

Annual Report 2014/15



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INTRODUCTION

WELCOME TO REPORT OF OPERATIONS 2014/15

Welcome to Loddon Shire Council's Report of Operations for the year 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015.

This is the final report in the planning and accountability framework for local government and, along with the financial statements and performance statement, forms the Council's annual report for the year.

Council is committed to transparent reporting and accountability to the community and the Report of Operations is the primary means of advising the Loddon community about Council's operations and performance during the year.

The report serves as an important document that will provide 'point in time' information about the Council and the community for readers of the future.

The document also provides the opportunity to celebrate the achievements of the Council, Council staff, and community over the course of the year.



Bridgewater ski platform.

SNAPSHOT OF COUNCIL

Demographic profile

Loddon Shire is located in Central Victoria, about 175 kilometres north-west of Melbourne. It is bounded by the Gannawarra Shire in the north, the Shire of Campaspe and the City of Greater Bendigo in the east, Mount Alexander and Central Goldfields shires in the south and Northern Grampians and Buloke shires in the west.

Loddon Shire is a predominantly rural area, with many small towns and communities. The largest towns are Boort, Bridgewater on Loddon, Inglewood, Pyramid Hill and Wedderburn.

The shire encompasses a total land area of about 6700 square kilometres. Land is used mainly for agriculture and horticulture, particularly grain, sheep, wool, beef cattle, dairy, pigs and poultry. In recent years, there has also been an increase in viticulture, olives and fodder crops.

Major features of the shire include the Loddon River, Terrick Terrick National Park, Leaghur State Park, Kooyoora State Park, Lake Boort, Major Mitchell Trail, Mount Korong, Melville Caves, Laanecoorie Reservoir and various wineries.

Major highways passing through the shire include the Calder Highway, the Loddon Valley Highway and the Wimmera Highway.

Purpose

Council Plan 2013-2017

In 2013, Council engaged a facilitator to work with Councillors, senior officers and members of the community to assist in preparing the Council Plan 2013-2017.

The ideas and philosophies contributed by those involved led to a restatement of Council's vision, mission and strategic platforms and an identification of Council's core business, all of which were included in the document.

In accordance with the Local Government Act 1989, Council reviews the Council Plan annually to ensure that it still reflects the Council's strategic intent.

At the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 24 March 2015, Council resolved that, having reviewed the Council Plan 2013-2017, it has formed the opinion that a full review of the plan was not necessary, but resolved that minor amendments to referencing be made, as well as the inclusion of the investigation of a water supply to the south-west of the shire.

Our Vision and Mission

The Loddon community vision is:

Strong communities proud of their individual identities.

In order to achieve this, Council's mission is to:

Deliver services that enhance the sustainability and liveability of our communities.

Council's core business

Council's core business was identified under 10 headings:

- 1. Leadership:** Providing vision and leadership in planning for our community's longer term future.
- 2. Provision of wellbeing services:** Cost-effectively providing for the basic needs of our communities.
- 3. Planning for future needs:** Anticipating and planning for demographic and economic shifts.
- 4. Economic development:** Supporting the growth and diversification of our economy, based on areas of competitive advantage.
- 5. Providing quality infrastructure:** Developing and maintaining both built and natural assets appropriate to community priorities.
- 6. Financial sustainability:** Planning and managing for long-term financial needs and keeping our ratepayers informed about the financial situation.
- 7. Education and life-long learning:** Advocating for better youth engagement and life-long learning outcomes.
- 8. Compliance:** Ensuring we are compliant with all legislative reporting requirements.
- 9. Regulation:** ensuring community compliance with local regulations.
- 10. Advocacy and partnerships:** Collaborating internally and externally to achieve our region's goals and promoting the interest and position of our Council.

LODDON SHIRE FACTS AND FIGURES

2014/15	
CUSTOMER SERVICE	
Incoming calls received via front counter	19,354
Land Information Certificates issued	390
RATES	
Rates notices issued	7982
ROADS	
Highways	
Kilometres of highway	209
Kilometres of sealed local roads	
Kilometres of main roads	394
Kilometres of sealed access roads	123
Kilometres of sealed collector roads	796
Gravel local roads	
Kilometres of gravel collector roads	256
Kilometres of gravel access roads	1114
Kilometres of minor gravel roads	1186
LOCAL LAWS/ANIMAL CONTROL	
Dogs registered	1942
Cats registered	379
Local laws permits issued	54
Permits to burn issued	21
YOUTH SERVICES	
FReeZA events	
Number of events	10
Attendance	1630

2014/15	
AGED AND DISABILITY SERVICES	
Meals on Wheels	
Meals delivered	8374
Number of recipients	305
Home care	
Hours delivered	8047
Number of recipients	292
Home/garden maintenance	
Hours of property maintenance	627
Number of recipients	161
Personal care	
Hours of personal care	2582
Number of recipients	77
Respite care	
Hours of respite care	1582
Number of recipients	27
Planned activity groups	
Hours of activities provided	6259
Number of recipients	120
Aged and Disability Assessment Team	
Number visited (new and existing service recipients)	525
Percentage of existing clients visited at least once during the year	94.8%
Hours of service delivered by the Aged and Disability direct care staff to residents of Loddon Shire	19,097
CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES	
Births	70
Immunisation program (vaccines administered)	779
Kindergarten enrolments 4 year old	75
Kindergarten enrolments 3 year old	33

HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE YEAR

Calendar of events

July 2014

Community groups the big winners

Forty-four community groups in Loddon were successful applicants under the 2014/15 Community Grants Scheme.

Council agreed to allocate \$195,326 in grants for the year, to aid recreational, sporting and service organisations to deliver projects to improve quality of life for residents.



Mayor Gavan Holt with Graham Nesbit and Geoff Weston.

Projects win cash boost from Community Planning

Council committed to spend \$266,000 on 18 requested projects across the municipality's five wards.

Funding was based on a \$50,000 allocation per ward, plus a \$500,000 Strategic Fund allocation.

Bridgewater Memorial Hall, Newbridge Progress Park Improvement Project and Boort's Nolens Park Redevelopment Project were among the developments to receive funding.

New to Hall of Fame

Two highly regarded Loddon Shire companies were honoured in the Business Victoria awards.

Laucke Flour Mills, of Bridgewater, Australia's oldest flour milling business, won the Technology in Manufacturing Award, while Boundary Bend Olives, of Boort, the nation's largest producer of extra virgin olive oil, was welcomed as a new inductee to the Victorian Manufacturing Hall of Fame.

Boundary Bend joins Hazeldene's chicken farms in the Hall of Fame, after the latter was honoured in 2011.

New to the team

Loddon Shire Council welcomed Year 11 Wedderburn College student Thomas Jackson to its team.

Thomas started an 18-month school-based apprenticeship, working two days a week with Council's IT department while continuing his studies at the college.

Say thanks to a volunteer

The Australian Bureau of Statistics released a report which stated Loddon had a high level of volunteerism.

According to the 2011 Census, 34 per cent of our population volunteer to help their communities, with many involved in more than one activity.

This compares with a figure of 23 per cent for regional Victoria.

Funding news welcome

Member for Swan Hill Peter Walsh announced further funding to support streetscape works in four of our towns, flood mitigation works and local learning opportunities.

The state government is providing \$120,000 from the \$1 billion Regional Growth Fund to improve the streetscapes of Bridgewater, Boort, Inglewood and Pyramid Hill.

Council will contribute the remaining \$40,000 required for the project.

Cycle race to stop towns

Residents of Boort and Pyramid Hill had the chance to leave a lasting impression when waves of riders passed through the town.

The cyclists rode through the towns as part of the six-day, seven-stage Men's Tour of the Murray River.

New app, food for thought

Bendigo Regional Tourism launched its new Bendigo Regional Food and Wine Fossicking app.

The launch celebrated the achievements of regional businesses.

Bridgewater Bakery, Simply Tomatoes, Salute Oliva, Inglewood Meats On Brooke St and Water Wheel Winery got on board to advertise the app.

HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE YEAR CONT.

History taken to the street

The colourful story of Boort and its surrounding farming settlements was on display, with seven steel pillars erected around town bearing historic photographs and descriptive captions.

The four-sided pillars were spread out between the Memorial Hall and Arnold's butcher shop near the railway line.

The 1.8m metal towers showcased photographs and text capturing relevant aspects of community life in and around Boort since its founding in 1871.

August

Soccer study out

Loddon Shire led the way on behalf of nine other municipalities in the Loddon Mallee region in investigating whether soccer could become an established sport in the area.

Council officers submitted an application to the state government for funding to develop a strategy to foster growth of the sport locally.

Full story is told

A book telling the complete history of Wedderburn was launched at the Wedderburn Mechanics Institute Hall.

The printing of 2000 copies of the 342-page hardcover book, entitled *The Golden Harvest – A History of Wedderburn* was written by Korong (Wedderburn) Historical Society stalwart Keith Ring and freelance writer and consultant Geoff Arnott.

The book took nearly two years to compile and cost \$80,000 to produce.

Green light for flood project

The state government announced it will fund a \$215,000 project for flood mapping, assessment and mitigation options for Bridgewater.

The investigation will enhance understanding of flood extents, depths, velocities and the potential impacts of flooding on the Loddon River at Bridgewater.

Class acts line up

Pyramid Hill College hosted a lunchtime Battle of the Bands competition, with 10 acts performing.

The winner of the event secured themselves a spot in the regional final in Ballarat.

Boort's Eastern Entry Project starts

Council started to work on the final stage of the Boort Eastern Entry redevelopment, paving the way for a potential fresh look to Nolens Park and landscaping of the area.



The Boort Eastern Entry Project begins.

Free service available

A diabetic sharps container exchange program, fully funded by Council, is operating in Pyramid Hill.

The service is free and residents who have diabetes or a medical need to use a sharps container are encouraged to access it.

The exchange site is at the Pyramid Hill Pharmacy Depot in Kelly Street.

Gala a great night

Some 160 people from around the shire gathered at Pyramid Hill for Council's first-ever Sports Gala.

The high-profile social event was designed to honour Loddon's top sportspeople.

The event attracted special guest speaker Max Walker.

Eleven awards were announced, chosen from 30 worthy finalists, whose sporting successes were achieved both locally and on the international stage and all of whom are highly significant contributors to their communities and their sports.

Views sought on economic planning

Council started work on developing an economic development strategy to guide the shire's economy and stimulate employment opportunities up to 2018.

The project is funded through the state government's Regional Growth Fund (\$45,000) and Council's own reserves (\$15,000).

The idea is to identify opportunities to boost local business and attract new investment, leading to an implementation plan with clear recommendations for action.

HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE YEAR CONT.

September

Festival launched

The Naturally Loddon Spring Festival was launched at John and Sonia Piccoli's Star Spanner Sculpture Gardens.

The event marked the start to the family-friendly, nature-focused events, starting with a wetlands tour around Boort and ending with the Wedderburn's Naturally New Age Festival later in the month.

Painting the town red

Twenty-five Years 8-10 students from Loddon Shire's four secondary schools attended Council's second annual street art camp.

The program offered by Melbourne Street Art Tours, is the only business of its kind in Australia and run by street artists.

Solar panels go up

Loddon Shire expects to cut its power bills and significantly lower greenhouse emissions with a move to install solar panels at its Wedderburn office.

The \$44,000 project saw 120 solar panels installed with two 15kW SMA inverters.



Loddon Shire expects to cut its power bills with the installation of solar panels.

Caravan park pushes on

Work on several key aspects of the Bridgewater Public Caravan Park redevelopment neared completion.

The manager's residence was almost finished, with plumbing and other services connected, while two buildings assembled off site, the park office and park cabin, arrived.

On track for 2015 finish

Work began on redevelopment works to see the 138 year-old Inglewood Railway Station and Goods Shed transformed into Loddon Shire's first-ever business incubator and a new home for three busy community entities.

The remodel saw the creation of enclosed office spaces, a community open area, meeting space, kitchenette, toilet facilities and store room.

Park space improved

The development of the public foreshore area alongside the Bridgewater Public Caravan Park neared completion.

A new public toilet was installed, while other improvement works saw the installation of two free gas barbecues in their own shelters and the planting of irrigated grassed spaces.

Child's play

Council's kindergartens received a round of grants to help with minor infrastructure and IT needs.

Inglewood Kindergarten and Dingee Preschool received \$545 each to purchase an iPad for their centres. Boort Preschool received \$1462 to purchase a new laptop, while Pyramid Hill Preschool was allocated \$1500 and Wedderburn Kindergarten \$999 for computer hardware.

A minor infrastructure grant was provided to Pyramid Hill Preschool for \$10,000 to install a shade sail over its jungle gym and Dingee Preschool \$1707 for new shade sails over its playground.

In line for top award

Yarrowalla's Kia-Ora Piggery was announced as a finalist for the 2014 Premier's Sustainability Awards for its environmental efforts.

Listed in the small and medium enterprises category, the piggery is a family-owned operation that runs 1950 breeding sows and produces around 950 pigs each week, representing more than 4000 tonnes of pork sold each year.

Funding news a win for parents

The news that the Commonwealth Government agreed to provide necessary funding for the continuation of 15 hours of kindergarten for 2015 was welcomed.

The government has extended the national partnership agreement on early childhood education with an investment of \$406 million.

HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE YEAR CONT.

Find us on Facebook

Loddon Shire Mayor Gavan Holt launched Council's Facebook page.

The Shire's move to beef up its online presence was sparked by comments from the community.



Mayor Gavan Holt launches Loddon Shire Council's Facebook page.

October

Big day out in Tarnagulla

Tarnagulla hosted an Out 'n' About as part of the Naturally Loddon Spring Festival.

A major highlight was the annual detector key hunt and an old-fashioned afternoon tea by the Tarnagulla History Group in the Victoria Theatre.

Weeds in the gun

Loddon Shire asked for resident input on roadside weeds and pest animals to identify the best way for Council and the community to battle the menaces together.

Graduating day

The 10th annual Wedderburn Shearing School was celebrated at the Wedderburn Community House.

The course covers accredited modules in wool handling and basic shearing shed skills and is available to students who qualify under the Skills Victoria regulations.

Study tour to fly out

Loddon Shire Councillor Cheryl McKinnon took part in a study tour of New Zealand involving 18 students from Boort and Pyramid Hill.

The trip was an initiative of Gateways 4 Sustainable Communities, a program which works to highlight agricultural and other career pathways for regional students.

Bridgewater Public Caravan Park and foreshore opens

Flood restoration works at the Bridgewater Public Caravan Park and foreshore reserve came to an end.

Minister Peter Walsh officially opened the caravan park and foreshore reserve.

The two separate projects received generous funding, with the foreshore project funded through the Local Government Infrastructure Project (\$100,000) and the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal's Percy Baxter Trust (\$124,000), while the caravan park received Flood Recovery Funding from the Department of Primary Industries (\$3.3 million).

Road show a stimulus

Wedderburn hosted a travelling road show put on by Rural Councils Victoria, an alliance of the state's 38 country councils who are supporting and strengthening the voice of local government.

Loddon Shire Council CEO John McLinden and Mayor Gavan Holt attended the event.

Inclusion Plan progresses

The Loddon Shire's Community Access and Inclusion Plan 2013/15 was deemed to have made a positive change towards improving access to people with a disability to goods and services, employment and a full community life within the shire.

Boost for water sport enthusiasts

Loddon Shire Council announced it would soon boast accessible canoe trails for water sport enthusiasts.

Loddon Shire Council applied to the state government Minor Facilities Scheme for financial assistance to incorporate canoe trails along the Loddon River and Serpentine Creek.

The state government announced it would support the proposal with a \$42,418 contribution to the project.

HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE YEAR CONT.

Loddon keeps sporting grounds alive

Sporting grounds are an integral part of the Loddon community and that is why Council announced it was proud to fund the allocation of water to keep the Inglewood and Wedderburn sporting communities alive.

Unfortunately, the Skinners Flat and Inglewood Reservoir were exhausted, meaning the two facilities would rely on more expensive water from the Coliban system to maintain playing surfaces.

Council voted at its October meeting to subsidise the \$1717 per megalitre difference between the Coliban Water and Skinners Flat and Inglewood Reservoir prices that the clubs would need to pay.

The total cost to Council was estimated at \$32,907.

November

Accommodation guide released

Loddon Shire released an Accessible Accommodation Guide to make it easier for people with a disability to visit the region.

The guide allows visitors to identify which accommodation providers could meet their access needs, as well as giving tourism businesses an avenue to promote their services.

Serpentine Hall's \$500,000 boost

The state government announced it would provide a \$500,000 grant for Serpentine Hall to undergo a facelift.

The multi-functional community hub at Janiember Park will undergo a transformation, which will include extending the building's footprint, updating amenities including toilets, commercial kitchen and storage, along with expanding the hall's social space and improving areas for community use such as childcare and seniors' activities.

Bridgewater Flood Management Plan

Residents were invited to a drop-in session to discuss a flood management study being undertaken, to develop a better understanding of the nature of flooding in Bridgewater.

The study was led by a steering committee, consisting of representatives from North Central Catchment Management Authority, Loddon Shire Council, Vic SES and local residents.

Residents access road maintenance information

Residents were given access to information on planned maintenance grading and capital projects for all local roads.

The information was available at Loddon Shire's website.

Loddon's seniors get festive

November marked the Seniors' Festival across the state.

The Shire participates annually in the event, providing its seniors with a number of trips and events inside and outside of Loddon Shire over a three week period.

Events organised by Council included a comedy show, lunches, a trip to Melbourne, a high tea, mystery trip and a visit to the Eureka Stockade Museum in Ballarat.

Wedderburn marks a significant milestone

The Wedderburn Community Centre held its official opening, with Minister Peter Walsh conducting the proceedings.

The \$1.75 million project is expected to provide a boost for the region and provide an area for residents to access services and participate in community groups.

Mayor Gavan Holt at the official opening.



Communities benefit from hall restumping

The Pyramid Hill Memorial Hall started to receive extensive restumping works to ensure it is able to cater for community needs and service the town into the future.

Financial boost for Loddon's kindergartens

Three of Council's kindergartens received a financial boost from the Small Rural Grants Initiative.

Wedderburn Preschool received \$15,000, Inglewood Kindergarten, \$8500 and Pyramid Hill Preschool, \$7500.

The grants are used to assist Council's kindergarten committees with operational and administrative costs of delivering Loddon's kindergarten programs.

HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE YEAR CONT.

Mayor elected for 2014/15

Wedderburn Ward Councillor Gavan Holt was re-elected as Mayor at the November Statutory Council Meeting in Wedderburn, in front of friends, family and the greater Loddon community.

This will be Cr Holt's sixth term as Mayor.



Cr Gavan Holt accepts the Loddon gavel from Cr Neil Beattie after he was re-elected as Mayor for the 2014/15 period.

A golden Council competition

Council launched its gold nugget competition allowing tourists and locals to win a gold nugget.

The idea behind the promotion is to capture information about where tourists are travelling from and how they are travelling through the shire.

This information is invaluable as it allows Council to spend its marketing budget to attract tourists to the region in a calculated manner.

December

Council supplies new mower for sports centre

Inglewood Community Sports Centre became the fifth community facility to benefit from a policy approved by Council in 2013, to update oval mowers around the shire.

The new mower, valued at \$27,273 will cut the Inglewood Sports Centre volunteer greens-keeper Gordon McNaughton's workload in half.

Streets of Inglewood set to come Alive

Inglewood burst into life, with colour and sound filling the town for the Inglewood Alive festival.

Classic cars and motorbikes, market stalls, baby farm animals, and a community garage sale featured in the town.

The biggest highlight was the Wimmera Axeman wood chopping competition. Past president John Coffey ran the furious wood chopping action.

Dingee's park receives a makeover

Dingee Progress Park received an extensive makeover with the erection of a new shelter.

Council put \$18,000 towards the project with the community also providing local contributions.

Council celebrates Red Cross centenary

Council recognised the dedicated work of all Loddon's Australia Red Cross volunteers with the installation of a beautiful rose garden.

In recognition of Loddon's volunteers' hard work and dedication throughout the 100 years, the Shire has planted 10 red roses at the Serpentine Council office gardens, each rose representing a decade of Red Cross in Australia.

Council invests in emergency water supply points for farmers

In light of pressures placed on farmers to keep water up to their stock, Council stepped up to the challenge and worked with the Victorian Farmers Federation to provide a viable solution for emergency stock and domestic water supplies.

Council put together a plan to install four emergency water supply standpipes, thus expanding the existing standpipe network from seven to 11. The new standpipe sites are different from the existing facilities, in that they will not operate on the existing Avdata key system and will not provide for an overhead fill point.

Opening of the Bridgewater swimming hole

Mayor Gavan Holt partnered with Bridgewater Development Committee president Graeme Morse to open the Bridgewater swimming hole. As part of the opening, Cr Holt unveiled a plaque in honour of Heather Mountjoy for her untiring work driving the project over the years.



Mayor Gavan Holt at the opening of the Bridgewater swimming hole.

HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE YEAR CONT.

Thanking Loddon's volunteers

Mayor Gavan Holt thanked Loddon's Wedderburn Community House and Loddon Visitor Information Centre volunteers for their contribution during 2014.

Great Victorian Bike Ride to stop in Loddon

Loddon secured an economic windfall, with the Great Victorian Bike Ride announcing it will make its way back to the shire in 2015.

Bicycle Victoria's research shows the average value of this event, to the towns through which it passes each year, is around \$35 per rider per day – a potential shared windfall for Loddon businesses and community groups of up to \$133,000.



The Great Victorian Bike Ride will travel through the shire in 2015.

Pools receive new look with shade structures

Council's five pools each had a 10x10 metre shade structure installed.

The project cost \$150,000 with \$110,000 from the state government's Sport and Recreation Fund and Loddon Shire Council tipping in the remaining \$40,000.



Loddon Shire Council's pools receive shade structures.

January 2015

Australia Day celebrations secure esteemed guest speakers

Loddon's Australia Day ceremonies secured nine guest speakers including esteemed business men and women, Order of Australia Medal recipients, entertainers and volunteers.

Loddon Valley Official Visitor Guide

Council worked with businesses and the community to put together a new visitor guide.

The Loddon Valley Official Visitor Guide was launched at the Loddon Visitor Information Centre.

Australian Masters Water Skiing Championships

Bridgewater Water Ski Club hosted the Australian Masters Water Ski Championship, featuring some of Australia's best skiers in trick skiing, slalom and jumps.

More than 90 entrants participated with people from Queensland, Tasmania, South Australia, New South Wales and across Victoria.

Thanking our community heroes

Australia Day ceremonies were conducted in towns the length and breadth of the shire.

Rheola's Des Roberts was the recipient of the Citizen of the Year award and Dingee's Crystal Shaw-Beck received the Young Citizen of the Year award.

Community service awards were presented to: Honie Twedde from the Boort Ward, Ian Penny from the Inglewood Ward, Fraser Ramsay of Tarnagulla Ward, John Twigg from Terrick Ward and Keith Ring from the Wedderburn Ward. Bryan Jolly from Dingee was awarded an Australia Day award for his achievement in sport and the Wool Wheat and Wine Festival in Bridgewater was awarded Community Event of the Year.



Cr Colleen Condliffe presents the Wool Wheat and Wine Festival committee with an award for Community Event of the Year.

HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE YEAR CONT.

Triathlon fun, fit for the whole family

Organisers held the 12th Bridgewater Triathlon Duathlon with hundreds of people flocking to the Bridgewater Public Caravan Park for the event along the Loddon River.

Features installed at Loddon's pools

Water features were installed at three Council pools. Mitiamo, Pyramid Hill and Inglewood received the features after a joint initiative between state government and Council.



Erno and Villiam Kalmar love the new additions to the Inglewood Swimming Pool.

February

Loddon celebrates 20th anniversary

Loddon Shire Council celebrated its 20 year anniversary. During 1994 and 1995, 210 local governments were reduced to 78 and councillors were replaced temporarily with commissioners. The three commissioners at Loddon were Goff Letts, Murray Treseder and Peter Watts. All three were in attendance at the celebration.



Loddon Shire Council's former Commissioners, Murray Treseder, Goff Letts and Peter Watts.

Council ends roadside firewood collection

Loddon Shire Council put an end to issuing roadside firewood collection permits. Permits for roadside firewood collection are still available from the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.

Asking for streetscape feedback

Public comment and feedback was once again sought for the Wedderburn Streetscape Improvement Project. Council received a number of comments and submissions from the public.



Community feedback was sought for the Wedderburn Streetscape Improvement Project.

Youth to help steer Council projects

Council joined with the shire's four high schools to pilot a program which will allow Loddon's youth to help make decisions within the municipality.

The group will consult with the Shire on a range of issues and will learn the ins and outs of civic duties and compliance with policies and procedures.

Grants money on offer

Council's annual Community Grants Scheme was on offer for local sporting and community organisations to stake a claim for a share of a \$200,000 funding pool.

Over the past 15 years, Council has invested more than \$1.4 million in and around 650 projects, worth, in total, \$5 million.

Bridgewater's country market

Bridgewater launched its monthly market, with the support of community members and the Lions Club of Inglewood.

Boort gets a little friendlier

The Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia officially declared Boort as an RV Friendly Town.

The partnership will encourage travellers to visit Boort and in turn provide an economic boost to the community.

HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE YEAR CONT.

Netball court upgrades start

Wedderburn's old netball court was ripped up as the redevelopment works started.

The work will mean that 17 of Loddon Shire's 18 netball courts have been upgraded in recent years under Council's Netball Court Plan.

March

Looking after fruit farmers

Council urged residents to help preserve the future of Loddon's orchards, by monitoring one of the biggest threats to the industry: backyard fruit fly.

Farmers with fruit flies on their property are no longer able to sell their produce as organic, because every individual crate must be fumigated before it's sold. The cost of fumigation, coupled with the inability to sell the fruit as organic, considerably cuts a farmer's bottom-line.

Bridgewater caravan park lease

Council announced it would be taking expressions of interest for the lease of the Bridgewater Public Caravan Park.

The park, situated along the Loddon River, is a fully refurbished site which was rebuilt after the 2011 floods.

Sloan playground comes to life

Council installed large play equipment and a shade structure, as it worked towards finalising the adventure park at Sloan Park.

The Inglewood park will gradually transform into an adventure park, with a dry creek bed, landscaping, logs, historical mosaic tiled walls and a fountain all set to be installed.



Rhiannon Murphy takes advantage of the new equipment at the Inglewood Recreation Reserve as her grandmother Lynette Rose looks on.

RACV Great Victorian Bike Ride

Council announced it was looking to partner with community groups and businesses to ensure the whole municipality benefits from a large economic windfall, when the Great Victorian Bike Ride passes through the municipality on 1 December 2015.

Boort opens its doors

Boort's businesses joined together to help raise funds for the Boort Murray to Moyne cycling team and Boort Business and Tourism Council.

Gold nugget winner

Jessica Dickson of Ferntree Gully was named the winner of a Loddon tourism initiative which saw her win a gold nugget.

The aim of the promotion was to capture the postcodes of visitors and locals who were in the Loddon area over the Christmas New Year period.

More than 560 people entered the competition with one person from overseas, 79 from interstate and 489 Victorians.

Industrial property available for sale

Council announced it would sell industrial land with the development and works to an estate along Reef Street in Inglewood finishing.

Two lots were already pre-sold and Council was looking forward to hearing from interested businesses.



Council has industrial land for sale.

Council issues permits to burn

Council reminded residents they can apply for a permit to burn during fire restriction periods from the CFA and the Shire office.

HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE YEAR CONT.

Council reaffirms its direction

At Council's March meeting, it reaffirmed its direction and its commitment to the Council Plan 2013/17.

Council is continuing to invest in the identified seven key strategic platforms:

1. Build a network of strong communities
2. Grow our population through appropriate development
3. Champion our agrifood enterprises
4. Make our towns liveable and memorable
5. Grow and diversify our economy
6. Support our transitioning townships
7. Connect with the next generation

Flood protection for Loddon

The flood protection design survey for Boort, Pyramid Hill and Serpentine neared completion, with the protection analysis and draft designs underway.

Loddon Valley Tourism Business Network

The first Loddon Valley Business Network evening was hosted and labelled a huge success with 20 operators from a variety of businesses attending the first meeting.

The evening gave operators the opportunity to talk about their businesses and think about marketing initiatives.



The first Loddon Valley Business Networking meeting was labelled a success.

Approval for Inglewood Town Hall

Council granted a planning permit for the redevelopment of the Inglewood Town Hall and Community Hub project.

The decision is a significant step forward for the most pivotal project to be undertaken in Inglewood for a number of years.

Our new citizen

Stephanie Guy, of Bridgewater, was awarded Australian citizenship, during a special ceremony held at the Serpentine Council Chambers.



Mayor Gavan Holt presents Stephanie Guy with Australian citizenship.

April

Fruit fly management

Council highlighted the fruit fly problem to its residents for the second time, encouraging residents to check their private fruit trees.

The Loddon Mallee region had an influx of Queensland fruit fly, which could potentially hurt local produce growers.

Community Grants open

Council opened its 2015 Community Grants Program.

Eligible community groups had the opportunity to apply for a share of \$200,000.

Streetscape improvement plans for major towns

Workshops were held for Council's streetscape project for Bridgewater, Boort, Inglewood and Pyramid Hill, called About Town.

Residents were encouraged to meet with the architects to discuss their ideas and what they envisaged for each of the towns.



Workshops for streetscape projects were held with residents.

HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE YEAR CONT.

They call this puppy love

Council secured two convictions against dog breeding establishment owners for breaches against the Planning Scheme.

Council reiterated its message, that there is no place in Loddon Shire for animal breeding businesses that seek to skirt the law or treat their animals inhumanely.

Gold found in Wedderburn

Father and daughter duo, Gemma and Dean Mouldsdales, found gold while out fossicking within Loddon's municipality boundaries. Mayor Gavan Holt congratulated the pair on their 11 gram find.



Gemma Mouldsdales found gold while fossicking in Loddon Shire.

Restructure of outdoor workforce

Council was working through its restructure of its works department, which will work towards greatly improving Council's ability to deliver effective, efficient and sustainable road and infrastructure maintenance services across the shire.

Council noted that there were 55 staff members working in the department and 55 positions available in the restructure.

Of the 55 staff, only 19 would be directly affected by the changes. Council was working closely with the whole team to ensure a seamless transition.

National magazine focuses on Loddon

Loddon Shire Council secured a massive feat when the team from Caravan and Motorhome spent 10 days in the region, promising to feature the region in its magazine and on DVD.



Manager Tourism Robyn Vella and tourism volunteer Roberta Foster excited with the feature on Loddon Shire.

Wedderburn's secret treasures

People converged on Wedderburn from across the state in the hunt for treasure.

Wedderburn hosted a geocaching event, which allows people to find a geocache (container) hidden in a location using handheld GPS-enabled devices.

Remembering our heroes

Anzac Day was commemorated with multiple services across Loddon Shire.

More than 1000 students and 500 community members attended a shire-wide centenary ceremony the Friday before Anzac Day, which Mayor Gavan Holt declared the centrepiece of Loddon's commemoration of the centenary of Anzac Day.



The Honourable Tim Fischer AC and Loddon Shire Mayor Gavan Holt pay their respects during the Anzac Day ceremony.

Photographer: Darren Roberts

HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE YEAR CONT.

May

Loddon's city showcase

The Shire received wonderful feedback from staff who volunteer their time attending the Regional Victoria Living Expo, to speak to 10,000 visitors about Loddon Shire.

All of Victoria's 48 rural and regional councils took part at the Melbourne based event, which is designed to give city residents looking for a regional move the chance to investigate all of the municipalities under the one roof.



Loddon Shire CEO John McLinden, Manager Organisation Development Carol Canfield and Customer Service Officer Helen Tonkin get ready for the crowds at the Regional Victoria Living Expo.

Diabetic sharps program

Council reminded residents of its diabetic sharps container exchange program, which was rolled out several years ago to assist those who need to dispose of needles.

The sharps containers are located at:

- Loddon Shire Council, Wedderburn
- Guardian Pharmacy, Inglewood
- Loddon Shire Council, Serpentine
- Boort Resource and Information Centre
- Pyramid Hill Pharmacy Depot

Inglewood's rubbish solution

Sustainability Victoria partnered with Loddon Shire Council to provide an opportunity for Inglewood residents to continue to dispose of their waste and recyclables locally.

The Inglewood tip has been filling up and is at the point where limited capacity remains to receive further waste.

Council was pursuing the option of establishing a transfer station to replace the current tip operations.

Hard rubbish days

Council conducted its annual hard rubbish day in a bid to aid residents clean up their properties.

Council's new livestock pound

Council acquired land for a new livestock pound for the Shire's local laws officers to house animals found wandering outside private property.

History at Inglewood

Inglewood decided to get involved in the National Heritage Month for the first time, and it was labelled a massive success.

More than 500 visitors strolled through the town, visiting Nimmitabel (Tivey House), the RSL building, the town hall, Aurora Lodge and the courthouse.

Draft budget released

Council released its draft budget for 2015/16, which outlined its proposed projects and costs for the upcoming financial year.

Businesses unite as a network

The Loddon Valley Business Network held its second meeting, with the network fast becoming a tourism driving force.

The idea behind the group is for business owners to collaborate on ideas to boost visitor spend and bed nights within the municipality.

Businesses get digital

Loddon's business operators were invited to take part in a digital marketing workshop as part of Bendigo Regional Tourism's Digital Marketing 101 Program.

Smoking bans in public spaces

Smoking bans came into force to protect Victorians from second-hand smoke.

Smoking was banned on the grounds of, and within four metres of, an entrance to hospitals and community health services, schools, childcare centres, kindergartens and preschools, and many government buildings including courts and police stations.

The Business of Agribusiness

Council partnered with the Central Victorian Agribusiness Forum to run an industry event in Loddon.

The seminar assisted those in attendance to identify growth opportunities and offer insights on local and foreign investment.

HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE YEAR CONT.

Council works towards an active future

Council released its draft plan of its Recreation Strategy 2015-2020, with an active, healthy and inclusive community at the top of its priority list.

June

Golden era for Inglewood

The Inglewood Train Station and Goods Shed was officially opened by the Honourable Jacinta Allan.

The Inglewood Station and Goods Shed was transformed into a health centre, business incubator and community space after an extensive refurbishment of the disused buildings.

Business hub opens in Inglewood

Council welcomed news of a business incubator set to open in Inglewood under Workspace Australia.

The business hub will operate from the newly refurbished Inglewood Goods Shed.

Local heroes recognised

Boort's Leading Senior Constable Ray Stomann was awarded the Australian Police Medal in the Queen's Birthday Honours and Bridgewater Leading Senior Constable Mick Balazs was honoured with the National Emergency Medal for his bravery, after rescuing a disabled man who was trapped in his house with fire approaching on Black Saturday.



Top right: Australian Police Medal recipient Senior Constable Ray Stomann. Above: Assistant Commissioner Tess Walsh awards Leading Senior Constable Michael Balazs.
Photo: Bendigo Advertiser.

Council backs Goulburn-Murray's proposal

Council supported the preparation of a Ministerial Amendment to the Loddon Planning Scheme, which if adopted, would allow Goulburn-Murray Water to conduct its works under its Connections Program without needing to obtain planning permits for each property.

Goulburn-Murray Water will collate the supporting documentation and forward it to the Planning Minister Richard Wynne, in the hope the Minister will support the amendment.

Streetscape moves full steam ahead

With funding announcements to the tune of \$2.3 million, the Wedderburn streetscape project started to move at full steam.

Council tunes in to Kool Skools

Council will once again offer the Kool Skools program to high school students who have an interest in arts.

Kool Skools is a music recording and multimedia project for secondary level school bands and solo performers to record an album of original music, either in Melbourne or Sydney, complete with their own photography, graphics and written material.

Touring the Loddon region

Visitor Information Centre volunteers were treated to a tour of the region. Loddon Shire Council provides the familiarisation tours to help arm volunteers with helpful guidance for visiting tourists.

Council adopts its 2015/16 budget

The Council budget was adopted, with Loddon Shire aiming to be debt free by the end of the financial year.

The Council budget will see Council invest more than \$8.4 million on capital works. Of the \$8.4 million, \$4.5 million will go towards Council's infrastructure program, with road resealing and reconstruction programs being allocated \$2 million of that amount. The budget allocates \$251,000 for recreation, leisure and community facilities and \$115,000 for parks, open space and streetscapes.

Council has committed \$557,000 to the development of a Pyramid Hill industrial estate and \$300,000 to transform the Inglewood tip into a transfer station. It has also provided full funding of Council's on-going commitment of community planning of \$750,000.

Council Plan 2013-2017



Wedderburn Football Club president Andrew Lockhart, Mayor Gavan Holt, Wedderburn Football Club treasurer Kevin Lockhart and Donaldson Park curator Leon Holt.

1. Build a network of strong communities

Loddon keeps sports grounds alive

Sporting grounds are an integral part of the Loddon community, and that is why the Shire was proud to fund the allocation of water to keep the Inglewood and Wedderburn sporting communities alive.

Loddon Shire Council recognises the importance of sport for every community's social wellbeing.

The Wedderburn and Inglewood sporting clubs have relied heavily on the Skinners Flat and Inglewood Reservoir to provide an affordable water supply to maintain grass sports surfaces.

Unfortunately, these water supplies were both exhausted late last year, meaning the sporting clubs would need to rely on more expensive water from the Coliban system to maintain their playing surfaces.

The venues affected in Wedderburn were Donaldson Park and Market Square, and in Inglewood, the Sports Centre. Together, the clubs would be up for \$2167 per megalitre

from the Coliban system, a vast difference from the \$450 per megalitre paid for Skinners Flat and Inglewood Reservoir water.

Based on the estimated water usage at the facilities, it was determined that the excess cost would significantly impact the clubs' ability to maintain grass playing surfaces to an acceptable level that meets safety standards.

Loddon Shire Council was proud to announce it would subsidise the \$1717 per megalitre difference at both recreation reserves.

The total cost to Council was estimated at \$32,907, which Council believes is a worthy investment into our sporting community.

The funding benefited a number of clubs, including the Wedderburn bowls, tennis, hockey, football and cricket clubs along with the Inglewood football and tennis clubs.

HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE YEAR CONT.

2. Grow our population through appropriate development

Council forges ahead with appropriate development

Council's priority of implementing planning strategies which would accelerate growth in appropriate areas has seen the development of several strategies over the past financial year. This, coupled with a plan to attract investors, develop an Economic Development Strategy and identify surplus Council properties, has seen Council make great bounds towards securing the future of the shire.

The planning scheme amendment to implement the Rural Zones Review has been submitted for approval to the Minister for Planning Richard Wynne. The review aims to make substantial changes to the farming zone to further protect Loddon's agricultural industry.

The Settlement Strategy has also progressed. The strategy aims to promote population growth in areas that are supported with infrastructure and services.

The Rural Zones Review, combined with the Settlement Strategy, recognises Council's need to support its farming industry while creating a strong economic backbone to the community, and therefore allowing the Shire to further invest in its small townships.

Council has been busy working behind the scenes and released its Economic Development Strategy for public comment in June 2015. The strategy focuses on attracting

investment into Loddon, to support growth of essential infrastructure and to enable job creation.

The development of a list of surplus Council properties has commenced, focussing firstly on vacant land in the shire's townships. The project will enable Council to rationalise its property holdings and offer purchasers the opportunity to develop in the shire.

Council is working with high profile project builders to offer house and land packages at the Wedderburn Housing Estate. These packages are aimed at providing value for money developments in Wedderburn while maintaining the quality expected at the subdivision. The packages offered are very cost competitive when compared to the high priced land offered in regional centres such as Bendigo, and are significantly more affordable than the land offerings in Melbourne suburbs.

In the last financial year, Council supported a rezoning to allow a low density residential property development in Bridgewater. The 30 hectare property will offer a significant number of fully serviced lots varying in size from 2000 to 4000 m² close to both the river and the main street of Bridgewater.

3. Champion our agrifood enterprises

The Business of Agribusiness

Council partnered with the Central Victorian Agribusiness Forum to run an industry event in Loddon.

The Business of Agribusiness seminar offered an insight on local and foreign investment for those in the agribusiness sector.

The day had an impressive line-up of speakers, including Victorian Minister for Agriculture and Regional Development Jaala Pulford, Victorian Farmers Federation president Peter Tuohey, Andrew Smith from Rural Finance and Tom Russo from Elders Ltd.

The Business of Agribusiness seminar was specifically designed for agricultural producers, agribusiness managers and those involved in the agribusiness sector. Lending advisors, government officials and those seeking funding were also invited to the event.



Minister for Agriculture and Regional Development, the Honourable Jaala Pulford, presents at the seminar.



Liberal Candidate for Ripon, Louise Staley, Cr Gavan Holt, Minister Peter Walsh, and Nationals Candidate for Ripon, Scott Turner at the official opening of the Wedderburn Community Centre.

4. Make our towns liveable and memorable

Wedderburn's community centre opens

Loddon Shire Council was proud to see its \$1.75 million Wedderburn Community Centre project completed in the last financial year.

Minister Peter Walsh announced the building was officially open, at a special ceremony held in October 2014.

The centre received a makeover, with improvements including on-site parking and refurbished facilities including a new tourism office, interview rooms for visiting services, improved multi-purpose rooms, meeting rooms and consulting rooms for the Inglewood and Districts Health Service.

The centre has already been labelled the community hub, with a number of local organisations taking up residence.

Wedderburn Community House, Loddon Tourism, Centrelink, VicRoads and Inglewood and Districts Health Service also operate from the centre.

The Victorian Government provided \$400,000 through the Regional Growth Fund, the Commonwealth Government supported the project with \$851,450, Loddon Shire Council was proud to invest \$300,000 with a further \$200,000 coming from Inglewood and Districts Health Service and Wedderburn Community House.

The centre is expected to enhance services and boost employment opportunities.

HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE YEAR CONT.



Peter Walsh, Mayor Gavan Holt and Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal Chief Executive Officer Alexandra Gartmann unveiled the plaques to commemorate the opening of the Bridgewater Public Caravan Park and foreshore reserve. *Photo: The Loddon Times*

5. Grow and diversify our economy

Caravan park and foreshore opens

It has been three years in the making, but the Bridgewater Public Caravan Park and foreshore reserve has officially been opened.

Minister Peter Walsh officially declared the precinct open, after it was completely restored following the 2011 flood waters which destroyed the park.

The two separate projects received generous funding, with the foreshore project funded through the Local Government Infrastructure Project, \$100,000, and the Foundation for Rural and Regional renewal contribution of \$124,000 from the Percy Baxter Trust, while the caravan park received Flood Recovery Funding from the Department of Primary Industries, \$3.3 million.

Loddon Shire Council Director Economy and Community Bryan McEwan said the projects would have a large economic benefit to the region.

“The flood recovery project will provide the Bridgewater community, visitors and tourists alike, with an inviting,

accessible and functional recreational area adjacent to the river,” he said.

“The project will result in an increase in tourist numbers to the region, resulting in a very significant increase in tourist bed nights.”

Mr McEwan said the development would benefit the whole region, with visitors expected to stay longer in the new caravan park.

“Visitors will also visit neighbouring towns including Inglewood, especially with its unique offering of antique shops, tourist attractions and access to a supermarket.”

Along with visitors, it is expected locals will take full advantage of the transformation, with a family friendly environment and easy access to water activities including skiing, fishing and canoeing.

HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE YEAR CONT.

6. Support our transitioning townships

Funding injection supports towns

Council has placed great emphasis on supporting its small town communities to retain the best quality of life possible in the face of a declining population with increasing needs.

Over the past financial year, Loddon Shire Council has put a large sum of money on the table under its Community Grants Scheme and community planning funding.

The allocation saw a total of \$961,326 spent across the municipality.

Forty-four community groups and 14 community planning projects received the welcomed news last July.

Manager Community and Recreation Allan Stobaus said the program offered significant benefits to the local community.

“It provides money for specific projects which may otherwise struggle to secure funding through Council’s other infrastructure programs or initiatives,” he said.

“As demonstrated in the value of projects delivered so far, Council’s investment pays rich dividends both in terms of financial help and social wellbeing.”

Manager Community Planning Tim Jenkyn said annual community planning funding was based on a \$50,000 allocation per ward, plus a \$500,000 Strategic Fund allocation.

“Unlike Council’s Community Grants program, which provides funding support for projects up to \$15,000 at a ratio of 2:1, Community Planning is a direct allocation to



Mayor Gavan Holt, Inglewood Sports Centre President Alan Last, curator Gordon McNaughton, Cr Colleen Condliffe and Les Miller inspect the new mower.

projects identified in the local Community Plan, facility master plans or partnerships across communities,” Mr Jenkyn said.

“Community Planning committees submit specific projects and an assessment committee looks at each one.

“Loddon’s community planning program has been a success story since its inception over a decade ago.

“Communities and Council continue to attract significant external funding through the process and we have seen numerous projects delivered in Loddon’s small towns and rural districts under this banner.”

7. Connect with the next generation

Loddon’s youth making decisions

Council joined with the shire’s four high schools to pilot a program which allows Loddon’s youth to help make decisions within the municipality. Each school had the opportunity to appoint two school leaders to form the Youth Advisory Council.

This is a great opportunity for Loddon’s future leaders to gain an insight into civic duties and compliance policies and procedures.

Councillors, Council officers and principals have been mentoring the advisory council.

The group will consult with the Shire on a range of issues and they will have the opportunity to develop an insight on how Council operates including its processes, budgets, compliance procedures and decision making processes.



Youth Advisory Council members (back) Thomas Jackson, Steven Gunther, Cyan Norton, (front) Monique Vella, Daniel Hercott and Arron Curry.

HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE YEAR CONT.

Grants

During the 2014/15 financial year, Council gave grants and funding to the following clubs:

Grants

- About Boort Newsletter
- Bendigo Historic Motorcycle Club
- Boort Cemetery Trust
- Boort Development Committee
- Boort Golf Club
- Boort Indoor Bias Bowls Club
- Boort Lawn Bowls Club
- Boort Memorial Hall
- Boort Men's Shed
- Boort Power Boat and Ski Club
- Boort Preschool
- Boort Resource and Information Centre
- Bridgewater on Loddon Bowling Club
- Bridgewater on Loddon Development
- Calivil Recreation Reserve
- Campbells Forest Hall
- Derby Hall and Recreation Reserve
- Dingee Bowling Club
- Dunolly and District Field and Game Club
- Inglewood Golf Club
- Kingower Cricket and Recreation Reserve
- Korong (Wedderburn) Historical Society
- Korong Community Newsletter
- Korong Vale Mechanics Institute Hall
- Laanecoorie Mechanics Institute Hall
- Loddon Arts
- Newbridge Public Hall
- Powlett and District Community Hall
- Pyramid Hill Bowling Club
- Pyramid Hill Netball Club
- Rheola Public Hall
- Serpentine Bowling Club
- Wedderburn and District Harness Racing Club
- Wedderburn and Korong Vale RSL
- Wedderburn Bowling Club
- Wedderburn Community House
- Wedderburn Football Club
- Wedderburn Historical Engine and Machinery Society
- Wedderburn Hockey Club
- Wedderburn Lions Club
- Wedderburn Patchwork Group
- Wedderburn State Emergency Services

Events Sponsorship Scheme

- Boort Agricultural and Pastoral Society
- Boort Business and Tourism Council
- Boort Golf Club
- Boort Harness Racing Club
- Boort Indoor Bowls Club
- Boort Lawn Tennis Club
- Bridgewater Football Netball Club
- Bridgewater Ski Club
- Calivil Bowling Club
- Dergholm Endurance Ride
- Dingee Progress Association
- Friends of Kooyoora
- Inglewood and Districts Health Service
- Inglewood Golf Club
- Inglewood Lions Club
- Korong Vale and District Bowling Club
- Loddon Southern Tourism and Development
- Mitiamo Golf Club
- North Central Catchment Management Authority for Chicks in the Sticks
- Northern Victorian Quarter Horse Association
- Pyramid Hill Bowls Club
- Pyramid Hill Golf Club
- Rheola Easter Charity Carnival
- Serpentine Bowling Club
- Tarnagulla Primary School
- Wedderburn and District Harness Racing Club
- Wedderburn Band Cricket Club
- Wedderburn Bowls Club
- Wedderburn Community House
- Wedderburn Development Association
- Wedderburn Kindergarten
- Wedderburn Tourism

League sponsorship

- Loddon Valley Football Netball League
- North Central Football League

Youth development

- Portsea Camp donation for local youth to attend

CHALLENGES AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

Our challenges

A constrained and yet uncertain fiscal environment

Local government, and in particular rural local government of Victoria is facing a number of financial challenges. These challenges seem to have combined in the recent past to create a number of difficulties for local government.

The challenges include the freezing of indexation of financial assistance grants from the federal government for a three-year period, the loss of Council's \$1 million a year Roads and Bridges Program provided by the state government and the introduction of rate capping effective 2016/17.

Whilst there has been some good news in relation to financial grants for local government, the three issues above are combined to reduce Council's financial capacity and therefore, in the medium to long-term, reduce the services and the asset renewals that Council is capable of funding.

Retaining our youth

The demographics of the Loddon Shire are indicating that the loss of our youth is a continuing problem.

The population of the Loddon Shire is ageing more rapidly than the rest of Victoria and Australia. The average Loddon resident is 13 years older than the average Victorian or Australian resident. Loddon's vibrant youth are leaving the municipality as soon as their education is finished.

Council has not been able to reverse this trend and this sounds alarm bells for the future viability of our community.

Changing weather patterns and unreliable rainfall

Loddon's economy is dominated by the agricultural sector and the fortunes of agriculture turn on the amount and reliability of rainfall. Our farming community is suffering and facing a significant challenge in the changing and uncertain weather patterns affecting this part of Victoria.

Council's road network

The burden of maintaining and renewing Council's extensive road network continues to dominate this Council's thinking in respect of the responsible allocation of its finite financial resources.

Ageing volunteers

The communities that make up the Loddon Shire have a very strong self-reliance. Much of the organised sport and community activities within this municipality are hosted and made possible by the efforts of volunteers. As our community ages, so too do our volunteers, and communities right across this municipality are seeing an ever shrinking pool of volunteers available.

Council's ageing workforce

As our population ages and the youth of our municipality leave to seek employment and other opportunities in larger centres, Council continues to experience difficulty in attracting young workers to its workforce.



Melville Caves.

CHALLENGES AND FUTURE OUTLOOK CONT.

The future

Economic Development Strategy

Council has drafted its Economic Development Strategy with a number of initiatives targeted at growing jobs and community wealth.

Recreation Strategy

Council has reviewed its recreation strategy. It sees its commitment and resourcing of recreation as one of the key ingredients to making our towns great places to live.

Community planning

Council has committed to looking at the future shape of community planning. The Loddon community has achieved great things through its Community Planning Program in the last 15 years. Council believes it is time to have a good look at the Community Planning Program and to ensure that the involvement of the community in critical planning and decision making continues into the future.

Revitalising our main streets

Council is committed to delivering a broad streetscape program that focuses on improving the commercial centres and main streets of at least five of our townships.

Funding the delivery of these streetscape programs will be a significant financial challenge for Council, but one which the Council is committed to achieving, as it believes that having towns that people want to live in and visit is an essential component of our future growth strategy.

Inglewood Town Hall Community Hub Development

In the short term, Council will complete the construction of the Inglewood Community Hub and the renovation of the Inglewood Town Hall. This is a significant project for Council which will significantly improve community facilities for the town of Inglewood.

Sporting facilities

Council is committed to ensuring that the only substandard netball court remaining in the shire, is refurbished to meet current day standards in the near future.

From the identified nine substandard courts, the Boort Netball Court is the only one across the municipality that has not yet been refurbished to meet appropriate modern day standards.

Council also has a commitment to developing plans for the upgrade of the Donaldson Park Recreation facility and to addressing the need for better function rooms at the Boort Park Recreation facility.

The growing agribusiness sector

Council will continue to invest in resources to support and grow investment in agribusiness within Loddon Shire. Council has a particular focus on the value adding sector with the objective of attracting jobs, and employees to fill these jobs.



Sporting facilities.

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

This 21st annual report of Loddon Shire Council details its achievements over the past twelve months in delivering its strategic objectives as outlined in the Council Plan 2013-2017.

To achieve its goals, the role of the Council includes:

- acting as a representative government by taking into account the diverse views and needs of the community in decision making
- providing leadership by establishing well-defined strategic objectives and monitoring their delivery
- maintaining the viability of Council by ensuring that resources are managed in a responsible and accountable manner
- advocating on behalf of the local community to other communities, agencies and governments on issues of concern
- fostering community cohesion and encouraging participation in public life.

Long term planning

In the 12 months to June 2015 the Loddon Shire Council has continued its commitment to long term planning, one of the cornerstones of good public administration. This has included continued review and implementation of our long-term financial plan. Council has continued to support our Community Planning Program by funding projects that have been identified as priorities by our community planning groups and fit the guidelines within our various Asset Management Plans and the Council Plan. Council has updated its Capital Works Program and its Long-Term Rolling Program and continues to identify projects that will help make our shire more prosperous.

Responsible financial management

I think that the 2014/15 year has demonstrated to our community the benefit of Council's policy of the effective use of Financial Reserves whereby funds are set aside for future use. Council has attained full funding for the Inglewood Town Hall Hub, the Wedderburn Streetscape and the Janiember Park Project at Serpentine. We have also made productive use of the Rates Reserve and the Unfunded Superannuation Reserve.



Gavan Holt.

Council continues to be one of the lowest raisers of municipal rates in Victoria and still provides the services that its community expects. Our financial management is supported by a regime of strong oversight, with Council receiving and scrutinising detailed monthly financial reports.

Council is supported by a vigilant Internal Audit Committee consisting of four community members Ken Belfrage (Chair), David Peterson, Rod Baker, Rod Poxon (who recently replaced Jo Haw) and myself.

Regional relationships

As Mayor of the Loddon Shire Council I have continued to maintain a strong engagement with the Municipal Association of Victoria (to which I am Council's delegate), Rural Councils Victoria which is the peak body representing Victoria's 38 rural councils and of which I am Deputy Chair, the Loddon Campaspe Councils and the Murray River Group of Councils. This is a very important part of our work, as together we can be a stronger voice for our individual councils.

Advocacy

Whilst much of the advocacy work of this council has been undertaken through our regional relationships, Council has made direct submission on a number of local issues. We have advocated in the strongest possible way for the adoption by the Victorian Government of the Loddon Rural Zones Review. We are working closely with other agencies to investigate the options for improved water security for the south-west of Loddon Shire. It is clear that

MAYOR'S MESSAGE CONT.

both the Commonwealth and state governments have serious budgetary issues. It is therefore no surprise that local government is being asked to review its fundraising and expenditure programs. Council has done some preliminary work to prepare for a tougher financial outlook in years to come. I must note though, that whilst there has been some bad news for the financial outlook, there have also been some positives. Most notable has been the recent announcement of significant increases to Roads to Recovery funding as a result of changes to fuel excise.

In conclusion

I would like to thank my fellow Councillors and the countless volunteers within our community who have done so much throughout the year to improve the lives of the citizens of Loddon. I would also like to thank the staff of Loddon Shire for their commitment to this organisation, to our Customer Service Charter and to our residents and ratepayers to help make Loddon a vibrant and prosperous community.



Councillor Gavan Holt
Mayor

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S MESSAGE

On behalf of Loddon Shire Council, it is a great pleasure to present Council's annual report for the year 2014/15. The CEO is responsible for:

- establishing and maintaining an appropriate organisational structure for the Council
- ensuring that the decisions of the Council are implemented without undue delay
- the day to day management of the Council's operations in accordance with the Council Plan
- developing, adopting and disseminating a code of conduct for Council staff
- providing timely advice to the Council
- carrying out the Council's responsibilities as a deemed employer with respect to Councillors, as deemed workers, which arise under or with respect to the Accident Compensation Act 1985 or the Accident Compensation (Work Cover Insurance) Act 1993.

Highlights

The 2014/15 year was a particularly satisfying year for a number of reasons. Council has worked hard over a number of years on many major projects and whilst a number of these are yet to reach conclusion, there were some projects completed in the 2014/15 year.

These included:

- the renovation and extension of the Wedderburn Community Centre
- the reconstruction and renewal of the Bridgewater Public Caravan Park



John McLinden.

- the construction of the Boort Eastern Entry Project. The project has been delivered over a period of approximately 10 years
- completion of plans for the Wedderburn Streetscape Project. This is a project that will revitalise the main street of Wedderburn and see the investment of approximately \$2.2 million into this major streetscape project.

Funding has now been secured for the construction of the Wedderburn Streetscape Project and for the Inglewood Town Hall Hub. Council has also been working with the Serpentine community on plans for the revitalisation of the change facilities and social rooms at Janiember Park. I am also pleased to report that this project is now fully funded, with the Serpentine community nearing completion of the planning cycle for this project. I expect that this project will commence construction early in the coming financial year.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S MESSAGE CONT.

The organisation

It is essential that this organisation continually renews itself and seeks to ensure its relevance to the community that it serves. With this in mind, a restructure of Council's outdoor workforce occurred during the 2014/15 year to ensure that the efficiency and competitiveness of this organisation remains intact. With this review now complete, and with a significant investment of capital in new technologies and additional and more appropriate plant, I am confident that Council's outdoor workforce can continue to deliver the services required by our community. This restructure will improve workflows within the outdoor works area and will provide more direct and more effective supervision and control over our outdoor resources.

The relentless effort to improve the policies and procedures of this organisation with a focus on the internal policies continues. Council has reviewed and adopted a large suite of policies and procedures over the last 12 months to ensure that we provide consistency in our decision making and that decisions are made in light of all the appropriate information being considered.

Council has also introduced the concept of lean thinking into the way that we do our work and I am confident that

as we roll out a comprehensive program of lean thinking throughout the organisation, our community will see the benefits of a more efficient organisation.

Thank you

I would like to thank the Loddon Shire Councillors for their leadership and support over the preceding 12 months, not only of myself but of the entire team. I would also like to thank the community, in particular the many, many volunteers who give so selflessly of their time to make Loddon a vibrant and prosperous community. My staff and I have regular interaction with so many wonderful community members who give of themselves so that their communities may benefit and to these I say thank you. And finally to the staff of the Loddon Shire who have worked so hard over the last 12 months to achieve Council's vision, I say thank you.



John McLinden
CEO

DESCRIPTION OF OPERATIONS

Description of operations

Loddon Shire Council is responsible for a variety of services, from family and children's services, aged and disability services, parks and gardens, youth programs, waste management and community building, to matters concerning business development, planning for appropriate development and ensuring accountability for Council's budget. This broad range of community services and infrastructure for residents support the wellbeing and prosperity of our community. Council's vision, strategic objectives and strategies to further improve services and facilities are described in our Council Plan 2013-2017, the budget, and documented in this report. Refer to the section on Our Performance for more information about Council services.

The delivery of services, facilities, support and advocacy to achieve the strategic objectives is measured by a set of service performance indicators and measures. Council also has a wide range of responsibilities under Victorian and Australian legislation.

Economic factors

Council's cash was boosted at year end with prepayment of 50% of the Victorian Grants Commission Allocation on 30 June 2015.

Council's significant cash holdings through the year provided the ability to invest surplus funds, earning more than budgeted interest for the year.

Major capital works

Fire services at Boort Caravan Park

Loddon Shire Council reviewed its caravan park fire services. It was deemed that Boort was one of the three parks that required a fire service upgrade to bring the park up to current industry standards. Loddon Shire Council installed fire hydrants and hose reels to ensure there was an appropriate fire service in the event of an emergency.

DESCRIPTION OF OPERATIONS CONT.

Development of Inglewood industrial estate

With assistance from the state government, Council is in the midst of completing a five lot industrial subdivision. The subdivision, located at Inglewood, will provide fully serviced, one acre lots for industrial use. The project will entail extensions to power, water, sewer and drainage. Chain mesh fencing and the creation of a new access road and cross overs was also included in the plans.

Completion of Wedderburn Community Centre upgrade

A \$1.75 million upgrade has seen a new wing added to the Wedderburn Community Centre. The new wing includes a new foyer, tourism office, administration facilities, new office space and consulting rooms for the Inglewood and Districts Health Service and Maternal and Child Health Service. The existing school house was also refurbished as part of the upgrade to include further administration areas, meeting rooms, a refurbished kitchen and the provision for Centrelink to provide its services. The project also included roof repairs and some external works to the car park area and landscaping.

Planning for Wedderburn streetscape

Loddon Shire Council has prepared landscape plans and detailed designs for the Wedderburn Streetscape Project. On the ground works will commence in the 2015/16 financial year, with the undergrounding of power, followed by streetscape changes to drainage and associated road works and the provision for future landscaping.



Walking trail at Bridgewater.

\$4.2 million in infrastructure and capital works

As part of its Annual Infrastructure Program, Council invested more than \$4.2 million towards the ongoing renewal, upgrade and establishment of critical public infrastructure across the municipality. This funding is separate from specific capital projects such as the Wedderburn Streetscape improvement or Inglewood Town Hall upgrade and is focused towards the ongoing renewal of existing road and building assets.

Investment in maintaining the standard of local roads, footpaths, bridges and township streets is a core element of the various services which Council provides to the community, and when combined with an annual road maintenance budget of nearly \$5 million, also represents approximately 30% of Council's total operating budget.

Examples of key infrastructure renewal projects completed throughout the financial year included re-sheeting of over 25km of local gravel roads, continuation of road safety improvements and upgrades along the Bridgewater Raywood Road, Pyramid Yarraberb Road and Borung Hurstwood Road, sealing of two township streets, drainage improvements along Nardoo Creek in Wedderburn and 30km of resealing across the Shire.

Commencement of the new livestock domestic pound

Significant progress has been made towards the relocation of Council's livestock and domestic pound facilities to a new site located on Wedderburn Junction Road. Following the purchase of the 13 ha block in 2013, steady progress has been made towards delivery of phase 1 of the project, costing nearly \$50,000 and involving the reconfiguration and development of the site to accommodate impounding of livestock.

Perimeter and internal fencing upgrades are now approaching completion and provide a number of holding pens for various classes of livestock. This has been complemented by installation of water supply infrastructure, stock yards, loading ramp and crush to allow the safe and efficient transport and handling of impounded animals.

Phase 2 of the project will see the relocation of the domestic pound facilities from the Council Operations Centre to the new site during 2015/16 and will include construction of further shedding, treatment rooms, office and animal holding pens.

DESCRIPTION OF OPERATIONS CONT.

Major upgrade to Sloans Park Inglewood playground

Council completed the upgrade of the major playground facility within the township of Inglewood. The \$85,000 redevelopment of the Sloans Park playground facility included installation of new play equipment, establishment of walking tracks, extensive landscaping and safety upgrades through topping up and expansion of soft fall areas.

Funding for the project was provided via a \$30,000 grant from Sport and Recreation Victoria combined with a further \$55,000 from Council's Community Planning Program and local contributions. The new playground facility is a significant improvement on the previous equipment offered, and now provides a broad range of play equipment and interactive activity areas for local children.

Upgrade of the Wedderburn netball court

More than \$90,000 was spent on the replacement and construction of a new netball court at Donaldson Park Wedderburn. Loddon Shire has been working to ensure all netball courts are in line with current safety standards.

The project, identified within Council's Recreation Strategy, has seen the construction of a new concrete playing surface with plexipave coating, along with ancillary lighting, fencing and shelter improvements.

Solar panels on the Wedderburn office

Energy costs associated with operating Council's municipal office are set to reduce significantly following the installation of a 30KW solar panel array on the Wedderburn office roof. The project saw the installation of 120 solar panels covering a roof area of approximately 590m².

The project was funded through the Victoria Adaptation and Sustainability Partnership, the \$40,000 investment in renewable energy technology is expected to generate around 44,000KWh per annum, translating into a \$7000 saving for Council (20% of annual electricity charges for building) as well as a reduction of 52 tonnes of CO₂ emissions (or 32%).

Shade structures and water features at Loddon's five swimming pools

In November 2014, Loddon Shire installed nine new shade structures between the five public swimming pools located throughout the municipality, along with installation of new water features in three toddler pools.

In addition, three water play features were also installed at Inglewood, Mitiamo and Pyramid Hill, contributing to improved facility amenity and water circulation.

The project, worth nearly \$190,000, was funded via a \$132,000 contribution from Sport and Recreation Victoria and \$58,000 from Council's pool development budget.

The completion of this project has made a significant contribution to improved amenity and safety of our local pools, with the cantilever design of the structures also providing an interesting architectural feature and conversation point.

Major changes

In 2014/15 Council undertook a restructure of its outdoor staff workforce. This restructure has provided:

- stronger supervision and support to our outdoor workforce
- increased, improved and more appropriate plant
- improved workflows
- the introduction of technology aimed at streamlining the work ordering and reporting system.

Major achievements

- The Wedderburn Streetscape Project design was finalised and the project has been fully funded for stages 2 and 3
- the Bridgewater Public Caravan Park construction was completed and the caravan park was opened
- Council completed 100% of the Capital Works Program assigned to the works department
- the Wedderburn Community Centre was completed and opened
- Council developed a Business Continuity Policy Framework and Plan and the plan was implemented
- a New Risk Management Framework was developed and implemented
- the Korong Vale Wastewater Disposal System was completed
- the audit of high-risk septic tanks project was completed
- Council revised and adopted a new Economic Development Strategy.

OUR COUNCIL

SHIRE PROFILE

Our Shire

Loddon Shire is located in Central Victoria, about 175 kilometres north-west of Melbourne. It is bounded by the Gannawarra Shire in the north, the Shire of Campaspe and the City of Greater Bendigo in the east, Mount Alexander and Central Goldfields shires in the south and Northern Grampians and Buloke Shires in the west.

Loddon Shire is a predominantly rural area, with many small towns and communities. The largest towns are Boort, Bridgewater on Loddon, Inglewood, Pyramid Hill and Wedderburn.

The shire encompasses a total land area of about 6700 square kilometres. Land is used mainly for agriculture and horticulture, particularly grain, sheep, wool, beef cattle, dairy, pigs and poultry. In recent years, there has also been an increase in viticulture, olives and fodder crops.

Major features of the shire include the Loddon River, Terrick Terrick National Park, Leaghur State Park, Kooyoora State Park, Lake Boort, Major Mitchell Trail, Mount Korong, Melville Caves, Laanecoorie Reservoir and various wineries.

Major highways passing through the shire include the Calder Highway, the Loddon Valley Highway and the Wimmera Highway.



Our people

Population

The estimated resident population (from the Australian Bureau of Statistics) for 2015 in Loddon Shire was 7365 and the number of private dwellings, according to the 2011 Census, was 4135.

The Census concluded that the overall median age of people in the shire was 50 years, the median weekly household income was \$686 and the median weekly rent \$100.

The proportion of rented households in 2011 was 16% and those with a mortgage 23%. Overall, 52% of the population owned their dwelling.

Census population figures for our bigger towns in 2011 were given as follows: Boort (760), Inglewood (711), Wedderburn (680), Pyramid Hill (419) and Bridgewater on Loddon (363).

Population was spread across the following age groups:

Children and young people, 0 to 17 years	21%
Adults, 18 to 69 years	62%
Mature adults and seniors, 69+ years	17%

During the year, Council recorded 70 births in the shire (71 in 2013/14).

Origin

The top five ancestries claimed by residents of the Loddon Shire during the 2011 Census were Australian (44%), English (41%), Scottish (13%), Irish (11%) and German (3%).

Overall, 86% of residents were born in Australia and 93% speak only English at home.

SHIRE PROFILE CONT.

Education

Overall, 32% of the population held educational qualifications, while 55% had no qualifications.

Employment

The 2011 Census data showed that 2932 residents of Loddon Shire were employed.

Of that total, 37% of workers were involved in agriculture, forestry and fishing, 10% in health care and social assistance, 7% in retail trade, 7% in manufacturing, 5% in construction, and 5% in public administration and safety.

In 2011, the car was the principal method by which people travelled to work. In total, 55% used a private vehicle, 20% worked at home and 8% always walked to work.

Volunteers

Loddon Shire has a strong sense of self-reliance and community spirit, and this is reflected in the rate of volunteerism experienced. The 2011 Census showed a rate of 34% of the population volunteering – and many of those volunteers held roles in a number of community organisations.

This figure compared with a total of 23% in regional Victoria generally.

In addition, 13% of our people provided unpaid care for others.

COUNCIL OFFICES

Municipal offices

Wedderburn

41 High Street, Wedderburn, 3518

Local Call: 1300 365 200

Phone: (03) 5494 1200

Fax: (03) 5494 3003

Serpentine

37 Peppercorn Way, Serpentine, 3517

Phone: (03) 5437 7999

Fax: (03) 5437 8407

If you are deaf, or have a hearing impairment or speech impairment, contact us through the National Relay Service

- TTY users phone 133 677 then ask for (03) 5494 1200
- Speak and Listen users phone 1300 555 727, then ask for (03) 5494 1200
- Internet relay users connect to the NRS, then ask for (03) 5494 1200

Office hours: 8.15am to 4.45pm

Monday to Friday (except public holidays)

Website: www.loddon.vic.gov.au

Email: loddon@loddon.vic.gov.au



COUNCIL OFFICES CONT.

Municipal library

North Central Goldfields Regional Library Corporation

HQ 259 Hargreaves Street,
Bendigo, 3550

PO Box 887, Bendigo, 3552

Telephone: (03) 5449 2790

Email: mobile@ncgrl.vic.gov.au

Web: www.ncgrl.vic.gov.au/libraries/mobile

Mobile Library timetable

Monday

Dingee 9.45am - 10.15am
Mitiamo 10.30am - 11.15am

Tuesday

Bridgewater 9.00am - 10.00am
Inglewood 10.30am - 12.30pm
Wedderburn 2.00pm - 4.30pm

Wednesday

Korong Vale 9.30am - 10.30am
Boort 11.00am - 1.00pm

Thursday

Newbridge 9.00am - 9.30am
Tarnagulla 10.00am - 10.30am
Moliagul 11.00am - 11.30am

Maternal and child health centres

* All Centres phone: 5437 7999

Boort Maternal and Child Health Centre

King Street, Boort, 3537

Mobile: 0409 166 891

• Thursday 9.00am - 4.30pm

Dingee Maternal and Child Health Centre

Bush Nurse Centre, King Street,
Dingee, 3571

Mobile: 0409 166 891

• Monday, weeks 1 and 3
8.30am - 5.00pm

Inglewood Maternal and Child Health Centre

75 Grant Street, Inglewood, 3517

Mobile: 0409 166 891

• Tuesday 8.30am - 5.00pm

Pyramid Hill Maternal and Child Health Centre

Northern District Community Health,
Victoria Street, Pyramid Hill, 3575

Mobile: 0409 166 891

• Monday weeks 2 and 4
9.00am - 4.00pm

Wedderburn Maternal and Child Health Centre

Wedderburn Community Centre,
24 Wilson Street, Wedderburn, 3518

Mobile: 0409 166 891

• Wednesday, weeks 2 and 4
9.00am - 3.30pm

Kindergartens

* All pre-school hours are from
8.45am - 1.45pm

Boort Preschool

123 - 127 Godfrey Street, Boort, 3537

Telephone: (03) 5455 2292

• Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday
• Three-year-old group
Wednesday 9.00am - 11.30am

Dingee Preschool

785 Dingee Road, Dingee, 3571

Telephone: (03) 5436 8401

• Monday, Wednesday and Thursday
• Three-year-old group
Tuesday 10.00am - 12.30pm

Inglewood Kindergarten

75a Grant Street, Inglewood, 3517

Telephone: (03) 5438 3533

• Tuesday, Thursday and Friday

Pyramid Hill Preschool

67 Kelly Street,
Pyramid Hill, 3575

Telephone: (03) 5455 7230

• Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday
• Three-year-old group
Tuesday 8.45am - 1.45pm

Wedderburn Kindergarten

77 Ridge Street, Wedderburn, 3518

Telephone: (03) 5494 3183

• Wednesday, Thursday and Friday
• Three-year-old group
Wednesday 8.45am - 11.45am
(Terms 3 and 4)

Municipal tips

Boort Landfill

off Boort-Quambatook Road

• Tuesday 8.00am - noon
• Sunday 1.00pm - 5.00pm

Dingee Transfer Station

Lawry's Road

1 April – 30 September

• Third Sunday 10.00am - 2.00pm

1 October – 31 March

• First Wednesday 8.00am - noon
• Third Sunday 10.00am - 2.00pm

Inglewood Landfill

off Inglewood-Salisbury Road

• Wednesday 8.00am - noon
• Saturday 8.00am - noon

Newbridge Landfill

off Newbridge-Tarnagulla Road

• Wednesday 1.00pm - 5.00pm
• Sunday 1.00pm - 5.00pm

Pyramid Hill Landfill

off Cemetery Road

• Tuesday 1.00pm - 5.00pm
• Sunday 8.00am - noon

Wedderburn Transfer Station

off Godfrey Street

• Thursday 8.00am - noon
• Sunday 8.00am - noon

COUNCILLORS

Cr Neil Beattie



Boort Ward

First elected: 2005

Re-elected: 2008 and 2012

Cr Beattie lives at Catumnal, west of Boort, running a dryland and irrigation farm along with a trucking operation.

Cr Beattie is Chairman of Little Lake Boort Management Committee, an active member of the Boort Football Club, Life Member of the North Central Football League, member of the Boort Aerodrome Committee of Management and Boort Memorial Hall Committee of Management.

He is a member of the Murray Darling Association, Rail Freight Alliance, Recreation Strategy Implementation Steering Committee and Boort Park redevelopment group and inaugural Chairman of the Boort Cereal Growers Co-operative.

Cr Colleen Condliffe



Inglewood Ward

Served three previous terms on Council from 2000 to 2008

Re-elected: 2012

Cr Condliffe grew up on the family farm at Salisbury West and was educated in Bendigo.

Her community involvements have included the Breakfast in Schools Program, Country Women's Association and Victorian Farmers Federation.

She has completed the Loddon Murray Leadership Program and was the first woman elected to Loddon Shire Council.

Cr Condliffe formed the Landcare group at Salisbury West and organised the 1997 Women on Farms gathering at Bendigo. She was a regional winner of the ABC Rural Woman of the Year award that same year.

Cr Condliffe is currently involved with the sports centre in Inglewood, Bridgewater on Loddon Development Committee, Women's Health in Bendigo and rural financial counselling and is Secretary of the Inglewood Town Hall Committee, a board member of Inglewood and District Community Bank and Vice-Chair of the Inglewood Community Resource Centre.



She is Chair of the Kooyoora Women's Network and a member of the transition advisory committee of the Dingee Bush Nursing Centre.

Cr Geoff Curnow



Tarnagulla Ward

First elected: 2008

Re-elected: 2012

Mayor: 2011-2013

Cr Geoff Curnow lives at Laanecoore and has a background in agricultural production. Cr Curnow and his wife, Merna, are the third generation to farm their property, producing a variety of grain crops and prime lambs.

Cr Curnow's present community involvement includes roles as Secretary of Laanecoore Mechanics Institute Hall Reserve Committee, Chairman of the Laanecoore Loddon River Recreation Reserve Committee of Management, member of Laanecoore Branch of the Victorian Farmers Federation, West Marong Landcare Group and Woodstock West CFA and board member of the Loddon Mallee Waste Resource Recovery Group.

COUNCILLORS CONT.

Cr Gavan Holt



Wedderburn Ward

First elected: 2003**Re-elected: 2005, 2008 and 2012****Mayor: 2005-2007, 2009-2011 and 2013-2015**

Cr Holt was born and raised in Wedderburn, where the Holt family has a history of involvement in local government.

Having completed a Commerce degree from the University of Melbourne, for 10 years he taught at various secondary schools across Victoria.

Cr Holt then returned to Wedderburn and is now a businessman with interests in farming, investment and hotels.

Cr Holt's present community involvement includes the Wedderburn Development Association Community Planning Group, Wedderburn and District Harness Racing Club, Donaldson Park Committee of Management, Wedderburn Community Centre Committee of Management and Wedderburn Football Club.

He is also involved with the Wedderburn and District Community Bank Steering Committee, Wedderburn Mechanics and Literary Institute Hall Committee of Management and the Wedderburn Engine Park Committee of Management.

Cr Holt was Chair of the Shire's ANZAC Centenary Organising Committee, Council delegate to the Municipal Association of Victoria, MAV Rural North Central Region councillor member of the Rural Councils Victoria Executive Committee, which represents 38 rural councils and where

he is currently Deputy Chairman and a member of the MAV Planning Sub-committee.

He is also Council's representative on its audit committee and on the Murray River Group of Councils.

Cr Cheryl McKinnon



Terrick Ward

First elected: 2012

Cr McKinnon, with her husband, Glenn, operates an irrigation and dryland farming operation based in Pyramid Hill and Terrick Terrick East, comprising beef and lamb production and cropping.

Cr McKinnon has been involved in community work in Pyramid Hill for many years. She was a member of the founding committee of the Pyramid Hill Neighbourhood House and worked in education, supporting students with disabilities.

Cr McKinnon's current community involvements include the Pyramid Hill Neighbourhood House, Pyramid Hill Historical Society, Pyramid Hill Progress Association, Community Leadership Loddon Murray, Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance and North Central LLEN. Cr McKinnon is Chair of the Loddon Shire Nature Tourism Advisory Committee and has a seat on the board of the Goldfields Regional Library Corporation.

She serves on the committees of the Dingee Progress Association, East Loddon Community Centre, Mitiamo Municipal Recreation Reserve, Pyramid Hill Memorial Hall, Pyramid Hill Swimming Pool and Serpentine Bowls and Tennis Pavilion and Reserve.



Loddon Shire Councillors
Geoff Curnow, Cheryl
McKinnon, Mayor Gavan
Holt, Colleen Condliffe and
Neil Beattie.

Councillor representation on committees

Councillors provided representation on the following committees:

Cr Neil Beattie

- Murray Darling Association
- Municipal Association of Victoria (substitute)
- Rail Freight Alliance
- Recreation Strategy Implementation Steering Committee

Section 86 Committees of Management

- Boort Aerodrome Committee of Management
- Boort Business and Tourism Council Committee of Management
- Boort Development Committee of Management
- Boort Memorial Hall Committee of Management
- Boort Park Committee of Management
- Korong Vale Mechanics Hall Committee of Management
- Korong Vale Sports Centre Committee of Management
- Little Lake Boort Committee of Management
- Yando Public Hall Committee of Management

Cr Colleen Condliffe

- Australia Day Committee
- Calder Highway Improvement Committee
- Loddon Healthy Minds Network
- Loddon Youth Committee

Section 86 Committees of Management

- Bridgewater Memorial Hall Committee of Management
- Bridgewater on Loddon Development Committee of Management
- Campbells Forest Hall Committee of Management
- Inglewood Community Sports Centre Committee of Management
- Inglewood Lions Community Elderly Persons Units Committee of Management
- Inglewood Riding Club Committee of Management
- Inglewood Town Hall Committee of Management
- Jones Eucalyptus Distillery Site Committee of Management

Cr Geoff Curnow

- Calder Highway Improvement Committee (substitute)
- Loddon Mallee Waste Resource Recovery Group
- Municipal Emergency Management Plan Committee
- Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee

Section 86 Committees of Management

- Kingower Development and Tourism Committee of Management

Cr Gavan Holt

- ANZAC Centenary Organising Committee
- Audit Committee
- Municipal Association of Victoria
- Rural Councils Victoria

Section 86 Committees of Management

- Donaldson Park Committee of Management
- Wedderburn Community Centre Committee of Management
- Wedderburn Engine Park Committee of Management
- Wedderburn Mechanics and Literary Institute Hall Committee of Management
- Wedderburn Tourism Committee of Management

Cr Cheryl McKinnon

- Nature Tourism Advisory Team
- North Central Goldfields Regional Library
- Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance

Section 86 Committees of Management

- Dingee Progress Association Committee of Management
- East Loddon Community Centre Committee of Management
- Mitiamo Municipal Recreation Reserve Committee of Management
- Pyramid Hill Memorial Hall Committee of Management
- Pyramid Hill Swimming Pool Committee of Management
- Serpentine Bowls and Tennis Pavilion Reserve Committee of Management

ORGANISATION STRUCTURE

Management Executive Group

The Management Executive Group is made up of the Chief Executive Officer and the four directors. The group meets on at least a weekly basis to discuss matters that relate to the effective and efficient operation of the entire organisation.

Chief Executive Officer

John McLinden

John McLinden was appointed Shire Engineer of the former Shire of East Loddon in 1993, having previously held engineering positions at the Shire of Rosedale, City of Broadmeadows and Shire of Colac.

After local government amalgamations in 1995, John served as Director Technical Services and, later, Director Operations for Loddon Shire before taking up the post of Chief Executive Officer in December 2005.

John has extensive experience in local government, with a particular focus on managing the growth of rural communities through challenging economic and climatic conditions.

He has a Bachelor of Civil Engineering degree, a Graduate Diploma in Municipal Engineering and Management and a Masters of Business Administration.

As Chief Executive Officer, John's role includes prescribed duties in accordance with the Local Government Act 1989, providing leadership to the Council, strategic planning, promoting external relationships and managing Council operations.

Director Corporate Services

Jude Holt

Jude Holt was appointed Director Corporate Services in October 2007 after serving as Manager Financial Services for the Shire since local government amalgamations in 1995.

Before this, Jude held administrative positions with the former Shire of Korong and in private enterprise and was a trainee accountant in public practice for a number of years.

She has extensive experience in local government, with a particular emphasis on financial management and administration. Jude has a Bachelor of Business degree



Loddon Shire Council Management Executive Group – L-R: Ian McLauchlan, Jude Holt, Bryan McEwan, Wendy Gladman and John McLinden.

majoring in accounting, is a graduate of the Company Directors' Course, and has a Graduate Diploma in Applied Corporate Governance from the Governance Institute of Australia.

As Director Corporate Services, Jude's role includes business improvement, internal audit, financial management, human resource management, occupational health and safety, risk management, records management, information technology, records management, valuations and rating, and customer service.

Director Economy and Community

Bryan McEwan

After a restructure of Council's operations, Bryan McEwan was appointed Director Economy and Community in February 2008.

Prior to this, Bryan worked as Industry Investment Manager with the Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development (Regional Development Victoria).

He has also held management and technical positions in the chemical and food processing industries and worked with the former Soil Conservation Authority.

Bryan has a mix of experience in both private and public sectors, with a particular focus on regional economic development, quality management and manufacturing. Bryan has a Bachelor of Science degree, with associated qualifications in Business and Environmental Management.

As Director Economy and Community, Bryan has a direct role in economic development in the shire, as well as promoting tourism and community planning.

Director Operations

Ian McLauchlan

Ian was appointed Director Operations in March 2011 and has been with Loddon Shire since January 2008, originally serving as Manager of Infrastructure Program Development.

Before starting work with Loddon Shire, Ian held a number of engineering positions in both local government and private enterprise, as well as serving as an officer in the Royal Australian Air Force.

Ian has more than 15 years' experience in the areas of asset management, project management, contract administration, infrastructure maintenance, policy and

strategy development, civil construction and waste management.

He has a degree in Environmental Engineering, majoring in land and water management, and has also completed post-graduate studies in project management, contract administration, waste and wastewater treatment and communications.

As Director Operations, Ian is responsible for the management and ongoing delivery of a wide range of Council services, including infrastructure policy and program development, works and maintenance, strategic and statutory planning, statutory building control, environmental and public health, local laws policy and compliance, contract management, climate change adaptation, recreation services, grant scheme administration, engineering, public buildings and youth services.

Director Community Wellbeing

Wendy Gladman

Wendy Gladman has been employed with Loddon Shire for 19 years in the community services sector.

She took up the role of Manager Community Services in January 2010 and became Acting Director Community Wellbeing in August 2012.

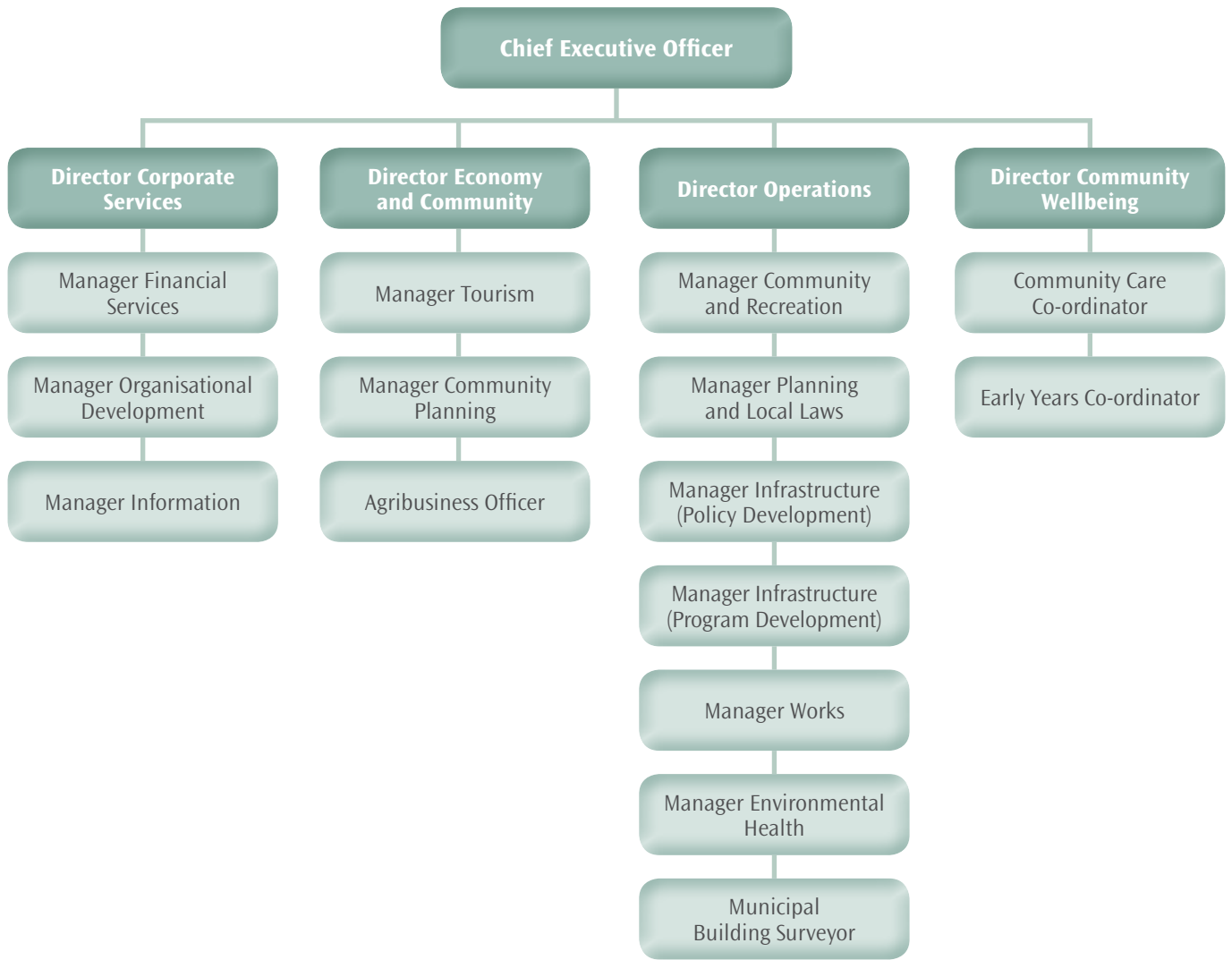
Wendy's subsequent appointment as Director Community Wellbeing was confirmed in May 2013 and she assumed the post officially on 1 July 2013.

She has a Diploma Business Management and a Diploma Community Services Management.

Wendy oversees the management of the maternal and child health and immunisation programs, the Loddon Kindergartens Cluster, aged and disability services, the Home and Community Care (HACC) program, the Packaged Care program, Municipal Emergency Recovery and the Loddon Healthy Minds Network.

ORGANISATION STRUCTURE CONT.

Organisation chart



Loddon Shire staff.

Management team

Corporate Services Directorate



Acting Manager Financial Services, Duncan Campbell

Duncan Campbell commenced with Council in 1996 after a career in the mining industry working throughout Australia and internationally. Duncan has held various positions in the accounts department at Loddon Shire. Since December 2014, Duncan has been appointed as Acting Manager Financial Services.

Duncan's role involves overseeing the preparation of the budget, financial statements, monthly financial reports and rates, reporting to government departments, payment of suppliers and customer service.



Manager Organisational Development, Carol Canfield

Carol Canfield commenced with Council in September 2007 after a long career with the City of Greater Bendigo and Shire of East Loddon. Carol has held positions in payroll, risk management, various administration roles and as Assistant Shire Secretary.

Carol's role includes payroll, human resource management, risk management, staff training, occupational health and safety, staff health and wellbeing and insurance. She was instrumental in managing the passage of Council's latest Enterprise Bargaining Agreement.



Manager Information, Leigh Jardine

Leigh Jardine joined Council in April 2014 as Manager Information. Prior to this, Leigh worked in the public health system and private industry in various IT roles.

Leigh's role includes management of information technology services, records and information services within Council, as well as providing IT support and expert guidance for Council's future IT strategy.

Economy and Community Directorate



Manager Community Planning, Tim Jenkyn

Tim Jenkyn commenced with Council in 2006 as Drought and Environment Officer. He has worked on various community projects with diverse sections of the community, as a private contractor, and for a range of regional authorities. This has been across many industries, including horticulture and forestry, landscaping and construction, on heritage projects, and in education, youth, indigenous and disability services.

Early in 2008, Tim was appointed Manager Community Planning. The role involves community engagement, project development and delivery, working on local and regional initiatives, and managing Loddon's Community Planning program.



Manager Tourism, Robyn Vella

Robyn Vella started work with Council in 2000 assisting the Tourism Manager on a part-time basis.

In 2003, she went full-time as a tourism co-ordinator specialising in coach tours before rising to the role of Manager Tourism.

Robyn's aim is to promote Loddon as a great place to visit, to enhance economic activity by encouraging visitors to stay and spend locally, to build local pride in our communities and to create a healthy and diverse tourism industry.

Operations Directorate



Manager Community and Recreation, Allan Stobaus

Allan Stobaus was appointed as Loddon's Manager of Community and Recreation in September 2001 following five years in a similar role at Bruce Rock Shire in Western Australia.

Allan is responsible for the management of Council's grant schemes and swimming pools, strategic planning for community facilities, project management of capital works projects and youth development.

ORGANISATION STRUCTURE CONT.



Manager Environmental Health, Teresa Arnup

Teresa Arnup commenced with Council in November 2008. She has more than 20 years' experience as an Environmental Health Officer.

Teresa's role in Council includes monitoring of premises under the Food Act, Public Health and Wellbeing Act, Tobacco Act and Residential Tenancies Act. Teresa also manages the diabetic syringe program and the issuing of septic tank permits under the Environment Protection Act.



Manager Infrastructure Policy Development, Terry Watson

Terry Watson was appointed as Manager Infrastructure (formerly known as Manager Assets) after local government amalgamations in 1995. He was previously employed by the Shire of East Loddon and Shire of Bet Bet as Assistant Shire Engineer.

Terry has a Diploma of Civil Engineering and, in his current role, is responsible for developing and maintaining policies, procedures and strategies for the provision of all infrastructure assets of the Council and developing management plans and registers for Council's assets.



Manager Infrastructure Program Development, David Fry

David Fry commenced with Council in March 1991 as Superintendent of Works, after more than 10 years' experience working with earthmoving and civil contractors in Melbourne. In 1998,

David was appointed to the role of Manager Works.

In 2011, David was appointed as Manager Infrastructure Program Development. This role involves the development of Council's annual infrastructure works program, Council's Waste Management Program, Building Management and Maintenance Program, engineering survey and design as well as the management of all infrastructure assets including roads, bridges and drainage.



Manager Works, Steven Phillips

Steven Phillips joined Loddon Shire in 2009 as the Assistant Works Manager following seven years with the Department of Sustainability and Environment, where he worked in forestry and fire management.

In 2011, Steven was appointed to the position of Manager Works, where he is primarily responsible for Council's maintenance and construction activities on roads, streets, bridges, footpaths and parks and gardens. This role also includes responsibilities for Council's vehicle and fleet management and VicRoads' maintenance contracts. He also acts as the Municipal Emergency Resources Officer during an emergency.



Manager Planning and Local Laws, Tyson Sutton

Tyson Sutton joined Council in November 2007 after working in strategic and statutory planning roles with local government and private industry.

Tyson manages the town planning and local laws responsibilities of Council, including development assessment, land use strategies, enforcement of the planning scheme, enforcement and administration of local laws and animal management.



Municipal Building Surveyor, David Turner

David Turner has worked with Council since June 2005. His experience includes more than 20 years in local government building control and over 15 years on building sites.

David's role in Council includes issuing building permits and administering the provisions of the Building Act 1993 and the Building Regulations 2006, resolving issues with works conducted without Council approvals and resolving lapsed or expired building permits.

COUNCIL STAFF

Our staff

Vale Pete Smith



It was a sad day for everyone on 12 February 2015 with news of the passing of Pete Smith.

Pete was a valued employee of Loddon Shire Council (and the former Shire of Bet Bet) for 27 years, and was highly regarded by his colleagues,

particularly his team at the Newbridge depot where he held the position of Team Leader.

Our Annual Report author moves on

Colin Taylor, the author of Council's Annual Report for a number of years, moved on to other challenges during the year, but not without finishing the 2013/14 document.



Colin Taylor holds the 2013/14 Annual Report.

John "Fozzie" Forster retires

John Forster, Team Leader of the Pyramid Hill depot, retired in April after serving the Loddon Shire and the former Shire of Gordon for 41 years.



John Forster, Terry Watson, and Lyn Don at "Fozzie's" send off.

Staff analysis

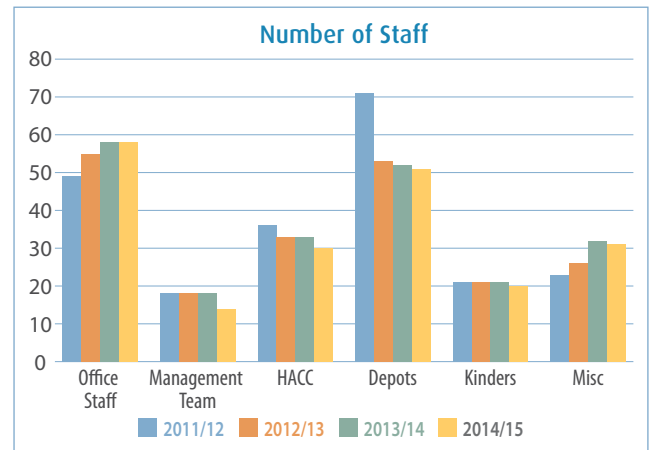
Number

Council has 204 staff in total, with an effective full-time equivalent of 129.

Most of our staff work from depots, in the offices or as home carers.

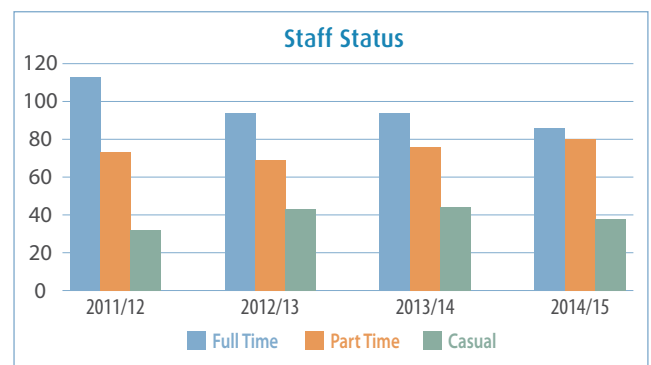
Other areas where Council employs staff are in the management team, pre-schools, recycling stations, school crossings and in maternal and child health centres.

The number of staff has dropped from 214 to 204 this year. This is predominantly due the completion of fixed term appointments.



Status

Council has 86 full-time, 80 part-time and 38 casual employees.



COUNCIL STAFF CONT.

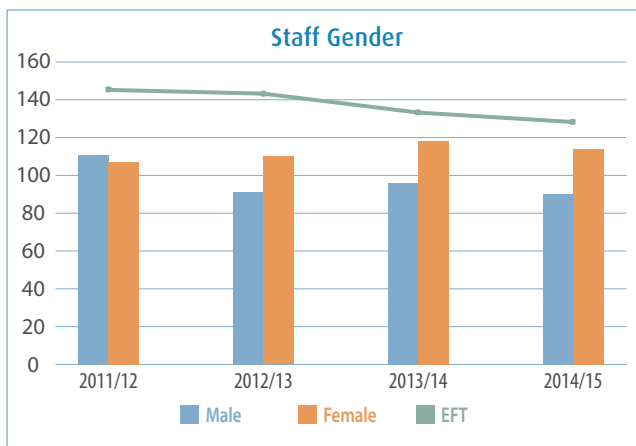
Gender

Of total staff numbers, 44% are male and 56% female.

There is a larger percentage of female staff due to positions such as home care, pre-school and administration areas being filled predominantly with female staff.

Council has five depots, all male. Pre-schools are all-female staff. Other worksites have a mix of female and male staff.

Home care and office staff have a greater prevalence of females, while the management team has a greater prevalence of males.

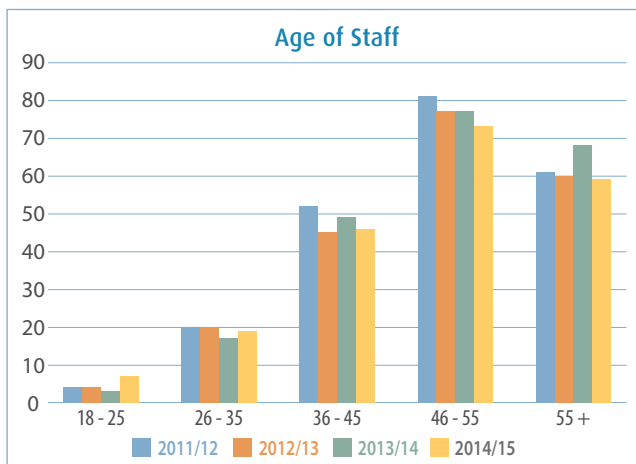


Age

Council's age demographic continues to show a strong representation of staff over 35 years of age.

This will provide challenges for workforce planning in the future, particularly due to the high number of staff in the 55+ age bracket.

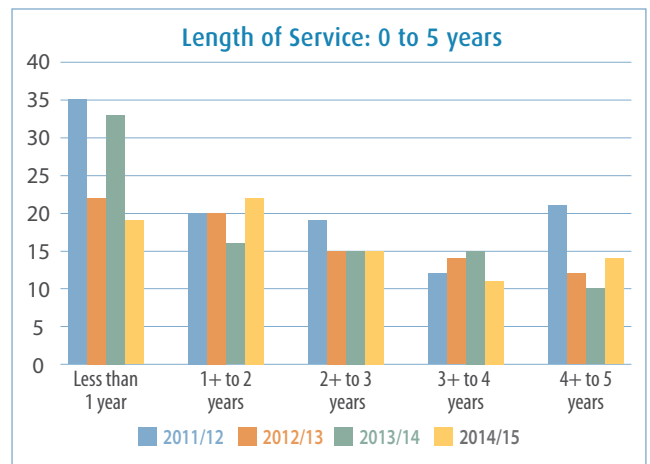
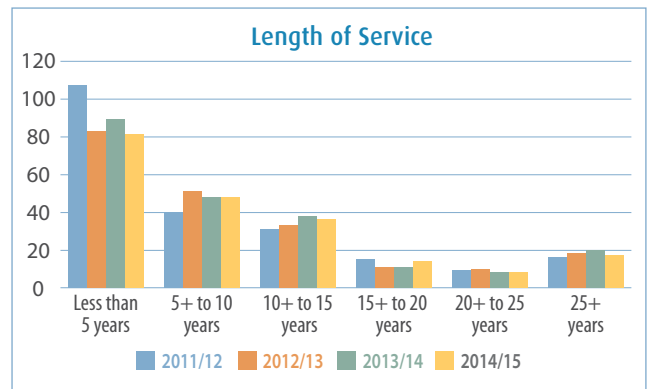
The number of staff in the over 46 bracket remains consistent with the figures reported last year.



Length of service

Some 40% of staff have been employed for less than five years, 41% of staff have been employed for five to 15 years, with the remaining 19% of staff being employed for over 15 years.

Of those employed less than five years, 50% have been employed for less than two years and 50% between two and five years.

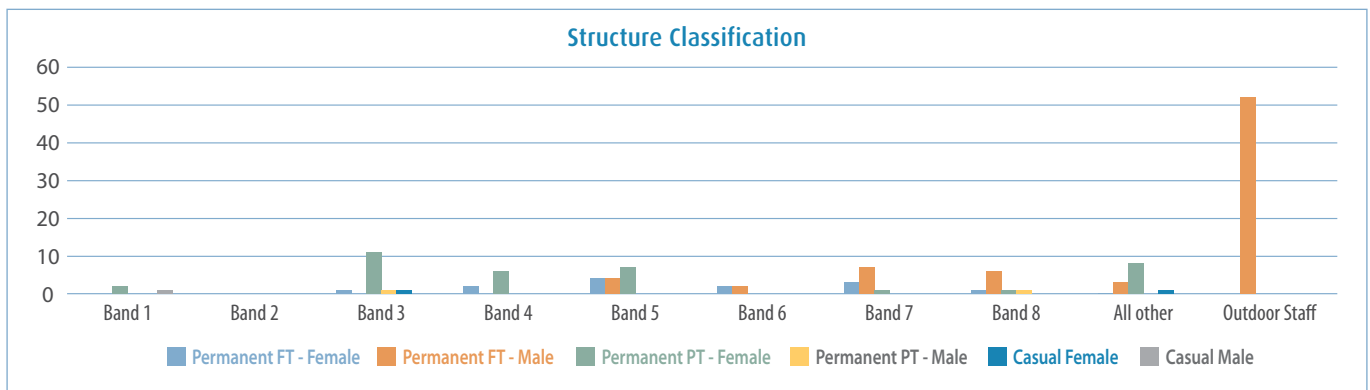


Council staff

Structure classification - employee type

Employment classifications Band 1 to 8 are as per the Victorian Local Government Award 2001. "Outdoor staff" come under a new classification structure agreed to and included in the Loddon Shire Enterprise Agreement No. 7, 2014. "All other" staff include the CEO, directors, preschool staff and maternal and child health nurses.

Structure classification	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	Band 5	Band 6	Band 7	Band 8	All other	Outdoor Staff	Total
Permanent FT - Female	0	0	1	2	4	2	3	1	1	0	14
Permanent FT - Male	0	0	0	0	4	2	7	6	3	52	74
Permanent PT - Female	2	0	11	6	7	0	1	1	8	0	36
Permanent PT - Male	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
Casual Female	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
Casual Male	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
TOTAL	3	0	14	8	15	4	11	9	13	52	129

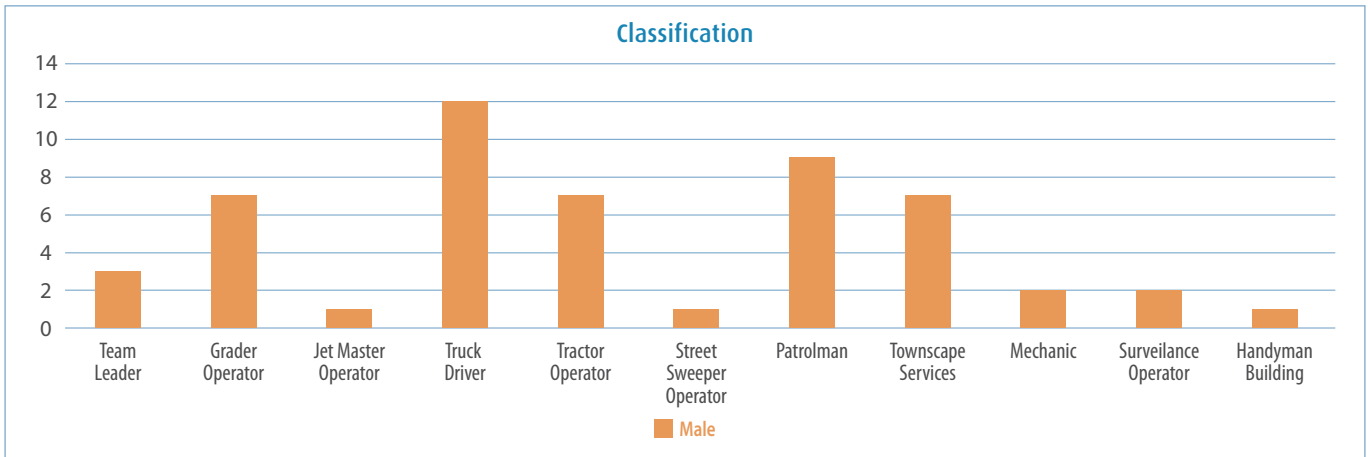


Structure classification - outdoor staff

The Loddon Shire Enterprise Agreement No 7, 2011 includes a new classification structure for the outdoor workforce. Under the new structure all entitled allowances are rolled into the hourly rate, and the structure provides a clear recognition of responsibility.

	Female	Male	Total
Team Leader	0	3	3
Grader Operator	0	7	7
Jet Master Operator	0	1	1
Truck Driver	0	12	12
Tractor Operator	0	7	7
Street Sweeper Operator	0	1	1
Patrolman	0	9	9
Townscape Services	0	7	7
Mechanic	0	2	2
Surveillance Officer	0	2	2
Handyman Building Maintenance	0	1	1
	0	52	52

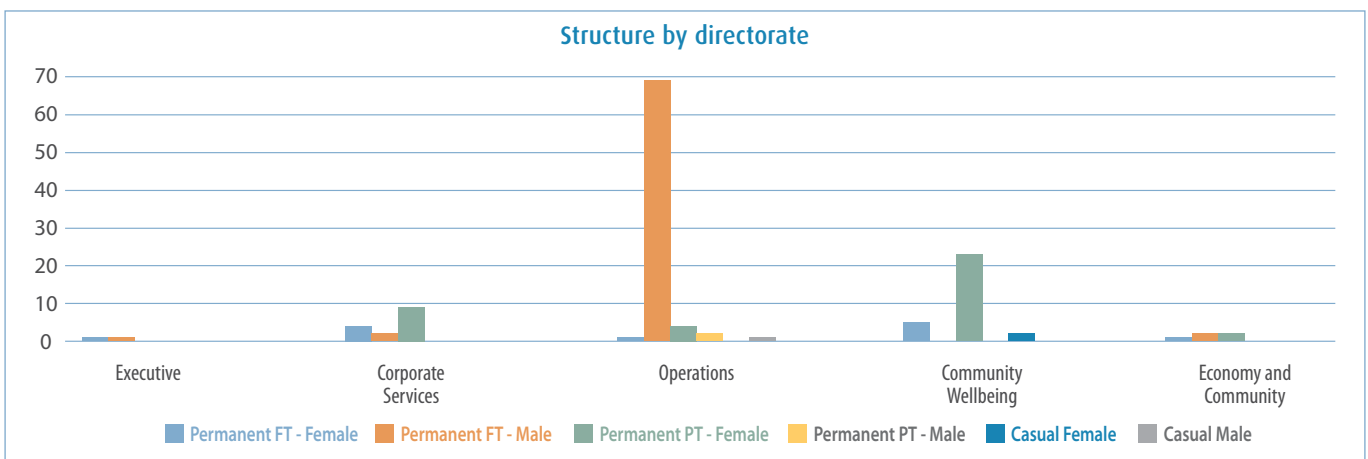
COUNCIL STAFF CONT.



Directorate – employee type/gender

A summary of the number of full time (equivalent FTE) council staff by organisational structure, employment type and gender is set out below.

Employee type/gender	Executive	Corporate Services	Operations	Community Wellbeing	Economy and Community	Total FTE
Permanent FT - Female	1	4	1	5	1	12
Permanent FT - Male	1	2	69	0	2	74
Permanent PT - Female	0	9	4	23	2	38
Permanent PT - Male	0	0	2	0	0	2
Casual - Female	0	0	0	2	0	2
Casual - Male	0	0	1	0	0	1
Total	2	15	77	30	5	129



STAFF RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Staff health and wellbeing

Council is committed to looking after the health and wellbeing of all staff, although it is recognised that Council cannot address any staff member's individual health and wellbeing needs without the co-operation of that person.

Council provides a healthy workplace by:

- developing, in consultation with staff, workplace-specific programs to address lifestyle, health, fitness and safety issues
- encouraging staff wellness and proactively managing risk of illness
- encouraging staff to take periodic annual leave (where relevant) to maintain a positive balance between work life, family and friends
- actively promoting exercise, healthy eating and a smoke-free environment to improve or maintain staff members' personal wellbeing
- providing confidential assistance and counselling services that benefit all staff
- providing targeted health and wellbeing programs.

Programs offered to all staff in 2014/15 included:

- WorkSafe health assessments – 18 employees
- flu vaccinations – 69 employees
- Premiers Active April Challenge – 32 staff and family members (completed 652.4 hours of activity).

In 2014/15 Council was successful in receiving funding from the Department of Health for an Achievement Program for Workplaces.

The Healthy Together Achievement Program supports a whole of organisation approach to health and wellbeing.

Funding was sought for the following services:

- Quit Program – 1 employee
- Standard Mental Health First Aid Course – 42 employees
- subsidised entry into the Bendigo Fun Run – 24 employees and family members.

Employment Assistance Program

Council offers a free confidential Employee Assistance Program for staff who are experiencing difficulties in their personal or professional lives.

Car pooling

Council has a car pooling program for staff travelling to the Wedderburn office from Bendigo.

Managers are rostered to drive their car on specific days. Staff are picked up from a central point and dropped back to that point at the end of the day.

The latest revision of this policy was approved by the Management Executive Group in May.

Over the course of the year, eight staff members have taken advantage of the program.

Communicating with staff

Staff newsletter

A staff newsletter is distributed with the fortnightly pay slips. The newsletter includes items of interest, job opportunities, coming events and personal milestones of staff.

Intranet

Council has an intranet site that is used to communicate information. Staff located at the Wedderburn and Serpentine offices, Boort, Newbridge, Pyramid Hill and Wedderburn depots, plus some remote workers in the Community Wellbeing Department, have access to the intranet.

All-staff meetings

Council holds an all-staff meeting in March and September. These meetings provide staff with information about current events, enable presentations by external groups, enable training for the whole staff, recognise staff achievements, both personal and professional, and give staff the opportunity to ask questions of the executive.

All-staff Christmas lunch

Each year, Council hosts an all-staff Christmas lunch in the shire. The lunch provides staff with an opportunity for informal interaction with their colleagues, managers and Councillors, and provides Council with the opportunity to thank staff for their efforts throughout the year.

The 2014 lunch was held at the Boort Memorial Hall.

STAFF RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION CONT.

Staff achievements

Staff recognition

The following staff received recognition of excellence at the 2014 Christmas function. The awards in 2014 were linked to the Council values:

- Janine Jackson – Payroll Supervisor/Human Resource Officer for Leadership
- Anne Hassell – Accounts Payable Officer/IT Assistant for Respect and Leadership
- Deanne Caserta – Manager Financial Services for Accountability and Respect
- Vicki Andrew – Service Delivery Team Leader for Leadership and Respect
- Linda Canfield – Planned Activity Group Officer for Leadership and Respect
- Sandra Steel – Loddon Discovery Tours Officer for Integrity and Respect
- Pauline Brown – Loddon Information Centre Officer for Integrity and Respect
- Michele Noble – Customer Service Officer for Leadership
- Sue McGuire – Packaged Care Case Manager for Respect and Accountability
- Kim Fletcher – Packaged Care Case Manager for Respect and Accountability

The following staff received awards for showing leadership in taking on additional loads in representing staff on the following committees:

Enterprise Bargaining Committee

- Terry Thomas
- Ian Hargreaves
- Shaun Smith
- Kerry Hanrahan

- Bill Chalmers
- Cindy McKay
- Jeff Seppings
- Scott Cunningham
- Darren Schultz
- Brian McDonald

Consultative Committee

- Terry Thomas
- David Shay
- Marj Ross
- Deanne Caserta
- Brian McDonald
- Peter Bewley
- Heather Christie
- Alan Jackson
- Jeff Seppings

Occupational Health and Safety Committee

- Peter Bewley
- Peter Ramsdale
- Gary Zanker
- Darren Schultz
- Tanya Leach
- Ross Conway
- Steven Cimesa
- Peter Norman
- Jeff Seppings

Plant Committee

- Craig Williams
- John Forster
- Glenn Wright
- Shayne Morris
- Alan Last
- Shane Maxwell
- Ian Hargreaves
- Brian McDonald

Certificate of Recognition

At the all-staff Christmas lunch held each year, staff who have reached service periods of 10, 20, 30 and 40 years are presented with Certificates of Recognition.

At the December 2014 lunch held at Boort, the following certificates were presented:

20 years of service

- Dale Jackson – Technical Officer Design
- Peter Wallbank – Townscape Serviceman
- Alan Last – Grader Operator

10 years of service

- Janine Jackson – Payroll Supervisor/Human Resource Officer
- Geoffrey Pollock – Ranger
- Michelle Hargreaves – Administration Officer
- Deanne Caserta – Manager Financial Services



Loddon Shire Council staff members participated in mental health training.

Staff representation on committees

Andrews, Vicki

- Loddon Shire Occupational Health and Safety Committee

Bellenger, Tony

- Central Victorian Tracks and Trails Working Group
- Inglewood Reservoir Committee of Management
- Loddon Mallee Sport Assembly (Sports Focus)
- Loddon Shire Recreation Strategy Steering Committee
- Loddon Youth Advisory Council
- Regional Youth Affairs Networks

Bewley, Peter

- Loddon Shire Consultative Committee
- Loddon Shire Occupational Health and Safety Committee

Brown, Shannon

- Australia Day Committee Secretary

Campbell, Duncan

- Loddon Shire Asset Management Working Group
- Loddon Shire Risk Management Committee
- Regional Finance Forum

Canfield, Carol

- Loddon Shire Consultative Committee
- Loddon Shire Disability Access and Inclusion Steering Group
- Loddon Shire Occupational Health and Safety Committee
- Loddon Shire Risk Management Committee
- North Central Local Learning and Employment Network

Caserta, Deanne

- Loddon Shire Asset Management Working Group
- Loddon Shire Consultative Committee
- Loddon Shire Risk Management Committee
- Regional Finance Forum

Cimesa, Steve

- Loddon Shire Occupational Health and Safety Committee

Coombes, Christine

- Loddon Bendigo Rural Women's Network
- Loddon Shire Information Systems Steering Group
- School Councils School Community Reference Group for the North-Central Trade Training Centre

Cunningham, Scott

- Loddon Shire Occupational Health and Safety Committee

Dowling, Cameron

- Loddon Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee

Fry, David

- Loddon Shire Asset Management Working Group
- Loddon Shire Disability Access and Inclusion Steering Group
- Loddon Shire Risk Management Committee

Gibbins, Tony

- Loddon Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee

Gladman, Wendy

- Bendigo Loddon Primary Care Partnership Board
- Early Years Professional Network
- Loddon Aged and Disability Services Network
- Loddon Campaspe Family Violence Advisory Committee
- Loddon Emergency Management Planning Committee
- Loddon Healthy Minds Network
- Loddon Mallee Government Aged and Disability Consortium
- Loddon Shire Consultative Committee
- Loddon Shire Risk Management Committee
- Wedderburn Community Centre Committee of Management
- Youth Area Partnership Steering Committee

Hamilton, Andrew

- Loddon Emergency Management Planning Committee
- Loddon Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee
- Regional Emergency Management Planning Committee
- Regional Emergency Management Team
- Regional Strategic Fire Management Planning Committee



Loddon Shire Council held a hat day to raise funds for mental health.

STAFF RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION CONT.

Hargreaves, Ian

- Loddon Shire Plant Replacement Committee

Hargreaves, Michelle

- Loddon Shire Occupational Health and Safety Committee

Holt, Jude

- Bendigo Loddon Primary Care Partnership - Finance Committee
- Loddon Shire Asset Management Working Group
- Loddon Shire Audit Committee
- Loddon Shire Information Systems Steering Group
- Loddon Shire Risk Management Committee
- Regional Procurement Cluster

Hutton, Brad

- Loddon Shire Occupational Health and Safety Committee

Jackson, Alan

- Loddon Shire Consultative Committee

Jardine, Leigh

- Loddon Shire Information Systems Steering Group
- Loddon Shire Risk Management Committee

Jenkyn, Tim

- Inglewood Town Hall Hub Project Working Group
- Loddon ANZAC Centenary Organising Committee
- Loddon Mallee Community Planners' Network
- Loddon Shire Community Planning Committees
- Loddon Shire Disability Access and Inclusion Steering Group
- Loddon-Buloke L2P Steering Committee
- Transitioning Towns Project, RDA Loddon Mallee

Last, Alan

- Loddon Shire Plant Replacement Committee



Loddon Shire Council's biggest tree competition winner, 'Tubby' Galdman.

Leach, Tanya

- Loddon Shire Occupational Health and Safety Committee

Lloyd, Daniel

- Loddon Emergency Management Planning Committee
- Loddon Shire Occupational Health and Safety Committee
- Loddon Shire Plant Replacement Committee

Lock, Jodie

- Loddon Shire Occupational Health and Safety Committee

Maxwell, Shane

- Loddon Shire Plant Replacement Committee

McEwan, Bryan

- Central Victorian Agribusiness Forum
- Jones Eucalyptus Distillery Site Committee of Management
- Loddon Shire Risk Management Committee
- Northern Poultry Cluster

McLauchlan, Ian

- Bridgewater Flood Study Technical Working Group
- G-MW Connections Project (NVIRP) Agency Liaison Group
- Loddon Shire Asset Management Working Group
- Loddon Shire Disability Access and Inclusion Steering Group
- Loddon Shire Risk Management Committee

McLinden, John

- Loddon ANZAC Centenary Organising Committee
- Loddon Campaspe Councils
- Loddon Mallee Regional Managers Forum
- Loddon Shire Audit Committee
- Loddon Shire Consultative Committee
- Loddon Shire Risk Management Committee
- Murray River Group of Councils
- North Central Goldfields Regional Library Corporation Board
- Rural Councils Victoria Executive

Middleton, Jolie

- Loddon Aged and Disability Services Network
- Loddon Mallee Rural Access and Deaf Access Network
- Loddon Shire Disability Access and Inclusion Steering Group
- Southern Loddon Mallee Regional Communication Service Advisory Committee
- Victorian Local Government Disability Planners Network

Montebello, Bob

- Loddon Shire Occupational Health and Safety Committee

Morris, Shayne

- Loddon Shire Plant Replacement Committee

Norman, Peter

- Loddon Shire Occupational Health and Safety Committee

O'Sullivan, Alycia

- Diabetes in Loddon Action Group
- Early Childhood Agreement for Children in Out of Home Care-Loddon Area
- Early Years Professional Network
- Loddon Shire Disability Access and Inclusion Steering Group
- Loddon Shire Information Systems Steering Group
- Loddon Shire Occupational Health and Safety Committee
- Maternal and Child Health Regional Coordinators' Network
- Regional Immunisation Network
- Wedderburn Community Centre Committee of Management

Phillips, Steve

- Loddon Emergency Management Planning Committee
- Loddon Shire Asset Management Working Group
- Loddon Shire Consultative Committee
- Loddon Shire Information Systems Steering Group
- Loddon Shire Plant Replacement Committee
- Loddon Shire Risk Management Committee

Ramsdale, Peter

- Loddon Shire Occupational Health and Safety Committee

Ross, Marg

- Loddon Shire Consultative Committee
- Loddon Shire Occupational Health and Safety Committee

Schultz, Darren

- Boort Aerodrome Committee of Management
- Loddon Mallee Waste and Recovery Group
- Loddon Shire Occupational Health and Safety Committee

Shay, David

- Loddon Shire Consultative Committee

Stobaus, Allan

- Loddon Mallee Sport Assembly (Sports Focus)
- Loddon Shire Disability Access and Inclusion Steering Group
- Loddon Shire Recreation Strategy Steering Committee
- Loddon Shire Risk Management Committee

Sutton, Tyson

- Central Victorian Landscape Assessment Study Project Reference Group
- Loddon Mallee South Regional Growth Plan Technical Advisory Group
- Loddon Shire Risk Management Committee

Thomas, Terry

- Loddon Shire Consultative Committee

Vella, Robyn

- Bendigo Regional Tourism Board
- Loddon Southern Region Development and Tourism Committee of Management
- Nature Tourism Advisory Team
- Nature Tourism Festival Committee
- Wedderburn Community Centre Committee of Management

Watson, Terry

- Loddon Shire Asset Management Working Group

Williams, Craig

- Loddon Shire Plant Replacement Committee

Wright, Glen

- Loddon Shire Plant Replacement Committee

Yorston, Paula

- Bendigo Loddon Primary Care Partnership Continuous Improvement Framework Committee
- Diabetes in Loddon Action Group
- Inglewood Lions Community Elderly Persons Units Committee of Management
- Loddon Aged and Disability Services Network
- Loddon Emergency Management Planning Committee
- Loddon Mallee Government Aged and Disability Consortium
- Loddon Shire Disability Access and Inclusion Steering Group
- Loddon Shire Occupational Health and Safety Committee

Zanker, Gary

- Loddon Shire Occupational Health and Safety Committee



Loddon Shire Council staff and family participated in the Bendigo Fun Run.

OTHER STAFF MATTERS

Equal Employment Opportunity Program

Council supports access and equity for all employees and recognises diversity as a valuable strength that will create benefits for employees and the community.

Council's Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination Policy ensures that any potential breach is resolved impartially and fairly.

Council regularly reviews its policies, procedures and practices to ensure equity and transparency for all staff.

Enterprise Bargaining Agreement

The Loddon Shire Enterprise Agreement No. 7, 2014 was approved by the Fair Work Commission on Wednesday 14 May 2014.

The new agreement is operative from 21 May 2014 to 31 December 2017.

Professional development

Staff training program

Council is committed to providing staff with access to staff training and development opportunities that will enable continuous learning and career growth in line with individual aspirations and Council's goals.

At the annual staff development review, employees identify training they would like to undertake the following year. Council also provides training that is required for legislative purposes and to keep qualifications current.

During the year, Council staff undertook training courses in the following areas:

- Occupational Health and Safety
- First Aid and CPR
- Computer applications
- Competency training sessions
- Compliance training sessions
- Mental Health First Aid
- Lean Thinking
- Incident and Crash Investigation Training
- Customer Service Training

Study Assistance Policy

Council has a Study Assistance Policy that is available to permanent employees with 12 months service.

Assistance is provided in the form of subsidies for course fees, examination and assignment leave and some leave for attending classes.

During the year, four employees accessed this policy while undertaking further study, they were:

- Heather Christie – Advanced Diploma in Record Keeping
- Deanne Caserta – CPA
- Daniel Lloyd – Diploma of Business
- Shane Maxwell – Diploma of Management

Traineeships

Council supports staff who are prepared to undertake traineeships in their field.

The following staff completed their traineeships during the year:

- Peter Ramsdale – Certificate III in Landscape Construction

The following staff are either continuing a traineeship commenced earlier or have commenced a traineeship:

- Shaun Smith – Certificate III in Landscape Construction
- Vaughan Herrick – Certificate III in Landscape Construction
- Annette James – Certificate IV in Disability and Certificate IV in Aged Care
- Kristy Simpson – Certificate IV in Disability and Certificate IV in Aged Care
- Bronwyn Tonkin – Certificate IV in Disability and Certificate IV in Aged Care
- Leanne Welsh – Certificate IV in Disability and Certificate IV in Aged Care.

The following staff completed the following qualifications during the year:

- Jude Holt – Graduate Diploma in Applied Corporate Governance
- Kim Bian Yap – Master of Teaching – Early Childhood Education
- Daniel Lloyd – Diploma of Business
- Carol Canfield – Certificate of Business Continuity Management.

Council's support is provided in the form of time to attend required classes and in financial assistance.

OTHER STAFF MATTERS CONT.

Staff scholarship program

Council has a staff scholarship program aimed at reducing the financial burden of undertaking university education for students and providing relevant work experience in their chosen career in a local government setting.

Loddon Shire Council's Finance Officer Lorraine Jackson was successful in applying for a staff scholarship to study for the Bachelor of Business degree at La Trobe University Bendigo.

Work experience program

Secondary school students

Council is an active supporter of the work experience program that operates in the school system and often hosts students from Years 10, 11 and 12.

During the year, Council hosted the following students:

- Christal Stanger (Boort College) worked at the Boort Preschool
- Jodie Stanger (Boort College) worked at the Boort Preschool
- Crystal Haw-Beck (East Loddon P-12 College) worked at Dingee Preschool.

School-based apprenticeships

Over the years, Council has hosted many students under school-based apprenticeships. This program provides a learning environment in the workplace while students remain at school.

Council currently has one school based apprentice, Thomas Jackson of Wedderburn, working in the IT Department.

Thomas is currently completing a Certificate II in Information Technology.

Preventing violence against women

Council first introduced a Family Violence clause in its Enterprise Agreement No. 6, 2011. This clause provides staff with 20 days special leave each year to deal with family violence.

The clause in the Enterprise Agreement safeguards security of employment for employees experiencing family violence, as well as providing workplace support to enable them to be safe at home and at work.

The 20 days special leave can be used for medical appointments, legal proceedings and other activities relating to family violence. Carer's leave is also offered for employees who are supporting a person experiencing family violence.

Occupational health and safety

Council recognises its moral and legal responsibility to provide, as far as it is reasonably practicable, a safe and healthy work environment for employees, contractors, customers and visitors.

This commitment extends to ensuring that the organisation's operations do not place the local community at risk of injury, illness or property damage.

Council continues its commitment of consultation and co-operation between management and employees through Council's Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) Committee.

This committee consists of staff and management representatives and meets quarterly, with all areas of the organisation represented.

All OH&S obligations continue to be met in a systematic, proactive and consultative manner.

Policies and procedures continue to be developed or reviewed to reflect new legislative requirements.

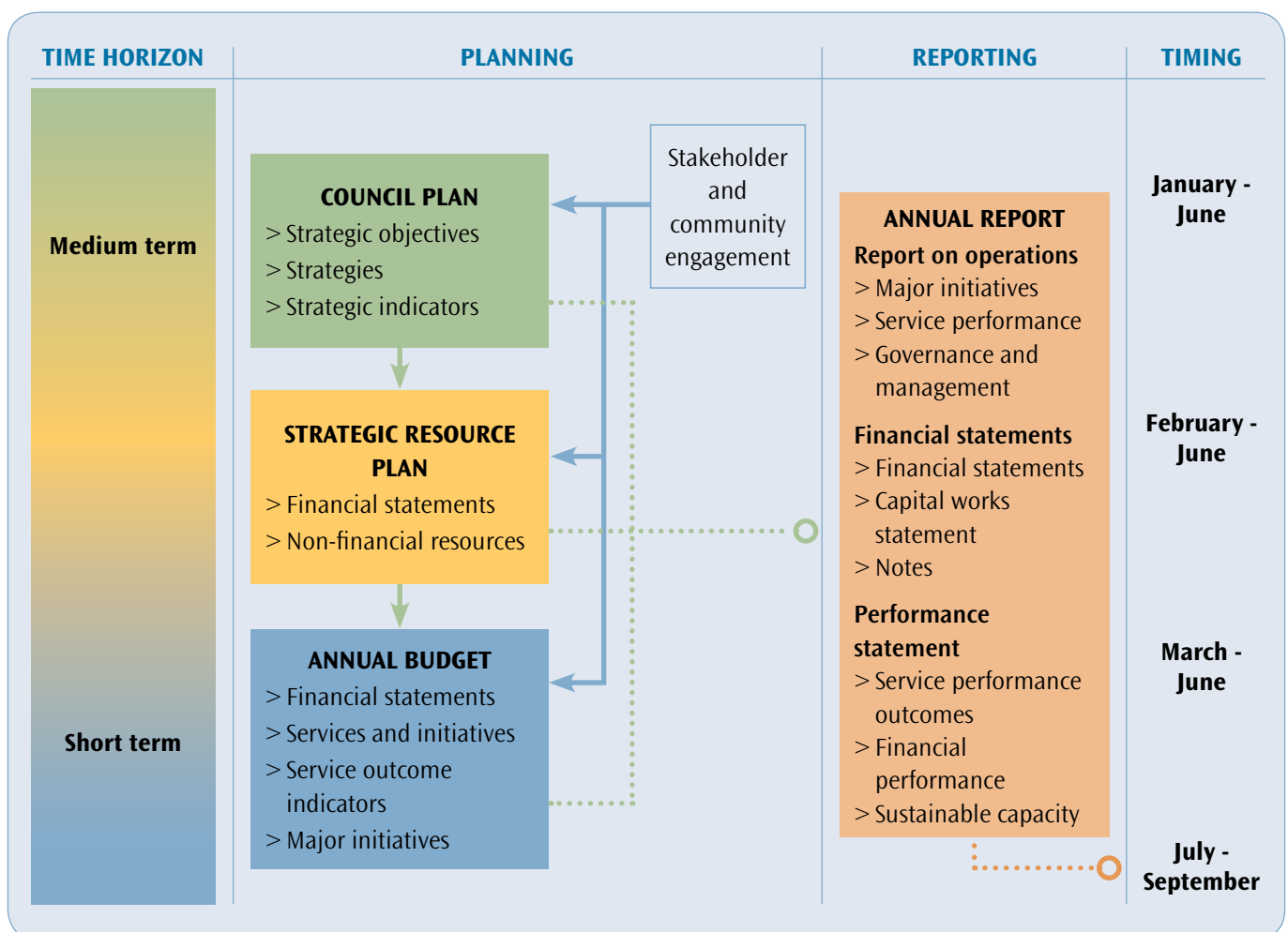
OUR PERFORMANCE

PLANNING AND ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK

The Planning and Accountability Framework is found in part 6 of the Local Government Act 1989. The Act requires councils to prepare the following planning and reporting documents:

- a Council Plan within the six months after each general election of the Council or by 30 June of the year following an election, whichever is the later
- a Strategic Resource Plan for a period of at least four years (and include this in the Council Plan)
- a budget for each financial year
- an Annual Report in respect of each financial year.

The following diagram shows the relationship between the key planning and reporting documents that make up the planning and accountability framework for local government. It also shows that there are opportunities for community and stakeholder input and feedback at each stage of the planning and reporting cycle.



COUNCIL PLAN

The Council Plan 2013-2017 includes strategic objectives, strategies for achieving these for the four year period, strategic indicators for monitoring achievement of the strategic objectives and a strategic resource plan.

The following are Council's seven strategic platforms, with their strategic objectives as listed in the Council Plan:

Strategic Platforms 2013-2017

1	Build a network of strong communities	Support our townships in preserving their individuality whilst leveraging their collective strength.
2	Grow our population through appropriate development	Capitalise on the demand for lifestyle properties, without compromising premium agricultural land or our environment.
3	Champion our agrifood enterprises	Be an advocate for our agrifood sector and support it to remain the backbone of our shire's economy.
4	Make our towns liveable and memorable	Improve the liveability of our towns by making them attractive to existing residents, prospective residents and tourists.
5	Grow and diversify our economy	Attract investment that introduces new industries, presents opportunity to existing businesses and grows our working population.
6	Support our transitioning townships	Support small town communities to retain the best possible quality of life in the face of a declining population with increasing needs.
7	Connect with the next generation	Engage our youth to equip them for a positive future and keep our communities young, vibrant and energised.



Tarnagulla Victory Park.

PERFORMANCE

Council's performance for the 2014/15 year has been reported against each strategic platform to demonstrate how Council is performing in achieving the Council Plan 2013-2017. Performance has been measured as follows:

- results achieved in relation to the strategic indicators in the Council Plan
- progress in relation to the major initiatives identified in the budget
- services funded in the budget and the persons or sections of the community who are provided those services
- results against the prescribed service performance indicators and measures.

STRATEGIC PLATFORM 1

Build a network of strong communities

The following statement reviews the performance of Council against the Council Plan including results achieved in relation to the strategic indicators in the Council Plan:

2013 - 2017 Priorities	Key Projects	Progress
Build unique brand identities for each of our communities based on their geography, history and personality	Define each of our town brand identities and communicate these	<p>Work in progress:</p> <p>Council is currently undertaking a streetscape redevelopment project which incorporates a number of community discussions which, in part, examine and assist in defining community values and aspirations.</p> <p>An allied project will use these findings to determine a unique identity for each of its major townships. This identity (the community's core values) will then serve as a point of reference for Council and the approach to deliver community planning and development initiatives.</p> <p>The brand identity project will be delivered in 2015/16.</p>
Leverage social media to better communicate with our residents	Develop a social media strategy and implement actions	<p>Action complete:</p> <p>Council has adopted and published its social media strategy. The strategy seeks to build Council's social media presence through the establishment of a Facebook page. Council has adopted a very conservative approach by allowing only one-way communication through its Facebook page. The Facebook page is now live.</p>
Promote a calendar of events across the region and support them	Promote and support events on a new website	<p>Action complete:</p> <p>Council's website was launched in April 2014. It has an events and activities portal on the home page and a calendar of events which displays all upcoming events that have been posted to the website.</p> <p>Council officers identify and post a number of events, and event organisers can complete their own online event submission form which is approved by Council prior to publishing.</p>

2013 - 2017 Priorities	Key Projects	Progress
Drive improvement in life services including lobbying for assistance with childcare shortfall	Identify service needs and develop links with providers to source options for provision of childcare	Action complete and ongoing: Councillors received and considered a report providing options for the provision of childcare to our remote communities. Council has not actioned this report pending support from the federal government through funding assistance.
Support volunteer organisations to remain active within the community	Promote the benefits of membership of a volunteer organisation	Action complete: Council's website was launched in April 2014. It has an extensive volunteers section, which promotes volunteering generally and volunteering for Council through the Meals on Wheels program and at the Visitor Information Centre located in Wedderburn.
	List volunteer groups on website and provide contact details	Action complete: Volunteer groups, along with their contact details, have been published on Council's website.

Major initiatives:

The following statement reviews the progress of Council in relation to major initiatives identified in the 2014/15 budget for the year:

Major initiatives:	Progress:
Define each of our town brand identities and communicate these: findings report presented to Council	Work in progress: Council is currently undertaking a streetscape redevelopment project which incorporates a number of community discussions which, in part, examine and assist in defining community values and aspirations. An allied project will use these findings to determine a unique identity for each of its major townships. This identity (the community's core values) will then serve as a point of reference for Council and the approach to deliver community planning and development initiatives. The brand identity project will be delivered in 2015/16.
Promote and support events on new website: list of community events sourced from website	Action complete: Council's website was launched in April 2014. It has an events and activities portal on the home page, and a calendar of events which displays all upcoming events that have been posted to the website. Council officers identify and post a number of events, and event organisers can complete their own online event submission form which is approved by Council prior to publishing.

PERFORMANCE CONT.

Service performance indicators:

The following statement provides the results of the prescribed service performance indicators and measures including explanation of material variations:

Aquatic facilities			
Service/indicator/measure		Result	Material variations
Service standard	<i>Health inspections of aquatic facilities</i> [Number of authorised officer inspections of Council aquatic facilities / number of Council aquatic facilities]	1	
	<i>Reportable safety incidents at aquatic facilities</i> [Number of WorkSafe reportable aquatic facility safety incidents]	0	
Service cost	<i>Cost of indoor aquatic facilities</i> [Direct cost of indoor aquatic facilities less income received / number of visits to indoor aquatic facilities]	\$0	Council does not have any indoor aquatic centres
	<i>Cost of outdoor aquatic facilities</i> [Direct cost of outdoor aquatic facilities less income received / number of visits to outdoor aquatic facilities]	\$19	
Utilisation	<i>Utilisation of aquatic facilities</i> [Number of visits to aquatic facilities / municipal population]	3	

Services:

The following statement provides information in relation to the services funded in the 2014/15 budget:

- **Recreation services**, including financial and administrative support to sporting clubs, management of Council's swimming pools, applications for government grants and assistance with long-term strategies for recreation facilities.
- **Loddon Healthy Minds Network**, including meetings and activities designed to boost mental health awareness and personal support for residents of Loddon Shire.
- **Recovery**, including working with Council's Emergency Management Team to deliver initial relief measures, then aid in ongoing recovery work; also includes response to single incidents of personal trauma.
- **Council committees**, including administrative support for Section 86 committees in managing compliance with the Local Government Act 1989.
- **Community planning**, including building Loddon communities through facilitation, logistical and financial means to improve the aesthetic of communities and develop key community assets, supporting communities to identify their strengths and opportunities, and facilitating novel approaches and solutions to local issues.
- **Community grants scheme**, including the administration of various community grants offered by compliance and enforcement.

STRATEGIC PLATFORM 2

Grow our population through appropriate development

The following statement reviews the performance of Council against the Council Plan including results achieved in relation to the strategic indicators in the Council Plan:

2013 - 2017 Priorities	Key Projects	Progress
Implement planning strategies that accelerate growth in appropriate areas	Implement Rural Zones Review	Work in progress: Council has prepared planning scheme amendment C36 to implement the Rural Zones Review. The implementation of this review will not be completed until the planning scheme amendment receives Ministerial consent. The amendment is currently sitting with the Minister for Planning and Council is hopeful of a positive response in the near future.
	Develop and commence implementation of a settlement strategy	Work in progress: The development of a settlement strategy has commenced. There has been a significant amount of research work completed and a draft strategy is expected to be placed before Council in the first quarter of the 2015/16 financial year.
Adopt a pro-development attitude to planning and stimulate investment needed to service the community's changing housing requirements	Bridgewater residential subdivision	Action complete: Council has successfully rezoned land on the edge of the Bridgewater township to provide an additional residential subdivision.
	Develop Loddon Shire Settlement Strategy	Work in progress: The development of a settlement strategy has commenced. There has been a significant amount of research work completed and a draft strategy is expected to be placed before Council in the first quarter of the 2015/16 financial year.
	Implement online planning application process for commercial development (SPEAR system)	Action complete: Council is using SPEAR but only for subdivision applications and processes. The general planning module has been abandoned by the state government.
Improve our turnaround time on planning approvals for housing projects	Implement a planning application progress tracking system	Action complete: A tracking system, which consists of a combination of the standardised PPARS reporting to the state government and the development of an in-house planning application tracking and reporting database, is being used by Council officers to track planning applications.
	Drive improvement in turnaround time by enforcing targets	Action complete and ongoing: The planning application tracking system is providing evidence of an improvement in turnaround time of planning applications.

PERFORMANCE CONT.

2013 - 2017 Priorities	Key Projects	Progress
Attract investors to develop infrastructure and services	Develop and commence implementation of new Economic Development Strategy which incorporates investment attraction for essential infrastructure and services	Work in progress: The draft Economic Development Strategy has been presented to Council and released for public comment. It is expected Council will adopt the Economic Development Strategy in August 2015.

Major initiatives:

There were no major initiatives identified in the 2014/15 budget for this strategic platform.

Service performance indicators:

The following statement provides the results of the prescribed service performance indicators and measures including explanation of material variations:

Statutory planning			
Service/indicator/measure		Result	Material variations
Timeliness	<i>Time taken to decide planning applications</i> [The median number of days between receipt of a planning application and a decision on the application]	60 days	
Service standard	<i>Planning applications decided within 60 days</i> [Number of planning application decisions made within 60 days / Number of planning application decisions made]	50%	
Service cost	<i>Cost of statutory planning service</i> [Direct cost of statutory planning service / Number of planning applications received]	\$456	
Decision making	<i>Council planning decisions upheld at VCAT</i> [Number of VCAT decisions that did not set aside Council's decision in relation to a planning application / Number of VCAT decisions in relation to planning applications] x100	0	Council had one VCAT decision in relation to a planning application and it was set aside by VCAT.

Food safety			
Service/indicator/measure		Result	Material variations
Service standard	<i>Food safety assessments</i> [Number of registered Class 1 food premises and Class 2 food premises that receive an annual food safety assessment in accordance with the Food Act 1984 / Number of registered Class 1 food premises and Class 2 food premises that require an annual food safety assessment in accordance with the Food Act 1984] x100	109%	

PERFORMANCE CONT.

Service/indicator/measure		Result	Material variations
Service cost	<i>Cost of food safety service</i> [Direct cost of the food safety service / Number of food premises registered or notified in accordance with the Food Act 1984]	\$138	
Health and safety	<i>Critical and major non-compliance outcome notifications</i> [Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance notifications about a food premises followed up / Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance notifications about food premises] x100	0%	

Services:

The following statement provides information in relation to the services funded in the 2014/15 budget:

- **Town planning services**, including planning permit and subdivision approvals, planning scheme compliance and enforcement, changes to the planning scheme and protection of significant heritage, cultural and environmental assets within the shire.
- **Environmental health services**, including septic tank and waste water management approvals, food safety inspections and certification, monitoring of tobacco and alcohol sales, compliance with the Public Health and Wellbeing Act and Environment Protection Act and their enforcement.
- **Building surveyor services**, including building permit and occupancy approvals and administering the Building Act.
- **Environmental management services**, including weed management on Council property and development and implementation of Loddon's response to climate change.

STRATEGIC PLATFORM 3**Champion Our Agrifood Enterprises**

The following statement reviews the performance of Council against the Council Plan including results achieved in relation to the strategic indicators in the Council Plan:

2013 - 2017 Priorities	Key Projects	Progress
Remove the road blocks for new agrifood enterprises or expansion of existing ones	Support the Northern Victorian Regional Transport Strategy	Action complete and ongoing: Council supports the Northern Victorian Regional Transport Strategy. Council's Director Operations sits on the strategy steering committee.
Engage with the agribusiness sector in a regular more formal way	Engage Agribusiness Development Officer	Action complete: Council engaged an Agribusiness Officer in June 2015
Continue to seek out agrifood value-adding opportunities	Engage Agribusiness Development Officer	Action complete: Council engaged an Agribusiness Officer in June 2015

Major initiatives:

There were no major initiatives identified in the 2014/15 budget for this strategic platform.

PERFORMANCE CONT.

STRATEGIC PLATFORM 4

Make our towns liveable and memorable

The following statement reviews the performance of Council against the Council Plan including results achieved in relation to the strategic indicators in the Council Plan:

STRATEGIC PLATFORM 6

Support our transitioning townships

2013 - 2017 Priorities	Key Projects	Progress
Renew the streetscape in our major towns	Wedderburn streetscape project	Work in progress: The Wedderburn streetscape project has now reached the end of its planning phase and funding for the entire project of stages two and three have been secured. Agreements have been signed with Powercor for the undergrounding of power and works will commence in early 2015/16.
	Develop plans for Boort, Pyramid Hill, Bridgewater streetscape redevelopment	Work in progress: Council has engaged consultants to meet with the community and then prepare concept plans for the streetscapes of Boort, Pyramid Hill and Bridgewater.
Enhance our overall amenities by offering improved, but rationalised facilities in line with financial resources	Inglewood Town Hall Hub Project	Work in progress: Planning for Inglewood Town Hall Hub Project is now complete and construction will commence in early 2015/16.
	Wedderburn Community Centre Redevelopment	Action complete: Construction and renovations of the Wedderburn Community Centre redevelopment are now completed.
Work with our business community to foster a customer service culture	Facilitate annual customer service training for businesses	Action complete and ongoing: Council continues to operate a series of customer service training classes for businesses.
Lift local hospitality capability	Deliver local accommodation guide and promote through website	Action complete: Council's website has an accommodation brochure which can be downloaded and printed.
Enforce a clean up of our towns	Conduct audit, identification and prioritisation of all unsightly properties in all major towns	Work in progress: An audit of all townships has now been completed and a list of unsightly premises has been compiled. A set of criteria is being developed to ensure that these unsightly premises can now be prioritised.
Improve the appearance and functionality of recreation and public spaces	Implement a capital works program for parks and gardens facilities	Action complete: Council has developed a Capital Works Program for parks and gardens and has funded works in 2015/16.
	Develop and implement a new recreation strategy	Work in progress: The new Recreation Strategy has been presented to Council in draft. It is expected that it will be adopted early in the 2015/16 financial year.

2013 - 2017 Priorities	Key Projects	Progress
Take leadership in building infrastructure, amenities and services appropriate to town needs	Develop long term parks and gardens and buildings capital works programs	<p>Action complete: Council has developed a capital works program for parks and gardens and has funded works in 2015/16.</p> <p>Not started: Council has not commenced a capital works program for buildings.</p>
Set the benchmark for recreational vehicle (RV) friendly towns	Install dump points at three strategic locations across Loddon Shire	<p>Action complete: Council has installed dump points at Bridgewater, Wedderburn, Boort and Pyramid Hill.</p>
	Implement action from the Loddon Shire Council Tourism Strategy 2011-2016 to establish Loddon as an RV Friendly Shire	<p>Action complete: Council has met all the criteria necessary to be established as an RV-friendly Shire.</p>

Major initiatives:

The following statement reviews the progress of Council in relation to major initiatives identified in the 2014/15 budget for the year:

Major initiatives:	Progress:
Inglewood Town Hall Hub Project: project completion	<p>Work in progress: Planning for Inglewood Town Hall Hub Project is now complete and construction will commence in early 2015/16.</p>
Implement a capital works program for parks and gardens facilities: adoption of program	<p>Action complete: Council has developed a Capital Works Program for parks and gardens and has funded works in 2015/16.</p>

Service performance indicators:

The following statement provides the results of the prescribed service performance indicators and measures including explanation of material variations:

Roads			
Service/indicator/measure		Result	Material variations
Satisfaction of use	<p><i>Sealed local road requests</i> [Number of sealed local road requests / Kilometres of sealed local roads] x100</p>	12	
Condition	<p><i>Sealed local roads below the intervention level</i> [Number of kilometres of sealed local roads below the renewal intervention level set by Council / Kilometres of sealed local roads] x100</p>	99%	

PERFORMANCE CONT.

Service/indicator/measure		Result	Material variations
Service cost	<i>Cost of sealed local road reconstruction</i> [Direct cost of sealed local road reconstruction / Square metres of sealed local roads reconstructed]	\$45	
	<i>Cost of sealed local road resealing</i> [Direct cost of sealed local road resealing / Square metres of sealed local roads resealed]	\$4	
Satisfaction	<i>Satisfaction with sealed local roads</i> [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how council has performed on the condition of sealed local roads]	55	

Libraries

Service/indicator/measure		Result	Material variations
Utilisation	<i>Library collection usage</i> [Number of library collection item loans / Number of library collection items]	1	
Resource standard	<i>Standard of library collection</i> [Number of library collection items purchased in the last five years / Number of library collection items] x 100	70%	
Service cost	<i>Cost of library service</i> [Direct cost of the library service / Number of visits]	\$21	
Participation	<i>Active library members</i> [Number of active library members / Municipal population] x 100	14%	

Waste

Service/indicator/measure		Result	Material variations
Satisfaction	<i>Kerbside bin collection requests</i> [Number of kerbside garbage and recycling bin collection requests / Number of kerbside bin collection households] x 1000	57	
Service standard	<i>Kerbside collection bins missed</i> [Number of kerbside garbage and recycling collection bins missed / Number of scheduled kerbside garbage and recycling collection bin lifts] x 10,000	2	

PERFORMANCE CONT.

Service/indicator/measure		Result	Material variations
Service cost	<i>Cost of kerbside garbage collection service</i> [Direct cost of the kerbside garbage bin collection service / Number of kerbside garbage collection bins]	\$108	
	<i>Cost of kerbside recyclables collection service</i> [Direct cost of the kerbside recyclables bin collection service / Number of kerbside recyclables collection bins]	\$65	
Waste diversion	<i>Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill</i> [Weight of recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins / Weight of garbage, recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins] x100	23%	

Animal management			
Service/indicator/measure		Result	Material variations
Timeliness	<i>Time taken to action animal requests</i> [Number of days between receipt and first response action for all animal management requests / Number of animal management requests]	N/A	Indicator commences in 2015/16.
Service standard	<i>Animals reclaimed</i> [Number of animals reclaimed / Number of animals collected]	66%	
Service cost	<i>Cost of animal management service</i> [Direct cost of the animal management service / Number of registered animals]	\$62	
Health and safety	<i>Animal management prosecutions</i> [Number of successful animal management prosecutions]	7	

Home and community care			
Service/indicator/measure		Result	Material variations
Service standard	<i>Compliance with Community Care Common Standards</i> [Number of Community Care Common Standards expected outcomes met / Number of expected outcomes under the Community Care Common Standards] x100	78%	

PERFORMANCE CONT.

Service/indicator/measure		Result	Material variations
Service cost	<i>Cost of domestic care service</i> [Cost of the domestic care service / Hours of domestic care service delivered]	N/A	Indicator commences in 2015/16.
	<i>Cost of personal care service</i> [Cost of the personal care service / Hours of personal care service delivered]	N/A	Indicator commences in 2015/16.
	<i>Cost of respite care service</i> [Cost of the respite care service / Hours of respite care service delivered]	N/A	Indicator commences in 2015/16.
Participation	<i>Participation in HACC service</i> [Number of people that received a HACC service / Municipal target population for HACC services] x100	58%	
	<i>Participation in HACC service by CALD people</i> [Number of CALD people who receive a HACC service / Municipal target population in relation to CALD people for HACC services] x100	28%	

Maternal and Child Health (MCH)			
Service/indicator/measure		Result	Material variations
Satisfaction	<i>Participation in first MCH home visit</i> [Number of first MCH home visits / Number of birth notifications received] x100	109%	
Service standard	<i>Infant enrolments in the MCH service</i> [Number of infants enrolled in the MCH service (from birth notifications received) / Number of birth notifications received] x100	102%	
Service cost	<i>Cost of the MCH service</i> [Cost of the MCH service / Hours worked by MCH nurses]	N/A	Indicator commences in 2015/16.
Participation	<i>Participation in the MCH service</i> [Number of children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of children enrolled in the MCH service] x100.	66%	
	<i>Participation in the MCH service by Aboriginal children</i> [Number of aboriginal children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of Aboriginal children enrolled in the MCH service] x100	60%	

PERFORMANCE CONT.

Services:

The following statement provides information in relation to the services funded in the 2014/15 budget:

- **Access programs**, including disability access to improve accessibility in and around the shire.
- **Infrastructure management**, including long-term asset management planning for roads, buildings, recreational facilities, pools, parks, waste facilities and bridges, development and delivery of annual infrastructure projects and programs, contract administration, survey and design and digital mapping.
- **Mobile library service** provided throughout the shire.
- **Aged services**, including home and respite care, property maintenance, senior citizens' centres, elderly persons' units and planned activity groups.
- **Early years services**, including maternal and child health, immunisations and cluster management of pre-schools.
- **Infrastructure management**, including long-term asset management planning for roads, buildings, recreational facilities, pools, parks, waste facilities and bridges, development and delivery of annual infrastructure projects and programs, contract administration, survey and design and digital mapping.
- **Local laws services**, including stock and domestic animal management permits, management of unsightly premises, roadside bushfire management works and local laws enforcement and compliance.
- **Works delivery**, including maintenance and construction of roads, bridges, road reserves, footpaths, parks, gardens, rest areas, toilet facilities, playgrounds, buildings and pools; depot, plant and fleet maintenance and management; response to infrastructure-related customer requests; and waste management.
- **Tourism development services**, including facilitation of strategic projects, assistance to small business, development of marketing and promotional material, assistance with advertising, direct financial support of key projects, provision and maintenance of tourism promotional signage, advice to new and existing tourism businesses, developing tourism linkages between regional communities and key tourism bodies such as Tourism Victoria, Tourism Alliance, Goldfields Committee and Bendigo Tourism, and administrative support to the Loddon Visitor Information Centre.
- **Loddon Discovery Tours**, including assistance to the Loddon tourism industry, public speaking, marketing, promotion and booking of group tours, program delivery to improve customer service and business development, and financial support for promotion.

STRATEGIC PLATFORM 5

Grow and diversify our economy

The following statement reviews the performance of Council against the Council Plan including results achieved in relation to the strategic indicators in the Council Plan:

2013 - 2017 Priorities	Key Projects	Progress
Exploit our existing strengths and areas of competitive advantage to grow and diversify the economy	Develop a new Economic Development Strategy	The draft Economic Development Strategy has been presented to Council and released for public comment. It is expected Council will adopt the Economic Development Strategy in August 2015

PERFORMANCE CONT.

2013 - 2017 Priorities	Key Projects	Progress
Build our tourism sector product, capability and promotion appropriate to the different range of products in the north and south of the shire	Complete foreshore redevelopment plans for the Boort Lakes and the Loddon River at Bridgewater	<p>Action not started: The concept plans for Boort Lakes have not commenced.</p> <p>Action complete: The concept plans for Bridgewater foreshore are complete.</p> <p>Action deferred: The funding required to deliver the project is no longer available, so presentation of the plans for consideration by Council has been deferred pending another funding stream becoming available in the future.</p>
	Complete construction of the Bridgewater Public Caravan Park	<p>Action complete: The caravan park was officially opened by Minister Peter Walsh on Saturday 25 October 2014.</p>
Promote development of tourist accommodation	List suitable accommodation venues on website	<p>Action complete: Council's website was launched in April 2014. It has an accommodation section which lists venues in the shire under the headings of various accommodation types.</p> <p>It also has an accommodation brochure which can be downloaded and printed.</p>

Major initiatives:

The following statement reviews the progress of Council in relation to major initiatives identified in the 2014/15 budget for the year:

Major initiatives:	Progress:
Complete foreshore redevelopment plans for the Loddon River at Bridgewater: redevelopment plans presented to Council	<p>Action complete: The concept plans are complete.</p> <p>Action deferred: The funding required to deliver the project is no longer available, so presentation of the plans for consideration by Council has been deferred pending another funding stream becoming available in the future.</p>
List suitable accommodation venues on website: list of accommodation venues sourced from website	<p>Action complete: Council's website was launched in April 2014. It has an accommodation section which lists venues in the shire under the headings of various accommodation types.</p> <p>It also has an accommodation brochure which can be downloaded and printed.</p>
Complete construction of the Bridgewater Public Caravan Park: official opening of caravan park	<p>Action complete: The caravan park was officially opened by Minister Peter Walsh on Saturday 25 October 2014.</p>

PERFORMANCE CONT.

Services:

The following statement provides information in relation to the services funded in the 2014/15 budget:

- **Economic development**, including support to new and existing businesses through direct facilitation, development of networking opportunities, provision of information, leadership development, promotion and marketing of opportunities within the shire, referral to internal and external agencies to encourage access to shire, state and federal development programs.
- **Industrial development**, including providing industry with access to infrastructure in developed and zoned industrial land which is appropriately located and priced to encourage the sustainable growth of industry.

STRATEGIC PLATFORM 7

Connect with the next generation

The following statement reviews the performance of Council against the Council Plan including results achieved in relation to the strategic indicators in the Council Plan:

2013 - 2017 Priorities	Key Projects	Progress
Identify the needs of young people and develop future leaders	Explore the interest in a youth council	Action complete: Council has established a Youth Advisory Council and its participants are drawn from the P-12 colleges across the municipality. It is in its first year of operation.
	Build a young professional leadership incubator	Action complete: Council explored the opportunities of developing a young professional leadership incubator and has decided that there are not sufficient numbers of young professionals in Loddon to sustain such a group. Council has employed the alternative strategy of actively promoting the Bendigo Young Professional Network within Loddon.
Create an arts and culture youth engagement program	Maintain Kool Skools Program	Action complete and ongoing: Council's support of the Kool Skools Program continued this year with trips to Melbourne for film-making, music production on CD, and street art programs.
	Continue to facilitate and expand the range of FReeZA events	Action complete and ongoing: Council's FReeZA events have maintained popularity with the youth of the shire. During the year, 10 events were held with 1630 participants.
Support youth mentoring	Continue Council's support for youth mentoring programs in partnership with secondary schools and the North Central Local Learning and Employment Network	Action complete and ongoing: Council continues to support mentoring programs in partnership with secondary schools in the North Central Local Learning and Employment Network.

Major Initiatives:

There were no major initiatives identified in the 2014/15 budget for this strategic platform.

PERFORMANCE CONT.

Services:

The following statement provides information in relation to the services funded in the 2014/15 budget:

Youth support services, including facilitating youth events, financial support for youth-related initiatives and long-term planning for youth development and retention.

Enablers

In order to deliver the strategies outlined in the Council Plan, it is acknowledged that Council requires a number of enablers to be in place. These are:

- talented, motivated professionals who gain job satisfaction from being part of our team
- effective and efficient operating systems and procedures
- the ability to innovate and think laterally
- sound financial management protocols
- delivery of service excellence
- a sustainability focus to asset management
- transparent communication
- skills in lobbying and advocacy.

Major initiatives:

There were no major initiatives identified in the 2014/15 budget for enablers.

Governance

The following statement provides the results of the prescribed service performance indicators and measures including explanation of material variations:

Service/indicator/measure	Result	Material variations
Transparency <i>Council resolutions at meetings closed to the public</i> [Number of Council resolutions made at Ordinary or Special Meetings of Council, or at meetings of a Special Committee consisting only of Councillors, closed to the public / Number of Council resolutions made at Ordinary or Special Meetings of Council or at meetings of a Special Committee consisting only of Councillors] x 100	13%	
Consultation and engagement <i>Satisfaction with community consultation and engagement</i> [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how Council has performed on community consultation and engagement]	60	
Attendance <i>Council attendance at Council meetings</i> [The sum of the number of Councillors who attended each Ordinary and Special Council meeting / (Number of Ordinary and Special Council meetings) x (Number of Councillors elected at the last Council general election)] x 100	96%	
Service cost <i>Cost of governance</i> [Direct cost of the governance service / Number of Councillors elected at the last council general election]	\$43,564	

PERFORMANCE CONT.

Service/indicator/measure		Result	Material variations
Satisfaction	<i>Satisfaction with Council decisions</i> [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how Council has performed in making decisions in the interest of the community]	58	

Services:

The following statement provides information in relation to the services funded in the 2014/15 budget:

- **Council administration**, including customer service and administrative support, records management, municipal building and equipment provision.
- **financial management**, including preparation and management of the Council budget, preparation of financial statements and government statistical returns, collection of various revenue sources and payment of employees and suppliers.
- **rating and valuations**, including management of valuations of properties in the shire, contract management relating to the revaluation process and raising annual rates and charges.
- **staff management**, including recruitment, development, wellbeing program and occupational health and safety.

Community Satisfaction Survey

Council has been involved in the annual Community Satisfaction Survey undertaken for the industry since 1998.

This survey provides Council with important information about how the community judges Council's performance in the current year, as well as providing Council with the ability to assess the trends in results.

The survey questions refer to the broad areas of governance and service delivery.

Governance is covered by overall Council performance, advocacy, community engagement, customer contact, overall Council direction, and making community decisions.

Service delivery is captured by key service areas. Those collected for a number of years include local streets and footpaths, recreational facilities, appearance of public areas, waste management, enforcement of local laws, business and community development and tourism, family support services, elderly support services, planning and building permits, emergency and disaster management, maintenance of unsealed roads, condition of sealed roads, and informing the community.

The 2015 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey results for the Loddon Shire show Council's overall performance is rated at a score of 65, a decrease of four points from last year's score of 69.

Council's performance in advocacy decreased from 62 to 59, community engagement remained at 60, customer contact decreased from 76 to 75, while overall direction decreased from 57 to 54.

Two newly introduced indicators were making Council decisions which scored 58 and condition of sealed roads scored 55.

Council scored higher than the median result of Small Rural Shires (a group of 22 like councils) in all governance areas.

There were 12 service delivery areas showing analysis from previous years. Sealed roads is a newly introduced category and does not have any trend data.

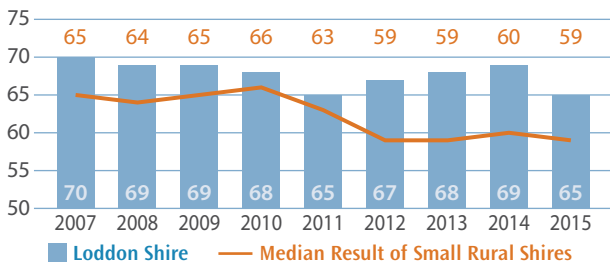
Council scored lower than last year in 10 areas – recreational facilities, appearance of public areas, emergency and disaster management, elderly support services, business and community development and tourism, family support services, informing the community, local streets and footpaths, planning and building permits, and unsealed roads.

Scores remained the same for waste management and enforcement of local laws.

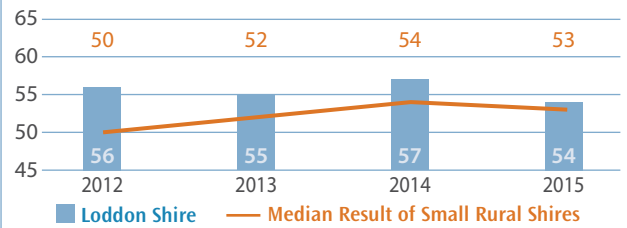
Of the 13 service areas surveyed in 2015, Council scored higher than the median result of Small Rural Shires in eight areas, and less in five areas.

PERFORMANCE CONT.

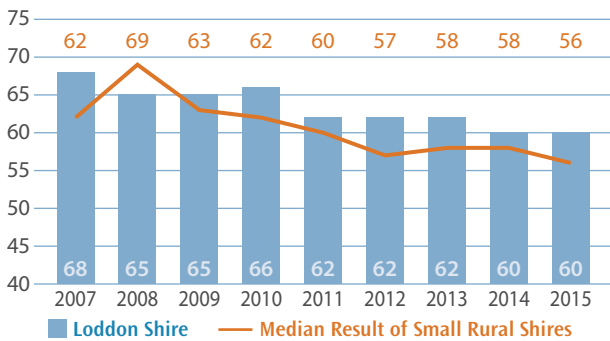
Community Satisfaction with Overall Performance



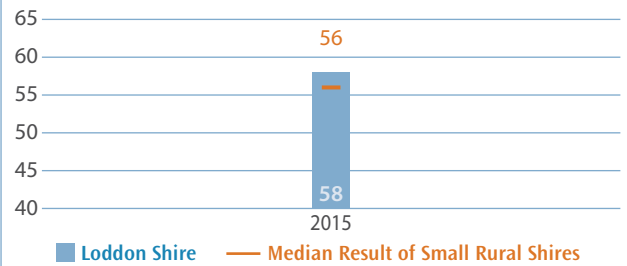
Community Satisfaction with Overall Council Direction



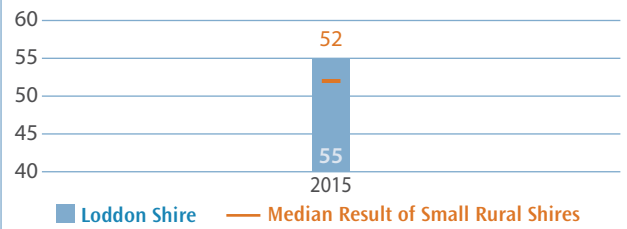
Community Satisfaction with Community Engagement & Consultation



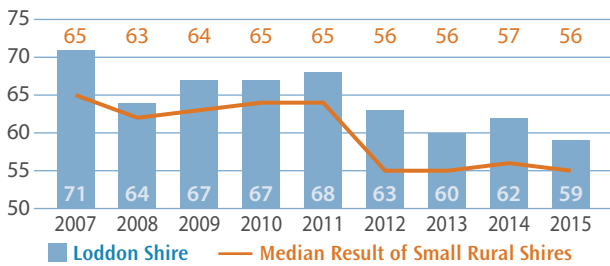
Community Satisfaction with Making Community Decisions



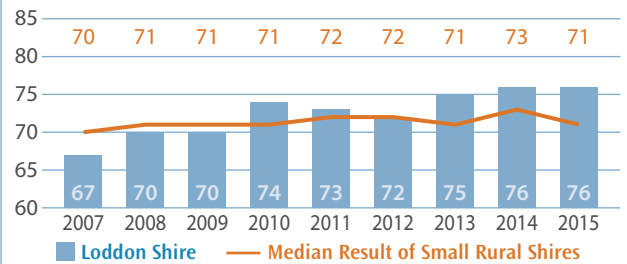
Community Satisfaction with Condition of Sealed Local Roads



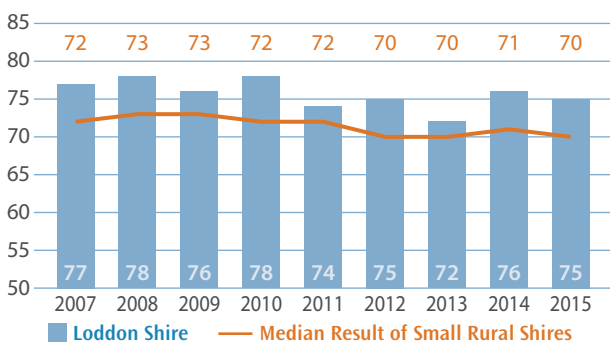
Community Satisfaction with Advocacy



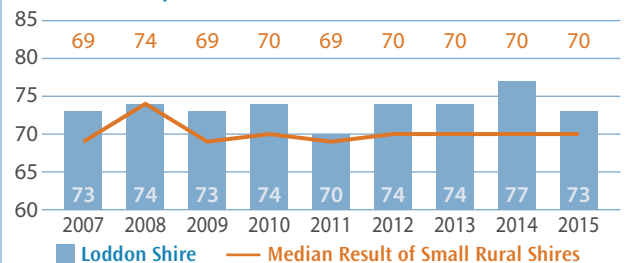
Community Satisfaction with Waste Management



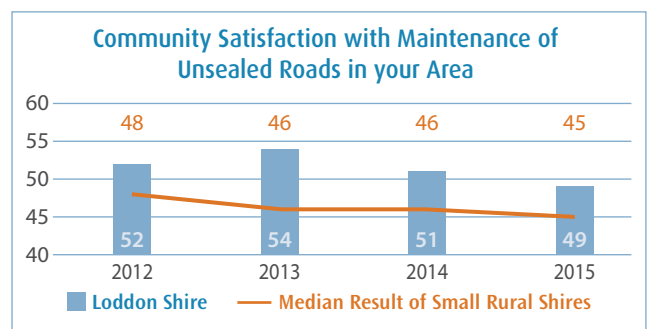
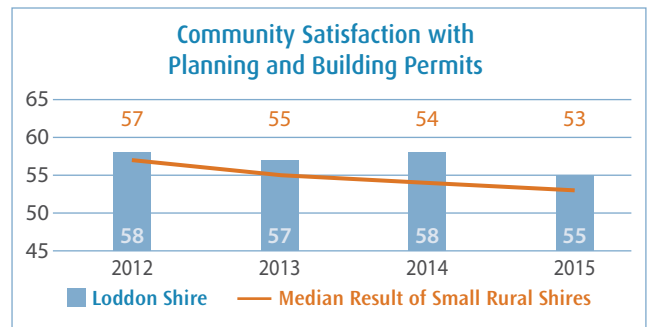
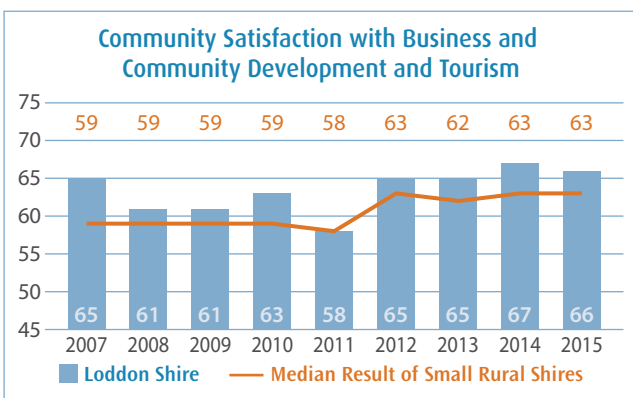
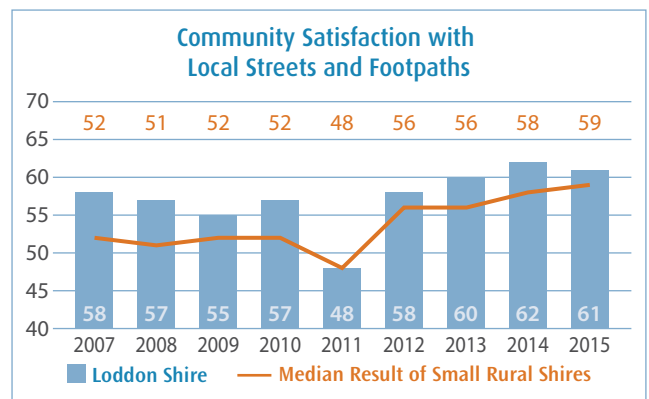
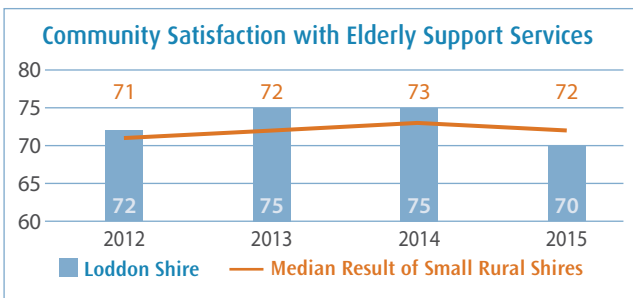
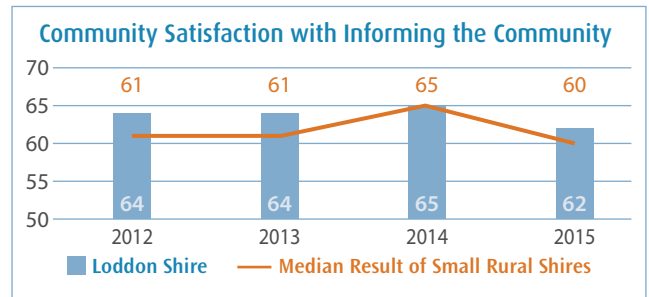
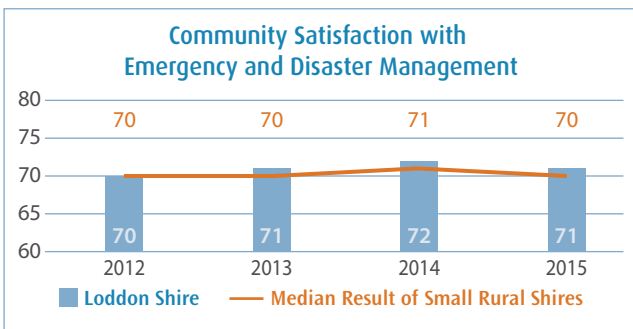
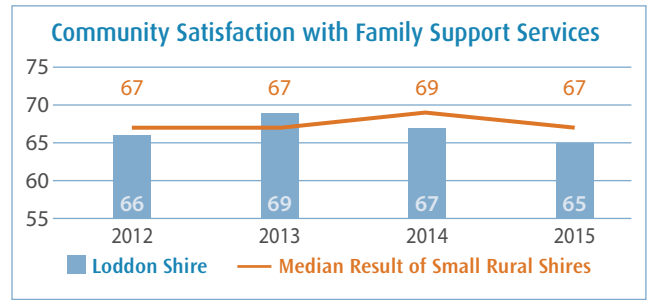
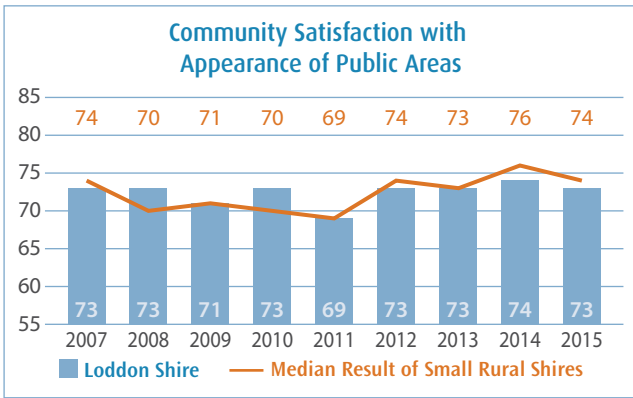
Community Satisfaction with Customer Contact and Service



Community Satisfaction with Recreational Facilities



PERFORMANCE CONT.



GOVERNANCE MANAGEMENT

GOVERNANCE

Introduction

Loddon Shire Council is constituted under the Local Government Act 1989 to provide leadership for the good governance of the municipal district and the local community.

Council has a number of roles including:

- taking into account the diverse needs of the local community in decision-making
- providing leadership by establishing strategic objectives and monitoring achievements
- ensuring that resources are managed in a responsible and accountable manner
- advocating the interests of the local community to other communities and governments
- fostering community cohesion and encouraging active participation in civic life.

Council is committed to effective and sustainable forms of democratic and corporate governance as the key to ensuring that Council and its administration meet the community's priorities.

The community has many opportunities to provide input into Council's decision-making processes including community consultation, the ability to address Council on specific topics at monthly Council Forums, involvement in Council's Special Committees and feedback on draft publications.

Council's formal decision making processes are conducted through Council meetings and Special Committees of Council.

Council delegates the majority of its decision making to Council staff. These delegations are exercised in accordance with adopted Council policies.

Attendances at Council functions

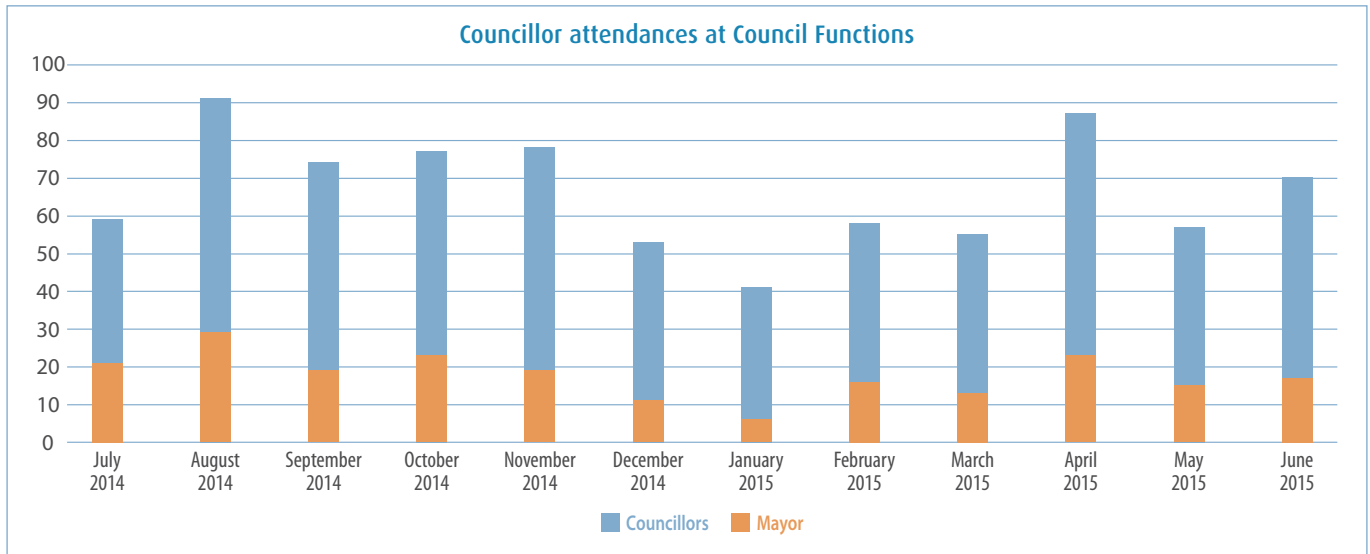
During the year, the Mayor and Councillors attended various functions on behalf of the Loddon Shire.

Some of the functions related to their representation on the committees listed, while others arose from invitations by community groups, local government bodies and politicians.

The following graph shows their attendances by month.

In total, the Mayor attended 212 functions while the other Councillors attended 588.

Month	Mayor	Councillors	Total
July 2014	21	38	59
August 2014	29	62	91
September 2014	19	55	74
October 2014	23	54	77
November 2014	19	59	78
December 2014	11	42	53
January 2015	6	35	41
February 2015	16	42	58
March 2015	13	42	55
April 2015	23	64	87
May 2015	15	42	57
June 2015	17	53	70
Total	212	588	800



Meetings of Council

Sum of Councillors who attended Ordinary and Special Meetings.

Number of attendances at ordinary or special meetings by month												
Councillor	July 2014	Aug 2014	Sept 2014	Oct 2014	Nov 2014	Dec 2014	Jan 2015	Feb 2015	Mar 2015	April 2015	May 2015	June 2015
Cr Cheryl McKinnon	4	4	3	2	3	3	2	3	3	4	4	3
Cr Colleen Condliffe	4	4	3	4	3	3	2	3	3	4	2	3
Cr Gavan Holt	4	4	3	4	3	3	2	3	3	4	4	3
Cr Geoff Curnow	4	4	3	1	3	3	2	3	3	4	4	3
Cr Neil Beattie	4	4	3	4	3	2	2	3	3	4	4	3
Totals	20	20	15	17	15	14	10	15	15	20	18	15
Meetings held												
Ordinary Meeting	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Council Briefing	1	1	1	1*	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Council Forum	1	1	1	1**	1	1*		1	1	1	1*	1
Special Meeting	1	1		1**							1*	
Budget Forum										1		
Total Meetings	4	4	3	4	3	3	2	3	3	4	4	3
Total possible number of attendance	20	20	15	20	15	15	10	15	15	20	20	15
Percentage attendance	100%	100%	100%	85%	100%	93%	100%	100%	100%	100%	90%	100%

* Councillor absentee

GOVERNANCE CONT.

Special committees

Committees appointed by Council

Under Section 86 of the Local Government Act 1989, Council may establish special committees comprising Councillors, Council staff and other persons.

The purpose of establishing a committee is to delegate some of Council's functions and responsibilities to a local level.

Council's committees are made up of dedicated community members who give their time and energy to the committees they represent.

Some committees manage facilities, while others exist to promote tourism and economic development within the shire.

By instrument of delegation, Council may delegate any of its functions, duties or powers to a special committee, although there are certain functions that cannot be delegated and these are listed under the Act.

Council respects and appreciates the contribution made by our volunteers which enriches our community, and provides a much broader range of services and activities than Council could provide on its own.

Council's current list of Section 86 committees of management include:

- Boort Aerodrome Committee of Management
- Boort Business and Tourism Council Committee of Management
- Boort Development Committee of Management
- Boort Memorial Hall Committee of Management
- Boort Park Committee of Management
- Bridgewater on Loddon Development Committee of Management
- Bridgewater on Loddon Memorial Hall Committee of Management
- Campbells Forest Hall Committee of Management
- Dingee Progress Association Committee of Management
- Donaldson Park Committee of Management
- East Loddon Community Centre Committee of Management
- Inglewood Community Sports Centre Committee of Management
- Inglewood Lions Community Elderly Persons Units Committee of Management
- Inglewood Riding Club Committee of Management
- Inglewood Town Hall Committee of Management

- Jones Eucalyptus Distillery Site Committee of Management
- Kingower Development and Tourism Committee of Management
- Korong Vale Mechanics Hall Committee of Management
- Korong Vale Sports Centre Committee of Management
- Little Lake Boort Committee of Management
- Loddon Southern Tourism and Development Committee of Management
- Mitiamo Municipal Recreation Reserve Committee of Management
- Pyramid Hill Memorial Hall Committee of Management
- Pyramid Hill Swimming Pool Committee of Management
- Serpentine Bowls and Tennis Pavilion and Reserve Committee of Management
- Wedderburn Community Centre Committee of Management
- Wedderburn Engine Park Committee of Management
- Wedderburn Mechanics and Literary Institute Committee of Management
- Wedderburn Tourism Committee of Management
- Yando Public Hall Committee of Management.

Code of Conduct

The Local Government Act 1989 requires councils to develop and approve a Councillor Code of Conduct within 12 months after each general election. On 22 July 2013, Council adopted a revised Councillor Code of Conduct which is designed to:

- assist Councillors to maintain the highest standards of conduct and behaviour as well as provide a means to deal with problems they may encounter
- attract the highest level of confidence from Council's stakeholders
- assist the Mayor and Councillors to discharge the responsibilities of their public office appropriately.

In addition to setting out the Councillor Conduct Principles, the Code also outlines:

- other conduct definitions under the Act, such as those relating to misuse of position, improper direction, breach of confidentiality and conflict of interest
- roles and relationships
- dispute resolution procedures.

GOVERNANCE CONT.

Conflict of interest

Councillors are elected by the residents and ratepayers to act in the best interests of the community. This is a position of trust that requires Councillors to act in the public interest. When a Council delegates its powers to a Council officer or a committee, the committee or officer also needs to act in the public interest.

A conflict of interest occurs when a personal or private interest might compromise the ability to act in the public interest. A conflict of interest exists even if no improper act results from it. Council has a comprehensive procedure in place to accommodate the disclosure of a conflict of interest.

Declaration of a conflict of interest is a standard agenda item for all Council and committee meetings.

While the procedures vary depending on the particular role and circumstances, in general they involve disclosing the relevant interests in a specific way and then stepping aside from the relevant decision making process or from the exercise of the public duty.

For example, Council's template for Council reports includes a declaration of conflict of interest by the authors.

Councillor allowances

In accordance with Section 74 of the Local Government Act 1989, Councillors are entitled to receive an allowance while performing their duty as a Councillor. The Mayor is also entitled to receive a higher allowance.

The state government sets the upper and lower limits for all allowances paid to Councillors and Mayors. Councils are divided into three categories based on income and population. In this instance, Loddon Shire Council is recognised as a category 1 Council.

For the period 1 July 2014 to 31 November 2014, the Councillor annual allowance for a category 1 council (as defined by the Local Government Act 1989) was fixed at \$18,418 per annum and the allowance for the Mayor was \$55,026 per annum. The Minister for Local Government approved an annual adjustment of 2.5 per cent to take effect from 1 December 2014. The annual allowances were adjusted for the period 1 December 2014 to 30 June 2015 at \$18,878 per annum for the Councillor allowance and \$56,402 per annum for the Mayoral allowance. An additional 9.5% of the allowance amount is also payable as an allowance equivalent to the value of the Superannuation Guarantee.

Councillor expenses

In accordance with Section 75 of the Local Government Act 1989, Council is required to reimburse a Councillor for expenses incurred whilst performing his or her duties as a Councillor. Council is also required to adopt and maintain a policy in relation to the reimbursement of expenses for Councillors. The policy provides guidance for the payment or reimbursement of expenses and the provision of resources, facilities and other support to the Mayor and Councillors to enable them to discharge their duties. Council also publishes in its Annual Report the details of the expenses, including reimbursement of expenses for each Councillor and members of a Council committee.

The following table contains a summary of the allowances and expenses reimbursed to each Councillor during the year.

Councillor	Councillor allowance	Expense reimbursement	Total Councillor payment
Cr G Holt (Mayor)	\$61,132	\$595	\$61,727
Cr G Curnow	\$20,461	\$7,429	\$27,890
Cr N Beattie	\$20,461	\$3,241	\$23,702
Cr C Condliffe	\$20,461	\$7,392	\$27,853
Cr C McKinnon	\$20,461	\$11,951	\$32,412



Wedderburn street.

MANAGEMENT

General introduction

Council has implemented a number of statutory and better practice items to strengthen its management framework. Having strong governance and management frameworks leads to better decision making by Council.

The Local Government Act 1989 requires Council to undertake an assessment against the prescribed governance and management checklist and include this in its report of operations. Council's governance and management checklist results are set out from page 81.

The following items have been highlighted as important components of the management framework.

Audit Committee

Membership

Council's Audit Committee is an advisory committee comprising five members – one Councillor and four external independent persons. The current membership consists of:

Councillor:

- Cr Gavan Holt

Independent external persons:

- Mr Ken Belfrage (Chair)
- Mr Rodney Baker
- Mr David Peterson
- Mr Rod Poxon.

Cr Holt was reappointed to the committee at the Statutory Meeting of Council held on 12 November 2014.

Mr Ken Belfrage's term ended on 30 April 2015 and he was reappointed to the committee until 30 April 2019.

Mrs Jo Haw tendered her resignation from the committee, creating a vacancy. Mr Rod Poxon was appointed to the committee until 30 April 2018.

Mr Belfrage, who was appointed Chair by Council for the term 1 May 2014 to 30 April 2015, was recommended by the committee to continue as Chair for the term 1 May 2015 to 30 April 2016 at the Audit Committee meeting held on 7 May 2015. Council endorsed that recommendation at Ordinary Meeting held on 26 May 2015.

Meetings

Meetings were held in August, November, February and May.

Council's Chief Executive Officer and Director Corporate Services attended the meetings in an advisory capacity.

Other staff were invited to each meeting to provide the committee with an opportunity to hear about their roles and current projects, which gave committee members further insight into the operations of Council.

Audit program

Council has a risk based audit program that is assessed annually for relevance and identification of new and emerging risks, and provided to the committee for endorsement.

Audit reviews

Audit reviews were undertaken in the following areas:

- project management
- local laws
- contract management
- induction, performance reviews and performance management.

During the year, the committee also regularly assessed outstanding audit recommendations from audit reports. At the start of the financial year, there were 45 actions to be completed.

With the addition of 47 actions from the audit reviews, plus three actions from the Management Letter for the Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2014, there were 95 actions active throughout the year.

At the end of the financial year, 52 actions remained outstanding.

Along with the audits, during the year the committee addressed the following items:

- a review of the 2013/14 Financial, Standard and Performance Statements
- review of monthly Finance Reports
- a survey by committee members to assess the performance and effectiveness of the committee
- quarterly updates in relation to fraud and any major lawsuits
- quarterly reports in relation to risk management
- a review of the Audit Committee Charter
- a review of the end of financial year Audit Strategy for 30 June 2015

MANAGEMENT CONT.

- a review of the Risk Management Policy
- endorsement of the newly developed Risk Management Framework
- a review of the draft budget for 2015/16
- a review of the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework first quarter trial data
- a review of the Victorian Auditor-General's financial sustainability indicators for 2013/14.

Audit provider

During the year Council's internal audit contract expired and the services were tendered for the four year period 1 May 2015 to 30 April 2019.

HLB Mann Judd Pty Ltd was the successful tenderer and will be Council's audit provider for the next four years.

The first task for the new contract is to undertake a risk assessment with key staff to ascertain Council's current and emerging risks. An audit program will be developed around addressing those risks.

External audit

Council is externally audited by the Victorian Auditor-General. For the 2014/15 financial year the annual external audit of Council's Financial Statements and Performance Statement was conducted by the Victorian Auditor-General's representative.

The external auditors attended the May Audit Committee meeting to provide the Audit Strategy and interim audit

findings, and will attend the August Audit Committee meeting to provide the results from the external audit.

Actions arising from the external audit are included on the Audit Committee's outstanding action list to be dealt with in due course.

Risk management

In May 2015, Council adopted the Risk Management Framework and Policy in line with the International Risk Management Guidelines and Principles (ISO 31000) which outlines the principles and processes for achieving best practice in risk management.

It articulates how Council will identify and record risks and the roles and responsibilities associated with risk management throughout the Council.

It also documents the reporting structure to ensure that Council, as the authority with ultimate responsibility for risk, is provided with information at all levels of the risk management process.

Risk Management Policy

As the Risk Management Framework was developed, the Risk Management Policy was amended to delete references to ISO 31000 which are now documented in the framework.

There has been no other change made to the policy, as it remains relevant and effective in stating Council's position in relation to risk management.



Soldiers Memorial Park, Wedderburn.

MANAGEMENT CONT.

Council is committed to proactive risk management and ensures it continues to prevent or minimise the chance of something happening that will have an adverse impact on Council's objectives.

Council has a comprehensive system of incident reporting and management, risk identification, assessment and management and legislative compliance.

An important element of this system is Advent Manager, an automated incident, risk and compliance software tool.

This software enables the breakdown of risk and compliance requirements into simple tasks, which can then be assigned for action.

Simple, yet comprehensive, reports can be run in minutes, giving a clear snapshot of how Council is progressing towards desired governance outcomes.

The compliance module is regularly updated as legislation changes and ensures that Council's practices remain current.

Local laws

Council has five local laws in operation:

Municipal Government Local Law No.1 of 2007

Facilitates the good governance of the Council, regulates and controls meetings and the use of the Council seal.

Streets and Roads Local Law No.2 of 2010

Provides for the management, control and regulation of roads and surrounding properties for the safety and convenience of road users.



Laanecoorie foreshore reserve.

Municipal Places Local Law No.3 of 2006

Allows people to enjoy the use of municipal places, control and prevent nuisance behaviour, protect community assets and promote the safe use of recreational facilities.

Environment Local Law No.4 of 2008

Provides a safe and healthy environment by regulating activities that may be dangerous or unsafe and providing services that enhance the quality of life in the municipal district.

Livestock Local Law No.5 of 2005

Provides for the control and welfare of livestock, minimises the spread of disease, weeds and damage to road reserves in the interests of road safety.

Copies of the local laws are available for inspection on Council's website www.loddon.vic.gov.au or at Council's office in Wedderburn.

Strategic documents

During the year, Council endorsed the following policies, guidelines, strategies and plans:

July

- Road Management Plan

August

- Levels of Authority
- Audit Committee Charter
- Volunteer Policy

September

- Municipal Early Years Plan
- Neighbourhood Safer Places Plan
- Business Continuity Management Framework

November

- Procurement Policy

December

- Levels of Authority

May

- Risk Management Framework and Policy
- Revenue and Debt Collection Policy

June

- Budget 2015/16
- Reserves Policy

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST

The following are the results in the prescribed form of Council's assessment against the prescribed governance and management checklist.

Governance and management checklist	Assessment
1. Community engagement policy Policy outlining Council's commitment to engaging with community on matters of public interest.	Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Date of operation of current policy: 27 May 2014
2. Community engagement guidelines Guidelines to assist staff to determine when and how to engage with the community.	No guidelines <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reason for no guidelines: The guidelines have not yet been developed. It is expected that they will be completed in 2015/16.
3. Strategic resource plan Plan under section 126 of the Act outlining the financial and non-financial resources required for at least the next four financial years.	Adopted in accordance with Section 126 of the Act <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Date of adoption: 23 June 2015
4. Annual budget Plan under section 130 of the Act setting out the services to be provided and initiatives to be undertaken over the next 12 months and the funding and other resources required.	Adopted in accordance with Section 130 of the Act <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Date of adoption: 23 June 2015
5. Asset management plans Plans that set out the asset maintenance and renewal needs for key infrastructure asset classes for at least the next 10 years.	Plans <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Date of operation of current plans: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • footpaths 24 August 2009 • buildings 23 November 2009 • parks 22 March 2010 • bridges 26 July 2010 • roads 22 July 2014 • urban drainage Not yet developed
6. Rating strategy Strategy setting out the rating structure of Council to levy rates and charges.	Strategy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reason for no strategy: Development of the rating strategy will be undertaken when the guidelines around the introduction of rate capping in 2016/17 are released
7. Risk policy Policy outlining Council's commitment and approach to minimising the risks to Council's operations	Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Date of operation of current policy: 26 May 2015
8. Fraud policy Policy outlining Council's commitment and approach to minimising the risk of fraud.	Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Date of operation of current policy: 24 September 2012
9. Municipal Emergency Management Plan Plan under section 20 of the Emergency Management Act 1986 for emergency prevention, response and recovery.	Prepared and maintained in accordance with Section 20 of the Emergency Management Act 1986 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Date of operation: 15 September 2011

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST CONT.

Governance and management checklist	Assessment								
<p>10. Procurement Policy Policy under section 186A of the Act outlining the matters, practices and procedures that will apply to all purchases of goods, services and works.</p>	<p>Prepared and approved in accordance with Section 186A of the Local Government Act 1989 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Date of approval: 25 November 2014</p>								
<p>11. Business Continuity Plan Plan setting out the actions that will be taken to ensure that key services continue to operate in the event of a disaster.</p>	<p>Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Date of operation of current plan: 23 September 2014</p>								
<p>12. Disaster Recovery Plan Plan setting out the actions that will be undertaken to recover and restore business capability in the event of a disaster.</p>	<p>No plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Reason for no plan: Council is in the process of developing a Disaster Recovery Plan and expects to have it in place by 31 December 2015</p>								
<p>13. Risk Management Framework Framework outlining Council's approach to managing risks to the Council's operations.</p>	<p>Framework <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Date of operation of current framework: 26 May 2015</p>								
<p>14. Audit Committee Advisory committee of Council under section 139 of the Act whose role is to oversee the integrity of Council's financial reporting, processes to manage risks to the Council's operations and for compliance with applicable legal, ethical, and regulatory requirements.</p>	<p>Established in accordance with Section 139 of the Act <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Date of establishment: 8 November 2000</p>								
<p>15. Internal audit Independent accounting professionals engaged by the Council to provide analyses and recommendations aimed at improving Council's governance, risk and management controls.</p>	<p>Engaged <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Date of engagement of current provider: 28 April 2015</p>								
<p>16. Performance reporting framework A set of indicators measuring financial and non-financial performance including the performance indicators referred to in section 131 of the Act.</p>	<p>No framework <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Reason for no framework: Council will develop a performance reporting framework in 2015/16.</p>								
<p>17. Council plan reporting Report reviewing the performance of the Council against the Council Plan including the results in relation to the strategic indicators for the first six month of the financial year.</p>	<p>Report <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Date of last report: 24 March 2015</p>								
<p>18. Financial reporting Quarterly statements to Council under section 138(1) of the Act comparing budgeted revenue and expenditure with actual revenue and expenditure.</p>	<p>Statements presented to Council in accordance with Section 138(1) of the Act <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Date statements presented:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>30 September 2014</td> <td>28 October 2014</td> </tr> <tr> <td>31 December 2014</td> <td>27 January 2015</td> </tr> <tr> <td>31 March 2015</td> <td>28 April 2015</td> </tr> <tr> <td>30 June 2015</td> <td>The report will be presented to Council after the external audit</td> </tr> </table>	30 September 2014	28 October 2014	31 December 2014	27 January 2015	31 March 2015	28 April 2015	30 June 2015	The report will be presented to Council after the external audit
30 September 2014	28 October 2014								
31 December 2014	27 January 2015								
31 March 2015	28 April 2015								
30 June 2015	The report will be presented to Council after the external audit								

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST CONT.

Governance and management checklist	Assessment
<p>19. Risk reporting</p> <p>Six-monthly reports of strategic risks to Council's operations, their likelihood and consequences of occurring and risk minimisation strategies.</p>	<p>Reports <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Date of reports:</p> <p>Council minutes 16 December 2014</p> <p>Council minutes 26 May 2015</p>
<p>20. Performance reporting</p> <p>Six monthly reports of indicators measuring the results against financial and non-financial performance, including performance indicators referred to in Section 131 of the Act.</p>	<p>Reports <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Reason for no reports:</p> <p>Reports will be provided to the Council when the performance reporting framework is developed in 2015/16.</p>
<p>21. Annual report</p> <p>Annual report under sections 131, 132 and 133 of the Act to the community containing a report of operations and audited financial and performance statements Annual report under sections 131, 132 and 133 of the Act to the community containing a report of operations and audited financial and performance statements.</p>	<p>Considered at a meeting of Council in accordance with Section 134 of the Act <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Date statements presented:</p> <p>14 October 2014</p>
<p>22. Councillor Code of Conduct</p> <p>Code under section 76C of the Act setting out the conduct principles and the dispute resolution processes to be followed by all Councillors.</p>	<p>Reviewed in accordance with Section 76C of the Act <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Date reviewed:</p> <p>22 July 2013</p>
<p>23. Delegations</p> <p>A document setting out the powers, duties and functions of Council and the Chief Executive Officer that have been delegated to members of staff.</p>	<p>Reviewed in accordance with Section 98(6) of the Act <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Date of review:</p> <p>25 March 2013</p>
<p>24. Meeting procedures</p> <p>A local law governing the conduct of meetings of Council and special committees.</p>	<p>Meeting procedures local law made in accordance with Section 91(1) of the Act <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Date local law made:</p> <p>1 March 2007</p>

I certify that this information presents fairly the status of Council's governance and management arrangements.



John McLinden, Chief Executive Officer

Dated: 31/08/2015



Cr Gavan Holt, Mayor

Dated: 31/08/2015

STATUTORY INFORMATION

Documents available to the public

Under various sections of the Local Government Act 1989, specific information is to be made available to the public.

Council must make available for public inspection documents containing the following prescribed matters:

- a) details of current allowances fixed for the Mayor, Lord Mayor (if any) and Councillors under section 74 or 74A of the Act;
- b) the total annual remuneration for all senior officers in respect of the current financial year and the previous financial year, set out in a list that states:
 - (i) ranges of remuneration of senior officers, where the difference between the lower amount and the higher amount in each range must not exceed \$10,000; and
 - (ii) the number of senior officers whose total annual remuneration falls within the ranges referred to in sub-paragraph (i);
- c) details of overseas or interstate travel (with the exception of interstate travel by land for less than three days) undertaken in an official capacity by Councillors or any member of Council staff in the previous 12 months, including the names of the Councillors or members of Council staff and the date, destination, purpose and total cost to Council of the overseas or interstate travel, including accommodation costs;
- d) names of Council officers who were required to submit a return of interest during the financial year and the dates those returns were submitted;
- e) names of Councillors who submitted returns of interest during the financial year and the dates those returns were submitted;
- f) agendas for, and minutes of, ordinary and special meetings held in the previous 12 months kept under section 93 of the Act, except if the minutes relate to parts of meetings which have been closed to members of the public under section 89 of the Act;
- g) a list of all special committees established by Council and the purpose for which each committee was established;
- h) a list of all special committees established by Council which were abolished or ceased to function during the financial year;
- i) minutes of meetings of special committees established under section 86 of the Act and held in the previous 12 months, except if the minutes relate to parts of meetings which have been closed to members of the public under section 89 of the Act;
- j) a register of delegations kept under sections 87 and 98 of the Act, including the dates on which the last reviews under sections 86(6) and 98(6) of the Act took place;
- k) submissions received in accordance with section 223 of the Act during the previous 12 months;
- l) agreements to establish regional libraries under section 196 of the Act;
- m) details of all property, finance and operating leases involving land, buildings, plant, computer equipment or vehicles entered into by Council as lessor or lessee, including the name of the other party to the lease and the terms and the value of the lease;
- n) a register of authorised officers appointed under section 224 of the Act;
- o) a list of donations and grants made by Council during the financial year, including the names of persons or bodies who have received a donation or grant and the amount of each donation or grant;
- p) a list of the names of the organisations of which the Council was a member during the financial year and details of all membership fees and other amounts and services provided during that year to each organisation by the Council;
- q) a list of contracts valued at \$100,000 (or such higher amount as is fixed from time to time under section 186(1) of the Act) or more:
 - (i) which the Council entered into during the financial year without first engaging in a competitive process; and
 - (ii) which are not contracts referred to in section 186(5) of the Act.

The information listed is held at Council's office in Wedderburn.

Best value

In accordance with section 208B(f) of the Local Government Act 1989, at least once every year a Council must report to its community on what it has done to ensure that it has given effect to Best Value principles. Council strives to ensure that its operations are conducted in a way that responds to the Best Value principles.

Council has done a number specific things in the 2014/15 financial year to ensure that our services are responsive to our community's needs and that they are provided in the most efficient and effective manner. Specific initiatives include:

- Council completed a review of the Road Management Plan. This plan specifies the service and maintenance

STATUTORY INFORMATION CONT.

of roads throughout the municipality. This is a critical service to our community

- Council has improved its budget preparation process incorporating a large amount of community feedback through secondary consultation processes.
- Council developed a detailed Capital Works Program with proposed timing of the commencement and completion of each program published.
- Council developed a cyclical maintenance program and provided Councillors with a detailed booklet allowing them to communicate with their constituency about the amount of maintenance grading to be provided to an individual road and the timing of that maintenance grading. This program was published online to allow the public to interrogate Council's system
- In 2014/15 Council undertook a restructure of its outdoor workforce. This restructure has provided:
 - o stronger supervision support to our outdoor workforce
 - o increased improved and more appropriate plant
 - o improved workflows
 - o the introduction of technology aimed at streamlining the work ordering and reporting system.

Victorian Health Records Act 2001

Loddon Shire collects health data, particularly in the community service area, to be used solely for the primary purpose for which it is collected or directly related purposes.

Council may disclose this information to other allied health professionals for continuity of care. If a referral to an allied health professional is required, consent is obtained unless exempted by other legislation.

Carers Recognition Act 2012

The Carers Recognition Act 2012 defines every council in Victoria as a 'public service care agency' and therefore a 'care support organisation'.

As a consequence, councils are required to comply with the Act and to report on this in their annual reports from 2012/13 and thereafter.

This reporting requirement impacts across a wide range of Council activities, including human resources, HACC, aged and disability services, leisure and recreation, community services and family and children's services.

Council has taken all practicable measures to comply with its responsibilities outlined in the Act.

Council has promoted the principles of the Act to people in care relationships and to the wider community by distributing printed material through relevant Council services, displaying posters at Council community venues and providing information to organisations represented in Council and community networks.

Council has also taken all practicable measures to ensure that staff, Council agents and volunteers working for us are informed about the principles and obligations of the Act by including information on the care relationship in Council induction and training programs for staff working in home and community care and disability services.

Council has made continuous efforts to review and modify policies, procedures and supports to include recognition of the carer relationship.

Contracts

During the year Council did not enter into any contracts valued at \$150,000 or more without first engaging in a competitive process.

Legislation compliance - Disability Act 2006

The Loddon Shire Council acknowledges that people living with disability are valuable members of the community who have the same fundamental rights and responsibilities as all citizens. It commits to act in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA) to ensure there is no discrimination based on disability in any of its functions, services or corporate framework.

Section 38 of the Victorian Disability Act 2006 makes it mandatory for all public sector bodies to develop a Disability Action Plan (DAP) to achieve the following objectives:

- reduce barriers to persons with a disability accessing goods, services and facilities
- reduce barriers to persons with a disability obtaining and maintaining employment
- promote inclusion and participation in the community of persons with a disability
- achieve tangible changes in attitudes and practices which discriminate against persons with a disability.

Council is in the second year of the delivery of its Community Access and Inclusion Plan 2013-2015.

The plan identifies action areas for Council to facilitate a truly inclusive community in relation to consultation, civic participation and community engagement, employment,

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST CONT.

the built environment, transport, and leisure and tourism activities.

During 2014/15, major achievements included:

- Essential Safety Audits planned to assess the accessibility of all Council buildings and development of priority recommendations for upgrades
- Inglewood Swimming Pool Universal Upgrade project specifically designed to meet disability access needs and requirements, plus provide an above standard accessible change room facility
- Council Document and Writing Style Guide reviewed by Vision Australia and recommended changes incorporated to increase the accessibility of Council documents and publications
- new Council website developed with integrated accessibility features such as ReadSpeaker software
- initial planning for partnership with the National Disability Recruitment Coordinator to review and enhance Council's recruitment and employment practices of people with disability
- Accessible Accommodation Guide developed that allows visitors to identify which accommodation providers could potentially meet their access needs and help accommodation providers to identify simple changes to their business to increase their accessibility
- increased number of people with a disability consulted as part of project community engagements.

Council has been an active advocate of the rights of people with disabilities in our community and is committed to demonstrating best practice in building a truly inclusive community.

Domestic Animals Management Plan

The Domestic Animals Act 1994 requires Council to prepare a Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) at four year intervals and to review the plan annually. The review of the DAMP has been undertaken using data for the 2014 calendar year. It identified that 31 activities have been achieved and nine remain outstanding, with one outstanding activity partially met.

The annual review of the DAMP identified that the majority of the identified activities have been completed. Further work is required to develop procedures for the declaration of dangerous and menacing dogs, undertake awareness campaigns and to undertake an audit of the provision of excrement collection bags.

The DAMP has been successful in raising awareness of domestic animal issues with particular regard to domestic animal businesses and wandering animals. This is evidenced by the increased reports of wandering animals and ongoing compliance actions with regard to domestic animals businesses. However, the increase in reports of wandering cats and dogs between the 2013 and 2014 calendar years indicates that more can be done to raise awareness for residents to contain their pets. Increased awareness can be driven by better use of existing avenues such as the Council website, Mayoral Column and media releases.

The review identified a small number of grammatical errors in the DAMP that will be corrected through an amendment to the document. In addition, more up to date statistics will be incorporated to ensure that it provides the most relevant and up-to-date data available.

Food Act Ministerial directions

Information Required: Food Act Ministerial Directions

In accordance with section 7E of the Food Act 1984, Council is required to publish a summary of any Ministerial Directions received during the financial year in its annual report.

No such Ministerial Directions were received by Council during the financial year.

Freedom of Information Act 1982

The Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Act) provides the community with right of access to documents of Council.

Applicants are entitled to access documents unless they are exempt documents. The Act specifies documents that are exempt.

Requesting a document

Section 17 of the Act outlines requirements for a request, which include:

- it must be in writing
- it must provide enough information for Council to reasonably identify the document
- it must be accompanied by the prescribed fee.

The prescribed fee for applications under the Act is outlined in Council's Fees and Charges Schedule which can be found on Council's website.

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST CONT.

Designated officer

The name and designation of the officer with authority to make a decision in relation to a request is:

Mrs Jude Holt
 Director Corporate Services and Freedom of Information Officer
 Telephone: (03) 5494 1207
 Email: jholt@loddon.vic.gov.au

Requests

During the year Council received three requests under the Act. The following table outlines how they were processed:

Details	No
Access granted in full	2
Access granted in part	0
Access denied	0
Request withdrawn	0
Request where no documents existed, applicant advised	1
Request transferred to another authority, applicant advised	0
Request outside the Act, applicant advised	0
Total applications	3

Protected Disclosure Act 2012

The Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001 was repealed on 10 February 2013, with the introduction of the Protected Disclosure Act 2012.

The Protected Disclosure Act 2012 continues the objectives of the Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001 to encourage and facilitate the making of disclosures of improper conduct by public officers and public bodies and establish a system for matters to be investigated.

The Protected Disclosure Act 2012 also provides new mechanisms for making disclosures about public sector improper conduct.

Reporting the Act

Under Section 70 of the Protected Disclosure Act 2012, Council must provide information pertaining to activities under the Act in the Annual Report each year.

National Competition Policy Compliance: 2014/15

Certification by Chief Executive Officer

Loddon Shire Council has complied with the requirements of the National Competition Policy (NCP) for the period 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015, in accordance with the requirements outlined in National Competition Policy and Local Government – A Revised Statement of Victorian Government Policy, December 2008 (2008 Statement) as set out below:

A. Trade Practices Compliance	Compliant
B. Local Laws Compliance	Compliant
C. Competitive Neutrality Compliance	Compliant

I certify that:

- this statement has been prepared in accordance with the National Competition Policy reporting guidelines
- this statement presents fairly the Council's implementation of the National Competition Policy.

Signed:



John McLinden
Chief Executive Officer

Date: 31 August 2015

That information includes:

- how to access procedures established under Part 9 of the Act
- the number of disclosures notified to Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission under Section 21(2) during the financial year.

In response to this requirement:

- the Protected Disclosure Procedure can be found on Council's website.
- no disclosures were notified to Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission under section 21(2) of the Act from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015.

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST CONT.

Council's Protected Disclosure Procedure references IBAC's guidelines for making and handling protected disclosures and protected disclosure welfare management.

Full copies of IBAC's Guidelines can be found on the IBAC website, <http://www.ibac.vic.gov.au>.

Protected Disclosure Coordinator

The IBAC Guidelines require a public office to have a Protected Disclosure Coordinator, who will have a central role in managing protected disclosures.

The name and designation of Council's officer to whom Protected Disclosure Act matters are referred is:

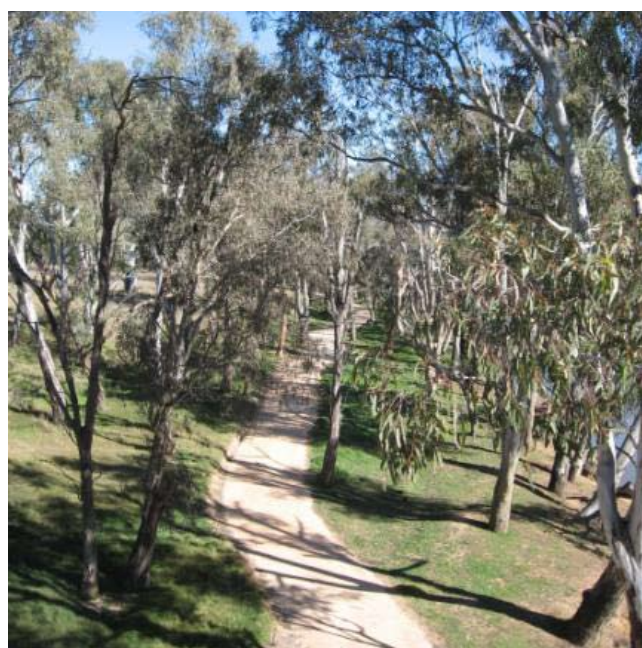
Mrs Jude Holt
 Director Corporate Services and Protected Disclosure Coordinator
 Telephone: (03) 5494 1207
 Email: jholt@loddon.vic.gov.au

In accordance with Council's Protected Disclosure Procedure, disclosures can also be made to Council's Chief Executive Officer.

Road Management Act Ministerial Directions

In accordance with section 22 of the Road Management Act 2004, Council must publish a copy or summary of any Ministerial Direction in its annual report.

No such Ministerial Directions were received by Council during the financial year.



Laanecoorie track.

Victorian Local Government Indicators

	2014/15	2013/14
Affordability/cost of governance		
Average rates and charges per assessment	\$1181	\$1132
Average rates and charges per residential assessment	\$683	\$838
Sustainability		
Average liabilities per assessment	\$760	\$835
Operating result per assessment	\$686	-\$518
Services		
Average operating expenditure per assessment	\$3412	\$3461
Community Satisfaction Rating for overall performance	65	69
Capital expenditure		
Average capital expenditure per assessment	\$1056	\$1342
Infrastructure		
Renewal gap	62%	78%
Renewal and maintenance gap	139%	160%
Governance		
Community Satisfaction Rating for Council's advocacy	59	62
Community Satisfaction Rating for Council's engagement	60	60

**Postal Address**

PO Box 21 Wedderburn Vic 3518

Telephone

(03) 5494 1200

Fax

(03) 5494 3003

Email

loddon@loddon.vic.gov.au

Website

www.loddon.vic.gov.au

Municipal Office

37 - 41 High Street Wedderburn Vic 3518

Office Hours

Monday to Friday 8.15am - 4.45pm