

LODDON

BULLETIN

A PROSPEROUS
VIBRANT AND
ENGAGED COMMUNITY



Loddon Shire 2021/22 Draft Budget

Council's 2021/22 Draft Budget maintains Council's approach of being financially responsible, while ensuring its commitment of providing a large range of services to the community.

The draft budget includes a rate increase of 1.5 per cent – in line with the Victorian Government's Fair Go Rates System. Council remains debt-free, with no loan repayments, and a continued strong cash position.

Along with the draft budget, Council's Draft Schedule of Fees and Charges, and Revenue and Rating Plan are also available for viewing. The Draft Schedule of Fees and Charges also proposes to increase fees and charges by 1.5 per cent – the same as the rate increase. The Revenue and Rating Plan proposes the revenue raising framework for Council for the next four years.

The draft budget allocates a capital expenditure program of \$6.92 million, which includes \$3.07 million towards roads, \$350,000 for urban and road drainage, and \$240,000 for footpaths. The total figure also includes \$1.33 million for leisure and community facilities.

Additionally, the budget includes a \$300,000 allocation for works associated with the Building Asset Management Plan and full funding of Council's ongoing commitment to community planning of \$750,000.

Council utilises waste services charges to fully recover the cost of Council's waste services and provide for future rehabilitation costs. Due to the increased cost of kerbside waste and recycling disposal, along with new licencing requirements, waste services charges will increase. The cost of a 140-litre bin will increase to \$354 (from \$322) and a 240-litre bin to \$481 (from \$437). The cost for a 240-litre kerbside recycling bin will increase to \$134 (from \$122).



Council's 2021/22 draft budget includes a capital expenditure program of \$6.92 million, including \$3.07 million towards roads.

Copies of the 2021/22 Draft Budget, Draft Schedule of Fees and Charges and Draft Revenue and Rating Plan are available from Council's website at www.loddon.vic.gov.au/Our-Council/Financial-reports

Copies are also available for inspection at Council's Wedderburn office during business hours or can be posted out on request by calling Council's Customer Service on (03) 5494 1200.

Submissions to the draft budget have closed. Council will meet to consider any submissions received at the Council Forum on Tuesday 8 June 2021.

Council will then consider adoption of the 2021/22 Draft Budget at the Ordinary Meeting of Council on Tuesday 22 June 2021 and will give public notice of its decision.

QUARTERLY BULLETIN
JUNE 2021

FEATURED

2021/22 Draft Budget
Available now

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Birds Eye View mural project launch

Mayor Neil Beattie has launched the Wedderburn Open Air Gallery project at an official event on 6 May.

The Mayor congratulated the working group, artists Andrew Bourke, Jimmy Dvate, Bryan Itch and the community of Wedderburn on the project.

The Wedderburn Open Air Gallery project originated from local artist Ross Currie, who approached Wedderburn Tourism regarding developing murals around the town.

Following initial feedback, the project's working group identified the Wedderburn Streetscape Improvement Project vicinity as the initial location for the murals.

Wedderburn Community House, in conjunction with the working group, sourced funding from Creative Victoria to establish five murals - forming the open air gallery and providing a point of difference for visitors to explore the town. The theme is "Birds Eye View", as Wedderburn is identified as a mecca for birdlife.

The launch event was held at Wedderburn's Uniting Church, which features the project's sixth mural. The mural was funded by the local community and Council's Community Grants scheme.

The Wedderburn Open Air Gallery mural project provides another quality visitor experience for Loddon Valley.

The murals will establish Wedderburn as a linkage between the North East Victoria Silo Art Trail and the Wimmera Mallee Silo Art Trail through the accredited Loddon Visitor Information Centre providing information on both regions.



The mural on the Uniting Church at Wedderburn. This is the sixth mural as part of the Wedderburn Open Air Gallery project.

The event also saw the launch of the Storytown "Birds Eye View" podcast. The podcast tells the story of the Mistletoe Bird mural on the Wedderburn Newsagency wall.

Along with the story of the Mistletoe, the podcast features Jeroen van Veen, local conservationist and amateur ornithologist, and Andrew Bourke telling the story of artist Jimmy Dvate who painted the mural.

The podcast is designed to provide an entertaining experience for tourists travelling through the Shire and locals alike.

Visitors and locals can listen to the podcast via the Visit Loddon Valley website at: www.bendigoregion.com.au/visit-loddon-valley/birds-eye-view-murals-wedderburn

The podcast is also available via: <https://storytowns.com.au/birdtour/>

Citizenship congratulations

On 27 April, Mayor Neil Beattie officiated at a Citizenship Ceremony.

Cr Beattie presented citizenship certificates to Mr Russel Roma Ceballos (formerly from the Philippines), Mr Binu Karuvelil Varghese, Ms Saritha Sajan and their daughter Grace Karuvelil Binu (all formerly from India), Mrs Mary Grace Loosley (Philippines), Mr Mohammed Mubarak Meera Sahib (India) and Mr Amine Rasbey (Lebanon).

All made the Australian Citizenship Pledge during a ceremony at the Council Chambers.

At the time of writing, another Citizenship Ceremony was due to be held on 25 May.

Further details regarding the ceremony will be provided in the September edition of the *Loddon Bulletin*.



Mayor Neil Beattie (middle) pictured with our new Australian citizens following the Citizenship Ceremony on 27 April.

Policy welcomes community engagement

A new policy adopted by Council at its Ordinary Meeting in February encourages greater engagement by the community.

The Community Engagement Policy, which is a requirement under the new Local Government Act, aims to communicate how Council will inform, consult with, involve, collaborate and empower the community in various engagement activities undertaken by Council.

A group of community members assisted with the development of the policy, and will continue to monitor and review the policy over the next six months.

A copy of the Community Engagement Policy is available on Council's website:

www.loddon.vic.gov.au/Our-Council/Community-Engagement/The-Loddon-Project/Community-Engagement-Policy

Feedback on the policy is welcome anytime. This feedback will help Council to continuously improve its approach to engagement.

Feedback regarding the policy can be provided via loddon@loddon.vic.gov.au or by calling Council on (03) 5494 1200.

A word from our Mayor

As highlighted in this edition of the *Loddon Bulletin*, Council's key financial documents are now available for viewing.

These key financial documents are Council's 2021/22 Draft Budget, Draft Schedule of Fees and Charges, and Revenue and Rating Plan.

The draft budget maintains Council's approach of being financially responsible, while ensuring its commitment of providing a large range of services to our community.

While feedback to these documents has now closed, I encourage you to take the time to read the documents on Council's website at www.loddon.vic.gov.au/Our-Council/Financial-reports

Progress continues on the development of the new four-year Council Plan, including asking our community to provide their thoughts on Council priorities. This has included a community survey (published in the March edition of the *Loddon Bulletin*), and community drop-in sessions held in May.

This community feedback will help in the development of the new Council Plan, which guides Council's priorities over the next four years. The Plan will outline objectives and strategies for achieving the direction along with initiatives for services, infrastructure and amenity to achieve them.

Finally, it was an honour to officiate at a Citizenship Ceremony on 27 April and present citizenship certificates to our newest Australian citizens. All made the Australian Citizenship Pledge during the ceremony at the Council Chambers. You can read more about the citizenship ceremony in this edition of the *Loddon Bulletin*.



Volunteer with the Loddon Visitor Information Centre

The Loddon Visitor Information Centre is inviting volunteers to become part of an enthusiastic team that enjoys helping visitors and sharing knowledge of the region.

Rewards for volunteering are free familiarisation tours that are fully catered, a Christmas function, team building and friendship, knowledge of the area, and free internet access when volunteering. You will also meet new residents or visitors from around Australia and overseas.

Volunteers are required on Sundays or public holidays and your commitment can be limited to as little as three hours a year. Shifts are from 10am to 1pm and 1pm to 4pm. Volunteers can nominate their preferred month and shift.

The Loddon Visitor Information Centre is coordinated by the Loddon Shire, including Tourism and Marketing Officer Robyn Vella, Tourism and Marketing Assistant Shelby Hutchinson, and Loddon Visitor Information Centre Officer Pauline Brown, all of whom are passionate about the growth of tourism in our region.



To get an information pack and learn more about this fantastic service please contact the Loddon Visitor Information Centre on (03) 5494 1257.

New residents are more than welcome to volunteer – the tourism team will teach you the knowledge of our region.

National Volunteer Week 2021

Community Asset Committee members attended a range of local information events held across Loddon Shire as part of National Volunteer Week from 17 to 21 May.



Launched by Mayor Neil Beattie, the National Volunteer Week information events revolved around governance and dispute resolution, insurance, attracting new volunteers, hire and user group agreements, and involving the community.

Community Asset Committees consist of dedicated community members and have been created to manage facilities within the Loddon Shire in accordance with Section 65 of the *Victorian Local Government Act 2020*.

"Our Community Asset Committee members do an outstanding job. Their contribution, through the volunteering of their time, and their dedication and passion enrich our community," Cr Beattie said.

Cr Beattie also launched Loddon Shire Council's Volunteer Induction Manual. The manual has been compiled to help volunteers - especially new volunteers with Community Asset Committees, to understand a little about what they can expect and where they can turn for help.

Council is also planning local events for National Student Volunteer Week in August, which acknowledges the impact student volunteers make through volunteering.

On 5 November will be International Volunteers Managers Day, which recognises the important work of those who lead volunteers in the process of effective volunteering.

Sunday 5 December is International Volunteers Day. The day raises awareness of the important role volunteers play in responding to challenges facing the world.



Works update

A glance at some of the works around Loddon Shire:

Roads

- Works have been completed on the reconstruction and widening of two kilometres of Bridgewater Raywood Road (seven kilometres out of Bridgewater).
- Works for the reconstruction, widening and sealing of Laanecoorie Newbridge Road are in progress.
- Council's annual reseal program has been completed. Around 32 kilometres of roads were resealed under the program.
- The upgrade and sealing of 3.2 kilometres of Whites Pit Road at Calivil is in progress.

Township street improvements

- Construction is in progress on the installation of footpaths in locations across the Shire.
- Works on the installation of kerb and channel and associated works at Lake View and Andrews Street in Boort is anticipated to get underway in June.
- Works are complete on the Heales Street drainage project at Inglewood.
- Works are underway on new footpaths, kerb and channel, and some underground drainage at High Street in Wedderburn (from near the 24 Karat Café to the police station corner).

Local bridge and culvert construction

- Works are complete on culvert replacement on the Seven Months Creek in Kelly Street, Pyramid Hill (near the secondary college).
- Works on the Baileys Road Bridge replacement over Bullock Creek in Derby are underway.



Works are complete on culvert replacement (pictured above) on the Seven Months Creek in Kelly Street, Pyramid Hill.

Tenders

- The tender has been awarded for the upgrade and replacement of the culvert in Godfrey Street, Wedderburn.

Township signs

- On-ground works are in progress on feature township entry signs for Wedderburn.

Defect rectification

From 1 July 2020 to 31 March 2021, 8,026 defects were rectified, with 98.3 per cent of all defects (7,887 in total) completed before their due date.

Maintenance grading program

From 1 July 2020 to 31 March 2021, 3,248 maintenance grading work actions were completed resulting in 1,886 kilometres of grading and 4,699 kilometres of inspections.

Inspection summary

From 1 July 2020 to 31 March 2021, 592 inspections were completed (5,550 defects raised), with 98.1 per cent of all inspections completed before their due date.

Capital works

From 1 July 2020 to 31 March 2021, Council completed:

- 15.3 kilometres of local gravel roads resheets and shoulder resheets
- 12.8 kilometres of local road construction
- Five upgrades to local bridges and culverts
- 27 building improvements to Council-owned buildings.

Caravan park upgrades

Upgrade works at the Wedderburn Pioneer Caravan Park, Pyramid Hill Caravan Park and Boort Lakes Holiday Park are almost complete.

New amenities blocks for all three caravan parks, which were constructed off-site, have been delivered and works to connect the blocks to services are underway.

Upgrades to the caravan parks include road and drainage works, powerhead upgrades, solar lighting and new amenities blocks.

The final part of the project yet to be done is upgrades to three cabins at the Wedderburn Pioneer Caravan Park.

Waste info app to discontinue

The Loddon Mallee Waste and Resource Recovery Group has made the hard decision to discontinue the Loddon Mallee Waste Info App as of 30 June 2021, following a review of the group's projects and activities.

Information from the app will still be available via Council's website. This includes features such as the collection calendar and A to Z material list.

For more information regarding waste collection in the Loddon Shire, visit:

www.loddon.vic.gov.au/For-residents/Your-home/Garbage-and-recycling

Community projects update

A snapshot of community projects happening around our Shire:

- The Inglewood Football and Netball Lighting Upgrade is complete. The project saw the installation of four lighting towers at the football oval and four lighting towers at the netball courts (*pictured below*).



- Construction is complete on the installation of a section of path at the Little Lake Boort foreshore. The path, at the northern end of the lake, significantly reduces the number of road crossings required to circumnavigate the lake's walking track.
- Construction works have begun on new female friendly changerooms at the Bridgewater Recreation Reserve.

- A Walking Tracks and Trails Asset Management Plan is currently in development. When complete, the plan will form part of Council's Footpath Asset Management Plan and will outline levels of service, inspection regime and improvement plans.
- The installation of outdoor exercise equipment has been completed at Nolens Park in Boort, along the Nardoo Trail in Wedderburn and Kelly Park at Pyramid Hill. Shade structures over the outdoor exercise equipment have been completed at Pyramid Hill and Wedderburn, and will be installed at Boort in the coming weeks.
- Work has been completed on conserving and preserving five timber memorial boards on the south wall of the Dingee Memorial Hall. The Hall displays nine memorial boards recognising the service given by local residents in war during the past century.

East Loddon Historical Society Inc, with the support of the Dingee Memorial Hall Committee of Management, Mitiamo and East Loddon District RSL sub branch, Dingee Progress Association, and Tandarra Progress Association sought the advice of arts conservator Jude Schahinger to preserve and protect the boards from further deterioration and where possible, restore the original finish. The project was supported through the Victorian Government's *Restoring Community War Memorials and Avenues of Honour* grant, which was auspiced by Council.

Community planning moves ahead

Council's Community Planning Officer has recently visited the majority of the 17 Community Planning groups, with remaining groups to be contacted in the coming weeks. These visits have been an excellent opportunity for each group to discuss the implementation of the Community Planning Framework, share their successes and express ideas for the future.

Overall, the Community Planning groups are progressing through the governance requirements of the Community Planning Framework, which include incorporation and formal Council recognition. To support each Community Planning group, Council is providing an annual allocation towards annual administration and insurance costs.

Once formally recognised by Council, groups that have developed a new community plan or undertaken a full review of the existing community plan will be invited to present their plan to Councillors.

The Calivil Recreation Reserve Inc. was the first to present its Community Plan to Councillors in May under the new Framework.

Despite the interruption from the COVID-19 pandemic, a number of community planning projects have been completed, including:

- Installation of a photovoltaic (solar) system at the Tarnagulla Public Hall. The Tarnagulla Public Hall Committee project managed the procurement and installation.
- External painting and minor works at the Rheola Public Hall, project managed by the Hall committee.
- Completion of the connection to the South West Loddon Pipeline, installation of tanks and internal pipeline by the Rheola Pioneers Memorial Park Reserve Committee.
- Termite repair and painting of the Arnold Public Hall, project managed by the Arnold Hall Committee of Management.
- Successful completion of the Birds Eye View project via Wedderburn Community Plan funding allocation, auspiced by the Wedderburn Development Association (more about the launch is in this edition of the *Loddon Bulletin*).

Upcoming Council meetings

Ordinary Meetings are usually held on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 3pm.

Council meetings are held at the Loddon Shire Council Chambers in Wedderburn (entry from Peters Street), behind the Council office.

An audio livestream of the meeting is available to the public via Council's Facebook page: www.facebook.com/LoddonShire

Upcoming Council meetings:

- Tuesday 22 June
- Tuesday 27 July
- Tuesday 24 August
- Tuesday 28 September

Upcoming immunisation sessions

Immunisation sessions will be held at Boort Senior Citizens Centre, Dingee Bush Nursing Centre, Inglewood Maternal and Child Health Centre, Pyramid Hill Senior Citizens Centre and Serpentine Council offices on:

Thursday 10 June

9.30am Inglewood
11.30am Dingee
2.00pm Pyramid Hill

Thursday 8 July

9.15am Serpentine
11.15am Boort

Thursday 12 August

9.30am Inglewood
11.30am Dingee
2.00pm Pyramid Hill

Thursday 9 September

9.15am Serpentine
11.15am Boort

Appointments are required. To make an appointment for an infant's immunisation, call Council's Serpentine office on (03) 5494 1201.

Bookings can also be made through Council's website:

www.loddon.vic.gov.au/Our-Services/Services-for-our-younger-residents/Immunisations

Please bring your Medicare card and Child Record Book to each immunisation session and allow 15 minutes waiting time following immunisation.

Loddon Healthy Minds Network art competition

Continuing to raise awareness of mental health within the Loddon community, the Loddon Healthy Minds Art Competition is on again in 2021.

Categories include an open section for those aged over 18 years (or under 18 if no longer attending secondary school), upper secondary students in years 9 to 12 and middle school students in years/grades 5 to 8. There are also two junior students' categories – grades 3 and 4 and grades Prep to 2.

The competition also includes literary entries between 500 to 1,000 words.

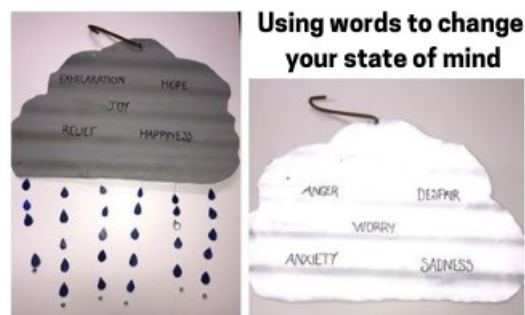
To find out more, including this year's themes and get an entry form, visit www.loddonhealthyminds.com.au/events/item/124-2021-art-competition

If you would like to receive an entry form via mail please contact Council's Community Wellbeing Officer on (03) 5494 1230.

Entry forms are also available for students via participating schools.

All entries are to be completed and delivered to the Loddon Shire office at Wedderburn or Serpentine by the first Monday in August 2021.

If COVID-19 restrictions do not permit delivery of items, alternative arrangements can be made by contacting Council's Community Wellbeing Officer on the number above. You can also call the Community Wellbeing Officer for any other enquiries about the competition or email: healthyminds@loddon.vic.gov.au



2020 BEST IN SHOW

Griffin Lanyon

(Above): Loddon Healthy Minds Network Art Competition Best In Show 2020 - Griffin Lanyon.

Shire offices

Wedderburn 41 High St, Wedderburn 3518 **T:** (03) 5494 1200 **F:** (03) 5494 3003
Monday to Friday 8.15am to 4.45pm

Serpentine 37 Peppercorn Way, Serpentine 3516 **T:** (03) 5494 1201 **F:** (03) 5437 8407
Monday to Friday 8.15am to 4.45pm

Email: loddon@loddon.vic.gov.au **Web:** www.loddon.vic.gov.au

Your Councillors



Mayor Cr Neil Beattie
Boort Ward
0427 552 468



Cr Wendy Murphy
Inglewood Ward
0436 457 170



Cr Linda Jungwirth
Tarnagulla Ward
0428 259 082



Cr Dan Straub
Terrick Ward
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