**Notice is given that a Special Meeting of Council will be held on:**

Date:        **Friday, 22 October 2021**

Time:        **9.00am**

Location:    **Virtual meeting, video live streamed to the public**

# AGENDA

# Special Council Meeting

# 22 October 2021

# Order Of Business

## 1    OPENING AFFIRMATION

"We, the Councillors of the Loddon Shire, declare that we will carry out our duties in the best interests of the community, and through collective leadership will maintain the highest standards of good governance."

## 2    ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

"The Loddon Shire Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we are gathered and pays its respects to their Elders both past and present."

## 3    APOLOGIES

## 4    DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

## 5        DECISION REPORTS

### 5.1        ADOPTION OF COUNCIL'S ROAD MANAGEMENT PLAN

| | |
|---|---|
| **File Number:** | **FOL/19/432732** |
| **Author:** | **David Southcombe, Manager Assets and Infrastructure** |
| **Authoriser:** | **Steven Phillips, Director Operations** |
| **Attachments:** | **1.     Attachment 1- Update to defect intervention levels and response times for roads and bridges** |
| | **2.     Attachment 2 - Update to defect intervention levels and response times for footpaths** |
| | **3.     Attachment 3 - Road Management Plan** |

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**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council:

1.     Adopt the Road Management Plan

2.     Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to certify that the proposed changes to the Road Management Plan results in a standard that is higher than a relevant standard previously determined under section 41 of the Road Management Act 2004.

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**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

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

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

The Draft Road Management Plan was discussed at the October 2021 Council Forum.

**BACKGROUND**

Council has adopted a Road Management Plan (the Plan) in accordance with the Section 54 of the Road Management Act 2004 (the Act) to manage the operation and maintenance of its road and footpath assets. This plan outlines the inspection regime, defect intervention and allowable time for Council to respond to any defect in the road and footpath assets.

Pursuant to Section 54 of the Act and Part 3, Division 1 of Road Management (General) Regulations 2016 (the Regulation), if a municipal Council develops and publishes a Road Management Plan, it is required to conduct and complete a review of its Road Management Plan during the same period as it is preparing its Council Plan under the Local Government Act 2020.

In addition, pursuant to Part 3, Division 2, Regulation 10(1) and (2) of the Regulation, any amendment that decreases the standard previously determined under Section of 41 of the Act, must be published in the Government Gazette and local newspaper, and any person who is aggrieved by the proposed amendment shall be given an opportunity to make a submission on the proposed amendment.

However, pursuant to Part 3, Division 2, Regulation 11(1) a road authority is not required to give notice under Regulation 10 if the Chief Executive Officer of the road authority certifies in writing that the proposed amendment to the Road Management Plan results in a determination under section 41 of the Act of a standard that is higher than a relevant standard previously determined under section 41 of the Act.

### ISSUES/DISCUSSION

The significant proposed changes following Council officer's review are new categories of inspection.  The new categories are:

- Creation of the "Fallen branches/trees on road shoulder" category for defect intervention levels and response times for roads and bridges, see Attachment 1 for details.

- Creation of inspection frequencies for pedestrian bridges under the defect intervention levels and response times for footpaths, see Attachment 2 for details.

These changes result in an increase in inspection frequency and consequently the service levels as determined under Section 41 of the Act will not require Council to provide a notice of amendment.

An update was undertaken on Table 5 within the plan to the gravel collector roads, gravel access roads, and gravel minor roads grading frequency categories by adding "Inspected to confirm if grading is required" prior to the frequencies listed.  For example, the gravel collector roads category previously was "Twice per year" and has been updated to "Inspected to confirm if grading is required twice per year".  This was to reduce confusion between the descriptors in this table and the text description in section 9.4.3 where it says:

*Prior to commencing grading on an individual road the road is inspected by the Team Leader or grader driver to confirm that grading is required, based on the intervention standards in appendix 12.6 - Defect intervention levels and response times for roads and bridges.*

*Completed maintenance grading is recorded in Reflect and updated by Works Department. For each individual road the grading crew identify as requiring grading, the date on which grading was undertaken is recorded.*

There is no material change on levels of service as a result of the updated text in Table 5.

### COST/BENEFITS

The proposed amendments will not create any additional cost to the Council. The service levels defined in the Plan are mainly unchanged from its previous version and the amendments formalise any practice that Council has been undertaking in managing its road and footpath assets.

The proposed changes in the Plan reflect the changes occurred in the organisation in the past few years, making the Plan a more accurate and reliable document.

### RISK ANALYSIS

There is no risk identified in the adoption of the proposed Plan. However, it is a statutory and a regulatory requirement for Council to review its Road Management Plan in accordance with the Act.

The impact of the proposed changes in the risk matrix and the service levels are deemed to be insignificant and will remain largely unchanged in relation to the existing plan.

### CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

The proposed changes are because of significant discussion and consultation between the Assets & Infrastructure Department and the Works Department. In addition, the Plan was discussed at the Management Executive Group meeting and the October Council Forum.

## Attachment 1: Update to defect intervention levels and response times for roads and bridges

New category is highlighted in yellow

| Defect | Intervention level | Response time | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Sealed roads | Gravel roads | Minor roads | Formed roads | Unformed roads |
| | | RSC,TSC,RSA,TSA | RGC, RGA, TGA | RGM, TGM | RF,TF | RUF,TUF |
| **Vegetation** | | | | | | |
| Roadside vegetation, tree, bushes and grass | Fallen branches/trees on road surface | 72 hrs | 4 wks | 4 wks | 3 mths | 12 mths |
| | Fallen branches/trees on road shoulder | 4 wks | 4 wks | 3 mths | N/A | N/A |
| | Branches, bushes or saplings obstruct safe intersection sight distance or restrict view of regulatory signs | 4 wks | 4 wks | 3 mths | N/A | N/A |
| | Branches, bushes or saplings obstruct restrict view of warning or hazard signs. | 3 mths | 3 mths | 3 mths | 6 mths | N/A |
| | Roadside vegetation obstructs sight distance at railway level crossings. | 4 wks | 4 wks | 3 mths | 3 mths | N/A |
| | Branches infringe into the vegetation clearance envelope | 12 mths | 12 mths | 12 mths | 12 mths | 12 mths |
| | Sight distances obstructed by grass. | 4 wks | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| | Grass >300mm high on shoulders. | 12 mths | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |

# Attachment 2: Update to defect intervention levels and response times for footpaths

New categories are highlighted in yellow

| Defect | Intervention levels | Response times | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | | Business Footpath | Strategic Footpath | Residential Footpaths |
| Pedestrian Bridges | | | | |
| Damaged bridge component | When damage affects structural performance. Missing or damaged bridge deck plank. | 3 mths | 3 mths | 3 mths |
| Obstructed stream flow | >25% | 6 mths | 6 mths | 6 mths |

# LODDON SHIRE COUNCIL

## ROAD MANAGEMENT PLAN

# DOCUMENT INFORMATION

| | |
|---|---|
| DOCUMENT TYPE: | Strategic document |
| DOCUMENT STATUS: | |
| POLICY OWNER POSITION: | Manager Assets & Infrastructure |
| INTERNAL COMMITTEE ENDORSEMENT: | Not applicable |
| APPROVED BY: | Council |
| DATE ADOPTED: | |
| VERSION NUMBER: | 1 |
| REVIEW DATE: | |
| DATE RESCINDED: | |
| RELATED STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS, POLICIES OR PROCEDURES: | Road Asset Management Plan Roadside Management Plan |
| RELATED LEGISLATION: | Road Management Act 2004 |
| EVIDENCE OF APPROVAL: | |

_____
Signed by Chief Executive Officer

FILE LOCATION:

**Strategic documents are amended from time to time, therefore you should not rely on a printed copy being the current version. Please consult the Loddon Shire website to ensure that the version you are using is up to date.**

**This document is available in alternative formats (e.g. larger font) if requested.**

# CONTENTS

## 1   PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to provide details of Council's policies, service standards and actions relating to the management of its road and footpath network, specifically the routine inspection and maintenance of road and footpath related assets.

Part 4, Division 5, section 49 of the Road Management Act 2004 enables Council to produce a Road Management Plan (RMP).

Section 50 of the Road Management Act 2004 states:

"The purposes of a Road Management Plan are having regard to the principal object of road management and the works and infrastructure management principles:

- to establish a management system for the road management functions of a road authority which is based on policy and operational objectives and available resources; and
- to set the relevant standard in relation to the discharge of duties in the performance of those road management functions".

In accordance with Section 39 of the Road Management Act, this plan will be regarded as a policy decision by Council in relation to the performance of its statutory road management function. As a result, it may be used in the defence of any common law proceedings in relation to the exercise of that road management function.

## 2   BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

The various actions and levels of service identified for delivery under this plan require the provision of both operational (e.g. staff and equipment) and financial resources. In order for Council to achieve full compliance with its RMP, service level, inspection or intervention targets must be appropriately matched to available resources.

Where it is identified that operational capacity may be insufficient to meet the required demands imposed by this plan, allocation of additional resources or alternatively modification of the plans requirements may be necessary to ensure service level targets are achievable and sustainable.

Resources deployed to achieve the objectives and deliverables of the RMP are predominately provided through the Works Department, and subsequently funded under the local road maintenance provisions within Council's annual budget.

As part of the annual budget development process, each year a review of road maintenance resource demand and distribution is conducted. This review examines a number of factors in determining appropriate resource levels to facilitate achievement of the RMP objectives. Such factors include:

- historical compliance against service targets
- competing resource demands or works commitments e.g. maintenance work vs. capital renewal
- alternative work methodologies, treatments or productivity improvement opportunities
- staff migration or vacancy levels.

A subsequent road maintenance budget bid is prepared annually by the Manager Works and submitted for Council consideration as part of the budget development process.

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## 3   RISK ANALYSIS

Determination of appropriate inspection regimes, intervention timeframes and service levels as specified within the RMP, is largely based upon the identification of risks associated with the existence or operation of various road elements including pavements, trees, level crossings and footpaths.

In assessing the level of risk, consideration is given to the likelihood of road users encountering adverse road conditions, e.g. defects such as potholes or fallen trees, and the likely consequence of such exposure. The combination of identified risk and availability of resources is then used to establish appropriate intervals between routine inspections as well as the determination of acceptable timeframes to undertake necessary repairs or remedial works.

In developing the RMP, Council has given careful consideration to the setting of intervention standards (i.e. at what point Council will undertake repair works, e.g. size and depth of potholes) and response times for rectification of defects (i.e. how long does Council have to undertake the required repair), so as to fulfil general community expectations and control the level of risk to road users.

The plan also provides a mechanism to deal with exceptional circumstances where the requirements of the plan cannot be met, such as during times of natural disaster. In general the plan establishes maintenance standards, inspection regimes and response times which are affordable, deliverable and responsible.

The RMP may provide Council with a defence mechanism against possible litigation in relation to the execution of its road management functions.

## 4   COSTING AND FUNDING OF ACTIONS

The ability to accurately cost deliverables under the RMP is somewhat compromised by the vast, variable and for the most part unpredictable nature of the road network. To a large extent the overall condition of the road network, including ancillary assets such as footpaths, is accurately known and regularly assessed, however the maintenance effort required across the network is subject to rapid or significant fluctuation.

Problems in estimating required funding to deliver the RMP stem from the variable rate of pavement or asset deterioration due to such contributing factors as:

- weather (drought, flood, rain, seasonal variations)
- topography and geology (e.g. plains vs. hills or clay vs. sand)
- surrounding land use and development
- changing transport trends (e.g. larger trucks and varying transport trends).

Meeting the requirements specified within the RMP will undoubtedly incur significant operational expense. Monitoring of compliance against RMP targets as well as operational expenditure on road maintenance activities is routinely conducted. These measures provide an indication as to how well the targets specified within the RMP match resource availability.

Historical trends are also utilised in setting the annual road maintenance budget as discussed in section 2 above.

## 5   INTRODUCTION

### 5.1   Contents of Road Management Plan

A Road Management Plan, under the Ministerial Code of Practice - Road Management Plans should include:

- a description of the types of infrastructure for which a road authority is responsible
- a description of the inspections required for different types of road infrastructure
- the standard or target condition to be achieved in the maintenance and repair of different types or road infrastructure
- details of the management system, which is established or is to be established and and implemented by the road authority to discharge its duty to inspect, maintain and repair infrastructure for which it is responsible.

### 5.2   Scope of assets included

This plan is applicable to the following assets (as at 30/6/2021), for which Council is the Responsible Road Authority:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 954 | km | sealed road and street pavements |
| 2577 | km | unsealed gravel road and street pavements |
| 1228 | km | formed or unformed roads and streets |
| 219 | No. | bridges, major culverts and structures |
| 37 | km | constructed footpaths |
| 62 | km | kerb and channel |

These assets are:

- listed in Council's infrastructure asset registers
- located on public roads, listed in the Register of Public Roads, for which Council is the Coordinating Road Authority.

This Plan also applies to road and footpath assets, at other locations where Council is the Responsible Road Authority, as determined by section 37 of the Road Management Act 2004 and the Code of Practice for Operational Responsibility for Public Roads. For the purposes of this code "urban area" is defined in Section 3 - Definitions in the Road Management Act 2004.

This plan is not intended to apply to un-constructed, private or non-Council assets such as foot trodden tracks, private driveways on government road reserves or roads on private land.

This plan does not include other infrastructure on roads as detailed in 7.12 Other infrastructure on roads.

This plan does not include highways, arterial roads and main roads for which VicRoads is the coordinating authority. A list of such roads is detailed in 12.8. However, this plan is applicable to the footpaths in the town within these road reserves.

### 5.3   Stakeholders

Stakeholders with an interest in the use or management of municipal public roads and road related infrastructure include:

- the general community
- residents and businesses adjoining the road network
- pedestrians, including those with disabilities and the elderly with restricted mobility
- users of a range of miscellaneous smaller, lightweight vehicles such as motorised buggies, wheel chairs, prams and bicycles
- vehicle users such as trucks, buses, commercial vehicles, cars and motor cycles
- tourists and visitors to the area
- emergency authorities such as Police, Fire, Ambulance and SES
- utilities as prescribed in Section 3 of the Road Management Act 2004
- Council as the Responsible Road Authority.

### 5.4    Duty of the road user

Under the Road Management Act 2004 and the Road Safety Act 1986, road users have an obligation to drive or use roads in a safe manner having regard to the relevant conditions/factors.

Section 17A, Obligation of road users, of the Road Safety Act 1986 specifies that:

1.  A person who drives a motor vehicle on a highway must drive in a safe manner having regard to all relevant factors.

2.  A road user other than a person driving a motor vehicle must use a public highway in a safe manner having regard to all relevant factors.

The relevant factors include (without limiting the generality):
- the physical characteristics of the road
- the prevailing weather conditions
- the level of visibility
- the condition of any vehicle the person is driving or riding on the highway
- the prevailing traffic conditions
- the relevant road laws and advisory signs
- the physical and mental condition of the driver or road user.

A road user must:
- take reasonable care to avoid any conduct that may endanger the safety or welfare of other road users
- take reasonable care to avoid any conduct that may damage road infrastructure and non-road infrastructure on the road reserve
- take reasonable care to avoid conduct that may harm the environment of the road reserve."

### 5.5    Property owner obligations

#### 5.5.1    Driveways

The Road Management Act 2004, provides that a road authority is not liable for cost of construction or maintenance of private driveways, on road reserves, that provide access to the public road from adjoining land. Landholders shall be required to obtain consent for construction or reconfiguration of driveways from the Coordinating Road Authority or Council.

Driveways in town areas are the responsibility of the landholders, specifically the:
- slabs or culverts over kerb and channel
- layback through kerb
- driveway between kerb and edge of footpath
- driveway infill between edge of footpath and property line.

In rural areas and in towns where no kerb and channel exists, landholders are responsible for:
- entrance culverts over open drains
- driveway from edge of road pavement to property line (footpath is excluded in town area).
- lengths of driveway which may extend along a government road reserve for the purposes of accessing a preferred property entrance point as opposed to the nearest point to the existing recognised road network.

The landholder is responsible for maintaining the driveway, and the immediate surrounds impacted by the driveway, in a safe condition.

### 5.6    Terms and definitions

Unless the context otherwise requires, terms used in this Road Management Plan have the same meaning as defined in the Road Management Act 2004.

For the purpose of this plan the following additional terms are defined:

"Defect" is a localised deficiency or fault in a sub-asset e.g. pothole.

"Intervention level" is the point at which it is determined that a defect has deteriorated beyond an acceptable level and requires rectification e.g. nominal depth or diameter of pothole.

"Hazard" is a defect or circumstance:
- which may impact on road user safety or
- has a required response time of 72 hours.

"Inspection frequency" is the period of time between the due dates of successive inspections.

"Patrol area" is a designated area within which the maintenance activities of a specific work group are undertaken. There are four work groups operating within Loddon Shire.

"Inspection areas" are subdivisions of Patrol areas, within which roads are grouped for coordination of proactive inspections.

## 6    ASSET MANAGEMENT POLICY FRAMEWORK

### 6.1    Asset Management Policy

Council's Asset Management Policy outlines a framework for the management of Council's substantial asset base in a sustainable, co-ordinated and structured way.

Council will maximise the potential of infrastructure through efficient and effective asset management practices to meet its responsibilities to provide a level of service to the community that responds to its needs and to provide and maintain community infrastructure in a condition that supports the services provided.

### 6.2    Council Plan

The Council Plan outlines the Loddon Community Vision and Council mission. The development and implementation of a responsible road management plan is critical in performing the role and achieving the outcome as outlined in the Loddon community vision and Council mission of the Council Plan.

### 6.3    Relationship with other strategic documents

The Road Management Plan is a key component of Council's planning and asset management process. Figure 1 below illustrates the relationship between the Road Management Plan and other strategic and operational Council documents.

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**Figure 1 - Relationship between Road Management Plan and other Council strategic documents.**
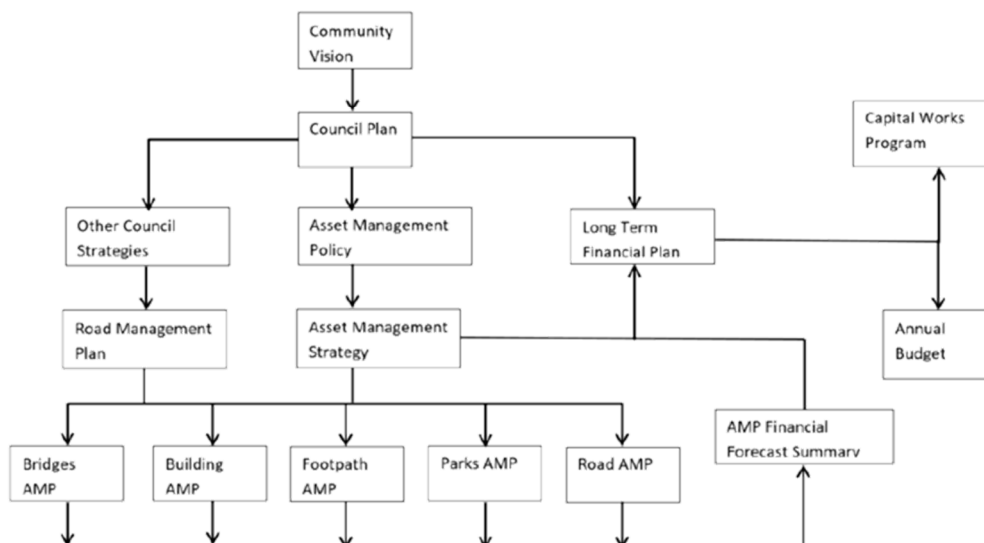


## 6.4   Asset management budget and program development

Funding for local road infrastructure competes against a range of other Council services including HACC, Maternal Child Health, Regional Agribusiness, Economic Development, Tourism, Local Law, Urban Drainage, Waste Management, Recreation and Regional Library Services.

Annual funding for the various Council services is based on the Long term Financial Plan, modified in consideration of current priorities, community and other forecast needs.

When developing content for capital infrastructure or road maintenance programs, consideration is given to Council's Risk Management Policy, with priority given to projects which meet one or more of the following criteria:

- address high priority safety risks
- maximise the life of the asset
- reduce operating cost of the asset
- meet agreed service levels
- fit with community plans
- achievable in consideration of Council's resource constraints.

The adopted annual budget provides the financial resources for funding road infrastructure maintenance.

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## 7   REGISTER OF PUBLIC ROADS

### 7.1   Road and street hierarchy

Council road assets are classified on a functional/surface type basis for Rural Roads and Town Streets.

Local Town Streets change to Rural Roads at the 100kph speed signs, or where no 100km/hr speed sign exists, at the end of the built up area.

See Appendix 12.1 Local Rural Roads and Town Streets Hierarchy

### 7.2   Footpath hierarchy

Council footpaths are classified on a functional basis.

See Appendix 12.2 Footpath Hierarchy.

### 7.3   Keeping a road register

The Road Management Act 2004 section 19 requires that "A road authority must keep a register of public roads specifying the roads in respect of which it is the coordinating road authority."

With respect to local roads, The Road Management Act 2004 section 17 (3) requires that "the relevant coordinating road authority must register on its register of public roads a road in respect of which the road authority has made a decision that the road is reasonably required for general public use."

### 7.4   Availability of Register of Public Roads

The Register of Public Roads is available for inspection, free of charge, during normal business hours at the Shire Office, 41 High St, Wedderburn and on Council's website www.loddon.vic.gov.au.

### 7.5   Criteria for roads included in Register of Public Roads

Criteria for a road to be included in Council's Register of Public Roads:
- Council must be able to be deemed the Coordinating Road Authority for the particular road, and
- the road is 'reasonably' required for general public use
- roads which are located on crown land other than road reserves, where Council enters into an arrangement with the relevant Committee of Management under section 15 of the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1975 to transfer responsibility of the road to Council

### 7.6   Criteria for roads excluded from Register of Public Roads

Roads meeting one or more of the following criteria are excluded from Council's Register of Public Roads:
- sections of road with gates or cross fences
- sections of road occupied under un-used road licence, or the like
- assets not directly associated with a road area, e.g. pathways on crown land, access roads located on land other than a road reserve such as recreation reserves access or off-road trails
- roads which are located on crown land other than road reserves, but which are not transferred to Council for operational responsiblity
- roads not reasonably required for general public use, including road reserves where there is no evidence of regular vehicular use, private roads, etc.

### 7.7   Contents of Register of Public Roads

The Register of Public Roads contains a list of roads in alphabetic order which includes:
- roads

- streets
- laneways

all of which are limited to the extent identified in Council's asset registers.

The Register of Public Roads contains the following information:
- road name
- location and extent
- date road became a public road
- classification within Road Hierarchy
- any agreements with other authorities regarding responsibility
- details of all changes to the Register and date of any such changes.

The Register of Public Roads is updated from time to time.

### 7.8   Unused (paper) roads

These are road reserves that are recorded on survey maps. They typically comprise dirt tracks. None of these roads are included in Council's Road Register. Council intends to progressively notify the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) that these roads are no longer required for public use and where appropriate recommend control revert back to the Crown Land manager.

### 7.9   Other authorities' roads within the municipality

State arterial roads including highways are included on VicRoads Register of Public Roads and are listed in 12.8.

DELWP roads and tracks and Parks Victoria roads and tracks will be on the relevant State Authority Register of Public Roads.

For state arterial roads through towns the operational responsibility is shared between VicRoads and Council. Generally through towns, VicRoads has the authority for the through traffic lanes, unobstructed flanks, kerbs and side drains, with the balance of operational responsibility allocated to Council. The Code of Practice for Operational Responsibility for Public Roads provides more detailed demarcation of responsibilities.

For arterial roads in rural areas, VicRoads is both the Coordinating Road Authority and Responsible Road Authority.

### 7.10  Boundary roads with adjoining municipalities

Boundary Agreements with adjoining municipalities were formulated and adopted in the late 1990s. Because all boundary roads are rural in nature there are no assets, such as footpaths, on the same section of boundary road reserve where operational responsibility needs to be shared. A more practical approach was adopted, with agreements being reached to equitably allot operational responsibility for full road width for specific sections of boundary roads to each municipality.

The sections of boundary roads for which Council is the Responsible Road Authority are included in Council's Register of Public Roads. Those sections for which Council is not the Responsible Road Authority are listed in the adjoining municipality's Register of Public Roads.

The boundary with Northern Grampians Shire is the centre of the Avoca River, over which there are several bridges. Northern Grampians Shire undertakes the operational responsibilities for these bridges, with costs being equally shared with Council.

Part of the boundary with Campaspe Shire is the western bank of the Bendigo Creek and Mount Hope Creek. The bridges over the Bendigo Creek are therefore solely in Campaspe Shire. Thus Campaspe Shire Council is the Coordinating and Responsible Road Authority for those structures.

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Council adopted an agreement with City of Greater Bendigo (CoGB) that they have operational responsibility for boundary roads, bridges and culverts from the intersection of Lakeys Road and Douglas Road in Shelbourne up to the intersection of Fitzpatricks Road and Loddon Valley Highway in Campbells Creek. Boundary roads north of this intersection are maintained by Council with an exception of Elmore–Raywood Road which will be maintained by CoGB.

### 7.11  Railway level crossings

The rail authority is responsible for repair of the road pavement, any lights or boom gates, and all "cross bucks", regulatory and width marker signs within 3.0m of the outside rail and as detailed in Safety Interface Agreements between road and rail authorities .

Council maintains line marking and advanced warning signs on the approaches to railway level crossings as per AS 1742.7:2007 – Manual of uniform traffic devices Part 7: Railway Crossings and the road surface beyond 3.0m from the outside rail, as detailed in Safety Interface Agreements between the road and rail authorities. Council also maintains intersection sight distance clearance within the road reserve. In some cases VicRoads is responsible for warning signs where arterial roads running parallel and adjacent to the railway line are required to have side road signage. VicRoads are the Coordinating Road Authority for major traffic control devices including regulatory signs on local and arterial roads level crossings.

### 7.12  Other infrastructure on roads

The following infrastructure may be located on various roads and streets:

1) Utility Authorities' assets including assets for, town water supply, sewerage, power supply and telecommunications which are dealt with as described in the Road Management Act 2004, the Code of Practice for Management of Infrastructure in Road Reserves, and the Road Management (Works and Infrastructure) Regulations 2005
2) private and company car parks on road reserves
3) car parks and entrances to hospitals, schools, public halls, etc.
4) private weighbridges and access to those facilities
5) other authority's weighbridges and access to those facilities
6) other private and company assets.

For infrastructure described in items 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 above the 'owners' of those assets are the responsible authority for those assets and are treated as infrastructure managers or works managers under the Road Management Act 2004.

### 7.12.1  Other authorities bridges, culverts and channels on road reserves

Across the local road network numerous open channels and drains run parallel to or pass under local roads. These channels and drains are owned or operated by water and irrigation authorities, private owners, or private schemes, generically referred to here as 'other asset owners'.

The channels and drains are the responsibility of the 'other asset owner'.

Section 3 Definitions, in the Road Management Act 2004, exclude bridges and culverts over water authorities channels or drains from the definition of road infrastructure, hence relieving Council of responsibility and directing responsibility to the 'other asset owner'.

In section 48 – Bridges, of the Code of Practice for Operational Responsibility for Public Roads under the Road Management Act 2004, the other authority is the owner of bridges and culverts over its channels and drains.

Under this section Council is responsible for maintenance of the road surface and road related infrastructure.

Table 1- Summary of responsibilities for bridges over water authority channels and drains

| Component | Maintenance | Rehabilitation, replacement or improvement |
|---|---|---|
| Bridge or culvert | 'Other Asset Owner' | 'Other Asset Owner' |
| Structure under road | 'Other Asset Owner' | 'Other Asset Owner' |
| Road warning signs | Loddon Shire Council | Loddon Shire Council |
| Road surface | Loddon Shire Council | Loddon Shire Council |
| Road pavement | Loddon Shire Council | 'Other Asset Owner' - where result of bridge defect.<br>Loddon Shire Council - where extensive pavement upgrade |
| Bridge railing | Loddon Shire Council | 'Other Asset Owner' |
| Approach guard railing | Loddon Shire Council | 'Other Asset Owner' |

## 8   LEVELS OF SERVICE

### 8.1   Community levels of service

A community satisfaction survey is undertaken annually. This survey provides Council with the community's expectation regarding all the services Council provides including roads and footpaths.

The Community Level of Service table included below is an interpretation of the results of community satisfaction surveys and other various public consultations taking into account affordability and resources available for road maintenance.

Table 2 – Community levels of service for maintenance

| Characteristic | Level of service | Level of service target | Strategy |
|---|---|---|---|
| Accessibility | Continuous access available at all reasonable times | Continuous access is available on collector and access roads except during unforeseen incidents or during emergencies. | Comply with specified levels of service within this plan and Council's Road Asset Management Plan. |
| Road Safety | Safety of road network maintained and improved. | All road assets inspected in accordance with program and faults rectified within tabled response times. | Implement provisions of Road Management Plan. |

| Characteristic | Level of service | Level of service target | Strategy |
|---|---|---|---|
| Responsiveness | Responses to customer complaints are prompt | Customer complaints and works requests are responded to within target response times in RMP and timeframes in Customer Service Charter | Implement prioritising and recording provisions of Road Management Plan |
| Quality | Roads maintained to maintenance quality targets. | Roads maintained to standards set in Intervention Standards and Response Times | Maintenance undertaken to targets in Road Management Plan |
| Affordability | Provide road maintenance in an efficient, cost effective manner. | Road maintenance program delivered within budget. | Monitor Road Management Plan and Budget and review as required. |

### 8.2    Technical levels of service

8.2.1    Maintenance levels of service

The Maintenance Level of Service for the local road network is detailed within:
- inspection regimes
- defect intervention and response tables
- maintenance grading program.

Inspection frequency tables may be found at Appendix 12.3 - Road and Street Inspection Regime and Appendix 12.4 - Footpath Inspection Regime. These tables provide details regarding the following levels of service:
- inspection type
- inspection frequency for particular Road Hierarchies.

Defect intervention and response tables may be found at Appendix 12.6 - Defect Intervention Levels and Response Times for Roads and Bridges and Appendix 12.7 - Defect Intervention Levels and Response Times for Footpaths. These tables provide the following levels of service detail:
- type of defect
- defect intervention level
- rectification response time
- the maintenance grading program (See Section 9.4.3) provides details of grading frequency for individual road hierarchies.

Maintenance is limited to the extent detailed within Table 6 in section 9.

## 9   MAINTENANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

### 9.1   Maintenance management system

The Road Management Act 2004 provides for Council to establish a management system for the road management functions of a road authority which is based on policy and operational objectives and available resources.

Council's Maintenance Management System involves a process of:
- enquiry
- inspection
  - proactive
  - safety - hazard
  - reactive
- prioritising identified works
- programming maintenance works
- recording
- review

The maintenance management system is summarised in figures 2 and 3, of this plan.

Council uses the application "Reflect" developed by Asset Edge as its Maintenance Management System for roads, bridges, streets and footpaths. Reflect enables:
- scheduling and recording of both programmed and reactive field inspections
- recording of defects
- prioritising of rectification works
- issuing works orders
- signing off on repairs
- reporting on compliance with inspection regimes and repair response times.

### 9.2   Inspections

Inspections are focused towards identification of:
- defects for inclusion in maintenance programs
- hazards requiring urgent response.

Inspections on roads, streets, bridges and footpaths undertaken include:
- safety/ hazard Inspections
- defect Inspections.

Inspection regimes were determined by reviewing past inspection practices and balancing a responsible approach with affordability.

The specified inspection regimes are considered appropriate as Council's local sealed rural roads have relatively low traffic volumes which range from less than 100 vehicles per day (vpd) to 500 vpd.

Formed and Unformed Roads are not proactively inspected.

Safety/hazard Inspections are undertaken concurrently with programmed road defect inspections and on a reactive basis in response to customer requests.

Inspection types and inspection frequencies for each road and footpath hierarchy and for bridges are detailed in Appendix 12.3 - Road and street inspection regime and Appendix 12.4 - Footpath inspection regime.

9.2.1   Safety/hazard inspections

Hazards are identified during nominated defect inspection cycles and have 72 hour response time in the defect intervention and response tables as seen within Appendix 12.6 - Defect intervention levels and response times for roads and bridges and Appendix 12.7 - Defect intervention levels and response times for footpaths.

9.2.2   Defect inspections

Defects to be identified during nominal inspections are as listed in the defect intervention level and response tables in appendices 12.6 and 12.7. Defects detected are recorded in the field using "Reflect" application via mobile devices.

9.2.3   Railway interface inspections

Programmed railway crossing inspections of approaches to railway crossings on local roads are undertaken at intervals detailed at Appendix 12.3 - Roads and bridges inspection regime. Inspections confirm that the items that are Council's responsibility, as detailed in an inventory for railway crossings, are in place, in serviceable condition and compliant with AS 1742.7:2007 – Manual of uniform traffic devices Part 7: Railway Crossings.

## 9.3   Risk assessment of maintenance works

Levels of risk for maintenance works are assessed based on:
- the likelihood of an incident and
- the associated consequence.

It is a reasonable assumption that defects/hazards on roads with higher usage have a higher likelihood of an incident. In developing the risk matrix for inclusion in the Road Management Plan, traffic volume ranges expected in Victorian municipalities were applied to Council's Corporate Risk Matrix as per the following table.

**Table 3 - Likelihood for traffic ranges**

| Traffic volume range (vehicles per day) | Likelihood |
| --- | --- |
| 5000 plus | A (almost certain) |
| 1000-5000 | B (likely) |
| 500-1000 | C (moderate) |
| 100-500 | D (unlikely) |
| 0-100 | E (rare) |

As road traffic volumes on Council's local road network are generally below 500 vehicles per day, the lower two rows only of the matrix apply.

Utilising principles listed in the "Risk Management Framework – ISO 31000" under principle 3, the corporate risk matrix has been tailored to suit road maintenance purposes as follows:
- by using the lower two lines of the corporate risk matrix
- by the introduction of additional levels of risk (medium low and very low) to provide a more comprehensive spread of response times.

The Risk Matrix adopted for road maintenance is shown at Appendix 12.5 - Risk matrices for roads, streets and footpaths.

Control actions and response times for each level of risk are as per the action table at appendix 12.5.

All defects associated with road maintenance have been identified for each road hierarchy. A qualitative risk analysis has been carried out to assess the level of risk for all defects, recognising any circumstances that would elevate the level of risk for a particular defect.

Response times for the levels of risk for each defect are included on the defect intervention and response table shown in appendices 12.6 and 12.7.

In the table in appendix 12.6 - Defect intervention levels and response times for roads and bridges, various hierarchies have been grouped to streamline maintenance management practices. Groupings are as shown in table 4.

Table 4 - Road hierarchy groupings

| Road grouping | Road hierarchies included |
|---|---|
| Sealed | Rural Sealed Collector (RSC)<br>Rural Sealed Access (RSA)<br>Town Sealed Collector (TSC)<br>Town Sealed Access (TSA) |
| Gravel collector and access | Rural Gravel Collector (RGCO<br>Rural Gravel Access (RGA)<br>Town Gravel Collector (TGC)<br>Town Gravel Access (TGA) |
| Gravel minor | Rural Gravel Minor (RGM)<br>Town Gravel Minor (TGM) |
| Formed | Rural Formed (RF)<br>Town Formed (TF) |
| Unformed | Rural Unformed (RUF)<br>Town Unformed (TUF) |

### 9.4 Proactive maintenance

Proactive Maintenance is carried out as illustrated in the flow chart below.

**Figure 2 - Proactive maintenance**

```
              ┌──────────────┐
              │ Inspect Road │
              └──────────────┘
                     │
                     ▼
              ┌──────────────┐
              │Identify Defects│
              └──────────────┘
                     │
                     ▼
              ┌──────────────┐
              │  Apply risk  │
              │  assessment  │
              └──────────────┘
                     │
                     ▼
               ◇ Is there a ◇
               ◇ safety issue? ◇
                     │
                     ▼
             ◇ Is required ◇
             ◇ response time ◇    NO      ┌──────────────┐
             ◇ greater than 72 ◇──────────▶│ Log defect in│
             ◇   hours?    ◇               │    Reflect   │
                     │                     └──────────────┘
                     │ YES                        │
                     ▼                            ▼
              ┌──────────────┐          ┌──────────────────┐
              │ Log defect in│          │Initiate Emergency│
              │    Reflect   │          │     Response     │
              └──────────────┘          └──────────────────┘
                     │                            │
                     ▼                            ▼
              ┌──────────────┐          ┌──────────────┐
              │Maintenance crew│        │ Contact Team │
              │rectifies the defect│    │    Leader    │
              └──────────────┘          └──────────────┘
                     │                            │
                     │                            ▼
                     │                  ┌──────────────────┐
                     │                  │   Team Leader    │
                     │                  │ assigns works to │
                     │                  │ maintenance crew │
                     ▼                  └──────────────────┘
              ┌──────────────┐                   │
              │Works Completed│◀─────────────────┘
              └──────────────┘
                     │
                     ▼
              ┌──────────────┐
              │Sign off on Reflect│
              │      as      │
              │ Accomplishment│
              └──────────────┘
```
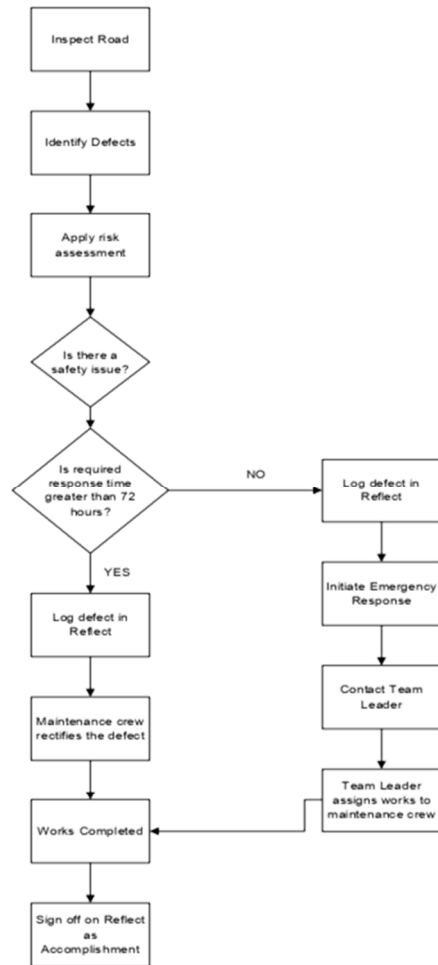
Designated road inspectors undertake formal inspections to identify defects and hazards on rural roads and town streets, at frequencies shown in appendix 12.3 - Road and street inspection regime and in appendix 12.4 - Footpath inspection regime. Inspections are recorded using Reflect on mobile devices.

If the required response time is 72 hours i.e. the defect is a hazard requiring treatment as an emergency response, section 9.4.2 outlines the required emergency response.

On sealed roads the extent of potholes, edge repairs, pavement failures, minor reseals and regulations are painted/marked on the sealed surface at the time of identification.

Where defects or hazards relating to other authority's infrastructure are encountered, the quantity and location is recorded, and the responsible authority is notified.

9.4.1    Defect intervention levels and response times

Tables detailing defect intervention levels and response times are set out in appendix 12.6 - Defect intervention levels and response times for roads and bridges and appendix 12.7 - Defect intervention levels and response times for footpaths.

Response times have been determined in consideration of financial and resource constraints.

Routine maintenance pavement repairs are generally undertaken by Council staff using the patrol truck and road maintenance unit. This is achieved using multiple applications of bituminous emulsion and sealing aggregate.

9.4.2   Emergency response

Emergency response may be activated during proactive safety-hazard inspections or reactive inspections following customer reports.

Public contact for 24 hours emergency response is by telephone on 5494 1200.

Where the defect is a hazard (rectification response time of 72 hours), emergency response is instigated.

In situations where circumstances prevent a hazard being rectified within the time specified in the defect intervention level and response tables, appropriate warning of the hazard is provided until the repair can be completed.

Appropriate interim warning measures may include:
- provision of warning signs or barricades
- traffic control action
- diverting traffic around the site
- installation of a temporary speed limit
- lane closure
- closure of the road to use by certain vehicles (e.g. load limit)
- road closure.

In extreme circumstances such as during times of natural disaster, the nominated response times or interim measures may not be achievable due to resource limitations or lack of accessibility.

9.4.3   Maintenance grading program

The maintenance grading program operates with inspection and grading frequencies for road hierarchies as listed in Table 5.

Table 5 - Maintenance grading frequency

| Road hierarchy | Grading frequency |
|---|---|
| All sealed road shoulders | As identified through road and street inspection regime |
| Gravel Collector roads | Inspected to confirm if grading is required twice per year |
| Gravel Access roads | Inspected to confirm if grading is required twice per year |
| Gravel Minor roads | Inspected to confirm if grading is required once per year |
| Formed roads | Upon request and as resources permit |
| Unformed roads | Upon request and as resources permit |
| Rural Fire Access roads | As per fire access roads grading program or upon request |

The maintenance grading program is set up with individual roads listed for grading in nominated quarters of the year. Roads to be graded are grouped by locality within individual inspection areas in each patrol area.

The Works Coordinator sets up, coordinates and monitors progress of the maintenance grading program. Team Leaders allocate roads to be graded to individual grading crews.

Prior to commencing grading on an individual road the road is inspected by the Team Leader or grader driver to confirm that grading is required, based on the intervention standards in appendix 12.6 - Defect intervention levels and response times for roads and bridges.

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Completed maintenance grading is recorded Reflect and updated by Works Department. For each individual road the grading crew identify as requiring grading, the date on which grading was undertaken is recorded.

If the inspection demonstrated no grading was currently required and the condition of the road is likely to remain satisfactory through to the next cycle, then the date of the inspection and the inspector's identity is recorded and the treatment shall be deferred.

If a road requires additional maintenance grading outside the maintenance grading program a defect is recorded and programmed in accordance with the defect intervention levels and response times through Reflect and completed works are signed off.

### 9.5 Reactive maintenance

#### 9.5.1 Safety/hazard inspections

Safety/hazard inspections may also be undertaken on a reactive basis in response to customer requests, as described in 9.4 - Proactive maintenance and 9.2.1 - Safety /hazard inspections.

#### 9.5.2 Routine maintenance and customer requests

Refer to Figure 3 - Reactive maintenance on the following page.

Reactive maintenance may be undertaken in response to reported problems or complaints from the public or Council staff on:
- sealed roads and streets between formal inspections
- gravel roads and streets between formal inspections
- formed and unformed roads and streets, where there is no formal inspection process
- footpaths
- bridges.

Council has implemented "Merit", a Customer Request Management (CRM) system which is utilised to log customers' requests and assign it to the respective Team Leader.

Reported complaints and problems may emanate from:
- customers through:
    - verbal reports
    - letters
    - telephone calls
- inspections by Team Leaders
- observations by other staff

An outline of the reactive complaint process is shown in Figure 3 - Reactive Maintenance.

Where defects or hazards relating to other authorities infrastructure are reported or observed, the quantity and location is recorded, and the responsible authority is notified. Data is stored in the CRM and is available for retrieval as required.

**Figure 3 - Reactive maintenance**
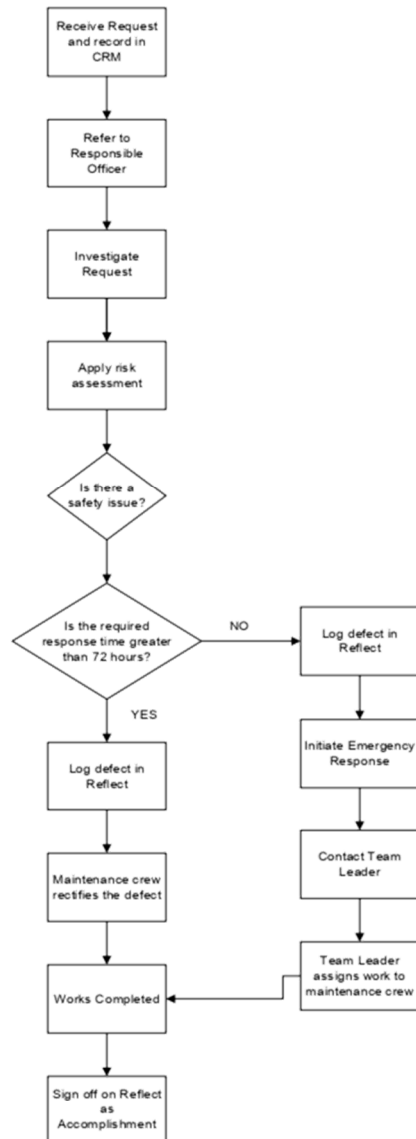


### 9.5.3　Reactive maintenance grading of gravel roads

Complaints regarding defects or hazards on gravel roads which are reported between scheduled inspections and the next programmed maintenance grading under the Maintenance Grading Program, are assessed as to whether immediate intervention is required as outlined in the figure 3 "Flow chart 2 Reactive maintenance".

### 9.5.4　Reactive maintenance grading of formed and unformed roads

Complaints regarding defects or hazards on formed roads identified between maintenance grading activities under the Maintenance Grading Program will be inspected and graded on a reactive basis as per 9.5.2 "Routine maintenance and customer requests".

Complaints regarding defects or hazards on unformed roads will be inspected and graded on a reactive basis as per 9.5.2 "Routine maintenance and customer requests", but works will be limited as detailed in 9.8 "Limitation of maintenance works".

### 9.6 Weeds and rabbits

Council has an obligation to manage roadside weeds and rabbits on its local road network. Available funding is directed to treatment aimed at the eradication of Regionally Prohibited Weed infestations and the containment of Regionally Controlled Weeds and rabbits. Council supports community groups and individual landholders as detailed in Council's Roadside Weeds and Pest Program.

Regular inspections are undertaken during the programmed proactive inspections of roads. Reactive inspections are undertaken as in section 9.5 Reactive maintenance.

### 9.7 Records

Council keeps records specifying details of inspections, defects requiring repairs, location of defects, details of repairs, temporary actions (i.e. signage installation) and date of completed repairs.

#### 9.7.1 Customer works request and reactive maintenance

Customer works request information and outcomes are stored electronically in Council's CRM.

Details of date, road, location and quantity of works activity undertaken are entered into Reflect.

#### 9.7.2 Inspections and proactive maintenance

Programmed inspections undertaken by designated road inspectors are recorded in Reflect. Data captured includes inspector identity and date of inspection as well as specific details of all defects identified for each section of road (road segment) along with a nominated rectification (repair) timeframe.

Completed rectification works are signed off against these entries including what works were undertaken and by whom along with a completion date.

#### 9.7.3 Electronic records

Reflect is a cloud based package and Council and Asset Edge have agreed that Asset Edge will backup the database in Reflect and Council can access whenever required. Information on CRM is backed up daily in Council's internal server.

### 9.8 Limitation of maintenance works

The level of inspection and maintenance varies depending on the category/classification of individual roads or road related assets. A number of lower category roads e.g. formed, unformed and fire access roads receive limited maintenance. Maintenance limitations for these low priority assets are detailed within table 6 following.

The decision to limit maintenance on low priority roads is driven by the need to prioritise allocation of Council's operational and financial resources. It is considered that the road classifications identified for limited maintenance pose low levels of risk given minimal traffic use and lower significance of functionality.

Council does not undertake any planned or unplanned maintenance or inspections on unused road reserves, nor warrants their safety or accessibility for public use.

**Table 6 - Limitation of maintenance works**

| Hierarchy code | Hierarchy | Limits of maintenance |
|---|---|---|
| RF & TF | Formed | No programmed inspections are undertaken.<br>Reactive routine maintenance is undertaken based on "Defect intervention levels and response times for roads and bridges". |
| RUF & TUF | Unformed | No programmed inspections or regular routine maintenance is undertaken.<br>Reactive grading may be undertaken.<br>No regular routine tree trimming is undertaken.<br>Limited minor tree trimming may be undertaken to provide clearance for utility type vehicles. Removal to provide greater clearance may be undertaken subject to inspection and demonstrated need. |
| RFA | Fire Access | No programmed inspections or regular routine maintenance is undertaken.<br>Reactive grading may be undertaken prior to fire season. |
| IF | Informal Footpaths | No programmed inspection or routine maintenance is undertaken. |

## 9.9 Resources deployed in road management

Routine maintenance is generally undertaken utilising in-house staff and supplemented with contractors if required.

## 9.10 Exceptional circumstances

Council will make every effort to meet its obligations under its Road Management Plan.

However, there may be situations or circumstances that affect Council's business activities to the extent that it cannot deliver on the service levels of the Road Management Plan. These include but are not limited to; natural disasters, such as fires, floods, or storms; prolonged labour or resource shortage or due to a need to commit or redeploy Council staff and/or equipment elsewhere.

In the event that the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Council determines that for either financial or operational reasons that the requirements of the Road Management Plan cannot be met, then pursuant to Section 83 of the Wrongs Act, the CEO will write to Council's officer in charge, Manager Assets & Infrastructure (MAI) of its plan and inform the officer that some, or all of the timeframes and responses in Council's RMP are to be suspended.

As the circumstances which may have led to either the partial or full suspension of the RMP continue, periodic consultation between Council's CEO and Council's MAI will occur, to ascertain which parts of Council's RMP may be reactivated.

Council will endeavour to inform residents of any suspension or reduction of the services outlined under the Road Management Plan, including how any required works shall be prioritised and the period for which the suspension is likely to be in effect.

## 9.11 Performance measures and targets

Council is provided with a quarterly report detailing compliance against the inspection and defect rectification targets specified within the RMP. The performance measures as listed in table 7 are used to form the basis of this report.

**Table 7 - Performance measures**

| Performance measure | Target |
|---|---|
| Programmed inspections are carried out as per schedule. | 100% as specified |
| Actual response times for rectification works are as detailed in the Defect intervention levels and response time tables. | 100% as specified |

## 10 REVIEW AND REPORTING

Review of this Road Management Plan is due by 30 June 2025 as prescribed in section 301 (1) and (3(b)) of the Road Management (General) Regulations 2005.

The Manager Works reports quarterly to Council on the performance measures in section 9.11 "Performance measures and targets".

## 11 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Loddon Shire Council Asset Management Policy

Loddon Shire Council Risk Management Policy

Council Plan

Register of Public Roads

Road Management Act 2004

Code of Practice for Operational Responsibility for Public Roads

Road Management (Works and Infrastructure) Regulations 2001

Road Management (General) Regulations 2005

Code of Practice for Road Management Plans
Loddon Shire Council Community Local Law

Loddon Shire Council Roadside Weeds and Pest Program.

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## 12 APPENDICES

### 12.1 Local rural roads and town streets hierarchy

| Local road hierarchy | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Hierarchy code | Hierarchy | Function | Comments |
| Rural roads (R) & Township Streets (T) | | | |
| RSC & TSC | Sealed Collector | Sealed Collector roads distribute traffic between arterials and primary access roads. | Connecting roads traditionally accommodating higher volumes of traffic or providing efficient access or an alternative to the arterial network. |
| RSA & TSA | Sealed Access | Sealed Access roads provide primary access to residential properties or other developments or provide for service or tourist traffic. | Usually accommodate high to medium traffic volumes and service multiple residential properties. |
| RGC & TGC | Gravel Collector | Gravel Collector roads distribute traffic between arterials and primary access roads. | Gravel connecting roads generally accommodating moderate traffic volumes. |
| RGA & TGA | Gravel Access | Gravel Access roads provide primary access to residential properties or other developments or provide for service traffic, tourist traffic, school buses, or milk tanker traffic. | Lower use roads primarily used for access to groups or individual residential properties. |
| RGM & TGM | Minor Gravel | Minor Gravel roads provide access to rural properties, or alternative access to rural residential properties. | Low use gravel roads providing access to rural properties (non-residential). |
| RF & TF | Formed | Rural formed roads provide access to rural properties. | Earthen roads only, access is often limited to dry weather conditions. |
| RUF & TUF | Unformed | Rural unformed roads provide access to rural properties. | No road formation, represented by tracks or worn surfaces only. |
| RFA | Fire Access | Rural Fire Access roads provide access for firefighting purposes | Generally located on 'unused' and 'unlicensed' road reserves. |

## 12.2 Footpath hierarchy

| Footpath hierarchy | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Hierarchy code** | **Hierarchy** | **Function** |
| Town street footpaths | | |
| BF | Business Area Footpath | Moderate use fully constructed footpaths in shopping areas and near schools and other pedestrian traffic generators |
| SF | Strategic Footpath | Moderate use footpath which may be gravel or fully constructed. Includes footpaths to specific locations |
| RF | Residential Area Footpath | Low use fully constructed footpaths or part constructed gravel footpaths in residential areas. |
| IF | Informal Footway | Un-constructed footways with little use. |

## 12.3 Road and street inspection regimes

| Local road and street inspections | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Inspection type** | **Extent** | **Inspection frequency** | | | | |
| | | **Road hierarchy** | | | | |
| | | **Sealed** | **Gravel Collector & Access** | **Gravel Minor** | **Formed & RFA** | **Unformed** |
| | | RSC, RSA, TSC & TSA | RGC, RGA & TGA | RGM & TGM | RF, TF & RFA | RUF & TUF |
| Cyclic inspections | | | | | | |
| Maintenance & hazard | Rural Roads & Town Streets | 3 mths | 2 yrs | 2 yrs | Reactive only | Reactive only |
| Night inspection | Rural Roads & Town Streets | 4 yrs | 4 yrs | Nil | Nil | Nil |
| Level 1 local bridges | All Rural & Town Bridges & Major Culverts | 6 mths | 6 mths | 6 mths | 6 mths | Nil |
| Railway crossing inspection | All crossings | 3 mths | 12 mths | 12 mths | 12 mths | 12 mths |
| Night railway crossing inspection | Rural Roads & Town Streets | 4 yrs | 4 yrs | 4 yrs | 4 yrs | 4 yrs |
| One-off inspections | | | | | | |
| Customer requests | As identified in request | As required | | | | |
| Emergency | Effected area | As required | | | | |
| Notes | | | | | | |
| Nominated inspection frequencies are not precise: a variation of 10% is allowable | | | | | | |
| Night inspections are staggered over winter months | | | | | | |

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## 12.4 Footpaths inspection regime

| Footpath inspections | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Inspection type** | **Extent** | **Footpath hierarchy** | | | |
| | | **Inspection frequency** | | | |
| | | **Business Footpath (BF)** | **Strategic Footpath (SF)** | **Residential Footpaths (RF)** | **Informal Footways (IF)** |
| Cyclic inspections | | | | | |
| Maintenance & hazard | Paved, sealed & gravel footpaths in Towns | 6 months | 6 months | 6 months | Nil |
| Night inspection | Paved, sealed & gravel footpaths in Towns | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil |
| One -off inspections | | | | | |
| Customer requests | As identified in request | As required | As required | As required | As required |
| Emergency | Effected area | As required | As required | As required | As required |
| Notes | | | | | |
| Nominated inspection frequencies are not precise; a variation of 10% is allowable. | | | | | |

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## 12.5 Risk matrices for roads, streets and footpaths

| Local roads, streets and footpaths | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Levels of risk** | | | | | | |
| Type or hierarchy | Likelihood | Consequences | | | | |
| | | Insignificant | Minor | Moderate | Major | Catastrophic |
| Roads | | | | | | |
| Sealed | Unlikely | VL | L | ML | M | H |
| Gravel Collector & Access | Rare | VL | L | ML | M | H |
| Minor Gravel | Rare | VL | L | ML | ML | M |
| Formed | Rare | VL | L | L | ML | ML |
| Unformed | Rare | VL | VL | L | L | L |
| Footpaths | | | | | | |
| Business & Strategic | Unlikely | VL | L | ML | M | H |
| Residential | Rare | VL | VL | L | ML | M |

| Action Plan | | |
|---|---|---|
| Risk Level | Description | Action |
| H | High | rectify within 72 hours or provide appropriate warning |
| M | Medium risk | rectify within 4 working weeks or provide appropriate warning |
| ML | Medium to low risk | rectify within 3 months or provide appropriate warning |
| L | Low risk | rectify within 6 months |
| VL | Very Low risk | rectify within 12 months |

This Matrix is applicable to Council's local road and footpath network (including footpaths in Arterial Roads within townships). Refer to the respective Responsible Road Authority Road Management Plan for risk assessment and response times for works relating to other roads.

**12.6  Defect intervention levels and response times for roads and bridges**

| Defect intervention levels and response times for roads and bridges | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | **Response time** | | | | |
| **Defect** | **Intervention level** | **Sealed roads** | **Gravel roads** | **Minor gravel** | **Formed roads** | **Unformed roads** |
| | | RSC,TSC,RSA, TSA | RGC, RGA, TGA | RGM, TGM | RF,TF | RUF,TUF |
| **Pavement cleaning** | | | | | | |
| Cleaning of pavement to remove materials which are: Slippery substances or a danger to road users or preventing the free flow of drainage water from the pavement area | On traffic lanes causing serious obstacle to traffic | 72 hrs | 4 wks | 4 wks | 3 mths | 6 mths |
| | Water ponding > 300 mm deep on traffic lane | 72 hrs | 4 wks | 4 wks | 3 mths | 6 mths |
| | Materials in traffic lanes resulting in a slippery surface | 72 hrs | 4 wks | 4 wks | 3 mths | 6 mths |
| **Sealed pavement and surface** | | | | | | |
| Potholes | On sealed traffic lane >400 mm dia. and > 100 mm deep | 72 hrs | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| | >50mm in depth or >300mm wide | 3 mths | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Edge breaks | >75 mm in width over 20 m length | 6 mths | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Minor sealed surface faults | Stripping > 5 m$^2$ in area with approximately 50% loss of aggregate. | 6 mths | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| | "Crocodile" cracking > 1 m$^2$ in area | 6 mths | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| | Longitudinal cracking | 6 mths | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| | When bleeding and seal pick up is occurring or imminent; or seal is flushing and there is evident loss of vehicle traction, for an area > 5 m$^2$. | 6 mths | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |

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| Defect intervention levels and response times for roads and bridges | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Response time | | | | |
| Defect | Intervention level | Sealed roads | Gravel roads | Minor gravel | Formed roads | Unformed roads |
| | | RSC,TSC,RSA, TSA | RGC, RGA, TGA | RGM, TGM | RF,TF | RUF,TUF |
| Isolated pavement failures and deformation | On sealed traffic lane > 100 mm under 3 m straight edge | 72 hrs | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| | All other surface level variations > $2m^2$ and > 50 mm deep under a 1.2 m straight edge | 12 mths | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Unsealed shoulder - isolated faults | When edge drops onto unsealed shoulder > 100mm in depth under a 1.2 m straight edge | 72 hrs | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| | When edge drops onto unsealed shoulder >60mm in depth under a 1.2 m straight edge over 20m length | 3 mths | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| | When shoulder subgrade is exposed or slippery for > 50 $m^2$ | 12 mths | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| | Potholes, roughness, scouring and > 75mm deep under a 1.2 m straight edge or when holds water | 3 mths | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Unsealed pavements | | | | | | |
| Potholes unsealed roads | When in traffic lane >500 mm diameter or > 150 mm deep | NA | 4 wks | 4 wks | N/A | N/A |
| | Surface scours, potholes or rutting >100 mm in depth > 300 mm diameter | N/A | 3 mths | 6 mths | N/A | N/A |
| | Corrugations >50 mm in depth for >200 m of road surface | N/A | 6 mths | 12 mths | N/A | N/A |
| | Loose material >50 mm in depth for >200 m of road surface | N/A | 6 mths | 12 mths | N/A | N/A |
| | When >100 $m^2$ and <300 $m^2$ in 1 km is slippery or bare subgrade exposed | N/A | 6 mths | 12 mths | N/A | N/A |

| Defect intervention levels and response times for roads and bridges | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Response time | | | | |
| **Defect** | **Intervention level** | **Sealed roads** | **Gravel roads** | **Minor gravel** | **Formed roads** | **Unformed roads** |
| | | RSC,TSC,RSA, TSA | RGC, RGA, TGA | RGM, TGM | RF,TF | RUF,TUF |
| Signs and delineation | | | | | | |
| Signs - illegible or missing | Bridge load limit signs are ineffective | 72 hrs | 4 wks | 4 wks | 3 mths | N/A |
| | Non-Regulatory Signs<br>Missing signs or signs which are illegible at 150m under low beam of car headlights or in daylight. | 12 mths | 12 mths | 12 mths | 12 mths | N/A |
| | Warning & hazard signs<br>Missing signs or signs which are illegible at 150m under low beam of car headlights or in daylight at curves or intersections or on the approaches to railway level crossings. | 3 mths | 3 mths | 3 mths | 6 mths | N/A |
| | Regulatory signs<br>Missing signs or signs which are illegible at 150m under low beam of car headlights or in daylight at curves & intersections | 4 wks | 4 wks | 3 mths | N/A | N/A |
| Guide posts or delineators missing or not clearly visible at 150m at night on low beam. | Missing on curves. | 4 wks | 4 wks | 3 mths | N/A | N/A |
| | When >2 posts in a row are missing | 6 mths | 6 mths | 6 mths | N/A | N/A |
| | Every missing culvert marker post. | 6 mths | 6 mths | 6 mths | 6 mths | N/A |
| Linemarking and pavement markings - illegible or missing | Linemarking and pavement markings not clearly visible at 50m | 12 mths | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |

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| Defect intervention levels and response times for roads and bridges | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Response time | | | | |
| **Defect** | **Intervention level** | **Sealed roads** | **Gravel roads** | **Minor gravel** | **Formed roads** | **Unformed roads** |
| | | RSC,TSC,RSA, TSA | RGC, RGA, TGA | RGM, TGM | RF,TF | RUF,TUF |
| **Vegetation** | | | | | | |
| Roadside vegetation, tree, bushes and grass | Fallen branches/trees on road surface | 72 hrs | 4 wks | 4 wks | 3 mths | 12 mths |
| | Fallen branches/trees on road shoulder | 4 wks | 4 wks | 3 mths | N/A | N/A |
| | Branches, bushes or saplings obstruct safe intersection sight distance or restrict view of regulatory signs | 4 wks | 4 wks | 3 mths | N/A | N/A |
| | Branches, bushes or saplings obstruct restrict view of warning or hazard signs. | 3 mths | 3 mths | 3 mths | 6 mths | N/A |
| | Roadside vegetation obstructs sight distance at railway level crossings. | 4 wks | 4 wks | 3 mths | 3 mths | N/A |
| | Branches infringe into the vegetation clearance envelope | 12 mths | 12 mths | 12 mths | 12 mths | 12 mths |
| | Sight distances obstructed by grass. | 4 wks | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| | Grass >300mm high on shoulders. | 12 mths | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |

| Defect intervention levels and response times for roads and bridges | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Defect** | **Intervention level** | **Response time** | | | | |
| | | **Sealed roads** | **Gravel roads** | **Minor gravel** | **Formed roads** | **Unformed roads** |
| | | RSC,TSC,RSA, TSA | RGC, RGA, TGA | RGM, TGM | RF,TF | RUF,TUF |
| **Drainage** | | | | | | |
| Road surface drainage and verges | Where ponding of water is adversely affecting the safety aspects for road users or causing identifiable deterioration of the road formation | 12 mths | 12 mths | 12 mths | 12 mths | N/A |
| | When drains are < 75% operating capacity | 12 mths | 12 mths | 12 mths | 12 mths | N/A |
| | When culverts and pits are <75% of operating capacity. | 12 mths | 12 mths | 12 mths | 12 mths | N/A |
| | Culverts and pits become non-functional or creates a danger to public | 6 mths | 6 mths | 6 mths | 6 mths | N/A |
| **Bridge maintenance** | | | | | | |
| Damaged bridge component | When damage affects structural performance. Missing or damaged bridge deck plank. Protruding deck spikes. | 72 hrs | 4 wks | 4 wks | 3 mths | N/A |
| Obstructed deck drainage | Scuppers blocked or partially blocked | 6 mths | 6 mths | 6 mths | 6 mths | N/A |
| Split /cracked deck planks | Defect affects >10% of area of a deck plank. | 6 mths | 6 mths | 6 mths | 6 mths | N/A |
| Settled or damaged running or wearing surface | Settling or depression > 50mm under 1.5m straight edge | 6 mths | 6 mths | 6 mths | 6 mths | N/A |
| Broken, misaligned railing or posts | All visible faults which affect traffic safety | 6 mths | 6 mths | 6 mths | 6 mths | N/A |
| Loose, missing rail connectors | Rail connectors loose or missing | 6 mths | 6 mths | 6 mths | 6 mths | N/A |
| Spalled concrete above deck | Spalling which exposes steel reinforcing | 12 mths | 12 mths | 12 mths | 12 mths | N/A |

| Defect intervention levels and response times for roads and bridges | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Defect** | **Intervention level** | **Response time** | | | | |
| | | **Sealed roads** | **Gravel roads** | **Minor gravel** | **Formed roads** | **Unformed roads** |
| | | RSC,TSC,RSA, TSA | RGC, RGA, TGA | RGM, TGM | RF,TF | RUF,TUF |
| Obstructed stream flow | >25% blocked | 6 mths | 6 mths | 6 mths | 6 mths | N/A |
| Minor scours in pavement | All scours | 6 mths | 6 mths | 6 mths | 6 mths | N/A |
| Subsidence in abutment fill | Subsidence or pothole in traffic lane >50 mm deep under 1.2m straight edge | 4 wks | 4 wks | 3 mths | 3 mths | N/A |
| **Other** | | | | | | |
| Vandalism, graffiti | All graffiti | 12 mths | 12 mths | 12 mths | 12 mths | |
| Road openings | Reinstate the sealed surface when notified | 4 wks | 4 wks | 3 mths | 3 mths | 6 mths |
| Litter control | Deposit of litter or rubbish > 1m$^3$ | 3 mths | 3 mths | 3 mths | 6 mths | 6 mths |
| **Roadside weeds and rabbits** | | | | | | |
| Wheel Cactus | When infestation exceeds greater than 100m in length within a road segment. | ARP | ARP | ARP | ARP | ARP |
| Patersons Curse | When infestation exceeds greater than 100m in length within a road segment. | ARP | ARP | ARP | ARP | ARP |
| Rabbit | Any rabbit warren with signs of activity in a road segment. | ARP | ARP | ARP | ARP | ARP |

| Glossary of terms and definitions | |
|---|---|
| Weeks | Working weeks. |
| Hours | Any hours of time. |

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| Mths | Calendar months in a year |
| --- | --- |
| Yrs | Years |
| ARP | As resources permit |
| Vegetation clearance envelope | Area to a height of 5 metres above the road surface between outside edges of shoulders. |

**12.7 Defect intervention levels and response times for footpaths**

| Defect | Intervention levels | Response times | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Business Footpath | Strategic Footpath | Residential Footpaths |
| **Footpaths** | | | | |
| Subsided, heaved and scoured | Lips or step in path surface levels >30mm | 4 wks | 4 wks | 3 mths |
| | Lips or step in path surface levels >20mm | 3 mths | 3 mths | 6 mths |
| | Depressions >300mm diameter and >50mm depth | 3 mths | 3 mths | 6 mths |
| | Mounding >40mm under 1.2m straight edge | 4 wks | 4 wks | 3 mths |
| | Mounding >30mm under 1.2m straight edge | 3 mths | 3 mths | 6 mths |
| Cracking | Longitudinal cracking >20mm wide over 300mm length | 6 mths | 6 mths | 12 mths |
| Edge breaks and edge drops or lips | Reduction in original footpath width >300mm over a 20m length | 6 mths | 6 mths | 12 mths |
| | Edge drop > 100mm over 20m length | 3 mths | 3 mths | 6 mths |
| | Edge lip > 25mm above the footpath surface level | 6 mths | 6 mths | 12 mths |
| Loose material | Loose material >15mm deep on sealed footpath surface | 3 mths | 3 mths | 6 mths |
| Vegetation | Foliage < 2.5m above footpath | 3 mths | 3 mths | 6 mths |
| | Foliage < 150mm from outside edge of path | 3 mths | 3 mths | 6 mths |
| | Fallen branches/trees on footpath | 4 wks | 4 wks | 3 mths |
| **Notes** | | | | |
| No defect intervention and response time for Informal Footways | | | | |
| **Pedestrian bridges** | | | | |
| Damaged bridge component | When damage affects structural performance. Missing or damaged bridge deck plank. | 3 mths | 3 mths | 3 mths |
| Obstructed stream flow | >25% | 6 mths | 6 mths | 6 mths |

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### 12.8 List of highways, arterial roads and main roads (Managed by Regional Roads Victoria)

| Highways, arterial roads and main roads |
| --- |
| Road name |
| Calder Highway |
| Loddon Valley Highway |
| Wimmera Highway |
| Bendigo-Maryborough Rd |
| Bendigo-Pyramid Rd |
| Boort-Charlton Rd |
| Boort-Kerang Rd |
| Boort-Mitiamo Rd |
| Boort-Pyramid Rd |
| Boort-Wedderburn Rd |
| Boort-Wycheproof Rd |
| Bridgewater-Dunolly Rd |
| Bridgewater-Maldon Rd |
| Bridgewater-Serpentine Rd |
| Dunolly-Eddington Rd |
| Echuca-Mitiamo Rd |
| Leitchville-Pyramid Rd |
| Logan-Wedderburn Rd |
| Prairie-Rochester Rd |

| 5.2 | ADOPTION OF MUNICIPAL PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN 2021-2025 |
|---|---|

**File Number:**      **FOL/20/2848**

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

**Authoriser:**        **Jude Holt, Acting Chief Executive Officer**

**Attachments:**       **1.    Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025**

---

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council:

1. adopt the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025

2. forward a copy of the approved plan to the Department Health Prevention and Population Health Branch.

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**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

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

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

Council was provided with a copy of the draft Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 (the Plan) at the September 2021 Forum prior to being placed on public display and inviting feedback.

Council was provided with a copy of the final content to be included in the Plan at the October 2021 Forum.

**BACKGROUND**

Council is required to prepare a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (the Plan) under Section 26 of the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008.

The Plan is a key strategic planning tool that aims to maintain and improve public health and wellbeing at a local community level.  When developed the plan becomes the pivotal document informing the health and wellbeing priority areas for the next four years.

Council changed the format and context of the Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017-2021 to provide a platform for all agency health and wellbeing planning and to encompass all relevant agencies in the delivery of actions that contributed to achieving the agreed outcomes, and thus delivery of the strategic focus areas.

The 2017-2021 plan introduced an Implementation Framework that identified and established four pillars to support and strengthen the collaborative and coordinated environment needed to ensure that the individual and combined effort of agencies was maximised.

The four pillars, Strong Families Strong Children, Loddon Healthy Minds Network, Family Violence Network, and Healthy Eating Active Living, provided the structure and authorising environment to create action plans specific to each pillar, with a direct link to the identified outcomes in the plan.

The development of an all agency collaborative approach has facilitated leadership of three of the four pillars by other sector agencies, such as health and education, rather than solely by Council.
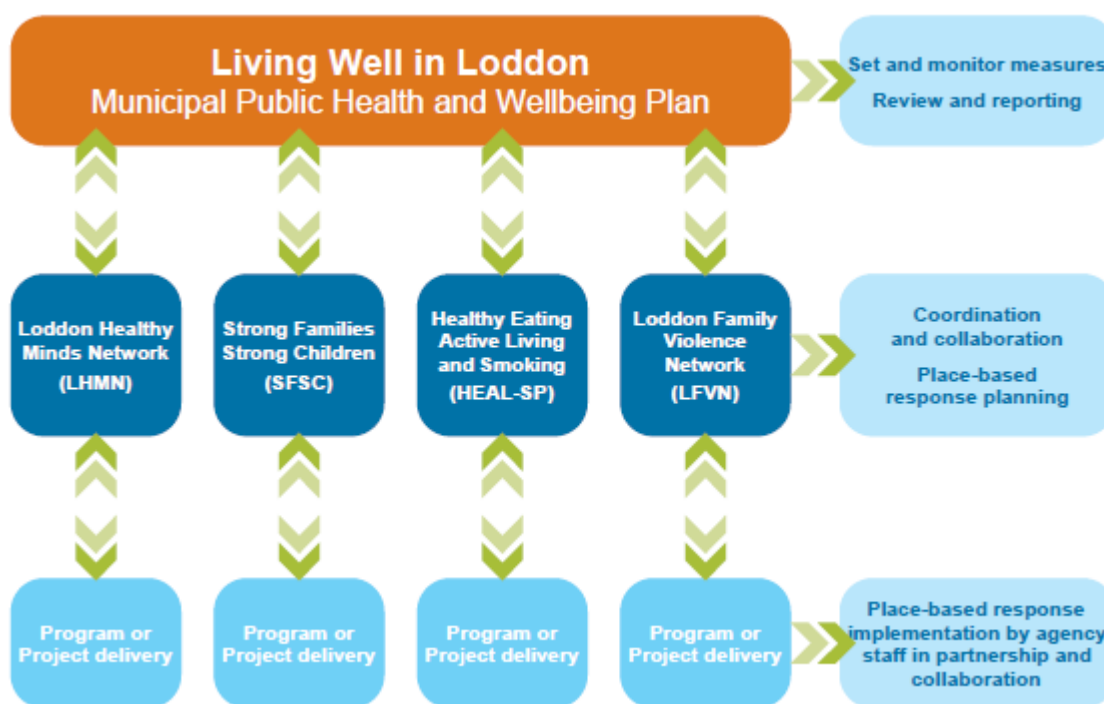
## ISSUES/DISCUSSION

The Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 provides for the retention of the four pillars to continue to consolidate the initial establishment and early work undertaken by these groups. It is acknowledged that the results of much of the work undertaken in these early stages may not be evident in our health and wellbeing data profile for many years to come.

The Plan has again identified two overarching areas of focus; the impacts of climate change on health and wellbeing, and the impacts inadequate digital connectivity has in widening the health inequity gap already experienced by rural communities.

Whilst there are many areas of focus that could be included in the plan, the agencies acknowledge that whilst collaboration maximises our combined efforts, optimal results will be achieved by focusing on a more targeted effort to areas that have rated as high concern in the data, that were identified by the community as concerns, and that if improved will contribute directly to the improved health wellbeing outcomes of our community.

The goals and strategies identified in the plan include:

| Strategic Focus Area | Priority | Outcomes |
|---|---|---|
| Good Physical Health | Increase healthy start in life | • the Strong Families Strong Children initiative is maintained<br>• all children arrive at school ready for learning<br>• all children have a voice and influence<br>• all children are happy and enjoy healthy lifestyles<br>• children's connection to culture is valued and supported within service provision<br>• initiatives for the provision of childcare options across the Shire are identified and promoted |
|  | Reduce preventable disease | • access to and participation in health screening programs is increased<br>• partnerships to reduce preventable disease are maintained and strengthened |

| Strategic Focus Area | Priority | Outcomes |
|---|---|---|
| Good Mental Health | Increase mental wellbeing<br><br>Decrease suicide | • the Loddon Healthy Minds Network is maintained<br>• a reduction in the stigma relating to mental health issues<br>• social isolation is reduced<br>• self-care initiatives are supported and promoted<br>• access to and engagement with mental health services is improved<br>• local capacity is increased in relation to suicide prevention within a rural context |

| Strategic Focus Area | Priority | Outcomes |
|---|---|---|
| Protect and promote Health | Increase healthy eating and active living<br><br>Reduce tobacco-related harm<br><br>Reduce harmful alcohol consumption | • the Healthy Eating Active Living and Smoking Prevention group is maintained<br>• understandings about the underlying drivers of high smoking rates in Loddon Shire are increased<br>• smoking and vaping uptake rates in youth are reduced<br>• rates of smoking during pregnancy are reduced<br>• service coordination for smoking cessation initiatives is improved<br>• healthy eating rates increase<br>• the Healthy Heart of Victoria initiative is maintained<br>• participation in active recreation is increased<br>• harmful alcohol consumption is reduced<br>• partnership work between schools and partner agencies in relation to these priorities is increased |

| Strategic Focus Area | Priority | Outcomes |
|---|---|---|
| Feel safe and secure | Prevent all forms of family violence | • the Loddon Family Violence Network is maintained<br>• partnerships to prevent family violence and improve gender equity are supported and strengthened<br>• capacity to identify and respond to family violence is increased<br>• well-resourced and coordinated family violence services are available within Loddon Shire |

| Overarching Strategic Focus Area | Priority | Outcomes |
|---|---|---|
| Climate Change | Support the community to mitigate the impacts of climate change on their health and wellbeing | <ul><li>the vulnerable persons register is maintained</li><li>community capacity to plan for and respond to extreme events/emergencies is increased</li><li>cooler space options are identified and access promoted on days of extreme heat</li><li>shade options are considered in facility planning and management</li></ul> |
| Connectivity | Reduce the health and wellbeing inequity gap created by inadequate digital connectivity | <ul><li>opportunities for improved digital connectivity across Loddon Shire are identified and promoted</li><li>opportunities to enhance community members access to online services are identified, supported and promoted</li></ul> |

**COST/BENEFITS**

The success of this plan is based on collaboration and strategic partnerships between government, health, education, community service organisations and community interest groups, such as the Loddon Healthy Minds Network.

Individually, agencies are unlikely to have the capacity to address the range of factors that influence health and wellbeing across the municipality and as such, recognise that partnerships with other key agencies and working together is paramount in order to maximise health and wellbeing outcomes.

It is anticipated that actions identified in the annual operational plans will be undertaken within existing budgets, or with sourced external funds as required.

**RISK ANALYSIS**

Under the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008, Council is required to develop and adopt a Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan within 12 months of an election being held. The adoption of this plan at Council's October Special Meeting will meet this legislative requirement.

**CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

Council's planned methods of consultation and engagement were impacted by periods of lockdowns and then restrictive environments and involved a pivot to online consultation only.

A survey seeking community feedback was distributed electronically and in limited hardcopy, with 110 responses received.

An initial focus area information session and prioritisation tool was provided for agencies and community reference groups members.  Following identification of the focus areas, agencies were invited to identify and agree on the priority areas and outcomes they would seek to achieve.

The draft plan was released for public comment from 23 September to 8 October 2021.  No submissions were received prior to the 8 October closing date.

# LIVING WELL IN LODDON

## MUNICIPAL PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN 2021-2025



LODDON
SHIRE

## DOCUMENT INFORMATION

| | |
|---|---|
| DOCUMENT TYPE: | Strategic document |
| DOCUMENT STATUS: | Draft |
| POLICY OWNER POSITION: | Director Community Wellbeing |
| INTERNAL COMMITTEE ENDORSEMENT: | Not applicable |
| APPROVED BY: | Council |
| DATE ADOPTED: | |
| VERSION NUMBER: | 1 |
| REVIEW DATE: | |
| DATE RESCINDED: | |
| RELATED STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS, POLICIES OR PROCEDURES: | Council Plan 2021-25 <br> Municipal Strategic Statement |
| RELATED LEGISLATION: | Local Government Act 2020 <br> Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 <br> Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019-23 <br> Public Health and Wellbeing outcomes framework <br> Climate Change Act 2017 <br> Climate Change Strategy 2021 <br> Royal Commission into Family Violence <br> Koolin Balit Victorian Government strategic directions for Aboriginal health 2012–2022 |
| EVIDENCE OF APPROVAL: | _____ <br> Signed by Chief Executive Officer |
| FILE LOCATION: | Document1 |

**Strategic documents are amended from time to time, therefore you should not rely on a printed copy being the current version. Please consult the Loddon Shire website to ensure that the version you are using is up to date.**

**This document is available in alternative formats (e.g. larger font) if requested.**

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# CONTENTS

## Mayor's message

Welcome to Loddon Shire Council's Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025. The Plan provides an opportunity to collaborate with our partner organisations and the community to identify and respond to the health and wellbeing challenges our community faces. Our goal is to create an environment that provides the opportunity for people of all ages and backgrounds to achieve optimum wellbeing.

The Plan recognises that health and wellbeing is influenced by not only our own behaviours but also by a wide range of issues, including the social networks in our community, whether we have a job and how we access services where we live. It also recognises that improving health and wellbeing is a whole-of-community responsibility, and can only occur if we work together and combine our efforts with our partners and the community.

As the level of government closest to the people, councils play a pivotal role in leading and developing policies, programs and infrastructure with the capacity to advocate for, promote and improve the health of local community members. With sustained effort, we will support our residents to achieve good physical and mental health; protect and promote their health; and to feel safe and secure. We recognise the significant and far-reaching impacts of climate change and connectivity on our community's wellbeing. In collaboration with our partner agencies, we commit to addressing these key focus areas and their priorities over the next four years to work towards achieving optimum health and wellbeing for our community.

On behalf of Loddon Shire Council, I wish to thank everyone who was involved in the development of this plan. We would like to acknowledge the contribution and valuable feedback gained from our internal departments, partner organisations and the community in the formation of the plan's strategic directions and priorities. We look forward to continuing our collaborative work to over the next four years and beyond to support our residents to 'Live Well in Loddon'.

Cr. Neil Beattie
Mayor, Loddon Shire Council

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## Executive summary

Council has developed the 2021-2025 Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan with the aim to facilitate improvement of our community's health and wellbeing. It is anticipated that the Plan will support and enhance local strategies and initiatives, inform other public health planning processes, and be used as a means to avoid duplication of the planning, implementation, monitoring and review effort at a local level.

For Loddon Shire to be a productive, resilient and cohesive community, our residents need to enjoy good health and wellbeing. This underpins everyone's ability to live a good life. It averts the distress and discomfort of disease, and the costs of treating illness, as well as enabling people to make the most of their lives and maximise their capability to work, learn, play, socialise, volunteer and care for loved ones.

As health and wellbeing is influenced by the conditions in which we are born, grow, live, work and age, it is only by working together with the community and our partner agencies that we can have a great impact on our community's health and wellbeing. By working together towards shared outcomes we can provide a more coordinated, integrated, efficient and effective approach in achieving our goals. We would like to acknowledge and thank our many partners whose efforts, insight and cooperation have been integral to the development of the plan, and recognise their ongoing commitment to achieving optimum wellbeing for all of our residents.

The Plan builds on Council's other policies, strategies and programs, as well as existing work being undertaken by local agencies to support health and wellbeing in our community. Consultation with stakeholders resulted in the identification of four strategic focus areas– good physical health; good mental health; protect and promote health; and feel safe and secure – and two overarching focus areas – climate change; and connectivity. These areas and their ten priorities align with the Victorian Government's Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019-2023, and Public Health and Wellbeing Outcomes Framework.

Annual operational plans for the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan will be developed in alignment with the requirements of the state's public health and wellbeing planning cycle. These plans will detail the actions that will be undertaken in the ensuing twelve months and the varying levels of responsibility for stakeholder agencies in implementing each of these actions. The Plan will be monitored throughout the four year period and progress will be reported to Council annually. Through annual review, we endeavour to learn what has been successful and what can be done better, and to highlight current gaps in resources and services.

## Acknowledgement of Country

Loddon Shire Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land comprising the Loddon Shire Council area. Council would like to pay respect to their Elders both past and present.

## The Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan

Under the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008, Council is required to prepare a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP) within twelve months of each election. The MPHWP is a key strategic planning tool that aims to maintain and improve public health and wellbeing at a local community level. The focus areas and priorities outlined in Loddon Shire's MPHWP will support the community to achieve optimal health and wellbeing over the next four years.

## Health and wellbeing

The World Health Organization (WHO, 2006) defines health as "a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." Likewise, wellbeing is a combination of an individual or group's physical, mental, emotional and social health factors and is strongly linked to happiness and life satisfaction (Victorian Government, 2020a).

**Health determinants** influence our health and wellbeing in a positive or negative way (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare [AIHW], 2016). Determinants that negatively affect health include background factors such as gender, age and genetics; and behavioural factors such as smoking, poor diet, harmful consumption of alcohol and physical inactivity. These factors can increase the likelihood of developing **chronic diseases** such as heart disease, stroke, cancer, respiratory diseases, diabetes and mental health conditions, which are the number one cause of disability and death worldwide (WHO, 2021b).

**Social determinants** are the conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live, and age and include the wider forces shaping these conditions, such as social norms, policies, and political systems (WHO, 2021a). The **determinants of health model** is based on the idea that these determinants are just as important in affecting our health and wellbeing as background and behavioural risk factors (Dahlgren & Whitehead, 1991).



The determinants of health model. Adapted from Dahlgren & Whitehead, 1991.

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The unfair and avoidable differences in health status experienced between countries, within countries and within communities are known as **health inequities** (WHO, 2021a). An example of this is the disadvantage and poorer health outcomes experienced by rural and remote Australian communities compared to those living in cities. This is magnified by factors such as limited access to public transport and internet and phone connectivity, and environmental challenges, such as drought, bushfire and flood (National Rural Health Alliance, 2017). Addressing the social determinants of health is vital in achieving health equity and improving health and wellbeing in our rural communities (WHO, 2021a).

## Legislative framework

Council's MPHWP fulfils legislative requirements and aligns with policies and frameworks of both state and national governments.

### Victorian Government

Local Government Act 2020 is the main legislative act for local councils and provides a framework for their establishment and operations. It requires councils to be accountable to their local communities in the performance of functions, exercise of powers and use of resources.

Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 defines the function of councils to protect, improve and promote public health and wellbeing within the municipal district:

a. creating an environment which supports the health of members of the local community and strengthens the capacity of the community and individuals to achieve better health

b. initiating, supporting and managing public health planning processes at the local government level

c. developing and implementing public health policies and programs within the municipal district

d. developing and enforcing up-to-date public health standards and intervening if the health of people within the municipal district is affected

e. facilitating and supporting local agencies whose work has an impact on public health and wellbeing to improve public health and wellbeing in the local community

f. coordinating and providing immunisation services to children living or being educated

g. ensuring that the municipal district is maintained in a clean and sanitary condition.

Public health and wellbeing plan 2019-2023 outlines the state government's focus areas over the next four years to improve the health and wellbeing of Victorians:

**Tackling climate change and its impact on health**     **Increasing healthy eating**     **Increasing active living**     Reducing tobacco-related harm

Adapted from Victorian Government, 2019.

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**Public health and wellbeing outcomes framework** informs Victorian public health and wellbeing planning and provides five key domains outlining a comprehensive set of indicators to assist in monitoring and evaluating progress over a long period of time:

Victorians are healthy and well

Victorians are safe and secure

Victorians have the capability to participate

Victorians are connected to culture and community

Victoria is liveable

**Royal Commission into Family Violence** resulted in 227 recommendations to reduce the impact of family violence. Under these recommendations, councils are required to report on the measures proposed to reduce family violence and respond to the needs of victims.

**Planning and Environment Act 1987** requires councils to prepare a Municipal Strategic Statement, which outlines the strategies and objectives for use and development of land of the municipality.

**Climate Change Act 2017** sets out a policy framework and pathway to 2050 to keep global temperature rise below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. The Act recognises that responding to climate change is a responsibility of all levels of government and that changing climate may directly or indirectly impact health and wellbeing.

### Direct and indirect effects of climate change on health and wellbeing

| Direct effects | Indirect effects | Social determinants of health | Health impacts |
|---|---|---|---|
| Extreme heat | Water quality | Socioeconomic status | Respiratory diseases |
| | | Education | Cardiovascular diseases |
| | | | Infectious diseases |
| Bushfires | Food safety | Housing | Mental illness |
| | | Transportation | Allergies |
| | | Food security | Injuries |
| Drought | Air quality | Social capital | Poisoning |
| | | Age | Undernutrition |
| Floods | Ecological and land use change | Gender | |

Source: Victorian Government, 2020.

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**Australian Government**

National Health Priority Areas initiative is a collaboration between commonwealth and state and territory governments, non-government organisations, health experts, clinicians and consumers. It aims to focus public attention and health policy on areas considered to contribute significantly to the burden of disease in Australia.

**International**

The World Health Organisation (WHO) is the directing and coordinating authority on international health within the United Nation's system. The WHO leads and advocates global efforts to give every person an equal chance to enjoy good health and wellbeing.

## Council's strategies and plans

Council's Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan integrates with the Council Plan, Municipal Strategic Statement and Council's other plans, strategies and policies, which include:

- Aboriginal Community Partnership Plan
- Road Management Plan
- Waste Management Strategy
- Disability Access and Inclusion Plan
- Swimming Pool Improvement Plan
- Youth Strategy
- Community Engagement Policy
- Activating Open Space Strategy
- Council Advocacy Policy
- Municipal Fire Management Plan
- Recreation Strategy
- Asset Management Strategy
- Domestic Waste Water Management Plan
- Municipal Heatwave Plan
- Municipal Early Years Plan
- Community Planning Framework
- Domestic Animal Management Plan
- Risk Management Policy and Framework
- Municipal Emergency Management Plan
- Event Management Guide
- Economic Development and Tourism Strategy
- Parks Asset Management Plan
- Volunteer Policy

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## Development process

The development of this plan was informed by:

- a review of Council's 2017 – 2021 Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan
- a review of the broader policy context
- an examination of data relating to the demographic profile, health status and health determinants in the municipality
- consultation with the community: surveys were completed- both online and hard copies through mailouts- and 110 responses were received
- a review of relevant consultations previously undertaken by Council
- a review of other relevant strategic documents
- consultation with organisations delivering services relevant to community health and wellbeing including a stakeholder briefing and two online workshops.

Organisations included:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bendigo Health | Department of Families, Fairness and Housing | Murray Primary Health Network | Bendigo Loddon Primary Care Partnership |
| Dingee Bush Nursing Centre | North Central Goldfields Regional Library | Boort District Health | Inglewood & District Health Service |
| North Central Local Learning and Employment Network | Catholic Care | Local schools | Northern District Community Health |
| Centre for Non-Violence | Loddon Healthy Minds Network | Sportsfocus | Department of Education and Training |
| | Loddon Neighbourhood Houses and Resource Information Centres | Women's Health Loddon Mallee | |

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## Partnerships

One of the fundamental principles of health promotion is the importance of partnerships and the role they play in creating environments that allow for healthy communities. The engagement of many organisations in the development of the plan reflects Loddon Shire's strong history of working in partnership to achieve outcomes both in delivering community projects and working to improve community health and wellbeing.

The success of this plan is based on collaboration and strategic partnerships between government, health, education, community service organisations and community interest groups, such as the Loddon Healthy Minds Network. Individually, agencies are unlikely to have the capacity to address the range of factors that influence health and wellbeing across the municipality and as such, recognise that partnerships with other key agencies and working together is paramount to maximising health and wellbeing outcomes.

Loddon Shire is part of the Loddon Campaspe Regional Partnership, which also includes the Campaspe, Central Goldfields, Greater Bendigo, Macedon Ranges and Mount Alexander Shires. The regional partnership has prioritised health and wellbeing through the Healthy Heart of Victoria initiative which continues to fund place-based projects to address rates of obesity, chronic disease, disability and high-risk health behaviours.

Council facilitates or participates in a number of additional partnerships, networks and committees that contribute to our community's health and wellbeing, including:

Bendigo Loddon PCP — Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance — Buloke Loddon Gannawarra Health Network — Rural Councils Victoria — Loddon Healthy Minds Network — Municipal Association Victoria — Loddon Strong Families Strong Children — Loddon Mallee CARE Partnership — North Central School Cluster — Loddon (Shire) Family Violence Network — Central Victorian Local Government Reconciliation Network — Murray River Group of Councils — Healthy Eating Active Living Network (SP) — Early Childhood Agreement for children in out of home care — Bendigo Healthy Systems Network — Loddon Campaspe Councils — Loddon Buloke L2P Steering Committee — North Central LLEN — Loddon Community Planning Committees — Loddon Smoking Prevention Action Group — Northern Victorian Cluster Emergency Management Planning Committee — North Central Goldfields Library Corporation

## Loddon's profile snapshot

To consider the determinants influencing Loddon Shire's health status, the most recent data has been examined and collated to provide the following profile snapshot. All sources have been referenced throughout and further detail on the data used during the agency consultation is available on Council's website.
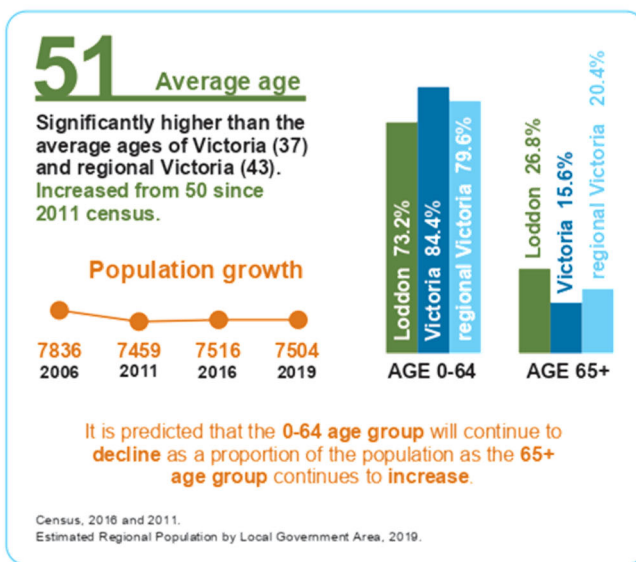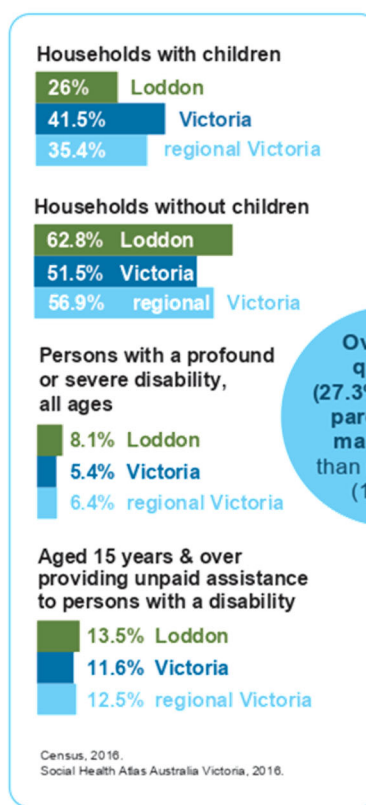
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## Our community

### The Shire

Loddon Shire encompasses a total land area of approximately **6,700** square kilometres. Predominantly a rural area with **rich agricultural and goldfields heritage**, it abounds with forests, rolling hills, rocky outcrops, rivers and lakes.[1] Annual rainfall varies between **250-500mm** amongst communities.[2] The Traditional Owners of the land are the **Dja Dja Wurrung** and **Barapa Barapa peoples** and there are approximately **1,067** registered Aboriginal cultural heritage objects, sites and Places.[3]

Map of Loddon Shire showing: Pyramid Hill, Boort, Mitiamo, LODDON, Dingee, Wedderburn, Serpentine, Inglewood, Newbridge, Tarnagulla

### Who we are

**GENDER PROFILE**
49% FEMALE
51% MALE

**1.6%** Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents, which is double that of Victoria.

**8% residents born overseas**
Top places of birth:
1. United Kingdom,
2. Philippines,
3. New Zealand,
4. Netherlands and
5. Germany[4]

**Households with children**
26% Loddon
41.5% Victoria
35.4% regional Victoria

**Households without children**
62.8% Loddon
51.5% Victoria
56.9% regional Victoria

Over one quarter (27.3%) of lone parents are **male,** more than in Victoria (17.8%)

**Persons with a profound or severe disability, all ages**
8.1% Loddon
5.4% Victoria
6.4% regional Victoria

**Aged 15 years & over providing unpaid assistance to persons with a disability**
13.5% Loddon
11.6% Victoria
12.5% regional Victoria

Census, 2016.
Social Health Atlas Australia Victoria, 2016.

**51 Average age**

Significantly higher than the average ages of Victoria (37) and regional Victoria (43). **Increased from 50 since 2011 census.**

**Population growth**
7836 (2006), 7459 (2011), 7516 (2016), 7504 (2019)

AGE 0-64: Loddon 73.2%, Victoria 84.4%, regional Victoria 79.6%
AGE 65+: Loddon 26.8%, Victoria 15.6%, regional Victoria 20.4%

It is predicted that the **0-64 age group** will continue to **decline** as a proportion of the population as the **65+ age group** continues to **increase**.

Census, 2016 and 2011.
Estimated Regional Population by Local Government Area, 2019.

### Neighbourhood perceptions

**People are willing to help each other**
90.1% Loddon
74.1% Victoria

**People can be trusted**
82.9% Loddon
71.9% Victoria

**Close-knit neighbourhood[5]**
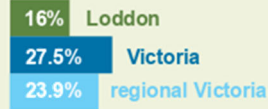80.5% Loddon
61% Victoria

References:
1. Victorian Government, 2015.
2. Elders, 2021.
3. Victorian Government Office of Aboriginal Affairs, 2014.
4. Census, 2016.
5. VicHealth indicators survey, 2015.

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## How we live

**Residents are home owners or purchasing**

- 80% Loddon
- 64.2% Victoria
- 66.9% regional Victoria

**Live in rental accommodation**

- 16% Loddon
- 27.5% Victoria
- 23.9% regional Victoria

**Median weekly rent**

- $131 Loddon
- $330 Victoria
- $238 regional Victoria

**Households with rental stress**

- 22% Loddon (Increased from 2011- was 18%)
- 30.4% Victoria
- 27.2% regional Victoria

### Median weekly household income

- $686 2011
- $826 2016

**Low-income households (earning less than $650 per week)**

- 36% Loddon
- 18% Victoria
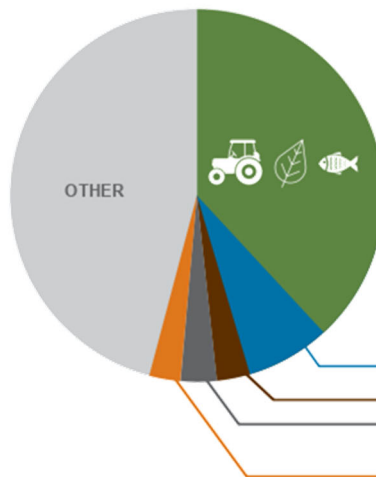- 30% regional Victoria

While **more than one quarter of lone parents** are **low-income earners**, there was an improvement in the proportion of these families earning **less than $399 per week** in 2016 **(9%)** since 2011 **(19%)**.

## What we do

**Over half** our employed residents work **full-time** and **over one third** work **part-time**.

The most popular sector of employment is **agriculture, forestry and fishing (36%)**, significantly higher than in Victoria (2%) and regional Victoria (8%).

OTHER

A higher proportion of residents **participate in volunteer work (31.7%)** compared to Victoria (19.2%) and regional Victoria (24.3%).

- 11% health care and social assistance
- 7% manufacturing
- 7% retail
- 6% education and training

**Proportion that left school at Year 10 or below**

- 41.2% Loddon
- 25.8% Victoria
- 34.7% regional Victoria

**Proportion completed year 12 or equivalent**

- 27.3% Loddon
- 54.4% Victoria
- 38.9% regional Victoria

**Residents aged 15 and over holding tertiary qualifications (vocational, diploma, advanced diploma, bachelor degree or higher)**

- 35.8% Loddon
- 50.4% Victoria
- 45% regional Victoria

However, a higher proportion of residents hold a **vocational qualification (20.6%)** than in Victoria (16.9%).

References:
Census, 2016 and 2011.

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## Our health

**Self-reported health status is poor or fair**
22.9% Loddon
20.3% Victoria

**Satisfaction with life is low or medium**
25.4% Loddon
20.5% Victoria

**Persons with one chronic disease**
22.5% Loddon
32.3% Victoria

**Persons with two or more chronic diseases[6]**
39.2% Loddon
25.5% Victoria

### Ever diagnosed with the following chronic illness[7]

**Anxiety or depression**
38.5% Loddon
27.4% Victoria

**Asthma**
24.3% Loddon
20% Victoria

**Heart disease**
6.1% Loddon
6.7% Victoria

**Type 2 diabetes**
4.5% Loddon
5.5% Victoria

**Cancer**
10.9% Loddon
8.1% Victoria

**Osteoporosis**
6.6% Loddon
5.7% Victoria

**Arthritis**
28.7% Loddon
0.6% Victoria
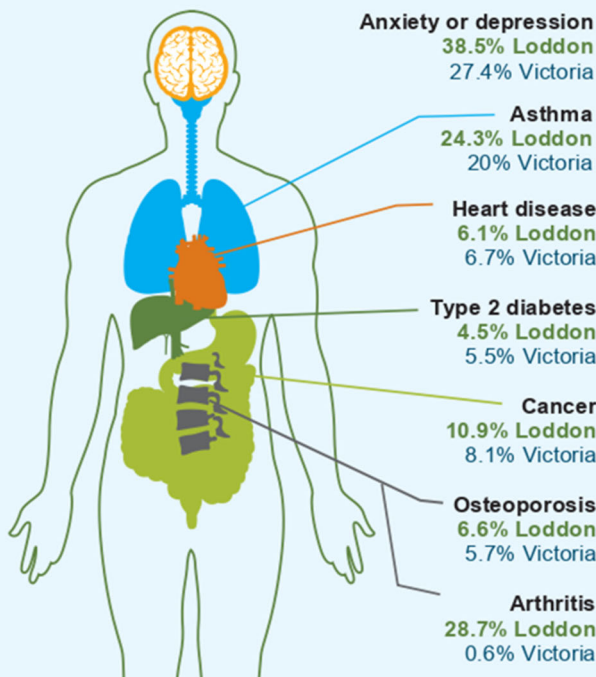
### Cause of death, number per 100,000 persons (crude rate)[8]

**Coronary heart disease**
154.2 Loddon
86.5 Victoria

**Colorectal cancer**
34.1 Loddon
22.9 Victoria

**Heart failure and complications, and ill-defined heart disease**
40.7 Loddon
14.5 Victoria

**Lung cancer**
66.5 Loddon
38.2 Victoria

**COPD**
77.4 Loddon
30.1 Victoria

**Cerebrovascular disease**
47.0 Loddon
32.2 Victoria

**Diabetes**
32.8 Loddon
18.8 Victoria

## Health determinants

| Unemployment rate % at March[9] | | Loddon | Victoria | regional Victoria |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2021 | 5.6 | 6.4 | 5.6 |
| | 2020 | 6.1 | 5.4 | 4.7 |
| | 2019 | 5.1 | 4.9 | 4.4 |
| | 2018 | 7.4 | 6 | 5.7 |

**CONNECTIVITY**
Internet not accessed from dwelling, in 2016:
27.6% Loddon
13.6% Victoria
19% regional Victoria[10]

References:
6. Victorian Population Health Survey (VPHS), 2017.
7. Mortality over regions and times, 2015-2019.
8. VPHS, 2017.
9. Labour Force survey, 2021, 2020, 2019 and 2016; and Small Area Labour Markets estimates, 2021.
10. Social Health Atlas Australia Victoria, 2016.
11. Census, 2016.

**GENDER PAY GAP:** Individuals earning above the minimum wage[11]

Loddon 21.4%
Victoria 29.3%
regional Victoria 25.2%

Loddon 28.8%
Victoria 41%
regional Victoria 35.3%
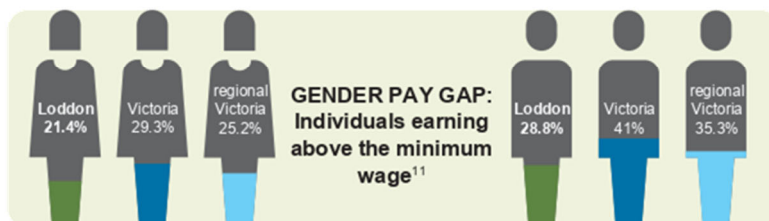
## Health determinants

### Socio Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA)

The SEIFA assesses the wellbeing of communities using Census data. A ranking below 1000 indicates disadvantage- the lower the score, the higher the level of disadvantage.

Loddon: 942
regional Victoria: 977
Victoria: 1010
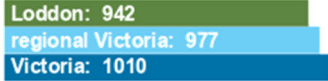
**8th** most disadvantaged LGA in Victoria - improved from 4th in 2011 (934)[12]
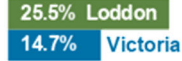
Self-reported dental health status is fair/poor
36.6% Loddon
24.4% Victoria

Avoided or delayed visiting a dental health professional due to cost
30.1% Loddon
33.9% Victoria

Current smoker
26.9% Loddon
16.7% Victoria

Daily smoker
25.5% Loddon
14.7% Victoria
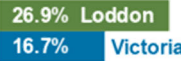
Pre-obese or obese
50.1% Loddon
50.8% Victoria

Increased risk from single occasion of alcohol consumption
57.2% Loddon
43% Victoria

Increased lifetime risk from alcohol consumption
68.7% Loddon
59.5% Victoria

VPHS, 2017.

**Do not meet both veg and fruit guidelines daily**[13]

Loddon 60.4%     Victoria 51.7%

**1 in 9** households are food insecure.

In some areas, this increases to 1 in 6.[14]

**Consume sugar-sweetened soft drink daily**[15]

25.6% Loddon
10.1% Victoria

**No water consumed per day**[16]

6.8%

**Barriers to meeting daily veg and fruit guidelines include**[17]

| Personal preference | Cost | Dietary requirements | Quality/ Availability | Time |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 28.6% veg | 18.2% veg | 13.8% veg | 11% veg | 15.9% veg |
| 35.8% fruit | 19.1% fruit | 14.4% fruit | 14.5% fruit | 8.9% fruit |
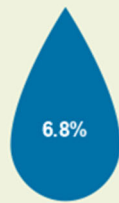
**Insufficient physical activity time and sessions as per guidelines**
43.1% Loddon
41.1% Victoria

**Main barriers to meeting daily physical activity guidelines**

1. Time poor (45.1%)
2. Poor health or disability (21%)
3. Cost (19.6%)

VPHS, 2017.
ALC, 2019.

On average, people travel **20.6km** to get to their activities.

**Walking** is the most popular physical activity among residents, with **19.6%** of the population reporting that they walked for exercise in the previous 12 months.

Most residents who walked for exercise in the past 12 months did so **once per week or more** (72.1%).

References:
12. Census, 2016 and 2011.
13. VPHS, 2017.
14. Active Living Census (ALC), 2019.
15. VPHS, 2017.
16. VicHealth Indicators Survey, 2015.
17. Active Living Census, 2019.

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## Health determinants

**Low birthweight babies**
5.6% Loddon
6.7% Victoria

**Smoked during pregnancy**
14.3% Loddon
8.4% Victoria

**Almost 60%** of **pregnant women** did not attend **antenatal care** within the first 10 weeks of pregnancy, same as in Victoria.[18]
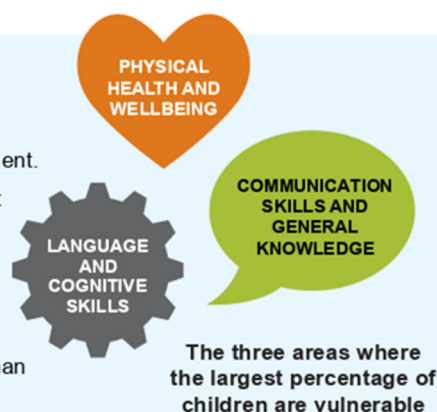
Average number of decayed, missing or filled primary and permanent teeth in children attending public dental services[19]

| AGE | Loddon | Victoria |
|---|---|---|
| 0-5 years | 1 | 1.1 |
| 6 years | 2.53 | 2.36 |
| 12 years | 2.91 | 1.87 |

### Australian Early Development Census (AEDC)

Completed by teachers as children enter their first year of school, the AEDC provides a snapshot of early childhood development.

AEDC highlights how children have developed across five domains: **physical health and wellbeing**, **social competence**, **emotional maturity**, **language and cognitive skills**, and **communication and general knowledge**.

The 2018 AEDC classifies **over one quarter** of Loddon's children of school entry level as **developmentally vulnerable** in **at least one of the five domains**. This is a significantly higher proportion than that in Victoria or Australia. The proportion of children who were classified as vulnerable in **two of the five domains** was also significantly higher.

**PHYSICAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

**COMMUNICATION SKILLS AND GENERAL KNOWLEDGE**

**LANGUAGE AND COGNITIVE SKILLS**

The three areas where the largest percentage of children are vulnerable

**Percentage of children developmentally vulnerable in 2018**

**Vulnerable in 1 domain**

Loddon 25.4%
Victoria 19.9%
Australia 21.7%

**Vulnerable in 2 domains**

Loddon 17.5%
Victoria 10.1%
Australia 11.1%
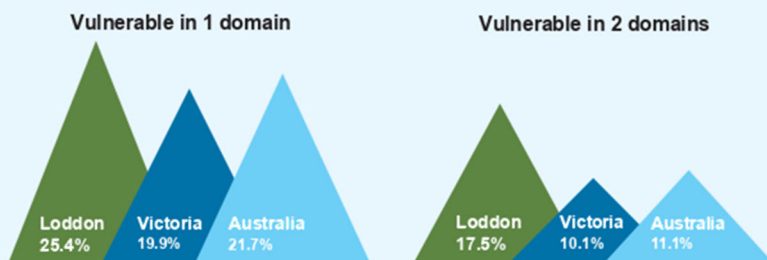
There has been a significant increase between 2015 and 2018 in the proportion of children classified as vulnerable in the **language** and **cognitive skills** domain.

AEDC, 2018 and 2015.

### Bullying in schools

**39.6%** of children in **years 5 and 6** reported being bullied. **This is the highest in the state** (Victoria 15.9%).

**24%** of children in **years 7 to 9** reported being bullied (Victoria 17.5%).[20]

References:
18. Social Health Atlas Australia Victoria, 2016.
19. Dental Health Services Victoria, 2017-2019.
20. Victorian Child and Adolescent Monitoring Systems indicators, 2018.

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## The plan: strategic focus areas, priorities and outcomes

Based on the available health and wellbeing evidence, supported by agency and community consultation, and with regard to the state government health and wellbeing focus areas, four strategic focus areas and two overarching focus areas have been identified  Within these focus areas, priorities and outcomes have been identified  These will inform the operational plans that will be developed annually to guide the work undertaken collaboratively by the partner agencies.
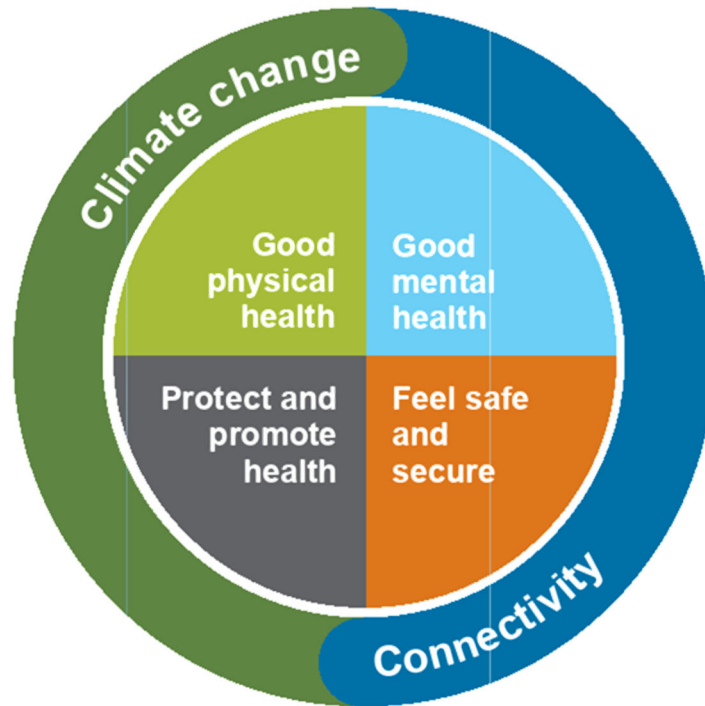




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## Strategic focus areas

### 1. Good physical health

**Priority: Increase healthy start in life**

The Strong Families Strong Children (SFSC) Loddon Project, funded by the William Buckland Foundation and facilitated by the North Central LLEN, has established partnerships to progress this priority; its ongoing work is strongly supported across the Shire. Its work with families and early years services to try to increase access for children and families to the services and resources they need to help children develop into the best they can be is highly regarded.

Stakeholder engagement in relation to the development of this plan as well as the Council plan, highlighted the impact that a lack of childcare has on community wellbeing and this was emphasised as an area of concern.

**Outcomes:**

- the Strong Families Strong Children initiative is maintained
- all children arrive at school ready for learning
- all children have a voice and influence
- all children are happy and enjoy healthy lifestyles
- children's connection to culture is valued and supported within service provision
- initiatives for the provision of childcare options across the Shire are identified and promoted

**Priority: Reduce preventable disease**

The Buloke Loddon Gannawarra Health Network (BLG) enables health, community and local government agencies across the three Shires to work collaboratively based on a shared understanding of the health needs and priorities of the Shire communities. Working in partnership increases the opportunities to ensure access and equity of health opportunities within the rural context.

**Outcomes:**

- access to and participation in health screening programs is increased
- partnerships to reduce preventable disease are maintained and strengthened

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## 2. Good mental health

**Priorities:**

**Increase mental wellbeing**

**Decrease suicide**

The Loddon Healthy Minds Network (LHMN) is a valued, community-driven network that works with Loddon community members and organisations. There was strong support for the network to continue its work across the Shire. LHMN has established a Suicide Prevention forum, held every two years, with a focus on suicide prevention strategies for a rural context. There is ongoing support for this forum to continue to build capacity through this initiative.

Community members highlighted increased social isolation as a major mental health issue related to the pandemic. Associated with this is the increased importance of self-care during these times.

Stakeholders highlighted the range of services that can contribute to mental wellbeing and the need to build warm, welcoming, non-judgmental and connected services across the Shire. This is especially true given that many services are based outside the Shire and are visiting services that may not have a strong connection to Loddon community members and organisations.

**Outcomes:**

- the Loddon Healthy Minds Network is maintained
- a reduction in the stigma relating to mental health issues
- social isolation is reduced
- self-care initiatives are supported and promoted
- access to and engagement with mental health services is improved
- local capacity is increased in relation to suicide prevention within a rural context



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## 3. Protect and promote health

**Priorities:**

**Increase healthy eating and active living**

**Reduce tobacco-related harm**

**Reduce harmful alcohol consumption**

Loddon Shire's very high smoking rates are a concern to many within the community and there is support for research to increase understandings of the drivers underlying these smoking rates.

There was community support for initiatives to increase active recreation (informal, non-competitive recreation) across the community. This is in line with the objectives of the Healthy Heart of Victoria initiative. There is growing concern about harmful alcohol consumption within the Shire, particularly in relation to community events, and the potential influence this has on young people's attitudes to alcohol consumption. Stakeholder workshops identified new opportunities for schools and other agencies to work in partnership in relation to these priorities.

There is continued support for the partnership work of the HEAL-SP (Healthy Eating Active Living and Smoking Prevention) group.

**Outcomes:**

- the Healthy Eating Active Living and Smoking Prevention group is maintained
- understandings about the underlying drivers of high smoking rates in Loddon Shire are increased
- smoking and vaping uptake rates in youth are reduced
- rates of smoking during pregnancy are reduced
- service coordination for smoking cessation initiatives is improved
- healthy eating rates increase
- the Healthy Heart of Victoria initiative is maintained
- participation in active recreation is increased
- harmful alcohol consumption is reduced
- partnership work between schools and partner agencies in relation to these priorities is increased.

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## 4. Feel safe and secure

**Priority: Prevent all forms of family violence**

The Loddon Family Violence Network (LFVN) was established in 2018 and there is strong support for its partnership work to continue to strengthen initiatives to prevent family violence and improve gender equity.

The Orange Door commenced operation in the Loddon Campaspe Region in October 2020, and is looking to establish a physical presence within the Loddon Shire. This provides opportunities for the Orange Door to work with the LFVN to develop service delivery models that are responsive to the Shire's unique strengths and challenges, enabling enhanced resourcing and coordination of family violence services within the Shire.

**Outcomes:**

- the Loddon Family Violence Network is maintained
- partnerships to prevent family violence and improve gender equity are supported and strengthened
- capacity to identify and respond to family violence is increased
- well resourced and coordinated family violence services are available within Loddon Shire



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## Overarching focus areas

### 1. Climate change

> **Priority: Support the community to mitigate the impacts of climate change on their health and wellbeing**
>
> The overarching nature of climate change as an issue across the priorities was a feature in stakeholder consultations where it was emphasised as a factor in relation to areas such as mental health, active living, and increase healthy start in life. This highlights the ways in which climate change is impacting all policy areas.
>
> Stakeholders highlighted the increasing frequency of emergency situations due to climate change and the need to plan ahead so that services and information resources are ready to connect with people immediately, and in circumstances where communications may be limited. This is particularly true in relation to vulnerable people within the community.
>
> **Outcomes:**
>
> - the vulnerable persons register is maintained
> - community capacity to plan for and respond to extreme events/emergencies is increased
> - cooler space options are identified and access promoted on days of extreme heat
> - shade options are considered in facility planning and management

### 2. Connectivity

> **Priority: Reduce the health and wellbeing inequity gap created by inadequate digital connectivity**
>
> Loddon Shire has long documented its limited access to reliable mobile phone and internet services. During the pandemic, this has become an even bigger issue. As services increasingly move from a face-to-face model to an online one, residents report increased frustration in accessing education, telehealth, emergency services as well as social connection and support. The "digital divide" is now more than ever before, a major source of disadvantage.
>
> **Outcomes:**
>
> - opportunities for improved digital connectivity across Loddon Shire are identified and promoted
> - opportunities to enhance community members' access to online services are identified, supported and promoted

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## Implementation, monitoring, review and reporting

Council is one of a number of agencies who will work collaboratively to meet the objectives in the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan. Annual operational plans will be developed in partnership with key agencies, partners and stakeholders which identifies the activities and initiatives for the following year.

As health and wellbeing is constantly evolving, having an annual operational plan provides flexibility to adapt to the changing environment and to work collaboratively, using current available evidence to guide action planning.
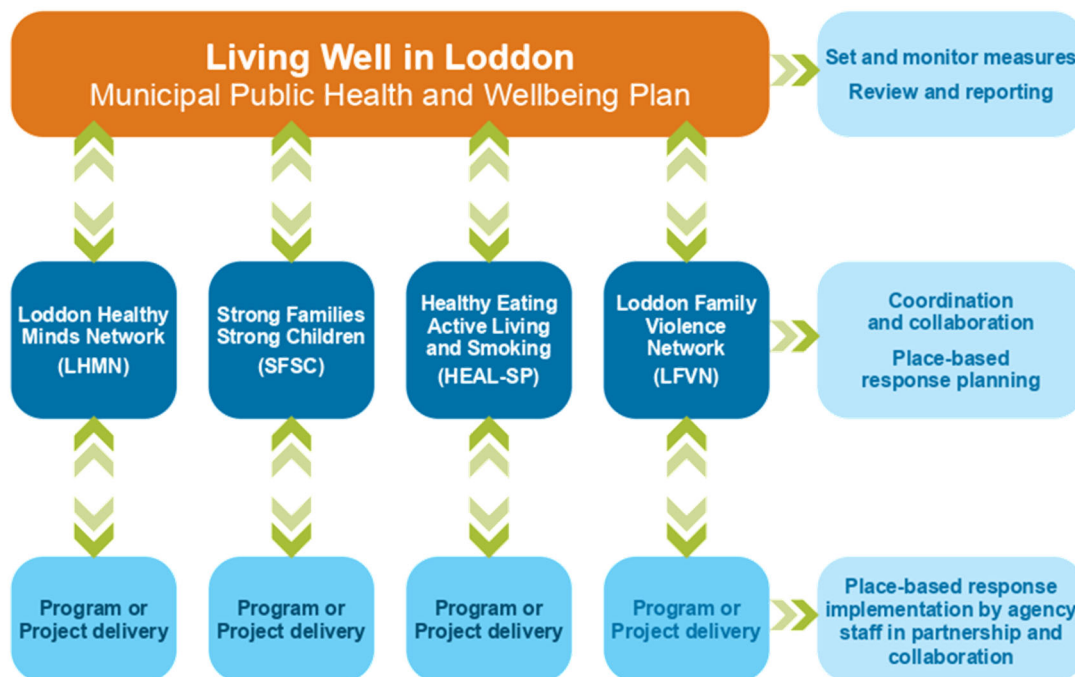


Loddon Shire Council's Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan implementation framework.

The Plan will be monitored throughout the four year period by Council staff and the Loddon Community Wellbeing network. In accordance with the statutory requirement under the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 the MPHWP Strategic group (facilitated by Council staff) will review the Plan annually and, if required, will recommend amendments to the Plan to Council. The purpose of this review is to learn what has been successful and what can be done better, and to highlight current gaps in resources and services.

Progress on the Plan's implementation will be reported to Council on an annual basis.

# References

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## NEXT MEETING

The next Ordinary Meeting of Council will be held on 26 October 2021 at Wedderburn commencing at 3pm.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at enter time.

Confirmed this……………………..day of……………………………… 2021

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