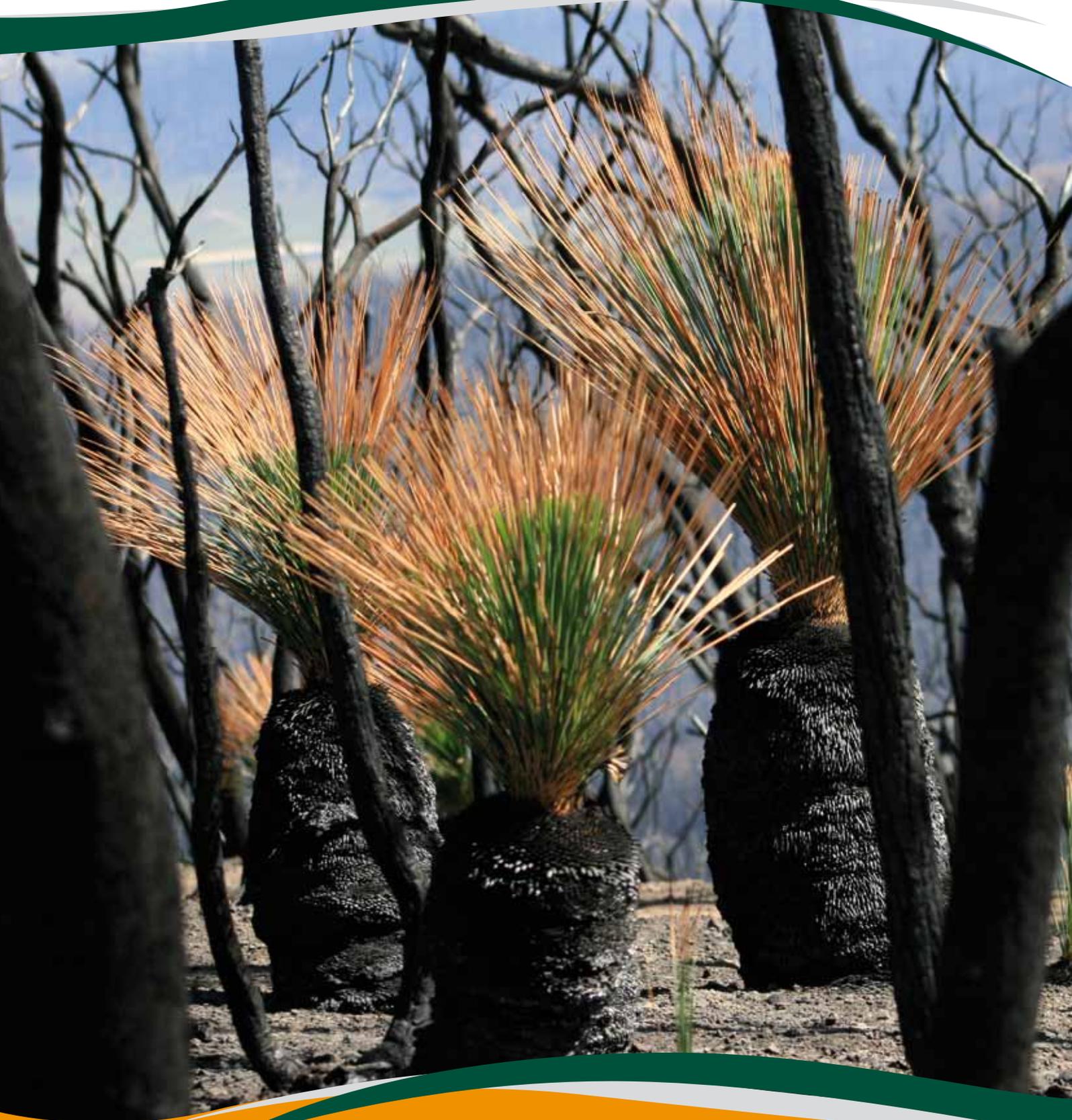




**Murrindindi**  
Shire Council

# ANNUAL REPORT 2008-2009



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*We thank John Leadbeater, Paul Blythman and Louise Flowers for the use of their photos in this document.*

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## About this report

The Murrindindi Shire Council Annual Report 2008-2009 details progress we have made in the past financial year towards achieving the activities of the Council Plan 2006-2010 (year 3 review), and the Annual Budget 2008-2009

In this report we identify highlights, achievements, challenges and what is planned for the year ahead for the plan's five themes of Environment, Community, Infrastructure, Local Economy, and Governance. A new council plan was being prepared at 30 June that sets the scene for the next four years.

The Annual Report 2008-2009 also contains audited financial reports and performance statements, which are a requirement of the Local Government Act 1989.

The Annual Report 2008-2009 is written for a variety of audiences including government agencies, the general community, ratepayers and businesses. Copies of the Annual Report 2008-2009 are available at council offices or online at [www.murrindindi.vic.gov.au](http://www.murrindindi.vic.gov.au)

We encourage you to tell us how we can improve our reporting to you. If you have any comments or suggestions please write to -

The Chief Executive Officer, Murrindindi Shire Council, PO Box 138, Alexandra 3714 or email [msc@murrindindi.vic.gov.au](mailto:msc@murrindindi.vic.gov.au)

## Murrindindi Snapshot

### Our history

The Wurundjeri tribe and the Taungurung language speakers are the traditional owners of the land now known as the Shire of Murrindindi.

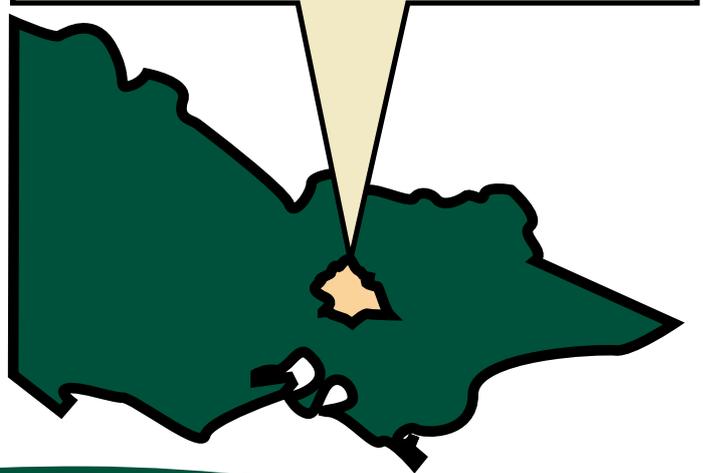
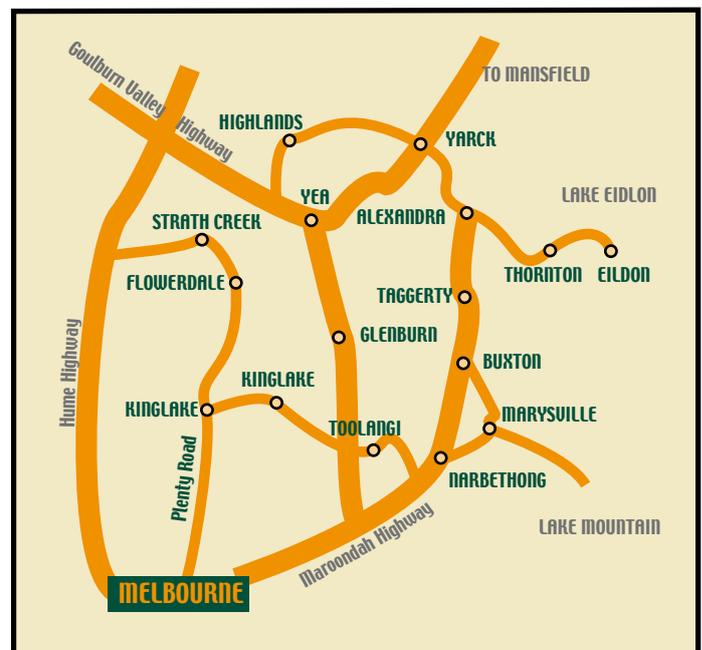
European settlement followed Hume and Hovell's overland exploration in December 1824. Many of the existing towns were established during the 1850s and 1860s after the discovery of gold.

The Shire of Murrindindi was declared on 18 November 1994 by the amalgamation of the former municipalities of Alexandra and Yea, and the addition of parts of the former municipalities of Healesville, Broadford, Eltham, Whittlesea and Euroa.

On the 7 February 2009 more than 40% of the shire was directly impacted by the Black Saturday bushfires. The fires have resulted in changes to our demographics.

### Our shire

- The Shire of Murrindindi is 150 kms or 90 minutes north east of Melbourne
- The major townships in our shire are Alexandra, Eildon, Kinglake, Marysville and Yea
- Our shire covers 3,889 sq kms, half of which is state and national parks, forests and reserves
- The shire is divided into seven wards
- We have seven councillors
- There are 9,124 rateable properties





### **Our people** *(pre 7 February 2009)*

- The Shire of Murrindindi is home to 14,228 people
- 28.8% are aged 24 years and under
- 30.5% are aged 55 years and over
- 56.7% are employed full-time
- 38.2% own their own homes
- 80.9% were born in Australia

### **Our industries**

- Agriculture, aquaculture, horticulture and viticulture
- Forestry and timber processing
- Tourism, hospitality and conferencing
- Light manufacturing and engineering
- Retail and trade services
- Education (including outdoor education)
- Public services

### **Council's services**

- Tourism and economic development
- Events management
- Waste management
- Environmental services
- Land use, land development and subdivisions
- Building control
- Aged and disabled services
- Youth and recreational development
- Public health
- Libraries
- Road and bridge construction and maintenance
- Child and family services
- Community development

### **Vision**

**By 2010 the Murrindindi Shire Council will be a progressive, financially strong organisation providing excellent service to motivated communities within a healthy environment.**

### **Mission**

To care for, foster and promote the Murrindindi Shire

### **Values**

- **Respect**  
We will respect other people and their opinions
- **Consistency**  
We will be consistent in the application of our principles, policies and processes
- **Integrity**  
We will do what we say we will and say what we mean
- **Accountability**  
We will accept responsibility for our actions
- **Innovation**  
We will accept responsibility for our actions
- **Innovation**  
We will consider new ideas, opportunities and better ways of doing things



## Mayor's message

### Bushfires

On 7 February 2009, Australia's worst natural disaster devastated many of our communities.

Over 40% of the Shire of Murrindindi was burnt as a result of the Black Saturday bushfires. Many in our community lost loved ones, homes and livelihoods.

There was substantial impact to community infrastructure and significant damage to our natural environment.

The resilience, courage and determination shown by the communities of the Shire of Murrindindi has been inspirational. We extend our sincere thanks to all emergency services, volunteer groups and the broader community for their immediate and ongoing efforts and assistance during what has been an immensely difficult time.

We have strived to provide emergency relief and recovery services after Black Saturday with support from government agencies, not for profit organisations and volunteer groups. Our limited resources were severely stretched and Council acknowledges that in the early days after Black Saturday we were not able to have a presence in all of the localities affected by the fires. As a number of staff lost their homes and many were directly affected by the fires we were heavily reliant on the support of neighbouring councils to fulfil some of our emergency response obligations.

Since then, our focus has been on the enormous recovery effort required to reconnect and rebuild our fire affected communities as well as just maintain regular council services to meet the needs of those communities not directly impacted by the fires. Inevitably our priorities in terms of our council plan for this year and beyond have been altered irrevocably by the fires.

Rate revenue will be down by as much as \$1.5 million dollars each year for four years due to

reevaluation of properties lost or damaged in the fires. Some projects we had planned related to infrastructure or communities which no longer exist, and the loss of many business premises and natural attractions has changed much of our economic base for the time being at least.

On the other hand government grants have been made available to us that will enable us to fast track many projects which may have taken years to come to fruition.

Rebuilding or reshaping our economy is both a challenge and an opportunity for council and our communities.

### Community satisfaction

The 2009 Local Government Community Satisfaction survey was originally to have been conducted shortly after the Black Saturday fires, however, it was postponed to mid March.

Community perception of our overall performance has not changed significantly from the 2008 survey. Of the 13 items surveyed seven have remained unchanged and six have declined. Anecdotally other fire affected councils have also experienced a similar result.

We continue to perform well on health and human services and the appearance of public areas but the survey shows that the community would like us to improve on local roads and footpaths, town planning policy and approvals, economic development and community engagement.

We are positive about our future and committed to continuous improvement. We will keep listening to and working hard in partnership with all of our communities to ensure the best use of financial and human resources to deliver services.

### Election

Our first election of councillors for seven wards was conducted in November 2008. Councillors state wide were elected for a four year term at this time.

We acknowledge the contribution to the Murrindindi Shire Council organisation and Murrindindi community made by Janet Gilmore and Leanne Pleash, representatives of the Cathedral and Cheviot Ridings respectively as councillors until the November election. Neither nominated for re-election.

### **Looking forward**

Positive sentiment is strong with many business people and residents displaying resilience and a desire to rebuild and renew. The Black Saturday bushfire has occurred in the context of drought, previous bushfires and uncertain economic times.

The economic reality in terms of future growth and development is an unknown at this point. Many individuals and businesses affected by the fires have not yet made a decision about their future and every decision made is based on a complex set of personal and economic factors.

The one 'known' is that Murrindindi has changed permanently, but we will continue to work together to rebuild lives, homes, businesses and buildings.



Cr Lyn Gunter  
Mayor



## Chief Executive Officer's Report

### Bushfires

The Murrindindi Shire Council has been part of the worst natural disaster in Australia's history.

Our thanks go out to the many service clubs and volunteers that supported the response, relief and recovery process. The role of the Department of Human Services Hume

Region is also gratefully acknowledged.

The extraordinary efforts of local communities, and leaders within those communities have been the most remarkable aspect of the recovery process to date.

The role of the councillors and staff is also to be acknowledged. The overarching desire to assist communities has resulted in many hours of volunteered time and constant monitoring of key issues impacting on our communities.

The appointment of the Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority (VBRRA) has been a key turning point in the recovery process. Relationships between the Council and Authority remain strong and joint long term planning is now starting to make a difference.

Looking forward there are emerging concerns for local economies, individual's mental health and the well-being of families. These aspects will need to feature strongly in recovery planning. Community development and consultation will be the key to long term recovery.

Given the strength of the community to this point, the hopes of recovery and rebuilding in the future are bright in the Murrindindi Shire.

### Financial Results

From a financial perspective the council continues to be in a reasonable financial position in accordance with its long term financial plan. The underlying operating deficit situation caused by one off grants and lack of alternate revenue streams continues to cause some concern.

The 2008-2009 Financial Statements have been completed and preliminarily audited.

Variations of notes in the Statements were:

#### The Income Statement

The change in total revenues from \$21.8 million in 2008 to \$40.8 million in 2009 represents an increase of \$13.6 million in grants revenue, \$1.4 million in user fees and reimbursements of \$3.6 million to support bushfire response and recovery after the Black Saturday fires.

A decrease in rates revenue compared to 2008 reflects the revaluation of fire-affected properties which resulted in a reduction in capital improved values.

The change in total expenses from \$20.9 million in 2008 to \$36.5 million in 2009 represents an increase of \$0.9 million employee costs and \$14.2 million in materials and services to support and delivery of projects and challenges provided by the bushfire recovery process.

The Income Statement delivered a surplus of \$6.1 million largely as a result of receiving grant funding late in the financial year. This surplus is to be allocated to projects that will be carried out during the 2009-2010 financial year.

#### The Balance Sheet

Items of note in the balance sheet include:

- an increase in cash and cash equivalent of \$3.9 million as a result of receiving increased revenue for grant funded projects related to the bushfire recovery process late in the financial year.
- an increase in current trade and other receivables of \$10.4 million as a result of outstanding grant funds and reimbursement of expenses associated with the bushfire recovery process.
- an increase in trade and other payables of \$3.4 million as a result of supporting grant funded projects related to the bushfire recovery process.
- a reduction in interest bearing loans and borrowings of \$0.4 million.
- an increase in total equity or net worth of the

council of \$8.5 million that demonstrates the trend of improving equity over time.

### **Cash Flow Statement**

Importantly the closing cash position of \$8.8 million is in line with the 2009-2010 budget projections and enables the recurrent and capital functions to be undertaken in the coming year.

### **Financial Summary**

The financial indicators of surplus on operation, improving equity and sufficient cash reserves ensures that the council's position remains sound.

The underlying deficit on operations is of ongoing concern and reflects the council's reliance on capital and one off grants. This issue has been flagged in the SRP.

The expectation of the community to rebuild and recover as a result of receiving increased level of grant funds post fires will be a huge challenge for our project managers and engineering staff.

### **Other Activities**

In addition to the impacts on the organisation of the fires, the past year has also been occupied with the election of a new Council in November 2008, the induction of new councillors and the delivery of services to areas that were directly and indirectly impacted by the fires.

75% of the capital works program was still able to be completed even with the diversion of resources as a consequence of the fires. Projects of particular note were: bridge renewal and upgrades, Eildon Jamieson Road, Extons Road, Kinglake Glenburn Road, Mt Margaret Road and Whanregarwen Road.

I am excited to be able to announce that in partnership with Mansfield and Mitchell Shire Councils we have secured \$13.2 million funding from the federal government for the Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail which will run between Mansfield and Tallarook with a connection to Alexandra.

### **Looking forward**

The challenge facing the Murrindindi Shire Council in assisting its communities to recover and rebuild is unprecedented. The operating budget is forecast to double and the capital program to triple.

We are fortunate however to have excellent staff, newly sourced contractors and strong relationships with other governments and the Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority. Together I am confident that we will be in a stronger position from a social, environmental and economic perspective when we report again next year.

We have also embarked on a Council Plan that has been driven by the councillors and senior staff in recent months. The Plan will set the scene and priorities for at least the next four years and provide the community with the confidence that Murrindindi will be a vibrant and progressive shire with strong communities thriving within a healthy environment.



Mark Henderson  
Chief Executive Officer

## The year at a glance

### Theme 1: Environment - further information page 27

- Achievements**
- Progressed Murrindindi Heritage Study Stage 2
  - Appointed Environment Strategy Project Officer to develop council's Environment Strategy
  - Decreased quantity of garbage per household collected via the roadside collection service by 24% from 2007-2008

- Challenges**
- 35 year life span of Alexandra Landfill reduced to 30 years
  - Marysville Transfer Station destroyed in February bushfires

- Year ahead**
- Progress the Marysville and Triangle Urban Design Framework
  - Review council's fire management planning with regard to the state government response to the Bushfire Royal Commission
  - Progress development plans for Kinglake West and Alexandra
  - Construct cell at Alexandra Landfill

Annual Community Satisfaction Survey score for waste management	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
	75	70	67	71	67

### Theme 2: Community - further information page 32

- Achievements**
- Completed the following upgrade works at recreational facilities: resurfacing and upgrade of Thornton Netball Courts, resurfacing and upgrade of Kinglake West Memorial Reserve Tennis Courts, construction of terracing in front of clubhouse at Kinglake Memorial Reserve
  - Continued to facilitate the implementation of the Community Building Initiatives project across the Kinglake Ranges
  - Approved additional staffing for the Yea Council office / Library and extended opening hours to 9am to 5pm with no closure for the lunch break. Commenced in August 2008

- Challenges**
- Manager of Community Services was redeployed to the Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre for four weeks
  - 880 library items were lost in homes destroyed by the fires
  - Time frames for preparation of the Municipal Public Health Plan were changed by amendments to the Health Act 1958. Councils must now prepare a four year Municipal Health plan that meets the new requirements by 27 November 2009 and our Health and Wellbeing Plan will be presented to council by this date

- Year ahead
- Work with Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority, community recovery committees and fire affected communities to develop community based recovery plans based on active participation and strengthening of community connectedness.
  - Develop and deliver additional youth support programs and activities including: youth web site, youth leadership program, youth providers committee and youth development grants program
  - Facilitate a community building initiative to support people impacted upon by the Sugarloaf North South Pipeline

Annual Community Satisfaction Survey score for health and human services	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
	72	72	73	76	76

### Theme 3: Infrastructure - further information page 39

- Achievements
- Inspection and maintenance of 600kms of fire affected roadsides where tree safety inspections, and removals or pruning were required to make them safe and to allow traffic movement
  - Completed upgrade to Yarck public conveniences
  - Announcement of \$400,000 funding for Eildon Town and Waterlink Pathway project

- Challenges
- Senior engineering staff were seconded to the Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre as Municipal Emergency Resource Officers for four weeks
  - Many community facilities were completely destroyed on Black Saturday, including five community halls, three kindergartens, two primary schools, one police station, one child care centre, three maternal and child health centres, one retirement village, one caravan park, one transfer station/depot
  - Special Charge Scheme process for Taylor Bay Left Arm Road and Green Street incomplete

- Year ahead
- Rebuild fire damaged and destroyed buildings and other infrastructure
  - Develop a five year forward capital works plan (new and upgrade works) aligned to the Strategic Resource Plan
  - Develop initial stages of Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail in partnership with Mitchell and Mansfield councils

Annual Community Satisfaction Survey score for roads and footpaths	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
	54	50	50	51	50

#### Theme 4: Local economy - further information page 44

- Achievements**
- In partnership with Mansfield and Mitchell Shire Councils secured \$13.2 million funding from the federal government for the Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail which will run between Mansfield and Tallarook with a connection to Alexandra
  - Conducted a successful Visitor Information Centre Volunteers Summit, focusing on bushfire recovery, on 21 April 2009 for 65 of our volunteers at the Yea Golf Club. Further information page 48
  - Supported businesses and individuals seeking work and staff through the Industry Capability Network registration process and Rural Skills Connect project
- 
- Challenges**
- Destruction of business and tourism infrastructure in the bushfire
  - Impact of the bushfire on the nature based tourism product that was a strength of the region
  - Introduction of new building regulations in March 2009 introducing Bushfire Attack Levels has added a layer of complexity at a difficult time, requiring our staff to familiarise themselves with the new legislation and then participate in community information sessions
- 
- Year ahead**
- Revise the draft 2009 – 2012 Economic Development Strategy to incorporate strategies for fire affected businesses
  - Support the Yea Wetlands Committee of Management to develop a sustainable business model for the Yea Discovery Centre
  - Finalise financing and implementation of Yea Saleyards upgrade

Annual Community Satisfaction Survey Score for Economic Development	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
	61	56	59	60	56

#### Theme 5: Governance - further information page 50

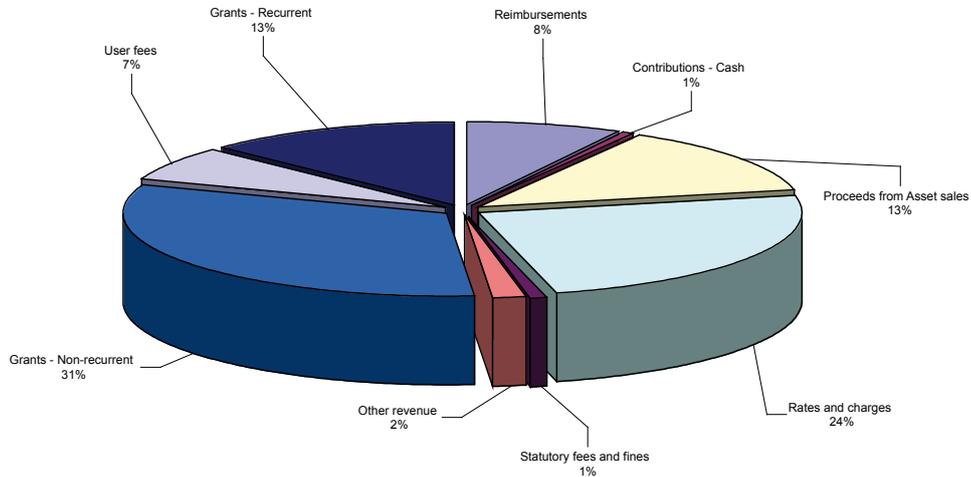
- Achievements**
- Reviewed the council plan in conjunction with portfolio councillors
  - Presented the Internal Financial Control Manual to the Internal Audit Committee in November 2008. This document identifies and addresses the management of risk related to audit issues and accounting standards and provides measures to address those risks
  - Undertook a revaluation of rateable properties affected by the February fires. The revaluation identified a significant decrease in council's rate base
- 
- Challenges**
- Robustness and system capabilities were tested with the large number of additional staff, contractors and government agencies requiring access to data and systems
  - Informing and engaging with residents who had relocated following the bushfires was difficult
  - The speed at which information and situations were changing made it difficult to ensure we had the latest information available
- 
- Year ahead**
- Produce a regular community newsletter
  - The development of a Grant Management Register, Grants Management Policy and guidelines will be essential to managing and reporting on the unprecedented number of grants Council is receiving in support of the recovery processes.

Annual Community Satisfaction Survey score for overall performance	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
	64	62	62	65	62

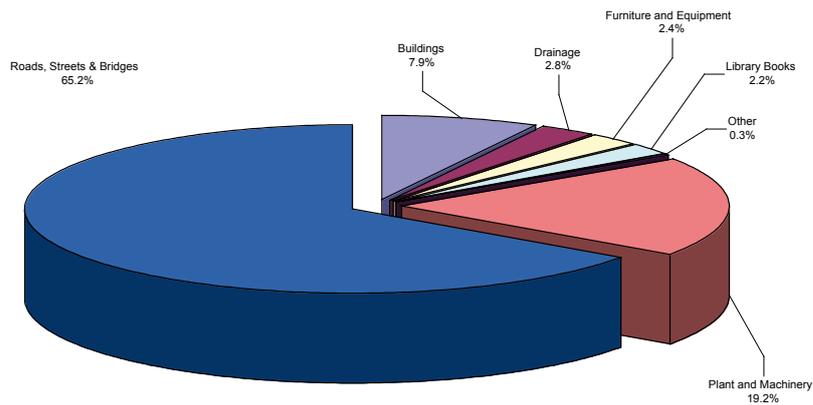
## Financial snapshot

The following graphs are a summary of the Council's financial reporting for the year ended 30 June 2009. For further financial detail refer to the Financial Report at the back of this report.

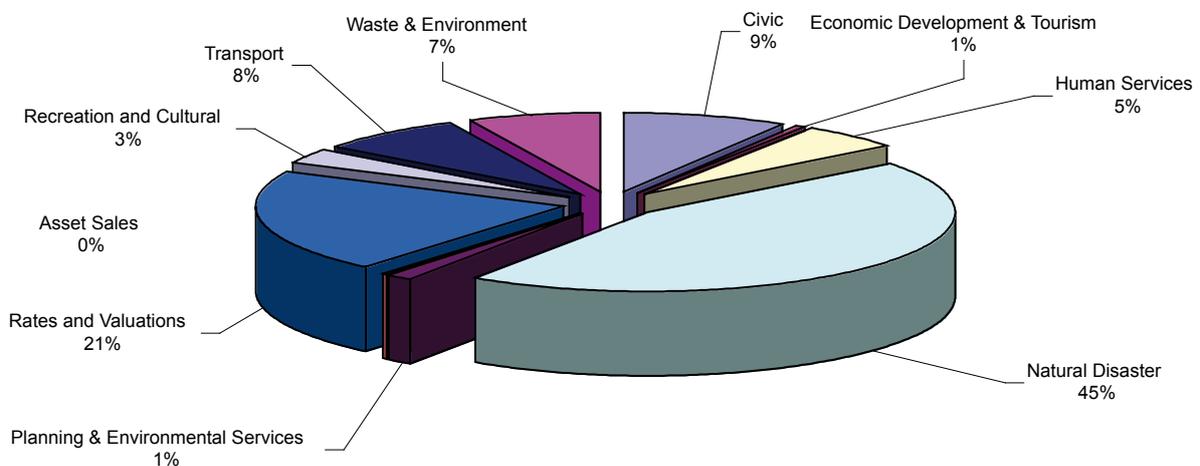
### Where did council's money come from?



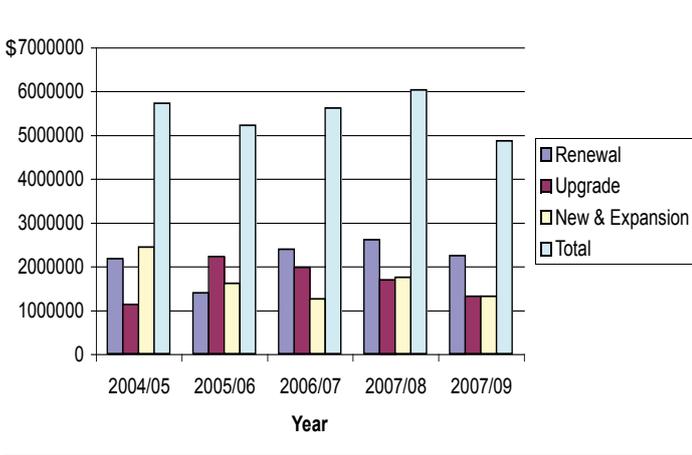
### How did council spend its capital budget?



### How did council spend its operating budget?



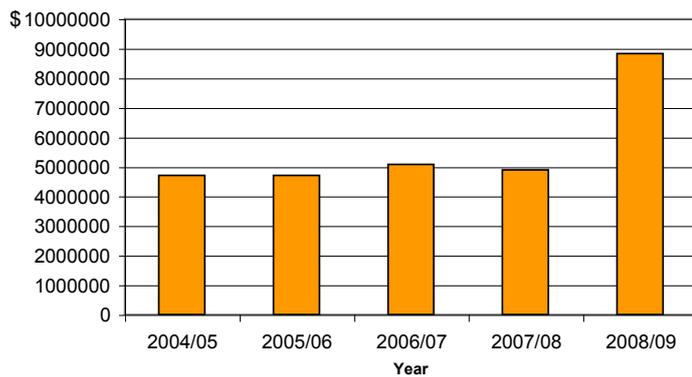
### Sustainable Capital Expenditure



As a consequence of the Black Saturday fires and staff resources being diverted from the capital program, projects were not completed as planned.

Additionally the \$900,000 Taylor Bay Special Charge Scheme did not proceed.

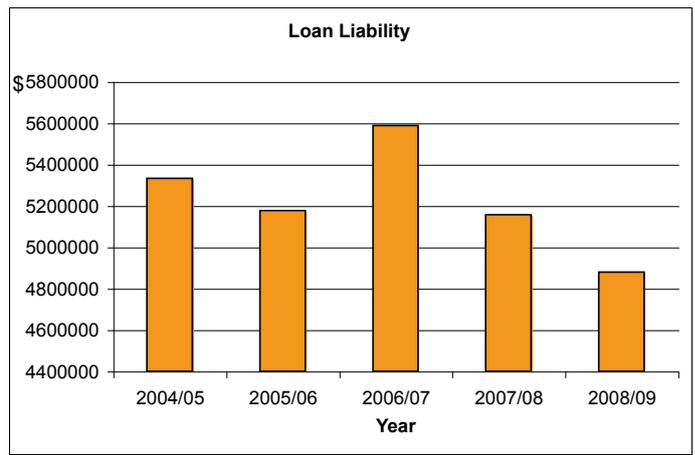
### Cash Reserves



Additional grant revenues and uncompleted capital works resulted in increase cash reserves at 30 June 2009.

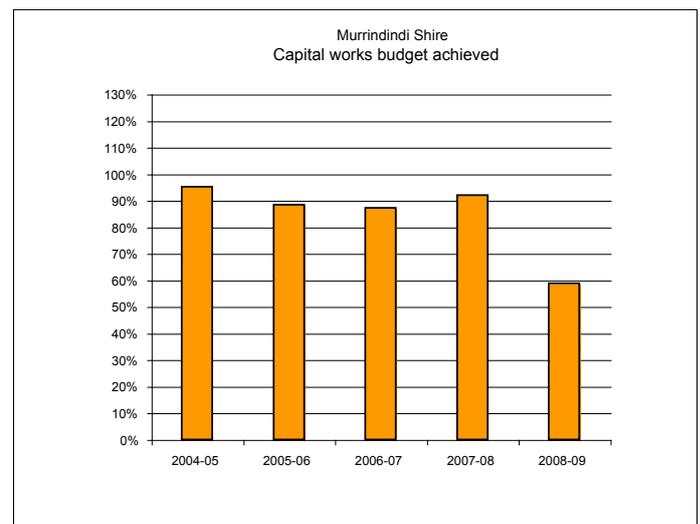
The additional reserves will be consumed in the completion of the operational grant and capital programs during 2009-2010.

### Loan Liability



In accordance with the Council's Strategic Resource Plan loan liability continues to reduce over time.

### Total Capital Works Achieved



## Capital works summary

Description of Works	Works in progress as at 1 July 2008	Total value of works 2008-2009	Total value of works completed as at 30 June 2009
	\$	\$	\$
<b>Buildings and structures</b>			
Alexandra Swimming Pool		16,699	16,699
Alexandra Transfer Station		23,604	23,604
Eildon Transfer Station		17,334	17,334
Irrigation and sprinklers public places		7,714	7,714
Marysville Caravan Park toilet		6,672	6,672
Marysville Retirement Village unit veranda upgrade		3,955	3,955
Marysville Swimming Pool		11,000	11,000
Marysville Transfer Station		10,050	10,050
Yea Recreation Reserve Fence Upgrade		50,365	50,365
Yea Saleyards		26,592	26,592
Yea Swimming Pool		41,990	41,990
Yea Transfer Station works		9,090	9,090
<b>Total buildings and structures</b>	-	<b>225,065</b>	<b>225,065</b>
<b>Plant and machinery</b>			
Major plant		654,120	654,120
Motor vehicles	-	272,728	272,728
<b>Total plant and machinery</b>	-	<b>926,848</b>	<b>926,848</b>
<b>Drainage</b>			
Downey Street Alexandra - drainage	41,737	6,578	48,315
Drainage - network expansion		41,993	41,993
Drainage renewal		39,414	39,414
Drainage Upgrade- trouble spots		18,452	18,452
Lyell Street Marysville - drainage improvements	9,241	20,000	29,241
Range Road Yea - drainage upgrade		10,120	10,120
<b>Total drainage</b>	<b>50,978</b>	<b>136,557</b>	<b>187,535</b>
<b>Heritage assets</b>			
Art show prizes	-	1,000	1,000
<b>Total heritage assets</b>	-	<b>1,000</b>	<b>1,000</b>
<b>Furniture and equipment</b>			
Computers		90,113	90,113
Other		27,625	27,625
<b>Total furniture and equipment</b>	-	<b>117,739</b>	<b>117,739</b>
<b>Library materials</b>			
<b>Total library materials</b>	-	<b>107,377</b>	<b>107,377</b>

**Roads, Streets & Bridges**

Bayley Street - seal / car parking		768	768
Bridge component renewal		130,511	130,511
Bridge load capacity upgrades		6,258	6,258
Bus shelters		5,355	5,355
Dyers Lane			84,179
Eildon Jamieson Road - shoulders		2,796	2,796
Eildon retaining wall at Pondage	1,451		1,451
Extons Road - resheet and sealing		2,753	2,753
Final seals		56,049	56,049
Footpath renewal		23,638	23,638
Footpaths - missing links		46,302	46,302
Gravel roads - resheeting		880,976	880,976
Kerb renewal		40,308	40,308
Kinglake Glenburn Road	124,827	278,270	403,097
Lyell Street Marysville	39,897	18,641	58,538
Minor capital works – Urban Design Framework	7,905		7,905
Minor capital works - Urban Design Framework		8,829	8,829
Mt Margaret Road		288,467	288,467
National Park Road - resealing		62,028	62,028
Sealed roads - pavement renewal		198,980	198,980
Sealed roads - reseals		732,190	732,190
Snobs Creek Road		522	522
Spraggs Road Toolangi	137,308	49,938	187,246
Spring Creek Road - pavement seal		80,068	80,068
Taylors Bay Left Arm	44,112		44,112
Urban access improvements		3,249	3,249
Whanregarwen Road - pavement widening	50,520	246,434	296,954
<b>Total road, streets and bridges</b>	<b>490,199</b>	<b>3,163,330</b>	<b>3,653,529</b>

**Work In Progress**

Thornton Recreation pavilion upgrade		140	140
Eildon cricket pavilion		140	140
Kinglake Memorial Reserve verandah		350	350
Ti Tree Drive		997	997
Green Street		2,625	2,625
Eildon Go Fishing - tables and facility		4,239	4,239
Landfill capital cell construction		4,954	4,954
Major plant purchase in progress		5,800	5,800
Coster Street units		9,100	9,100
Bollygum - sewerage and water treat facility		9,155	9,155
Land road reserve Acheron		12,523	12,523
Yea Community House – disability access		14,699	14,699
Thornton Netball Courts		27,663	27,663
Yea Caravan Park - toilet upgrade		41,286	41,286
Kinglake Football Netball Club		45,691	45,691
<b>Total works in progress</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>179,363</b>	<b>179,363</b>

<b>Total value of capital works completed</b>	<b>541,177</b>	<b>4,857,279</b>	<b>5,398,456</b>
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## Our councillors



Left to right – Cr John Walsh, Cr Chris Healy, Cr Lyn Gunter, Cr Bob Flowers, Cr Kevin Bellingham, Cr Peter Beales, Cr Sally Abbot Smith

### Cr Lyn Gunter – Mayor

#### King Parrot Ward

First elected March 2000

Mayor 2002-2004, 2005-06, 2007-08, 2008-09

Portfolio The Mayor represents the shire at forums and ceremonies.

Lyn's past experience includes 10 years as a VIC State Emergency Service controller and involvement in emergency management planning and recovery.

She is the local government representative on the CFA Board.

Lyn is also a board member of the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority as she recognises the importance of natural resource management and land use planning.

Lyn has lived in Flowerdale for 30 years and is involved in many of the local community groups.

**External committees** Drought Strategy Committee, Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV), Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee, Peri Urban Group of Rural Councils, Victorian Local Governance Association

Telephone: 0417 535 566

Email: [gunters@yca.com.au](mailto:gunters@yca.com.au)

### Cr Kevin Bellingham – Deputy Mayor

#### Cathedral Ward

First elected 1997

Re-elected November 2008

Portfolio Corporate Services

Kevin has lived in the Cathedral Ward for 25 years and worked as a building contractor and deer farmer. He and his wife now own and operate the Buxton General Store.

He has always been actively involved in the community as a tourist operator and is currently a member of the North East Victoria Area Consultative Committee (NEVACC), the Marysville & District Lion's Club and the Narbethong Tourist Association.

Kevin is proud to represent the community of the Cathedral Ward and Shire of Murrindindi.

**External committees** Alexandra Racecourse and Recreation Reserve Committee of Management, Marysville Retirement Village Committee of Management, Marysville Village Residents Association, Marysville Community Liaison Group, Steavensons Falls Scenic Reserve Committee of Management

Telephone: 0448 327 563

Email: [kbellingham@murrindindi.vic.gov.au](mailto:kbellingham@murrindindi.vic.gov.au)

**Cr Sally Abbott Smith****Cheviot Ward****First elected November 2008****Portfolio Climate Change and Natural Environment**

Sally is a long-term resident-farmer of the area. Her career has been in education in resource development and learning design.

She is committed to a commonsense approach to council deliberations, to accessible and responsible governance, developing a sense of community connectedness, and strategic planning that retains and enhances our natural assets.

She has been actively involved in local community groups including School Council, Yea River Catchment Landcare, Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority, Murrindindi Film Society and 3717 Watch Inc.

**Qualifications** Post Graduate Diploma of Documentary Film & Television Post Graduate Diploma Educational Technology

**External committees** International Council for Local Environment Initiatives, Municipal Association of Victoria Strategic Environment Advisory Group, Municipal Association of Victoria Water Taskforce Committee, Murrindindi Environment Advisory Committee, Victorian Local Sustainability Accord, Yea Cemetery Trust – Advisory Group, Yea Indoor Recreation Centre, Yea Wetlands Committee.

Telephone: 0407 011 089

Email: [sabbottsmith@murrindindi.vic.gov.au](mailto:sabbottsmith@murrindindi.vic.gov.au)

**Cr Robert Flowers****Redgate Ward****First elected November 2005****Mayor 2006-07****Portfolio Infrastructure and Assets**

Bob came to Alexandra in 1972 to teach science at the High School and he finished his career there as assistant principal in 2002. In the interim he taught at Caulfield Secondary College and was principal at Yea High School.

He and his wife now run a farm-stay cottage and small beef cattle farm.

Bob has always participated in community life and since retirement has been busy with Rotary, the Country Fire Authority, Red Cross and the farm.

Bob is very proud to be given the opportunity to represent the residents of Redgate Ward on council.

**Qualifications** Bachelor of Agricultural Science, Diploma in Education

**External committees** - Alexandra Community Leisure Centre Committee of Management, Alexandra Showgrounds Committee of Management,

Telephone: 0429 165 052

Email: [bflowers@murrindindi.vic.gov.au](mailto:bflowers@murrindindi.vic.gov.au)

**Cr Christopher Healy****Eildon Ward****First elected November 2005****Portfolio Planning and Environment**

Chris and his family moved to Eildon in 1994, when they purchased the Lake Motel. Chris had come to Eildon to fish in his younger years while living in Melbourne.

In the interim he had lived in Papua New Guinea, Darwin and the Noosa Shire.

He became a member of Eildon Action some 10 years ago when it first started and during this time has been president on four occasions.

An interest in the Eildon community and the wider Eildon Ward led Chris to stand for council and he is pleased to be able to represent the people of the ward.

**External committees** Lake Eildon Public Users Liaison Committee, Municipal Association of Victoria Planning and Advisory Committee

Telephone: 0429 436 156

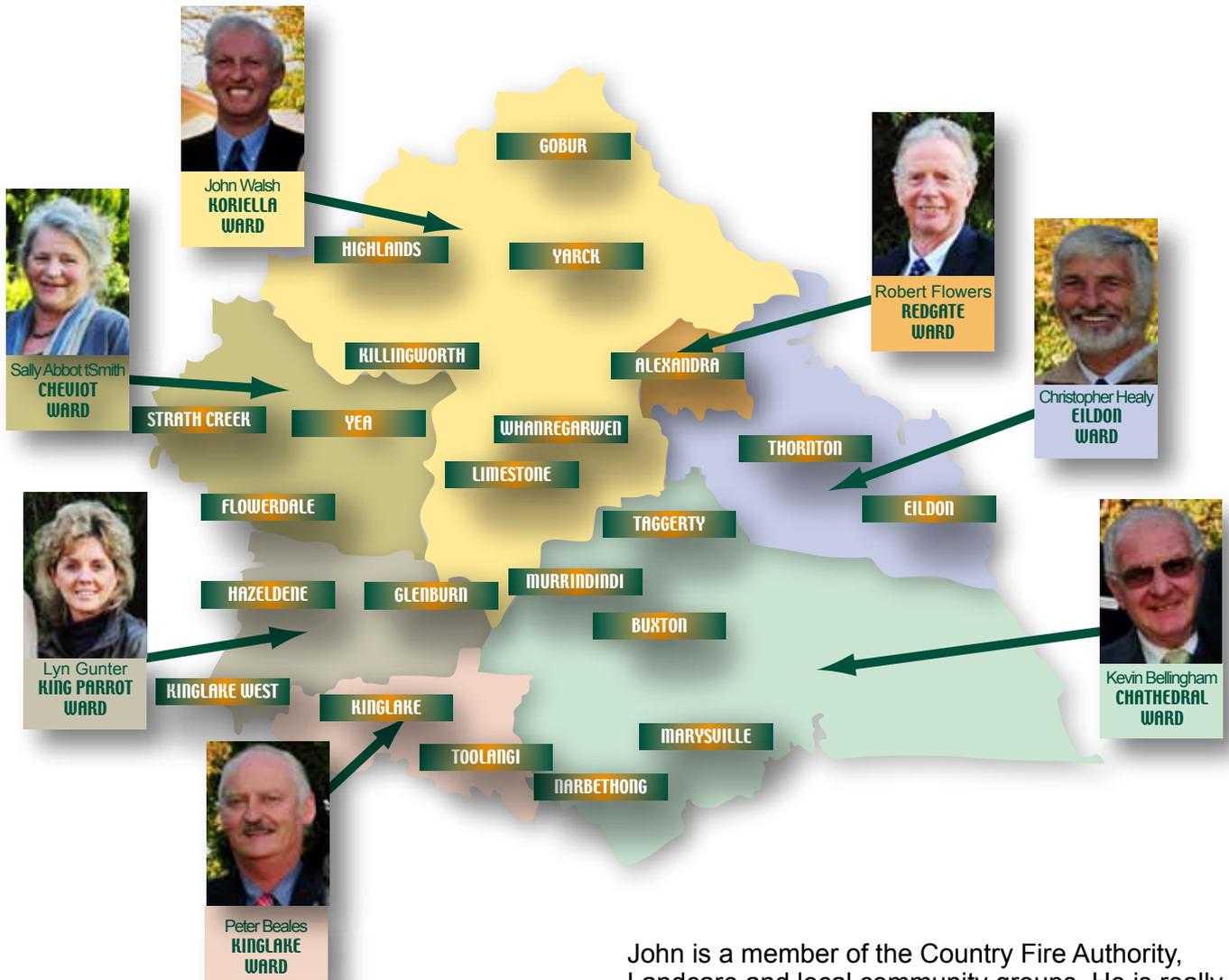
Email: [chealy@murrindindi.vic.gov.au](mailto:chealy@murrindindi.vic.gov.au)

**Cr Peter Beales****Kinglake Ward****First elected March 1997****Mayor 1999-2001****Portfolio Community and Customer Services**

Peter has been a resident of Kinglake since 1981 and has on-going involvement with many community groups.

He was a police officer for 29 years, proprietor of the Kinglake West Store for seven years, and currently a Disability Support Officer with people with acquired brain injury.

**Qualifications** Bachelor of Arts in Youth Affairs, Associate Diploma in Criminal Justice and Welfare Administration, Certificate IV in Disability Studies



and a Certificate IV in Workplace Training and Assessment.

**External committees** Community Building Initiative Committee, Murrindindi Scenic Reserve Committee of Management, Primary Care Partnerships

Telephone: 03 5786 2193  
 Email: [jpbeales@bigpond.com.au](mailto:jpbeales@bigpond.com.au)

**Cr John Walsh**

**Koriella Ward**  
**First elected November 2008**  
**Portfolio Tourism and Economic Development**

John and his wife moved to their beef and berry farm at Yarck in 1999.

John was with the army for 21 years which included postings around Australia, United Kingdom and the USA and since retirement has worked in information technology, project management and risk management.

John is a member of the Country Fire Authority, Landcare and local community groups. He is really pleased to have the opportunity to represent the people of Koriella Ward which is made up of many small communities.

**External committees** Central Ranges Local Learning and Employment Network, Municipal Fire Prevention Committee, Murrindindi Regional Tourism Association, Plantations North East, Timber Roads Advisory Committee, Timber Towns Victoria, Transport Connections Steering Committee

Telephone: 0408 013 237  
 Email: [jwalsh@murrindindi.vic.gov.au](mailto:jwalsh@murrindindi.vic.gov.au)

**Retired councillors**

Janet Gilmore represented the Cathedral Riding and Leanne Pleash represented the Cheviot Riding until the November election. Neither nominated for re-election. We thank them for their tireless work and commitment to the Murrindindi communities during their term in council.

## Our organisation



Chief Executive Officer

**Mark Henderson**

*Bachelor of Business (Local Government)*

Mark was appointed as Chief Executive Officer for Murrindindi in May 2008.

In his role as CEO Mark is the link between Council and the organisation. Council delegates a number of powers to the CEO to ensure that he has the necessary authority to fulfil his role.



Deputy Chief Executive Officer and  
General Manager Operations/ Municipal Recovery Manager

**Robert Croxford**

*Bachelor of Business (Local Government), Grad Cert (Marketing),  
Fellow LGPro*

Rob was initially appointed to Murrindindi in August 2000 as Director of Corporate and Community Services. In his current role as General Manager Operations he is responsible for the management and strategic development of the operational services within council including corporate services, community services, libraries and customer services and engineering services.

Since the Black Saturday bushfire Rob has headed up council's bushfire recovery program.



General Manager Sustainability

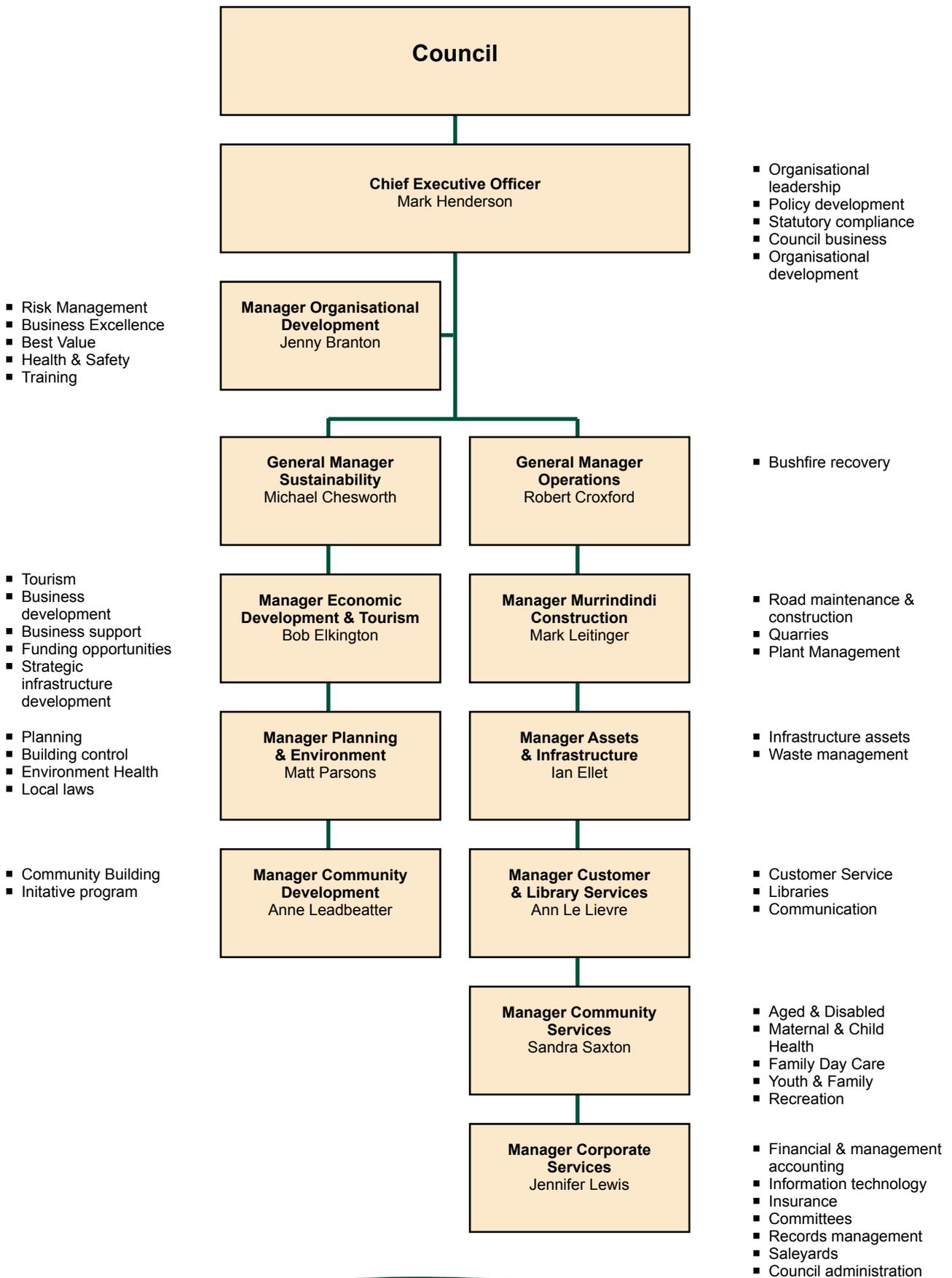
**Michael Chesworth**

*Bachelor of Behavioural Science (Hons.)*

Michael was first appointed as Manager of Organisational Development in 1997.

His current role as General Manager Sustainability includes the overall management of the sustainability services within council which includes organisational development, economic development and tourism, and planning and environmental services.

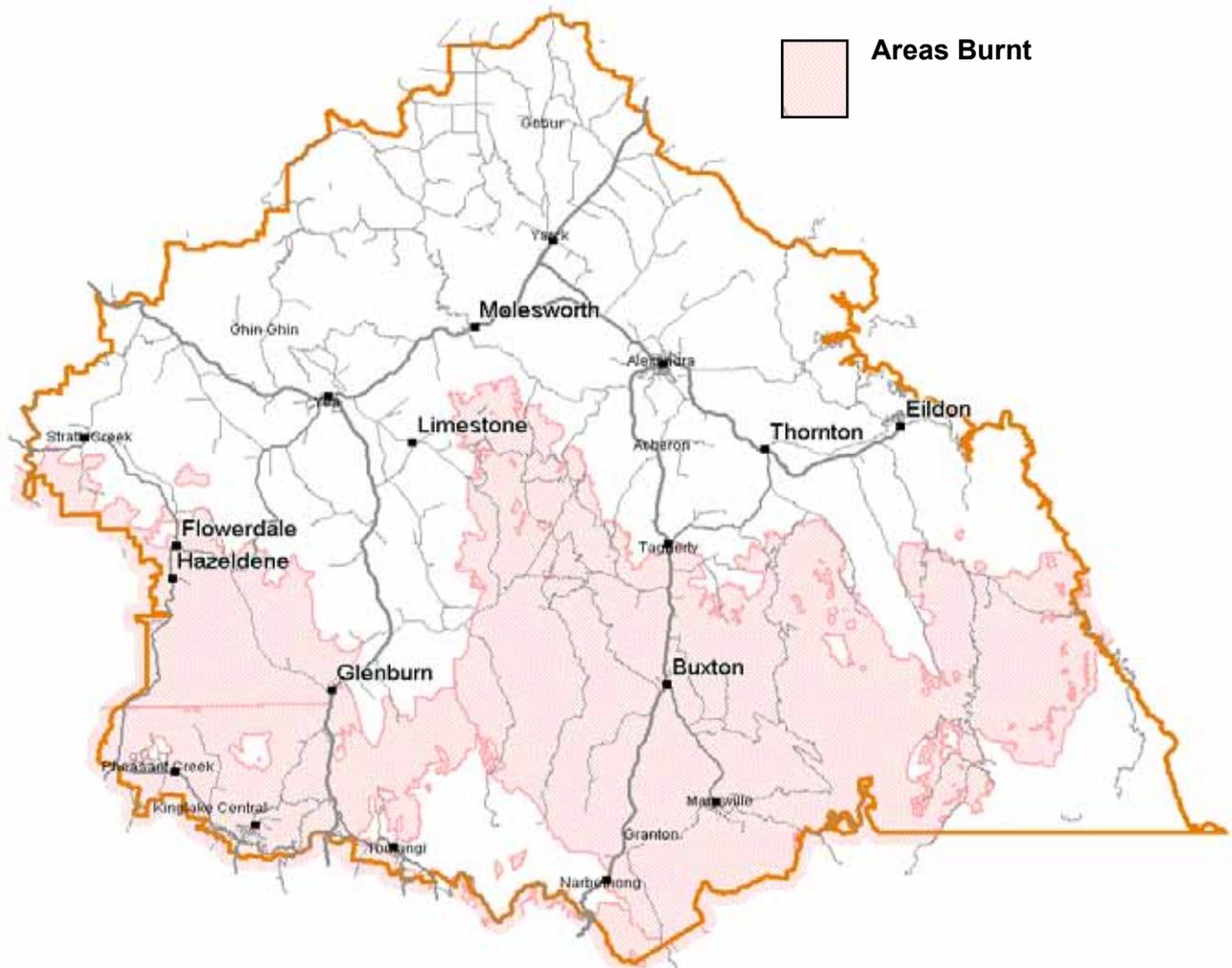
Organisational Structure



## Bushfire Report – Black Saturday – 7 February 2009

On 7 February 2009 ‘many all-time temperature records were set ... the heat and drought desiccated the vegetation ... the fuel loads were extremely high ... dreadful expectation was matched by a calamity ... fires so extreme so feral so catastrophic so devastating’.

(2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission, *Interim Report*, p. 2)



<b>Area burnt</b>	1,539 sq kms – 40% of shire area
<b>Deaths within Shire of Murrindindi</b>	106
<b>Registered businesses / shop fronts destroyed</b>	75

Community / government facilities destroyed	16 total losses – 9 partial losses Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 2 primary schools</li> <li>▪ 3 kindergartens</li> <li>▪ 3 Maternal &amp; Child Health centres</li> <li>▪ 1 long day care centre</li> <li>▪ 1 police station</li> <li>▪ 5 public halls</li> </ul>
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Houses destroyed	1,397
Other structures destroyed (sheds only on vacant land)	234

<b>Fencing destroyed</b>	3,533kms (a straight line from Alexandra to Perth)
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<b>Relief centres activated / staffed</b>	Alexandra x 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Alexandra Leisure Centre</li> <li>▪ Alexandra Secondary College</li> </ul> Yea x 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yea Recreation Reserve</li> </ul>
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<b>Rate revenue</b>	<b>\$375,000 reduction in revenue 2008-2009</b>
<b>Amount spent on making our roads safe</b>	\$8.8 million to July 2009

**Stock losses - Department of Primary Industry and Council figures only**

Cattle	496
Sheep	880
Horses	40
Alpacas	19
Goats	25
Poultry	476
Domestic animals	35
Farmed fish	160 tonne
Other / wildlife	726

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**Council**


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Staff homes lost	14
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Bridges damaged / lost	24 - 8 major - \$710,000 repair bill
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Building assessments conducted in the affected area	Total properties assessed	2000
	<i>Comprising:</i>	
	▪ Houses assessed	1260
	▪ Commercial buildings	100

▪ Farm sheds and garages	2000
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Health inspections of registered premises completed	100
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Communications	Murrindindi Recovery Newsletter 24,800 copies to July 2009
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 21 February to 5 April produced daily</li> <li>▪ From 6 April three editions per week</li> </ul>



	Bushfire Recovery web page 38,314 hits
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Machinery lost	1 grader : 1 roller
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### Municipal Emergency Communication Centre (MECC)

- Commenced operation Saturday 7 February
- 24 hours per day until 12 February
- Reduced hours 13 February to 13 March
- Closed 13 March

### Agencies present at MECC during the first four weeks

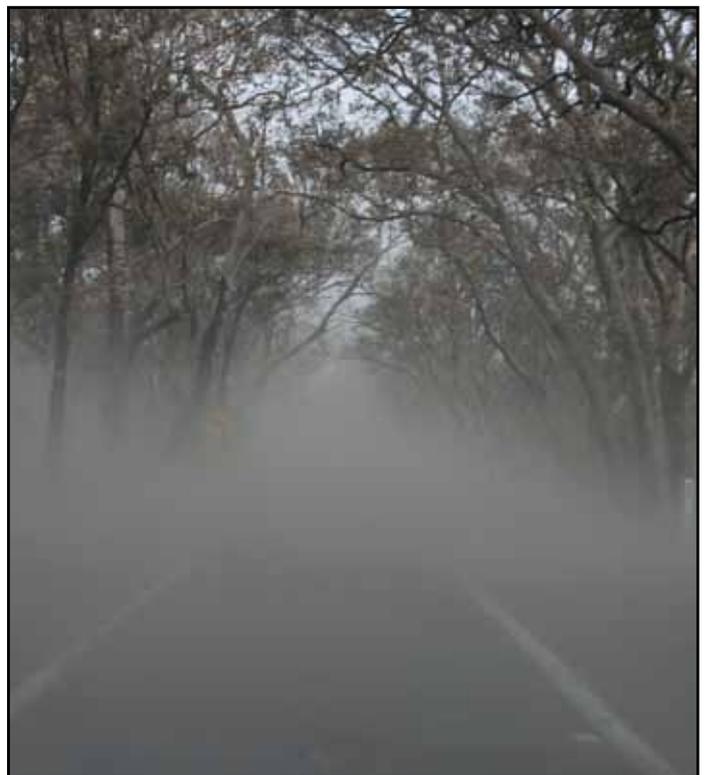
- Murrindindi Shire Council
- Victoria Police
- Country Fire Authority
- Department of Sustainability & Environment
- State Emergency Service
- Red Cross
- Department of Primary Industry
- Department of Human Services

### We wish to thank the following councils who helped us out after the fires

Ballarat, Benalla, Boroondara, Brimbank, Geelong, Golden Plains, Greater Geelong, Hobsons Bay, Indigo, Knox, Kingston, Loddon, Mansfield, Maribyrnong, Melbourne City, Mitchell, Moira, Monash, Moonee Valley, Moorabool, Mornington Peninsula, Northern Grampians, Port Phillip, Stonnington, Swan Hill, Shepparton, Southern Grampians, Strathbogie, Wangaratta, Whitehorse, Whittlesea, Wodonga, Yarra Ranges, Yarriambiack, Municipal Association of Victoria.



*Staging area - Alexandra Showgrounds*



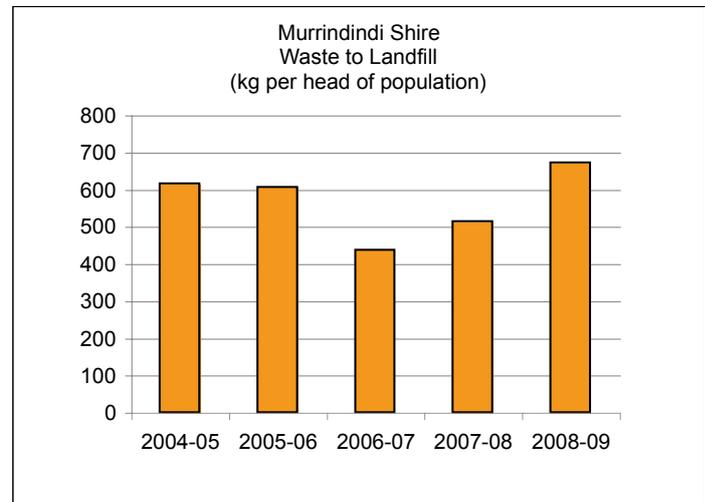
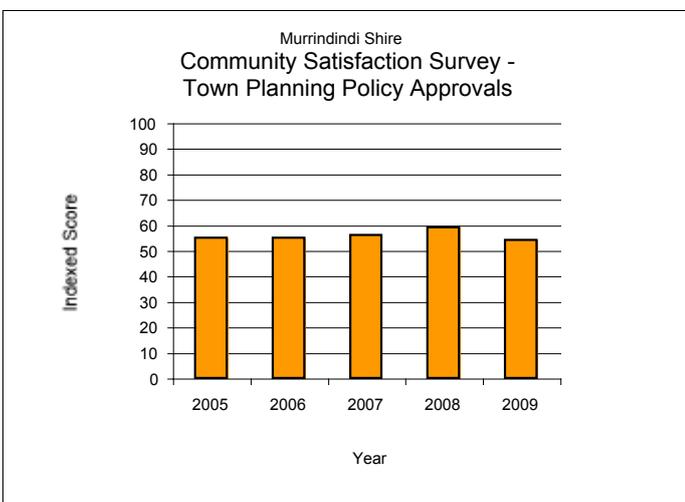
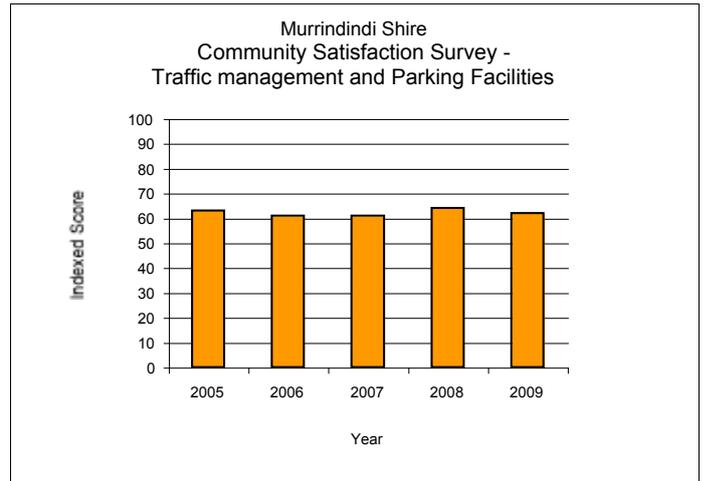




Theme 1 Environment



Performance Indicators



## Objective One - Ensure that land use is strategically planned and implemented

### Strategy

- Work within the strategic framework

### Activities

Activities as per Council Plan	Status as at 30/06/09
Implement the <i>Murrindindi Planning Scheme</i> as amended	Ongoing
Implement the strategic directions, priorities and actions contained in the <i>Kinglake-Flowerdale Integrated Strategy Plan</i> for the settlements of: Kinglake West and Pheasant Creek, and Flowerdale and Hazeldene as opportunities and funding allow. Monitor the implementation of the guidelines as resources allow	Ongoing
Implement the strategic directions, priorities and actions contained in the <i>Rural Living Development Guidelines 2004</i> as opportunities and funding allow	Ongoing
Complete the <i>Rural Land Study</i> for consideration and adoption by Council in partnership with state government directions on new farming zones.	Ongoing
Complete the necessary planning amendments to embed the new zones as per the <i>Rural Land Study</i> recommendations	Ongoing
Complete the development plan for Lamont Street Alexandra	Ongoing
Progress Stage 2 of the <i>Heritage Study</i>	Ongoing
Review the <i>Municipal Strategic Statement</i>	Ongoing

### Achievements – Council Plan

- Progressed *Murrindindi Heritage Study Stage 2*
- Completed Planning Amendment C22 which will implement the *Yea Flood Study* and correct anomalies in the residential zone within the Yea township

### Challenges

- Staff redeployed to emergency response services focusing on coordination of the relief centres and stock welfare

### Year Ahead

- Further progress the *Murrindindi Heritage Study Stage 2*
- Progress the *Marysville and Triangle Urban Design Framework*
- Progress development plans for Kinglake West and Alexandra
- Progress amendment C23 in Alexandra to rezone land to industrial

- Assist the Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority and the community with new land use options with respect to land rezoning, Urban Design Frameworks and approvals processes
- Complete *Rural Land Study*
- Investigate innovative water treatment options
- Review council's fire management planning with regard to the state government response to the Bushfire Royal Commission
- Map municipal fire risk
- Progress strategic fire prevention programs that address an ongoing commitment to fire safety and community awareness
- Strengthen building, planning and environmental health teams to cope with rebuild workload

## Objective Two - To protect and enhance our natural environment

### Strategies

- Strengthen Council's role in environmental issues and activities
- Improve statutory planning processes to deliver timely decisions that are aligned with the strategic framework
- Manage our waste materials and facilities in accordance with best practices and Environmental Protection Authority guidelines
- Improve wastewater management across the shire
- Reduce green house gas emissions and strive to become a carbon neutral institution
- Work with permit applicants to ensure that conditions are adhered to

### Activities

Activities as per Council Plan	Status as at 30/06/09
Complete the <i>Local Priority Statement</i> as part of the <i>Department of Sustainability &amp; Environment Sustainability Accord</i>	Completed
Work in partnership with environmental and resource management agencies to improve local outcomes	Ongoing
Develop an environment policy and supporting strategy and resource plan	Ongoing
Clarify Council's role in roadside management and standards	Ongoing
Investigate the possibility of an environmental incentive	Ongoing
Assess the feasibility of establishing an environmental advisory committee	Completed
Receive a business plan for the Yea Wetlands Discover – E Centre and consider priority actions as opportunities and funding allow	Completed
Encourage communities to participate in environmentally supportive initiatives	Ongoing
Complete the three-year monitoring report on the performance of the <i>Murrindindi Planning Scheme</i> and processes (statutory requirement)	Ongoing
Enhance enforcement, desktop analysis and collection of data using aerial photography, hand held data units and databases	Ongoing
Finalise and adopt the <i>Waste Management Strategy 2006</i>	Not adopted
Adopt and implement priority actions contained in the <i>Waste Management Strategy 2006</i>	Ongoing
Implement the recycling, garbage collection and transfer station attendant's contracts	Completed
Complete and consider priority actions contained in the <i>Environment Improvement Plan (EIP)</i>	Ongoing
Seek Environmental Protection Authority approval to implement the revised landfill licence	Ongoing
Negotiate and resolve landfill assurance issues with the Environmental Protection Authority	Ongoing
Comply with Environmental Protection Authority licence conditions for the landfill	Ongoing
Investigate more equitable means of funding Council's waste management requirements	Ongoing
Complete and adopt the <i>Waste Water Management Plan</i> for Murrindindi	Ongoing

Continue to work on innovative water and wastewater initiatives through the Kinglake Waste Water Innovation Project	Ongoing
Investigate opportunities for alternate fuel motor vehicles and the purchase of 'green' electricity as opportunities and funding allow	Ongoing
Investigate options for achieving carbon offsets	Ongoing
Ensure compliance with planning and building permit conditions through a regular monitoring program	Ongoing
Develop relationships with other agencies and organisations to improve strategic directions and referrals within the Planning Scheme	Ongoing
Promote greater understanding of the environmental impacts of development for consideration by planning applicants	Ongoing
Emphasise environmental and or health concerns when reviewing policies,	Ongoing

### Achievements – Council Plan

- Continued to audit planning permit conditions to ensure compliance by permit holders
- Secured funding for the continuation of the roadside Weed Mapping Project from council, Upper Goulburn Landcare Network and Goulburn Broken Catchment Authority which identifies weed infestations and areas of conservation significance on council managed roadsides
- Secured \$28,000 as part of the 'Building the Capacity of Local Government to Respond to Pests' grant program for on-ground works to help control and prevent spread of blackberry and gorse weeds on roadsides
- Launched the Steavenson River Project, a joint project with the Council, Department of Sustainability and Environment and the Upper Goulburn Catchment Authority to remove invasive woody weeds from the banks and in the vicinity of the Steavenson River
- Appointed Environment Strategy Project Officer to develop council's *Environment Strategy*
- Completed milestones one and two of the five step Cities of Climate Protection (CCP) program resulting in the establishment of an inventory of council greenhouse gas emissions and the setting of emission reduction goals
- Decreased quantity of garbage per household collected via the roadside collection service by 24% from 2007-2008
- Implemented electronic waste recovery and recycling at our Resource Recovery Centres. Approximately 15 tonne of material recovered and processed

- Improved systems for drumMuster collections at Resource Recovery Centres
- Operated all collection services, Resource Recovery Centres and Landfill sites in accordance with best practice and relevant guidelines
- Provided worm farms to six schools within the municipality via a regional program

### Achievements – Fire related

- Modified the planning approval process making it easier for people to rebuild their homes and farms destroyed by the bushfires
- Deployed and maintained more than 75 skip bins in fire affected areas at relief centres and community hubs
- Worked cooperatively with Grocon, the Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority and Environment Protection Authority to establish a new waste cell at the Alexandra landfill in record time. The cell was used to dispose of bushfire waste from the Marysville district, so that the heavy vehicles involved in the clean up did not have to travel over the Black Spur. *Further information page 31*
- Replaced 401 recycling bins and 371 garbage bins at fire affected properties
- Implemented garbage and recycling collections at all temporary community villages
- Recommenced operation at Marysville Transfer Station on 20 May 2009 after approximately \$107,000 of repair works

## Challenges

- Still significant room for improvement in the recovery of material from commercial sectors ie: Commercial / Industrial and Construction / Demolition
- 35 year life span of Alexandra Landfill reduced to 30 years
- Marysville Transfer Station destroyed in February bushfires
- Commencing an Environment Strategy at a time of heightened community concerns about environmental management practices following the fires

## Year Ahead

- Construct Cell 1E at the Alexandra Landfill
- Finalise and implement new management arrangements at Resource Recovery Centres
- Improve the collection and processing of electronic waste and agricultural plastics (eg silage wrap) at Resource Recovery Centres through regional infrastructure funding
- Investigate the diversion of organic waste from landfill
- Produce regional advertising campaigns to minimise contamination in household recycling bins and the benefits of sorting loads going to Resource Recovery Centres

## Significant Others

### Acceptance of fire affected waste from Marysville area into Alexandra Landfill



*Trucks delivered fire affected waste to the Alexandra Landfill*

When the Black Spur was opened to traffic following the bushfires, waste from the Grocon cleanup project was travelling to specialised waste transfer facilities such as the asbestos station at Lyndhurst.

There were three major truck accidents on the Black Spur, including an asbestos spill, which prompted a need to reduce travel distances.

Council was granted a temporary Section 30A approval to allow waste to go to the existing landfill facility at Alexandra.

The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) designed and approved the construction of the new cell which was constructed by Grocon.

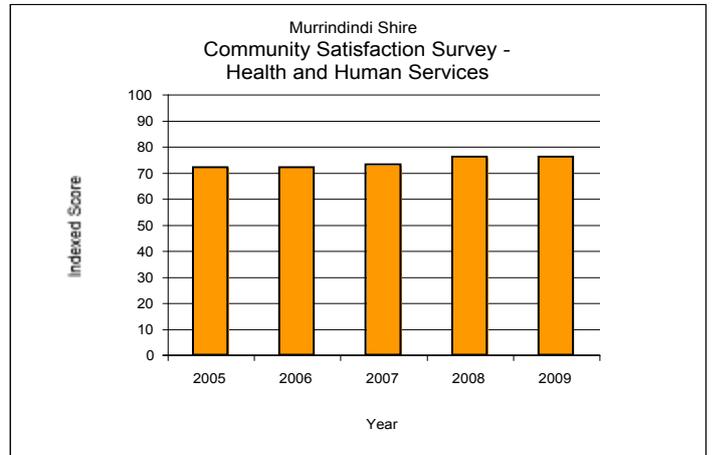
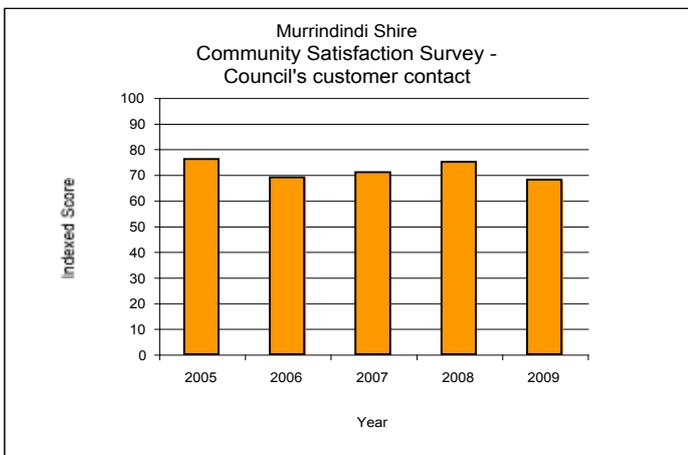
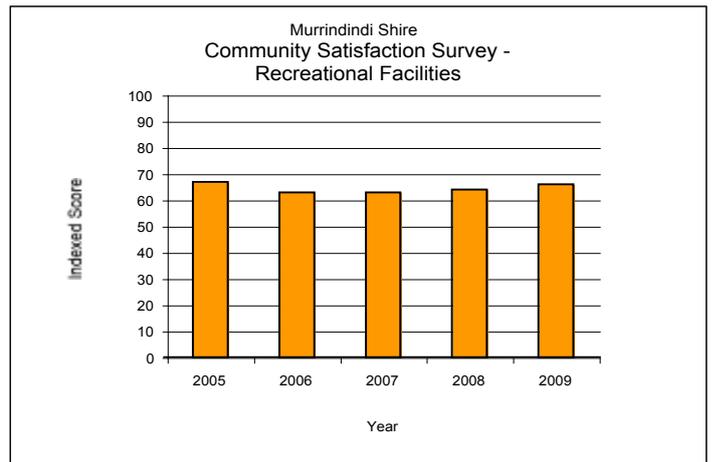
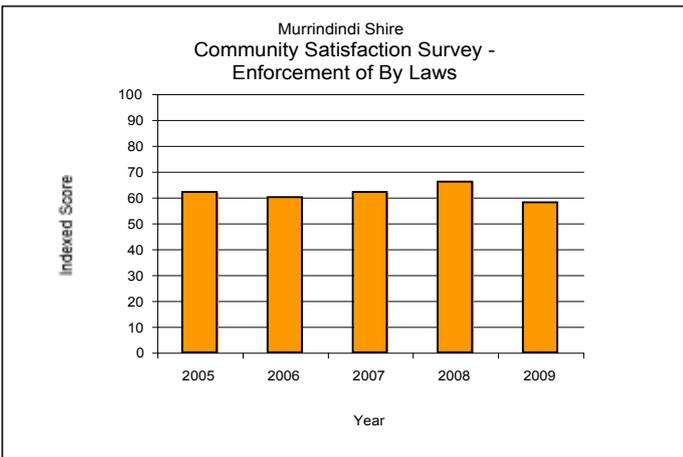
Thirty-six thousand tonne of fire-affected waste from the Marysville cleanup was deposited at the new cell at Alexandra.

Theme 2 Community



Party on the hill at Kinglake

Performance Indicators



\* Community satisfaction for well-being. No data available for 2008-2009 year

## Objective One - To promote safe, healthy, active communities

### Strategies

- Support an integrated approach to health and well being
- Strengthen relationships with other agencies
- Develop improved processes for response and recovery from emergencies
- Advocate, facilitate and deliver services for all ages
- Link our communities and existing transport hubs
- Assist communities to develop their priorities and find creative ways to deliver them
- Foster community ownership
- Improve accessibility to services and facilities
- Develop our libraries as a focus of community strengthening activities
- Promote good health and safety
- Support arts and cultural experiences
- Provide leisure opportunities to residents and visitors that have broad benefits
- Implement insurance recommendations in relation to recreation reserves

### Activities

Activities per Council Plan	Status as at 30/06/09
Review, evaluate and update the <i>Municipal Public Health Plan</i> (MPHP) in consultation with health service providers to support co-operative planning	Ongoing
Maintain an active role in the Primary Care Partnership (PCP)	Ongoing
Consult on and consider priorities in the development of strategic plans, programs and services with the aim of improving links between organisations, services and schools	Ongoing
Review, update and seek Department of Human Services approval for a <i>Recovery Management Manual</i> and associated systems to assist staff and communities	Ongoing
Define the roles of officers, councillors and the community and other agencies in emergency activities	Completed
Seek adequate resources for the Municipal Emergency Communication Centre and recovery centres	Ongoing
Finalise and adopt the <i>Early Years Strategy</i> and incorporate into the <i>Municipal Public Health Plan</i>	Ongoing
Implement priority actions of the adopted <i>Early Years Strategy</i> as opportunities and funding allow	Ongoing
Finalise and adopt the <i>Youth Strategy</i> and consider for incorporation into the <i>Municipal Public Health Plan</i>	Ongoing
Implement priority actions of the adopted <i>Youth Strategy</i> as opportunities and funding allow	Ongoing
Pursue adequate funding for early years programs and services	Ongoing
Address Pioneer Reserve traffic management issues	Ongoing
Prepare an <i>Aged Persons Strategy</i>	Commenced
Investigate the potential development of the Alexandra Children's precinct	Ongoing

Explore innovative ways to link our communities	Ongoing
Commence a Transport Connections Program	Completed
Implement priority actions of the transport strategy	Ongoing
Implement year one and two of a four year program for the community building program in Kinglake Ranges	Ongoing
Monitor the delivery of community building capacity across the shire	Ongoing
Consider the appointment of a Community Development Worker	Not commenced
Participate in the Lighthouse Program	Ongoing
Review the Recreation and Culture Grants and Community Loan programs to provide a seed funding pool to match community initiated projects and programs	Ongoing
Complete the access audit contained in the <i>Inclusiveness Planning Project</i>	Completed
Develop, review and implement priority actions in the <i>Disability Action Plan</i> as opportunities and funding allow	Completed
Develop a policy for the use of council assets by the community	Not commenced
Address high priority recommendations from the <i>Inclusiveness Project</i>	Ongoing
Collect evidence and advocate for appropriate levels of emergency and affordable housing	Ongoing
Implement the activities contained in the <i>Library Strategic Plan and Collection Development Policy</i>	Completed
Increase public awareness of environmental health issues	Ongoing
Review after hours local laws callout and service arrangements	Completed
Comply with legislative requirements in the operation of the swimming pools	Completed
Continue to work with pool reference groups	Ongoing
Investigate the provision of public toilets	Commenced
Support initiatives that foster social connectedness and or good health	Ongoing
Complete the development of an <i>Arts and Culture Policy</i> and associated strategy and resource plan	Not commenced
Adopt the overall development plans (ODP) and commence the implementation of the short term priorities for: Kinglake Memorial Reserve, Kinglake West Mechanics Institute & Recreation Reserve, Alexandra Showgrounds & Recreation Reserve, Thornton Recreation Reserve, Yea Recreation Reserve as opportunities and funding allow	Completed
Implement priority actions contained in the <i>Recreation Reserves and Play Strategy 2003 Vol 1</i> , under the following goals: recreation input into land use planning, managing infrastructure, design of sustainable facilities, targeted information and communication as opportunities and funding allow	Ongoing
Implement short term and medium term priorities for playgrounds contained in the <i>Recreation Reserves and Play Strategies 2003 Vol 2</i> as opportunities and funding allow	Completed

Complete the marketing feasibility plan to establish opportunities for development of Bollygum Park and implement the master plan as opportunities and funding allow	Completed
Review the Council's role in supporting committees of management	Not commenced
Ensure a proactive inspection system including a timetable for recreation reserves	Ongoing
Ensure that boundaries comply with sports association guidelines	Completed
Ensure that all seasonal users of council facilities are governed by seasonal use / tenancy agreements and have a contact point within the Council	Not commenced

### Achievements – Council Plan

- Approved additional staffing for the Yea Council office / Library and extended opening hours to 9am to 5pm with no closure for the lunch break. Commenced in August 2008
- Completed refurbishment of Yea Council office / Library with additional shelving
- Developed a suite of library programs at the Yea Library including [Tuesdays@YeaLibrary](#) 2009, weekly story times and Baby Bounce and Rhyme sessions
- Launched the 'Away with Words' literary festival hosted by the library in conjunction with the Alexandra Friends of the Library. Stars of the program were philosopher Raimond Gaita, comedian Rod Quantock and a literary luncheon with Arnold Zable
- Undertook a weekly 'Developing the Reader' program for school children from the primary and secondary schools at the Alexandra Library
- Hosted a successful Seniors Festival during October, attended by more than 100 seniors from across the shire in a variety of events
- Completed the following upgrade works at recreational facilities: resurfacing and upgrade of Thornton Netball Courts, resurfacing and upgrade of Kinglake West Memorial Reserve Tennis Courts, construction of terracing in front of clubhouse at Kinglake Memorial Reserve
- Completed the feasibility study for the refurbishment and redevelopment of the Yea Swimming Pool resulting in an application to Sport and Recreation for grant funding to carry out the necessary works
- Partnered with the community to advocate and submit an application for grant funding on behalf of the young people in Yea for a skate park
- Obtained grant funding to employ a Drought Coordinator until December 2009
- Undertook an audit of all council playgrounds
- Continued to facilitate the implementation of the Community Building Initiatives project across the Kinglake Ranges. *Further information page 36*

### Achievements – Fire related

- Restored mobile library services into the bushfire affected towns of Flowerdale, Strath Creek, Buxton, Marysville and Eildon
- Maintained programs at the Kinglake Library to which displaced families are travelling from Melbourne to overcome isolation and reconnect with their community
- Continued Maternal and Child Health services in fire affected communities in temporary accommodation
- Re-established Family Day Care and In Home Child Care services in fire affected areas as soon as properties were assessed as safe
- Re-established contact with Home and Community Care clients as a priority and provided additional services where required
- Appointed five Community Development Officers to assist communities across the shire as they recover from the devastation of the fires. *Further information page 38*

### Challenges

- Library service staff were redeployed to assist at relief centres
- Manager of Community Services was redeployed to the Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre for four weeks
- 880 library items were lost in homes destroyed by the fires
- Time frames for preparation of the *Municipal Public Health Plan* were changed by amendments to the Health Act 1958. Councils must now prepare a four year Municipal Health plan that meets the new requirements by 27 November 2009 and our *Health and Wellbeing Plan* will be presented to council by this date
- The Positive Ageing Project 'Healthy and Active in the Third Age' was not completed by the due date because resources were diverted to bushfire response. A report will be put to Council for endorsement in October 2009

- The Arts and Culture Policy was not completed due to the impact of the bushfires on Council resources. The work on this has been redefined and deferred to year 3 of the Council Plan. This policy will be finalised by December 2009.

## Year Ahead

- Use \$90,000 of funding from the Victorian Bushfire Relief Fund to deliver the Murrindindi Library Service 'Out there ...' programs in ten communities affected by the bushfires
- Finalise the Positive Ageing Project 'Healthy and Active in the Third Age' consulting with the community on specific activities
- Repair and upgrade Marysville Swimming Pool for the 2009-2010 swimming season
- Work with Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority, community recovery committees and fire affected communities to develop community based recovery plans based on active participation and strengthening of community connectedness.
- Develop and deliver additional youth support programs and activities including: youth web site, youth leadership program, youth providers committee and youth development grants program
- Roll out a program of activities and initiatives to support fire affected communities including: recreation programs, social connectedness program, celebrate positive images project, community information and notice boards, theatre plays and support for volunteers
- Work with the community to deliver a series of community festivals and celebrations
- Facilitate a community building initiative to support people impacted upon by the Sugarloaf North South Pipeline
- Develop, subject to funding, leadership, mental health and wellbeing programs for drought affected communities
- Provide, subject to funding, support to Community and Neighbourhood Houses for additional programs
- Seek funding to assist people to re-establish gardens damaged or destroyed by fire
- Finalise Yea swimming pool redevelopment planning, considering disability access and improved amenity
- Complete the development of the *Arts and Cultural Policy*
- Complete the *Health and Wellbeing Plan*
- Complete construction of Alexandra community kitchen

## Significant Others

### Kinglake Ranges Community Building Initiative Update



The Community Building Initiative is funded by the Department for Victorian Communities and is a joint partnership between the Kinglake Ranges

Neighbourhood House, KANDO and the Murrindindi Shire Council. It aims to deliver on projects that support growth and reflect each community's needs and desires.

The Kinglake Ranges Community Building Initiative is well established and comprises the communities of Flowerdale, Hazeldene, Kinglake West, Pheasant Creek, Kinglake Central, Kinglake, Castella and Toolangi.

The Black Saturday fires have impacted greatly on the capacity of these communities to support ongoing community initiatives. However community members have, where possible, continued to work hard with a mixture of success and disappointment over the past 12 months.

- The Kinglake Ranges Film Society, launched in 2007, continues to grow and now has 35 members. It has been successful in obtaining grants for projection and sound equipment. The Film Society hosted a recovery event on Saturday 21 March with the screening of *The Power of Community* in the Kinglake West Hall. Regular monthly screenings have resumed.
- An application to the Australian Research Council for a three year research venture 'Fraying Edges to Weaving Webs – Outcomes for young people in a peri-urban community' was not successful.
- A range of new bus services between Kinglake and Whittlesea has been introduced in conjunction with the Department of Transport, facilitating travel for work, study, shopping and appointments.
- The Community Reference Group as elected at a community meeting in October 2008 for the development of a Strategic Plan for Kinglake, has been reconvened since the fires and is working in collaboration with Council, Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction & Recovery Committee and the community to facilitate an effective and innovative plan for the long term development of Kinglake. Prior to the fires, an allocation of \$20,000 by Regional Development Victoria had

been matched with \$20,000 from Council to fund the plan's development.

- The Bollygum Team has been very active and accrued more than \$500,000 of local, state and federal funding to complete this major project. Sixty thousand dollars has been granted by the Department of Planning and Community Development for the skate park component of the project. The team has spent many hours collecting the information, quotes, and statistics needed to complete grant applications and further funding applications have been lodged with the Federal Government's Jobs Fund and the North South Pipeline Regional Benefits Program.
- The 'Parents for a Pool' group was successful in developing a funding application for the feasibility study into the construction and operation of an indoor aquatic facility for Kinglake.
- The Flowerdale Community Hub is a key project for the Flowerdale Community House and community and seeks to create a multi-use facility for the House, other agencies and visiting services. Following the fires, the potential for co-locating the community House with the Jarara Community Centre is being explored.
- Costs and specifications were identified for the installation of a unisex, disabled access toilet facility at the Spring Valley Recreation Reserve.
- The Flowerdale Public Transport Action Team conducted a survey of the community about the current bus services to Flowerdale. The CBI is also working to assist a Flowerdale resident who is seeking to establish a private bus service in the area.
- A team is investigating the potential for a Toolangi All Purpose Track to join the existing Monda Track (from Toolangi to Healesville which links with the Centenary Track to Cooktown). Ultimately, the track would extend to the Melba Highway. Improved pedestrian access is a high priority for Toolangi, given the high number of trucks using the main road. A funding application has been developed and submitted to the North South Pipeline Regional Benefits Program.
- The CJ Dennis Hall has received \$67,500 to renovate the kitchen and establish a covered walkway to the toilet area. Financial support has been received from Council and the Departments of Sustainability and Environment and Planning and Community Development. Plans for the kitchen are finalised and quotes are being



*Member for Seymour, Ben Hardman, Mayor Lyn Gunter and Lily D'Ambrosio launch the Toolangi 'CJ Dennis Centennial Track' project with local horse riders*

obtained. Additional funding is being sought for a new grey water system.

- Following the Black Saturday fires, a fundraising initiative undertaken by the Brumby's Bakery in Geelong raised sufficient funds for the purchase and installation of play equipment at the CJ Dennis Hall.

Community support is critical to the success of the Community Building Initiative and input is welcomed and encouraged. Everyone involved is to be congratulated on the achievements to date.

#### **Kinglake Ranges CBI - Totals to date:**

**Number of projects: 16**

**Number of volunteers: 88**

**Funding secured: \$577,500**

**Number of community partnerships: 17**

## Bushfire Recovery Community Development Team Appointed



Council welcomed Liam McCarthy, Mike Wasley, Howard Paix, Michele Braid and Sarah Martin on board as members of the new Community Development Team. This team began working in June 2009 to support our bushfire-affected communities to re-group, re-visit and re-new community aspirations and collective projects.

The Department of Human Services has provided funding for this team to operate for 18 months

as part of the state government's commitment to bushfire recovery.

The Community Development Team will be working to assist community-led recovery processes and will play an important role in supporting planning and action on community priorities and projects. The Community Development Officers (CDO) are already working to support Community Advisory Committee Planning Days, and to enable Council's Community Building Initiative project groups to get back on track. CDOs engage with community groups, business networks, service providers and individuals across the shire.

Howard and Mike will work in the Narbethong, Taggerty, Buxton and Marysville area. Michele, Liam and Sarah will concentrate on Strath Creek, Flowerdale, Kinglake to Kinglake West, Castella, Toolangi, Glenburn, Limestone and Murrindindi.

The Community Development team members bring a wealth of skills, experience and enthusiasm and are looking forward to making an important contribution to the communities affected by the fires on Black Saturday.



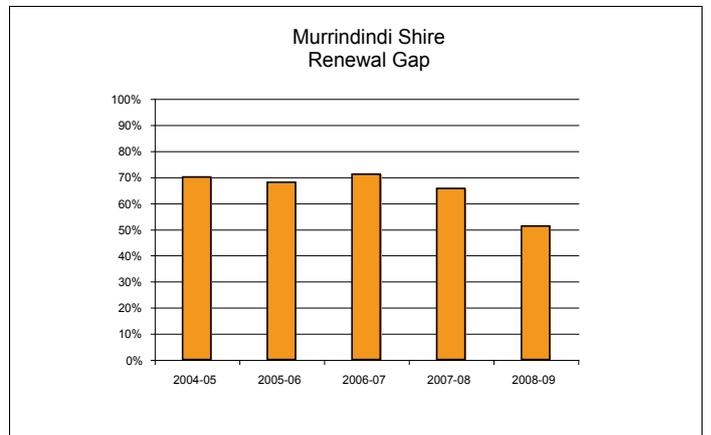
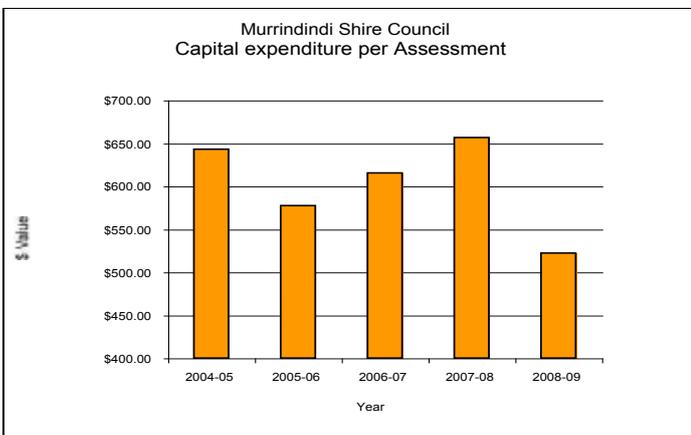
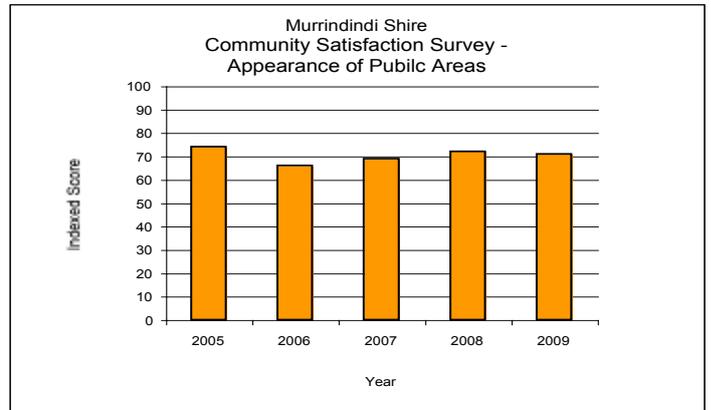
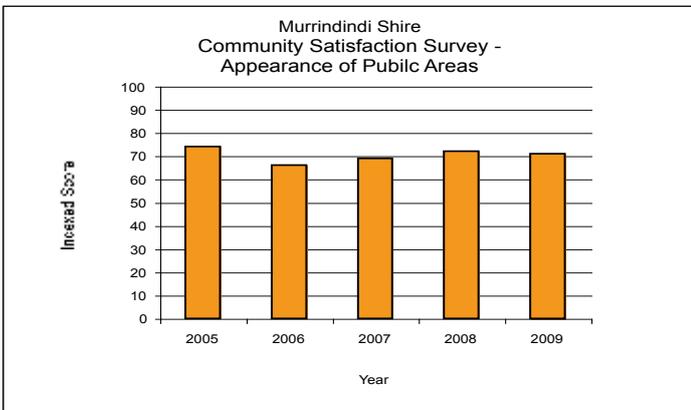
*Restoring book mobile library service into Flowerdale and other fire affected communities was a priority*

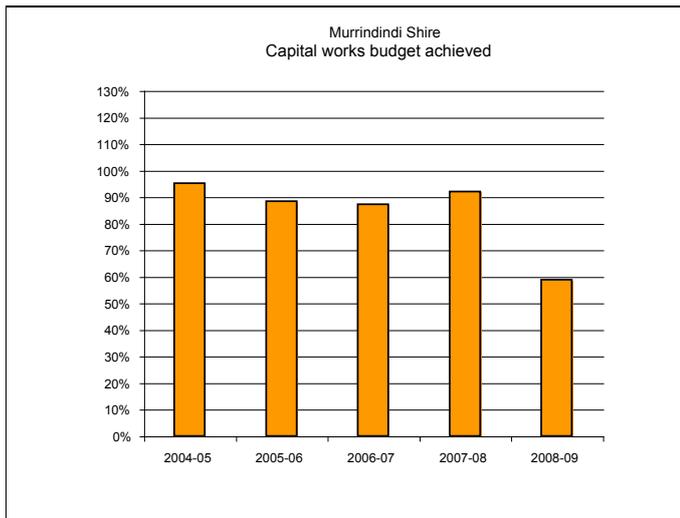
Theme 3 Infrastructure



In 2008 -2009 \$ 3,163,330 of road works, street and bridge work was undertaken

Performance Indicators





Parks & Gardens staff David Girvan and Scott Maloney working in the early morning to keep Murrindindi's parks in good order

## Objective One - To maintain and improve our infrastructure

### Strategies

- Address the infrastructure renewal gap
- Integrate the organisation's approach to asset management
- Pursue innovative funding sources and strategies for the renewal and upgrading of infrastructure
- Comply with insurance recommendations and address risk issues
- Ensure our infrastructure is maintained to the standard adopted by the council

### Activities

Activities per Council Plan	Status as at 30/06/09
Commence the development of an <i>Overall Asset Management Strategy</i> (OAMS)	Ongoing
Complete the <i>Road Asset Management Plan</i> (RAMP)	Not commenced
Implement the <i>Roads and Bridge Construction Strategy</i>	Completed
Implement the building maintenance program	Completed
Implement the priority actions contained in the various storm water strategy documents as opportunities and funding allow	Ongoing
Prioritise and implement the actions of the Urban Design Frameworks (UDFs) as opportunities and funding allow	Ongoing
Consolidate all asset management functions	Ongoing
Formulate a <i>Special Charge Scheme Policy</i>	
Continue to participate in the <i>STEP Asset Management Program</i>	Ongoing
Review and adopt the <i>Building Asset Management Strategy</i>	Ongoing
Demonstrate a link between inspection defects, maintenance generation and completed works for all types of asset inspections. Ensure that proactive inspections are undertaken in accordance with the schedules nominated in Council's <i>Road Management Plan</i>	Ongoing

Continue the proactive tree inspection program for trees located in Council owned reserves and urban streets	Completed
Implement the <i>Road Management Plan</i> including the publishing of the road register, schedules of inspection types and frequencies, and key defects and service response time	Completed
Complete and publish the <i>Infrastructure Manual</i>	Ongoing
Develop and implement a programmed maintenance system for infrastructure maintenance	Completed
Inform the community of the maintenance standards, construction programs, levels of intervention, response times and programmed maintenance of all asset classes	Not commenced
Implement the Road Asyst system in response to the <i>Road Management Plan</i>	Completed
Implement priority actions contained in the <i>UT Creek Master Plan</i> as opportunities and funding allow	Ongoing
Advocate for an alternative road route through the Black Spur	Ongoing
Undertake a review of the depot operation and accommodation requirements for the shire	Ongoing
Review Murrindindi Construction's focus on private works	Ongoing

### Achievements – Council Plan

- Delivery of substantial part of capital works program, particularly completion of sealing Kinglake-Glenburn Road and widening of Whanregarwen Road
- Completion of timber industry funded improvements on Mt Margaret Road
- Announcement of \$400,000 funding for Eildon Town and Waterlink Pathway project
- Completed a condition audit of road and footpath assets across the shire
- Inspection and maintenance of 600kms of fire affected roadsides where tree safety inspections, and removals or pruning were required to make them safe and to allow traffic movement



The widening of Whanregarwen Road was completed in 2009 making it safer for log trucks and providing a safer road as an alternate route when the Alex-Molesworth roads are impassable

### Achievements – Fire related

- Appointment and management of six contracting teams with approximately 180 sub-contractors employed on the tree safety program
- Appointed and managed six contracting teams with approximately 180 sub-contractors employed on the tree safety program
- Organised repair of the following partially destroyed buildings:
  - Kinglake Community Centre – stadium, hall and craft room
  - Kinglake Memorial Reserve Pavilion
  - Kinglake West Rest Stop
  - Flowerdale Hall
  - Gallipoli Park, Marysville – toilet block
  - Gallipoli Park, Marysville – saddle tramps building and yards
  - Marysville Caravan Park
- Buxton-Marysville Road toilet block
- Marysville Pool (in progress)
- Marysville Transfer Station/Depot
- Commenced other building works including:
  - Kinglake Memorial Reserve – construction of verandah and terraced seating
  - Kinglake Community Centre - kitchen facility
  - Kinglake Community Centre –storage room for Senior Citizens
  - Kinglake Early Learning Centre – fitting out of building
  - Kinglake Memorial Reserve Pavilion – Kinglake Scouts – air-conditioning, re-surface floor and minor carpentry

- Kinglake Memorial Reserve – water supply established in co-operation with CFA, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and reserve committee
- Marysville temporary ski sites
- Marysville Retirement Village – temporary accommodation
- Marysville Retirement Village – Owners Corporation consultation

## Challenges

- Special Charge Scheme processes for Taylor Bay Left Arm Road and Green Street Alexandra have not been completed
- Several minor capital works projects, including Alexandra public toilet, were not completed due to staff resource being diverted to recovery efforts
- Senior engineering staff were seconded to the Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre as Municipal Emergency Resource Officers for four weeks
- Normal asset and infrastructure operations were on hold for four weeks after the fires, as the focus was on recovery issues
- Access to council roads was not permitted until VicRoads had cleared major roads and the police allowed access to council staff and contractors
- Council machinery and outdoor personnel were redeployed to focus on emergency response and recovery issues including cleaning and filling of water tanks, installation of temporary amenity buildings, distribution of generators, clearing of roads
- Eight major bridges were destroyed or damaged in the fires
- Recent tree clearing has attracted significant community and media interest. Council officers have actively engaged with the community in an effort to create a better understanding and greater accountability in these works, bearing in mind that public safety is of paramount importance
- Delivery of an extensive program of works in 2009-2010 will add to construction staff workload as time available is shortened due to the delay in the budgeting process

## Year Ahead

- Rebuild fire damaged and destroyed buildings and other infrastructure
- Complete refurbishment or repair of Hazeldene Bridge
- Develop a five year forward capital works plan (new and upgrade works) aligned to the *Strategic Resource Plan*
- Construct a new public toilet in the Alexandra shopping precinct.
- Develop initial stages of Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail in partnership with Mitchell and Mansfield councils
- Complete Bollygum Park Kinglake
- Establish bushfire maintenance teams
- Resource the Assets Team sufficiently to cope with rebuild workload
- Undertake a roadside green waste and hard waste collection program
- Cope with delivering an extensive program with reduced lead times due to delayed strategic planning and finalisation of council's budget for 2009-2010
- Complete safety works on local roads, concentrating on the review of tree safety
- Employ enough staffing resources to assist with recovery works



*The Flowerdale Community Village was constructed on the Spring Valley Recreation Reserve*

## Objective Two - Foster Civic Pride

### Strategy

- Improve council facilities

### Activities

Activities per Council Plan	Status as at 30/06/09
Upgrade the Yea Council Chambers	Completed
Install clocks for the Yea Shire Hall	Completed
Consider Committees of Management for the Yea and Alexandra Shire Halls	Completed (Yea)
Progress landscaping works at the Kinglake District Service Centre	Ongoing
Consider upgrading or improving other council facilities	Ongoing
Consider a signage policy, including road signs and town signs	Not commenced

### Key Achievements

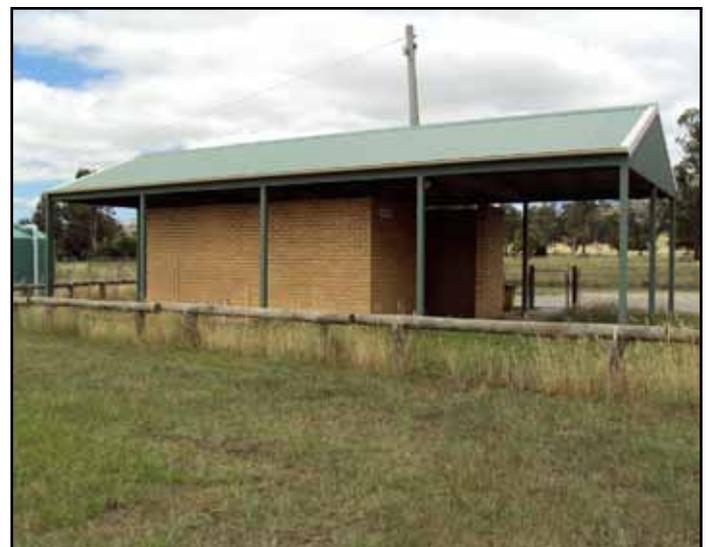
- Completed upgrade to Yarck public conveniences
- Announcement of federal government's Regional & Local Community Infrastructure Program enabled a series of community projects throughout the shire to proceed

### Challenges

- Unable to complete upgrade to CJ Dennis Hall due to staff resource being diverted to recovery efforts
- Many community facilities were completely destroyed on Black Saturday, including five community halls, three kindergartens, two primary schools, one police station, one child care centre, three maternal and child health centres, one retirement village, one caravan park, one transfer station/depot

### Year Ahead

- Work with the VBRRA and community to rebuild community facilities destroyed by fires
- Work with the community to complete a range of community infrastructure projects

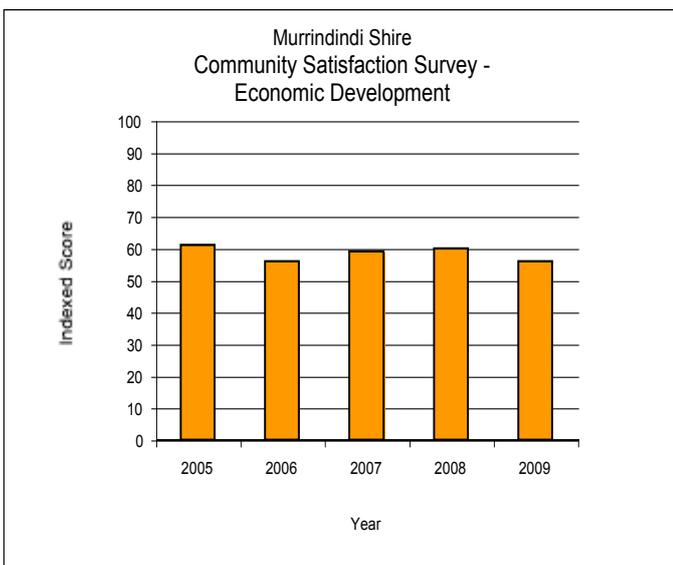


*The upgrade to the Yarck public conveniences was completed this financial year*

## Theme 4 Local Economy



### Performance Indicators



**\* New businesses opening in the shire.  
No data available for the 2008-2009 year**

### Strategies

- Strengthen local industries and value add
- Provide support to new and expanding businesses
- Provide opportunities for industrial development
- Attract investment
- Provide event coordination
- Manage building development in a planned and sustainable way across the shire
- Provide saleyards facilities for the farming community
- Pursue a coordinated approach to visitor information services across the shire
- Continue to strengthen and develop the tourism industry
- Pursue investment in new tourism product and infrastructure
- Participate in cooperative marketing and public relations initiatives

Activities per Council Plan	Status as at 30/06/09
Implement the <i>Economic Development Strategy</i> as opportunities and funding allow	Ongoing
Facilitate education and training activities for industry	Ongoing
Implement priority outcomes of the <i>Training Demand Study</i>	Ongoing
Participate in the Central Ranges Local Learning and Employment Network (CRLLEN)	Ongoing
Develop a new program of business and tourism awards	Awards bi-annual
Produce aids to support and assist new and expanding businesses	Completed
Collate and provide information on business trends, climate information, incentives and training programs	Ongoing
Encourage new and established businesses to participate in seminars, workshops, business breakfasts and networking opportunities	Ongoing
Implement the priority actions of the <i>Yea and Alexandra Industrial Land Demand Study</i> as opportunities and funding allow	Ongoing
Pursue opportunities associated with the Eildon Marine Precinct as opportunities and funding allow	Ongoing
Investigate industrial land options in Marysville and Kinglake as opportunities and funding allow	Ongoing
Progress development of the Yea Industrial Estate in accordance with the <i>Yea Industrial Estate Development Plan</i>	Ongoing
Pursue opportunities for improved broadband services	Completed
Investigate opportunities for the development of council properties as resources allow	Ongoing
Develop a business prospectus as opportunities and funding allow	Ongoing
Progress the local 'Live, Work, Visit, and Invest' Provincial Victoria marketing campaign	Ongoing
Support events that provide an economic benefit to the community	Ongoing
Establish cross-departmental policies and processes for better management of major external events	Completed
Review and seek to increase capacity to undertake statutory building services activities	Completed
Appoint a cadet building surveyor	Completed
Establish an essential services register for commercial buildings with fire safety systems	Ongoing
Implement the <i>Yea Saleyards Development Plan</i>	Ongoing
Implement the capital works programs as determined by the saleyards committees	Completed
Complete the tourism signage audit	Completed
Develop and implement a tourism signage strategy	Not commenced
Progress the Visitor Centre Coordination network	Ongoing
Facilitate the development of visitor guides	Ongoing
Implement the tourism industry communications plan	Ongoing
Pursue cooperation and coordination between Local Industry Sector Tourism Associations (LISTA)	Ongoing
Facilitate Murrindindi Regional Tourism Association (MRTA) restructure	Ongoing
Complete the revision of the memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Murrindindi Regional Tourism Association	Completed
Pursue key tourism development opportunities as opportunities and funding allow	Ongoing

Complete the nature-based tourism accommodation feasibility study	Not commenced
Assist MRTA to develop greater consistency in the branding of Murrindindi tourism	Ongoing
In partnership with MRTA ensure Murrindindi tourism is represented in inter-regional marketing and public relation campaigns	Ongoing
In partnership with the MRTA develop and implement the MRTA intra-regional marketing and PR programs	Ongoing
Conduct market research projects to contribute to planning within the tourism industry	Ongoing
Conduct summer visitor research project	Withdrawn due to bushfires

### Achievements – Council Plan

- In partnership with Mansfield and Mitchell Shire Councils secured \$13.2 million funding from the federal government for the Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail which will run between Mansfield and Tallarook with a connection to Alexandra
- Conducted a successful Visitor Information Centre Volunteers Summit, focusing on bushfire recovery, on 21 April 2009 for 65 of our volunteers at the Yea Golf Club. *Further information page 48*
- Hosted an overnight stop for the Jayco Herald Sun Tour in October 2008 for a stage finish in Marysville and stage start in Alexandra. *Further information page 48*
- Progressed the 'Buy Local' awareness campaign with an extensive advertising and promotional campaign using \$13,000 of funding from Regional Development Victoria
- Supported businesses and individuals seeking work and staff through the Industry Capability Network registration process and Rural Skills Connect project
- Generated over \$200,000 in tourism marketing, and facilitated major content in three *Age* lift outs – Summer, Autumn, Spring
- Appointed Events Coordinator
- Undertook a review of and improved processes and risk management practices in relation to events management; the number of registered events increased from 18 in 2007 to 58 in 2008.
- Coordinated the removal of or repair of over 60 tourism signs across the shire in accordance with the *Tourism Signage Audit*
- Completed the Winter Visitor Research Project

- Implemented a successful programming of council's statutory obligation to monitor and ensure the maintenance of essential safety measures of all commercial buildings within the shire
- United Tourism Project – commenced

### Achievements – Fire related

- Supported Lake Mountain Alpine Resort and ski related businesses in Marysville to ensure they were ready to open for the 2009 ski season.
- Provided individualised support, guidance and referral services to over 70 businesses in the bushfire recovery and rebuilding process.
- Completed a \$1.2 million funding application through the Jobs Fund for the purchase and fit out of the former Marysville Car Museum to enable business restart and the provision of essential services.
- Appointed two part time Business Recovery Officers, to assist business recovery from the February bushfires. These positions are funded by Regional Development Victoria. *Further information page 48*
- Collaborated with Council's planning department to fast track permits so our local business operators could re-open following the bushfires.
- Obtained \$600,000 from the state government for the Murrindindi-Mitchell Bushfire Tourism Recovery Committee to market tourism businesses in Murrindindi and Mitchell shires
- Coordinated a series of business recovery information sessions for more than 100 businesses in May and June 2009
- Participated in five tourism industry recovery forums with over 110 participants

- Completed a tourism business bushfire impact audit
- Provided substantive input into economic recovery strategy for Marysville undertaken by the Boston Consulting Group
- Increased support of Yea Business and Tourism Association and Kinglake Ranges Business Network as a critical element of bushfire response
- Created a series of business recovery fact sheets and published a business bushfire grants database
- Provided temporary signage to promote businesses remaining in Marysville after the fires
- Strengthened business support referral networks primarily as a bushfire response, however will benefit ongoing department activities
- Completed 2000 property inspections following the bushfires including 1260 houses, 100 commercial buildings and 2000 farm sheds and garages
- Issued 503 Emergency Orders on properties in the fire affected areas
- Coordinated an additional 20 building surveyors from local governments across the state to do inspections within the fire affected region for seven days per week for four weeks after the bushfire,

## Challenges

- Redeployment of departmental staff to work at emergency relief centres and other bushfire response activities for extended period of time
- Destruction of business and tourism infrastructure in the bushfire
- Impact of the bushfire on the nature based tourism product that was a strength of the region
- Having regular meeting of the Murrindindi Festivals and Events Network, Murrindindi Human Resources Network, and Murrindindi LLEN sub committee between February and June due to the focus on recovery activities
- Visitor Information Centre accreditation into the future
- Re-establishment of the Visitor Information Centre in Marysville
- 'Live, Work and Invest in Provincial Victoria' promotional collateral and website impacted heavily by the bushfires
- Development of new and relevant tourism collateral including official visitors guide, regional and local maps and websites

- Ratification and launch of the draft *2009 –2012 Economic Development Strategy*
- Ensuring the well-being of our building department staff, and those assisting with inspections, who were amongst the first permitted into fire affected areas and who worked long hours and witnessed scenes that would be difficult to deal with
- Introduction of new building regulations in March 2009 introducing Bushfire Attack Levels has added a layer of complexity at a difficult time, requiring our staff to familiarise themselves with the new legislation and then participate in community information sessions

## Year Ahead

- Progress the Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail project
- Revise the draft *2009 – 2012 Economic Development Strategy* to incorporate strategies for fire affected businesses
- Support the Yea Wetlands Committee of Management to develop a sustainable business model for the Yea Discovery Centre
- Conduct 'Inspired by Murrindindi' food, wine and arts events
- Participate in the Mitchell-Murrindindi collaborative tourism destination recovery marketing campaign
- Initiate cooperative regional marketing and industry development as part of the 'United Approach to Tourism Project' in partnership with Mitchell, Strathbogie and Shepparton councils
- Determine council's future role in and possible structure of regional tourism industry support
- Finalise financing and implementation of Yea Saleyards upgrade
- Undertake a feasibility study of our Visitor Information Centres
- Coordinate the Visitor Information Centre Volunteers Summit 2010
- Provide assistance to local towns seeking Recreation Vehicle Friendly status
- Advocate for improved access to high speed, affordable broadband and mobile phone services
- Secure additional staffing resources in the building department to enable council's statutory requirements can be fulfilled

## Significant Others

### Visitor Information Centre Volunteers Summit



*Visitor Information Centres volunteers experienced the Cheviot Tunnel and Wetland Reserve at Yea so they can better inform tourists in the Visitors Centres*

More than 70 volunteers from our Murrindindi Visitor Information Centres attended the 4th Annual VIC Summit held in April 2009 at the Yea Golf Club. The venue changes each year so that volunteers can experience attractions in different areas within the shire.

On the day volunteers chose to visit the historic Cheviot Tunnel or go on an informative walk around the Wetlands Reserve with councillor Sally Abbott-Smith

The Summit provided a free day for volunteers to get together for fun, networking, information and professional development. Thank you to the Alexandra Eildon & Marysville Standard and the Rotary Club of Yea who sponsored this event.

The focus of the summit was on recovery and included visits to local Yea attractions, and presentations by Tourism Alliance Victoria, Northern Grampians Shire and Grampians Tourism, Murrindindi Regional Tourism Association, and a session with a panel from Kerrisdale Mountain Railway and Museum, Lake Mountain Alpine Resort, the Alexandra Truck Ute and Rod Show and Parks Victoria.

### Appointment of Business Recovery Officers



*Sally Macdonald and Sandra Slatter appointed as Business Recovery Officers*

Murrindindi Shire Council appointed Sally Macdonald and Sandra Slatter as Business Recovery Officers in June 2009. These positions are funded by Regional Development Victoria.

Economic development is critical to the shire's recovery and both officers are working with our Economic Development Department, focusing their attention on the areas most affected by the Black Saturday bushfires.

Sally's responsibilities cover the west and south of the shire from Toolangi and the Kinglake Ranges through to Yea, including all towns in between. Sandra is devoting her efforts to the eastern section of the shire especially in the Marysville and Triangle districts.

## Jayco Herald Sun Tour



Australian and International cycling teams competing in the Jayco Herald Sun Tour pedalled through Murrindindi in October 2008, bringing with them hundreds of spectators, support crews and domestic and international media.

Some of the highlights included:

- Involvement of the Marysville, Eildon, Thornton, Buxton, Alexandra and Marysville Primary Schools and Alexandra Secondary School in a range of activities
- Cash prizes (\$500 each) to two local schools in the banner competition
- Local riders leading the peloton on a parade lap in Alexandra
- Television coverage on Channel 10 on Sports Tonight and Fox Sports
- Broadcasting by local community radio UGFM and ABC regional
- Support of the two local steering committees (Marysville and Alexandra) who made the event come to life in their town

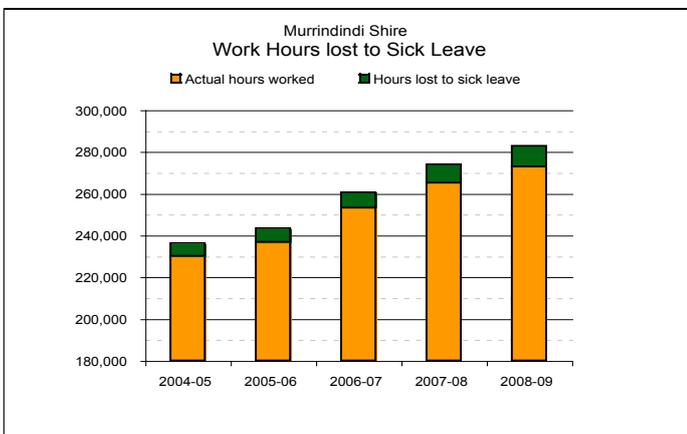
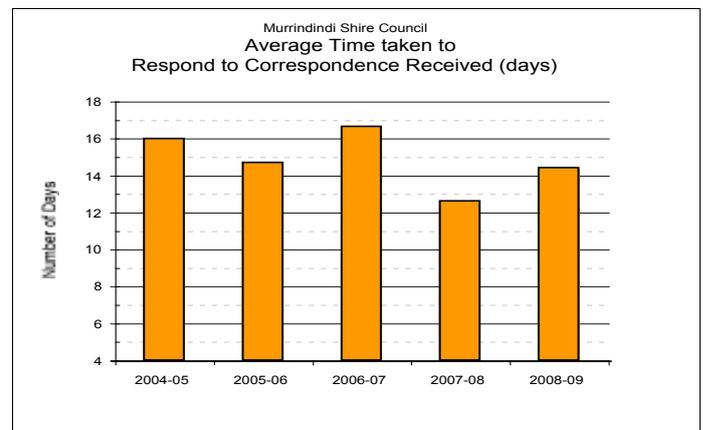
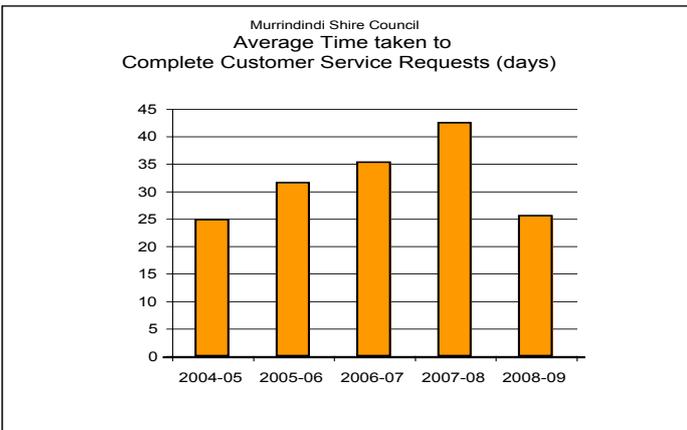
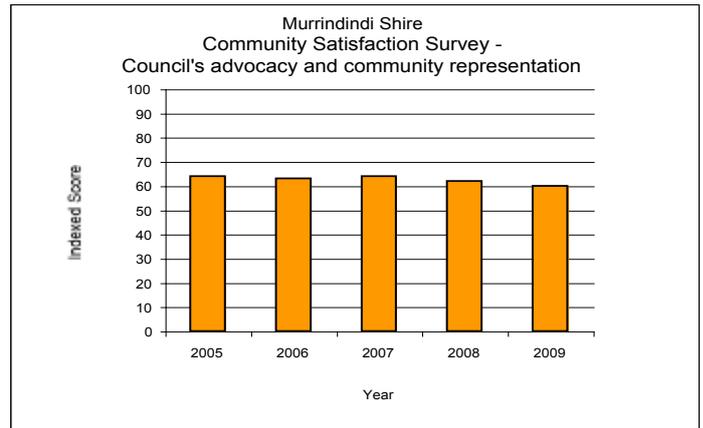
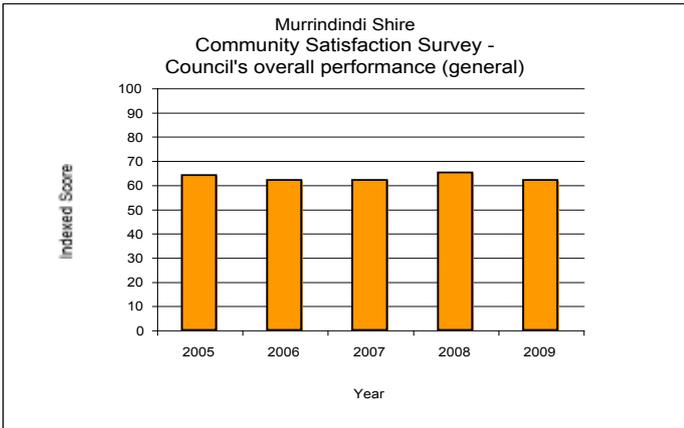


School children wait to cheer on the cyclist at the start of The Herald Sun Tour

Theme 5 Governance



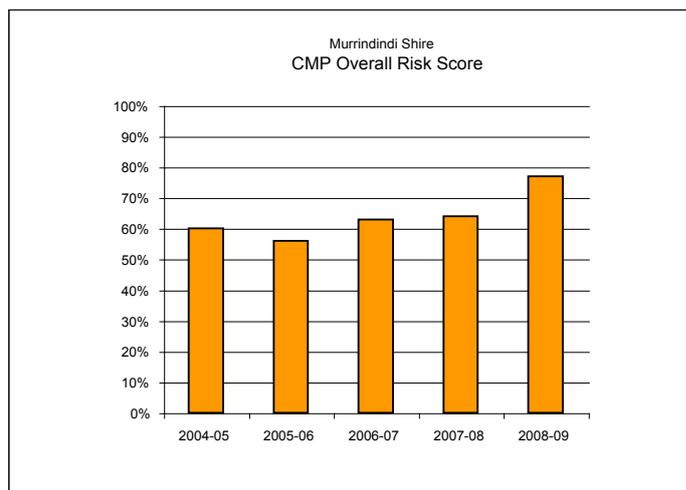
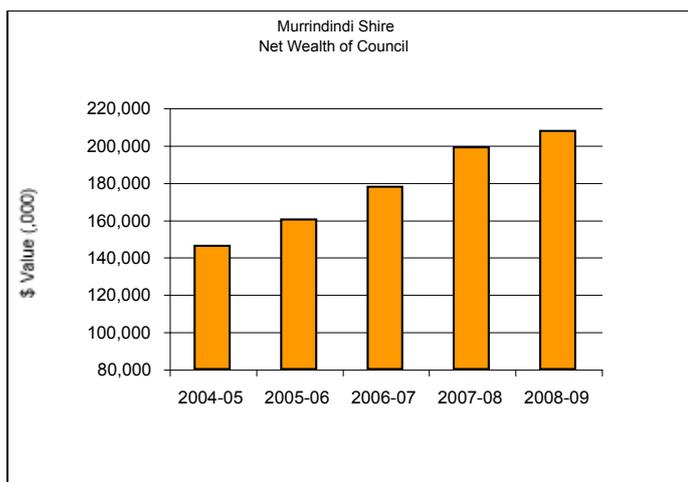
Performance Indicators



Continuous improvement program

The continuous improvement and best value activities used to measure performance are set out on page 65

\* Staff Satisfaction Survey  
No staff satisfaction survey was undertaken during 2008-2009



## Objective One - To be consistent, fair and transparent in our decision making

### Strategy

- Act with probity and due diligence

### Activities

Activities per Council Plan	Status as at 30/06/09
Adhere to the councillor and staff codes of conduct	Ongoing
Self assess and prioritise governance processes for improvement	Ongoing
Review and improve the Councillor Development Program based on a skills assessment process	Ongoing
Recognise and respect the right of people to express their views and criticise the decisions we make and treat the public and business partners with respect	Ongoing

### Achievements – Council Plan

- Adopted the *Rating Strategy* and used it to set the structure of rates in the 2008-2009 Budget
- Completed internal audit projects on management of grants and customer service
- Presented the *Internal Financial Control Manual* to the Internal Audit Committee in November 2008. This document identifies and addresses the management of risk related to audit issues and accounting standards and provides measures to address those risks
- Commenced the development of a *Grants Management Policy* with supporting procedures and templates

### Achievement – Fire related

- Undertook a revaluation of rateable properties affected by the February 2009 fires. The revaluation identified a significant decrease in Council's rate base.

### Challenge

- As a result of the February 2009 bushfires officer time was consumed with processing an extraordinary amount of commercial transactions that would not normally be required in a small rural council. The greatest challenge was to ensure suppliers received payment in a timely manner to relieve pressure placed on their own business

## Year Ahead

- Implement a reporting system which ensures that councillors and ratepayers are frequently informed on the progress of activities in the *Council Plan*, the state of the Budget and operations of the organisation

## Objective Two - To improve our performance and sustainability

### Strategies

- Continue to improve council systems, processes and relationships
- Ensure our customers have a positive experience
- Improve service delivery and efficiency
- Improve our image and communication
- Be proactive in reducing organisational risk and improve our risk profile

### Activities

Activities per Council Plan	Status as at 30/06/09
Implement the prioritised annual improvement program	Ongoing
Improve our performance in response to correspondence and customer requests	Ongoing
Develop a system and provide regular financial and non- financial reports to Executive Team and Council based on systems views and key performance indicators	Not Completed
Review the customer service system to ensure we are delivering good customer service	Ongoing
Review the customer service staff relief arrangements	Completed
Implement the revised Information Technology Strategy	Completed
Roll out the e-commerce system	Ongoing
Establish the intranet site	Not Completed
Resource the internet and intranet functions to ensure customer satisfaction with the on-line experience	Ongoing
Undertake a review and make recommendations on the records management function of the Council including historical and operational hard copy and electronic records	Ongoing
Review the Council's operations to identify areas that may be considered as non-core business	Completed
Consider a review of the rate structure	Completed
Complete the <i>Communications Strategy</i>	Completed
Review and develop a system that integrates risk assessment, insurance audits, workcover inspections, public liability, occupational health and safety and fraud into one system	Completed
Develop risk assessment processes relating to the management of major projects	Commenced

## Achievements – Council Plan

- Engineering services department undertook a 'What is good customer service' project which included identification of strengths and weaknesses, and a customer survey
- Our risk policy and strategy were reviewed
- CMP audit score increased from 64% to 77% reflecting improved risk management practices across the council's operations
- Thirty six people completed a two day risk management training program delivered in house during November
- Sixty staff members attended a customer service training program
- Eighteen staff members participated in community engagement training with a particular focus on planning for engagement and using relevant tools to collect or disseminate information.
- A new management reporting system was trailed in December
- The Councillor induction program, designed in-house, commenced with involvement from senior officers and other staff and will continue until May
- Thirty six staff members were trained in the use of Council's electronic purchasing system which will deliver efficiencies in the processing and recording of transactions. A complete roll out of training was interrupted by the February fires
- A business case for a collaborative approach to procurement of appropriate software and a shared services approach to managing records is in development with 24 other councils. The business case should be completed late in 2009. The state government has provided \$60,000 to support the development of the business case
- A *Committees of Management Handbook* was developed during the year to provide guidelines for committees in addressing risk, managing volunteers, reporting requirements and legislative requirements. A roll out of the handbook and training to support the committees did not proceed
- Establishment of Council's intranet was completed
- Information technology induction process was streamlined and updated

## Achievements – Fire related

- Council officers attended many community briefings and meetings in the period immediately after the fires. These meetings were the key source of information, particularly in the initial stages when there were no telephone lines, no

power, newspapers or internet

- The *Murrindindi Recovery Newsletter* was instigated following the bushfires to keep our community updated on key issues. Each issue is distributed via 600 hard copies, more than 250 electronic copies, a number of copies posted directly to relocated residents, and online on council's website
- A series of fact sheets on key issues was prepared for distribution at community meetings
- A *Communication Strategy* was prepared for the recovery process
- A liaison officer was appointed to the Mayor for the purpose of coordinating media requests
- The council web site was modified to ensure easier access to emergency information
- Staffing resources were increased to update online communications – intranet and internet - to ensure latest news and events available for staff and community. Between February and June there were approximately 188,400 hits on council's web site
- A mobile Geographic Information System was implemented for use by council officers in the field for bushfire data collection and validation
- Access to council systems from remote sites and locations was expanded and improved
- Council data was provided to government agencies post bushfire
- IT staff resources were increased by 0.2 per week
- There was a virtualisation and upgrade of servers
- A Storage Area Network (SAN) was implemented to increase storage capacity and performance of council data

## Challenges

- Completion of our business continuity plan and pandemic plan was delayed due to work load issues
- Informing and engaging with residents who had relocated following the bushfires was difficult
- The speed at which information and situations were changing made it difficult to ensure we had the latest information available
- Managing and supporting council systems, staff expectations and applications with available resources
- Robustness and system capabilities were tested with the large number of additional staff, contractors and government agencies requiring access to data and systems
- Council phone system is now at capacity
- Increase costs of printing and photocopying

## Year Ahead

- Council's *Procurement Policy* will be reviewed to address recent legislative changes, probity issues and to mitigate risks associated with commercial dealings. Emphasis will be placed on providing training to accountable officers and to providing appropriate tools and procedures to assist with execution of transactions.
- Further training will be provided to ensure all Council officers are well informed in procurement processes
- The development of a Grant Management Register, *Grants Management Policy* and guidelines will be essential to managing and reporting on the unprecedented number of grants Council is receiving in support of the recovery processes.
- The completion of a business case for electronic document management will be completed. Investigation into an appropriate software solution will proceed throughout the year.
- A records management program (STEP) will be implemented to address the recently developed best practice guidelines for records management published by the Public Records Office
- It is anticipated that Council will participate in a collaborative approach to archiving council records
- A *Strategic Communications and Marketing Strategy* will be developed and implemented
- Technology will be introduced that will create efficiencies by enabling staff to be more mobile externally and internally
- Telecommunications and internet service provider across council network will be reviewed
- Council will continue to work closely with the Municipal Association of Victoria to implement 'Shared Services' for Council IT infrastructure services

## Objective Three - To foster civic pride

### Strategies

- Promote the shire
- Foster leadership

### Activities

Activities per Council Plan	Status as at 30/06/09
Consider, adopt and implement the priority actions contained in the <i>Branding Strategy</i> as opportunities and funding allow	Ongoing
Participate in industry and regional forums	Ongoing
Adhere to the Community Consultation Policy and processes	Ongoing
Train officers on the philosophy and implementation of the community consultation process	Completed
Investigate regional partnership opportunities	Ongoing
Mentor future leaders / councillors	Ongoing
Participate in forums	Ongoing

## Achievements – Council Plan

- Six community consultations plans were completed and implemented prior to the February bushfires:
  - Ward Boundary Realignment
  - Missing Link Project – Yea
  - Closure of Ghin Ghin Bridge
  - Provision of counseling/personal support – North South Pipeline
  - High Street Yea street furniture
  - Restriction of truck access Killingworth Road

## Challenges

- Councillor media training was postponed as it had been scheduled to take place during the bushfires
- Allocating resources to enable improved communications and information for the community

## Year Ahead

- Adopt a new communications strategy
- Produce a regular community newsletter
- Appoint a communications and marketing expert

## Objective Four - To value our staff

### Strategy

- Be an employer of choice

### Activities

Activities per Council Plan	Status as at 30/06/09
Address issues raised in the staff satisfaction survey	Ongoing
Formalise the organisational planning development cycle including: self assessment, risk assessment, council planning, budgeting, coaching, systems views and performance reporting	Completed
Investigate and implement a centralised staff training and development program	Ongoing
Investigate and commence a workforce development plan	Commenced
Implement the performance coaching system	Ongoing
Pursue options for attracting and retaining skilled and experienced staff	Ongoing
Investigate the provision of traineeships and apprenticeships in the organisation	Completed
Review the way we manage projects	Not commenced
Commence the development of a skills register across the shire	Not commenced
Review and further develop performance measures for the organisation and the Council Plan	Ongoing
Investigate methods for collecting resident satisfaction data in addition to the Community Satisfaction Survey	Not commenced

## Achievements – Council Plan

- Agreement was reached on amendment and extension of our enterprise bargaining agreement, which will now expire in February 2012

## Challenges

- No staff satisfaction survey was completed for the 2008-2009 year as it was scheduled to be completed shortly after the fires

## Year Ahead

- Resume staff satisfaction surveys
- Support staff to achieve their best given the increased workload of bushfire recovery

## Objective Five - To be a financially strong organisation

### Strategy

- Strengthen the Council's financial position

### Activities

Activities per Council Plan	Status as at 30/06/09
Implement the Strategic Resource Plan	Completed
Review the rating structure	Completed
Review the debt policy	Completed
Develop a policy about seeking grants	Not commenced
Develop a policy about using consultants	Completed
Develop a policy about acquiring and owning public buildings	Withdrawn
Develop a policy about community requests for funding	Completed

## Achievements – Council Plan

- Reviewed the council plan in conjunction with portfolio councillors
- Achieved a clear audit opinion on the council's finances
- Adopted key financial strategy work such as the rating and debt strategies

## Achievement – Fire related

- Managing the financial impacts of bushfire recovery

## Challenges

- Coping with an operating budget that doubled

during the year

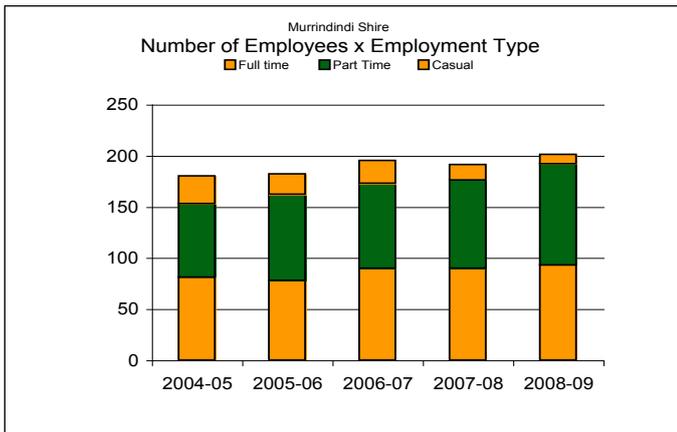
- Managing the myriad of funding and government requirements as a result of the fires

## Year Ahead

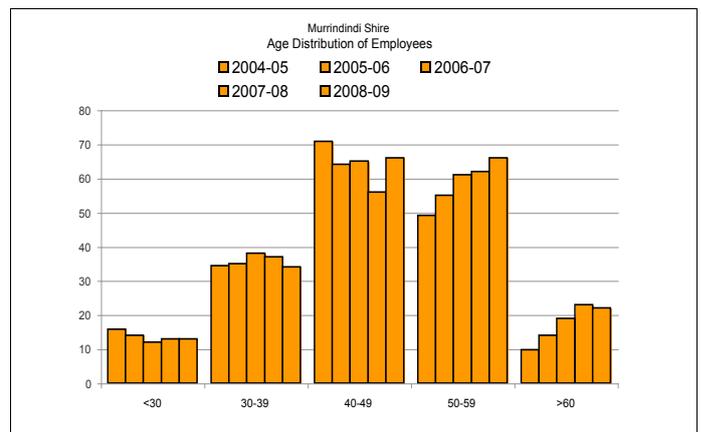
- Complete the shire wide revaluation as at January 2010
- Restructure the financial ledger to match the new Council Plan
- Manage cash flow
- Achieve funding from government to offset the loss of 40% of rate base

## Workforce Profile

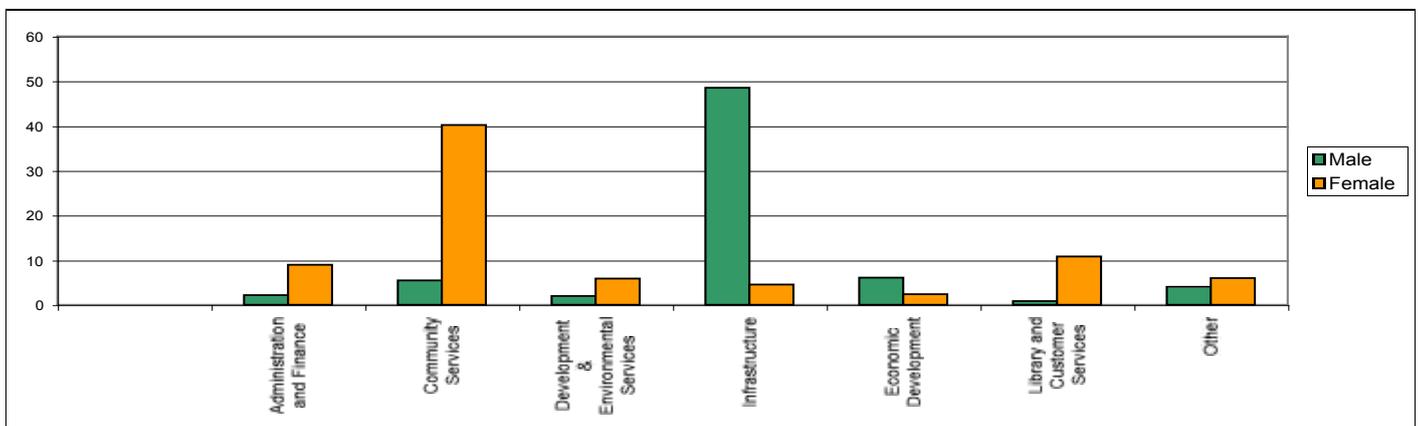
### Employment Status of Murrindindi Employees



### Age Distribution of Employees



### Type of work undertaken by Murrindindi Employees Equivalent full time



### Equal employment opportunity

Murrindindi Shire Council is committed to the principles of equal opportunity and anti-discrimination in employment and delivery of council services to the community.

Council believes that its employees are entitled to be treated on the basis of their true abilities and merit, and to work in an environment which is free of discrimination and harassment.

Council has an *Equal Employment Opportunity Policy* and supporting procedures which apply to council employees and contractors.

### Staff Code of Conduct

The Murrindindi Shire Council *Code of Conduct* is an agreement about the way in which we have chosen to behave in our working relationships with each other and with the wider community.

The *Code of Conduct* aims to establish a shared

understanding of how we can work well together to create an enjoyable, satisfying and productive workplace.

For the community our *Code of Conduct* establishes our commitment to carry out our duties and deliver our services responsively, impartially, professionally and with the highest level of integrity.

### Internal communications

During 2008-2009 we produced the *Staff Informer* on a regular basis. Staff members are encouraged to contribute to the newsletter and articles can be on professional, informative or social topics.

A number of departments also produce service specific newsletters for their staff or customers.

- *Works Talk* for outdoor staff
- *Dindi Chat* for staff, volunteers and clients of the aged and disability services
- *YAK* for home care staff

- *Home Based Child Care News* for Family Day Care and In Home Child Care families and carers

During 2008-2009 work has been undertaken to further build the content and the usage of council's intranet, 'Murri', so that staff can have electronic access to a range of information.

Other forms of internal communication include general staff meetings, departmental meetings and depot meetings.

### Health and safety of our people

Our staff are our most valuable asset because they are essential to the delivery of our services and our achievements.

### Health and Wellbeing

Responding to the bushfires has required great physical and mental energy by our staff. When the height of the emergency had passed many staff were exhausted and emotional.

Our staff wellbeing has been closely monitored since February and will continue to be into the future. It is very important that we recognise any distress reactions that occur days, weeks or months after the fires.

Debriefing sessions were held for staff members involved in the emergency response of the Black Saturday Bushfires. These sessions were facilitated by personnel from the Department of Human Services.

A variety of counselling services were made available to staff, both individually and in groups.

In the approach to winter council provided free flu vaccinations to staff. Sixty four staff members participated.

### Occupational Health and Safety (OHS)

Council is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment and ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of all employees.

Training is an essential component of improving our workplace safety. Relevant training has been provided across the organisation to reinforce workplace safety. Training increases employee awareness of safety responsibilities, assists employees to apply safe work procedures and practices at all times, and provides relevant information.

During this year OHS related training has included risk management, occupational health and safety

refresher, first aid, manual handling, fire warden, evacuation practice, driver training, red card, back hoe and grader training.

### WorkSafe

Council has worked with WorkSafe on several projects including event management, manual handling and monitoring construction industry incidents throughout the year.

### Training and development

This year council established and implemented an in-house training and development plan to reduce the time and costs incurred by travelling to city or regional venues.

Seventeen training programs were delivered with 232 staff members participating.

Training topics included

- Software applications
- Customer service
- Time management
- Personal well-being
- Project management
- Personal development
- Health and safety

### Staff satisfaction survey

No staff satisfaction survey was held this year due to the impact of the February fires on workload. This will resume next year.

### Performance coaching

Individual and organisational performance has continued to be based on performance coaching.

Managers and supervisors undertake individual coaching twice a year. These sessions are additional to standard day to day task management meetings and focus on improving performance, overcoming barriers and planning for the future.

Training this year has been focussed on our outdoor supervisors and team leaders.

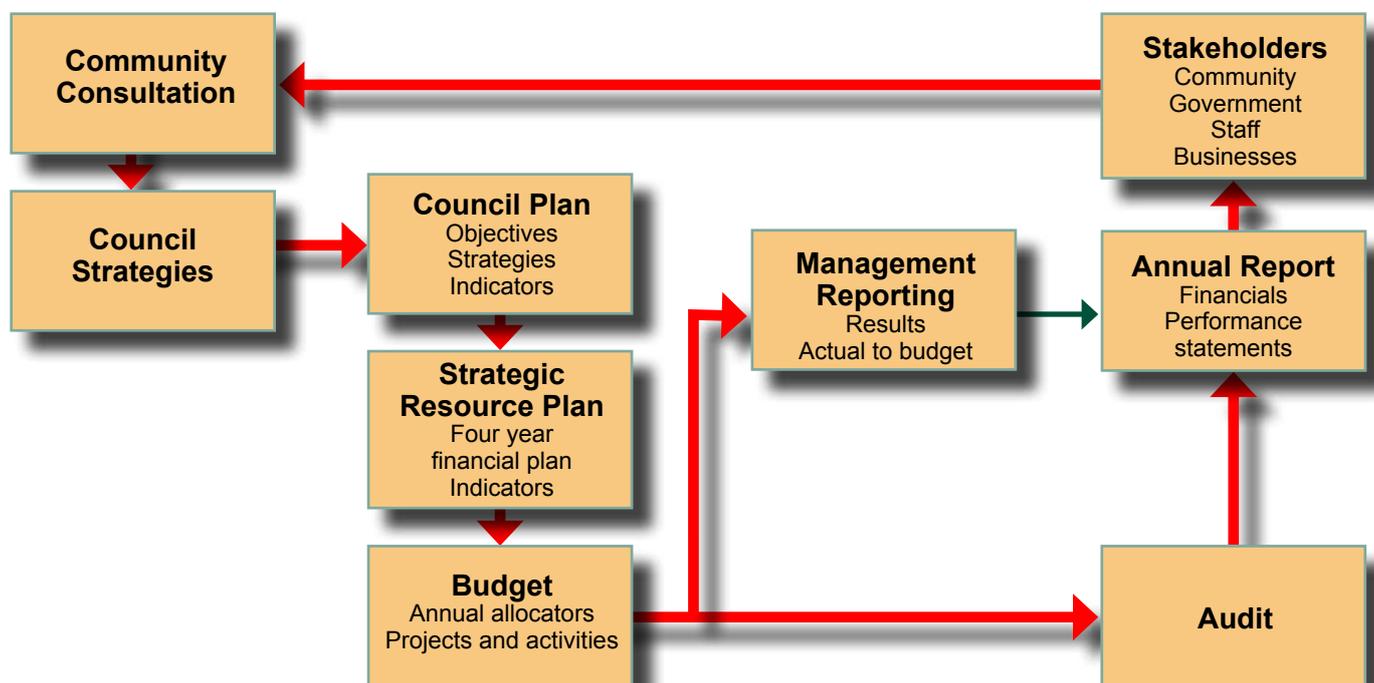
## The role of local government

Local Government is governance by councillors who are democratically elected by the voters of the local communities. As such it is the 'grass roots' level of government.

Section 3D of the *Local Government Act 1989* states that the role of a council includes:

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

## Planning Process



## Council electoral restructure

In 2008 the Victorian Electoral Commission completed a review of the electoral boundaries of all municipalities in Victoria. Prior to this review the Murrindindi Shire Council had six single councillor ridings.

As a result of the review, the Minister for Local Government accepted the recommendation from the Victorian Electoral Commission that Murrindindi Shire Council consist of seven councillors to be elected from seven single councillor wards.

Boundaries were realigned to average out the number of voters in each ward. This resulted in a change of ward for 3,500 voters.

Redgate, Koriella, Cathedral, King Parrot and

Cheviot retained their names, Dennis was renamed Kinglake, and the seventh ward was called Eildon.

A map of the wards appears on page 18

## Council elections

Murrindindi Shire Council elections for the seven new wards were held in November 2008. The election, by postal vote, was conducted by the Victorian Electoral Commission. In accordance with an amendment to the *Local Government Act 1989* councillors were elected for a four-year term.

Results of the 2008 general election were:

Ward	Elected	Voting count method
Cathedral Ward	Kevin Bellingham	Preferential
Cheviot Ward	Sally Abbot Smith	Unopposed
Eildon Ward	Chris Healy	Unopposed
King Parrot Ward	Lyn Gunter	Unopposed
Kinglake Ward	Peter Beales	Preferential
Koriella Ward	John Walsh	Preferential
Redgate Ward	Robert Flowers	Preferential

The next election for all Victorian councils will be held on the last Saturday in November, 2012.

Each year the seven councillors elect the mayor and deputy mayor.

## Councillor conduct

Murrindindi Shire Council has adopted the following ethics to ensure that councillors act honestly, in good faith and in the best interests of Murrindindi as a whole.

1. Councillors will respect other councillors' views and the decisions of council.
2. Councillors may publicly express their own opinions on council matters but not so as to undermine the standing of council in the community.
3. The Mayor will always represent the opinion or position of council when speaking publicly.
4. Individual councillors' expenditure will be incurred in a reasonable manner.
5. Councillors will avoid conflicts of interest.
6. Councillors will act with integrity when interacting with council staff.
7. Councillors will demonstrate fairness in all dealings and conduct and be open and accountable to the community at all times, both for the acts and omissions of council and councillors.
8. Without compromising the right to express a personal view on council matters, councillors will endeavour to conduct themselves in a manner that they would be prepared to disclose to the other councillors and the Shire of Murrindindi community.
9. Councillors will debate on issues and not on a personal level.

The *Councillor Code of Conduct* was adopted by resolution of the Murrindindi Shire Council on 16 May 2006.

There were no breaches of the *Councillor Code of Conduct* during the 2008-2009 financial year.

## Councillor support and remuneration

Section 74 of the *Local Government Act 1989* provides for the Governor in Council to set allowances for the mayor and councillors. Councils are categorised according to their size and revenue base and an allowance range payable to councillors is set for each category. Murrindindi Shire Council is a level one council.

For 2008-2009 the allowance paid to the Mayor of Murrindindi Shire Council was \$48,400 per annum plus an amount equivalent to 9% superannuation and the exclusive use of a vehicle.

The allowance paid to the councillors was \$16,200 per annum plus an amount equivalent to 9% superannuation.

All councillors are provided with a laptop computer and mobile phone.

For further detail regarding allowances and expense entitlements please refer to Council Policy 16: *Councillor's Allowance and Expense Entitlements*.

## Council meetings

Council decisions are made by resolution of council either at ordinary council meetings or at special committees of council meetings.

From 1 July 2008 to 9 December 2008 council meetings were held on the first and third Tuesday of the month.

Since December 2008 council meetings have been held on the fourth Wednesday of the month.

Council meetings are held in the Alexandra Council Chamber except for six meetings annually which are held in Kinglake, Marysville, Eildon or Yea. A schedule of council meetings is available at any council office or on our web site.

Councillors also meet on the first three Wednesdays

of each month for briefing sessions. The briefing sessions give councillors the opportunity to hear presentations by officers and the community on upcoming items and to seek clarification on these and other issues that may appear on the agenda at future council meetings.

Community members are encouraged to attend and participate in council meetings and the council briefing sessions. An 'Open Forum' is held prior to each meeting to allow members of the public to address council. If you wish to speak at this time please submit an 'Open Forum' application form prior to the meeting. Forms are available from council offices or online.

You can get an agenda for the council meetings no

less than 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting from a council office or on our website.

Additional special meetings of council may be called to consider specific issues. We make every effort to publicise these meetings.

Council meetings are conducted in accordance with the procedures as detailed in Murrindindi Shire Council's Local Law No. 3 - *Processes of Municipal Government (Meetings & Common Seal)*.

A Statutory Meeting is held annually to elect the mayor and deputy mayor, set allowances for the mayor and councillors, and nominate council's representatives for a range of committees. The Statutory Meeting was held on 9 December 2008.

### Council meeting attendances for 2008-2009

	Ordinary Council Meetings (17)		Statutory Meetings (1)		Special Meetings (1)	
	Eligible to Attend	Attended	Eligible to Attend	Attended	Eligible to Attend	Attended
Cr Lyn Gunter (Mayor)	17	12	1	1	1	1
Cr Kevin Bellingham (Deputy Mayor)	7	6	1	1	0	0
Cr Sally Abbott Smith	7	7	1	1	0	0
Cr Peter Beales	17	16	1	1	1	1
Cr Bob Flowers	17	17	1	1	1	1
Cr Chris Healy	17	17	1	1	1	1
Cr John Walsh	7	7	1	1	0	0

Councillors Kevin Bellingham, Sally Abbott Smith and John Walsh were newly elected to Council at the November 2008 elections.

Councillors Janet Gilmore and Leanne Pleash did not stand for re-election.

## Portfolios

In May 2006, council decided that each councillor would be responsible for a specific 'portfolio' which focussed on functional areas of council. With the election of an additional councillor in the November 2008 an additional portfolio was created – Climate Change and Natural Environment.

This allows each councillor to maintain a close relationship with staff managing issues associated

with their portfolio, and to report to council meetings on points of interest to the council that fall under that portfolio.

Councillor	Current Portfolio
Cr Lyn Gunter, Mayor	The mayor does not hold a portfolio
Cr Kevin Bellingham	Corporate Services
Cr Peter Beales	Community and Customer Services
Cr Bob Flowers	Infrastructure and Assets
Cr Chris Healy	Planning and Environment
Cr John Walsh	Economic Development and Tourism
Cr Sally Abbott Smith	Climate Change and Natural Environment

## Special committees of council

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 1989* council may establish special committees with delegated powers to inform and act on behalf of council.

Murrindindi Shire Council has twenty-five Section 86 Committees of Management.

Councillor	Committee representation
Cr Lyn Gunter, Mayor	Kinglake Memorial Reserve Committee of Management, Moores Road Reserve Committee of Management, Jarara Community Centre Committee of Management, Glenburn Community Centre Committee of Management
Cr Kevin Bellingham	Buxton Recreation Reserve Committee of Management, Gallipoli Park Committee of Management, Murrindindi Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Committee
Cr Peter Beales	Bollygum Park Reserve Committee of Management, CJ Dennis Hall and Castella Public Hall Reserve Committee of Management, Kinglake Community Centre Committee of Management, Murrindindi Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Committee
Cr Bob Flowers	Alexandra (Bill Clapham) Saleyards Committee of Management, Goulburn Valley Regional Waste Management Authority, Mount Pleasant Reserve Committee of Management, UT Creek Enhancement Community Support Group
Cr Chris Healy	Eildon Alliance Boat Ramp Committee, Eildon Resource Centre Committee of Management, Thornton Recreation Reserve Committee of Management
Cr John Walsh	Murrindindi Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Committee
Cr Sally Abbott Smith	Friends of Yea Railway Reserve Committee of Management, Yea Pioneer Reserve Committee of Management, Yea Saleyards Committee of Management, Yea Shire Hall Committee of Management, Yea Wetlands Committee of Management, Strath Creek Pioneer Reserve Committee of Management, Yea Showgrounds and Recreation Reserve Committee of Management

## Review of delegations

As required under Section 98(6) of the *Local Government Act 1989* Council conducted a review of delegations for the Chief Executive Officer and council officers.

## Murrindindi Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Committee

The Murrindindi Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Committee has been established under section 86 of the *Local Government Act 1995* and is responsible for enabling key agencies to work together to assist communities to recover and rebuild following the Black Saturday bushfires.

The committee is comprised of the following six members:

Representative of the Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority – Chairperson

Representatives from the Murrindindi Shire Council – Crs John Walsh, Peter Beales and Kevin Bellingham

Representative from the Department of Human Services

Representative from the Department of Planning and Community Development

To be transparent as possible, meetings of the Murrindindi Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Committee (MBRRC) are open to all members of the public and an open forum session is held prior to each meeting to allow members of the public to address the committee in person.

Meetings of the MBRRC are held on a monthly basis. A meeting schedule is available at council offices or on council's web site.

## Auditing

### Audit Committee

The Audit Committee is an independent advisory committee to Council. The primary objective of the Audit Committee is to assist Council in the effective conduct of its responsibilities for financial reporting, management of risk, maintaining a reliable system of internal controls and facilitating the organisation's ethical development.

The Internal Audit Committee comprises of:

- Mayor (voting) or Deputy Mayor
- Corporate Services Portfolio Representative (voting if Mayor absent)
- Two external independent representatives (voting)
- Chief Executive Officer (non voting)

- General Manager Operations (non voting)
- Internal Auditor (non voting)

During 2008-2009 the Internal Audit program reviewed the management of grants and customer service.

Recommendations from the audit program are prioritised and addressed as opportunities for improvement across the organisation.

### Internal Audits

Murrindindi Shire Council's internal audit function is contracted to Richmond, Sinnott & Delahunty.

During 2008-2009 the Internal Auditor completed the following reviews:

- Customer service
- Grant management

### External Audits

Council's external auditor is appointed by the Auditor General. The current Auditor is Mark Peters of HLB Mann Judd.

The main audit is conducted in late July and early August with interim audits conducted during the year.

### Local laws

Local Laws are available for viewing at all council offices. Council did not introduce any new local laws during 2008-2009.

Local Laws currently in place are:

<i>Local Law No. 1</i>	Consumption of Liquor in Public Places
<i>Local Law No. 2</i>	Environment
<i>Local Law No. 3</i>	Processes of Municipal Government (Meetings & Common Seal)
<i>Local Law No. 4</i>	Streets and Roads
<i>Local Law No. 5</i>	Livestock
<i>Local Law No. 6</i>	Open Air Burning

## Policy and strategy reviews

New policies adopted during the year were:

- *Discipline* adopted January 2009
- *Consumption of Alcohol & Drugs* adopted 9 July 2008
- *Smoke Free Workplace* adopted 9 July 2008

Policies reviewed during the year:

- Risk and Safety
- Prevention of Bullying and Occupational Violence
- Emergency and Defence Services Leave
- Equal Employment Policy
- Confidentiality and Privacy

## Cemetery management

Murrindindi Shire Council administers the old and new Yea cemeteries.

A number of projects were undertaken at the new cemetery during 2008-2009 including:

- Commencing construction of a new columbarium to be finished by October 2009
- Submitting a grant application to the Sugarloaf Pipeline Project Regional Benefits Program for works at the cemetery to include construction of a gazebo, road work and watering system
- Installing three new beams

## The year ahead

Council will continue to work with the Friends of the Cemetery to improve maintenance and facilities available. Completion of works is reliant on the success of the Sugarloaf Pipeline Project Regional Benefits Program funding.

Application for funding will be made to the Crematoriums and Cemeteries Association for works to be undertaken at the old cemetery.

There will be construction of more beams and plaque stands

## Risk management

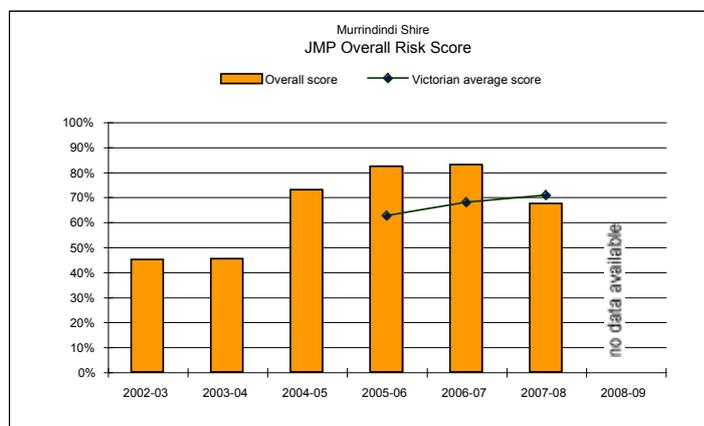
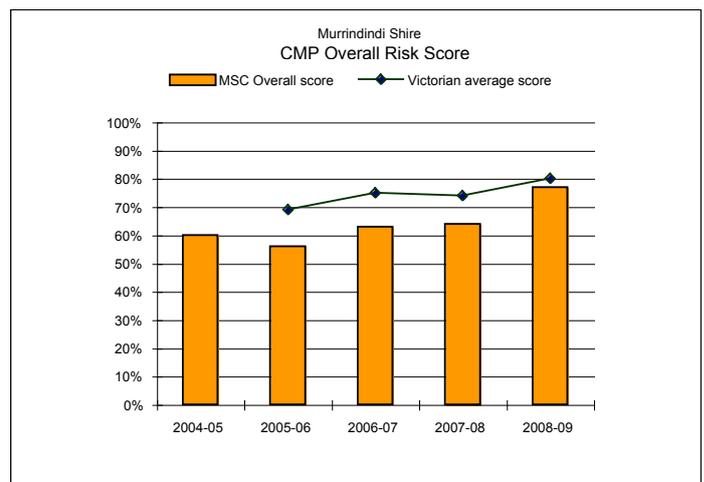
Council's risk management policy and strategy were reviewed this year. The new policy and strategy were launched with a whole of council training program. Staff from all departments completed the training which covered identifying and defining risks, conducting risk assessments, and integrating risk management into operational activities.

## Public Liability and Property Audits

Council's public liability and property insurer implemented a change to audit and support services in August 2008. The change introduced a three tiered auditing system with full audits conducted every two years rather than annually.

Council completed a full public liability audit in January 2009 and achieved a final score of 77% compared to 64% in 2007-2008. Our next full audit will be in 2010-2011.

Our next full property audit will be in January 2010.



## Best value

All council services must conduct an assessment against the Best Value principles outlined in the *Local Government Act 1989*.

The principles of Best Value are:

- Services must meet quality and cost standards
- Services must be responsive to community need
- Services must be accessible for those members of the community who need them
- Council must achieve continuous improvement in provision of service
- Council must regularly consult with their community
- Council must regularly report to their community on its achievements against the other principles.

For each service the review process involves:

- Identifying the relevant people, processes, relationships and outputs to be evaluated
- Undertaking a self assessment of how the service is performing by identifying strengths and opportunities for improvement.
- Collecting performance information from sources including:
  - Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey
  - Other community surveys
  - Community consultations
  - Customer model surveys
  - Interviews
  - Benchmarking
- Preparing a report which summarises the findings of the review including the priority actions for improvement

During 2008-2009 the following Best Value reviews were completed:

### Community Services

Assessment & Care Management

Home Care

Personal Care

Respite In Home

Family Day Care

Maternal and Child Health

Swimming pools

## Assessment & Care Management

Provides assessment of an individual's need for community support services for both Home and Community Care (HACC) and non-HACC services. This includes assessment of a person's strengths and abilities and is aimed at maximising the individual's independence.

Client feedback was received through a range of methods, including informal feedback, complaints and client satisfaction surveys. This information is used to ensure clients are involved in the assessment process and determine their own needs where appropriate.

Improvement activities in 2008 included:

- Ongoing training for assessment staff to ensure they have the necessary skills to maintain a high standard of practice.
- Collection of anecdotal feedback as part of team meeting agendas
- Holding meetings with local hospitals in relation to the quality of delivered meals resulting in a contract review

Priority opportunities for improvement for Assessment & Care Management include:

- Developing a method for explaining service scope and limitations
- Formalising council's arrangements with external agencies with memorandums of understanding
- Initiating team building activities with community care workers
- Improving carer security by ensuring mobile phones are carried by carers

### Home Care

Whilst cleaning tasks form an essential part of home care, it is more than a cleaning service.

It is focused on enhancing the client's independence by providing housekeeping, assistance with administration, monitoring and escorting, whilst encouraging clients to be active and involved in their service.

## Personal Care

Provides assistance to clients with activities that they would normally do for themselves but due to illness, disability or frailty they are unable to perform without assistance.

Priority opportunities for improvement for Home Care and Personal Care include:

- Improving communication regarding service changes
- Ensuring regular staff coaching and supervision sessions are completed
- Undertaking manual handling and risk assessment training

## Respite In-home

Provides support to the caring relationship by providing the carers of frail older people and people with a disability, with a break from their caring responsibilities.

Priority opportunities for improvement in 2009 for Respite In-Home include:

- Increasing the opportunities for carers to provide feedback
- Improving management of waiting lists
- Investigating the potential for using "pamper kits"
- Ensuring client profiles are current prior to commencement

## Family Day Care (FDC)

FDC provides child care in the carer's own home or at an approved venue. Care is primarily for preschool children.

Family Day Care aims to provide a home environment which promotes quality outcomes for children.

Improvement activities during 2007-2008 included:

- Conducting training opportunities for carers based on national and state priorities for early years such as *Kids Go For Your Life*
- Developing a proforma to communicate with families about the care of their children

Priority opportunities for improvement in 2008-2009 for Family Day Care include:

- Carers obtaining Certificate III in Children's Services
- Achieving Quality Assurance accreditation
- Collecting more feedback from carers and parents

## Maternal and Child Health (M&CH)

The Maternal and Child Health Service is a free service to families with children 0-6 years of age. The service offers support, information and advice regarding parenting, child health and development, child behaviour, maternal health and well-being, child safety, immunisation, breastfeeding, nutrition and family planning.

Parents can also join groups that provide health information, and an opportunity to meet other parents in the local area.

Information is collected through client feedback and allied health liaison. This information is then used to modify service delivery as required. Collection methods include:

- client satisfaction in annual surveys
- formal and informal feedback
- new Parent Group surveys
- complaint mechanisms

Improvement activities in 2008 included:

- Conducting the annual client survey in November
- Commencing the evaluation of new parent groups
- Improving access to information technology at Yea and Kinglake

## Swimming Pools

Council has swimming pools in Alexandra, Yea, Eildon and Marysville.

Patron and private hirer feedback is received through a variety of methods including informal feedback, complaints and reference groups. The information is used to ensure private hirers and patrons are involved in the ongoing development of the pool facilities, quality assurance and recommendations for staff training where appropriate.

Continuous improvement processes are incorporated into everyday practice usually as a response to a particular need.

Priority opportunities for improvement in 2009-2010 for swimming pools include:

- Streamlining data systems
- Reducing water usage
- Offering a learn to swim program
- Improving training and development planning
- Redevelopment of facilities at the Yea site

## Corporate Services

Finance

Information Technology

Administration Governance Coordination

Administrative support

Records management

Rates

Corporate support

## Finance

The finance team has adopted the concept of an Internal Financial Control Manual and is reviewing processes and procedures to address the internal controls.

Improvement activities in 2008 included:

- Commencing a finance strategic plan
- Adopting the procurement policy in March 2008
- Establishing an e-commerce systems hierarchy

Priority opportunities for improvement for finance in 2009:

- Completing the development of the Financial Strategic Plan
- Progressing the roll out of electronic purchasing
- Supporting and training officers in the adoption of use of the contract register
- Rationalising the chart of accounts - removal of

## Local government indicators

The Victorian Government requires all Victorian councils to measure and annually report against 11 Victorian Local Government Indicators.

Category	Description	Score 2008-2009
Overall performance	Community satisfaction rating for overall performance generally of the council	62
Advocacy	Community Satisfaction rating for Council's advocacy and community representation on key local issues	60
Engagement	Community satisfaction rating for Council's engagement in decision making on key local issues	58
All rates	Average rates and charges per assessment	\$1,244.99
Residential rates	Average residential rates and charges per assessment	\$1,055.60
Operating costs	Average operating expenditure per assessment	\$3,753.82
Capital expenditure	Average capital expenditure per assessment	\$524.77
Infrastructure	Renewal gap	51.14%
	Renewal and maintenance gap	61.02%
Debts	Average liabilities per assessment	\$1,448.75
Operating result	Operating result per assessment	\$662.03

- duplication business unit accounts
- Linking titles to GIS, Land & Buildings assets
- Reviewing Investment Policy (guidelines) in light of the Federal Government's guarantee of deposits

## Information Technology

Improvement activities in 2008 included:

- Reviewing the Strategic Resource Plan
- Expanding council's intranet
- Resourcing of the GIS development project to integrate with back end systems
- taking up the mobile technology available through Civica
- Expanding of the Customer Request Management System across the organisation
- Rolling out the Civica E Services modules which included:
  - on line leave
  - electronic purchasing

Priority opportunities for improvements for information technology include:

- Reviewing the internet service provision for both council and library services
- Updating the business continuity plan
- Exploring electronic file management systems
- Developing a GIS strategy

## National Competition Policy compliance 2008-2009

Murrindindi Shire Council has complied with the requirements of the Local Government Act Improvement Incentive Program in respect of: - National Competition Policy (in accordance with

National Competition Policy and Local Government – A Revised Statement of Victorian Government Policy (January 2002)); for the financial year 2008-2009 as set out below:

<p><b>Trade Practices Compliance</b></p> <p>State whether the Council is compliant or non-compliant. If non-compliant, justify or cite actions to redress</p>	Compliant
<p><b>Local Laws Compliance</b></p> <p>State whether the Council is compliant or non-compliant. If non-compliant, justify or cite actions to redress</p>	Compliant
<p><b>Competitive Neutrality Compliance</b></p> <p>State whether the Council is compliant or non-compliant. If non-compliant, justify or cite actions to redress</p>	Compliant

I certify that:

- a) this statement has been prepared in accordance with the 2006/07 Local Government Improvement Incentive guidelines issued in June 2007 for reporting on the following criterion : - National Competition Policy in accordance with National Competition Policy and Local Government – A Revised Statement of Victorian Government Policy (January 2002); and
- b) this statement presents fairly the Council's implementation of the National Competition Policy.



Signed:  
Rob Croxford  
(Acting Chief Executive Officer)  
Dated: 17 November 2009

## Public documents

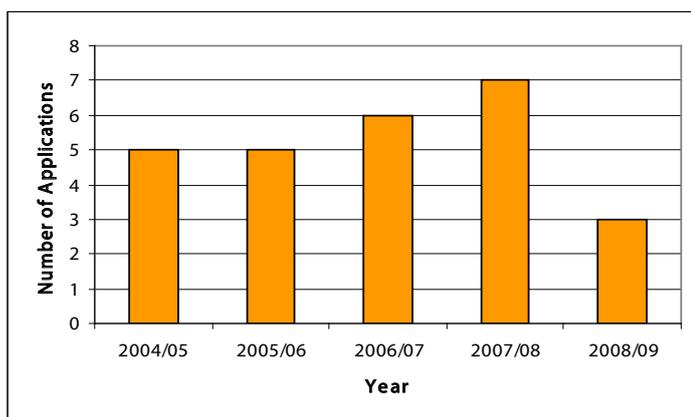
Section 11 of the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2004* requires Council to have the following documents available for public inspection:

- Financial statements
- Details of current allowances fixed for the Mayor and Councillors under Section 74 of the Act
- Details of senior officers' current gross salaries, allowances and other benefits for the current financial year and two previous financial years
- Details of overseas and interstate travel undertaken in an official capacity by Councillors or any member of council staff in the previous 12 months
- Names of council officers who were required to submit a return of interest during the financial year and the dates these returns were submitted
- Names of Councillors who submitted returns of interest during the financial year and the dates these returns were submitted
- Agendas for and minutes of ordinary and special meetings kept under Section 93 of the Act, except where such minutes relate to parts of meetings, which have been closed to members of the public under Section 89 of the Act
- A list of all special committees established by the Council and the purpose for which each committee was established
- A list of all special committees established by the Council which were abolished or ceased to function during the financial year
- Minutes of meetings of special committees established under section 86 of the Act except where such minutes relate to parts of meetings which have been closed to members of the public under Section 89 of the Act
- Agreements to establish regional libraries under Section 196 of the Act
- Register of delegations kept under Section 87,88 and 98 of the Act
- Submissions received under Section 223 of the Act during the previous 12 months
- Details of all property, finance and operating leases involving land, buildings, plant, computer equipment or vehicles entered into by the council as lessor or lessee
- Register of authorised officers appointed under Section 224 of the Act
- List of donations and grants made by the Council during the financial year
- List of names of organisations of which the Council was a member during the financial year
- List of contracts valued at \$100,000 or more which the Council entered into during the financial year without first engaging in a competitive process



*In 2008-2009 the quantity of garbage per household collected via the roadside service decreased by 24%*

## Freedom of Information



The *Freedom of Information Act 1982* gives members of the public a way to access information held by a council. Some documents and information may be deemed exempt under the Act.

Applications under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* must be made in writing and addressed the Freedom of Information Officer, Murrindindi Shire Council, PO Box 138, Alexandra, 3714. An application costs \$22.70 to lodge.

Applicants are encouraged to contact council's Freedom of Information Officer prior to lodging an application.

In 2008-2009 the Murrindindi Shire Council received three applications under the *Freedom of Information Act*.

Of the applications received:

- Full access was granted for one application
- One application did not proceed
- One application was outside the scope of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*

Council received \$68.10 in fees and associated charges for these applications.

### Whistleblower protection

The *Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001* came into effect on 1 January 2002. Its purpose is to encourage and facilitate the disclosure of information about improper conduct by council officers or councillors.

Council has established procedures to facilitate the making of disclosures under the Act.

Council does not tolerate improper conduct by its employees, officers or members, nor reprisal against those who come forward to disclose such conduct.

The Chief Executive Officer is the Council's Protected Disclosure Coordinator.

Topic	Report 2008-2009
Number of disclosures made	Nil
Disclosures referred to Ombudsman for determination	Nil
Disclosures referred by Ombudsman	Nil
Disclosures referred to Ombudsman to investigate	Nil
Investigations taken over by the Ombudsman	Nil
Requests made under Section 74 during the year to Ombudsman to investigate disclosed matters	Nil
Disclosures the public body has declined to investigate	Nil
Disclosures that were substantiated on investigation	Nil
Recommendations by the Ombudsman under this Act that relate to Murrindindi Shire Council	Nil

## Donations and grants provided by council

Received By	Amount
Acheron Mechanics Institute	\$2,500.00
Alexandra & District Horseman Association	\$3,400.00
Alexandra & District Kindergarten	\$1,287.00
Alexandra & District Kindergarten	\$2,060.00
Alexandra Community Leisure Centre	\$12,000.00
Alexandra Gun Club	\$3,000.00
Alexandra Information Centre	\$4,437.00
Alexandra Secondary College	\$500.00
Alexandra Timber & Tramways Museum	\$4,000.00
Alexandra Truck & Ute Show	\$5,000.00
Berry Street Victoria	\$10,000.00
Blackburn Cycling Club	\$1,025.00
Eildon & District Kindergarten	\$4,200.00
Eildon & District Woodworkers Guild	\$500.00
Eildon Community Leisure Centre	\$1,000.00
Eildon Golf Club	\$3,500.00
Eildon Information Centre	\$1,155.00
Eildon Resource Centre	\$500.00
Flowerdale Playgroup	\$500.00
Golden Trout Hotel Motel	\$2,500.00
Goulburn Valley Family Care	\$4,000.00
Kinglake Ranges Festival Committee	\$3,000.00
Kinglake Community Centre	\$2,000.00
Kinglake Information Centre	\$3,596.00
Kinglake Kindergarten	\$2,070.00
Kinglake Neighbourhood House	\$4,000.00
Kinglake Senior Citizens	\$4,640.00
Kinglake West Mechanics Institute	\$1,670.00
Marysville & District Kindergarten	\$4,200.00
Marysville Community Golf & Bowls	\$2,500.00
Marysville Information Centre	\$6,887.00
Marysville Primary School	\$1,000.00
Mt Pleasant Reserve Committee Management	\$1,150.00
NAIDOC Week School Initiative	\$900.00
Rotary Club Alexandra	\$1,500.00
Rotary Club Yea	\$1,500.00
State Emergency Alexandra	\$5,390.00
State Emergency Kinglake	\$5,390.00
State Emergency Marysville	\$5,390.00
Toolangi Festival Group	\$5,000.00
Upper Goulburn Community Radio	\$2,000.00
Yea A P & H Society	\$2,500.00
Yea High School	\$500.00
Yea Indoor Recreation Centre	\$4,000.00
Yea Information Centre	\$1,155.00
Yea Neighbourhood Watch	\$800.00
Yea Pre School	\$1,050.00
Yea Recreation Reserve	\$2,000.00
Total of donations and grants with a value of less than \$500 paid to seven organisations	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$142,852.00</b>

## Organisation memberships for 2008-2009

Organisation	Membership fee
Local Government Professionals	\$550.00
Personnel Development	\$2,000.00
Australian Local Government Job Directory	\$638.00
Municipal Association Of Victoria	\$18,714.78
Family Day Care Council	\$222.55
Victorian Employers Chamber Of Commerce & Industry	\$3,472.70
Timber Towns Victoria	\$2,200.00
Alzheimers Association Australia	\$50.00
Viclink	\$698.50
Viclink Libraries Australia	\$1,394.80
Viclink Picture Victoria	\$550.00
Family Day Care Victoria	\$131.48
Livestock Saleyards Association Of Victoria	\$1,237.50
Civil Contractors Federation	\$2,357.10
National Saleyards Quality Assurance Ltd	\$467.50
Children's Book Council of Australia	\$82.50
Victoria Local Government Membership	\$3,502.40
Goulburn Valley Regional Waste Management Group	\$6,798.00
SAI Global	\$374.00
Regional Victoria	\$165.00
Carers Management Society Australia	\$212.00
International Council Local Environmental Initiatives	\$957.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$46,775.81</b>



*Pram walkers and pram passengers enjoy the sun and company at Children's Week Pram Strolls*

## Calendar of events

### July 2008

Welcomed a group of Czechoslovakian Youth to Yea who were in Australia for National Youth Day

### August 2008

9 August Upper Goulburn Wine and Food Expo

### September 2008

2 September Council resolved to proceed to sign Memorandum of Understanding for the Rail Trail Project  
Council resolved to purchase two community buses  
FreeZa event – Alexandra Community Leisure Centre

12 September

### October 2008

4 October Victorian Seniors Festival Event – Russian Cossack dancers  
Womindjeka Day (Welcome Day) Yea Wetlands  
6 October Victorian Seniors Festival Event – cinema screening (Alexandra)  
8 October Victorian Seniors Festival Event – Tea dance (Yea)  
12 October Victorian Seniors Festival Event – Orchestra Victoria (Melbourne)  
15 & 16 October Hosted Jayco Herald Sun Tour  
29 October Pram strolls in Kinglake, Eildon, Yea and Marysville

**November 2008**

- 15 November Opening of the Mt Pleasant Reserve in Alexandra  
Hosted Akademos Car Rally
- 29 November Local Government elections

**January 2009**

- 26 January Coordinated Australia Day Celebrations – Yea, Kinglake, Alexandra, Eildon, Strath Creek, Marysville, Flowerdale, Glenburn  
Australia Day Concert, Alexandra

**February 2009**

- 5 February Murrindindi Transport Connections – Triangle Transport Forum
- 7 February Black Saturday bushfires
- 17 February Murrindindi Transport Connections – Kinglake West
- 24 February Murrindindi Transport Connections - Yea
- 26 February Murrindindi Transport Connections - Alexandra

**March 2009**

- 15 March Community Meeting and gathering in Glenburn – debrief, unwind and update
- 20 March to 5 April The Youth Arts Festival (Youth Week 2009)
- 27 March All Ages Recovery concert - FreeZa

**April 2009**

- 3 April Community Event Flowerdale – Yea FreeZa group
- 4 April Free Youth Street Art Workshop – Junior Friends of the Library and Berry Street
- 18 April Community information session Marysville
- 21 April Visitor Information Centre Volunteer Summit
- 22 April Council endorses the management model for bushfire recovery and reconstruction in the Murrindindi Shire - *Council establishes a Special Committee pursuant to Section 86(1) of the Local Government Act 1989 to be known as the Murrindindi Bushfire Recovery and Reconstruction Committee*
- 25 April Anzac Day services conducted across the shire

**May 2009**

- 2 May Marysville – Lake Mountain Fire Relief Ride
- 16 May Amnesty open air burning period
- 19 May Inspiration for parents Alexandra library
- 26 May Business Recovery information session – Kinglake Ranges/  
Toolangi/Flowerdale
- 27 May Council resolved to sign Memorandum of Understanding between Council and the Murrindindi Climate Network  
Official opening of Marysville Temporary Village

**June 2009**

- 2 June Business Recovery information session – Marysville/ Narbethong/Buxton
- 7 June Alexandra Truck Rod & Ute Show
- 9 June Business Recovery information session – Taggerty/  
Buxton/Eildon/Thornton
- 10 June Business Recovery information session – Yea
- 16 June Business Recovery information session - Alexandra
- 24 June Council resolved to join with the Shepparton, Strathbogie and Mitchell Councils in the creation of a Regional Tourism Board
- 25 to 28 June Marysville and Triangle Phoenix Workshop

## Understanding the financial statements

The financial report of the Murrindindi Shire Council is a general purpose financial report that consists of an Income Statement, Balance Sheet, Statement of Changes in Equity and Cash Flow Statement together with notes accompanying these statements.

This general purpose financial report has been prepared to comply with the provisions of the *Local Government Act, 1989, Local Government (Finance and Reporting) Regulations 2004*, applicable *Australian Accounting Standards* and other mandatory professional reporting requirements.

Council's Audit Committee and the council have examined the report. The Victorian Auditor General has provided an 'unqualified' audit opinion.

### The Income Statement

The Income Statement sets out the movement in relation to revenue, expenses and other adjustments from all activities and compares these figures to the previous financial year. The Income Statement requires revenues to be separately disclosed where the item is of such a size, nature and incidence, that its disclosure is relevant in explaining the performance of the Council.

The change in total revenues from \$21.8 million in 2008 to \$39.9 million in 2009 represents an increase of \$13.5 million in grants revenue, \$0.5 million user fees and reimbursements of \$3.6 million in to support bushfire response and recovery after the Black Saturday bushfires.

The change in total expenses from \$20.9 million in 2008 to \$36.5 million in 2009 is mainly due to an increase of \$0.9 million employee costs and \$14.2 million in materials and services to support and deliver the projects and challenges provided for by the aforementioned grant funding opportunities and bushfire recovery process.

The Income Statement delivered a surplus of \$5,170,824 as a result of receiving grant funding late in the financial year. This surplus is allocated to projects which will be executed during the 2009/10 financial year.

### The Balance Sheet

The Balance Sheet shows a snap shot of the financial situation at the end of the period. It shows the total of what is owned (assets) less what is owed (liabilities). The assets and liabilities are separated into current and non-current. Current means those assets or liabilities that fall due in the next twelve months.

The 'bottom line' of this statement is net assets, which is the net worth of the council.

The change in net assets between the two years shows how the financial position has changed over the period.

Net assets is made up of the total current and non-current assets less the current and non-current liabilities.

Items of note in the balance sheet include:

an increase in cash and cash equivalent of \$3.9 million as a result of receiving increased revenue for grant funded projects related to the bushfire recovery process late in the financial year.

- an increase in current trade and other receivables of \$9.6 million as a result of outstanding grant funds and reimbursement of expenses associated with the bushfire recovery process.
- an increase in trade and other payables of \$3.4 million as a result of supporting grant funded projects related to the bushfire recovery process.
- a reduction in interest bearing loans and borrowings of \$0.3 million.
- an increase in total equity or net worth of the council of \$7.5 million demonstrates that trend of improving equity over time.

Note 24 in the financial report provides details of loans and borrowing balances and the years in which loans will expire.

Notes 15 to 26 of the financial report provide more details on the items reported in the balance sheet.

### Statement of Changes in Equity

The statement of changes in equity tables the types of movement and adjustments in the financial reporting that determines the balance of ratepayers equity at the end of the reporting period.

The most significant item in the table is the adjustment change of accounting policy to take up land under roads valuation of \$3.4 million and the indexation of valuations of infrastructure, roads and bridges and land and buildings (refer note 25a).

## Cash Flow Statement

The Cash Flow Statement shows what has happened during the year in terms of cash. It explains what cash movements have resulted in the difference in the cash balance at the beginning and end of the year.

The net cash flows from operating activities shows how much cash is remaining after paying for council operations and commitments. The information in the Cash Flow Statement assists in the assessment of the ability to generate cash flows, meet financial commitments as they fall due, including the servicing of borrowings and fund changes in the scope or nature of activities.

The Cash Flow Statement also reports on restriction on cash assets. Note 29 of the accounts more fully outlines the legislative restriction to provide for employee entitlements and reserve funds.

Importantly the closing cash position of \$8.8 million is in line with the 2009/10 budget projections and enables the recurrent and capital functions to be undertaken in the coming year.

## Performance Statement

The Performance Statement reports on the actual results of some of the strategic activities as outlined in the Council Plan. The report provides the performance measure for those activities and details on whether or not the targets were achieved.

The Performance Statement is found in the report on page 26

## Summary

The financial statements represent a positive outcome for the 2008-2009 financial year. Council has demonstrated an ability to meet operational expenses, statutory requirements and its commitment to achieving the goals as set by the *Council Plan 2006-2010* and long term *Strategic Resource Plan*.

Council has managed to provide services to bushfire response and recovery during the second half of the reporting period which has presented many challenges for the resources available.

Note 39 of the statements sets out several indicators to monitor the financial health of the Council.

The debt commitment ratio has remained fairly flat over the past three years and reflect an increasing debt services cost and increasing rate and total revenues. The ratio is considered to be financially prudent, as is the debt servicing ratio as it has

dropped by 0.86% to .93% in 2008-2009.

The revenue ratio demonstrates the impact of increased grant funding received to support the bushfire recovery.

The working capital ratio shows a coverage of current assets to current liabilities of 2.3 times which is a financially sound measure. It is noted however that this is artificially inflated as a consequence of the additional grant revenues received by the council.

In conclusion, the indicators of surplus on operation, improving equity, and sufficient cash reserves, ensures that council's position remains sound. Please see the commentary contained in the *Strategic Resource Plan* (SRP) that sets out the financial challenges facing the council.

