



Murrindindi
Shire Council

ANNUAL REPORT 2013 - 2014



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About this Annual Report

The *Murrindindi Shire Council Annual Report 2013-2014* details progress we have made in the past financial year, 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014, towards achieving the activities of the *Council Plan 2013–2017* and the *2013-2014 Annual Budget*.

In this report we identify our achievements, challenges and what is planned for the year ahead for the four themes of Our Council, Our Economy, Our Environment and Our Community.

This report also contains audited financial reports and performance statements, as required by the *Local Government Act 1989*.

This report is written for a variety of audiences including government agencies, the community, ratepayers and businesses. Copies of the *Annual Report 2013-2014* are available at council offices or online at www.murrindindi.vic.gov.au

We encourage you to tell us how we can improve our reporting to you. Whilst it is likely that the format of the Annual Report for 2014-2015 will change considerably with the recent introduction of a new Local Government Performance Reporting Framework, we are happy to consider any comments or suggestions you make.

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

Further copies or questions?

If you would like additional copies of our *Annual Report 2013-2014* or you have any questions about the report, please send your enquiry by email to msc@murrindindi.vic.gov.au or post to Chief Executive Officer, Murrindindi Shire Council, PO Box 138, Alexandra 3714.

Contact us

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Murrindindi snapshot



Our history

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

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

The Murrindindi Shire Council 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.

Council services offered

- Economic Development
- Tourism services
- Events management
- Waste management
- Environmental services
- Land use, development and subdivisions
- Building control
- Aged and Disability services
- Youth and Recreational development
- Public Health
- Libraries
- Roads and bridges
- Children and family services
- Community Development

Industries

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

Our shire

Location: 150 kms or 90 minutes north east of Melbourne

Area: 3873 sq kms (48% Crown Land)

Population: 13,494 (2011 Australian Bureau of Statistics)

Councillors: 7

Rateable properties: 9506

Sealed roads (Council maintained): 487.1 kms

Unsealed roads (Council maintained): 713.6 kms

Townships and localities

- Acheron • Alexandra • Buxton • Cathkin • Castella • Caveat
- Devil's River • Dropmore • Eildon • Fawcett • Flowerdale
- Ghin Ghin • Glenburn • Gobur • Granton • Highlands
- Homewood • Kanumbra • Kerrisdale • Killingworth • Kinglake
- Kinglake Central • Kinglake West • Koriella • Limestone
- Maintaingoon • Marysville • Molesworth • Murrindindi
- Narbethong • Pheasant Creek • Rubicon • Strath Creek
- Taggerty • Taylor Bay • Terip Terip • Thornton • Toolangi
- Wanregarwen • Woodbourne • Yarck • Yea

Vision

Murrindindi Shire will be vibrant and progressive through strong connected communities within a healthy and attractive environment.

Values

- Integrity - We will be respectful, open and truthful in our dealings. Council will strive to be valued and trusted by the Murrindindi Shire community.
- Accountability - We will accept responsibility for our actions and be consistent in the application of our principles, policies and processes.
- Innovation - We will consider new ideas, opportunities and better ways of doing things. Council will constantly seek opportunities to look for new, more efficient and effective ways of providing its services.
- Respect - We will respect other people and their opinions and do as we say we will.
- Service Excellence - We will ensure that Council services meet quality, cost and efficiency standards; are responsive to need; accessible to members of the community for whom the service is intended; and demonstrate continuous improvement.

Message from the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer

Our communities have been major drivers behind a lot of our works this year.

Community feedback and input has helped form the development of many of our key strategic resources such as our Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy, Governance Local Law, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013-2017 and Animal Management Plan to name a few.

We also received valuable input which will help guide the formation of principles and goals for 'positive ageing' in our Shire as well as the current and future demand for the provision of early childhood education and care services in our regions.

It's encouraging to have so many of our community interested in helping us to steer our goals and future planning in the right direction.

Further work was done during 2013/14 on establishing a vision for the Shire in 2030 and we have received many comments on our plans for the future.

Community projects have been high on the agenda during this past year – some have been completed and the occasions marked with official openings and ribbon cuttings, and others have made significant progress which will see them concluded during 2014/15.

The '1000 hands' project in Marysville was officially opened to the community in April. Led by the Triangle Arts Group, this project celebrates and acknowledges the efforts of all community members in the rebuilding process following the 2009 bushfires.

We've been encouraged by the progress made at the Vibe Hotel and Conference Centre in Marysville. It's come along in leaps and bounds during this past year. This \$28 million project will further assist in the economic recovery of Marysville and its surrounds and is due for completion in early 2015.

A strong focus this year has been the

delivery of Council's Capital Works Program. In 2013/2014 we expended 80% of the adopted budget - a significant increase over the previous year which was 68%.

Bridge works were a key component of our construction efforts this year with major upgrades to Taponga Road and McGuigans Road bridges in Eildon and Kanumbra. Two other significant refurbishments were also completed at Allendale Road Bridge at Strath Creek and Breakaway Bridge at Acheron. The Allendale Road project fixed a long term inconvenience for residents who often found themselves cut off from their properties and township during flood events.

The community of Acheron was instrumental in the refurbishment of their iconic landmark and made it a high priority that Breakaway Bridge retained its historic look. The finished product earned Council an award for excellence at the 2014 Institute of Public Works Engineering Australia (IPWEA) awards an award that we believe reflects the efforts and dedication of all involved.

We acknowledge the support of the Victorian Government through its Country Roads and Bridges Initiative in enabling these projects to proceed.

Yea pride shone through at the opening of the refurbished historic Yea Shire Hall in June. Memories of past times were resurrected and the Hall has a promising future ahead.

The residents of Taggerty have decided on a number of township enhancement projects that will benefit both those that live there and those who visit this beautiful part of our Shire. Refurbishment works to the Taggerty Hall has been the first step in this process. These projects will offer many benefits to the Taggerty community and we thank the members of the Project Reference Group for their efforts and engagement thus far.

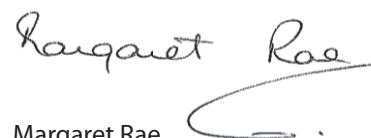
All of these projects and the many others not mentioned here have

one major common denominator – community!! It is the active participation and initiative of our communities that strengthens our shire and contributes to its liveability. A theme for several of our communities this past year has been celebrating our local history. It has been a pleasure to be able to celebrate these histories with Acheron, Kinglake and Narbethong to name just a few.

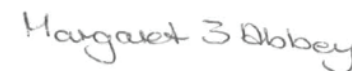
We were fortunate to again be able to highlight the strength, resilience and camaraderie of our communities through not one, but two National Emergency Medal Award ceremonies in September and June. These important medals recognise the work and volunteerism of so many in the region during the February 2009 bushfires.

We continue to advocate strongly to the State Government to provide assistance in meeting our on-going financial costs for the operation and maintenance of the novated and gifted assets as the result of the 2009 fires. In June 2014 we received word from the Minister for Local Government Tim Bull advising Council that "the Government has no plans to provide further financial assistance in relation to your gifted assets".

While we will maintain pressure on all candidates in the forthcoming State election, we need to be realistic about the likelihood of receiving additional funding. We have been actively engaging with our community on options that may need to be pursued if our efforts are unsuccessful.



Margaret Rae
Mayor



Margaret Abbey
Chief Executive Officer

Councillors



Cr Margaret Rae
Mayor

Redgate Ward

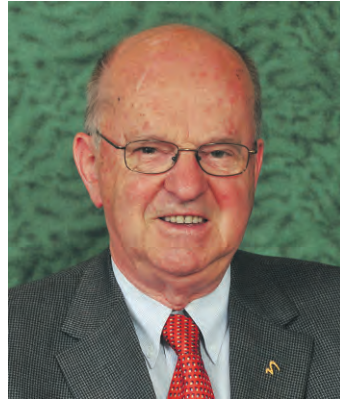
First elected November 2012

Portfolio: the Mayor does not hold a Portfolio

Ward township: Alexandra

The Mayor is Chair of meetings of the Murrindindi Shire Council and represents Murrindindi Shire Council on the following advisory committees and external organisations:

- Audit Advisory Committee
- Advancing Country Towns Strategic Steering Group
- Chief Executive Officer Performance Review Sub-Committee
- Economic Development Sub-Committee
- Alexandra Police & Community Consultative Committee
- High Country Councils Coalition
- Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)
- Rural Councils Victoria
- Mount Pleasant Reserve Committee of Management
- Alexandra Community Leisure Centre Committee of Management
- Alexandra Racecourse & Recreation Reserve Committee of Management
- Alexandra Showgrounds & Recreation Reserve Committee of Management
- Hume Regional Local Government Network



Cr John Kennedy
Deputy Mayor

Cheviot Ward

First elected November 2012

Portfolio:

Natural Environment & Climate Change

Ward townships:

Yea, Strath Creek, Flowerdale

The Deputy Mayor represents Murrindindi Shire Council on the following advisory committees and external organisations:

- Audit Advisory Committee
- Chief Executive Officer Performance Review Sub-Committee
- Friends of Yea Shire Hall Advisory Committee
- Murrindindi Environment Advisory Committee
- Great Victorian Rail Trail Advisory Committee
- Friends of Yea Railway Committee of Management
- Strath Creek Pioneer Reserve Committee of Management
- Yea Pioneer Reserve Committee of Management
- Yea Showgrounds & Recreation Reserve Committee of Management
- Yea Wetlands Committee of Management



John Walsh

Koriella Ward

First Elected 2008

Portfolio:

Land Use Planning

Ward townships:

Yarck, Cathkin, Molesworth, Limestone, Highlands, Gobur

Cr Walsh represents Murrindindi Shire Council on the following advisory committees and external organisations:

- Audit Advisory Committee
- Central Ranges Local Learning and Employment Network (CRLLEN)
- Peri Urban Group of Rural Councils
- Timber Towns Victoria (TTV)
- Yea Saleyards Committee of Management
- Murrindindi Scenic Reserve Committee of Management

Councillors



Cr Christine Challen
Cathedral Ward
First elected November 2012
Portfolio:

Economic Development

Ward townships:

Taggerty, Buxton, Marysville,
Narbethong

Cr Challen represents
Murrindindi Shire Council
on the following advisory
committees and external
organisations:

- Economic Development Sub-Committee
- Linking Murrindindi Partnership
- Goulburn River Valley Tourism Board
- MAV Arts & Culture Committee
- Workspace Australia Board
- Buxton Recreation Reserve Committee of Management
- Gallipoli Park Precinct Committee of Management
- Steavenson Falls Scenic Reserve Committee of Management



Cr Bernie Magner
Eildon Ward
First elected November 2012
Portfolio:

Infrastructure & Waste

Ward townships:

Thornton, Eildon

Cr Magner represents
Murrindindi Shire Council
on the following advisory
committees and external
organisations:

- Audit Advisory Committee (alternate)
- Advancing Country Towns Strategic Steering Group
- Chief Executive Officer Performance Review Sub-Committee
- Goulburn Valley Waste & Resource Recovery Local Government Forum
- Eildon Alliance Boat Ramp Committee of Management
- Eildon Community Resource Centre Committee of Management
- Thornton Recreation Reserve and Hall Committee of Management
- Eildon Community Centre Committee of Management



Cr Andrew Derwent
Kinglake Ward
First elected November 2012
Portfolio:

Community Services

Ward townships:

Kinglake, Toolangi

Cr Derwent represents
Murrindindi Shire Council
on the following advisory
committees and external
organisations:

- Economic Development Sub-Committee
- Kinglake Community Centre Advisory Committee
- Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee
- MAV Emergency Management Reference Group
- CJ Dennis & Castella Public Hall Reserve Committee of Management
- Kinglake Memorial Reserve Committee of Management



Cr Cris Ruhr
King Parrot Ward
First elected March 2010
Portfolio:

Corporate and Customer Services

Ward townships:

Hazeldene (now known as Flowerdale), Glenburn, Kinglake West, Pheasant Creek

Cr Ruhr represents
Murrindindi Shire Council
on the following advisory
committees and external
organisations:

- Murrindindi Environment Advisory Committee
- Glenburn Community Centre Committee of Management
- Flowerdale Community Hall Reserve Committee Inc

Our organisation

Chief Executive Officer Margaret Abbey

Margaret joined Murrindindi Shire Council in 2010 with 26 years of Local Government experience.

Margaret is the link between the elected Council and the organisation. The Council delegates a number of powers to Margaret to ensure she has the authority to fulfil her role.

Margaret has focused on developing a financially sustainable organisation, as well as continued service delivery across the shire.

Margaret previously held the position of Group Manager, Environment and Planning Services at Nillumbik Council and her first Council role was in the Southern Highlands of NSW.

Margaret has an Arts Degree, a Masters Degree in Town and Country Planning and Postgraduate qualifications in Management from Victoria University.



General Manager Corporate and Community Services Michael Chesworth

Michael joined Murrindindi Shire Council 1997 to assist in the preparation for compulsory competitive tendering.

After serving in a number of Senior Management positions including General Manager Sustainability from 2003 to 2013, Michael was appointed to the role of General Manager Corporate and Community Services following Council's transition to a two General Manager structure in August 2013. Michael's role oversees the organisational areas of *Business Services, Community Services, Library, Human Resources & Risk*.

Michael has a strong background in the private sector and has over 10 years experience in marketing and research consulting, particularly in business and retail.

Michael has a Bachelor of Behavioural Science (Hons.) and has completed postgraduate studies in Local Government Financial Management.



General Manager Infrastructure and Development Services Tamara Johnson

Tamara joined Murrindindi Shire Council in 2012 as General Manager Infrastructure Services. Tamara previously held the role of Manager Infrastructure Maintenance at Nillumbik Shire Council.

In August 2013 Tamara was appointed to the role of General Manager Infrastructure and Development Services following Council's transition to a two General Manager structure. Tamara's role oversees the organisational areas of Development and Environmental Services, Environmental Programs and Infrastructure Assets and Operations.

Tamara has a Bachelor of Applied Science (Environmental).



Former General Manager Corporate and Community Services Rob Cherry

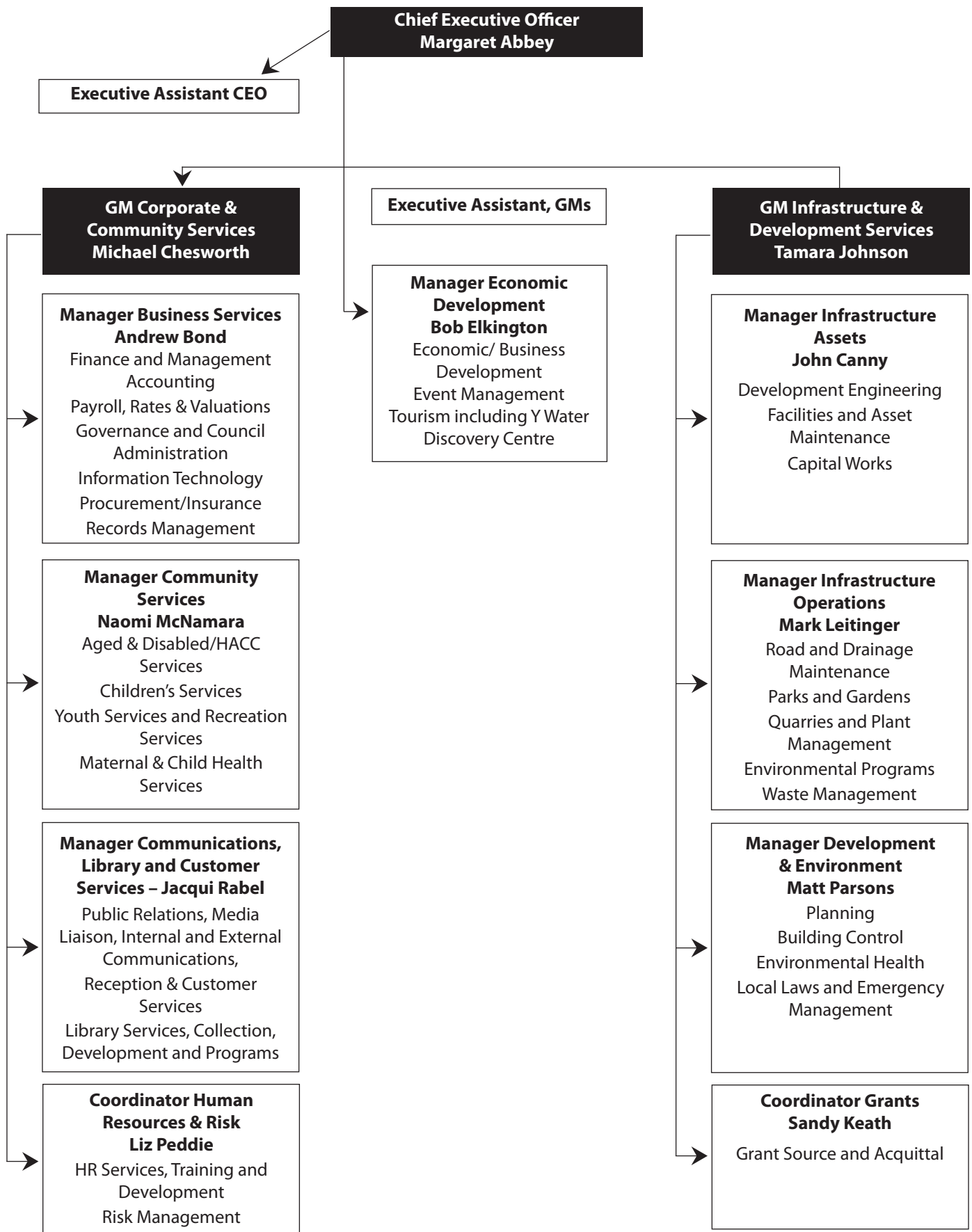
Rob started with Murrindindi Shire Council in 2010 as General Manager Corporate and Community Services.

Rob's role covered the management and strategic development of Council services in relation to Corporate Services, Finances and Community Services.

In August 2013, Council transitioned to a two General Manager structure to refine its operations which unfortunately resulted in Rob leaving the organisation.



Organisational Structure June 2014



2013-2014 – the year in review

Our Community Goal			
Strategic objective	Achievements	Challenges	Year ahead
We will support and promote health and well-being, social connectedness and community involvement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Transport Innovations project was completed and achieved positive outcomes towards reducing transport disadvantage across Murrindindi Shire. An online demographic resource was developed and is available to Council, businesses, service providers and the community to access detailed demographic information about the Shire. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long term planning of Home Based Child Care and Aged and Disability Services in the context of changing State and Federal Government social policy. The need for an updated Recreation Strategy to assist in long term planning of parks and recreation facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintaining and strengthening connections with community groups and services including local learning providers and Men's Sheds. Accessing grant funding to extend Disability Access mapping in key communities across Murrindindi Shire.

Our Environment Goal			
Strategic objective	Achievements	Challenges	Year ahead
We will manage our natural and built environment in a responsible manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The <i>Kinglake Ranges, Flowerdale and Toolangi Plan and Design Framework</i> was adopted by Council and sets out a number of key directions for sustaining the communities of Kinglake Ranges, Flowerdale, Toolangi and Castella into the future. The <i>Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2014-2019</i> was developed and adopted by Council which sets the strategic direction over the next five years for Council. The upgrade and renewal of the Yea Shire Hall was finished including new toilets, kitchen and meeting room facilities and was officially opened. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managing expectations from the community in relation to Council's ability to reduce municipal fire risks within resourcing levels. Identifying and seeking opportunities to fund the Capital Works renewal programs to assist in addressing the Infrastructure Renewal gap. Funding the ongoing operation maintenance and renewal of new and gifted assets received post 2009 Bushfires. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertaking the <i>Eildon Structure Plan</i> to assess potential settlement growth, tourism, economic development, public land directions. Developing a system to monitor and measure Council resource consumption including the establishment of goals for reducing electricity, water, fuel and gas. Replacing the Ghin Ghin Road bridge over the Goulburn River and refurbishing the Yea Swimming Pool Complex.

2013-2014 – the year in review

Our Economy Goal			
Strategic objective We will support the sustainable growth of Murrindindi Shire's businesses and the local economy.	Achievements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Memorandum of Understanding between all Murrindindi Shire local business and tourism associations and Council focusing on the provision of visitor services across the shire was signed. Council adopted the <i>Yea Saleyards Strategic Business Plan</i> which establishes strategies for the future management and development of the facility with projections for future growth of the business. 	Challenges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying and implementing the mechanisms to promote the shire and its attractions that provide the best value for money given Council's limited resources. Attracting new residents, building investor confidence and growing employment opportunities at a time of widespread fiscal restraint. 	Year ahead <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completing the business prospectus for the Murrindindi Shire and undertaking direct marketing to encourage development within the Shire. Completing the Disaster Ready Business Project to support tourism businesses in responding to potential emergency events.

Our Council			
Strategic objective We will provide strategic leadership and effective governance that supports the aspirations of our community.	Achievements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The first stage of creating a paperless record system was completed with the implementation of Council's Electronic Document Management System (EDMS). A review of Council's Governance Local Law was completed which established new community participation opportunities in Council meetings. 	Challenges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ongoing advocacy to the State Government to secure funding associated with ongoing costs of servicing gifted assets related to the 2009 bushfires. Preparing for the new Local Government Reporting Framework requirements which come into effect from 1 July 2014. 	Year ahead <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council will negotiate a new Enterprise Agreement with staff which falls due in the 2014/15 financial year. Finalising a <i>Rating Strategy</i> to optimise revenue and a <i>Master Plan</i> to grow the rates base to improve the overall financial sustainability of Council and the Shire.



Calendar of events

July 2013

- Council places its draft Public Health and Wellbeing Plan on Public Exhibition for comment and feedback.
- Residents take advantage of free mulch loading days at Eildon and Marysville Resource Recovery Centres.
- Past Councillor Drew Collier recognised for his advocacy for the preservation and enhancement of Alexandra's history with a plaque dedication at Alexandra's Red Gate.
- The Royal Family received the children's story book 'Bollygum' as a gift following the birth of His Royal Highness Prince George of Cambridge. The Garry Fleming picture book is the story on which the Kinglake community has themed Bollygum Park.
- 17 Tianjin City delegates visit Murrindindi Shire as part of a leadership program hosted by RMIT College of Business.
- Council welcomes State Government support to develop a Master Plan for the Alexandra Railway Precinct.
- Staff from the Parks and Bushlands department of Yarra Ranges Shire Council tour Marysville's Gallipoli Park and surrounds to gain an understanding of the town's recovery from the 2009 bushfires, and in particular the rebuilding of key facilities and the revival of parkland.

September 2013

- Council releases its 2012/13 Annual Report.
- A special two day youth workshop called 'Change it Up' takes place in Yea to energise and engage young people living in regional and rural Australia who have an interest in sparking change in their local communities.
- Alexandra Friends of The Library host 'Away with Words' event with guest speaker acclaimed Australian Author Tony Birch.
- Council purchases four lifesaving 'Heartstart' Defibrillator units to be available at its three administration offices and the Yea Saleyards facility.
- National Emergency Medals are presented to 48 recipients at a ceremony at the Maranatha Hall in Yea.
- Council reviews its Road Management Plan ensuring that standards and priorities given to the inspection, maintenance and repair of Council's roads are safe, efficient and appropriate.
- Council advertises for dedicated staff and volunteers to oversee the day to day operations of the Y Water Discovery Centre.

August 2013

- A cloned specimen of the Hume and Hovell tree is planted at the Hume and Hovell Memorial site in Yarck.
- Council staff join Alexandra Events Corporation to promote the Eildon Big Fish Challenge at Melbourne's National 4x4 Outdoor, Fishing and Boating Expo.
- Murrindindi Shire Council hosts a Tender Right workshop and information session for businesses across the shire and region to gain skills in the preparation of tenders. More than 30 business people participated.
- Council announces new General Management Structure: Michael Chesworth, General Manager Corporate and Community Services and Tamara Johnson, General Manager Infrastructure and Development.
- The efforts of Council's Meals on Wheels program was recognised during National Meals on Wheels Day.
- Council emergency crews work to clear debris from roads and unblocking drains following high winds and rain that lashed the shire.
- Council declares a two week amnesty

October 2013

- Council emergency crews work to clear debris from roads and unblocking drains following high winds and rain that lashed the shire.
- Council declares a two week amnesty

Calendar of events

burn off period to allow residents to prepare their properties in the lead up to the fire season. A free green waste disposal service is also made available to coincide with the amnesty period for those who do not wish to burn their vegetation material.

- Professor Frederick Mendelsohn is a guest speaker at Alexandra Library. Presenting a talk on 'Our plastic brains: How the brain adapts during learning, development and in response to injury and disease'.
- Rates notices are delivered for the 2013/2014 period.
- Council formally adopts its Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013 – 2017.
- Council gets behind nationwide campaign to promote small businesses across Australia by supporting 'Small Shop' – a program to encourage local residents to recognise the big role of small businesses in our shared communities and think small when they shop.
- Murrindindi Shire Council joins with the Home Creek/Spring Creek Landcare Group to formalise the ongoing preservation and maintenance of part of the Cathkin Rail Reserve.
- Chief Executive Officer, Margaret Abbey presents Andrew Forrest with a certificate of appreciation in recognition of his immediate response to the February 2009 fires at the annual Australian Sparkling Wine Show business breakfast held at Narbethong Hall.
- Murrindindi Shire Council elects Councillor Margaret Rae as Mayor and Councillor John Kennedy as Deputy Mayor.
- Council supports Seniors Week by hosting an afternoon tea dance for more than 70 participants.

November 2013

- Four bike racks are installed in Alexandra as cyclists take a break on the Cathkin-Alexandra spur line.
- Council adopts a Code Red Policy that sets in place a number of changes that will be made to its operations when Code Red Days are declared in the fire ban district.
- Alexandra traders take up the opportunity to have their businesses audited in an effort to improve overall accessibility in the town. Access Alexandra seeks to develop a local disability access map to identify accessible toilets, car parking, businesses and venues in the town. A project supported by the Alexandra Tourism and Traders Association (ATTA) and Murrindindi Shire Council's Access and Inclusion Working Group.
- Council announces that nominations for Australia Day awards are open.
- Council sets its meeting dates for 2014, with Yea, Eildon, Glenburn, Yarck and Narbethong listed for meetings.
- Council supports pram stroll events in Marysville, Yea and Eildon in celebration of Children's Week
- Kinglake's Bollygum Park hosts one of the 11 heats in the North West Metro Series of the Victorian Skate Park Leagues.
- Celebrations are held acknowledging 20 years of operation of the Yea Saleyards.

December 2013

- The CFA announces that the Declared Fire Danger Period is in force.
- Kinglake District Service Centre hosts a special Christmas edition of Storytime.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is signed between the newly formed Lake Eildon Houseboat Industry Association and Murrindindi Shire Council to enhance the reputation of the Eildon houseboat industry as a leading and professional local sector.





Calendar of events

January 2014

- Australia Day celebrations are held throughout the Murrindindi Shire with awards announced for Murrindindi Citizen of the Year, Young Citizen of the Year and Community Event of the Year.
- Author of *Banana Girl* - biography about growing up as an Asian girl, Michele Lee launches the Tuesday Talk program at the Yea Library for 2014.
- The Yea Saleyards undergoes its annual Australian Quarantine Inspection Service (AQIS) audit to retain EU accreditation for a further year.
- Council has strong community focus during heatwave – safety and welfare of older and vulnerable community members was at the forefront of Council's Community Services team during challenging heatwaves.

February 2014

- Council hosts a civic reception to welcome the Collingwood Football Club to Kinglake as part of the AFL's 2014 Australia Post Community Camp program.
- Council adopts the Kinglake Ranges, Flowerdale and Toolangi Plan and Design Framework.
- The Kinglake District Service Centre becomes a sea of colour when the Kinglake Primary School students display carefully and lovingly hand-made hearts to mark the 5th anniversary of the February 2009 bushfires.
- The coldest day in February was the backdrop for the FReeZA pool party at Alexandra Swimming Pool - 200 young people attended and partied to the sounds of a DJ and live bands.

March 2014

- Council offers a free green waste weekend to coincide with Clean Up Australia Day. All Resource Recovery Centres accepted green waste free of charge.
- Council's Maternal and Child Health Centres in Alexandra and Kinglake offer

free parental information sessions on managing sleep problems in babies and tackling toilet training, fussy eaters and difficult behaviours in toddlers.

- Breakaway Bridge at Acheron is officially opened to the public by Member for Seymour Cindy McLeish and Mayor of Murrindindi Shire Margaret Rae cutting the ribbon on the iconic structure.
- Council receives an award for excellence at the 2014 Institute of Public Works Engineering Australia (IPWEA) awards for the refurbishment of Acheron's Breakaway Bridge.
- Council highlights the positive results six months on from adopting its Health and Wellbeing Plan.
- Young people from Murrindindi, Mitchell and Strathbogie Shires collaborate for a second year in a row to participate in the MusoMagic program. A mentoring program to unite, engage, motivate and empower groups of all ages and backgrounds through the magic of song.
- Council staff and Councillors join Nexus Primary Health Staff to experience the reality of living with a disability by participating in a 'Realistic Race'.
- Council receives input from the Yea community on how the town should look in the future as it works on the development of a draft Yea Structure Plan.

April 2014

- Council staff and Councillors were joined by local business and community representatives to promote all that is great about living in Murrindindi Shire at the Regional Victoria Living Expo at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre.
- Marysville's 1000 hands project is officially opened by Minister for Police and Emergency Services and Bushfire Response Kim Wells. The community was a big part of this symbolic milestone in the region's recovery.
- An accessibility map for the town of

Calendar of events

Alexandra is launched, pinpointing the location of accessible businesses and eateries. The map was produced as part of the 'Access Alexandra' project which is aimed at raising awareness of issues about being inclusive.

- The localities of Flowerdale and Hazeldene are officially amalgamated to be known as Flowerdale with the postcode 3717.
- Mayor and Councillors recognised and thanked Marysville's Delice Guscott for her contribution to the community through her work with the Triangle News.
- Council announces that a communications tower that has long lain dormant atop Mt Pleasant on the outskirts of Alexandra is to be re-connected to improve local emergency communications.

May 2014

- The stabilisation and restoration works to the landslip site along Snobs Creek Road, Eildon is completed ahead of schedule.
- Council welcomes all residents and visitors to the 18th Truck, Ute and Rod Show in Alexandra on the Queen's Birthday long weekend. This year's event also marked the official opening of Victoria's first permanent Truck Drivers Memorial in Alexandra's Rotary Park.
- Alexandra's Maternal and Child Health Centre is the lucky recipient of brand new fun and educational toys thanks to Alexandra Rotary Club supporting a project initiated by the District Governor's partner, Helen Clancy, who is a midwife.
- Murrindindi Shire Council receives a Certificate of Commendation at the 2014 Sir Rupert Hamer Records Management Awards for its development of a paperless tender evaluation process.
- Council supports the second Building Our Business Community networking forum. The event provides fantastic

networking and learning opportunities to business operators, business support organisations and entrepreneurs from the region.

- After eight months of planning by the Murrindindi Children's Network Subcommittee, the inaugural 'Building Beyond Early Years' Conference took place at the beautiful 'El Kanah' Guest House in Marysville.
- The community of Strath Creek came together to be a part of the official opening of the Allendale Road bridge.
- After four years of planning, preparation and construction the refurbished Yea Shire Hall is reopened to the community.
- A group of six Council officers participated in the Australian Management Challenge by the Local Government Management Association, rating second in the state.

June 2014

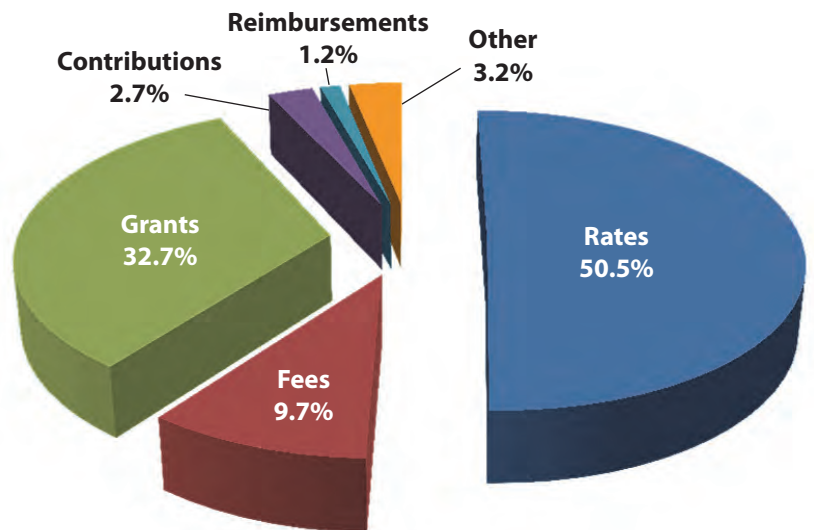
- A second round of Murrindindi Shire National Emergency Medals was awarded to recipients, highlighting their efforts in the aftermath of the 2009 bushfires.
- Alexandra resident John Rodgers is the lucky recipient of an iPad Mini after being drawn from over 300 people who put forward their comments on Council's waste management services. The feedback received during the consultation period informed the development of Council's Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy.
- Alexandra Landfill is installed with a new weighbridge and eight monitoring wells.
- Murrindindi Shire Council adopted a ten-point plan for creating a more environmentally sustainable and energy efficient workplace.
- Council unveils its new Online Social Profile - a highly interactive portal that provides access to statistics on specific topics, and localities in the Murrindindi Shire.



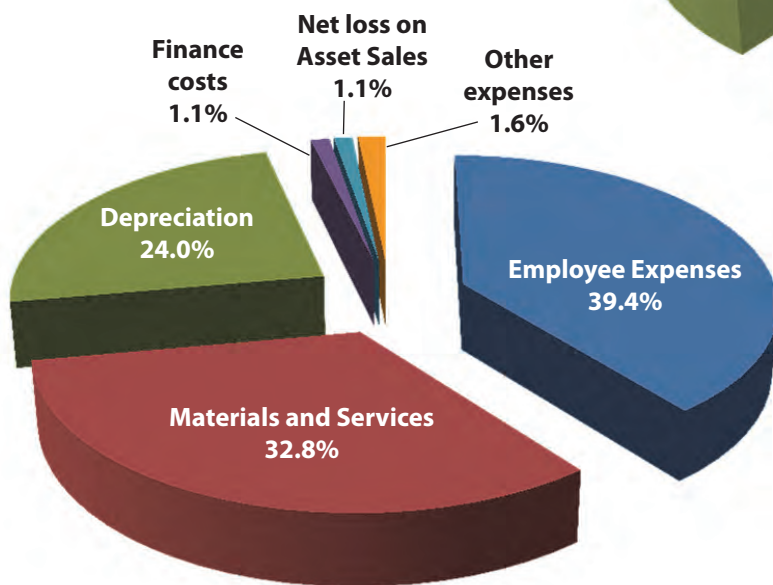
Financial overview 2013-2014

The following graphs are a summary of Council's financial reporting for the year ended 30 June 2014. For further financial detail refer to the Financial Report at the back of this report.

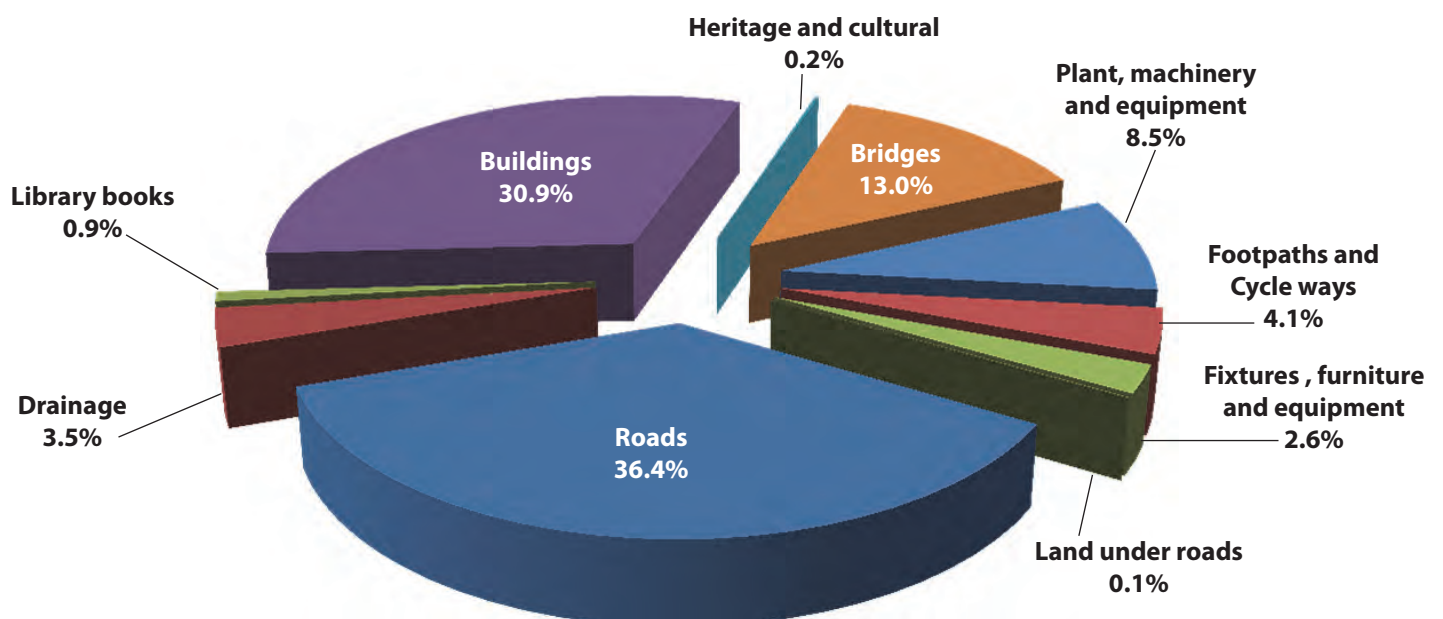
Income Breakdown



Operating Expense Breakdown



Capital Expenditure Breakdown



Performance reporting

We report on our performance under the four goals of the Council Plan 2013-2017.

Our Community

We will support and promote health and wellbeing, social connectedness and community involvement.

Our goal of Council and our Community is to create vibrant, interconnected and inclusive Communities.

Murrindindi Vision 2030 supports a strong sense of pride and belonging across the Shire. From arts programs, improved footpaths, on-going support of fire affected communities and new and upgraded recreational facilities; we aim to put the pieces in place for a healthy and active community. We will achieve this vision through strong support programs and robust policy decisions.

Our Environment

We will manage our natural and built environment in a responsible manner.

Council will continue to look for ways to protect significant environmental values along with balancing the need to develop and manage our built environment.

This will be achieved through leadership and cooperation with other agencies and community networks. Our Council will be recognised for its environmental practices as we look to balance our natural surrounds with our need to grow. We aim to achieve communities that are sustainable in the use of natural resources while developing planning policies that embrace and protect our rural landscapes.

Our Economy

We will support the sustainable growth of Murrindindi Shire's businesses and the local economy.

A vibrant economy will attract people to our region and in turn open further opportunities for business expansion and investment. This will increase employment prospects, social and cultural benefits and population growth. A key focus of our activities will be the further development and enhancement of educational and training options across the Shire. While our attention will continue to be focused on a vibrant tourism and agricultural-based economy, we need to also advocate for improved telecommunications networks that will enable opportunities which will encourage diverse and entrepreneurial businesses to become established.

Our Council

We will provide strategic leadership and effective governance that supports the aspirations of our community.

By ensuring our long term financial sustainability, Council's priorities will be directed towards the implementation of the Murrindindi Vision 2030. Achieving the outcomes of this community-driven vision will be central to our strong advocacy to all levels of government on local needs and issues, the implementation of a master plan to grow the Murrindindi Shire rate base through sound planning and support for economic development and the effective and efficient operation of the Council. By achieving this Murrindindi Shire will be a place of prosperity and opportunity.

Our Community

Health and Wellbeing

Strategic Objective – What we will do

We will advocate for and support the lifelong needs of our communities at all ages and all stages.

Social Connectedness

Strategic Objective – What we will do

We will encourage inclusive, creative and resilient communities.

Community Engagement

Strategic Objective – What we will do

We will actively engage with our communities to increase participation and community input.

Achievements

- The Change it Up program was undertaken by young people seeking to build their leadership skills and develop ideas on how they could improve their communities. Young people from Yea High School and Alexandra Secondary College then pitched their project ideas to local community leaders and attended an alumni event in Ballarat where initiatives from across the region were presented.
- The Murrindindi Children's Services Network coordinated the Building Beyond Early Years Conference at Marysville in May 2014, bringing early years experts and local practitioners together for professional development and networking. The event was a resounding success with over 85 delegates in attendance.
- Council was successful in attracting grant funding to support the delivery of major recreation projects including the Yea Pool Redevelopment, upgrade and maintenance projects at Eildon, Alexandra and Marysville Pools and the Terip Terip Recreation Reserve Tennis Courts resurfacing project. All projects to be delivered during 2014/2015.
- The Transport Innovations project was completed and achieved positive outcomes towards reducing transport disadvantage across Murrindindi Shire. Projects included the development of a community transport trial in Alexandra and the delivery of 'What's my Gizmo' training to improve older people's access to online transport resources. This was run in partnership with CEACA and Yea and Toolangi Community Houses with over 50 older people participating.
- The Health and Wellbeing Consortium was established which brings together Council, the community and health organizations to implement actions in the *Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013-2017*.
- The Realistic Race was held in Yea with over 30 participants across Murrindindi Shire Council and Nexus Primary Health. The Access Alexandra initiative produced a Disability Access

Map of Alexandra shopping district highlighting accessible car parking, toilets and local traders.

- An online demographic resource was developed in partnership with the Lower Hume Primary Care Partnership and is available to Council, businesses, service providers and the community to access detailed demographic information about the Shire to assist with service planning and grant applications.

Challenges

- Long term planning of Home Based Child Care and Aged and Disability Services in the context of changing State and Federal Government social policy.
- Home Based Child Care Services provided an additional 20,000 hours of care to meet increasing demand for child care.
- The need for an updated *Recreation Strategy* to assist in long term planning of parks and recreation facilities.

Looking forward

- Negotiating the transition of Home and Community Care Services agreement with Council from the State to Federal Government.
- Maintaining and strengthening connections with community groups and services including local learning providers and Men's Sheds.
- Reviewing the *Municipal Emergency Recovery Plan*.
- Continuing the implementation of the *Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan* in collaboration with key service partners and the community.
- Accessing grant funding to extend disability access mapping in key communities across Murrindindi Shire.

Council Plan activities

1.1 Health and Wellbeing - We will advocate for and support the lifelong needs of our community.

1.1.1 Advocate for and support flexible delivery of early years services.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Undertake feasibility study for integrated early years services.	Completed	The <i>Advancing Country Towns Early Years Feasibility Study</i> has been undertaken. The Final report has been received by Council officers. Work has progressed to consider the options raised, and follow up work will be presented for Council consideration in the July-September quarter of 2014.
Undertake a communications and social media strategy in consultation with service providers for Murrindindi Shire.	Completed	A <i>Communications and Social Media Strategy</i> has been completed in consultation with early years service providers across the Murrindindi Shire. A final report has been received and work has progressed to implement a range of recommendations including the continuation of the Murrindindi Children's Network, hosting professional development forums and the development of a website for the Murrindindi Children's Network.

1.1.2 Promote and deliver effective transition through integrated aged care options.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Advocate for increased flexibility in funding to improve and strengthen older people's access to social activities in the community.	Completed	<p>Consultation with Darlingford Upper Goulburn Nursing Home resulted in the delivery of a trial Planned Activity Group that was initiated in March 2014 and continues to date. Home and Community Care (HACC) eligible clients from Alexandra are supported to participate in the initiative. Objectives of the activity are being achieved with participants achieving a greater connection to the community and social networks.</p> <p>A Social Connection project developed in collaboration between Council, Alexandra District Hospital and residential aged care providers successfully gained State Government funding of \$25,000. The 'Breaking Down the Barriers' project aims to encourage greater connection of aged care residents and community members across a range of facilities by creating a community choir. A project manager has been engaged and is working closely with all project partners, community and residential aged care residents to progress the initiative.</p>

1.1.3 Support older people to remain active and healthy and connected to their community.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Implement initiatives of the Positive Ageing Plan.	Completed	<p>Actions within the plan promoting positive ageing have been completed including the promotion of the 'Get Involved' campaign highlighting Council as a key contact to link people with service groups and volunteering opportunities. A register of community groups and service clubs across Murrindindi Shire has been developed and maintained.</p> <p>The projects completed under the Transport Innovations Initiative during the year had a key focus on connecting older people through better access to community transport, including training in how to access online transport resources and support.</p>

Council Plan activities

1.1.4 Strengthen partnerships with service providers to meet the demonstrated health needs of our communities.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Develop and coordinate a health consortium of services across the Murrindindi Shire to support joint planning and coordinated service provision.	Completed	<p>The Health and Wellbeing Consortium was established with service partners to support the implementation and ongoing review of the <i>Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan</i>. The consortium meets on a six monthly basis throughout the year. All partners participated in delivering the six month progress report on year one actions of the plan.</p> <p>A copy of this report is available from Council's website. A media release was completed promoting highlights from the four priority areas: Strong and Connected Communities; Celebrating Place and Space; Sustainable Economic Growth; and Keeping People Well. An annual report on the implementation of the plan is being compiled.</p>

1.1.5 Actively engage with community health and wellbeing issues through implementation of the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Implement initiatives of the <i>Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan</i> in partnership with key stakeholders and service providers.	Completed	<p>A range of activities under year one of the <i>Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan</i> was delivered in collaboration with other organisations. These included disability awareness training and activities, NAIDOC week activities, ELF reading day, Children's Week activities, community transport initiatives and the PEEP program. The PEEP program has continued with a further six groups running across the Shire. Council has established and maintained representation on the Prevention of Violence Against Women and Children Steering Committee and the Hume Region Local Government Charter Subcommittee.</p> <p>Council supported and coordinated a range of networks to encourage joint planning and service cooperation. A key activity of the Murrindindi Children's Network was the development and delivery of the 'Building Beyond' Early Years Conference held on 8 May 2014 in Marysville. The event attracted over 80 delegates across Murrindindi Shire and beyond and provided a valuable opportunity for professional development.</p>

1.1.6 Work with young people and service providers to identify and respond to youth priorities across their respective communities.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Implement the initiatives of the <i>Murrindindi Youth Strategy</i> .	Completed	<p>The Murrindindi Youth Partnership developed a focus on supporting mental health service delivery and tracking young people's wellbeing. Gaps have been identified that need addressing to support stronger advocacy for additional service support.</p> <p>The Council in partnership with the Youth Partnership was successful in a submission to run The Australian Youth Foundation 'Change It Up' program 2014 which will be delivered after June 30 2014. Berry Street and Council are the key delivery agencies. The focus is on inspiring change and motivation in young people to become more engaged in their communities.</p>

Council Plan activities

1.1.7 Support participation in a range of sport recreation and leisure activities.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Promote and support the Community Grants Program and other funding sources to strengthen recreation and leisure activities.	Completed	<p>Recreation and leisure activities that were supported under the Community Grants Program included family tennis programs, local art, craft and history exhibitions, Koori Kid School Engagement Initiative, equipment to support environmental community education activities and Open Garden Programs.</p> <p>Organisations which were successful in their application to the Community Facility Funding Program grants for 2014/15 were the Terip Terip Recreation Reserve Tennis Club, for a multipurpose court resurfacing project, and the seasonal pool rejuvenation projects for Eildon, Alexandra and Marysville Swimming Pools.</p> <p>Sports Recreation Victoria invited Council to submit a full application under the 2015/2016 Community Facility Funding Program for the Marysville Cricket Club training nets project, which will be located with the recreation hub at Gallipoli Park.</p>

1.2 Social Connectedness - We will encourage inclusive, creative and resilient communities.

1.2.1 Prioritise the activities of Council and engage other stakeholders to improve people's access and inclusion.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Develop the Access and Inclusion Action Plan in consultation with the community and key service providers.	Completed	<p>The <i>Access and Inclusion Plan</i> forms part of the <i>Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan</i>. The Access and Inclusion Committee continued to meet on a six weekly basis throughout the year.</p> <p>The group worked on the delivery of access and inclusion related activities in the Plan to improve accessibility and inclusion.</p>
Progress priorities of the Urban Access Initiative.	Progress delayed	Works were identified in consultation with the Access and Inclusion Committee during 2013/2014 and have been prioritised in the 2014/2015 works program.
Progress priorities of the Missing Links program.	Progress delayed	The Kinglake East walking path design is completed; however works were delayed due to the need to consider the endangered Pomaderris Vaccinifolia plant in the vicinity of the proposed path. The path link from Dame Pattie Menzies Centre to George Street in Alexandra was completed.

Council Plan activities

1.2.2 Ensure access and social connectedness is considered in the planning and development of facilities and infrastructure.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Implement the initiatives of the <i>Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan</i> .	Completed	<p>Promotion of the use of simple English was undertaken with the training of an Easy English Champion and several key documents for Aged and Disability Services clients have been simplified. Communication and disability awareness training has taken place with 15 Council staff attending.</p> <p>The Access Alexandra project was completed involving access audits of 22 local traders and a number of council owned facilities. The project resulted in 16 traders achieving an 'Access Friendly' accreditation and the production of a disability access map for Alexandra, launched on 8 April 2014.</p> <p>The Realistic Race was conducted in Yea on 27 March 2014 with 40 participants. This was a collaborative awareness project delivered in partnership with Nexus Primary Health to raise awareness and the profile of disability access related issues.</p>

1.2.3 Support participation in a wide range of artistic and cultural pursuits.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Enable community groups to coordinate and participate in arts and cultural events through the Community Grants Program and other initiatives.	Completed	<p>Arts and cultural events and activities supported under the Community Grants Program included Country Women's Association Craft Exhibition in Yea, the Yea Pioneer Reserve Committee to support the documentation and exhibition of Yea's history and the Alexandra Timber Tramway and Museum 'Full Steam Ahead' a 100+ year pictorial history of rail heritage in Alexandra and District. Council continued to support a number of arts events and exhibitions in Alexandra, Yea, Kinglake and Marysville.</p> <p>Youth led FReeZA events were undertaken to support youth participation in cultural events including pool parties in Alexandra and Yea.</p> <p>The Muso Magic Project delivered in partnership with Mitchell and Strathbogie Shire Council's FReeZA programs was delivered successfully for the second year. Fifteen young people from Yea High School participated in a two-day song writing and choreography workshop that culminated in a YouTube posted track titled "SHOUT".</p>

1.2.4 Work with communities to build resilience and prepare for future unplanned events.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Maintain a leadership and coordination role in emergency response and recovery planning.	Completed	<p>Municipal Emergency Response and Recovery staff from Council participated in a simulated exercise to test the Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre (MECC) system under emergency conditions. The Vulnerable Persons Register was also regularly reviewed and updated where required.</p> <p>A number of Council officers provided assistance to Mitchell Shire Council during the February 2014 fires in emergency response and recovery functions.</p> <p>Aged and Disability support staff continued to encourage and support clients who use our service to prepare and maintain their own Personal Emergency Plans.</p>

Council Plan activities

1.2.5 Support people and groups to work together to strengthen connections and community networks.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Work in partnership with community and service providers to implement initiatives that strengthen neighbourhoods.	Completed	<p>Council is a member of the Murrindindi Learn Local Network of Neighbourhood Houses and Community Training providers which aims to encourage partnerships across Neighbourhood Houses to improve community engagement and participation. Council has provided coordination and financial support to the Yea and Toolangi Neighbourhood Houses and Alexandra CEACA to enable IT training for older residents, with funding stemming from the Transport Innovations project. Benefits have included social connectivity via improved knowledge and practical use of communication devices.</p> <p>Children's week activities were held in four towns in October 2013, encouraging parents and their children to become actively involved in their communities through pram strolls and teddy bear picnics.</p>
Explore flexible community transport options.	Completed	<p>Council completed the Transport Innovations Program which funded a range of activities designed to improve transport options for people who are socially isolated and transport disadvantaged. The following activities were undertaken in 2013/2014:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The recruitment, support and training of volunteer drivers and improving links between Community Transport organisations. 2. Internet training for older adults to improve older people's access to and knowledge of transport and travel assistance available on the internet. 3. The introduction of Smartlink services to Murrindindi Shire. The aim of the Smartlink Pproject is to encourage better utilisation of and access to community transport options. All Council buses are now registered with the Smartlink Program and Community Accessibility is managing the booking and hiring of buses.

1.2.6 Recognise, support and value volunteers.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Work in partnership with key partners to support the coordination of volunteer recruitment and training.	Completed	<p>Council has over 100 active volunteers supporting Council programs and service delivery. Council is involved in a partnership with Berry Street and other community service providers to support the Volunteer Coordination Network. The group developed and signed a Memorandum of Understanding that details centralised processes to recruit, train and support volunteers. It is hoped this initiative will encourage more volunteers to share their expertise across a range of programs.</p> <p>Council Officers facilitated a partnership between Berry Street and PANDA (Post and Antenatal Depression Association) to deliver appropriate training to registered volunteers.</p>

Council Plan activities

1.2.7 Advocate for better access to public and social housing options.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Explore the community need for additional public and social housing options in the Murrindindi Shire and develop an advocacy plan to communicate this need to State and Federal Governments.	Progress delayed	<p>The Health and Wellbeing Consortium has agreed to work collaboratively on the issue of access to social and public housing, with the aim of developing an advocacy plan in the 2014/2015 year.</p> <p>Data compilation is underway and further discussion has been scheduled on this issue at the next Health and Wellbeing Consortium meeting in late August 2014.</p>

1.3 Community Engagement – We will actively engage with our communities to increase participation and community input.

1.3.1 Trial and evaluate locality-based planning, that involves local communities.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Explore and implement processes that will support cross departmental and community involvement in locality based planning.	Progress delayed	<p>Whilst work on this activity has not progressed as quickly as planned, work has progressed to assess the potential for seeking grant funds for community based planning. An initial exploration of external funding opportunities has been undertaken. A project brief outlining the community planning proposal has been developed and Council Officers are in the process of providing feedback on this to determine the next steps in the process.</p>

Services related to this theme

- Aged and Disability Services.
- Maternal and Child Health Services.
- Children's Services.
- Recreation and Aquatic Services.
- Youth Services.
- Library Services.

Fast facts

- 9294 hours of support were provided to people attending Planned Activity Groups.
- 9109 hours of home care and 1961 hours of personal care were provided.
- 7559 meals were delivered by volunteers through the Meals on Wheels Program.
- 73,400 hours of Family Day Care and 13,466 hours of In Home Care were provided to 291 children.
- Five FReeZA events were presented with 921 young people attending.
- 20,000 people attended one or more of Council pools across the Shire during the 2013-2014 pool season.
- Maternal and Child Health Services received 131 birth notifications (an increase of 10 from the previous year).
- The service also conducted 1183 Key Ages & Stages checks, 1021 additional consultations and 305 telephone consultations were performed.
- 752 immunisations were performed.
- 58 out of 61 (95%) of first time parents in Murrindindi Shire attended First Parent Group sessions.
- 10 parent education sessions were offered, covering sleep and settling, toddler behaviour and first aid, with 46 parents attending.

Our Environment

Conservation of Resources

Strategic Objective – What we will do

We will use resources more efficiently and effectively.

Protection of the Natural Environment

Strategic Objective – What we will do

We will protect and enhance the natural environment.

Achievements

- Council was represented at various State Government forums on legislative reforms concerning bushfire planning and building provisions in order to advocate for those in the community attempting to rebuild.
- Council continued its participation in the development of the *Hume Regional Growth Plan* with strong advocacy to ensure the plan promotes the sustainability of the Murrindindi Shire into the future.
- The *Kinglake Ranges, Flowerdale and Toolangi Plan and Design Framework* was adopted by Council which sets out a number of key directions for sustaining the communities of Kinglake Ranges, Flowerdale, Toolangi and Castella into the future.
- The *Murrindindi Heritage Study 2011* was adopted by Council and now ensures buildings of local heritage significance will be better protected under changes to the Murrindindi Planning Scheme.
- Council adopted the *Domestic Animal Management Plan* which outlines Council's management practices in relation to the management of domestic animals for the wider community.
- The *Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2014-2019* was developed and adopted by Council which sets the strategic direction over the next five years for Council in relation to waste and recycling management.
- Council participated in the Watts Working Better working group which is progressing a project that will result in the changeover of all existing street lighting to energy efficient alternatives.
- The upgrade and renewal of the Yea Shire Hall was completed and officially re-opened and included new toilets, kitchen and meeting rooms as well as improved performance facilities.
- The Breakaway Bridge in Acheron was refurbished under the Country Roads and Bridges Initiative and the load limit increased to 20 tonnes. The project was recognised under the Institute of Public Works and Engineering Australia Awards for Excellence for Capital Projects under \$1 million.

Planning for Future Growth

Strategic Objective – What we will do

We will plan for future growth that is sensitive to the constraints of our natural environment whilst considering development needs.

Asset Management

Strategic Objective – What we will do

We will apply a whole of life approach to the management and maintenance of Council's assets.

- Installation of a new bridge at Allandale Road, Strath Creek along with major bridge works at the Taponga Road and McGuigans Road bridges in Eildon and Kanumbra was completed.
- Significant work has been carried out assessing the impact of new and gifted assets received following the 2009 bushfires and now being incorporated in Council's ongoing *Asset Management Strategy* and *Asset Management Plans* for all major asset categories.

Challenges

- Managing and promoting growth within the shire and recognising this in the *Murrindindi Planning Scheme* to ensure the economic sustainability of the municipality moving forward.
- Managing the impacts on the community and Council associated with the expiry of the temporary bushfire planning provisions during early 2015. Also the implementation of the new State Bushfire Management Overlay and State bushfire provisions in the *Murrindindi Planning Scheme* will present some challenges for the Murrindindi Shire community.
- Managing expectations from the community in relation to Council's ability to reduce municipal fire risks within resourcing levels.
- Revision of the *Murrindindi Planning Scheme* to provide a responsible and sustainable approach to residential growth, settlement, economic development and service provision.
- Meeting expectations from the community in relation to Council's ability to reduce weed cover within tight budget constraints.
- Identifying and seeking opportunities to fund the Capital Works Renewal Programs to assist in addressing the Infrastructure Renewal gap.
- Funding the ongoing operation maintenance and renewal of new and gifted assets received post 2009 Bushfires.

Council Plan activities

Looking forward

- Completing and implementation of the current Yea Structure Plan.
- Undertaking the *Eildon Structure Plan* to assess potential settlement growth, tourism, economic development, public land directions.
- Implementing of the *Kinglake Flowerdale Toolangi Plan* into the *Murrindindi Planning Scheme*, in conjunction with the Victorian State Government.
- Completing and implementation of the revised *Local Planning Policy Framework* to the *Murrindindi Planning Scheme*.
- Developing a system to monitor and measure Council resource consumption including the establishment of goals for reducing electricity, water, fuel and gas.
- Replacing the Ghin Ghin Road bridge over the Goulburn River, the refurbishing of the Yea Swimming Pool Complex and completing the Y Water Centre Interpretive Centre and Visitor Information Centre.
- Completing the Taggerty Community Project which includes refurbishment of the Taggerty Hall roof, installation of a walking track and suspension bridge over the Little River and upgrade to the Little River Reserve.
- Completing the Kinglake Ranges Art History Walk from Kinglake West to Kinglake.
- Continuing the development and implementation of the asset management system including Asset Management Plans and Service Management Plans for key asset classes.

2.1 Conservation of Resources – We will use resources more efficiently and effectively.

2.1.1 Reduce our corporate footprint by using energy, water and materials more responsibly.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Set up a system that will identify a baseline for corporate resource consumption and enable the organisation to set targets to reduce this baseline into the future.	Progress Delayed	Work to date has included the development of a reporting framework to collate Council's corporate resource consumption data specifically relating to electricity, water, paper, fuel and bottled gas for the period July 2013 to December 2013. Research has been undertaken including benchmarking with other Councils to obtain information on systems used for reporting on energy consumption. It is intended that this reporting framework will become operational in late 2014.
Design and identify strategies to fund a pilot program for energy improvements in a selection of Council buildings.	Progress delayed	Energy audits have been completed on seven Council buildings including the Alexandra Shire Offices, Kinglake Community Centre, Marysville Community Centre, Alexandra Library, and Alexandra Shire Hall over the past 12 months. An Energy Management Plan has also been drafted to identify ways to implement retrofits within Council's existing maintenance and capital improvement programs. Minor energy improvements have been made to Alexandra Shire Offices, Kinglake Community Centre and the Alexandra Library which have included upgrades to interior and exterior lighting and exiting signs as well as tamper proof timers on hot water boiling dispensers. Additional opportunities for energy improvements will be informed by the results of the Corporate Resource Consumption Baseline Project.

Council Plan activities

2.1.2 Encourage and recognise environmentally responsible behaviour and practices within Council and across the Murrindindi Shire community.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Liaise with and support community groups leading initiatives aimed at promoting sustainable resource use in households and businesses.	Completed	<p>Council has supported community groups throughout the past 12 months through the provision of information in the form of web based materials, flyers, fact sheets, media stories and internally via staff newsletters and other staff based initiatives. In addition, Council has revised the existing Memorandum of Understanding with the Murrindindi Climate Network (MCN), a key group promoting sustainable business and living in Murrindindi Shire.</p> <p>The intention of the MOU is to assist in the implementation of initiatives aimed at supporting sustainable resource use in households, schools and businesses. Council has liaised with and supported the MCN to implement a range of initiatives including the Green Business Assessment Program, the Community Garden and The Tree Project. In addition ongoing liaison and support is provided to other community groups including: the Upper Goulburn Landcare Network in the form of logistics and administration support for initiatives including National Tree Day and Clean Up Australia Day.</p>

2.1.3 Strengthen Council's capacity to use resources more sustainably by cooperating with the Goulburn Broken Greenhouse Alliance (GBGA) and community networks.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Work closely with the Goulburn Broken Greenhouse Alliance to deliver regionally funded projects that Council can lead, support and/or coordinate across Murrindindi Shire.	Completed	<p>Council is a member of the Goulburn Broken Greenhouse Alliance and has worked closely with the Alliance to deliver a number of regionally funded projects in 2013/14. These projects have included the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The development and implementation of the Local Government Sustainability Training Program delivered to Councillors and Council staff. 2. The Watts Working Better Project that will result in over 500 80W Mercury Vapour lights being replaced in Murrindindi Shire with energy efficient lighting technology. Council has worked closely with the Alliance to support the development and implementation stages of the project. 3. The development of the Climate Smart Agriculture Project to review agricultural commodities grown in Murrindindi Shire, and assess how they will perform under different climate scenarios. <p>In addition, the Council has also expressed interest in participating in a regional solar bulk purchasing project (for Council building stock) in partnership with the Alliance and a number of other local governments across central and north eastern Victoria.</p>

Council Plan activities

2.1.4 Finalise the Waste Management Strategy that seeks to promote waste minimisation strategies and increase opportunities for recycling and reuse of resources.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Leverage support from the Goulburn Valley Regional Waste Management Group to improve the way waste is managed across the Murrindindi Shire.	Completed	Resource GV funded an investigation into organic waste collection and processing strategy options which was completed in June 2014, Resource GV also provided support and input into the development of the <i>Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy</i> and the joint procurement process for the kerbside waste and recycling collection services including a letter of support to the Minister for Local Government.

2.2 Protection of the Natural Environment - We will protect and enhance the natural environment.

2.2.1 Ensure Council operations are managed in a way that minimises impact on the natural environment.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Develop a policy and process for managing native vegetation in Council's infrastructure works.	Progress delayed	An organisation policy, aimed at protecting and appropriately managing native vegetation (and broader environmental impacts) in Council's infrastructure works has been adopted and clearly sets out requirements which must be considered in the various stages including the planning, development and delivery of the project.

2.2.2 Conserve high value sites on Council controlled land and roadside reserves by reducing environmental threats.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Develop a <i>Roadside Management Plan and Code of Practice</i> for managing environmental values in Council roadside reserves.	Completed	A <i>Roadside Management Plan</i> was approved for public exhibition until 23 July 2014. A wide range of stakeholders has been involved in its development including Murrindindi Environment Advisory Committee, the Municipal Fire Management Committee, the Country Fire Authority, the Department of Environment and Primary Industries, as well as other State Government agencies, Landcare groups and utility service organisations. A <i>Roadside Code of Practice</i> for Council's own internal infrastructure works has also been prepared.
Implement Council's <i>Roadside Weeds and Pest Animal Control Program</i> .	Completed	Weed control works on priority roadsides identified under Council's <i>Roadside Weed and Pest Animal Control Plan</i> were completed for the year. Key target species include Blackberry, Sweet Briar, St Johns Wort, Cape and English Broom, Gorse and Paterson's Curse.

Council Plan activities

2.2.3 Encourage property development across the Shire that protects and enhances environmental values.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Develop and deliver an Environmental Communications Strategy that sets out how the Council will communicate with households, businesses and agencies.	Completed	A Communications Strategy was planned and delivered resulting in a number of initiatives: the environment section on Council's website updated, seven media releases delivered on range of topics, and marketing and promotional materials such as design and print of native flora species booklet and invasive weeds flyer.

2.2.4 Strengthen Council's capacity to work with key agencies that have responsibility to deliver local, regional, state and federal environmental policy and programs.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Continue collaborating with key local Landcare networks, as well as regional, state and federal agencies to identify and deliver environmental projects in Murrindindi Shire.	Completed	<p>Council has developed Memorandums of Understanding with key environmental groups to support key community led projects. Examples include ongoing support to the Murrindindi Climate Network's Projects including: the Alexandra Community Garden, the Green Business Assessment Program and the Tree Project, and to individual Landcare groups such as those wishing to take on management responsibilities at the Cathkin Rail Trail Reserve, Maintongoon Lookout Reserve and the Homewood Rail Trail Reserve.</p> <p>Council has also worked closely with the Goulburn Broken Local Government Biodiversity Reference Group to investigate opportunities for offsetting native vegetation removal on land within the catchment.</p>

Council Plan activities

2.3 Planning for Future Growth – We will plan for future growth that is sensitive to the constraints of our natural environment whilst considering development needs.

2.3.1 Improve the Planning Scheme's capacity to be flexible in responding to growth in a way that balances environmental values and improves the level of safety of our community.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Implement ongoing changes and improvements to the <i>Murrindindi Planning Scheme (MPS)</i> , e.g. anomalies, projects and studies, re-zoning and refinements.	Completed	<p>Council engaged in an active ongoing program of implementing changes to the <i>Murrindindi Planning Scheme</i>. A significant number of corrective amendments occurred in 2013/2014, including the minor rezoning of land, adjustments to overlay controls and a number of projects and studies. <i>Amendment C43 (Heritage Overlay)</i> has been split into two parts, with part one being adopted by Council and has been sent to the Minister for Planning for approval.</p> <p><i>Amendment C51</i>, rezoning of the old CFA site in Eildon, was adopted by the Minister for Planning on 15 May 2014. <i>Amendment C50</i>, which relates to the provision of mixed use rezoning in Grant Street, Alexandra, was adopted by Council in March 2014 and sent to the Minister for approval.</p> <p>The Development Plan for the Goulburn Valley Highway Low Density Residential area was adopted by Council in June 2014, with the <i>Wattle Street and Lawrances Road Development Plans</i> anticipated to be put to Council in the first quarter of 2014/2015.</p>
Complete bushfire protection measures within the <i>Murrindindi Planning Scheme (Policy and Bushfire Management Overlay Schedule)</i> .	Progress delayed	<p>Murrindindi Shire Council has prepared schedules for the <i>Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO)</i>, to support the BMO mapping changes prepared by the Department of Transport, Planning and Local Infrastructure. Consent has been given to the Minister for Planning to prepare and approve an amendment.</p>

2.3.2 Ensure that Council's emergency management planning responds to community safety needs.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Ensure that Council's emergency management planning responds to community safety needs.	Completed	<p>The shared resource between Mitchell and Murrindindi Shire Councils for an Emergency Management Fire Coordinator has assisted in ensuring Council's emergency management responsibilities are better aligned with state and regional objectives. A comprehensive review of Council's <i>Municipal Emergency Management Plan</i> has occurred, and is scheduled for public exhibition in the first quarter of 2014/2015. Council officers continue to participate with other Emergency Management Authorities in the implementation of the <i>Municipal Emergency Management Plan</i> and <i>Municipal Fire Management Plan</i> priorities.</p>

Council Plan activities

2.3.3 Improve Council and community capacity to respond to the impacts of extreme weather events and longer term climate change.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Improve Council and community capacity to respond to the impacts of extreme weather events and longer term climate change.	Progress delayed	Council's Environment Officers have continued to develop an <i>Energy Management Plan</i> which will identify initiatives to reduce Council's impact on the environment. It is expected that this will be completed in the first quarter of 2014-2015.

2.3.4 Complete a review of the *Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS)* to establish future directions that align to the *Council Plan*.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Complete a review of the <i>Municipal Strategic Statement</i> to establish directions that align to the <i>Council Plan</i> .	Progress delayed	The review of the <i>Municipal Strategic Statement</i> has been undertaken, and was expanded to include a full review of the <i>Local Planning Policy Framework</i> , which is scheduled for implementation into the <i>Murrindindi Planning Scheme</i> by December 2014. The reviewed <i>Local Planning Policy Framework</i> has been placed on informal exhibition for the month of July. A report will be presented to Council in relation to any submissions in the first quarter of 2014/2015.

2.3.5 Promote environmentally sustainable design in future developments to achieve more energy and water efficient outcomes in our built environment.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Promote environmentally sustainable design in future developments to achieve more energy and water efficient outcomes in our built environment.	Completed	Through the building regulations Council ensures that every new development or extension to an existing dwelling addresses sustainable design requirements. Planning applications also assess and advise on siting, building orientation, water sensitive urban design and other ResCode provisions.

2.3.6 Review and progress Council's implementation of the Urban Design Frameworks for settlements within the Shire.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Commence implementation of the <i>Kinglake Ranges, Flowerdale and Toolangi Plan and Design Framework</i> .	Completed	Council formally adopted the <i>Kinglake Ranges, Flowerdale and Toolangi Plan and Design Framework</i> and the <i>Implementation Strategy</i> on 26 February 2014. The implementation of the KFT into the <i>Murrindindi Planning Scheme</i> is to be funded through the Department of Transport, Planning and Local Infrastructure. Council officers are now in the process of preparing the <i>Kinglake Ranges, Flowerdale and Toolangi Streetscape Masterplan</i> to implement one of the actions out of the adopted document.

Council Plan activities

2.4 Asset Management – We will apply a whole of life approach to the management and maintenance of Council's assets.

2.4.1 Manage and renew our existing infrastructure assets in a responsible manner.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Develop a policy and process for the transfer of savings from the capital works projects to the infrastructure reserve.	Completed	<p>At the request of Council, officers developed a <i>Capital Works Policy</i> which details how savings from Capital Projects will be managed and this was adopted at the August 2013 Ordinary Council Meeting.</p> <p>The policy is operational and is being applied to relevant projects.</p>
Complete the <i>Waste Management Strategy</i> .	Progress delayed	<p>A Draft Waste Strategy was prepared and presented for Councillor feedback in June. This was followed by a period of public comment that extended into July 2014.</p> <p>The final <i>Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy</i> will be presented to Council for adoption at the July 2014 ordinary meeting.</p>
Continue the implementation of the improvement actions from the adopted <i>Asset Management Plans</i> .	Completed	<p>Asset management improvement actions continue to be implemented with the Asset Management Working Group overseeing the implementation.</p>
Seek infrastructure grants to support future capital works programs to assist in reducing the Infrastructure renewal gap.	Completed	<p>Council has successfully sought a Flood Recovery Community Infrastructure Fund grant of \$18,240 for the Yea Wetlands – 2012 Flood Reinstatement Works Project that will renew pathways damaged during the 2012 floods.</p> <p>In addition Council has also successfully sought a grant under the Community Facilities Fund for Swimming Pool upgrades to the value of \$1 million.</p> <p>Council officers have also submitted Expressions of Interest (EOIs) for funding through the Putting Locals First Program for the Connecting and Revitalising Eildon Town Centre and Enhancing Community Gathering Spaces Projects.</p> <p>Over the last 12 months Council has successfully delivered grant funded infrastructure renewal programs such as Roads to Recovery and the Country Roads and Bridges Initiative.</p> <p>Council officers have also delivered a number of projects under the Local Government Infrastructure Program including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yea Shire Hall • Yea Drainage Study • Design works on the Yea Swimming Pool.

Council Plan activities

2.4.2 Engage with relevant communities on the development of community infrastructure and services.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Engage with relevant communities on the development of community infrastructure and services.	Completed	<p>Communities are engaged regularly via diverse and widely accessible media such as local radio, local papers, community newsletters and publications, direct letter drops/ bulk mail outs, flyers, and group emails.</p> <p>Project specific engagement has been developed via the creation of Project Control and Project Reference Groups. These groups comprise a combination of Council officers and community/business representatives. The Taggerty Community Project, Kinglake Ranges Art History Walk, Y Water Discovery Centre, Kinglake East Walking Path and Yea Shire Hall project all have functioning Project Reference or Control Groups which have met throughout the past 12 months.</p> <p>Project Control and Reference Groups for the abovementioned projects continue to make successful contributions to the delivery of works.</p> <p>Business and residents directly affected by works are consulted directly throughout the planning, delivery, and close out of the project.</p>

2.4.3 Develop and deliver services with consideration of the impacts on the natural environment that meet community needs.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Develop and deliver services with consideration of the impacts on the natural environment that meet community needs.	Completed	A policy for the management of biodiversity impacts including vegetation and affected by Infrastructure works has been developed and approved.

Services related to this theme

- Development Approvals.
- Building Services.
- Fire Prevention.
- Environmental Health.
- Local Laws.
- Infrastructure Operations.
- Waste And Recycling.
- Infrastructure Assets.
- Engineering Design And Management.
- Roads, Bridges And Drainage.
- Facilities Maintenance.
- Asset Management.

Fast Facts

- 305 building permits processed.
- 97% Council building permits determined within 30 days.
- 325 building certificates issued.
- 43 days average to process planning permits.
- 27 planning consents issued.
- 10 days average to process planning consents.
- 105 septic tank permits issued.
- 212 Registered food and health premises.
- 207 Statement of Trade Mobile Food Permits issued.
- 90.86% immunisation coverage across all age cohorts.
- 2,628 dogs registered.
- 473 cats registered.
- 471 Local Law Permits issued.
- 472 Fire Prevention Notices issued

following inspection of approximately 4000 properties.

- Households in Murrindindi Shire Council diverted 40% of waste to recycling at the kerbside.
- 67% of waste arriving at the Resource Recovery Centres is recycled.
- 54% of waste in a household bin within the Shire is recyclable or compostable waste.
- Council maintained:
 - 487.1kms of sealed road.
 - 713.6 kms of unsealed road.
 - 68 kms of sealed pathway.
 - 108.2 kms of unsealed pathway.
 - 63.5 kms of underground drains.
 - 6.8 kms of open channel drains.
 - 2306 drainage pits and end walls.
 - 298 bridges.

Our Economy

Workforce Development

Strategic Objective – What we will do

We will maximise the potential of the local workforce through education, training and employment opportunities.

Improving Business Infrastructure

Strategic Objective – What we will do

We will advocate for the provision of infrastructure and services that supports business growth.

Achievements

- Level 2 accreditation for the Visitor Information Centre within the new Y Water Discovery Centre was secured during the year.
- A MOU between all Murrindindi Shire local business and tourism associations and Council focusing on the provision of visitor services across the shire was signed.
- Hosting rights and funding was secured for the Mansfield-Alexandra-Marysville-Healesville stage of the 2014 - 15 Great Victorian Bike Ride, with an overnight stop within the Shire.
- Council adopted the *Yea Saleyards Strategic Business Plan* which establishes strategies for the future management and development of the facility with projections for future growth of the business.
- With Mitchell and Mansfield Shire, Council developed a service agreement with Mansfield-Mt Buller Regional Tourism Association to deliver a full suite of visitor and business related services associated with the Great Victorian Rail Trail.
- Advocacy was undertaken for mobile phone blackspot improvement resulting in Council's highest priority (Skyline Road Eildon) being selected as one of the top three sites for the Indi electorate area.
- Council promoted the Shire and its attractions across a range of mediums including websites, Apps, hard copy material and four major tourism and lifestyle expos in Melbourne and Bendigo.

Investment Attraction

Strategic Objective – What we will do

We will support local business retention and growth and attract new business and residential investment to the Shire.

Tourism Development

Strategic Objective – What we will do

We will increase the economic, social and cultural benefits to the Shire of a growing tourism sector.

Challenges

- Identifying and implementing the mechanisms to promote the Shire and its attractions that provide the best value for money given Council's limited resources.
- Continuing the momentum to promote areas affected by the 2009 bushfires following the completion of the Marysville and Surrounds Tourism and Events Program.
- Attracting new residents, building investor confidence and growing employment opportunities at a time of widespread fiscal restraint.
- Securing improved telecommunications services for the Shire including resolving mobile blackspots and securing the rapid NBN rollout.

Looking forward

- Encouraging widespread business and investor interest in the *Eildon Structure Plan*.
- Resourcing the implementation of the key recommendations from the *GRVT Destination Management Plan*.
- Advocating for further funding support to follow on from the Marysville and Surrounds Tourism and Events Program.
- Completing the business prospectus for the Murrindindi Shire and undertaking direct marketing to encourage development within the Shire.
- Completing the Disaster Ready Business Project to support tourism businesses in responding to potential emergency events.

Council Plan activities

3.1 Workforce Development – We will maximise the potential of the local workforce through education, training and employment opportunities.

3.1.1 Advocate for and support initiatives to improve post-secondary education opportunities in the Shire, including development of the Murrindindi Training Institute.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Work with MTI to establish a local employer and educator network to integrate local training provision with employment needs.	Completed	<p>Despite some focus being drawn away as a result of the impacts of funding cuts to the vocational education and training sector, progress was made regarding workforce development in 2013 - 2014. A Local Strategic Skills, Training and Employment Network (LSSTEN) was formed and is made up of representatives from local business, the Murrindindi Training Institute, Alexandra CEACA, local government and the Central Ranges Local Learning and Employment Network. The LSSTEN established three Actions Groups including the 'HR Network', the 'Youth in Health' and the 'Employment Information & Government Incentives' groups.</p> <p>After receiving and considering the Murrindindi Training Needs Analysis 2013, the LSSTEN undertook a prioritisation process to provide guidance to the Action Groups. The key focus for the HR Network was to establish a shire wide training calendar and the first step in this process was to survey employers across the shire to ascertain if this and other collaborative projects would be useful to them. The number of responses to the survey was disappointing and as a result Alexandra CEACA undertook to complete the survey process by phone interview.</p> <p>The 'Youth in Health' Action Group focused its attention on career opportunities for (mostly young) people in the health and community services sectors. The Group developed plans to deliver a 'LEAP' (Learn Experience Access Profession) event later in 2014 that will see students engage in a health careers event funded by a university.</p> <p>The 'Employment Information & Government Incentives' Action Group took responsibility for contacting a range of local employers and informing them about government incentives and procedures for employing staff. As well as direct phone and/or in person contact, another method used to achieve this was for a local group training organisation representative to be invited as a guest speaker to a Murrindindi Inc meeting. Information on government incentives and training opportunities was provided both verbally and in hard copy and then disseminated by the local business and tourism association representatives present. Discussions with some larger employers from Eildon, Marysville and Thornton regarding the potential for establishing a range of school based apprenticeships were also initiated by this action group.</p>

Council Plan activities

3.1.2 Work closely with the Central Ranges Local Learning and Employment Network (CRLLEN) to improve local workforce development opportunities.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Support CRLLEN in the development of a strategic plan for workforce development, based on the recommendations of the <i>Murrindindi Training Needs Analysis Report 2013</i> .	Progress delayed	<p>Changes in State Government funding arrangements affecting Local Learning and Employment Networks hampered progress on this activity. Despite this, some progress was made on key priorities from the <i>2013 Murrindindi Training Needs Analysis</i> including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The establishment of three Actions Groups including the 'HR Network', the 'Youth in Health' and the 'Employment Information & Government Incentives' groups. • A very successful, 'speed dating style' careers session involving a range of local employers and secondary students. • An industry visitation day to Eildon focusing on opportunities in the houseboat industry. • Establishment of a HR Network. • Information dissemination regarding government incentives for new employees in specific careers/professions/trades .

3.2 Improving Business Infrastructure - We will advocate for the provision of infrastructure and services that supports business growth.

3.2.1 Support the development and implementation of the Hume ICT (Digital) Strategy and the Hume NBN Business Readiness Plan.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Promote the <i>NBN Small Business Readiness Tool</i> as part of the implementation of the <i>Hume NBN Business Readiness Plan</i> .	Completed	Road testing of the free online <i>NBN Business Readiness Tool</i> by a local business, on behalf of Council, indicated that the process was straight forward and would prove to be useful for many businesses interested in getting better prepared for the NBN rollout. The opportunity to access the tool was promoted to businesses across Murrindindi Shire via local print media outlets, Council's website and via local business and tourism associations.

3.2.2 Support further growth and development of the Yea Saleyards subject to the availability of grant and reserve funds.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Develop a business case for the potential lease of additional land to support further enhancement of facilities at the Yea Saleyards for Council's consideration.	Completed	<p>Council endorsed the <i>Yea Saleyards Strategic Business Plan</i> at its Ordinary Meeting on 25 June 2014.</p> <p>The <i>Yea Saleyards Business Plan</i> charts a course for the development and management of the Yea Saleyards over the next ten years.</p>

Council Plan activities

3.2.3 Facilitate opportunities to increase utilisation of available industrial land in the Shire.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Facilitate opportunities to increase utilisation of available industrial land in the Shire.	Completed	<p>As part of Council's Service Review and following a call for expressions of interest, the site that was previously the Alexandra Saleyards was sold to a private investor in January 2014. The site was then improved and its use for industrial purposes began.</p> <p>The Department of Environment and Primary Industries and adjacent landowners on Binns-McCrae Rd Alexandra developed plans to undertake earthworks on the industrial land on the southern side of the road, to make it more suitable for industrial development in the future.</p> <p>A significant proportion of the industrial land in Lamont Street Alexandra that was previously the site of Gunns Timber Products mill was redeveloped and led to an increase in local employment opportunities at that site.</p>

3.2.4 Advocate to the State Government to broaden the range of business development opportunities in rural settings.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Subject to the outcomes of the State review of Farming Zones, promote business development opportunities that align with agriculture in rural areas.	Completed	<p>Changes to the Farming Zone created greater flexibility in relation to possible developments in the zone. Landowners that had expressed interest in developments that were previously not allowed under the zoning regulations were contacted by Council officers to ensure that the implications and opportunities of the new regulations were clarified and understood. The changes were also promoted via local print media, on Council's website, via local community radio and through Murrindindi Inc.</p> <p>The Farming Zone changes were also discussed, with a number of new initiatives suggested at the Real Estate Agents Forum held in Alexandra in March. The forum was well attended with agents from Marysville, Eildon, Alexandra and Yea participating. An action plan to follow up the recommendations made at the forum was developed and key recommendations actioned.</p>

Council Plan activities

3.2.5 In partnership with Mitchell and Mansfield Shire Councils, support initiatives to maximise the economic benefits of the Great Victorian Rail Trail.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Work with Mansfield and Mitchell Council's to finalise, and commence implementation of the <i>Rail Trail Integrated Identity, Interpretative and Wayfinding Strategy</i> .	Completed	<p>Significant progress was made in implementation of the <i>Great Victorian Rail Trail (GVRT) Identity, Interpretive and Wayfinding Strategy</i> including but not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development of the GVRT website, pocket guide and DL brochure. 2. Establishment and promotion of the business prospectus enabling buy in to marketing and promotional opportunities for businesses across the three shires. 3. Establishment of a dedicated 1800 number enabling trail users to enquire about the trail, make bookings for accommodation and other related products as well as a means to log trail maintenance requests. 4. Installation and monitoring of ten track usage counters. 5. Development and costing of a signage plan. <p>The three Councils agreed to progress with phase 1 of the GVRT signage plan and implementation began in the latter part of the financial year. To support the on trail signage development, in-town signage was added including directional banners, guiding users from UT Creek Bridge in Grant Street Alexandra to the trail head adjacent to the Alexandra Timber Tramway and Museum.</p>

3.3 Investment Attraction – We will support local business retention and growth and attract new business and residential investment to the Shire.

3.3.1 Implement a business attraction and investment campaign.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Support the finalisation of the bushfire recovery funded <i>Murrindindi Business Prospectus</i> and commence implementation of a business investment and attraction campaign.	Progress delayed	<p>Despite some delays in receiving formal confirmation that the State Government funding for this project was to be provided, significant progress was made. A new project scope and timelines for delivery were created, a draft project plan was developed, an expanded steering committee - with shire wide representation - was formed and a consultant appointed to deliver the project.</p> <p>Two project steering committee meetings were held and the project plan was endorsed. A review of the work previously undertaken during the initial Marysville and Surrounds Investment Prospectus Project was completed.</p> <p>The concept of the Prospectus was promoted at the Real Estate Agents Forum held in March 2014 where input into the project was welcomed. Continuation of the Murrindindi Business Investment Prospectus Project will carry forward into 2014 - 15 with the implementation phase, including a promotional campaign, to get underway in late 2014.</p>

Council Plan activities

3.3.2 Participate in a range of State Government sponsored initiatives that encourage people to Live, Work and Invest in rural and regional Victoria.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Participate in the 2014 Regional Living Expo and associated promotional activities.	Completed	<p>Murrindindi Shire was well represented at the Regional Victoria Living Expo held on 11 to 13 April 2014 with a range of local business people and Councillors taking up the opportunity to be involved. Two local real estate agents and the new VIBE Hotel and Conference Centre were represented on the shared industry stand.</p> <p>Over 8,000 people attended the Expo with almost 500 Murrindindi Shire showbags/promotional kits being given to prospective tree changers, with forty 'hot leads' being followed up post-event. A new tear off map covering the footprint of the partner shires (Mitchell, Murrindindi, Strathbogie, Mansfield and Benalla), identifying key information and location of services such as hospitals, schools, aged care facilities and the like was developed and distributed at the Expo. Post event the map was available at Council offices and the local Visitor Information Centres. Regional postcards also proved popular. A range of local and regional promotional material was provided as part of the Murrindindi Shire display and within the showbags.</p>

3.3.3 Support developers through the regulatory requirements of Council.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Support developers through the regulatory requirements of Council.	Completed	<p>Numerous facilitated discussions with potential investors/land developers were initiated and hosted by Council throughout 2013 - 2014. Some of these discussions involved investors and Council officers/departments only and some extended to other key stakeholders/authorities. Investment and development proposals canvassed covered a wide range of sectors including retail, tourism attractions/accommodation developments, industrial land and retirement villages and related to locations across the shire including sites in Marysville, Alexandra, Thornton, Yea, Eildon and Toolangi.</p>

3.3.4 Support the creation of strong economic leadership in the Shire through the development of the Murrindindi Business and Tourism Association.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Facilitate the formal establishment of the Murrindindi Business and Tourism Association.	Completed	<p>Following a series of business forums in 2012 - 2013, canvassing the need for and concept of an umbrella business body, a shire-wide peak business and tourism organisation called Murrindindi Inc was incorporated in February 2014. The organisation evolved from and is driven by key representatives from the local business and tourism associations from across the Shire and has been strongly supported by Council. An action plan for the association was developed and endorsed by the inaugural board and work got underway to promote the role of the association.</p> <p>A key focus for Murrindindi Inc for the first half of 2014 was delivery of phase 1 of the Disaster Ready Business Project being undertaken in partnership with Council as the auspice. State Government funding was secured and support for the project was sought from and re-affirmed by Tourism Victoria and the State Emergency Service. The concept of a business development and disaster ready accreditation process was developed and a plan to road test the idea with businesses and other key stakeholders in the second half of 2014 was created.</p>

Council Plan activities

3.3.5 Investigate opportunities to attract investment in residential facilities for retiree and aged sectors.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Investigate opportunities to attract investment in residential facilities for retiree and aged sectors.	Completed	<p>Regular discussions with representatives from local aged care facilities took place and reinforced the demand for retiree and aged care facilities in the shire. Projected population data collected supported the proposition that Murrindindi has an ageing population and that there will be a growing need for retiree and aged care facilities/ support.</p> <p>Attracting investors to develop residential facilities for the retiree and aged care sector was identified as a significant opportunity in the Business Investment Prospectus Project with Eildon, Alexandra, Yea and Marysville all providing some scope for this opportunity. A pre planning application meeting was facilitated for investors looking to develop a major facility in the south of the shire. Subject to how the Federal Government progresses with changes to aged care funding arrangements, all indications are that this development should come to fruition over coming years.</p>

3.3.6 Continue to engage with businesses and relevant agencies through the Economic Development Advisory Committee and liaison with key industry associations.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Continue to engage with businesses and relevant agencies through the Economic Development Advisory Committee and liaison with key industry associations.	Completed	<p>A strong pattern was established in 2013 - 2014, seeing Council's Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) invite and engage with representatives from Murrindindi Inc, the peak business and tourism body across the shire. Both formally and informally the Chair of Murrindindi Inc provided updates on the organisation's activities and plans for the future. The key focus of these interactions was how Murrindindi Inc could support the objectives of Council and vice versa. Murrindindi Inc expressed a strong desire to work with Council on key economic development matters and on delivery of the Disaster Ready Business Project.</p> <p>Agreement on and signing of the Murrindindi Visitor Information Centres' Memorandum of Understanding in April was an example of the strong collaboration and shared vision between Council and the local business and tourism associations. Council's support to Mystic Mountains Tourism and the Marysville Chamber of Commerce in their desire to move towards an amalgamation was rewarded with all conditions to enable a merger being in place by June 30, 2014 with the merger to go ahead on July 1, 2014.</p> <p>The combined strength of these two well established business and tourism associations added to the collective and collaborative approach that is the cornerstone of the Murrindindi Inc concept.</p>

Council Plan activities

3.3.7 Identify and promote opportunities for growth in housing and business development in and around the Shire's main townships.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Investigate the capacity to expand residential and business investment in and around the Shire's major townships.	Completed	<p>A plan to expand investment in Murrindindi Shire's major townships was presented to the Economic Development Advisory Committee and subsequently approved. The plan has a strong focus on opportunities for residential and business investment in and around the major (serviced) towns. Officers took action on a number of the key recommendations in the plan including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Completing a mapping exercise to identify vacant/available residential, commercial and industrial land. 2. Preparation of the <i>Draft Yea Structure Plan</i> – including community forums – in readiness for a formal public exhibition phase planned for August 2014. 3. Securing agreement with Goulburn Murray Water to contribute funding towards the development of an <i>Eildon Structure Plan</i> to explore opportunities for future investment, rezoning and growth. 4. Publicising the change to regulations affecting land in the Farming Zone to promote potential investment/development. 5. Hosting and facilitating a Real Estate Agents Forum to remove barriers and identify opportunity to increase residential and commercial investment across the Shire. 6. Securing funding, establishing the steering committee and developing the project plan for the Murrindindi Investment Prospectus. <p>Plans were also developed to review the Alexandra UDF which identified opportunities along the Bayley Street Business Zone area and a rezoning opportunity along Downey Street to formalise existing use and allow for future opportunities.</p>

Council Plan activities

3.4 Tourism Development – We will increase the economic, social and cultural benefits to the Shire of a growing tourism sector.

3.4.1 Support the initiatives of the GRVT and Marysville and surrounds marketing and events program to promote visitation to the Shire.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Promote visitation to the Shire through development and distribution of marketing materials and attendance at promotional expos in partnership with GRVT.	Completed	<p>There was strong Council presence at the Bendigo Leisure Fest in November 2013 and the Caravan and Camping Supershow at Caulfield Racecourse in March 2014. Being part of these events along with supporting the Eildon Big Fish Competition at the National 4 X 4 and Outdoors Show at Melbourne Showgrounds in August provided great opportunities to promote the GRVT region to a large target audience.</p> <p>At each of these events, the Regional Holiday Planners and Special Deals Flyer, Official Visitors Guides and Calendars of Events were displayed and distributed. The GRVT display, including Great Victorian Rail Trail and Lake Mountain Alpine Resort video and regional map, took out the best tourism stand prize at the Caulfield show. Many new contacts were added to the GRVT database which forms the basis of promotional activity driving people to the GRVT website.</p> <p>In conjunction with the Marysville and Surrounds Tourism and Events Program, an industry survey was developed to ascertain what types of marketing mediums/ collateral the local tourism industry would support going forward. The results of the survey will inform future decisions on marketing spend.</p>

3.4.2 In partnership with GRVT actively encourage investment in, and support development of new tourism product, attractions and accommodation options in the Shire.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
In partnership with GRVT actively encourage investment in, and support development of new tourism product, attractions and accommodation options in the Shire.	Completed	<p>Following a series of workshops, industry forums, one on one interviews and Council feedback sessions, the <i>Goulburn River Valley Tourism Destination Management Plan (DMP)</i> was completed and launched in May. The DMP sets out ten strategic development themes and twelve priority (catalyst) projects.</p> <p>Many of these have direct relevance to Murrindindi Shire with four of the catalyst projects being within the shire including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A Marysville Spa and Wellness Facility. 2. Product development and potential expansion of the Great Victorian Rail Trail. 3. Lake Eildon waterfront development opportunities. 4. Toolangi zipline/canopy tour. <p>The recommendations in the DMP give guidance to and form the basis of future investment and development opportunities for tourism product, attractions and accommodation across Murrindindi Shire and the broader region. To this end the <i>Murrindindi Investment Prospectus</i> will include, not only the various catalyst projects but a number of sub regional opportunities identified in the DMP as well.</p> <p>Publicising the positive changes to the Farm Zone provisions via local radio and print media, a shire-wide Real Estate Agents Forum and on Council's website also helped to promote potential tourism development.</p>

Council Plan activities

3.4.3 Assess the feasibility of extending the Great Victorian Rail Trail from Alexandra to Eildon.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Complete a feasibility assessment of a Great Victorian Rail Trail link between Alexandra and Eildon.	Progress delayed	<p>Following the development of a consultant's brief and interview process the successful consultants were appointed to undertake the Alexandra to Eildon Rail Trail extension feasibility.</p> <p>A steering committee was formed and research on potential trail alignments was completed.</p> <p>A series of community forums were held to enable the sharing of information about the potential trail development and to encourage community and stakeholder input.</p>

3.4.4 Support event managers in the establishment and delivery of new tourism events across the Shire.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Promote access to tourism event funding through the Marysville and Surrounds Marketing and Events Program.	Completed	<p>Promotion of the availability of events funding via the Marysville and Surrounds Tourism Events Program was undertaken through a range of mediums including via Council's Events Coordinator, on Council's website and through Murrindindi Inc. Council supported the process further by providing advice to applicants, information on various events to the program manager and by being on Tourism Victoria's funding selection panel.</p> <p>Twenty local events were successful in gaining funding to the value of \$146,500 including, but not limited to, the Yea Arts Carnivale, The Eildon Big Fish Challenge, the Granite Grind, Marysville Australia Day Parade and Celebrations, Marysville Region Really Long Lunch and the Alexandra Truck, Ute and Rod Show.</p> <p>Funding from the events program also led to the delivery of an image library audit and photo shoot and support for a Murrindindi Shire-wide events audit.</p>

3.4.5 Support the development of the Y Water Discovery Centre at Yea Wetlands as a tourism attraction.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Support the establishment of the accredited Visitor Information Centre as part of the Y Water Discovery Centre at Yea Wetlands.	Progress delayed	<p>Establishment of the Visitor Information Centre (VIC) component of the Y Water Discovery Centre was delayed pending the supply and installation of the water based educational aspects of the building and finalisation and hand over of the centre from the builder.</p> <p>The centre staff developed a Marketing Plan, Business Plan and Training Plan as well as completing most of the tasks required for accreditation. Recruitment of a team of volunteers was very successful as were a number of local familiarisation tours.</p> <p>Establishment of a draft version MOU between Council and the Y Water Association also created greater certainty around the relationship and responsibilities into the future.</p>

Council Plan activities

3.4.6 Develop tourism markets that align with the product strengths of the region (e.g. cycle tourism, equine and picnic racing, nature based tourism).

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Develop tourism markets that align with the product strengths of the region (e.g. cycle tourism, equine and picnic racing, nature based tourism).	Completed	<p>Considerable development of tourism markets that are aligned with the shire's product strengths occurred in 2013 - 2014. Three events calendars were produced with free listings for twenty nature based events (including many at Lake Mountain Alpine Resort), seven equine events and six cycling events. Two calendars also included feature articles on the Great Victorian Rail Trail including images of both horse riders and cyclists using the trail. The events calendars are also available online.</p> <p>The Great Victorian Rail Trail strategy was completed and promotion of the trail began via the new website, DL brochure and pocket riders guide.</p> <p>An overnight stay in Alexandra and lunch stop in Marysville for the 2014 Great Victorian Bike Ride (GVBR) to be in November-December 2014 was secured. A steering committee was formed to ensure that local businesses and sporting/ service clubs were able to plan to get the most value from the ride.</p>

Services related to this theme

- Economic Development.
- Tourism.
- Event Coordination.
- Yea Saleyards.

Fast Facts

- 60,850 'walk in' visitors to Visitor Information Centres across the shire.
- Murrindindi Shire received 452,000 domestic daytrips. Visitors spent an estimated \$40 million in the region – an average of \$67 per visitor with 58.2% coming from Melbourne.
- Murrindindi Shire received 174,000 domestic overnight visitors. Visitors spent 452,400 nights in the region. Visitors stayed on average 2.6 nights per visit. Visitors spent an estimated \$30 million in the region – an average of \$67 per night.
- 81 events progressed through Council's event coordination process.
- 21 sales were held at the Yea Saleyards complex with 39,666 head of cattle being offered for sale. A record operating income of \$381,045 was achieved at the Saleyards.

Our Council

Leadership

Strategic Objective – What we will do

We will deliver visible leadership and advocacy.

Customer Service

Strategic Objective – What we will do

We will deliver quality customer outcomes by continuing to find better ways of doing things.

Achievements

- As part of the delivery of the Council's Procurement Roadmap a total of eight panel or schedule of rates contracts were established across a range of expenditure categories to provide improved value for money for Council.
- The first stage of creating a paperless record system was completed with the implementation of Council's electronic Document Management System (EDMS). As part of this the organisation was recognised at the Sir Rupert Hamer Records Management Awards for a pilot project utilising EDMS to receive, evaluate and award tenders.
- A review of Council's Governance Local Law was completed which established new community participation opportunities in Council Meetings.
- An increased focus was placed on leadership development with the management team and coordinator team participating in a High Performance Leadership Development Program. In addition Council participated in the Local Government Management Association challenge, placing second across Victorian Councils.
- New governance guidelines for Council's Section 86 Committees of Management were developed and released during the year providing a valuable resource to support the effective and efficient running of committee business.

Financial Sustainability

Strategic Objective – What we will do

We will administer sound financial management practices.

Staff

Strategic Objective – What we will do

We will have engaged and professional staff.

Challenges

- Developing systems to assist in compliance with procurement best practice with the aim of maximizing value for money for residents and ratepayers.
- The ongoing advocacy to the State Government to secure funding associated with ongoing costs of servicing gifted assets related to the 2009 bushfires.
- Continuing to work with the community to improve its satisfaction with Council operations, advocacy and overall performance.
- Preparing for the new Local Government Reporting Framework requirements which come into effect from 1 July 2014.

Looking forward

- Council will implement an electronic tendering and quotation system in collaboration with other Councils and in line with the direction of the Procurement Roadmap.
- Council's *Workforce and Development Plan* will see implementation of a Staff Rotation Program, an improved Work Experience Program and exploration and implementation of an apprenticeship opportunity with Council subject to budget capacity.
- Council will negotiate a new *Enterprise Agreement* with staff which falls due in the 2014/15 financial year.
- Finalising a *Rating Strategy* to optimise revenue and a *Master Plan* to grow the rates base to improve the overall financial sustainability of Council and the Shire.

Council Plan activities

4.1 Leadership – We will demonstrate visible leadership and advocacy.

4.1.1 Involve community leaders in regular advocacy to State and Federal Governments on local needs and issues.

4.1.4 Communicate key Council decisions and strategies to the community in a variety of ways.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Advocate on behalf of the community on a minimum of 10 issues.	Completed	<p>Over the past year Council has advocated to Goulburn Murray Water on the development of a Structure Plan for Eildon township and surrounds to support further development opportunities.</p> <p>Advocacy has also occurred with the Metropolitan Planning Authority for assistance in the development of the Eildon and Yea Structure Plans.</p> <p>Council has continued its advocacy with community members in relation to logging in the Royston Range and supported VicForests in a community information session and other community engagement activities.</p> <p>Council has continued its advocacy or improved mobile phone communications across the shire and has participated in an Indi working group supporting Federal Member Cathy McGowan in her advocacy for improved coverage as well as with local members of parliament and with neighbouring Councils.</p> <p>Additional support to the Murrindindi Shire Council as a result of the financial impacts of the gifted and novated assets has been a strong theme of Council's advocacy to both local members of parliament and the Minister for Local Government.</p> <p>Council has also provided support to the outdoor education sector regarding the reduction in fees to the Murrindindi Training Institute and in support to the Central Ranges LLENs.</p> <p>Council has supported the Municipal Association of Victoria in its advocacy with respect to the freezing of the indexing of the Federal Assistance Grants and also concerning the reduction in funding for community services.</p>

Council Plan activities

4.1.2 Actively develop and implement a long term vision for the Shire of Murrindindi.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Complete the Murrindindi 2030 Vision.	Progress delayed	<p>Working groups comprising Councillors and officers have been working on the three themes of Community, Place and Opportunity. These working groups identified a vision for each theme, values and opportunities for improvement. This work was collated into a document that formed the basis of not only a community leaders' workshop held in May 2014 but also a broader community engagement program for individuals who had participated in the first visioning exercise and also with community organisations.</p> <p>With feedback having been received, the final draft document is currently under preparation.</p>
Develop a long term plan for the implementation of the Murrindindi 2030 Vision.	Progress delayed	<p>Parallel with the development of the <i>Draft Murrindindi 2030 Vision</i> work commenced on the development of a long term implementation plan. The staff and Councillor working groups have already identified potential actions to go into the long term implementation plan which will be completed once the Murrindindi 2030 Vision is finalised.</p>

4.1.3 Building community relationships and trust through community forums and engagement.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Building community relationships and trust through community forums and engagement.	Completed	<p>Council undertook a range of community forums during the year including Taggerty Community Projects meetings, Tender Right Workshop in Alexandra and forums in Yea, Alexandra, Thornton, Kinglake and Marysville to introduce the new business peak body Murrindindi Incorporated. The Health and Wellbeing Consortium was established to support the implementation of the <i>Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan</i>.</p> <p>A forum was held in Yea to seek interest in volunteering for the new Y Water Discovery Centre and forums were held in Yea and Alexandra to get input into the development of the Goulburn River Valley's <i>Tourism Destination Management Plan</i>.</p>

4.2 Customer Service – We will deliver quality customer outcomes by implementing better ways of doing things.

4.2.1 Build on our customer service and communications with the community.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Establish an Electronic Customer Service Request System.	Progress delayed	<p>Initial assessment has taken place in relation to establishing an electronic on-line customer request form. The next stage is to identify how the electronic system can be integrated with current processes.</p>

Council Plan activities

4.2.2 Continue to improve our processes to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the organisation.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Implement business process improvements related to: Governance, Procurement Roadmap, Electronic Document Management System, Finance Systems, Murrindindi Services Review.	Completed	<p>During the year Council completed a review of its officer delegations and a review of the Governance Local Law was completed. These reviews have resulted in improvements to governance practices and provided operational efficiencies.</p> <p>The roll-out of the new Governance Manual providing all the necessary resources for Council's Section 86 committees was completed in the June quarter in 2014. All S86 Committees have now been formally inducted to this process and are reporting back to Council in accordance with the new governance procedures.</p> <p>Council officers completed Phase One of Council's new Electronic Document Management System, which has been progressively implemented across the organisation to improve paper-based and digital record and information management, increase overall efficiency in administrative procedures and improve customer service. By 30 June 2014, nearly 40,000 documents had been electronically uploaded to the new system.</p> <p>Improved value for money associated with Council's procurement processes is being sought through the implementation of several large tender processes to select a panel of approved suppliers across a range of common goods and services used by Council in its operations. By the end of the June quarter Council had appointed a panel of providers in a number of key service areas, including Legal Services, Engineering Services, Project Management, Quarry Products, Architectural Services, Human Resources, Minor Civil Works, Street Sweeping, Building Cleaning and Meals on Wheels. With the electronic receipt and evaluation of tender submissions, processes have been streamlined and adapted to the new Electronic Document Management System.</p> <p>Council officers have significantly improved the supplementary valuation process in 2013/14. By integrating the extraction of data relating to new building within the Shire, Council is now more easily able to identify all properties requiring supplementary valuations, which assists in informing both the State Revenue Office and Council's external valuers.</p> <p>This has benefited in more accurate, timely and complete capture and analysis of Council's supplementary rate revenue, that has assisted in ensuring that Council achieved its 1% supplementary rate revenue growth target in 2013/14.</p> <p>Following the Services Review Council completed its first year of operation under a new Library Service Agreement with Yarra Plenty Library Service which has seen the introduction of significant efficiencies and cost savings in the supply 'shelf-ready' new library books.</p>

Council Plan activities

4.3 Financial Sustainability – We will administer sound financial management practices.

4.3.1 Growing our rate base through diligent planning.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Develop and coordinate a master plan for growing the rate base.	Progress delayed	Whilst preliminary work has continued to identify opportunities to better utilise existing developable land in and around the townships of the Shire, the development of the Master Plan has not progressed as quickly as anticipated. This project is due to be completed in the first half of the new financial year.

4.3.2 Provide value for money through the delivery of long term financial plans.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Provide value for money through the delivery of long term financial plans.	Completed	Council completed its review of the Council's long term financial plan during the June quarter as a part of the 2014/2015 Budget process and review of the <i>Council Plan</i> and <i>Strategic Resource Plan</i> , in accordance with the new Local Government Reporting Framework that is to be introduced for the 2014/15 financial year. The <i>Council Plan Review</i> and <i>Strategic Resource Plan</i> that incorporates the 10-year long term financial plan were adopted by Council at the Ordinary Council Meeting in June 2014.

4.3.3 Practising responsible grants management and how we access our grants.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Increase capacity to attract grants.	Completed	Council has undertaken informal and formal coaching activities with community members. This has included the provision of advice, grant administration tools and resources as well as attendance at community group meetings. Within Council this support has included the provision of advice regarding project eligibility and assistance in grant seeking and the preparation of expressions of interest, applications and reporting/acquittal documentation. It has also included liaison with funding representatives as well as negotiations of grant agreements and exploring funding options for key projects. Preliminary discussions on the delivery of grant capacity building workshops are continuing.

4.3.4 Promoting an equitable rating strategy for all ratepayers.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Complete and implement the review of the Rating Strategy.	Deferred	Further work has been undertaken to examine different differential rate options with a range of options presented to Council in the March and June quarters as a part of Council's budget and strategic resource planning activities. Council has requested further analysis to be undertaken as part of the complete financial review of Council's operations that is scheduled to be undertaken in early 2014/15.

Council Plan activities

4.4 Staff – We will have engaged and professional staff.

4.4.1 Ensure a healthy and safe workplace for all staff.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Ensure a healthy and safe workplace for all staff.	Completed	Council delivered seven health and wellbeing programs over the year covering topics relating to physical and mental health from an organisational and personal perspective. These included a mental health Are you OK? program, encouraging exercise during breaks with 'Walk the Block' and a pedometer challenge, participation in a corporate triathlon, driver safety awareness training, First Aid training and CPR updates. A number of organisational systems were updated to improve health and wellbeing including the retraining of the risk and safety representatives and emergency control staff, as well as the installation of defibrillators (with training in their use) for the three main council offices. Other activities included the influenza immunisation program offered to all staff, regular healthy eating updates in newsletters, and the biannual review of the risk register. Indicators including a reduction in reported health and safety incidents in the workplace from 47 in 2012/13 to 36 in 2013/14. The number of hazards reported increased from 7 to 17 reflecting an increased focus on reporting potential problems before they occur.

4.4.2 Provide staff training and professional development opportunities.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Develop and implement a training register.	Completed	A centralised training register was established to better capture and record all training undertaken by staff; with key users trained in its use.
Provide staff training and professional development opportunities.		<p>An improved number and range of programs to support staff in their roles were delivered in 2013-14. Over the whole year 566 staff training days were completed representing a significant increase on previous years. In addition there was a substantial focus on leadership development across the organisation both for existing and potential leaders. This included 30 people undergoing a leadership coaching program, one staff member successfully nominated for an Emerging Leaders Program (only one group of 24 people is accepted each year from across Victorian Councils), and a team of six staff performed in the Local Government Management Australia Challenge. The team achieved second place in Victoria only just missing out by half a point, on going to the national finals.</p> <p>The diversity of training and development topics ranged from governance, OH&S, compliance training, customer service, career development, social media and some practical skills training for specific areas. In addition to the leadership programs, highlights included good attendance at a number of compliance programs such as bullying prevention, fraud prevention, protected disclosures; a comprehensive review and implementation of practical skills training for outdoor staff including chainsaw, elevated work platforms, bridge inspections and arborist training; and support for key staff to manage social media changes.</p>

Council Plan activities

4.4.3 Provide workforce development and succession planning opportunities.

Activities	Status	Comment on progress and outcomes
Provide workforce development and succession planning opportunities.	Completed	Year 1 priorities in the adopted <i>Workforce Development Plan</i> that were delivered included departmental meetings and actions on outcomes from the staff survey, continued access to training and development targeted through performance coaching, and establishment of a working group to plan and implement a staff rotation program in 2014-15.

Services related to this theme

- Procurement.
- Human Resources and Risk.
- Financial Management.
- Information Technology.
- Information Management.
- Governance.
- Corporate Strategy.

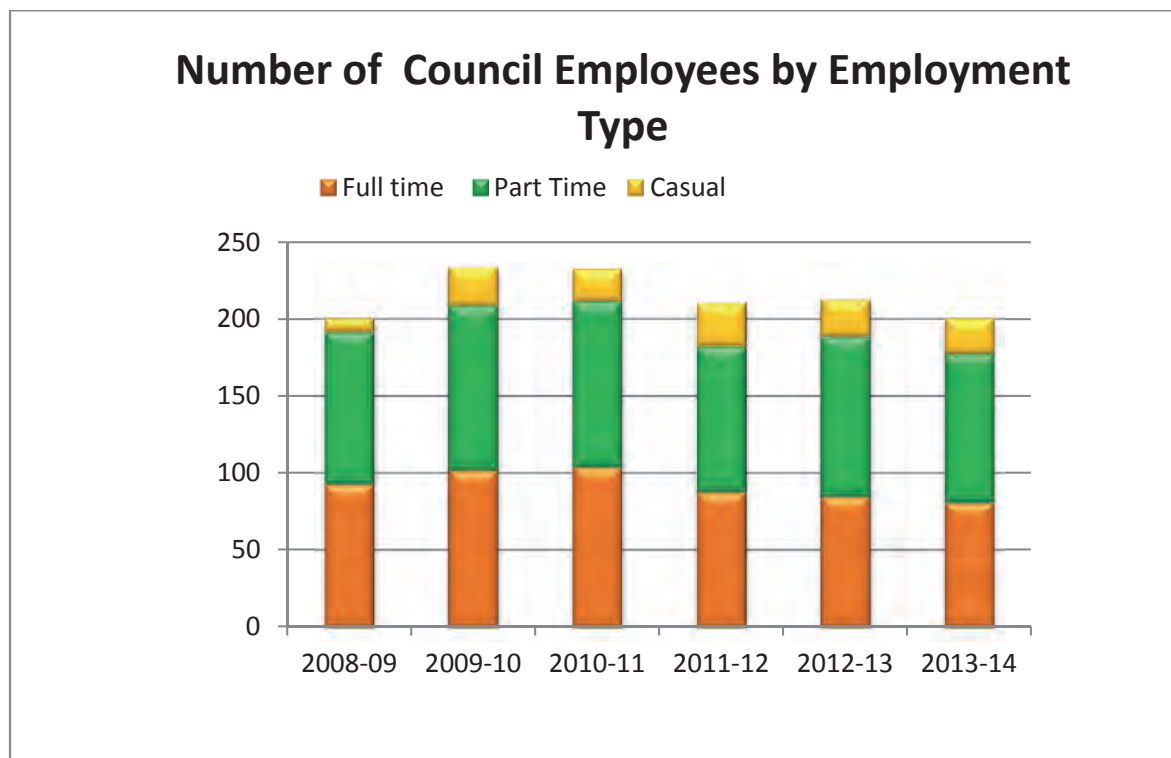
Fast Facts

- Appointed 65 suppliers from 111 submissions for 8 panel contracts.
- Training delivery included 261 online learning courses plus 566 staff training days.
- Sick leave reduced from 3.6% to 3.0% representing a significant improvement.
- Hazards, incidents and injury reports reduced by 15%.
- Workcover claims halved from 12 to 6.
- 24 staff left Council (61 including casual pool staff): 3 end of contract, 3 retirements, 1 redundancy, 1 medically unfit, 16 resignations.
- 23 staff appointments were made (54 including casual pool staff): 9 have Local Government experience, 5 were internal recruits. Time to fill a vacancy averaged 27 working days.
- Registered nearly 40,000 documents in Council's new Electronic Document Management System.
- Conducted governance training for 15 Section 86 Committees of Management.
- 16 Council Meetings held.
- 8 new Council Strategies adopted.
- 5 internal audits completed.

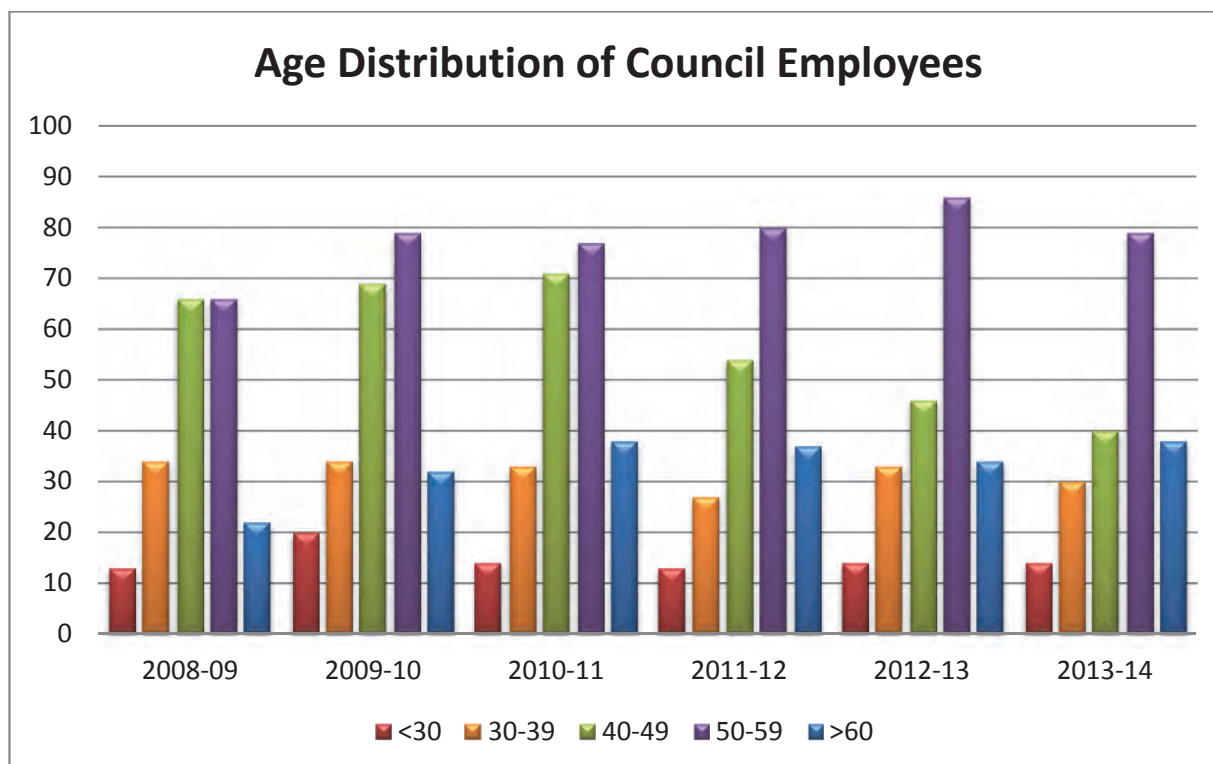
Corporate Development – Our Organisation

WORKFORCE PROFILE

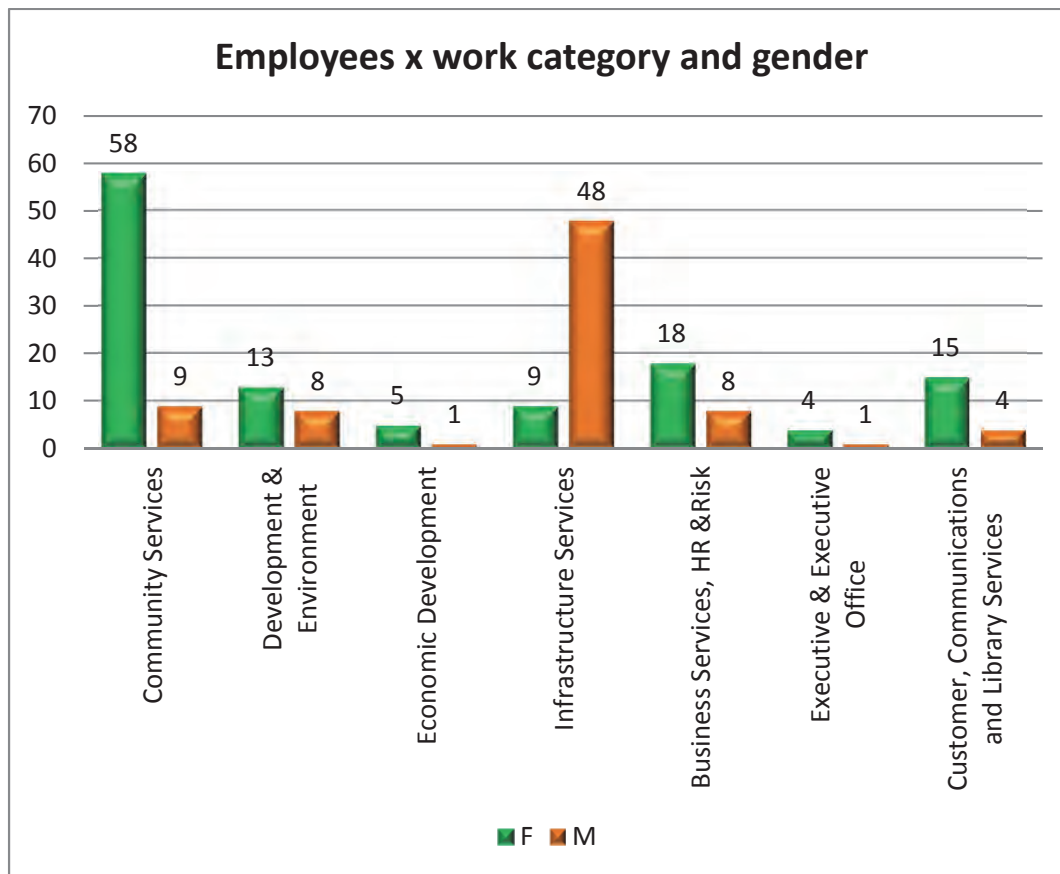
Number of Employees by Employment Type



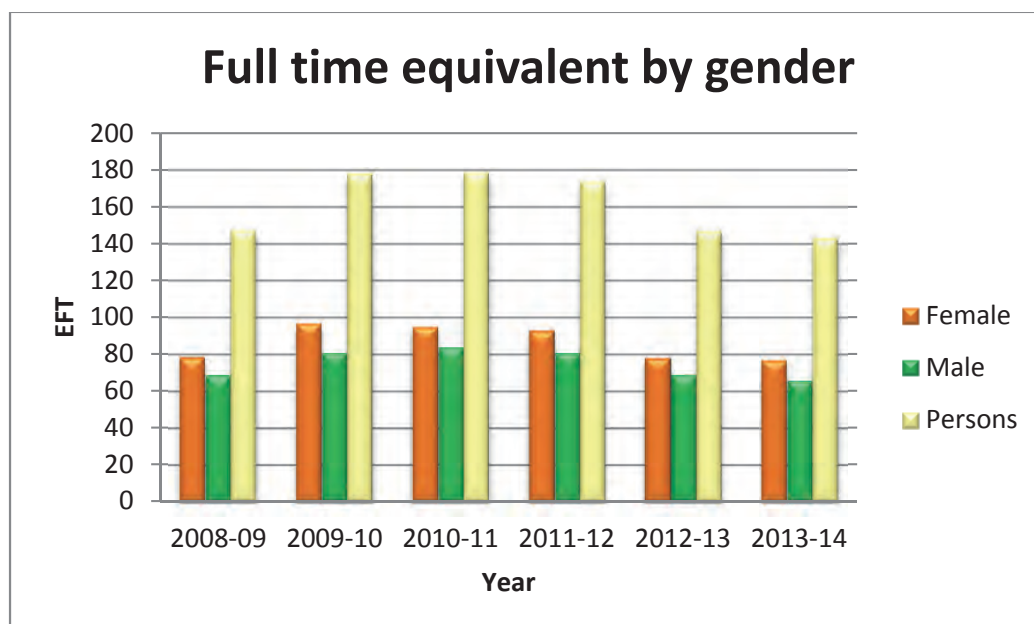
Age Distribution of Employees (actual numbers)



Employees In Each Work Area at 30 June 2014



Employees by Gender



Corporate Development – Our Organisation

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

The staff satisfaction survey undertaken on October 2013 showed a slight drop in staff satisfaction in this area, particularly in those departments most recently affected by the outcomes of the Service Review and other organisational restructuring. To address this Council ran three staff engagement workshops to assist and empower employees. These were designed to provide an outlet to discuss the impact on people's respective roles, increase sense of personal control and to reduce stress.

In addition Council continued to run a variety of Health and Wellbeing Programs covering topics relating to physical and mental health from an organisational and personal perspective. These included a mental health Are you OK? program, encouraging exercise during breaks with 'Walk the Block' and a pedometer challenge, participation in a corporate triathlon, driver safety awareness training, yoga sessions (in personal time) and First Aid training and CPR updates. Other activities included the influenza immunisation program offered to all staff and regular healthy eating updates in newsletters.

Council remains a participant in the Local Government Employees Health Plan Scheme which enables Council staff to join a private health fund at competitive rates.

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.

Council operates a Risk and Safety Committee made up of four Health and Safety Representatives and four Management Representatives who support and represent each workgroup across the organisation as well as four staff with professional responsibilities in aspects of risk management. The Committee aims to ensure that all identified hazards and risks are acknowledged, communicated and resolved promptly.

Hazard incident and injury reporting indicators showed a reduction in reported health and safety incidents in the workplace from 47 in 2012/13 to 36 in 2013/14. At the same time staff increased reporting hazards (rising from 7 to 17) enabling Council to reduce potential incidents before they occur.

Sick leave improved in 2013-14 as Council became a more stable workplace and uncertainty and stress reduced. In addition (in line with the reduction in incidents) Council's workcover claims reduced from 12 to 6.

Training, information and education remains an important aspect of our strong OH&S culture ensuring key people are trained in procedures to support health and safety in the workplace. Activities this year included:

- Two Health and Safety Representatives undertaking five day OH&S training and one undertaking the refresher training.
- Emergency control procedures were updated, 28 emergency control staff (fire wardens and deputies) received refresher training and two office evacuation drills were conducted.
- Training of key staff in emergency management.
- Training of 10 support and contact officers.
- First Aid training for 11 staff and CPR updates for nine employees.
- Driver safety training for 13 people.
- Defibrillator training for 12 employees.
- Lead auditors course for one employee.
- OH&S compliance training for one employee.

Risk Management

Council also undertook a range of activities to ensure that Council's exposure to risk is anticipated and managed appropriately. These included undergoing a range of audits and inspections, including an internal audit of Council's *Risk Management Framework*. Council is implementing actions from these.

Council also commenced a comprehensive review of its *Business Continuity Plan* to ensure Council is prepared in the event of any major business interruption.

Training and development

Council continued as an active participant in a North East Regional Development Scheme (NERDS) involving 10 Councils, which focuses on reducing costs and travelling for the associated rural councils by working collaboratively to run local and online training.

The online learning program 'Learning Seat' continues to assist Council to access professional development opportunities and to address training needs.

In 2013-14 we again increased participation and training delivery. Over the whole year 566 staff training days were delivered. There were also 261 staff enrolments in online training including inductions, prevention of bullying, prevention of sexual harassment, EEO, fraud awareness, MS Excel.

The delivery of onsite training included (in addition to those listed under OHS);

- Staff engagement
- Fraud awareness
- Confined space
- Chainsaw training
- Bridge inspections
- Working at heights
- Driver training workshop (in addition to the driver safety lessons)
- Conflict of Interest
- Protected Disclosure training
- Realistic Race (access and Inclusion workshop) 30
- High Performance Leadership Coach Program
- Providing Exceptional Customer Service
- Business Writing Skills
- Electronic Records Management Training

Training opportunities were also made available offsite and through externally arranged workshops including;

- Local Government Management Challenge

- Emerging Leaders workshop
- Fleet management workshops
- Council Report Writing
- Managing the Manager
- Planning Reforms
- Lean Basics for Local Government
- Working in Local Government
- Web Accessibility for Writers and Editors

Council also commenced an informal program of 'Learning lunchtimes' where staff volunteer and share their knowledge on topics as diverse as using GIS (Geographic Information Systems) and writing plain english.

Staff satisfaction survey

The Staff Satisfaction Survey was conducted in October 2013. The results showed a small increase in satisfaction levels from a low base following a survey conducted in 2011, which at the time reflected uncertainty within the organisation with respect to the outcomes of the Services Review underway at that time. The 2013 results indicate improved results around staff engagement, having clear direction, understanding the vision, and in areas of planning and leadership.

Awards / recognitions

Activities to recognise staff excellence and effort included:

- Regular peer-nominated Organisational Development recognition awards (OD Fellow award) for employees.
- Delivery of the annual awards scheme to recognise services delivered in line with organisational values. The presentation was held at the staff Christmas party and awards were presented to staff by the Mayor and CEO.

Staff turnover / recruitment / numbers

In early 2013-14 Council completed an organisational re-structure creating two organisational divisions and reducing senior management positions from three to two General Managers. This also involved some reorganization of reporting lines within the new structure. With these changes Council has returned to a more stable staffing level similar to pre-bushfire levels.

Staff turnover figures showed more staff terminations (61) than new staff commencements (54), which reflected a number of grant funded positions coming to the end of their terms. These figures also include seasonal pool staff (28).

The terminations included resignations (16), redundancy (1), end of contract or casual engagement (40), retirement (3) and other terminations (1).

Of the 54 staff appointments made (including 28 temporary pool staff): 50% (27) have previous local government experience and 9.25% (5) were internal recruits. The time taken to fill a vacancy averaged 27 working days.

As at 30 June 2014 staff numbers were 201 people at 141 EFT (Equivalent full time staff).

Equal employment opportunity

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

The Access and Inclusion committee has operated well with great representation from Council and key partners in the community working to improve access to council services and access to employment. Some of the initiatives in access and EEO included a refresher training in EEO for all staff, running the Realistic Race in Yea (involving teams negotiating a range of access challenges), facilitating a transgender arrangement in the workplace, engaging a disabled staff member through an access grant, and employing a trainee to support youth access to employment.

Staff Code of Conduct

The Murrindindi Shire Council *Code of Conduct* remains a core document about the way in which we behave in our working relationships with each other and with the wider community.

The *Code of Conduct* establishes 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.

All new staff are made aware of their obligations under the code of conduct as part of their induction. In addition Fraud Prevention Awareness and Conflict of Interest training was conducted for all staff, as a refresher in line with best practice.

Internal communications

Council's intranet, 'Murri', and the Daily Update front page have continued to develop as integral communication tools for our organisation.

These tools are a key component in the induction of new staff and provide a single focal point for access to a range of information.

The staff newsletter *The Murricle* is published fortnightly. 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

Other forms of internal communication include general staff meetings, departmental meetings and depot meetings. As a result of a six month leadership program, managers have increased one on one and regular team meetings to assist in effective communication and engagement.

Corporate Development Our Council

Integrated Planning Framework

Murrindindi Shire Council has developed a corporate planning framework which identifies the relationship between the *Council Plan*, its various strategies and the individual departmental business plans and staff performance plans.

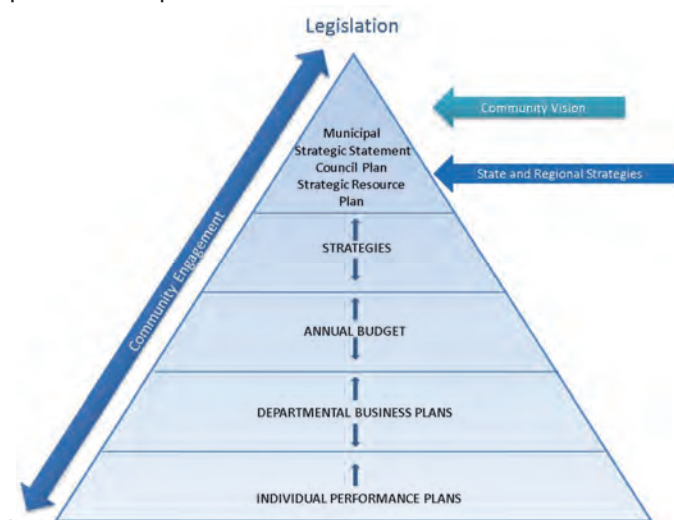


Figure 2: Integrated Planning Framework

The planning framework provides for the Council Plan Strategic Objectives to be linked to the implementation of adopted strategies that are funded and resourced through the Annual Budget.

The Council then measures and monitors its performance and reports both internally and to its community as required.

Council receives formal reports on a quarterly basis detailing progress against the *Council Plan*, the Annual Budget and the *Capital Works Program*.

The role of local government

Local Government is governed 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.

Councillor Code of Conduct

All Councils in Victoria are required by the *Local Government Act 1989* (s76C) to develop and regularly review a *Councillor Code of Conduct*.

A *Councillor Code of Conduct* was adopted by Murrindindi Shire Councillors on 25 September 2013.

The *Councillor Code of Conduct* sets out the standards of behaviour and disclosure expected of Councillors, and identifies a process for resolving complaints.

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 2013-2014 the allowance paid to the Mayor of Murrindindi Shire Council was \$55,026 plus an executive standard vehicle, and an amount equivalent to 9% superannuation.

The allowance paid to the Councillors was \$18,418 and an amount equivalent to 9% superannuation for the 2012 / 2013 year.

All Councillors are provided with an iPad and mobile phone.

For further detail regarding allowances and expense entitlements please refer to the *Councillor Reimbursement Policy* adopted on 22 January 2014.

Council elections

All seven current Murrindindi Councillors were elected on 27 October 2012 for a four-year term

Council's next election will be held on 22 October 2016.

Each year the seven Councillors elect the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

Council electoral structure

The Shire of Murrindindi is divided into seven single councillor wards. Ward boundaries are aligned to ensure an even spread of voters in each ward.



Council meetings

Council decisions are made by resolution of Council either at Ordinary Council Meetings or at Special Council Meetings.

Ordinary Meetings of Council are held on the fourth Wednesday of the month.

Council meetings are held in the Alexandra Council Chamber except for three meetings annually which are held in locations across the Shire. A schedule of Council meetings is available at any Council office or on our website. Community members are encouraged to attend and participate in Council meetings.

Councillors generally also meet on the first three Wednesdays of each month for briefing sessions. Briefing sessions give Councillors the opportunity to hear presentations by officers on upcoming items and to seek clarification on these and other issues that may appear on the agenda at future Council meetings.

A 'Public Participation' session is held at the beginning of each Council meeting to allow members of the public to address Council or have a question answered.

Agendas for Council meetings are made available 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. As well as the formal notice we make every effort to publicise these meetings.

Council meetings are conducted in accordance with the procedures as detailed in Murrindindi Shire Council's Governance Local Law 2, 2014 adopted by Council on 25 June 2014.

A 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. This meeting was held on 30 October 2013.

Council meeting attendances for 2013-2014

	Ordinary Council Meetings		Special Meetings	
	Eligible to Attend	Attended	Eligible to Attend	Attended
Cr M Rae, Mayor	12	11	4	4
Cr J Walsh	12	12	4	4
Cr C Challen	12	12	4	4
Cr J Kennedy	12	11	4	3
Cr B Magner	12	9	4	4
Cr A Derwent	12	10	4	3
Cr C Ruhr	12	11	4	3

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 15 Section 86 Committees of Management.

Portfolios

Each Councillor, with the exception of the Mayor, is responsible for a specific 'Portfolio' which focuses on a functional area of Council.

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 that fall under that Portfolio.

Councillor	Portfolio
Cr Margaret Rae	The Mayor does not hold a portfolio
Cr John Walsh	Land Use Planning
Cr Christine Challen	Economic Development
Cr John Kennedy	Natural Environment and Climate Change
Cr Bernie Magner	Infrastructure and Waste
Cr Andrew Derwent	Community Services
Cr Cris Ruhr	Corporate and Customer Services

Local Laws

Council's Local Laws are:

- *Governance Local Law 2, 2014*
- *Community Local Law 2012*

Local Laws are available for viewing at all Council offices and online at www.murrindindi.vic.gov.au

Council conducted a review of its *Governance Local Law* in 2014 and on 25 June 2014 adopted *Governance Local Law 2, 2014*.

Policy and strategy reviews

Policies

New Policies

There were nine new policies adopted during the year.

Capital Works Expenditure

Outlines the management of savings from capital works projects including any unspent contingency budgets.

Complaints Resolution

Ensures a consistent, fair and equitable approach to resolving all Murrindindi Shire Council customer complaints. Responses will be provided at the earliest opportunity and in the most efficient way. Council will treat all feedback as an opportunity for improvement.

Conflict of Interest

The Conflict of Interest Policy outlines the types of interest and sets the disclosure requirements of Councillors, members of Special Committees, the Chief Executive Officer (the CEO), Council Officers and Contractors.

Councillor Development and Conference

Establishes principles that underpin the professional development for Councillors.

Employee Code Red and Fire Danger

Provides an overview for employees on the specific arrangements for "Code Red" and other fire danger rated days and outlines the employment restrictions during such periods.

Environmental Standards in Infrastructure Works

Provides greater clarity around the requirements and process for seeking appropriate environmental approvals in the delivery of Council's Infrastructure Works Programs.

Service Provision on Code Red Days

Outlines how Council will respond to a Fire Danger Rating of Code Red in terms of its service provision to the community.

Special Charge Scheme for Infrastructure Works

Provides an equitable and consistent approach to the implementation and administration of Special Charge Schemes undertaken by Murrindindi Shire Council pursuant to Section 163 of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

Street & Public Lighting Installation

Provides a framework for assessing the need for new street and public lighting installations and an equitable and consistent approach to responding to requests for new street lighting or public lighting installations received by Council from members of the community.

Policy and strategy reviews

Policy Reviews

There were thirteen policies reviewed during the year.

Asset Management

Set out Council's commitment to manage and care for its assets in a way that meets the needs of the community by outlining the importance of asset management within the organisation and setting out the broad framework for the implementation of asset management in a structured and coordinated manner.

Briefing Note

Councillors and the Executive Management Team must be aware and up to date on all issues/projects that the Council faces; Briefing Notes are the forum to ensure that everyone is adequately informed.

Corporate Credit Card

This Policy provides for the appropriate use of Corporate Credit Cards.

Councillor Code of Conduct (including A Guide to Councillors)

Outlines the responsibilities and behaviours that are to be observed in order to provide fair, accurate and unbiased advice, to act promptly and effectively and to manage assets efficiently.

Councillor Reimbursement

Establishes the expense entitlements for a Councillor in relation to reimbursement or pre payment of out of pocket expenses incurred while performing duties as a Councillor, support entitlements that will be provided to Councillors to allow them to effectively carry out their duties, and support available to Councillors for upgrading their skills during their term of office.

Driver Safety

Ensures vehicles are operated and maintained in a safe manner, minimising the incidence and severity of motor vehicle incidents including use of vehicles for commuter and private use and extends to the use of private vehicles for council related business.

Internal Grievance Resolution

Maintains a safe and healthy work environment and encourage effective resolution of internal grievances by maintaining a safe and healthy work environment and encourage effective resolution of internal grievances.

Meeting Rooms and Council Chambers

Defines the expectations and obligations when booking and using the Council's meeting room facilities.

Prevention of Bullying and Occupational Violence

Outlines Council's position that bullying and workplace violence will not be tolerated and to provide guidelines for

the processes to follow if any instances of bullying or other inappropriate behaviours are reported.

Procurement Policy

Provides guidance to Council to allow consistency and control over procurement activities; demonstrate accountability to ratepayers, and guidance on ethical behaviour in public sector purchasing.

Protected Disclosures

Supports the ethical behaviours and values expected from Councillors and Council Officers and agents as detailed in the Councillor and Staff Codes of Conduct.

Township Entrance and Community Event Frames Guidelines

Assists Council or its nominated community group to manage event promotion on town entry signage and service/club signage.

Vehicle Usage

Outlines the conditions for officer use of motor vehicles, including outlining obligations for general usage and the circumstances when vehicles may be used for different Council purposes.

Strategy

During 2013-2014 Council adopted seven strategies.

- Yea Saleyards Strategic Business Plan – adopted 25 June 2014.
- Updated Murrindindi Heritage Study 2011 – adopted 28 May 2014.
- Kinglake Flowerdale & Toolangi Plan – Implementation Strategy – adopted 26 February 2014.
- Kinglake Flowerdale & Toolangi Plan & Design Framework – adopted 26 February 2014.
- Domestic Animals Management Plan 2013-2017 – adopted 18 December 2013.
- Municipal Public Health & Wellbeing Plan 2013-2017 – adopted 23 October 2013.
- Review of Council Road Management Plan 2013-2017 – adopted 8 August 2013.

Auditing

Audit Advisory Committee

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

The Internal Audit Advisory Committee currently comprises the following members:

Ian McKaskill (Chair)
Robert Richards
Michele Sheward
Cr Margaret Rae (non-voting)
Cr John Walsh
Cr John Kennedy

The Chief Executive Officer and a representative of the Internal Auditor are also required to attend meetings in a non-voting capacity. A representative of the External Auditor is also required to attend where either the year-end financial statements or external audit reports are to be considered.

The Audit Committee met on four occasions during the 2013-2014 financial year, providing invaluable advice to Council on a number of important issues including reviews of Contract Management Framework, Payroll and Purchasing systems.

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 HLB Mann Judd - appointed 1 December 2010.

During 2013-2014 the Internal Auditor conducted the following components of the audit program:

- Review of Risk Management Framework – ongoing as of June 2014
- Review of Project Management – completed November 2013
- Review of Cash Handling Procedures – completed November 2013
- Review of Planning and Management Processes – completed October 2013
- Review of Service Planning – completed July 2013

External Audits

Council's external auditor is currently the Victorian Auditor-General's Office. The main audit is conducted in early September with interim audits conducted during the year.

Public Liability and Property Audits

Council's regional ranking was 7 in 2013-2014 for the JMAPP Regional Risk Audit.

Civic Mutual Plus (CMP), now known as MAV Insurance, Liability Mutual Insurance, conducted the Public and Professional Liability audit.

Privacy

Council is committed to the responsible collection, handling and protection of the personal privacy of residents, ratepayers and the community as a whole. Council has policies in place to ensure adherence with the *Information Privacy Act 2000* and will only collect, use or disclose information where it is necessary to perform Council functions or where required by law.

Murrindindi Shire Council will endeavour to take all reasonable steps to keep any information held about you secure. Murrindindi Shire Council employees are aware of their obligations to respect the confidential nature of identifying and personal information held by Council.

Freedom of Information

The *Freedom of Information Act 1982* gives the community a legally enforceable right to information held by Council.

Applications under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* must be made in writing and a fee of \$26.50 (as of 1 July 2014) must be paid. Information regarding Council's FOI application process can be found on Council's website or available from any of the Council Offices.

Community members are encouraged to contact Council's FOI Officer prior to lodging an application to receive advice regarding what is and isn't accessible.

Freedom of Information	2013-2014
Access granted in full	Nil
Access granted in part	9
Access denied in full	Nil
Withdrawn	Nil
Not proceeded with	Nil
Act does not apply	Nil
Not processed	Nil
No documents	Nil
Outside the Act	Nil
Not yet finalised	Nil
Granted in part - outstanding from previous year	1

Year	Number of applications
2009-2010	3
2010-2011	12
2011-2012	16
2012-2013	9
2013-2014	9

Protected Disclosures

(formally Whistleblowers Protection Act)

The *Protected Disclosure Act 2012* increased integrity reforms in Victoria, including the establishment of the Independent Broad-Based Anti-Corruption Commission (IBAC), a body established to promote integrity and accountability across the Victorian Public Sector, including Local Government.

Whistleblowers expose serious problems within the management and operations of a government organisation. The *Protected Disclosure Act 2012* enables people to make disclosures about improper conduct within the public sector without fear of reprisal. The Act aims to ensure openness and accountability by encouraging people to make disclosures and protecting them when they do.

Murrindindi Shire Council is committed to the aims and objectives of the *Protected Disclosure Act 2012* and has in place procedures to facilitate the making of disclosures. Council does not tolerate improper conduct by its employees, officers or members, nor the taking of reprisals against those who come forward to disclose such conduct.

Contact details for council's Protected Disclosure Coordinator/Officer are:

- **Protected Disclosure Coordinator:** Michael Chesworth, General Manager Corporate and Community Services, Murrindindi Shire Council, PO Box 138, Alexandra 3714. Ph: 5772 0335
- **Protected Disclosure Officer:** Liz Peddie, Coordinator Human Resources, Murrindindi Shire Council, PO Box 138, Alexandra 3714. Ph: 5772 0396

Alternative Contacts

- Independent Broad-Based Anti-Corruption Commission (IBAC), Address: IBAC, GP Box 24234, Melbourne Victoria 3000, Internet: www.ibac.vic.gov.au ; Phone: 1300 735 135

Note: All disclosures about Councillors should be directed to IBAC.

2013-2014 Disclosures

2012-13 Disclosures	
Protected Disclosures Topic	Report 2013-2014
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

Public documents

Section 11 of the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2004* requires Council to have certain documents available for public inspection. Documents and registers available for inspection in accordance with these Regulations and the *Local Government Act 1989* are:

- The certified voters' roll for a Council election - for the period beginning on the certification date and ending 30 days after election day.
- Election Campaign Donation Returns Register.
- Councillor Code of Conduct.
- Councillor Reimbursement Policy.
- Details of current allowances fixed for the Mayor and Councillors under Section 74 or 74A of the Act.
- Register of Interests.
- All Local Laws adopted by the Council.
- Council Plan, Strategic Resource Plan, Budget and Annual Report.
- Auditors Report (incorporated in Annual Report).
- Details regarding differential rates declared by Council.
- Special Rate.
- Quality and Cost Standards.
- Details of senior officers' total salary packages for the current financial year and the previous year including the gross salary, the amount of the Council or employer contribution to superannuation, the value of any motor vehicle provided by the Council and the total value of any other benefits and allowances provided by the Council.
- Details of overseas or interstate travel (with the exception of interstate travel by land for less than 3 days) undertaken in an official capacity by Councillors or any member of Council staff in the previous 12 months, including the names of the Councillors or members of Council staff and the date, destination, purpose and total cost of the overseas or interstate travel.
- Names of Councillors and Council Officers who submitted returns of interest during the financial year.
- Agendas for Council meetings - except parts of meetings closed to the public under section 89 of the Act.
- Minutes of Council meetings - except parts of the meetings closed to the public under section 89 of the Act.
- 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 and held in the previous 12 months except if the minutes relate to parts of meetings which have been closed to members of the public under Section 89 of the Act.

- A register of delegations kept under Sections 87, 88 and 98 of the Act, including the date on which the last review under Section 98(6) of the Act took place.
- Submissions received in accordance with 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, including the name of the other party to the lease and the terms and the value of the lease.
- A register of authorised officers appointed under Section 224 of the Act.
- A list of donations and grants made by the Council during the financial year.
- A list of organisations that Council was a member of during the financial year.
- A list of contracts valued at \$100,000 (or such higher amount as is fixed from time to time under Section 186(1) of the Act) or more -
 - (i) which the Council entered into during the financial year without first engaging in a competitive process; and
 - (ii) which are not contracts referred to in section 186(5) of the Act.
- Council's current Procurement Policy
- Written record of 'Assembly of Councillors' for a period of 12 months after the date of the assembly.

Cemetery management

Murrindindi Shire Council as Trustee for the Yea Cemetery Trust administers the pioneer and new cemeteries in Yea.

Activities completed with regard to the Yea cemeteries in 2013–2014 included:

- Opening of a memorial shelter
- Receipt of grant for computer
- Review of the cemetery fee structure
- Completed Grave Safe Training

Looking forward

- Secured Cemetery Site Survey for sealed road, pavement design and drainage.
- Continue the development of the cemetery grounds
- Seek funding for road works to achieve safe pedestrian access.
- Develop a 'leaves' memorial recognising those whose remains are not interred in the cemetery.

Donations and Grants provided by Council 2013-2014

RECEIVED BY	AMOUNT
Alexandra & District Open Gardens	\$5,000.00
Alexandra Community Leisure Centre	\$14,000.00
Alexandra Information Centre	\$3,579.28
Alexandra Pastoral & Agriculture Ladies Auxiliary	\$100.00
Alexandra Pre School	\$2,312.00
Alexandra Timber Tramway Museum	\$3,000.00
Country Womens Association-Hume Goulburn	\$800.00
Eildon Community Leisure Centre	\$1,000.00
Eildon Information Centre	\$1,090.90
Eildon Pre School	\$4,200.00
Eildon Resource Centre	\$500.00
Fawcett Mechanics Institute	\$500.00
Glenburn Hall & Progress Association	\$325.00
Kinglake Community Centre	\$2,000.00
Kinglake Ranges Neighbourhood House	\$409.09
Kinglake Ranges Tennis Club	\$500.00
Kinglake Senior Citizens	\$3,585.00
Koori Kids	\$450.00
Lions Club of Eildon	\$425.00
Lions Club of Marysville	\$750.00
Marysville Information Centre	\$3,500.00
Mystic Mountains Tourism Special Events	\$500.00
Murrindindi Woodbourne Community Hub	\$227.27
Rotary Club of Alexandra	\$2,500.00
Rotary Club of Kinglake	\$2,000.00
Rotary Club of Yea	\$2,950.00
State Emergency Services Alexandra	\$19,280.00
State Emergency Services Kinglake	\$19,280.00
State Emergency Services Marysville	\$19,280.00
Strath Creek Reserves & Halls	\$375.00
Triangle Arts Group	\$2,000.00
Upper Goulburn Landcare	\$5,000.00
Y Water Discovery Centre	\$20,000.00
Yea Indoor Recreation Centre	\$4,000.00
Yea Information Centre	\$1,323.23
Yea Pioneer Reserve	\$5,000.00
Total	\$151,741.77

Organisation memberships for 2013-2014

ORGANISATION	MEMBERSHIP FEE
Local Government Professionals	\$1,076.36
North East Regional Development Scheme	\$2,500.00
Australian Local Government Job Directory	\$775.00
Municipal Association Of Victoria	\$23,681.82
Family Day Care Australia	\$190.73
Victorian Employers Chamber of Commerce	\$6,000.00
Timber Towns Victoria	\$3,000.00
Public Libraries Victoria Network Inc	\$584.00
Family Day Care Victoria	\$275.00
Civil Contractors Federation	\$604.55
National Saleyards Quality Assurance Ltd	\$470.00
Children's Book Council	\$46.66
Victorian Local Governance Association	\$2,520.00
Goulburn Valley Regional Waste Management Group	\$4,092.00
SAI Global	\$423.64
Meals Victoria	\$72.73
Victorian Maternal & Child Health Coordinators Group	\$50.00
Australian Local Government Womens Association	\$250.00
National In-Home Childcare Association	\$200.00
National Timber Councils Association	\$2,500.00
Family Day Care Victoria	\$287.00
Play Australia	\$250.00
Total	\$49,849.49

Capital works summary 2013-2014

CAPITAL WORKS UNDERTAKEN AND COMPLETED DURING 2013/2014

Description of works	Works in progress 01 July 2013 \$	Total value of works 2013-2014 \$	Total value of works completed 30 June 2014 \$
BUILDINGS & STRUCTURES			
Alexandra Senior Citizens (Installation of window furnishings)	-	7,455	7,455
Alexandra Swimming Pool	-	37,209	37,209
Buxton Reserve Upgrade	32,846	-	32,846
CJ Dennis Hall (Restoration of facade)	-	15,979	15,979
Council Offices Remodelling	-	52,624	52,624
Eildon Transfer Station (Refurbishment of Bin Bay)	-	9,387	9,387
Gallipoli Park (Skate Park)	18,125	110,506	128,631
Gallipoli Park Pavilion	-	94,547	94,547
Kinglake Community Centre (Kitchenette Refurbishment)	-	8,998	8,998
Kinglake Lions Park	14,891	11,286	26,177
Kinglake Services Centre (External Painting)	-	17,375	17,375
Kinglake Transfer Station (Generator upgrade)	-	7,996	7,996
Kinglake Transfer Station (Refurbishment)	-	19,759	19,759
Kinglake Transfer Station Shed	-	13,543	13,543
Landfill Solar system	-	14,742	14,742
Marysville Community Centre (Kitchenette Lower Floor)	67,716	3,541	71,257
Marysville Heart	720	14,636	15,356
Marysville Retirement Village	12,991	-	12,991
Marysville Community Centre	295,966	-	295,966
Memorial Reserve Redevelopment, Kinglake	-	3,355	3,355
Narbethong Reserve (Landscaping)	-	14,170	14,170
Narbethong Reserve (Public Amenities)	165,633	-	165,633
Narbethong Reserve (Structural)	73,416	19,702	93,118
Playground Renewal	-	6,810	6,810
Public Conveniences - Refurbishment	-	20,025	20,025
Strath Creek Community Hall	5,935	6,706	12,642
Toolangi & Castella Central Park	3,849	1,610	5,458
Transfer Station Yea (Heating and Cooling)	-	3,460	3,460
Transfer Station (Paving and Fencing)	-	30,687	30,687
Tumbling Waters Reserve Playground & Facilities	43,140	-	43,140
UGFM Building (Electrical)	-	4,000	4,000
Yea Community Park - Railway Station	76,516	-	76,516
Yea Grandstand - Refurbishment	-	10,261	10,261
Yea Pioneer Reserve	8,181	-	8,181
Yea Railway Station	-	27,050	27,050
Yea Saleyards Development	-	2,380	2,380
Yea Shire Hall (furniture and furnishings)	-	12,139	12,139
Yea Shire Hall (Refurbishment)	165,166	646,842	812,009
Total Buildings & Structures	985,090	1,248,779	2,233,869

Capital works summary 2013-2014

CAPITAL WORKS UNDERTAKEN AND COMPLETED DURING 2013/2014

Description of works	Works in progress 01 July 2013 \$	Total value of works 2013-2014 \$	Total value of works completed 30 June 2014 \$
LAND			
Lot 1 Road Riverside Drive Eildon	-	4,650	4,650
Total Land	-	4,650	4,650
Plant And Machinery			
Major Plant	-	467,159	467,159
Motor Vehicles	-	254,198	254,198
Total Plant & Equipment	-	721,357	721,357
ROADS			
Buxton Streetscape	28,391	33,692	62,083
Gravel Roads - Resheeting	-	977,019	977,019
Kerb Renewal	-	101,092	101,092
Marysville Community Centre Car park	-	279,681	279,681
Molesworth-Dropmore Road	20,161	6,924	27,085
Sealed Road - Renewal & Patching	-	504,629	504,629
Sealed Roads - Reseals	-	718,138	718,138
Shoulder Resheeting Program	-	23,465	23,465
Topsie Gully Road	-	27,783	27,783
Town Amenity Project	6,883	55,854	62,737
Total Road and Paths	55,435	2,728,276	2,783,711
BRIDGES			
Allendale Road Bridge, Strath Creek (Replacement)	31,444	319,514	350,958
Big River Bridge (Guard Rail Replacement)	-	68,589	68,589
Breakaway Bridge, Acheron (Refurbishment)	343,870	357,678	701,548
McGuigans Rd Bridge, Kanumbra (Replacement)	-	139,119	139,119
Rotary Park Cable Bridge, Alexandra (Refurbishment)	37,320	3,560	40,880
Toponga Bridge (1), Eildon-Jamieson Road (Refurbishment)	-	34,294	34,294
Toponga Bridge (2), Eildon-Jamieson Road (Refurbishment)	-	51,442	51,442
Total Bridges	412,634	974,195	1,386,829
FOOTPATHS AND CYCLEWAYS			
Footpath Renewal	-	78,566	78,566
Footpaths - Missing Links	-	116,507	116,507
Toolangi All Purpose Track	9,346	4,461	13,807
Yea Wetlands Path Reinstatement	-	18,240	18,240
Total Footpaths and Cycleways	9,346	217,774	227,119

Capital works summary 2013-2014

CAPITAL WORKS UNDERTAKEN AND COMPLETED DURING 2013/2014

Description of works	Works in progress 01 July 2013 \$	Total value of works 2013-2014 \$	Total value of works completed 30 June 2014 \$
DRAINAGE			
Drainage Initiatives Yea	-	101,760	101,760
Drainage Initiatives Buxton	11,450	132,588	144,038
Drainage Initiatives Alexandra and Kinglake	-	30,206	30,206
Drainage Upgrade Marysville	-	10,815	10,815
Stormwater Quality Improvements	-	16,795	16,795
Drainage Initiative Marysville	20,527	-	20,527
Total Drainage	31,976	292,164	324,140
HERITAGE AND CULTURAL ASSETS			
1000 Hands Project Marysville	113,291	14,627	127,918
Total Heritage and Cultural Assets	113,291	14,627	127,918
FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT			
Computer Equipment	-	26,990	26,990
Other	-	189,918	189,918
Total Furniture & Equipment	-	216,908	216,908
LIBRARY MATERIALS			
Bookstock	-	61,290	61,290
DVD and Audio Visual	-	9,523	9,523
Magazines	-	4,063	4,063
Total Library Materials	-	74,876	74,876
WORK IN PROGRESS			
Ghin Ghin Goulburn Bridge	-	131,629	131,629
Y Water Centre	-	1,153,687	1,153,687
Green Street	-	197,134	197,134
Buxton Flood Levy	-	3,200	3,200
Various Buildings Access Compliance	-	803	803
Essential Safety Services System	-	93,755	93,755
Yea Community Shed	-	17,374	17,374
Yarck Streetscape	-	7,646	7,646
Urban Access Improvements	-	54,066	54,066
RV Dump Sites	-	739	739
Yea Swimming Pool	-	47,396	47,396
Kinglake Ranges Art History Walk	-	45,078	45,078
Landfill Cell Constructions	-	62,976	62,976
Taggerty Walking Trail & Township	-	29,618	29,618
Road Safety Improvements	-	156,995	156,995
Total Works In Progress	-	2,002,097	2,002,097
Total value of Capital works completed 2013-2014	1,607,772	8,495,703	10,103,475

Local Government Indicators 2013-2014

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

Category	Description	2014
Overall performance	Community satisfaction rating for overall performance generally of the Council	46
Advocacy	Community Satisfaction rating for Council's lobbying on behalf of the community	47
Community Consultation	Community satisfaction rating for Council's community consultation and engagement.	48
All rates	Average rates and charges per assessment	\$1,650.84
Residential rates	Average residential rates and charges per assessment	\$1,505.09
Operating costs	Average operating expenditure per assessment	\$3,142.09
Capital expenditure	Average capital expenditure per assessment	\$895.89
Infrastructure	Renewal undertaken as a percentage of budget	100.5%
	Total capital works completed	82.8%
Debts	Average liabilities per assessment	\$389.91
Operating result	Operating result per assessment	\$137.92

National Competition Policy Compliance

Council continues to ensure compliance with the National Competition Policy in order to ensure the transparency of its decision making and as a good business practice.

Introduction to the Financials

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.

Particular terms required by the Standards may not be familiar to some readers. Further, Council is a 'not for profit' organisation and some of the generally recognised terms used in private sector company reports are not appropriate for Council's reports.

Council is committed to accountability and transparency. It is in this context that the plain English guide has been developed to assist readers to understand and analyse the Financial Report.

What is contained in the Annual Financial Report?

Council's Financial Report has three sets of Statements:

1. Standard Statements
2. Financial Statements
3. Performance Statement

Each of these statements is prepared by Council's employees, examined by the Council Audit Advisory Committee and by Council, and then are audited by the Victorian Auditor-General.

Standard Statements

The Standard Statements report on how the Council performed financially during the year compared to its Annual Budget. The Standard Statements include an Income Statement, Balance Sheet, Cash Flow Statement and Statement of Capital Works. With the exception of the Statement of Capital Works, each of the statements is discussed later in this guide. The Statement of Capital Works sets out the expenditure on creating or buying property, infrastructure, plant and equipment assets by each category of asset. It also shows how much has been spent on renewing, upgrading, expanding or creating new assets of this type.

These Standard Statements provide a comparison between the actual results for the year and the budget that was set at the start of the year. All major differences are explained in accompanying notes.

Comprehensive 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. It provides a view of Council's operating performance. 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 Balance Sheet

The Balance Sheet shows a snap shot of Council's financial position as at 30 June. 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 12 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 are made up of the total current and noncurrent assets less the current and noncurrent liabilities.

Statement of Changes in Equity

During the course of the year the value of Total Equity as set out in the Balance Sheet changes. This Statement shows the values of such changes and how these changes arose.

The main reasons for a change in equity stem from:

- The 'surplus or deficit' from operations, described in the Comprehensive Income Statement as Comprehensive Result for the year.
- The use of monies from Council's reserves.
- A revaluation of the assets which takes place on a regular basis to ensure the most up-to-date value is included in Council's books. It also occurs when existing assets are taken up in the books for the first time.

Cash Flow Statement

The Cash Flow Statement summarises Council's cash payments and cash receipts for the year. This Statement is presented according to a very specific Accounting Standard and needs some care in analysis. The values may differ from those shown in the Comprehensive Income Statement because the Comprehensive Income Statement is prepared on an accrual accounting basis.

Cash in this Statement refers to bank deposits and other forms of highly liquid investments that can be readily converted to cash. Council's cash arises from, and is used in, three main areas.

1. Cash flows from operating activities:

- Receipts – all cash received into Council's bank account from ratepayers and others who owe money to Council. Receipts also include the interest earnings from Council's cash investments. It does not include the costs associated with the sale of assets.
- Payments – all cash paid by Council from its bank account to employees, creditors and other persons. It does not include the costs associated with the creation of assets.

2. Cash flows from investing activities:

- This section shows the cash invested in the creation or purchase of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment assets and the cash received from the sale of these assets.

3. Cash flows from financing activities:

- This is where the receipt and repayment of borrowed funds are recorded.

The bottom line of the Cash Flow Statement is the cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year. This shows the capacity of Council to meet its cash debts and other liabilities.

Notes to the Financial Statements

The Notes are a very important and informative section of the report. The Australian Accounting Standards are not prescriptive regarding a lot of issues. Therefore, to enable the reader to understand the basis on which the values shown in the Statements are established, it is necessary to provide details of Council's significant accounting policies.

Apart from the accounting policies, the Notes also give details behind many of the summary figures contained in the Statements. The Note numbers are shown beside the relevant items in the Comprehensive Income Statement, Balance Sheet and the Cash Flow Statement.

The Notes also include information that Council wishes to disclose but which cannot be incorporated into the Statements.

Other notes include:

- The cost of the various functions/activities of Council.
- The breakdown of expenses, revenues, reserves and other assets.
- Contingent liabilities.
- Transactions with persons related to Council.
- Financial performance indicators (ratios).

The Notes should be read at the same time as, and together with, the other parts of the Financial Statements to get a clear picture of the accounts.

Performance Statement

The Performance Statement shows the results that were achieved for the year for a number of performance indicators. These are then compared against targets that were set for those indicators at the beginning of the year and published in Council's Annual Budget.

The document is then certified by the Principal Accounting Officer, the person responsible for the financial management of Council that, in her/his opinion, the Financial Statements have met all the statutory and professional reporting requirements.

The performance statement is also certified by the Chief Executive Officer and two Councillors on behalf of Council that, in their opinion, the Financial Statements are fair and not misleading or inaccurate.

Auditor-General's Report

The Independent Audit Report provides the reader with an external and independent opinion on the Financial Statements. It confirms that the Financial Report has been prepared in accordance with relevant legislation and professional standards and that it represents a fair picture of the financial affairs of the Council.