



# WEST WIMMERA SHIRE COUNCIL

2018 - 2019

# ANNUAL REPORT

*The best of country living*

# Council Information

## Offices

Edenhope Civic Centre  
49 Elizabeth Street  
EDENHOPE VIC 3318  
Tel: (03) 5585 9900  
Fax: (03) 5585 9950

Kaniva District Office  
25 Baker Street  
KANIVA VIC 3419  
Tel: (03) 5392 7700  
Fax: (03) 5392 7750

## Postal Address

PO Box 201  
EDENHOPE VIC 3318

## E-mail

[council@westwimmera.vic.gov.au](mailto:council@westwimmera.vic.gov.au)

## Office Hours

Monday to Friday  
8.30am – 5.00pm

## Website

[www.westwimmera.vic.gov.au](http://www.westwimmera.vic.gov.au)

## Auditor

Crowe Horwath, Ballarat  
Victorian Auditor General, Melbourne

## Banker

National Australia Bank

## Solicitors

Stewart & Lipshut  
Victoria Street, Nhill

## Internal Auditor

RSD Audit  
Breen Street, Bendigo

Maddocks

La Trobe Street, Melbourne

Russel Kennedy Solicitors

La Trobe Street, Melbourne

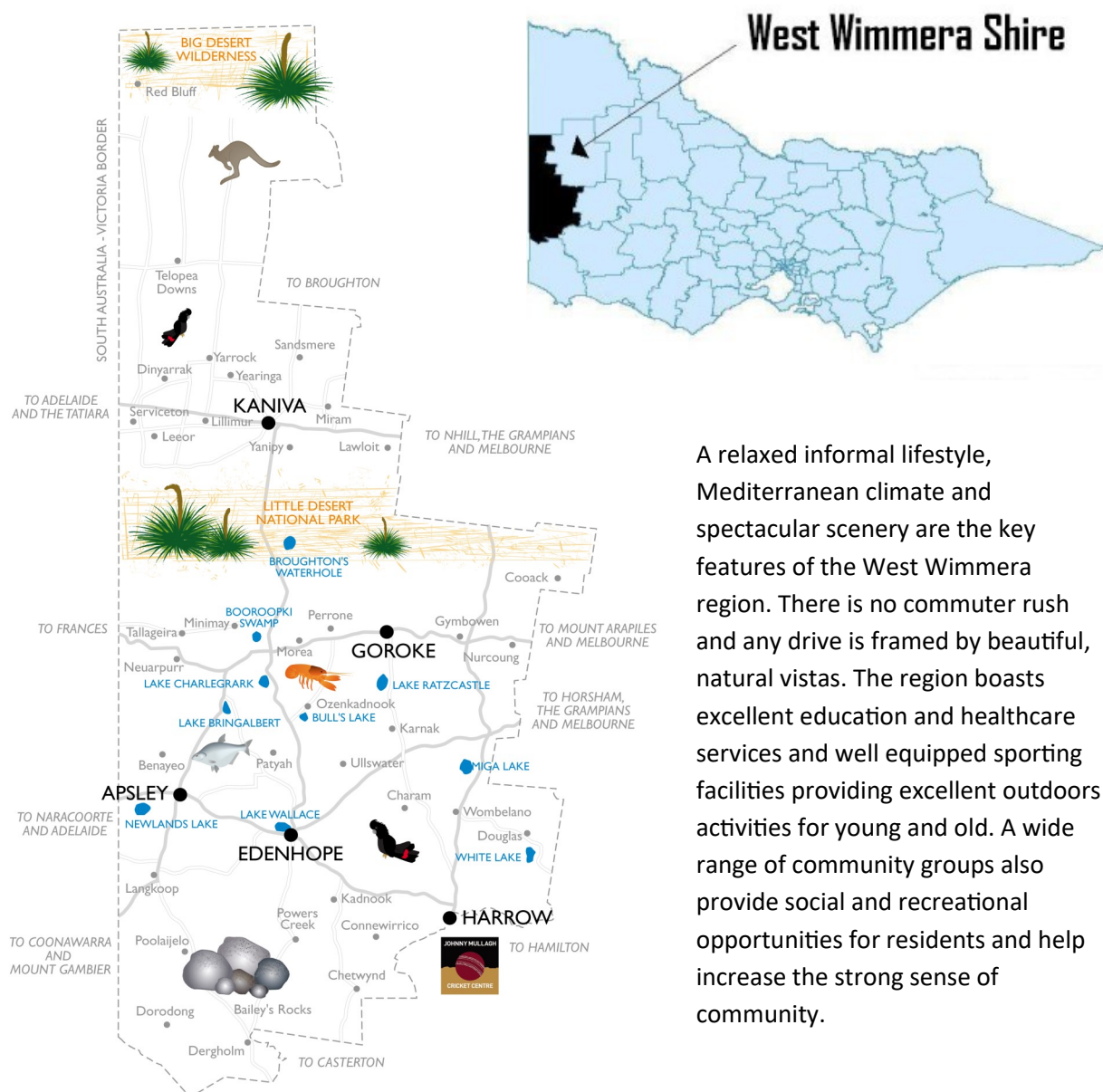




## About West Wimmera

West Wimmera Shire Council, situated along the Victorian - South Australian border, covers 9,200 square kilometres and includes the townships of Apsley, Edenhope and Harrow in the southern half of the shire through to Goroke, Kaniva and Serviceton in the north. Home to approximately 4,000 people, the region prides itself in its welcoming communities and wide diversity of industry and environment.

Consisting of untouched desert parks, vast wetlands and fertile plains, West Wimmera is equally known for its acres of wheat and legumes, and as a home to the famous Malleefowl, red-tail black cockatoo and a unique abundance of wildflowers.



A relaxed informal lifestyle, Mediterranean climate and spectacular scenery are the key features of the West Wimmera region. There is no commuter rush and any drive is framed by beautiful, natural vistas. The region boasts excellent education and healthcare services and well equipped sporting facilities providing excellent outdoors activities for young and old. A wide range of community groups also provide social and recreational opportunities for residents and help increase the strong sense of community.

# Council Vision, Mission, and Values

## Council Vision

West Wimmera Shire delivers the very best experience and opportunity that rural living has to offer.

## Our Values

West Wimmera Shire Council values its resident population and its wellbeing. This will be demonstrated through promotion of viable and sustainable communities, the retention of the current population and support to grow communities.

West Wimmera Shire Council values good governance and transparent decision making. Supporting community groups and advocating on their behalf will enable open dialogue to occur with residents.

Representing the whole of West Wimmera is highly valued by Councillors.

A connected community, both via transport infrastructure and modern digital technology that enables us to be connected to the world for business and education.

Partnerships (locally, regionally, and with government) are valued as a way of ensuring sustainable service delivery.



## Mayor's Message

It is my pleasure to present the 2018-19 Annual Report of West Wimmera Shire. It has been a year that has seen the Shire advocating strongly on local issues and delivering important infrastructure improvements and major community projects.

West Wimmera Shire is extremely grateful for the funding it receives from both the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments. This allows us to upgrade and maintain excellent facilities which is of great importance to all residents across our Shire. Receiving continued financial support allows West Wimmera to successfully develop, progress and grow, which also contributes to building strong, resilient communities.



Council has undertaken a number of important community social infrastructure projects over the year, including the completion of the Goroke Little Desert Nature Playspace, and the commencement of works on the long-awaited Edenhope Community Hall Redevelopment. The demolition of the old Edenhope Mechanics Institute Hall was completed by December 2018, and it is being replaced with a large modern multi-function space which will include the relocated Edenhope Library.

Significant works have taken place in restoring the Kaniva Shire Hall including revamping the meeting room facilities, and major works have also occurred at the Kaniva Cultural and Tourism Precinct, including the creation of a new playground and fauna park facilities. External funding has made possible a significant power and amenities upgrade at Lake Charlegrark, a popular recreational tourist attraction located centrally within the Shire. The Harrow Recreation Reserve upgrade is progressing well, and when completed it will provide gender friendly facilities to the Harrow community. It is anticipated all of these major projects will be completed in the 2019-20 financial year.

In June 2019 the flood recovery project funded by the Federal Government's Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA) was finalised. This important injection of funds allowed us to repair roads and infrastructure which were significantly damaged by the 2016 flood event.

I would also like to highlight the contribution made by both the Commonwealth and State Governments to the ongoing delivery of services to our Shire communities, through recurrent funding programs such as aged and disability services and libraries. Without this ongoing funding a greater burden would fall upon our ratepayers to maintain current standards. Council welcomes the revision of the Financial Assistance Grants formula for the coming year to provide greater assistance to rural communities.

Council also highlights and thanks the various community members and groups who have made contributions not only to projects, but also to the ongoing wellbeing of our





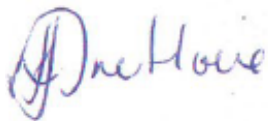
communities. These hard working and generous individuals and groups are the glue holding our communities together and are of immeasurable value to our Shire.

Council continues to maintain and renew our roads network, with in excess of \$6.5 million spent on capital renewal of our roads and bridges on top of a further \$2.6 million of preventative maintenance works, our highest spend ever on our road network. Council continues to recognise that our road network is critically important to our residents and to economic development, and recognises this with a sustainable long term renewal plan.

Council has continued to strongly advocate on issues that are important to our communities including:

- Road Funding
- Pest Plants and Animals
- Native Vegetation
- Rural Mental Health Outreach services
- West Wimmera rural water pipeline
- Digital connectivity

More information on Council's advocacy program is contained further along in this document.



Cr. Jodie Pretlove - Mayor



## Chief Executive Officer's Message

The 2018/19 financial year was one that has seen significant change both within the organisation of Council and the municipality in general.

The year has seen the completion of a number of key projects including:

- The restoration of the Kaniva Shire Hall
- Construction of roads to improve the flow of freight at the Lillimur Grain Facility
- Bridge strengthening works on the Mooree Bridge
- The first stage of an upgrade to the Mortat / Ozenkadnook Road
- New amenities and power upgrade at Lake Charlegrark
- Upgrade to the foreshore infrastructure at Lake Wallace in Edenhope
- Completion of the Goroke Little Desert Nature Play space



Works have continued on a number of other significant projects which include:

- The redevelopment of the Edenhope Mechanics Hall into a multi – purpose community centre
- New female friendly facilities at the Harrow & District Recreation Reserve
- Completing the final stages of the Kaniva Community and Cultural Precinct.

In addition to the above mentioned projects, Council has advocated strongly to leverage improved service levels for its community. As a result of this advocacy, a number of programs have benefitted significantly.

The highlights of the advocacy include the implementation of a Rural Mental Health Outreach Program, the securing of a long-term commitment as the VicRoads Maintenance Contractor, the installation of a number of mobile phone towers and commitment to ongoing dialogue regarding the investment in a rural water supply via a pipeline from Rocklands Reservoir.

Council staff continue to seek external funds to assist with the renewal or redevelopment of key community assets and have been successful in receiving funds for a number of projects to be completed in the 2019/20 financial year.

During October and November of 2018, Council underwent a governance examination, which was completed by representatives of the Local Government Inspectorate. The examination provided 41 recommendations of which 31 were considered to be complete at 30 June 2019.



The examination process was quite beneficial to Council and provided reassurance in some areas such as policy development and review, delegations and the direction Council is taking with Human Resource Management. All of the recommendations will be utilised into the future as guidance material for best practice management of governance, procurement, records management and human resource management.

Council is about to enter into the final year of 3 year exemption to enable a higher rate increase to be applied above the government imposed rate cap. Throughout the period of the exemption, Council has managed to lift its base rate revenue and direct the funds raised to asset renewal.

Also in recognition of the tough fiscal environment that small rural shires operate in, Local Government Victoria has facilitated a program specifically to assist rural Councils in collaborative activities that will improve sustainability.

West Wimmera, along with 5 other rural Councils has been successful in gaining funds to drive a program of reform that will see the Council operate off of a common IT platform and open up opportunities for shared corporate services. The efficiencies gained from this program will be directed to enhanced service delivery on the front line.

Finally I wish to conclude by acknowledging the efforts of the Council Staff and Councilors in once again achieving very good results through the customer satisfaction survey.

In a year that saw considerable personnel changes in key positions, the governance examination and an unprecedented capital works program, West Wimmera can feel proud of the result and comfortable that the services it is providing are meeting community expectation.



**David Leahy**

**Chief Executive Officer**





## Advocacy

The West Wimmera Shire Council, Council Plan 2017-2021, has been divided into Actions and Advocacy Actions to enable more accurate tracking of activity associated with the plan and to ensure that the activities align with the plan.

As in previous years, our Councillors and CEO have attended a series of appointments with state Ministers and their senior advisors.

The appointments were designed to enable Councillors to directly promote projects and programmes that benefit the people of West Wimmera, to the decision makers at state level.

In order to provide an accurate representation of the needs of the shire, a set of strategies were developed and workshopped with Councillors. Also to assist in the delivery of the presentations, Councillors were grouped in to areas that best fit their skill set and where they are the shire representative on a particular committee.

In 2019 the subjects that were discussed included the following;

Narrow Sealed Roads - Council advocated for an increase in funding to upgrade narrow sealed roads across the Shire, in the interests of road safety and efficient freight movements.

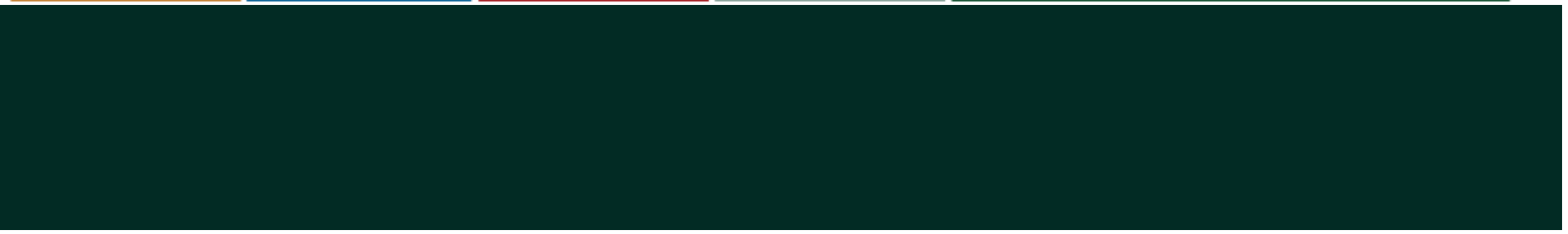
Native Vegetation - Council advocated for a clearer set of guidelines and exemptions for tree removal be established to support safer roads, property biosecurity and native vegetation preservation.

Pest Plants and Animals - Council advocated for increased funding for the management of pest plants and animals, via

- Greater assistance to provide an effective control program across the West Wimmera
- Reinstatement of regional officers tasked with overseeing the control of the spread of pest plants and animals
- Increased funding levels to assist with Local Government programs
- Funding for VicRoads officers to manage arterial roads

Rural Outreach - Assistance in maintaining a Rural Outreach program via:

- An annual funding commitment of \$300,000 from the Victorian Government
- Promotion of the outreach program to the Commonwealth Government to secure matching funding
- Ongoing promotion of Mental Health First Aid programs for rural areas
- Improved transport options for people requiring clinical assistance
- Access to the Victorian Mental Health Minister to promote the positive outcomes achieved through the program



West Grampians Rural Pipeline - Council requested assistance to provide up to \$35 million funding to construct a pipeline which will provide water security to the Western Grampians region

Council is highly appreciative of the opportunities to present these cases to our State representatives and agencies and looks forward to continuing to work with other Local Governments and State and Commonwealth agencies to maximize the benefits to our community.



## Financial Summary 2018-19

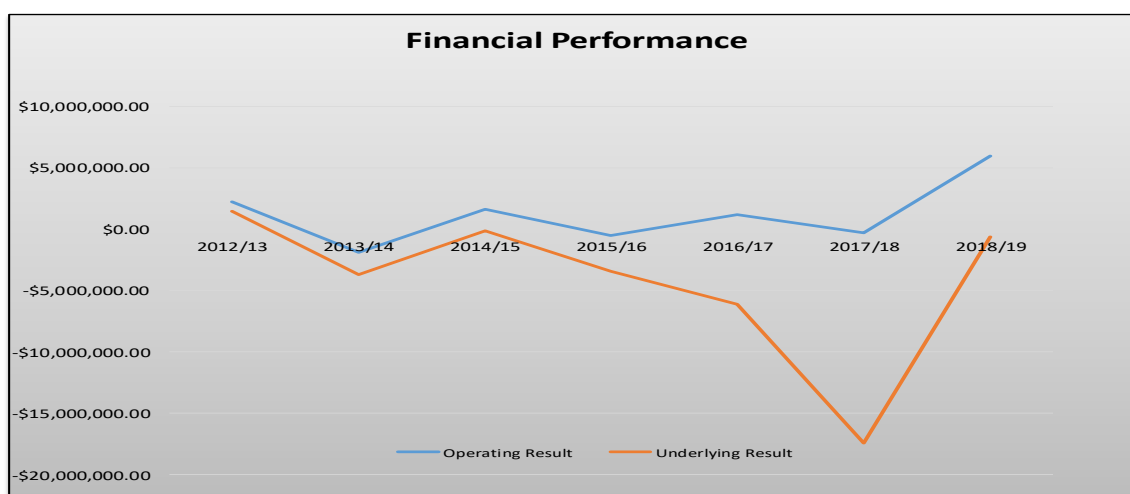
Council's financial position continues to remain sound. A summary of our performance is outlined below. Detailed information relating to Council's financial performance is included within the financial statements and performance statements addendums of this report.

### Operating Position

Council achieved an operating surplus of \$5.97 million for 2018/19 (\$0.28 million deficit 2017/18). After taking into consideration other comprehensive income this reduces to a hefty total comprehensive loss of \$21.94 million. This comprehensive loss comes on the back of an asset revaluation which saw the values of Council's infrastructure assets reduce by \$28.3 million. This came about from a comprehensive engineering assessment of what it would cost to replace all of Council's infrastructure assets in today's costs. Council's underlying result for 2018/19 (the operating surplus less non-recurrent income) shows a deficit of \$0.65 million (2017/18 \$17.44million deficit). The significant underlying deficit for 2017/18 includes a large amount of one off expenditure related to flood recovery of \$12.39 million. Increases in recurrent funding notably from Financial Assistance Grants and the Roads to Recovery program assisted Council to reduce the underlying deficit for 2018/19.

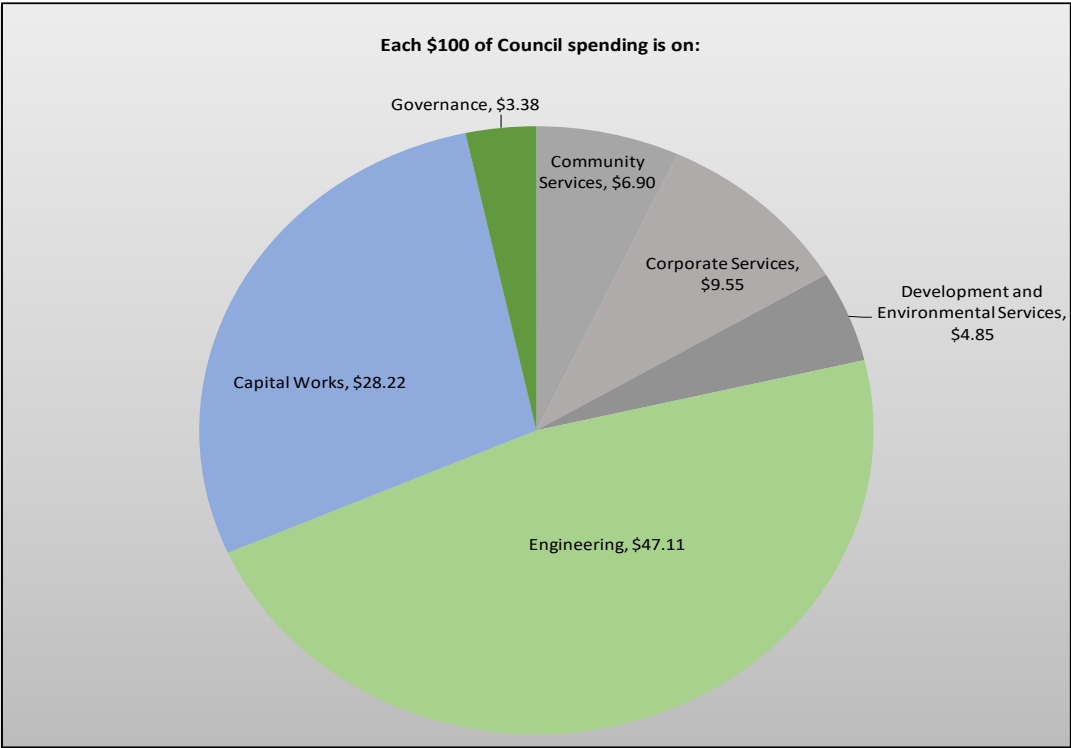
This information needs to be read in context with all of Council's income and expenditure sources. When analysing Council's financial data we can see that Council incurs a significant depreciation charge of \$7.66 million for 2018/19. This amount represents the consumption of Council's assets annually. If this was removed from Council's underlying result Council would be generating a solid underlying surplus. What this indicates is that Council is dependent upon non recurrent funding sources (particularly capital grants) to fund its asset renewal. It must be said that this is not an uncommon position within local government in Victoria, with all but the largest municipalities facing similar issues.

Included in the 2018-19 result was an amount of \$1.04 million of asset write downs arising from a revaluation of infrastructure assets. Removing these write downs would also significantly improve the underlying result.

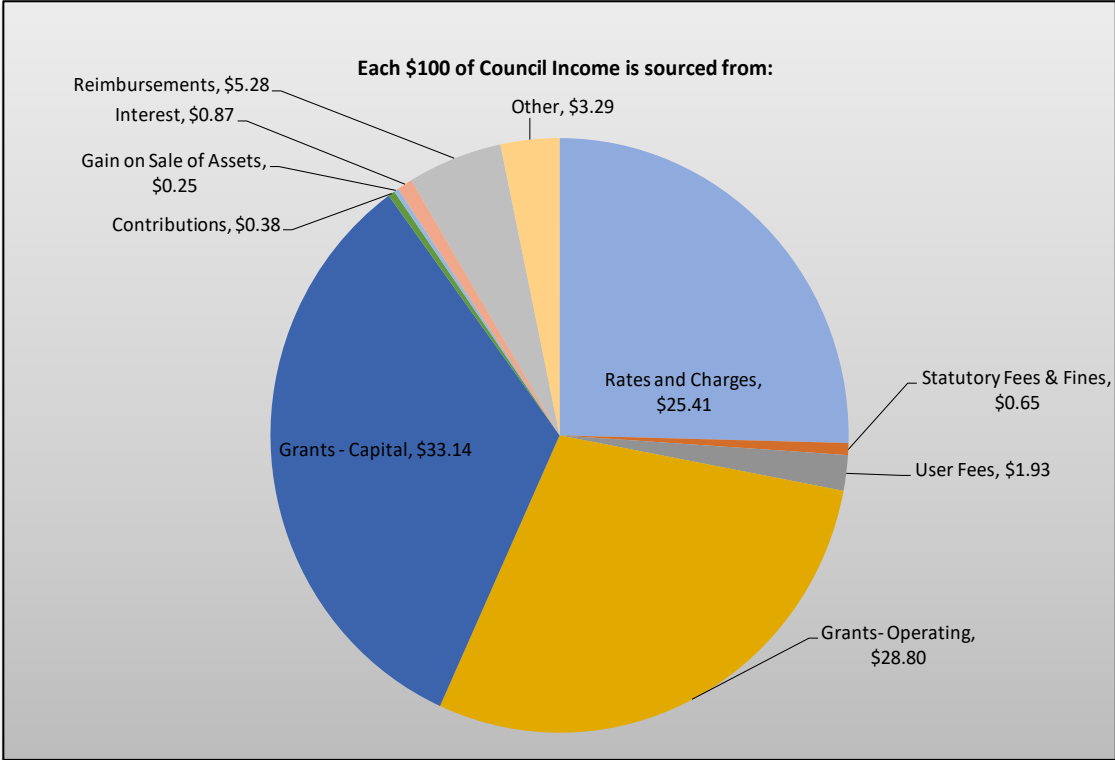




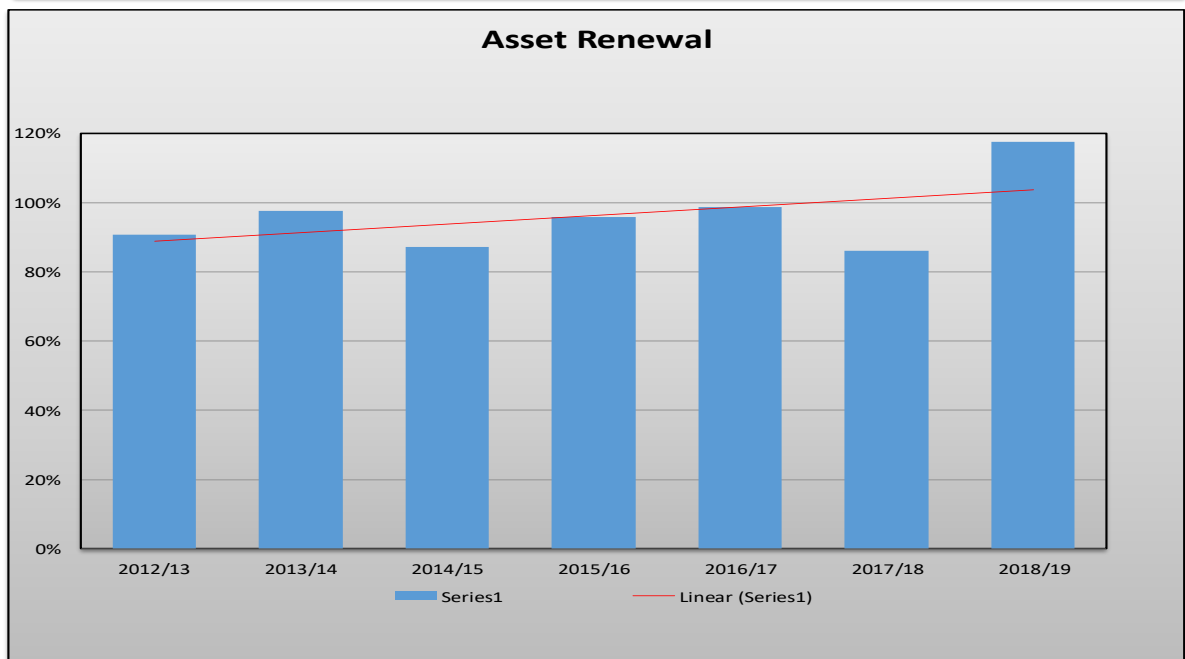
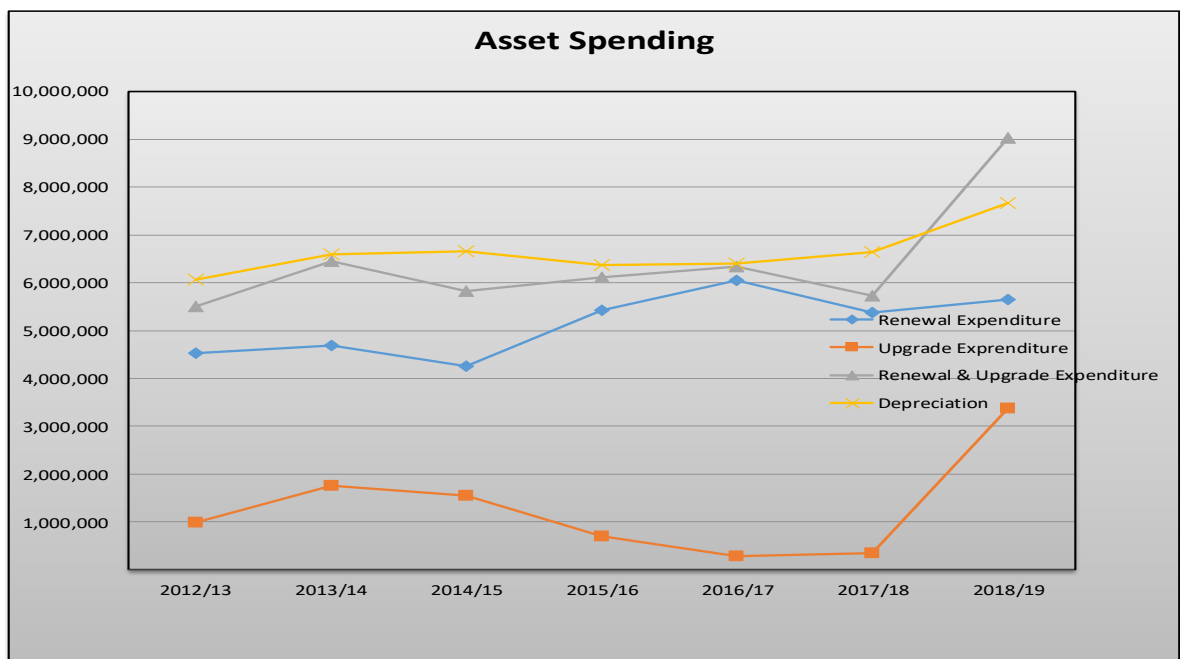
The following charts indicate where Council's income comes from and where it spends:



Council's reliance on grant funding can clearly be seen from these charts, with grant funding making up \$57.10 of every \$100.00 Council receives.



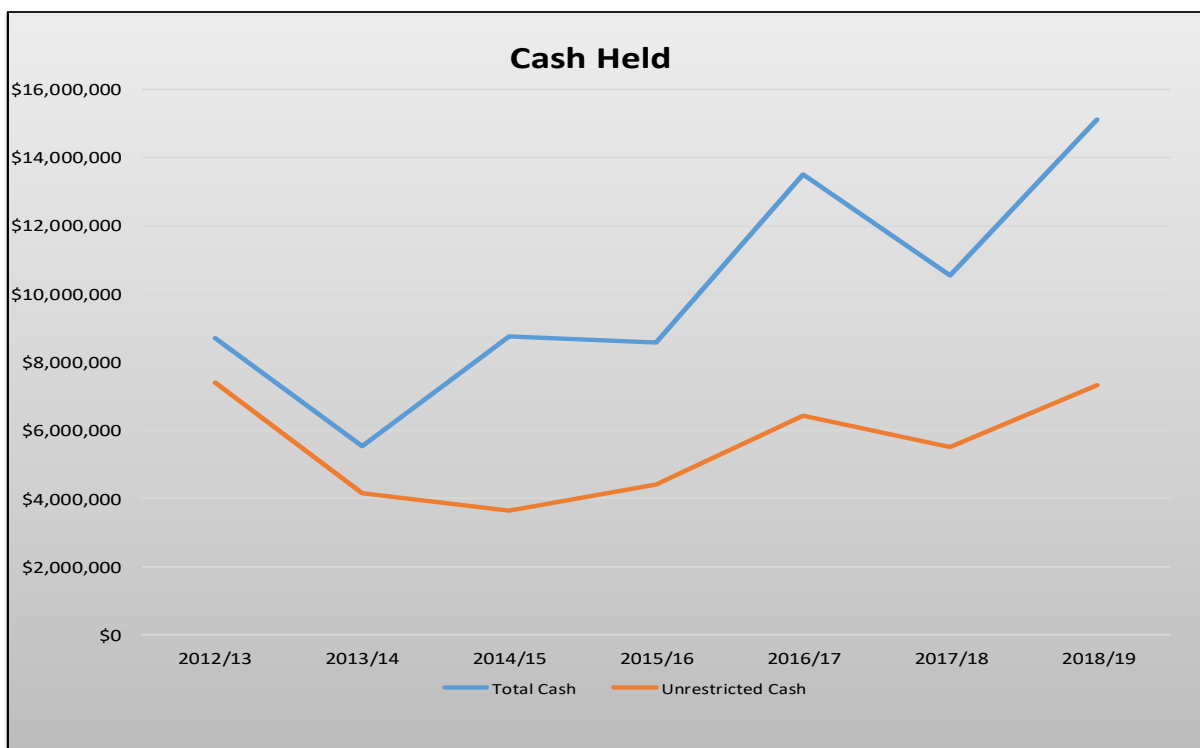
Council delivered a significant capital expenditure program during 2018/19 of \$9.10 million, an increase of 51% over the previous year (2017/18: \$6.01 million). Of this \$5.63 million was spent on roads with a further \$0.63 million spent on bridges, all aided by Roads To Recovery funding and additional funding received by Council from Rural Roads Victoria. Of the \$9.10 million spend, \$5.64 million was expended on renewing Council's existing assets, with a further \$3.38 million spent on upgrading Council's existing assets. This amount was sufficient to cover Council's consumption of its asset base, as measured through depreciation, meaning that Council was restoring its assets at a greater rate than it was consuming them during the year. The following graphs show Council's last seven years of asset renewal and upgrade spending as compared to depreciation:



As can be seen, 2018/19 is the only one of the previous seven years has Council met 100% renewal of its asset base as measured against depreciation. This is a negative trend which may result in loss of service provision and potential into the future if it continues over the long term. Council is developing a longer term capital expenditure plan which identifies required spend on required assets to ensure effective capital renewal

Council's cash position remains healthy, with \$15.12 million in the bank at 30 June 2019. This represents an increase of \$4.58 million on the previous year. The major factor behind this was in Council having received flood recovery grant monies in arrears for some works carried out in the previous year, and also an amount of grant monies received for works to happen in the 2019/20 year.

However, care must be taken when assessing the cash figure. Council is holding commitments by way of reserves, unspent grants, and trust deposits of \$7.79 million, leaving an unrestricted cash amount of \$7.33 million. Of course it must be noted that the majority of the \$7.79 million of funds restricted is held on a discretionary basis which Council may resolve to use for other purposes if the need arises.





Council retains a solid working capital ratio. This is the coverage of current liabilities by current assets, and measures the ability of Council to quickly cover liabilities. At 30 June 2019 Council had a working capital ratio of 515%.



Overall, Council has reported a sizeable operating surplus for the year. However Council continues to record an underlying deficit. A lack of own sourced revenue sources other than rate income coupled with the rate cap creates a complex financial management issue for Council into the future.

The fluctuating between operating surplus and deficit over the previous seven years is not ideal, and is impacted by the flood events of 2016 and the subsequent recovery works which highlights Council's reliance on grants funding. This is clearly supported by Council incurring ongoing underlying deficits.

Also of concern is the fact that Council is on a long term average not meeting its asset renewal targets (as measured against depreciation expense). Again this highlights how much Council is dependent upon grant funding for asset renewal.



## Our Councillors

West Wimmera Shire Council consists of five councillors elected from an un-subdivided municipal district.



West Wimmera Shire Council 2016-2020

Bruce Meyer, Trevor Domaschenz, Richard Hicks, Tom Houlihan, Jodie Pretlove

### Cr. Trevor Domaschenz

Cr. Trevor Domaschenz was elected to West Wimmera Shire Council on 22 October 2016 and this is his first term in local government.

Councillor Domaschenz is West Wimmera Shire Council's representative to the following organisations:

- West Wimmera Landcare Network
- Wimmera Development Association
- Wimmera Mallee Regional Tourism Association
- West Wimmera Shire Tourism Advisory Committee
- West Wimmera Shire Sustainability Advisory Committee

### **Cr. Richard Hicks**

Councillor Hicks was elected to West Wimmera Shire Council on 22 October 2016 and this is his first term in local government. He holds a Masters of Rural Science from the University of New England.

Councillor Hicks is West Wimmera Shire Council's representative to the following organisations:

- Big Desert National Park Fire Control Committee
- Little Desert National Park Fire Control Committee
- Roadsafe Wimmera
- Rail Freight Alliance
- Western Highway Action Committee
- Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Transport Group

### **Cr. Tom Houlihan**

Councillor Houlihan was elected to West Wimmera Shire Council on 22 October 2016 and this is his first term in local government.

Councillor Houlihan is West Wimmera Shire Council's representative to the following organisations:

- Douglas Mine Environment Review Committee
- Grampians Central West Waste and Resource Recovery Group – Forum Group
- Wimmera Mallee Sustainability Alliance
- Johnny Mullagh Interpretive Centre Inc.
- Municipal Emergency Management Planning (MEMP) Committee
- Municipal Fire Prevention Committee
- West Wimmera Rural Water Supply Project – Feasibility Study





### **Cr. Bruce Meyer**

Councillor Bruce Meyer was re-elected to West Wimmera Shire Council on 22 October 2016. He first became an elected representative for the former Shire of Kaniva in 1993, serving until that Shire amalgamated with the Shires of Kowree and Arapiles in 1995. Councillor Meyer was elected to the inaugural West Wimmera Shire Council in 1997 and has continuously represented the Shire since then.

Councillor Meyer is West Wimmera Shire Council's representative to the following organisations:

- Kaniva Community Sporting Complex Committee of Management
- Crabtree Estate Committee
- Kaniva Museum and Historical Collection Committee
- West Wimmera Groundwater Management Area Implementation Committee
- Wimmera Regional Library Corporation
- West Wimmera Shire Audit Committee

### **Cr. Jodie Pretlove**

Councillor Pretlove was elected to West Wimmera Shire Council on 22 October 2016 and this is her first term in local government. Councillor Pretlove was elected Mayor in November 2018 for her second consecutive term as Mayor.

Councillor Pretlove is West Wimmera Shire Council's representative to the following organisations:

- Primary Care Partnership
- Municipal Association Victoria
- North West Municipalities Association
- Rural Councils Victoria
- West Wimmera Shire Audit Committee
- West Wimmera Shire Youth Council
- West Wimmera Shire Sustainability Advisory Committee



# Organisational Structure

Council is the governing body that appoints a Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The CEO has responsibility for the day-to-day management of operations in accordance with the strategic directions of the Council Plan. Two General Managers/Directors and the CEO form the Senior Management Group.



**Chief Executive Officer**  
**David Leahy**

David commenced with Council in February 2016. David brings to Council extensive senior management experience in governance and also works and project management across a number of public sector entities across two states.



Areas of Responsibility

- Overall Staff Management
- Strategy and Direction
- Governance
- Human Resources

**Director Corporate and Community Services**  
**Ashley Roberts**

Ashley re-joined Council in April 2016 after an earlier stint as Manager Finance between 2012-2014. Ashley brings to Council over 20 years financial management and governance experience from both the public and private sectors. Ashley holds a Bachelor Commerce and an Associate Diploma in Accounting and is a member of CPA Australia and an Associate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



Areas of Responsibility

- Finance, Rates and Revenue, Payroll
- Customer Service
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Kindergartens, Early Years Services
- Risk Management, Audit Committee
- Maternal & Child Health Services
- Youth Services
- Home and Community Care Services
- Community and Volunteer Support
- Information Technology
- Libraries
- Cemeteries
- Economic Development and Tourism





## **General Manager Infrastructure, Development and Works Mark Marziale**

Mark joined Council in June 2018. Prior to becoming part of the West Wimmera family Mark held senior positions in local government and the public sector across 3 states.

Mark holds a Bachelor of Arts in Planning (Architectural Studies) and a Graduate Diploma in Regional and Urban Planning. Mark is a Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and a Registered Planner with the Planning Institute of Australia.



### Areas of Responsibility

- Shire Buildings
- Roads Program
- Footpaths
- Culverts and Drains
- Waste, Recycling and Transfer Stations
- Public & Environmental Health
- Statutory Planning, Municipal Building Surveyor Services
- Strategic Planning
- Property Services
- Emergency Management and Fire Prevention
- Domestic Animals and By-Laws
- Roadside Pests & Weeds Program
- Parks & gardens
- Aerodrome
- Quarries
- Contracts and Procurement
- Seasonal Pools



## **Description of Operations**

West Wimmera Shire Council is responsible for the delivery of over 70 services across many areas including:

- Economic and business development and tourism
- Family, early years, youth services
- Home and Community Care services
- Community and volunteers
- Finance, rates and revenue, payroll
- Information technology
- Libraries
- Parks and gardens
- Council and community building maintenance
- Road works, footpaths and other civil infrastructure
- Cemeteries
- Property Management
- Public & Environmental Health
- Planning and Building Approvals
- Waste Management
- Domestic Animal Management
- Stock Control
- Emergency Management & Fire Prevention

### **Economic Factors**

No economic or other factors have had an impact on Council's performance in the 2017-18 year.

### **Major Changes**

No major changes have taken place during the financial year in relation to the operations of the Council or to the Council's organisational structure or the methods of carrying out its strategic objectives.



## Corporate and Community Services

2018/19 was a year of progress and development within the Corporate and Community Services area of Council.

Council continues with the transition of Home And Community Care (HACC) services away from the state funded system to the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP). Whilst there is still a large amount of uncertainty surrounding the transition, Council welcomed the extension of block funding until 2022 as providing some amount of consistency whilst the transition gathers pace.

Recovery works relating to the September 2016 floods wound up during the year, affecting both Council's income and expenditure as government grants are received to pay for the necessary works.

## Financial Services

Council continues to commit to providing a financially sustainable future for our municipality whilst maintaining services to our community.

During 2018/19 Council worked within the 3.5% rate increase cap variation granted to it by the Minister for Local Government. The purpose of this additional funding was to reduce Council's asset renewal gap and improve asset conditions across the shire. As a result of this coupled with a concerted effort from Council staff to control budgets tightly, Council was able to achieve its largest ever capital works program of \$9.10 million for 2018/19, which showed a distinct emphasis on asset renewal and upgrade. Council finance staff continue to plan for sustainable service delivery by generating medium and long term financial plans.

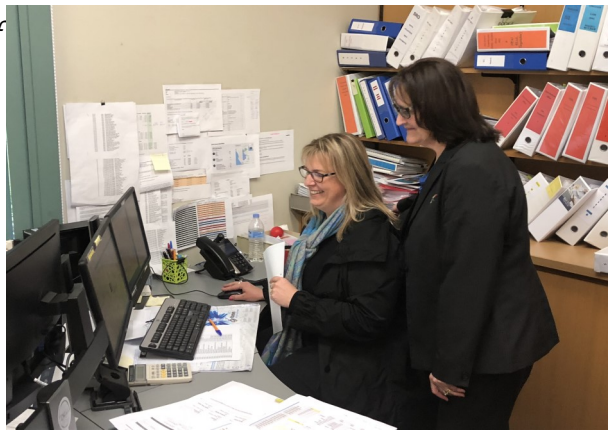


The Victorian Government formalised the transition and implementation of Annual Centralised Valuations during 2018-19. The Valuer-General is now the sole valuation authority for the delivery of annual valuations for the purposes of council rates, land tax, and the Fire Services Property Levy. The State pays for the full cost of revaluations each year and Council will pay for the full cost of supplementary valuations each year. With this new arrangement Council will no longer directly contract the services of an independent valuer.



To allow for the change, the *Valuation of Land Act 1960* includes a transition period for Councils. This means a council can choose to opt out each year until 2022.

The financial services team continues to strive to deliver financial data to many agencies and government departments in an appropriate timeframe. The finance team has alliances with other neighbouring Councils and have formed partnerships to support financial service provision in many areas.



Council continues to seek efficiencies and other revenue sources where possible to limit any immediate and future financial effect on our ratepayers.

## Customer Services

As the 'smiling face of Council', it is important the Council provides a great customer experience, and once again Council's customer service performance continues to be ranked extremely highly in the annual customer satisfaction survey undertaken for Local Government across the state.



The fact that Council's customer service ranks amongst the best in the state is a reflection of our skilled, dedicated and responsive Customer Service team.

Council maintains Customer Service Centres in Edenhope and Kaniva, and continues to provide services on behalf of Centrelink and Vic Roads to our communities.

Council's customer service team also manage the day to day operations of the Edenhope, Goroke, and Kaniva cemeteries.





# Community Services—Aged and Disability Programs

## Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP)

## Home and Community Care Program for Younger People (HACC PYP)

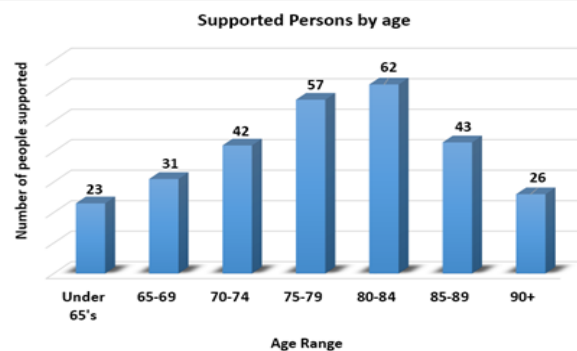


Council's Community Service department has undergone another year of significant change as the transition towards a competitive market from July 2022 for the provision of Aged Care Services continues.

Council is committed to continuing to provide quality services to assist the frail, aged and younger people with a disability or chronic illness within our community. Through our continuous improvement process, we have reviewed and implemented changes to our existing programs to better meet the needs of our community. This included:

- Changing our current grant agreement to include two new services-
  - ◊ Flexible Respite which provides greater assistance to people caring for loved ones
  - ◊ Social Support - Individual for people requiring help to access their community.
- The meal voucher program- Meal recipients are provided with vouchers to use at businesses throughout the West Wimmera Shire, for greater choice and control on what and where they choose to eat.
- Computer Savvy Seniors- A monthly self-paced class aimed at people over 65 years, to provide information and support with all forms of technology.
- Out and About- A monthly social support event for people over 65 years that includes a shared meal and meaningful activities such as bus trips, education sessions and themed days.
- Subsidised flue cleaning and provision of firewood for eligible service users.
- Hosting a community expo providing access to information and equipment to assist people to remain independent.

Through 2018-2019 West Wimmera Shire Council supported 232 people over 65 years and 23 people under 65 years to remain independent and safe at home and in our community.



## Maternal and Child Health (MCH)

### Enrolments

This year has not been too dissimilar from last year when it comes to new babies born into our region. Unlike 2017/18 year's record breaking 52 births we have had 45 in 2018/19. Of these 19 were born in Victorian hospitals and 26 in hospitals of South Australia, the Northern Territory and Queensland. There have been six of the 45 that have moved onto other areas as we see an increasing population of families that may only reside in our towns for short blocks of time due to work or family events. With 45 new births we are still above the past averages of about 35 which will be good for the kindergarten enrollments in the years ahead. These children have been equally spread over the Shire with no one town out shining another for top billing in the numbers game.

### Immunisations

The annual report that is submitted to DEECD each July showed that the service delivered some 770 vaccinations, this does not include the visitors to the area that drop in for a catch up vaccination, nor the school program which is delivered to the three secondary colleges, nor the staff flu vax program, so you can say that once again this service has also been very busy. This is a further increase from last year's total which would be attributed to the excellent update of the local families having their children immunized against influenza. The childhood influenza program that the Victorian state government provides to every child aged 6 months to 5 years has been offered again this year. Considering that we know that health outcomes for children under 5 contracting the flu can be very poorly sometimes requiring hospitalization, and with three reported child deaths in Victoria to date this year parents are very well aware of the risks of influenza. From the uptake last year we have had been able to have sufficient stock on hand to see us through the season so that any child requiring the vaccine was able to receive it locally and not have the burden of travel to other towns and providers as I've heard other parents having to endure that live elsewhere. The influenza vaccination is also available to any pregnant woman in the shire with many taking up the offer.

### Professional Development

There is a never ending list of meeting, seminars, conference and study days that one can attend in order to complete the 60 hours of mandatory education that MCH nurses must complete each year. Most are delivered in Horsham and everywhere beyond so it's important to 'cherry pick' what will give the most value and disrupt the service the least, but



thankfully the clientele and management value the importance of education so understand if a center has to shut for a day or two while I complete the training required.

Now, let's see what the year ahead brings us,.....

Monica Feder

RN/RM/MCHN/GradDip(Mid)/GradDip(Family&ChildHealth)/MNSc(NPrac)/Nurse Immuniser

## Youth Services

Council continued it's commitment to engage with our younger residents through a number of youth driven events throughout the year

These included:

- Kaniva Pool Party
- Edenhope Halloween Party
- 'Frozen in Time' Ball—celebrating 90 years of the Kaniva Shire Hall
- 'Winter Wonderland' event in Edenhope

Various school holiday activities have been organised for the benefit of Youth from West Wimmera.

Various partnerships with local community organisations, business and schools have been essential for the success of the youth program. LINK Neighbourhood House Kaniva, Red Tail Gallery Edenhope, Kaniva Guides, Young Farmers Nhill and Hindmarsh Shire Council.

Edenhope, Goroke and Kaniva Colleges have been extremely obliging in allowing access to their students. With their curriculum and time pressures, new avenues of engaging the region's young people will be sought so as not to over burden these important relationships.

New partnerships are being formed all the time. This facilitates the ability to share resources and experience to provide fabulous opportunities for the young people of our Shire.



## International Volunteers Day

The Kaniva Community celebrated International Volunteers Day on Thursday 6 December with a morning tea at the Heartfelt Gallery Café. The theme for 2018 was “Volunteers Build Resilient Communities”. Not a truer word was spoken. The Herald Sun ran an article on the 25<sup>th</sup> of November 2018 and it was reported that the West Wimmera Shire Council was rated No 1 with the best volunteering rates in the state of Victoria. This again clearly demonstrates our willingness to work towards the greater community.

Approximately 60 people attended the morning tea with representation from a broad range of community groups including the Kaniva College year 9 students, Meals On Wheels Volunteers, the Kaniva Fauna Park Volunteers and Wimmera Southern Mallee community bus drivers who provide a bus service for people to travel from Kaniva to Horsham with bus stops in every town on a Wednesday. Those who regularly give of their time to ensure the Purple Starfish’ is open for business and volunteers are vital to the Kaniva LINK Neighbourhood House. This is not to mention all our sporting clubs and community groups who quietly work away adding great value to our communities.

Councillor Bruce Meyer welcomed all volunteers and reiterated just how vital volunteering is within our communities. Cr Meyer introduced Libby Wright who is taking over from Christine Picone, Libby commenced as the Volunteer Coordinator for the Centre for Participation in Nhill and will become a familiar face in the West Wimmera. Councillor Meyer awarded Certificates of Appreciation to Margaret Vivian for 20 Years, Nancy Alexander for 12 Years, and Erica Manh for many years of service, delivering Meals On Wheels within the Kaniva Community.

Kaniva LINK Neighbourhood House Coordinator Sharon Munn kept the momentum going with a volunteer quiz, this was a challenge as well as very entertaining. The Kaniva LINK Neighbourhood House, the Centre for Participation and the West Wimmera Shire Council would like to thank everyone who came to celebrate International Volunteers Day for 2018.



## Economic Development

2018-19 saw a busy year in the Economic Development area with involvement in a number of major community projects dominating staff time.

This included providing project support to these major projects and developments during the year. These include the Lake Charlegrark redevelopment, the Goroke Little Desert Playspace, the Kaniva Cultural and Tourism Precinct development, the refurbishment of the Kaniva Shire Hall and commencing the construction of the Edenhope and District Community Centre. The Economic Development unit also prepares groundwork for future projects including sourcing funding and the preparation of development plans.

Once again the unit facilitated the provision of over \$39,000 in Community Strengthening and Business Assistance grants to community groups and new and expanding businesses across our community.

## Early Years

West Wimmera Shire Council continues to deliver play-based educational programs to children aged 3-5 years. Goroke, Edenhope and Kaniva all run Kindergarten and Pre-Kinder programs.

2018/19 saw all services continue to run to running long-day programs (8:30am – 4pm), allowing children aged four and up to access school bus services both to and from kinder.

Playgroups have run in Kaniva, Goroke, Edenhope, Apsley and Harrow. Some of these sessions are an informal catch up, and others involve more formal activities. Story time sessions, rhyme time, free play and excursions have all happened across the Shire during the year.

During 2018/19 Council saw the following enrolments in its kindergartens:

	3 Year Old	4 Year Old	Total
Edenhope Kindergarten	6	16	22
Goroke Kindergarten	2	10	12
Kaniva Kindergarten	8	20	28
TOTAL	16	46	62



# Infrastructure, Development and Works

## Infrastructure

The Infrastructure Engineering and Works Teams have again been very busy during the past year with a considerable amount of capital works projects being completed along with ongoing maintenance of council Infrastructure.

Council's maintenance program includes sealed and unsealed roads, bridges, Council owned buildings and reserves, playgrounds, footpaths, kerb and channel, Parks and Gardens. In addition, Council has again been awarded the contract for maintenance of Vicroads arterial roads within the municipality including sections of the Wimmera and Western Highways.

The capital works program consisted of a variety of renewal, upgrade and safety initiatives of sections of roads and other infrastructure including:

- Kadnook Connewirricoo Road Mooree Bridge strengthening and upgrade
- Lake Wallace foreshore retaining wall
- Lake Wallace concrete boat ramp replacement
- Lake Wallace endwall and fence replacement at caravan park
- Apsley Natimuk Road reconstruction and widening
- Ullswater Mortat Road reconstruction
- Lillimur Yearinga Road reconstruction
- Leeor Road reconstruction
- Cove Estate Road reconstruction
- Cemetery Road reconstruction
- Harrow Casterton Road reconstruction
- Ozenkadnook Mortat Road reconstruction and widening
- High Street footpath construction
- Commercial Street footpath construction
- Roof replacement on Johnny Mullugh centre
- Window replacements on Edenhope, Goroke and Kaniva Kindergartens to ensure compliance with current safety standards

Other capital improvements include resheeting of approximately 39 Kilometres of unsealed roads, 34 Kilometres of sealed road shoulder resheeting and resealing of approximately 57 Kilometres of sealed road pavements.

Capital improvements were also undertaken on a number of Council buildings in addition to routine maintenance.



## Major Projects

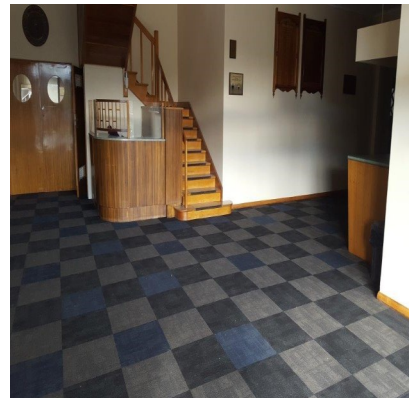
West Wimmera Shire has undertaken a number of projects during the 2018/19 financial year. Some of the projects have been undertaken with the assistance of funding from both the State and Federal Governments, as well as 'in kind' and financial support from local community groups.

### Kaniva Shire Hall Refurbishment

Council has undertaken a significant amount of works in refurbishing the Kaniva Shire Hall, bringing the iconic building which dates back to 1924 back to its former glory.

The works followed on from major structural and footing repairs which commenced in the previous year, and included:

- Painting external and internal
- Installing new floor coverings
- Refitting the kitchen including plumbing and new appliances
- Refitting toilet facilities
- Installation of heating and cooling in the supper room and office facilities



### Lake Charlegrark Precinct Development

The bulk of the works on upgrading facilities at Lake Charlegrark were undertaken in the previous year, with the finishing touches being completed during 2018-19 . The project involved 3 major facets,;

- the construction of a large amenities block at the Southern end including the installation of a Reed Bed septic system,
- the installation of a smaller toilet block at the Northern end, and
- the power upgrade of the complete site.

Council is grateful for the assistance of the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments in providing funding to allow the provision of modern and efficient facilities for our community's enjoyment.



## **Goroke Little Desert Nature Playspace**

Work on the new playspace in Goroke was completed during 2018/19. The playspace has attracted significant attention and much positive feedback from the community.

The playspace is full of fantastic items such as a trampoline, slides, swings, digger, hand pump, and a concrete path running through the middle of the park for scooters and skateboards. During 2018/19 a shelter, outdoor furniture and fencing was added to complete the project and make it great addition to the Goroke community and its visitors.

## **Kaniva Cultural and Tourism Precinct**

Significant works have been undertaken on the Kaniva Cultural and Tourism Precinct over 2018/19 including:

- Redevelopment of the wetland area
- Installation of a playspace
- Construction of bbq area and shelters
- Construction of road, footpaths and parking areas

There are some relatively minor works to be completed in the new year, including the installation of new toilet facilities and some fauna park works.

Once again Council is highly appreciative of the funding and support given by both the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments which has enabled this project to be realised.

## **Edenhope Cultural and Community Centre**

After many years of planning and consulting works on the redevelopment of the former Edenhope Mechanics Hall got underway during 2018/19.

Construction works began in the second half of the 2018/19 year after an extensive public consultation program achieved a broad consensus.

The facility will include the relocated Edenhope Library, a public activity space, meeting room and a large open space area suitable for larger scale functions. Kitchen and rest room facilities are included also.

Council was fortunate to be able to secure partial funding for this facility from the



Commonwealth Government through the Drought Communities Funding Program and also from the Victorian Government through the Living Libraries Program.

It is anticipated that the building will be completed by 30 June 2020.



### **Making a Difference @ Harrow**

During 2018/19 Council in partnership with the Harrow community commenced a redevelopment of facilities at the Harrow Recreation Reserve.

This project, funded by a \$1.0million grant from the Victorian Government as well as community contributions, provides for gender friendly change rooms and facilities to benefit the sporting clubs and community groups that use the Harrow Recreation Reserve.

As at 30 June 2019 works on this project were well underway and are expected to be completed by the end of 2019.



## Contracts

The Contracts Department is responsible for the development, implementation and administration of all contracts undertaken by the Council.

The activities include administration of all contracts and agreements from the preparation of specifications, advertisements, evaluation, awarding of contracts, monitoring of works to the successful completion of the project.

As at the 30<sup>th</sup> of June, the Council has 32 active contracts covering a diverse and important range of works and services for the West Wimmera Shire Council.

During the year the Council let 19 new contracts for a combination of works and services. The total value of these contracts is \$6,781,752.

### 2018/19 Contracts related to Capital Works:

CM0478 Energy Saver Program	\$21,470
CM0483 Lake Wallace Foreshore Upgrade	\$151,192
CM0484 Edenhope Cultural & Community Hub	\$1,787,631
CM0485 Demolition of Edenhope Mechanics Hall	\$78,500
CM0488 Mooree Bridge Strengthening	\$514,431
CM0490 Harrow Sporting Changerooms	\$1,217,696
CM0491 Painting of Kaniva Shire Hall	\$76,230
CM0496 Bituminous Sealing of Roads	\$1,600,000
CM0498 Kaniva Cultural & Tourism Precinct Upgrade	\$71,200
CM0499 Kaniva Cultural & Tourism Precinct Parrot Flight	\$32,370
CM0503 Kaniva Cultural & Tourism Precinct Toilet Block	\$51,160

### 2018/19 Contracts related to Plant and Equipment Purchases:

CM0492 Supply & Delivery of a Road Maintenance Truck	\$215,194
CM0493 Supply & Delivery of a Highway Maintenance Tractor	\$116,383
CM0494 Supply & Delivery of a Combination Roller	\$99,100

Once again the largest project in term of dollars was the annual sealing program for local roads. This was the last year of a five year collaborative contract involving five Wimmera Councils for this work. Locally based sealing contractor Inroads P/L of Horsham are contractors for this work.

Council aims to reseal 15% of the total sealed road network each year to maintain this important asset.





Through Procurement Australia, Council has a contract with AGL Pty Ltd for the supply of electricity to public lighting within Townships throughout the Municipality. This contract commenced on 1 July 2018.

Through Procurement Australia, Council also holds a contract with Origin Energy for the supply of electricity to all of Council's 41 metered sites throughout the Municipality.

This contract commenced on 31 July 2018.

Wimmera Mallee Waste from Rainbow holds three waste contracts with the Council, a weekly kerbside garbage collection service, a fortnightly kerbside recycling collection service, and the transfer of waste to the Doon landfills.

Council has entered into a number of contracts with Procurement Australia and the Municipal Association of Victoria, who have negotiated contracts for a range of goods and services for the benefit of all Victorian Councils.



*Vegetation Control Contractors at work*



*Councils' Contracts Manager Bernie expecting a rainy day!*



## **Swimming Pools**

There are three public swimming pools within West Wimmera Shire Council, situated in the Townships of Kaniva, Edenhope and Goroke. These outdoor pools are all solar heated and are open from mid November through to the end of March each year.

### **Pool Operations:**

#### **Kaniva Pool:**

This pool is managed under contract by BRAML Enterprises and the value of the contract for 2018/2019 was \$79,429

Total attendance including School usage for 2018/2019 season was 6,200

#### **Edenhope Pool:**

This pool is managed under contract by Edenhope Swimming Centre Pty Ltd and the value of the contract for 2018/2019 was \$72,570.

Total attendance for 2018/2019 season was 6,085

#### **Goroke Pool:**

This is managed by the Goroke Pool Committee.

The Council makes a financial contribution to the Goroke Pool Committee each year to assist with operational costs. For 2018/2019 this contribution was \$30,000.

Total attendance, including school usage, for 2018/2019 season was 3,114



## Australia Day Awards 2019

Australia Day events were held across the Shire with good numbers of people coming out to celebrate all that is great about our Country and living in West Wimmera. Council congratulates the winners of the various awards across the Shire and also congratulates all the people who were nominated. The task of choosing people and events from a high quality field was difficult but the following people are the worthy recipients of Australia Day Awards in the Shire.

The 2019 Australia Day Citizen of the Year is Mr Alan Miles of Serviceton. Alan has enjoyed a long term commitment and involvement with the Serviceton Community, with involvement in many sporting and community associations including Life Membership of the Leeor Football Club and Serviceton Bowling Club, where he was also the greens keeper for 42 years. Alan was also a school bus driver for 44 years and a former member of the Serviceton Sewage Authority. We recognise and thank Alan for his sterling service to our community!

The Community Event of the Year which was recognised as part of the awards was jointly awarded to the 150th Anniversary of Australia's First XI Cricket Team to Tour England (Edenhope and Lake Bringalbert) , and First XI Legends of 1868 (Harrow). Both of these events recognised and celebrated one of the most significant events in Australian sporting history and Council thanks all who contributed to these.

The Young Citizen of the Year award was presented to Mr Justin Merrett of Serviceton. Justin had been a student at Horsham Specialist School where he developed a passion for music often playing guitar at youth and public meetings. Justin has recently been awarded the prestigious Order of Australia Association Student Citizenship Award.

Win and Don Forster of Edenhope were invited to attend the Australia Day Awards at Government House on the 23 January 2019.

Don was awarded a Council of the Ageing Seniors Award in October 2018 at Government House.

Don and Win met the Honorable Linda Dessau AC, Governor of Victoria, at the Victorian Australia Day Awards and presented her with a West Wimmera Shire lapel pin.



*Win and Don Forster with the Hon. Linda Dessau, Governor of Victoria*

## Community Strengthening Grants Program

Council's Community Strengthening Grants program is designed to promote and increase participation of local residents in community initiatives, to build and strengthen local networks and partnerships and to support community leadership, learning and skill development.

This annual grant program is delivered across two rounds, providing financial assistance to local community organisations to support the provision of programs, activities and services which respond to identified community needs, contribute to the building of a stronger community, develop innovative approaches and local social issues and are in accordance with Council's strategic objectives.

A total of \$39,844.92 was granted to the community in 2018-19 for the following projects:

Community Projects		
APPLICANT	PROJECT	GRANT
Harrow Golf Club Inc	Complete weatherproofing of outdoor area	\$2,282.50
Goroke Recreation & Sporting Complex	Goroke Recreation Ground & Goroke Showground master plan	\$5,000.00
Edenhope-Apsley Football Netball Club	Indoor play area	\$2,000.00

Community Events		
APPICANT	PROJECT	GRANT
Edenhope Golf Club Inc	New Year's Eve Celebration	\$400.00
Harrow Horsemanship Challenge	Harrow Horsemanship Challenge	\$750.00
Edenhope Debutante Group	Edenhope Debutante Ball	\$750.00
Edenhope P & A Society Inc.	Edenhope Draught Horse Festival	\$750.00
Goroke Apex Club	Goroke Apex Rodeo	\$750.00
Kaniva Playgroup	Mik Mak performance at 2019 Kaniva Show	\$750.00
Edenhope Lions Club	New residents meet & greet	\$250.00

Facility Upgrades and Equipment Purchases		
APPLICANT	PROJECT	GRANT
Kaniva Golf Club Inc.	Kitchen upgrade	\$5,000.00
Kaniva Leor Football Club Inc.	Landscaping at Kaniva Community Hub	\$2,722.42
Goroke & District Memorial Hall	Blinds & Stage Curtains	\$5,000.00
Edenhope Tourism Inc.	The Old Court House electrical upgrade	\$2,244.00
Edenhope Motorcycle Club Inc.	Occupational Health and Safety and track works	\$5,000.00
Kaniva Community Sporting Complex Inc.	Installation of illuminated exit signs	\$3,246.00
Bills Gully Welfare Group Inc.	Lock the Hall	\$2,950.00





## Statutory Information

### Documents Available for Public Inspection

In accordance with Part 12 of the Local Government (General) Regulations 2015 the following is a list of the prescribed documents that are available for inspection or copies of the documents can be obtained for the purposes of section 222 of the Local Government Act 1989 at the Edenhope Civic Centre, situated at 49 Elizabeth Street, Edenhope, and the Kaniva District Office, situated at 25 Baker Street, Kaniva:

For the purposes of section 222 of the Act, the following are prescribed documents if they are not published on the Internet website of the Council—

- a) a document containing details of overseas or interstate travel (other than interstate travel by land for less than 3 days) undertaken in an official capacity by any Councillor or member of Council staff in the previous 12 months, including—
  - i. the name of the Councillor or member of Council staff; and
  - ii. the dates on which the travel began and ended; and
  - iii. the destination of the travel; and
  - iv. the purpose of the travel; and
  - v. the total cost to the Council of the travel, including accommodation costs;
- b) the agendas for, and minutes of, ordinary and special meetings held in the previous 12 months which are kept under section 93 of the Act, other than those agendas and minutes relating to a part of a meeting which was closed to members of the public under section 89 of the Act and are confidential information within the meaning of section 77(2) of the Act;
- c) the minutes of meetings of special committees established under section 86 of the Act and held in the previous 12 months, other than those minutes relating to a part of a meeting which was closed to members of the public under section 89 of the Act and are confidential information within the meaning of section 77(2) of the Act;
- d) a register of delegations kept under sections 87(1) and 98(4) of the Act, including the date on which the last review took place under sections 86(6) and 98(6), respectively, of the Act;
- e) a document containing details of all leases involving land which were entered into by the Council as lessor, including the lessee and the terms and the value of the lease;
- f) a register maintained under section 224(1A) of the Act of authorised officers appointed under that section;



g) a list of donations and grants made by the Council in the previous 12 months, including the names of persons who, or bodies which, have received a donation or grant and the amount of each donation or grant.

### **Domestic Animal Management Plan**

In accordance with the Domestic Animals Act 1994, Council is required to prepare a Domestic Animal Management Plan at four yearly intervals and evaluate its implementation in the annual report.

Council adopted the Domestic Animal Management Plan 2017–21 in August 2017. In 2018-19, Council implemented the following actions in accordance with the Plan:

#### **Registration and Identification -**

Objective 2: Promote registration and microchipping – Council officer provided an onsite microchipping service upon request as well as coordinated microchipping days across the Shire

Objective 2: Advertise pet registrations on Council webpage—pet registration due dates were advertised via Council’s social media sites.

### **Food Act Ministerial Directions**

In accordance with section 7E of the Food Act 1984, Council is required to publish a summary of any Ministerial Directions received during the financial year in its annual report.

No such Ministerial Directions were received by Council during the financial year.

### **Freedom of Information**

In accordance with section 7(4AA)(a) and 7(4AA)(b) of the Freedom of Information Act 1982, Council is required to publish certain statements in their annual report or separately such as on its website, concerning its functions and information available. Council has chosen to publish the statements separately however provides the following summary of the application and operation of the Freedom of Information Act 1982.

Access to documents may be obtained through written request to the Freedom of Information Officer, as detailed in section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 1982 and in summary as follows:

- it should be in writing
- it should identify as clearly as possible which document is being requested
- it should be accompanied by the appropriate application fee (the fee may be waived in certain circumstances).

Requests for documents in the possession of Council should be addressed to the Freedom of Information Officer. Requests can also be lodged online or by email.

Access charges may also apply once documents have been processed and a decision on access is made (e.g. photocopying and search and retrieval charges).

There was one FOI request made during 2018-19.

Further information regarding FOI can be found at [www.foi.vic.gov.au](http://www.foi.vic.gov.au) and on the West Wimmera Shire Council website.

### **Protected Disclosures Act 2012**

The Protected Disclosures Act 2012 (the 'PD Act') came into effect on 10 February 2013, replacing the former Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001.

The PD Act aims to encourage the disclosure of improper conduct by public officers and bodies by providing for a framework to allow for these disclosures to be received and investigated.

The PD Act provides legislated protection from 'retaliatory' action which could be detrimental to the person or persons making such a disclosure. Under the PD Act detrimental action includes:

- Any actions which may cause injury, loss or damage;
- Actions which result in intimidation or harassment;

Discrimination, disadvantage or adverse treatment in relation to a person's employment, career, profession, trade or business, including the taking of unfair disciplinary action.

West Wimmera Shire Council has prepared a Protected Disclosures Policy, outlining Council's requirements under the PD Act. The Protected Disclosures Policy is available from Council's Customer Service Centres.

There were no Protected Disclosures made during 2018-19.

### **Road Management Act Ministerial Direction**

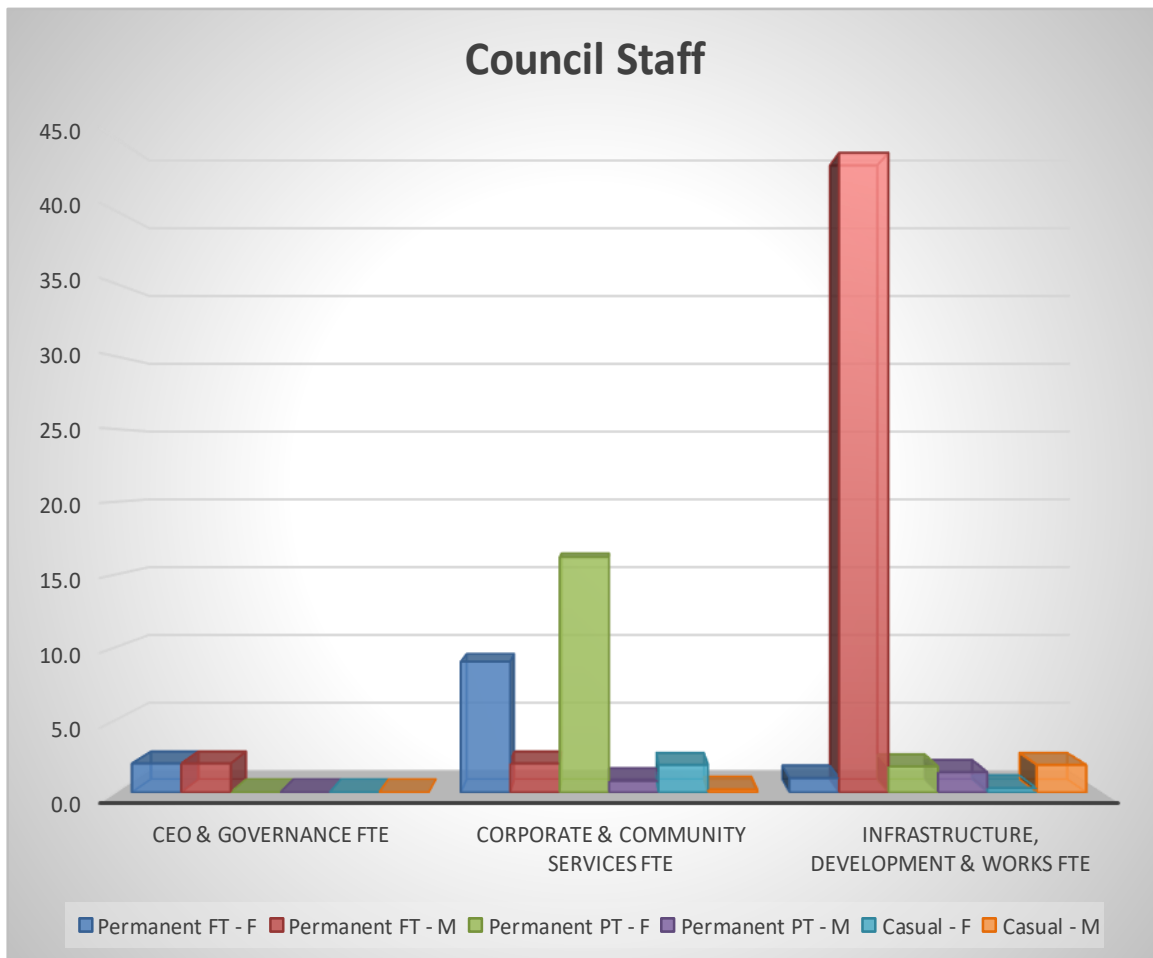
In accordance with section 22 of the Road Management Act 2004, Council must publish a copy or summary of any Ministerial direction in its annual report. No such Ministerial Directions were received by Council during the financial year.



## Council Staff

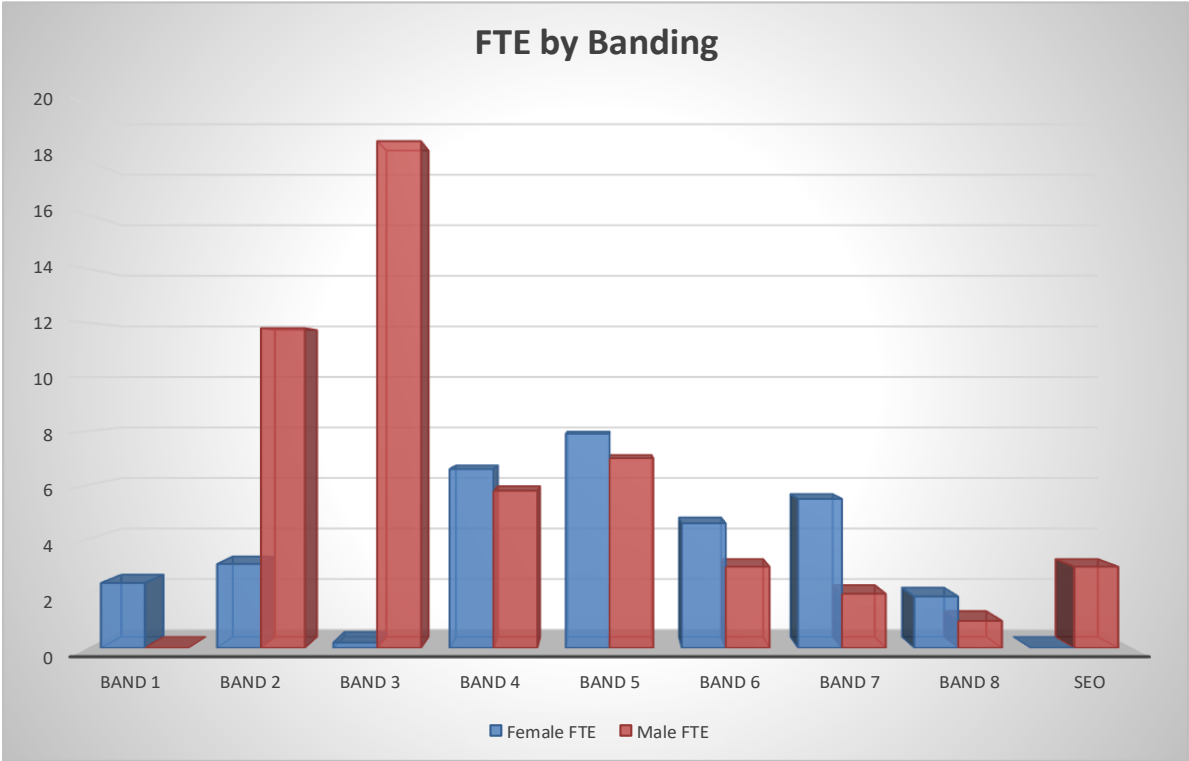
A summary of the number of full time equivalent (FTE) Council staff by organisational structure, employment type and gender is set out below.

Employment Type/ Gender	CEO & Gov- ernance FTE	Corporate & Community Ser- vices FTE	Infrastructure, De- velopment & Works FTE	Total FTE
Permanent FT - F	2.00	9.00	1.00	12.00
Permanent FT - M	2.00	2.00	44.00	48.00
Permanent PT - F	-	16.20	1.80	18.00
Permanent PT - M	-	0.80	1.40	2.20
Casual - F	-	1.90	0.30	2.20
Casual - M	-	0.20	1.90	2.10
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.00</b>	<b>30.10</b>	<b>50.40</b>	<b>84.50</b>



A summary of the number of full time equivalent (FTE) staff categorised by employment classification and gender is set out below.

Employee classification	Female FTE	Male FTE	Total FTE
Band 1	2.4	-	2.4
Band 2	3.1	11.8	14.9
Band 3	0.2	18.7	18.9
Band 4	6.6	5.8	12.4
Band 5	7.9	7	14.9
Band 6	4.6	3	7.6
Band 7	5.5	2	7.5
Band 8	1.9	1	2.9
SEO	-	3	3
Total	32.2	52.3	84.5





## Equal Employment Opportunity/Human Rights

West Wimmera Shire Council continues with its practice of providing a non-discriminatory working environment.

West Wimmera Shire Council has a responsibility to its members of the community to create and reflect the nature and needs of its community. West Wimmera Shire Council is wholly committed to the principles of Equal Employment Opportunity and Human Rights. These policies extend to all employees and potential employees.

In all our practices and policies, Council adheres to the principles of no discrimination in relation to sex, marital status, parenthood, race, colour, national origin, physical or mental impairment, religious or political affiliation. In accordance with its objective, West Wimmera Shire Council's Equal Employment Opportunity program continued to maintain a non-discriminatory working environment.

*Selection of individuals for employment, promotion or advancement, training and staff development will be on the basis of personal merit in fair and open competition according to the skills, qualifications, knowledge and efficiency relevant to the position involved.*

*Council's Policy on Equal Employment Opportunity reflects our desire to enjoy a workplace free of discrimination where each person has the opportunity to progress to the extent of his or her ability.*

Employees are encouraged to raise equal opportunity issues or grievances with any manager, chief executive officer or senior officer. Confidentiality will be respected.

Council is a member of the CORE (Communities Of Respect and Equality) alliance.



# **Governance, management and other information**

## **Governance**

West Wimmera Shire Council is constituted under the Local Government Act 1989 (the Act).

In Section 3D of the Act the role of a Council is stated as follows:

(1) A Council is elected to provide leadership for the good governance of the municipal district and the local community.

(2) The role of a Council includes—

(a) acting as a representative government by taking into account the diverse needs of the local community in decision making;

(b) providing leadership by establishing strategic objectives and monitoring their achievement;

(c) maintaining the viability of the Council by ensuring that resources are managed in a responsible and accountable manner;

(d) advocating the interests of the local community to other communities and governments;

(e) acting as a responsible partner in government by taking into account the needs of other communities;

(f) fostering community cohesion and encouraging active participation in civic life.

Council's formal decision-making processes are conducted through council meetings and Special Committees of Council. Council delegates the majority of its decision-making to council staff. These delegations are exercised in accordance with adopted council policies.

## **Council Meetings**

Ordinary Council meetings were held on the third Wednesday of the month for the 2018-9 year, with the exception of January when no Ordinary Council Meeting was held. The 11 Ordinary Meetings were rotated between Edenhope, Kaniva and the surrounding localities of Charam, Connewirrecoo and Serviceton.

Three (3) Special Meetings of Council were held in 2018/19.



## **Community Forums**

Community Forums were held in July 2018 at Serviceton, October 2018 at Charam and April 2018 at Connewirricoo. Community Forums give the Councillors an opportunity to have a meal with local residents and discuss local issues in a relaxed, informal atmosphere. The community is provided with the opportunity to lodge customer requests, which are followed up by the relevant staff members and outcomes communicated back.

## **Committees**

In accordance with Section 86 of the Local Government Act 1989, Council is able to establish one or more special committees consisting of Councillors, Council staff, other persons or any combination of these.

Council currently has the following Special Committees

- Economic Development Special Committee
- West Wimmera Shire Council Plant Special Committee

### **Economic Development Special Committee**

The Economic Development Special Committee is constituted of all Councillors.

Purpose:

- To consider and make recommendations to Council in relation to economic development matters;
- To invite persons to address the special committee in relation to economic development matters;
- To act generally as a forum to discuss and further matters of an economic development nature.

### **West Wimmera Shire Council Plant Special Committee**

The West Wimmera Shire Council Plant Special Committee is constituted of three Councillors nominated by Council, General Manager Infrastructure Development and Works, Finance Manager, Works Manager and Assets Manager.

Purpose:

The Plant Committee exists to investigate, review and provide advice on all matters pertaining to plant. This includes budget implications however excludes day to day operations.



## **Local Law –Meeting Procedure & Common Seal**

Local Law No. 7 – Meeting Procedure and Common Seal was reviewed and endorsed by Council in February 2017. The Local was subsequently gazetted and has been in operation since that date.

Unless Council chooses to review the Local Law sooner, it scheduled to cease to operate on 15 February 2026.

## **Review of Delegations**

West Wimmera Shire Council undertook a complete review of all delegations in February to March of 2019.

The next review is scheduled for November 2019.

## **Review of Council Policies**

West Wimmera Shire Council policies are reviewed regularly in accordance with a rolling review schedule

The review includes compliance with relevant legislation, removal of any procedural items and tailoring of policies to current activities and reformatting to current template styles.

As policies are reviewed and endorsed by Council, they are uploaded on to Council's website (where public access is available).

## **Councillor Code of Conduct**

In accordance with Section 76C of the Act, Council adopted a revised Councillor Code of Conduct on 15 December 2016, which was revised in June 2019. A council must review the Councillor Code of Conduct within the period of 4 months after a general election. The Councillor Code of Conduct outlines the following:

### **Core Values**

In pursuing its strategic objective, West Wimmera Shire Council believes in and is committed to the following values:

- Integrity
- Respect
- Selflessness
- Openness

Under the Local Government Act 1989 Councillors must:



act with integrity; and  
impartially exercise his or her responsibilities in the interests of the local community; and  
not improperly seek to confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.  
avoid conflicts between his or her public duties as a Councillor and his or her personal  
interests and obligations  
act honestly and avoid statements (whether oral or in writing) or actions that will or are  
likely to mislead or deceive a person;  
treat all persons with respect and have due regard to the opinions, beliefs, rights and  
responsibilities of other Councillors, Council staff and other persons;  
exercise reasonable care and diligence and submit himself or herself to the lawful  
scrutiny that is appropriate to his or her office;  
endeavour to ensure that public resources are used prudently and solely in the public  
interest;  
act lawfully and in accordance with the trust placed in him or her as an elected  
representative;  
support and promote these principles by leadership and example and act in a way that  
secures and preserves public confidence in the office of Councillor.



## Councillor Attendance at Meetings

Ordinary Meetings	Cr Meyer	Cr Pretlove	Cr Hicks	Cr Houlihan	Cr Domaschenz
Wed 18 Jul 2018	1	1	1	1	1
Wed 15 Aug 2018	1	1	1	1	1
Wed 19 Sep 2018	1	1	1	1	1
Mon 15 Oct 2018	1	1	1	1	1
Wed 21 Nov 2018	1	1	1	1	1
Wed 19 Dec 2018	1	1	1	1	1
Wed 20 Feb 2019	1	1	1	1	1
Wed 20 Mar 2019	1	1	1	1	1
Wed 17 Apr 2019	1	1	-	1	1
Wed 15 May 2019	1	1	1	1	1
Thu 20 Jun 2019	-	1	1	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>

Annual Statutory Meeting	Cr Meyer	Cr Pretlove	Cr Hicks	Cr Houlihan	Cr Domaschenz
Wed 7 Nov 2018	1	1	1	1	1

Special Meetings	Cr Meyer	Cr Pretlove	Cr Hicks	Cr Houlihan	Cr Domaschenz
Mon 6 Aug 2018	1	1	1	1	1
Wed 6 Mar 2019	1	1	1	1	1
Wed 29 May 2019	1	1	1	1	1
Thu 20 Jun 2019	-	1	1	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>

All Meetings	Cr Meyer	Cr Pretlove	Cr Hicks	Cr Houlihan	Cr Domaschenz
Total Meetings attended in 2018-2019 Financial Year	14	16	15	16	16
Percentage of meetings attended for 2018-2019	88%	100%	94%	100%	100%



## Councillor Allowances

In accordance with Section 74 of the Act, councillors are entitled to receive an allowance while performing their duty as a councillor. The mayor is also entitled to receive a higher allowance.

The State Government sets the upper and lower limits for all allowances paid to councillors and mayors. Councils are divided into three categories based on the income and population of each council. In this instance West Wimmera Shire Council is recognised as a category one council.

For the period 1 July 2018 – 30 November 2018, the councillor annual allowance as a category one council (as defined by the Local Government Act 1989) was fixed at \$18,996 per annum and the allowance for the mayor was \$44,328 per annum. The Minister for Local Government approved an annual adjustment of 2.0% to take effect as from 1 December 2018. The annual allowances were adjusted for the period 1 December 2018 to 30 June 2019 at \$19,376 per annum for the councillor allowance (plus 9.5% superannuation equivalent) and \$45,215 per annum for the mayoral allowance (+9.5% superannuation equivalent). The Mayor also receives access to a fully maintained motor vehicle.

The following table contains a summary of the allowances paid to each councillor during the year (including allowance equivalent to superannuation):

Councillor	Allowance (\$)	Superannuation Equivalent (\$)	Total (\$)
Cr. T Domaschenz	19,217.14	1,825.63	21,042.77
Cr. R Hicks	19,217.14	1,825.63	21,042.77
Cr. T Houlihan	19,217.14	1,825.63	21,042.77
Cr. B Meyer	19,217.14	1,825.63	21,042.77
Cr. J Pretlove (Mayor July 2018- June 2019)	44,845.28	4,260.30	49,105.58

## Councillor Expenses

In accordance with Section 75 of the Local Government Act 1989, council is required to reimburse a Councillor for expenses incurred whilst performing his or her duties as a Councillor. Council is also required to adopt and maintain a policy in relation to the reimbursement of expenses for Councillors. The policy provides guidance for the payment of reimbursements of expenses and the provision of resources, facilities and other support to the Mayor and Councillors to enable them to discharge their duties. Council also publishes in its Annual Report the details of the expenses, including reimbursement of expenses for each Councillor and member of a Council Committee paid by the council. The details of the expenses for the 2018-19 year are set out in the following table.

Councillor	Travel (excluding Mileage)	Mileage	Accommoda- tion & Meals	ICT expens- es	Conferences & Training	Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Cr. T Domaschenz	567.23	4,124.11	1,637.70	687.92	1,248.74	<b>8,265.70</b>
Cr. R Hicks	213.72	2,196.72	3,927.53	479.47	537.17	<b>7,354.61</b>
Cr. T Houlihan	-	9,708.10	72.73	446.41	-	<b>10,227.24</b>
Cr. B Meyer	-	456.94	-	907.70	-	<b>1,364.64</b>
Cr. J Pretlove	573.14	-	2,421.12	701.38	1,334.65	<b>5,030.29</b>

## Governance and Management Checklist

	Column 1 Governance and Management Item	Column 2 Assessment	
1	Community engagement policy (policy outlining Council's commitment to engaging with the community on matters of public interest)	Policy Date of operation of current policy: 16 August 2017	X
2	Community engagement guidelines (guidelines to assist staff to determine when and how to engage with the community)	Guidelines Date of operation of current guidelines: 16 August 2017	X
3	Strategic Resource Plan (plan under section 126 of the Act outlining the financial and non-financial resources required for at least the next 4 financial years)	Adopted in accordance with section 126 of the Act Date of adoption: 20 June 2019	X
4	Annual budget (plan under section 130 of the Act setting out the services to be provided and initiatives to be undertaken over the next 12 months and the funding and other resources required)	Adopted in accordance with section 130 of the Act Date of adoption: 20 June 2019	X
5	Asset management plans (plans that set out the asset maintenance and renewal needs for key infrastructure asset classes for at least the next 10 years)	Asset Management Strategy Adopted 21 March 2018	X
6	Rating strategy (strategy setting out the rating structure of Council to levy rates and charges)	Strategy Date of operation of current strategy: 19 September 2018	X
7	Risk policy ( policy outlining Council's commitment and approach to minimising the risks to Council's operations)	Policy Date of operation of current policy: 21 February 2018	X
8	Fraud policy (policy outlining Council's commitment and approach to minimising the risk of fraud)	Policy Date of operation of current policy: 21 February 2018	X
9	Municipal emergency management plan (plan under section 20 of the Emergency Management Act 1986 for emergency prevention, response and recovery)	Prepared and maintained in accordance with section 20 of the <b>Emergency Management Act 1986</b> Date of preparation: 20 December 2017	X

## Governance and Management Checklist

10	Procurement policy (policy under section 186A of the Local Government Act 1989 outlining the matters, practices and procedures that will apply to all purchases of goods, services and works)	Prepared and approved in accordance with section 186A of the <b>Local Government Act 1989</b> Date of approval: 21 May 2019	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11	Business continuity plan (plan setting out the actions that will be taken to ensure that key services continue to operate in the event of a disaster)	Plan adopted 16 June 2017	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
12	Disaster recovery plan (plan setting out the actions that will be undertaken to recover and restore business capability in the event of a disaster)	No plan Reason for no plan: Council has commenced preparing a Disaster Recovery Plan in accordance with an internal audit into Council's current Business Continuity capacities . It is anticipated that this be completed by 30 June 2020.	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	Risk management framework (framework outlining Council's approach to managing risks to the Council's operations)	Framework Date of operation of current framework: 21 February 2018	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
14	Audit Committee (advisory committee of Council under section 139 of the Act whose role is to oversee the integrity of a Council's financial reporting, processes to manage risks to the Council's operations and for compliance with applicable legal, ethical, and regulatory requirements)	Established in accordance with section 139 of the Act Date of establishment: 16 May 2013	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
15	Internal audit (independent accounting professionals engaged by the Council to provide analyses and recommendations aimed at improving Council's governance, risk and management controls)	Engaged Date of engagement of current provider: 21 February 2018	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
16	Performance reporting framework (a set of indicators measuring financial and non-financial performance, including the performance indicators referred to in section 131 of the Act)	Framework Date of operation of current framework: 21 July 2017	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
17	Council Plan reporting (report reviewing the performance of the Council against the Council Plan, including the results in relation to the strategic indicators, for the first six months of the financial year)	No Report Reason for no report: Quarterly Reports are presented to Council at assembly meetings.	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Governance and Management Checklist

18	Financial reporting (quarterly statements to Council under section 138 of the Act comparing budgeted revenue and expenditure with actual revenue and expenditure)	Most Statements presented to Council in accordance with section 138(1) of the Act. June 2018 quarter not presented separately to annual financials. Dates statements presented: PE 30 Sep 2018 - 15 October 2018 PE 31 Dec 2018 – 20 February 2019 PE 31 Mar 2019 – 17 April 2019 PE 30 Jun 2019—17 July 2019	<b>X</b>
19	Risk reporting (six-monthly reports of strategic risks to Council's operations, their likelihood and consequences of occurring and risk minimisation strategies)	No reports Reason for no reports: Risk reports are made to Audit Committee and presented to Council with minutes of Audit Committee Meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>
20	Performance reporting (six-monthly reports of indicators measuring the results against financial and non-financial performance, including performance indicators referred to in section 131 of the Act)	No reports Reason for no reports: Council's systems are at the moment not flexible in reporting.	<input type="checkbox"/>
21	Annual report (annual report under sections 131, 132 and 133 of the Act to the community containing a report of operations and audited financial performance statements)	Considered at meeting of the Council in accordance with section 134 of the Act Date of consideration: 15 October 2018	<b>X</b>
22	Councillor Code of Conduct (Code under section 76C of the Act setting out the conduct principles and the dispute resolution processes to be followed by Councillors)	Reviewed in accordance with section 76C of the Act Date reviewed: 20 June 2019	<b>X</b>
23	Delegations (a document setting out the powers, duties and functions of Council and the Chief Executive Officer that have been delegated to members of staff)	Reviewed in accordance with section 98(6) of the Act Date of review: 15 May 2019	<b>X</b>
24	Meeting procedures (a local law governing the conduct of meetings of Council and special committees)	Meeting procedures local law made in accordance with section 91(1) of the Act Date local law made: 16 June 2017	<b>X</b>



## Major Initiatives

Council identified a number of major initiatives in its 2018/19 Annual Budget. Each of these major initiatives is aligned with a Strategic Objective in the Council Plan. The following table indicates Council's progress against these major initiatives:

Council Plan Reference	Major Initiative	Status	Comments
Strategic Objective 1: A proactive, well-governed, professional and financially sustainable organisation that encourages community participation.	Identify and drive shared service opportunities within the region which may have been of benefit to WWSC	Achieved/ Underway	Council is party to a shared Municipal Building Survey-or service with other regional Councils.  Council has resolved to be involved in a regional group with the Rural Councils Transformation Program.
Strategic Objective 2: Meaningful partnerships to support advocacy priorities and service provision.	Investigate opportunities to improve access to utilities for the WWSC community.	Achieved/ Underway	Council has successfully lobbied government for improvements to mobile telephone communication blackspots within the shire. WWSC continues to lobby for improved NBN connectivity to our shire.
	Participate in business case development for rural pipeline study	Achieved	Council is participating as a stakeholder in this non-council led study.
Strategic Objective 3: Quality sustainable community infrastructure	Invest in addressing the infrastructure renewal gap by maintaining renewal funding to Council's assets.	Ongoing	Council has maintained a steady capital renewal program in line with long term renewal spends. Council has undertaken a detailed review and condition assessment of its complete road network to improve data quality and renewal requirement analysis.
	Create a prioritised Playground Strategy	Not Achieved	Not commenced.



# Major Initiatives

Council Plan Reference	Major Initiative	Status	Comments
Strategic Objective 4: Building on our agricultural and business strengths and supporting economic development.	Participate in the development of a business case for utility infrastructure, notably water and gas pipelines.	Underway	Council has been involved in water pipeline planning.
Strategic Objective 5: Thriving, safe and diverse local communities	Continue with the development and implementation of a Youth Council.	Achieved	Youth Council has been assembled and has met.
Strategic Objective 6: Participating in activities that address health and well being issues	Complete wall, boat ramp and all access path around Lake Wallace.	Partially Achieved	Wall and boat ramp have been constructed.
Strategic Objective 7: Providing access to, and promoting the natural environment.	Create Eco-Tourism opportunities to develop a visitor economy.	Ongoing	Council has adopted a Recreational Trails Strategy.

