



Council Plan 2017-21 (2019/20 Update)



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Foreword

The Swan Hill region is booming socially and economically. The people of this region are friendly and enjoy a range of cultural and sporting pursuits. There is abundant employment and a booming economy, primarily built on agriculture and the need to service the agriculture sector.

This region is home to some fantastic natural attractions and our economy benefits from the visitors drawn to our majestic Murray River, our extensive lake system, the Riverine forests, the unique Mallee landscapes and splendid climate.

The Swan Hill region, with its many small towns and its large centres of Swan Hill and Robinvale, is a great place to live.

The community has elected a Council with high levels of energy and optimism. They come from diverse backgrounds but they share one thing in common - a passion for this community and its future.

This Council Plan sets out the municipality's vision for the future and has ordered our activities over the next four years into five key areas – economic growth, community enrichment, infrastructure, governance and leadership, and environment.

The 2020 update has recognized the significant impact the Covid-19 response and the requirements that the new Local Government Act 2020 will have on our Community and Councils operations.

The Council Plan plays an important role in shaping the future for the Swan Hill municipality, setting a broad direction for the next four years.

It recognises that everything we do impacts our community, our economy or our environment. It acknowledges that in order to achieve our vision and objectives, we must operate effectively.

Council will determine details of specific activities, programs and projects each year. But everything Council undertakes in the next four years will be based on the strategies included in this Council Plan.

Working with our community and our many stakeholders and partners, we will achieve our vision of creating a prosperous and healthy community enjoying quality facilities and services where everyone has the chance to realise their full potential.

We invite you to delve deeper into this plan and discover the many exciting opportunities this Council sees for the future of our community. Through reading this plan perhaps you will become as excited by the future as we are, and consider playing an increased role in helping build the community that you want for the future.



Economic growth



Community enrichment



Infrastructure



Governance and leadership



Environment

You and our Council Plan

The Council Plan is our commitment to our community, using innovation, good governance and responsible management of community resources. We encourage all residents, businesses and community organisations to use the Council Plan to monitor Council's progress as we strive to achieve our shared vision for the municipality.

This plan details Council's priorities for the upcoming four-year period and outlines the activities Council will focus on achieving. Where necessary it has been adjusted in the light of the new Local Government Act 2020 and for the impact of Covid-19.

Council recognises that it is through listening to our community that we are able to develop this four-year Council Plan and set the strategic direction for the organisation for the period of our elected term.

This plan provides information to a variety of audiences including all community groups, businesses, ratepayers, visitors, investors, government agencies and other interested stakeholders.

As a high level strategic document, the Council Plan directs the priorities of the Strategic Resource Plan, which ensures there are sufficient financial and non-financial resources to deliver the plan.

The development of a Council Plan is a statutory requirement of Section 90 of the Local Government Act 2020 (Vic). Council is legally required prepare and adopt a Council Plan for a period of at least the next 4 financial years after a general election in accordance with its deliberative engagement practices and adopt the Council Plan by 31 October in the year following a general election.

The Council Plan must include the strategic objectives of Council, the strategies for achieving the objectives for the next four years along with the strategic indicators for monitoring the achievement of the objectives.

Regardless of the legislative requirement to prepare a Council Plan, Swan Hill Rural City Council recognises the value of sound strategic planning processes. It is through our vigorous adherence to decision making, informed by well developed strategies and plans that we maximise the value we provide to our community when employing the scarce resources at our disposal.

Definitions

Council	means Swan Hill Rural City Council, being a body corporate constituted as a municipal Council under the Local Government Act 2020
Councillors	means the individuals holding the office of a member of Swan Hill Rural City Council
Council officer	means the Chief Executive Officer and staff of Council appointed by the Chief Executive Officer.

Our place in the region



The Swan Hill Rural City Council municipality is home to the townships of Swan Hill, Robinvale, Lake Boga, Nyah, Nyah West, Piangil, Woorinen, Ultima, Manangatang, Boundary Bend and Tresco.

Swan Hill Rural City Council is located on the Murray River in north-west Victoria. Our region is home to 20,584 people (2016 Census data). In a recent study by Geografia (2019) there is substantial evidence to suggest that Robinvale's true year-round population is notably higher than the official Estimated Resident Population (ERP) of 3,359. The evidence suggests there is a mean population in Robinvale in the order of 7,900 residents.

With an area covering 6,116km², we have 3,492 kilometres of local roads connecting 12,041 rateable properties.

Agriculture and manufacturing drive the economy. Our region's gross regional product is \$2.7 Billion (Remplan 2020), of which Horticulture represents \$1.118 Billion (SunRISE Report 2019) Agriculture accounts for almost 21 per cent of the region's total economic output, with more than 40 products grown commercially in the municipality.

Irrigated farming (including stonefruit, grapes, nuts, olives and vegetable production) accounts for over 15 per cent of our economic output, while traditional livestock and broadacre farming accounts for almost 4.5 per cent. More than 18 per cent of all jobs in the city are directly related to agriculture, Remplan, (2020).

Tourism and retail sectors are also strong. About 656,000 people visit the municipality each year, injecting about \$55 million into our local economy.

Our population statistics show our community members are 51 per cent male and 49 per cent female. We have a median age of 40 years (Australian Bureau of Statistics).

Almost 9,033 of our residents are employed and nearly 45 per cent of these individuals work in agricultural, health care or the retail industry (Australian Bureau of Statistics).

A message from our Mayor and CEO

Swan Hill Rural City Council plays a vital role in shaping the future prosperity, health and wellbeing of our municipality.

This Council Plan 2017-2021 will ensure our organisation remains progressive, dynamic and committed as we aim to achieve this. The plan is a high level, strategic document that will guide us as we make decisions in the best interest of our communities.

It will help us monitor our performance, stay on track and meet the legislative requirements of the Local Government Act 2020.

Importantly, the Council Plan is based on what Council understands to be most important to people's lives, hopes and aspirations, and the kind of community we all want in the years ahead. This information comes from a collaborative process between elected Councillors, the organisation and the community.

As you read through this Council Plan, you will see that it sets out our organisation's key result areas, key strategic activities and our performance indicators over the plan's four-year life.

These five key result areas are - Economic growth, Community enrichment, Infrastructure, Governance and leadership, and Environment.

Over the next four years, we will monitor our progress against our performance indicators every quarter. Results will be reported to Council and published in our Annual Report.

The Council Plan will also guide future financial plans, the annual budget, annual operational plans and continuous service improvement. Other key plans are also aligned to the Council Plan, including, but not limited to, the Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, Strategic Resource Plan and Long Term Financial Plan and Budget.

It gives us great pleasure to present the community with the Council Plan 2017-2021.



John McLinden
Chief Executive Officer

Councillor Bill Moar
Mayor

Our Councillors



A Bi-election was held in 2019 resulting in the election of two new Councillors.
Image: Cr Bill Moar, Cr Jade Benham, Cr Nicole McKay, Cr Les McPhee, Cr Ann Young, Cr Lea Johnson and Cr Chris Jeffery.

Our electoral structure consists of four wards.

Central Ward

Councillor Lea Johnson (elected 2016)
Councillor Ann Young, Mayor (elected 2016)
Councillor Bill Moar (elected 2016)
Councillor Chris Jeffery (elected 2016)

Lakes Ward

Councillor Les McPhee (elected 2008)

Murray Mallee Ward

Councillor Gary Norton (elected 2003-2019)
Councillor Nicole McKay (elected 2019)

Robinvale Ward

Councillor John Katis (elected 1997-2019)
Councillor Jade Benhan (elected 2019)

Our Vision

A prosperous and healthy community enjoying quality facilities and services.

Our Mission

We will lead, advocate, partner and provide efficient services and opportunities for growth and the wellbeing of our community and environment.

Our Values

Council values our residents and community and will be responsive to their needs. In pursuing our objectives, we believe in, and are committed to, the following values:

Community engagement

We will ensure that our communities are consulted, listened to and informed.

Leadership

We will be at the centre of our community and by actively engaging our community we will form the collective view on strategic issues and will then express our views through strong advocacy.

Fairness

We will value and embrace the diversity of our community and ensure that all people are treated equally.

Accountability

We will be transparent and efficient in our activities and we will always value feedback.

Trust

We will act with integrity and earn the community's trust by being a reliable partner in delivering services and providing facilities.

Our key result areas

To achieve our Mission, Council has identified five Key Result Areas.



Economic growth

We will encourage new business development, provide support for business expansion and will continuously seek to help our existing businesses to prosper.



Community enrichment

We will provide a range of services to individuals and to the broader community that assist all in our community to live healthy, fulfilling lives. We will embrace our role as a regional centre by providing a range of cultural opportunities.



Infrastructure

We will provide and maintain publicly accessible infrastructure that is appropriate for the community's needs in the most effective and efficient manner possible.



Governance and leadership

We will represent our community's interests, conduct our affairs openly and with integrity, reflecting the high levels of governance our community expects. We will plan for our municipality's long term growth and development by committing to a robust program of strategic planning.



Environment

We will adopt work practices and implement policies that reduce our environmental impact, advocate for the protection of our environment and fulfil our regulatory obligations.



Key result area Economic growth

Strategic objectives

We will:

1. Encourage and attract new business to our region.
2. Assist existing businesses to expand and increase their efficiency.
3. Have a region with an equipped and productive workforce.
4. Provide land use planning that is responsive and which proactively encourages appropriate development.

"We will encourage new business development, provide support for business expansion and will continuously seek to help our existing businesses to prosper."



Our current services, strategic documents and relevant legislation

Current services	Current strategic documents	Key legislation
<p>Encourage and attract new business to our region</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business and rural development • Economic development • Visitor information centre services <p>Assist existing businesses to expand and increase their efficiency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism marketing and promotion • Economic development • Pioneer Settlement • Grant funding administration <p>Have an equipped and productive workforce</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism marketing and promotion • Business and rural development • Grant funding administration • Industry training <p>Provide land use planning that is responsive to current needs and proactive for future needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building services • Planning development • administration • Planning investigations and enforcement • Statutory planning (planning permits) • Strategic land use planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Development Strategy • Swan Hill Rural City Council Tourism Strategy • Swan Hill Residential Development Strategy- 2006-2030 • Aboriginal Partnership Plan • Lake Boga Economic Development Tourism and Marketing Strategy • Sustainable Living Strategy • Active Transport Strategy • Swan Hill Planning Scheme Municipal Strategic Statement • Swan Hill Rural City Council Planning Scheme • Workforce Development Strategy • Robinvale Economic Development Strategy • Retail Strategy • Swan Hill Riverfront Masterplan • Robinvale Housing Strategy • Robinvale Population Determination: Briefing Paper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Act 1993 • Building Regulations 2006 • Planning and Environment Act 1987 • Subdivisions Act 1988 • Swan Hill Planning Scheme

Strategic objective 1

Encourage and attract new business to our region

Strategic initiatives	How we will know we have achieved this
Formulate new ways to encourage new business development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and investigate suitable land parcels for new business • Apply for funding through Regional Development Victoria • Develop a business expansion or relocation strategy • Commence an investment attraction campaign.
Identify the types of businesses suited to this region and develop investment prospectuses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform an industry gap analysis • Review the Investment Attraction Policy • Develop a suite of industry and business prospectuses • Market the opportunities available
Investigate and identify potential export opportunities and facilitate connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse the region's products and identify where we have competitive advantages that might provide opportunities for growth • Investigate what role Council can play with development of new markets • Facilitate connections and partnerships to achieve market access • Encourage the establishment of value adding industries
Pursue new businesses that are upstream processors for our local produce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with local industry to identify opportunities • Work with industry to establish new businesses
Promote new technologies and new ways of working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate and market opportunities for internet based business • Promote and educate industry and the community to encourage the uptake of new technologies through training and workshops
Increase the availability of appropriate housing to support growth of industry and agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate housing needs and identify appropriate solutions • Facilitate combined public and private sector investment to diversify housing stock

Our ongoing responsibilities

- Actively pursue decentralisation of State and Federal Government services to establish in the local area
- Implement and review the Economic Development Strategy
- Support growth in our satellite communities
- Encourage new business development through support and facilitation
- Provide marketing and tourism information services
- Implement procurement practices to encourage local investment
- Manage the Tower Hill development and others
- Support and develop tourism product

Strategic objective 2

Assist existing businesses to expand and increase their efficiency

Strategic initiatives	How we will know we have achieved this
Encourage the growth of agriculture through appropriate advocacy and strategic planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for improved transport links • Review the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) to ensure the growth of agriculture is supported • Implement the Rural Land Use Strategy
Investigate opportunities for agricultural businesses to establish new enterprises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with local industry to identify opportunities, for example clean energy on farms • Investigate opportunities for agri-tourism products and experiences, for example paddock to plate, farm stays
Encourage organisations to joint tender for works and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate and where possible implement shared contracts and services with the region's Councils • Conduct workshops and provide advice to local businesses and tenderers to improve their tendering processes
Actively pursue opportunities for regionally focused infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for additional and upgraded infrastructure that will improve efficiency of local businesses, for example rail freight • Advocate for adequate and alternative utility supplies
Investigate options for investment in renewable energy technologies for the municipality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete and adopt a study • Facilitate renewable energy projects
Encourage and assist existing business to pursue value adding to their industry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake forums and discussions with industry to understand opportunities • Complete an analysis of relevant industry data • Identify and prioritise government grant applications • Develop a business prospectus
Improve the commercial position of the Pioneer Settlement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the day product review • Review the promotion plan • Enhance the Heartbeat of the Murray by improving operational effectiveness and adding additional elements to the visitor experience
Utilising Swan Hill Incorporated, market and promote the region as a place to live, work and invest.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue agreement with Swan Hill Incorporated
Help existing businesses recover from the Covid-19 restrictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business support and advice including access to Government support • Develop a Business Support Grants Program • Review and Adjust Council's rates strategy to assist the Commercial sector

Our ongoing responsibilities

- Liaise with existing employers and associations about the potential for growth and expansion
- Facilitate an environment that is conducive to a sustainable and growing local business sector
- Provide opportunities for local residents to improve their skill levels and access employment
- Support the Agribusiness Committee
- Caravan parks
- Tourist Information Centre

Strategic objective 3

Have a region with an equipped and productive workforce

Strategic Initiatives	How we will know we have achieved this
Assist local businesses to up-skill and retrain their workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify skills shortages and training gaps• Advocate for regional training opportunities• Create partnerships to deliver short courses and training
Promote the benefits of the region as a place to live, work and invest	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participate in regional expos• Support regional marketing of the municipality• Advertise all job vacancies with a link to a website that outlines regional information• Develop a new Residents Guide
Implement the Workforce Development Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete a project to quantify labour force data from within the municipality, with a particular focus on the agricultural sector
Encourage the development of appropriate accommodation for various workforces	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) and Planning Scheme to ensure diverse housing and land is available• Investigate opportunities for improved public transport• Investigate alternative ways to provide accommodation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•

Our ongoing responsibilities

- Support skilled migration
- Promote our municipality as a preferred lifestyle living place
- Encourage and support local employment opportunities
- Lobby to expand locally-available educational opportunities
- Workforce development
- Continue to explore opportunities to increase affordable housing supply
- Provide Council traineeships and scholarships

Strategic objective 4

Provide land use planning that is responsive and which proactively encourages appropriate development.

Strategic initiatives	How we will know we have achieved this
Review the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Revise Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) and refer back to the Minister for approval
Identify and zone appropriate land for future development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify land through strategic work program• Rezone land as approved by Council
Investigate and develop options for de-watered farming land	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete audit of areas with de-watered land• Develop and implement strategy to address issues
Review the availability and suitability of industrial land in Swan Hill and Robinvale	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete an Industrial Zones Strategy• Amend planning scheme as appropriate
Review small towns for further housing development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop and implement Small Town Strategy
Prepare a Settlement Strategy that identifies and recommends rural residential and rural living development opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Investigate rural residential and rural living development opportunities• Develop the Settlement Strategy• Implement the actions of the Settlement Strategy through the Swan Hill Planning Scheme

Our ongoing responsibilities

- Ensure Council's policies encourage development
- Planning Compliance
- Building Compliance
- Advocate for water, sewer and potable water across our municipality



Key result area Community enrichment

Strategic objectives

We will:

1. Help all people to find a place in our community.
2. Provide services and support initiatives that create a Healthy and Safe Community.
3. Develop a community with a sense of pride and responsibility/ownership that strives to achieve its aspirations.

“We will provide a range of services to individuals and to the broader community that assist all in our community to live healthy, fulfilling lives. We will embrace our role as a regional centre by providing a range of cultural opportunities”



Our current services, strategic documents and relevant legislation

Current services	Current strategic documents	Key legislation
<p>Ensure all people have a place in our community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arts and culture Community and major events Libraries Major facilities administration Recreation planning, development and support Social planning and policy Youth development Positive ageing <p>Provide services and support initiatives that create a healthy and safe community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early years service planning Maternal and child health Occasional care Aged services planning Delivered meals Home and community care Rural Access and health promotion Environmental health Domestic wastewater Food safety Immunisations Municipal and emergency management Community emergency management Community fire safety Fire prevention Regulatory services Local laws School crossing management <p>Develop a community with a sense of pride and responsibility/ownership that strives to achieve its aspirations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community development Community planning and engagement Community capacity building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth Strategic Plan Disability Action Plan Playgrounds Strategy Robinvale Leisure Centre Management Plan Swan Hill Leisure Centre Management Plan Art Gallery Collection Management Plan Parks and Reserves Master plan Public Health and Wellbeing Plan Aboriginal Partnership Plan Swan Hill Community Plan Lake Boga Community Plan Piangil Community Plan Woorinen Community Plan Nyah/Nyah West Community Plan Robinvale Community Plan Boundary Bend Community Plan Beverford Community Plan Ultima Community Plan Manangatang Community Plan Wemen Community Plan Municipal Emergency Management Plan Municipal Early-Middle Years Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aged Care Act 1997 Carers Recognition Act 2012 Children Youth and Families Act No. 96 of 2005 (Vic) Country Fire Authority Act 1958 Disability Discrimination Act 1992 Disability Amendment Act 2012 Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 Emergency Management Act 2013 Environmental Protection Act 1970 Food Act 1984 Home and Community Care Act 1985 Health Records Act 2001 Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 Residential Tenancies Act 1997 Tobacco Act 1987 Working with Children Check Act 2005

Strategic objective 1

Help all people find a place in our community.

Strategic initiatives	How we will know we have achieved this
Review and implement the Aboriginal Partnership Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake initiatives with the intent to work toward developing a Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP)
Investigate opportunities to develop Aboriginal leadership capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate leadership opportunities, for example scholarships, grants, host a forum with young people and local service providers.
Establish and maintain partnership with organisations that support Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in the Settlement Services group to provide support to new arrivals through adapting service provision. Assist with the delivery of multicultural events Review of service access plans to ensure inclusion
Develop and implement Disability Action Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt the plan Implement the actions within timelines
Implement actions from the Youth Strategy 2015-19.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review make up and role of Youth Council Implement actions in the Youth Strategy within budget and timelines Improve partnerships and relationships with other youth services Hold youth specific events
Strengthen our connection with youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the structure of the Youth Council with young people Deliver a responsive and relevant program of Youth Services Deliver the actions within the Youth Strategy Develop work placement and work experience programs Implement the Robinvale Employment Program in accordance with the funding agreement Maintain and develop our partnerships with youth agencies
Develop and implement Cultural Services Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and adopt a plan Implement initiatives within timeframes and subject to adequate resourcing

Our ongoing responsibilities

- Provide support, advice and advocacy for community groups
- Provide support to strengthen community leadership
- Provide support for links between the community, key organisations and Council
- Respect Aboriginal culture and identity
- Support Aboriginal engagement
- Promote compliance with the Aboriginal Heritage Act
- Fly the Aboriginal flag at our offices
- Actively participate in Settlement Services Committee meetings

Strategic objective 2

Provide services and support initiatives that create a healthy and safe community

Strategic initiatives	How we will know we have achieved this
Review and implement actions from the Public Health and Wellbeing Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the plan, including actions, to address violence against women Report on status of actions biannually
Strategically position Council's ongoing role regarding the community-based aged care reforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce an options paper on integration of Commonwealth Home Support Program to National Standards. Ascertain how HACC/Commonwealth Home Support Program services can be delivered within funding levels Develop a Positive Ageing Plan
Review and determine Council's role in early years and child care services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review early years services Produce a report on outcomes and provide recommendations Develop an Early Years Plan Implement Early Years Plan actions within timeframes and resources
Improve personal and community safety by working with partners on community safety issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote awareness of the Community Charter for the Prevention of Violence against Women Implement the requirements of Child Safety Standards Expand and continue CCTV operation Enforce local laws and develop an MOU with Victoria Police to support additional community crime prevention measures
Plan for the future provision of sport and recreation facilities and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the development of sport and recreation clubs across the municipality Complete and implement the Recreation Reserves Masterplan.
Expand library services in Robinvale and review the delivery of library services in our small communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scope, fund and complete Robinvale Library Project within limitations Develop an effective partnership arrangement with Robinvale P-12 College Confirm that the new library is meeting the Robinvale community's needs Review delivery of library services in our small communities.
Investigate the need for an off leash dog park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey community about need for an off-leash dog park Develop a project scope if the community need is identified

Our ongoing responsibilities

- Maintain relationships and provide resources to external organisations for emergency management
- Health promotion and education
- Provide public library services and explore possibilities for expanding library services
- Provide a range of diverse cultural, arts and community experiences via festivals, events, ceremonies and iconic celebrations
- Participate in and promote significant days and cultural celebrations
- Maintain services that improve amenity and liveability of our towns
- Lead and test emergency management planning and processes

Strategic objective 3

Develop a community with a sense of pride and responsibility/ownership that strives to achieve its aspirations.

Strategic initiatives	How we will know we have achieved this
Support the capacity of communities to self-manage and self-regulate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review and renew Community Plans as appropriate• Implement ways to encourage all communities to actively participate in the community grants program• Advocate on behalf of our communities for priority issues and opportunities• Sponsor Loddon Murray Community Leadership Program
Review each of our Community Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop and publish new Community Plans
Plan for the development of the Swan Hill Regional Art Gallery precinct	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Determine a long-term site for Swan Hill Regional Art Gallery• Prepare final Gallery designs for approval and costing• Secure funding and complete the project

Our ongoing responsibilities

- Provide access to funds to the community through grant contributions and in-kind support
- Preserve important heritage
- Acknowledge the changing cultural identity and celebrate diversity of the municipality
- Compile a vulnerable residents list for emergency management



Key result area Infrastructure

Strategic objectives

We will have:

1. Infrastructure that appropriately services community needs.
2. Infrastructure that is provided and appropriately maintained in accordance with agreed standards.
3. A strong focus on asset management systems and planning.

“We will provide and maintain publicly accessible infrastructure that is appropriate for the community’s needs in the most effective and efficient manner possible.”



Our current services, strategic documents and relevant legislation

Current services	Current strategic documents	Key legislation
<p>Infrastructure that is provided and appropriately maintained in accordance with agreed standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engineering services • Infrastructure planning and development • Design • Drainage projects • Works inspections • Traffic management <p>A strong focus on asset management systems and planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asset management • Contracts and projects • Facilities and fleet administration • Facilities management • Fleet management • Civic works • Local roads and pathways maintenance • Private works • Road reserves drainage <p>Transport networks that appropriately service community needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks and open space • Road safety • Street lighting • Active parks and reserves • Bus shelters • Open space maintenance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal Fire Management Plan • Road Management Plan • Road Asset Management Plan • Parks and Road Reserve Strategy • Domestic Wastewater Management Plan • Alan Garden and Swan Hill Showgrounds Masterplan • Building Asset Management Plan • Bromley Road Streetscape Master Plan – Robinvale • Footpath Asset Management Plan • Irrigation Asset Management Plan • Ken Harrison Sporting Complex Master Plan • Kerb and Channel Asset Management Plan • Landfills Asset Management Plan • North Park Reserve Masterplan • Plant and Fleet Asset Management Plan • Playground Asset Management Plan • Playground Development Strategy • Public Roads Register • Swan Hill Reserves Masterplan • Public Convenience Strategy <p>Missing Links Footpath Construction Strategy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Act 1993 • Building Regulations 2006 • Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2010 • Electricity Safety Act 1998 • Local Government Act 2020 • Rail Safety Act 2006 • Road Management Act 2004 • Road Safety Act 1986 • Transport Act 1983 • Water Act 1989

Strategic objective 1

Infrastructure that appropriately service community needs

Strategic initiatives	How we will know we have achieved this
Manage Council's roads and road related infrastructure in line with the Road Management Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete 100% of inspections outlined in Road Management Plan by identified timeframes • Ensure 100% of defects are repaired in line with Road Management Plan timeframes
Advocate for funding for an active trail between Lake Boga and Swan Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete project scope and plan to enable future funding submission
Advocate for improved transport routes across the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the Central Murray Regional Transport Forum (CMRTF) to identify regional priority projects • Advocate with CMRTF for funding for identified projects • Advocate with the Rail Freight Alliance rail alliance for funding for suitable rail projects
Pursue funding for a levee bank at Robinvale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete detailed design • Lodge funding application
Review the Swan Hill Active Transport Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the Strategy • Adopt the reviewed Strategy
Review the way we procure and maintain our infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuously improve the efficiency of our works and maintenance crew • Identify opportunities to rationalise assets and facilities that do not have an identified service need
Maximise community benefits from the opportunities presented at the Swan Hill Motorplex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to work with community groups of Swan Hill Motorplex • Complete an investigation into the causes of the Drag Strip condition problem

Our ongoing responsibilities

- Manage and Maintain aerodrome
- Develop a Missing Link Footpath Strategy
- Deliver planned infrastructure in line with Capital Works and Major Project Program
- Maintain roads and road infrastructure in line with service standards
- Review maintenance service standards for roads and road related infrastructure
- Review maintenance service standards for parks and public open spaces
- Review maintenance service standards for facilities

Strategic objective 2

Infrastructure that is provided and appropriately maintained in accordance with agreed standards

Strategic initiatives	How we will know we have achieved this
Implement Swan Hill and Robinvale riverfront masterplans	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify and successfully apply for funding opportunities• Ensure projects are completed in accordance with timelines.• Identify and encourage private sector investment
Ensure developers comply with the Infrastructure Design Manual where relevant to local standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve internal and external stakeholders' understanding of the Infrastructure Design Manual• Develop a local policy position in areas where the Infrastructure Design Manual can be varied
Upgrade Swan Hill Livestock Selling Complex	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement upgrade project• Identify funding opportunities for future stages
Review the road network and classify each road	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete road network service review• Identify and pursue funding opportunities for upgrades
Plan and deliver Council's capital works program and Major Project Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Minimise capital works and major project carryover from year to year.• Complete Major Projects Plan review each year• Minimise project budget overruns

Our ongoing responsibilities

- Provide, maintain and upgrade hard infrastructure like footpaths, lighting, roads, urban drainage, buildings and street cleaning
- Provide and maintain recreation facilities
- Operate, maintain and renew established Council facilities
- Manage and maintain parks and urban public spaces

Strategic objective 3

A strong focus on asset management systems and planning

Strategic initiatives	How we will know we have achieved this
Actively pursue opportunities from decommissioned irrigation infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with Goulburn Murray Water to decommission channel number 9.• Identify opportunities for land parcels taken over by Council• Identify funding opportunities to upgrade newly available land
Complete the Recreation Reserves Masterplan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adopt the Recreation Reserves Masterplan• Establish a long term operational maintenance program for Council-managed reserves• Investigate funding options to implement actions from the masterplan• Review and update user agreements between Council and recreation reserve user groups
Review current use of Council facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Produce usage report, including analysis of non-Council facilities that provide similar services• Identify opportunities to rationalise Council assets
Plan and deliver assets for the current and future needs of our growing community and changing environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement an effective asset management system• Develop and update policies, strategies and registers• Complete a centralised asset register• Develop an Asset Plan in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020

Our ongoing responsibilities

- Develop, review and implement Asset Management Plans
- Maintain and renew current assets in accordance with Asset Management Plans
- Manage existing assets
- Administer Council's property portfolio
- Review user agreement of Council-maintained facilities



Key result area

Governance and leadership

Strategic objectives

We will have:

1. Positive community engagement through appropriate and constructive consultation.
2. Effective and efficient utilisation of resources.
3. Effective partnerships and relationships with key stakeholders and staff.
4. Effective advocacy and strategic planning.

“We will represent the interests of our community, conduct our affairs openly, with integrity, reflecting the high levels of governance expected by our community. We will plan for the long term growth and development of our Municipality by committing to a robust program of strategic planning.”



Our current services, strategic documents and relevant legislation

Current services	Current strategic documents	Key legislation
<p>Positive community engagement through appropriate and constructive consultation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications and public relations • Council elections • Councillor support • Customer service <p>Effective and efficient use of resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial management and planning • Procurement • Risk management • Human resource management • Information technology • Records management • Management accounting • Rates administration • Rating and property services • Revenue administration <p>Effective partnerships and relationships with key stakeholders and staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational development • Human resources • Occupational health and safety • Risk management <p>Information services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information technology management and support • Records and information management <p>Effective advocacy and strategic planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive services • Council support • Financial management • Corporate planning and improvement • Corporate governance • Local Government legislative compliance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Plan • 10 Year Financial Plan • Customer Service Strategy • Customer Service Charter • Communication Strategy • Budget • Annual Report • Best Value Report • Local Law No. 1/Governance Rules • 10 Year Major Project Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Government Act 2020 • Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 • Disability Discrimination Act 1992 • Equal Employment Opportunity Act 2010 • Fair Work (Commonwealth Powers) Act 2009 • Freedom of Information Act 1982 • Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 • Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 • Protected Disclosure Act 2012 • Valuation of Land Act 1960 • Victorian Grants Commission Act 1976 • Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2013 • Municipal Association of Victoria Act 1907

Strategic objective 1

Positive community engagement by appropriate and constructive consultation

Strategic initiatives	How we will know we have achieved this
Develop Council's systems and processes to improve our customer service, efficiency and effectiveness of our operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Undertake Council services review• Implement the new IT Strategy• Implement Customer Service Strategy actions
Use social media as a medium for community consultation and communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduce Facebook advertising• Increase the use of online survey tools
Establish new and alternative methods of consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Research and report to council on contemporary consultation methods• Investigate the use of multilingual publications• Increase the use of social media and online survey tools• Increase the use of current and professional networks and contacts to canvass opinion and share information• Review Council's Communication Strategy• Develop a Community Engagement Strategy in compliance with the Local Government Act 2020• Develop a Public Transparency Policy
Champion a culture that values strong community engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Include effective community engagement processes in all planning and project delivery plans• Conduct training for staff• Implement a project management system
Develop a strong positive message and image for Council and the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Publish two community newsletters a year• Use Facebook advertising and social media to promote Council• Use established connections/partnerships to promote a positive Council image
Progressively Implement the requirements of the new Local Government Act 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop Governance Rules to replace Local law No 1• Review Audit and Risk Committee Charter• Develop a Revenue and Rating Plan• Develop and adopt a Community Vision.

Our ongoing responsibilities

- Maintain public question time at start of each Council meeting
- Ensure Council meetings remain open to all members of the public
- Conducting Council meetings at a range of locations
- Issue regular media releases to local newspapers, radio stations and TV stations, and share on social media
- Update and develop Council's website
- Participate in community satisfaction and service specific surveys
- Provide senior managers and Council representation at community group meetings
- Produce and distribute community newsletter twice per year

Strategic objective 2

Effective and efficient utilisation of resources

Strategic initiatives	How we will know we have achieved this
Continually improve workplace safety and staff health and wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in MAV Workcover self insurance scheme • Develop and implement an OHS framework • Implement National Assessment Tool (NAT) auditing across the organisation • Test the Business Continuity Plan • Review and develop Council's Risk Framework and Strategy
Review results of community satisfaction survey, submissions and community consultations to identify and respond to changes in service demand or expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in the annual community satisfaction survey • Review, report and act as appropriate on survey results, formal submissions and specific consultations
Implement a project management system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and improve current processes • Implement a centralised project management system to be used throughout the organisation
Review Council services for efficiency, effectiveness and quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise services for a detailed review • Identify relevant benchmarks for a service review • Implement an improvement plan • Implement the IT Strategy

Our ongoing responsibilities

- Continue the Independent Audit Committee and internal audit function
- Provide tailored and targeted staff training and development
- Maintain and improve an appropriate system of internal controls
- Explore opportunities to share resources with other Councils on a regional basis to minimise costs and / or improve service delivery
- Manage finances with a view on the impact to future generations
- Demonstrate financial, social and environmental responsibility
- Review 10 Year Financial Plan annually
- Review 10 Year Major Project Plan annually
- Prepare an Annual Budget and Annual Report
- Regularly review procurement policy and practices
- Negotiate new Enterprise Agreement

Strategic objective 3

Effective partnerships and relationships with key stakeholders and Staff

Strategic initiatives	How we will know we have achieved this
Engage and partner with organisations, business and individuals to increase co-operation and avoid duplication of resources when common objectives are identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct skills audit of community organisations • Identify area in which to increase co-operation • Form strategies and partnerships for key issues / projects
Encourage and support Council representatives to obtain positions on relevant boards that support Council's activities, providing these duties do not conflict with Council responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify key board positions • Discuss board position opportunities regularly at Councillor Assemblies and management meetings • Develop advocacy strategies • Train staff and Councillors on governance responsibilities and industry based awareness
Ensure regular dialogue with neighbouring municipalities and other stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule regular meetings with Murray River Council, Balranald Shire Council and Murray River Group of Councils • Schedule meetings with State Government representatives
Ensure we have appropriately skilled staff that are aligned to the organisational values of Council and are recognised accordingly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement ongoing training and education program • Recognise achievements in innovation and best practice, including through the staff awards • Pursue industry and professional recognition for staff • Utilise management and leadership development programs • Increase cross-organisational awareness and resource sharing • Invite Councillors to all staff recognition events
Council to lead the conversation on Swan Hill bridge placement with the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represent Council's views at stakeholder meetings • Conduct public engagement and awareness campaign

Our ongoing responsibilities

- Recognise and reward high achievers and exceptional service
- Maintain membership of relevant professional bodies
- Maintain membership of relevant regional groups and organisations
- Continue regular meetings with key stakeholders
- Host targeted and timetabled meetings with elected State and Federal representatives
- Regularly meet with other representative bodies
- Regularly engage with stakeholders that have key responsibilities for the Murray Darling Basin, native vegetation, Crown land reserves and environmental protection
- Proactively promote the opportunities for shared facilities for Murray Mallee Local Learning and Employment Network, TAFE and other educational institutions
- Support local business associations
- Build relationships with relevant businesses, developers and organisations to meet our future infrastructure needs
- Regularly meet with agricultural grower groups and large horticulture producers
- Develop a new Enterprise Agreement

Strategic objective 4

Effective advocacy and strategic planning

Strategic initiatives	How we will know we have achieved this
Improve effectiveness of Council's advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the key issues to be advocated for Develop and implement an Advocacy Strategy
Work with Swan Hill District Health and Robinvale District Health Services to develop joint advocacy strategies for improved health services for our community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt the Health Precinct Plan into the Swan Hill Planning Scheme Regularly meet with relevant bodies to determine needs Advocate to State and Federal governments
Advocate to State and Federal governments to fund priorities in Community Plans, Major Projects Plan and other key Council plans and strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop marketing material on key issues Strategically meet with key stakeholders and policy makers

Our ongoing responsibilities

- Maintain 10 year Financial Plan
- Develop and review plans, policies, directives and procedures as required
- Annually review the Council Plan
- Ensure sufficiently and appropriately zoned land is available
- Pursue strategic land acquisitions and progress through a strategic land disposals report
- Provide efficient planning practices to ensure timely outcomes



Key result area Environment

Strategic objectives

We will have:

1. Sound policies and practices that protect and enhance our environment.
2. A waste management program that is environmentally and financially sustainable.

“We will adopt work practices and implement policies that reduce the environmental impact, advocate for the protection of our environment and fulfil our regulatory obligations.”



Our current services, strategic documents and relevant legislation

Current services	Current strategic documents	Key legislation
<p>Sound policies and practices that protect and enhance our environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change reduction and adaptation programs • Nature reserve management • Roadside invasive plant and animal control • Open space administration and planning • Community sustainable living partnership programs <p>A waste management program that is ecologically and financially sustainable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community education • Kerbside collection – garbage, recycling, green waste • Street cleaning and bins • Waste disposal • Waste services planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste Management Strategy • Resilience Action Strategy • Sustainable Living Strategy • Heritage Plan • Sustainable Water Use Plan • Robinvale Irrigation System Review • Municipal Fire Prevention Plan • Swan Hill Flood Mitigation Scheme Operations Manual • Robinvale Township Floodplain Management Plan • Municipal Emergency Management Plan • Lake Boga Management Plan • Swan Hill CBD Car Parking Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 • Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 • Coastal Management Act 1995 • Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978 • Environment Protection Act 1970 • Environment Protection Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 • Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 • Heritage Act 1995 • Parks Victoria Act 1998 • Water Act 1989

Strategic objective 1

Sound policies and practices that protect and enhance our environment

Strategic initiatives	How we will know we have achieved this
Be actively involved in external discussions that affect the Murray River, its tributaries and lake systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nominate a Councillor to represent Council on the Murray Darling Association Lodge submissions to Federal agencies via Murray River Group of Councils and report to Council.
Maintain and improve the condition of Lake Boga foreshore and its environs within our area of control in collaboration with other stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue restoration works. Chair and attend Lake Boga Land and On Water Management Plan meetings
Seek to influence how environmental water is used within the municipality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attain membership to Catchment Management Authorities (CMA) Seek a position on CMA committees
Investigate opportunities to improve stormwater run-off from townships into the river	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete an investigation Action recommendations Identify funding opportunities and submit applications
Investigate alternative energy for Council buildings, and a community solar option	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify additional buildings to connect to renewable energies Prepare a business case for each option
Advocate for improved control on private and public land of feral pests and weeds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with local Landcare groups Identify and reduce boxthorn infestations Extend fruit fly program
Review our work methods to reduce the environmental impact of what we do	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review our fuel usage Review plant and corporate fleet requirements Investigate and use where possible sustainable building practices Investigate and use where possible recycled materials
Define Council's approach to fulfilling our environmental enforcement obligations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a clear policy

Our ongoing responsibilities

- Regularly review and seek new ways of undertaking works and delivering services to reduce our effect on the environment, including native tree enforcement
- Pursue external funding to help finance projects to improve the natural environment
- Promote the need for businesses, agencies and individuals to become aware of and reduce their impact on the natural environment
- Manage the natural environment in ways that are under our direct control.
- Review, monitor and enforce regulatory services like animal management, car parking and school crossings
- Identify possibilities and encourage multi-user recreation, health and cultural facilities
- Provide education and support to Council departments and our community on reduce, reuse and recycle options for energy, water and waste
- Comply with regulatory and statutory requirements
- Murray Darling Plan
- Review Tree Management Policy and related documents

Strategic objective 2

A waste management program that is environmentally and financially sustainable

Strategic initiatives	How we will know we have achieved this
Review and implement the Waste Management Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approve a revised and updated Waste Management Plan• Implement identified actions• Review the Plan based on the State Government Circular Economy Strategy
Investigate opportunities for green waste and organic collection services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review data for current green waste service• Develop and implement a green waste information campaign• Investigate organic waste disposal opportunities
Continue to lobby for a statewide container deposit scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have the container deposit scheme identified as a priority in the Loddon Mallee Waste Resource Recovery Forum.
Develop projects that can be funded from the Victoria Sustainability Fund to provide environmental benefits for our community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify projects• Secure funding for identified projects

Our ongoing responsibilities

- Operate waste removal, disposal and recycling services
- Educate the community on waste management and reduction, including illegal dumping
- Provide waste management services
- Maintain an active membership to the Loddon Mallee Waste Resource Recovery Forum

Strategic Resource Plan

A high-level summarised Strategic Resource Plan for the years 2017/18 to 2020/21 has been developed as part of Council's forward financial planning and to enable Council to consider the budget in a longer-term context.

The plan takes the objectives and strategies from the Council Plan and expresses them in financial and resource terms for the next four years.

The Plan will be updated annually to ensure the underlying assumptions remain accurate and to take account of any unexpected changes. These changes can be significant especially where capital grants become available, a major project is delayed, a new government-funded program becomes available or government funding is reduced.

In preparing the Strategic Resource Plan, Council has complied with the following principles of sound financial management:

- Prudent management of financial risks relating to debt, assets and liabilities.
- Provision of reasonable stability in the level of rate in the dollar (Council's tax rate).
- Consideration of the financial effects of Council decisions on future generations.
- Accurate and timely disclosure of financial information.

The key objective of the Strategic Resource Plan is financial sustainability in the short to medium term, while achieving the Council Plan objectives. Council also intends to take advantage of current financial conditions and any available government funding to pursue its long-term growth targets for the municipality. Other key objectives that underpin the Strategic Resource Plan are:

- Maintaining existing service levels with any increases funded externally, from efficiencies or additional rate revenue generated through economic development.
- Achieving a recurrent underlying operating surplus annually.
- Maintaining capital expenditure program of at least \$10 million per annum.
- Maintaining annual cash surpluses.
- An emphasis on funding replacement of existing infrastructure at the end of its useful life where required.
- Maintaining or rationalising infrastructure in consultation with the community.
- Progressively reducing loans to ensure borrowing capacity is available in the future to help fund peaks in infrastructure replacement.

Various Council strategic documents feed into the Strategic Resource Plan or have an impact on the assumptions underlying the Plan. These include:

- Council Plan
- Public Health and Wellbeing Plan
- Asset management plans
- Rating Strategy
- Funding and services agreements
- Environment/Sustainability Strategy
- Municipal Strategic Statement and Swan Hill Planning Scheme
- Economic Development Strategy
- Workforce Plan
- Pioneer Settlement Masterplan and Interpretive Plan
- Major Projects Plan
- Riverfront Masterplan
- Enterprise Bargaining Agreement

Achieving the Council Plan and its strategies is dependent on Council's ability to effectively plan for and manage its resources. These Council resources can be grouped under three main categories: Financial, Staff and Infrastructure.

Financial plan

The following table summarises the key financial results for the next four years as set out in the Strategic Resource Plan for years 2017/18 to 2020/21.

Indicator	Forecast	Budget	Strategic Resource Plan			Trend
	Actual		Projections			
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	6,462	6,423	3,940	6,936	3,720	-
Adjusted underlying result	3,548	1,071	2,344	2,644	2,735	+
Cash and investments balance	14,483	13,937	17,085	19,169	20,631	+
Cash flow from operations	15,074	17,001	14,324	17,844	15,437	-
Capital works expenditure	13,956	16,880	10,939	14,872	13,276	-

Key to forecast trend:

- + Forecasts improvement in Council's financial performance/financial position indicator
- o Forecasts that Council's financial performance/financial position indicator will be steady
- Forecasts deterioration in Council's financial performance/financial position indicator

In assessing the contents of its Strategic Resource Plan, Council measures the results of the plan against a number of key indicators that are used by the Victorian Auditor General's Office (VAGO) in measuring the financial sustainability of Council. The results of these ratios are then classed as being in a low risk, medium risk or high risk category. It is Council's aim that all our indicators are in the low risk category. The following table shows the results of Council's Strategic Resource Plan against the VAGO indicators:

Auditor General Ratio	High Risk (Red)	Medium Risk (Yellow)	Low Risk (Green)	Budget	Strategic Resource Plan Projections			
				2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	
Net result	<-10%	-10%-0%	>0%	12.2%	8.0%	12.9%	7.2%	
Liquidity	<=0.75	0.75 -1.0	>1.0	2.09	2.54	2.78	1.87	
Internal financing	<75%	75% to 100%	>100%	91.6%	119.0%	110.0%	106.8%	
Indebtedness	>60%	40-60%	<40%	25.3%	25.2%	24.7%	12.8%	
Capital replacement	<1.0	1.0 to 1.5	>1.5	2.13	1.32	1.70	1.44	
Renewal gap	<0.5	0.5 to 1.0	>1.0	1.22	0.96	1.30	1.01	

Using the VAGO ratios, Council has attained a low risk score in the majority of assessments, and those with a medium risk score are trending towards the low risk score in future years. This being the case, Council will retain its overall low risk score.

Key assumptions/outcomes

- **Rates** – continued increases in rate revenue are expected due to the value of economic development that is anticipated to occur over the next four years. Rateable Capital Improved Value (CIV) is conservatively expected to increase by approximately \$126 million from new development over this time. Council's Rating Strategy is to capture increased CIV due to development as additional rate revenue rather than using it to reduce the rates paid by existing ratepayers.
- **Recurrent grants** – Federal and State government grants are expected to continue to reduce in real terms, continuing the trend of the last 25 years.
- **User charges** – existing fees and charges will be increased by an average of 4.15% per annum with additional charges for any new services Council introduces.
- **Borrowings** – net borrowings are to progressively decrease over the life of the plan. Council's borrowing levels will remain at historically low levels as a percentage of income.

- **Service levels** – Council intends to increase expenditure on infrastructure maintenance and replacement over the four years of the plan. Any other major changes to service levels requiring increased resource requirements will generally be funded externally or from internal efficiencies.
- **Employee costs** – forecast to increase in line with national and industry trends, with a slight reduction in aged care staff as Council funded services are reduced in years 2018/19 and 2019/20.
- **Other costs** – generally expected to increase at between 1% and 2 % above CPI.
- **Capital expenditure** – a consistent level of capital expenditure is forecast for the next four years of the plan. This is consistent with Council’s vision of growing the municipality.
- **Operating result** – operating result will vary over the next four years dependent on the level of external capital funding achieved each year. The forward plan indicates sustained underlying surpluses in the operating result annually.
- **Cash and investments** – the underlying cash position will progressively increase over the period of the plan. Council intends to build up cash reserves to help fund future infrastructure replacement requirements.

Financial statements

A detailed analysis of the financial resources to be used over the four year period of the Council Plan is displayed in the following financial statements:

- Comprehensive income statement
- Balance sheet
- Statement of changes in equity
- Statement of cashflows

Comprehensive Income Statement

For the four years ending 30 June 2021

	Forecast Actual 2016/17 \$'000	Budget 2017/18 \$'000	Strategic Resource Plan Projections		
			2018/19 \$'000	2019/20 \$'000	2020/21 \$'000
Income					
Rates and charges	25,868	26,639	27,371	28,258	29,161
Statutory fees and fines	937	971	990	1,013	1,037
User fees	5,124	4,683	4,889	5,147	5,374
Grants - Operating	13,725	9,628	9,782	10,297	10,234
Grants - Capital	4,230	5,713	2,564	5,278	2,349
Contributions - monetary	1,012	1,655	40	40	37
Net gain on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	161	315	138	170	50
Other income	2,779	3,343	3,448	3,671	3,653
Total income	53,836	52,947	49,222	53,874	51,895
Expenses					
Employee costs	19,420	19,637	20,214	20,730	21,351
Materials and services	14,634	12,342	12,713	13,104	13,514
Bad and doubtful debts	2	2	15	13	15
Depreciation and amortisation	8,297	8,697	9,136	9,532	10,056
Borrowing costs	403	380	375	377	382
Other expenses	4,618	5,466	2,829	3,182	2,857
Total expenses	47,374	46,524	45,282	46,938	48,175
Surplus for the year	6,462	6,423	3,940	6,936	3,720
Other comprehensive income					
Items that will not be reclassified to surplus or deficit in future periods					
Net asset revaluation increment	7,288	7,208	10,025	7,008	10,770
Total comprehensive result	13,750	13,631	13,965	13,944	14,490

Balance Sheet

For the four years ending 30 June 2021

	Forecast Actual 2016/17 \$'000	Budget 2017/18 \$'000	Strategic Resource Plan Projections		
			2018/19 \$'000	2019/20 \$'000	2020/21 \$'000
Assets					
Current assets					
Cash and cash equivalents	14,483	13,937	17,085	19,169	20,631
Trade and other receivables	2,909	2,995	2,826	3,099	2,987
Inventories	164	110	110	110	110
Other assets	212	174	174	174	174
Total current assets	17,768	17,216	20,195	22,552	23,902
Non-current assets					
Trade and other receivables	83	83	73	62	52
Property, infrastructure, plant & equipment	452,181	466,315	477,199	489,448	502,838
Intangible assets	1,434	1,434	1,434	1,434	1,434
Total non-current assets	453,698	467,832	478,706	490,944	504,324
Total assets	471,466	485,048	498,901	513,496	528,226
Liabilities					
Current liabilities					
Trade and other payables	1,840	1,901	1,681	1,750	1,772
Trust funds and deposits	394	394	394	394	394
Provisions	5,427	5,488	5,550	5,614	5,678
Interest-bearing loans and borrowings	974	457	326	349	4,904
Total current liabilities	8,635	8,240	7,951	8,107	12,748
Non-current liabilities					
Provisions	1,726	1,729	1,732	1,735	1,738
Interest-bearing loans and borrowings	7,035	7,379	7,553	7,704	3,300
Total non-current liabilities	8,761	9,108	9,285	9,439	5,038
Total liabilities	17,396	17,348	17,236	17,546	17,786
Net assets	454,070	467,700	481,665	495,950	510,440
Equity					
Accumulated surplus	273,212	280,365	281,126	285,886	288,405
Reserves	180,858	187,335	200,539	210,064	222,035
Total equity	454,070	467,700	481,665	495,950	510,440

Statement of Changes in Equity

For the four years ending 30 June 2021

	Total \$'000	Accumulated Surplus \$'000	Revaluation Reserve \$'000	Other Reserves \$'000
2017/18				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	454,070	273,212	169,834	11,024
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	6,423	6,423	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment	7,208	-	7,208	-
Transfer to other reserves	-	(3,692)	-	3,692
Transfer from other reserves	-	4,423	-	(4,423)
Balance at end of the financial year	467,700	280,365	177,042	10,293
2018/19				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	467,700	280,365	177,042	10,293
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	3,940	3,940	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment	10,025	-	10,025	-
Transfer to other reserves	-	(6,191)	-	6,191
Transfer from other reserves	-	3,012	-	(3,012)
Balance at end of the financial year	481,665	281,126	187,067	13,472
2019/20				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	481,665	281,126	187,067	13,472
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	6,936	6,936	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment	7,349	-	7,349	-
Transfer to other reserves	-	(2,474)	-	2,474
Transfer from other reserves	-	298	-	(298)
Balance at end of the financial year	495,950	285,886	194,416	15,648
2020/21				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	495,950	285,886	194,416	15,648
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	3,720	3,720	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment	10,770	-	10,770	-
Transfer to other reserves	-	(2,206)	-	2,206
Transfer from other reserves	-	1,005	-	(1,005)
Balance at end of the financial year	510,440	288,405	205,185	16,849

Statement of Cash Flows

For the four years ending 30 June 2021

	Forecast	Budget	Strategic Resource Plan		
	Actual		Projections		
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)
Cash flows from operating activities					
Rates and charges	25,843	26,549	28,035	28,614	29,747
Statutory fees and fines	937	971	1,014	1,026	1,058
User fees	5,637	5,151	5,008	5,212	5,482
Grants - operating	13,725	9,628	10,019	10,427	10,440
Grants - capital	4,230	5,714	2,626	5,344	2,396
Contributions - monetary	1,012	1,655	40	40	37
Interest received	542	525	643	720	765
Other receipts	2,563	3,266	2,874	2,989	2,947
Net GST refund / payment	2,620	2,536	1,529	1,980	1,836
Employee costs	(19,334)	(19,573)	(21,151)	(21,535)	(22,196)
Materials and services	(22,701)	(19,421)	(16,313)	(16,973)	(17,075)
Net cash provided by operating activities	15,074	17,001	14,324	17,844	15,437
Cash flows from investing activities					
Payments for property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	(15,351)	(18,568)	(12,033)	(16,228)	(14,458)
Proceeds from sale of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	804	1,575	1,189	671	715
Net cash provided by/ (used in) investing activities	(14,547)	(16,993)	(10,844)	(15,557)	(13,743)
Cash flows from financing activities					
Finance costs	(403)	(380)	(375)	(377)	(382)
Proceeds from borrowings	500	800	500	500	500
Repayment of borrowings	(760)	(974)	(457)	(326)	(350)
Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities	(663)	(554)	(332)	(203)	(232)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash & cash equivalents	(136)	(546)	3,148	2,084	1,462
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year	14,619	14,483	13,937	17,085	19,169
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	14,483	13,937	17,085	19,169	20,631

Financial performance indicators

The following table highlights Council's current and projected performance across a range of key financial performance indicators. These indicators provide a useful analysis of Council's financial position and performance and should be used in the context of the organisation's objectives.

Indicator	Measure	Notes	Forecast Actual 2016/17	Budget 2017/18	Strategic Resource Plan Projections			Trend +/-
Operating position								
Adjusted underlying result	Adjusted underlying surplus (deficit) / Adjusted underlying revenue	1	7.0%	2.3%	4.9%	5.3%	4.7%	+
Liquidity								
Working capital	Current assets / current liabilities	2	205.8%	208.9%	254.0%	278.2%	187.5%	-
Unrestricted cash	Unrestricted cash / current liabilities		146.3%	159.9%	205.2%	226.8%	155.7%	o
Obligations								
Loans and borrowings	Interest bearing loans and borrowings / rate revenue	3	31.1%	29.6%	28.9%	28.8%	28.4%	+
Loans and borrowings	Interest and principal repayments on interest bearing loans and borrowings / rate revenue		4.5%	5.1%	3.1%	2.5%	2.5%	+
Indebtedness	Non-current liabilities / own source revenue		25.1%	25.3%	25.2%	24.7%	12.8%	+
Asset renewal	Asset renewal expenses / depreciation	4	117.3%	114.5%	75.2%	83.2%	84.1%	-
Stability								
Rates concentration	Rate revenue / adjusted underlying revenue	5	50.5%	55.6%	57.2%	56.4%	57.2%	-
Rates effort	Rate revenue / CIV of rateable properties in the municipality		0.71%	0.72%	0.74%	0.75	0.77%	o
Efficiency								
Expenditure level	Total expenditure / no. of property assessments		\$3,970	\$3,873	\$3,745	\$3,853	\$3,926	o
Revenue level	Residential rate revenue / No. of residential property assessments		\$1,591	\$1,630	\$1,664	\$1,696	\$1,731	+
Workforce turnover	No. of permanent staff resignations and terminations / average no. of permanent staff for the financial year		20%	19%	18%	18%	18%	o

Key to forecast trend:

- + Forecasts improvement in Council's financial performance/financial position indicator
- o Forecasts that Council's financial performance/financial position indicator will be steady
- Forecasts deterioration in Council's financial performance/financial position indicator

Notes to indicators

1	Adjusted underlying result – An indicator of the sustainable operating result required to enable Council to continue providing core services and meet its objectives. Improvement in financial performance is expected over the period. Continued losses would mean reliance on Council's cash reserves or increased debt to maintain services.
2	Working capital – The proportion of current liabilities represented by current assets. Working capital is forecast to increase until the final year of the plan. This is due to cash reserves being increased so that the payout of interest only loans can be met at the end of the loan term.
3	Debt compared to rates – Council is reducing reliance on debt against its annual rate revenue through redemption of long-term debt.
4	Asset renewal – This percentage indicates the extent of Council's renewals against its depreciation charge (an indication of the decline in value of its existing capital assets). A percentage greater than 100 indicates Council is maintaining its existing assets, while a percentage less than 100 means its assets are deteriorating faster than they are being renewed and future capital expenditure will be required to renew assets. Council will also continue to upgrade existing infrastructure to modern standards. These upgrades effectively renew part of Council's infrastructure however upgrade expenditure is not included in this ratio.
5	Rates concentration – Reflects extent of reliance on rate revenues to fund all of Council's ongoing services. Trend indicates Council will become more reliant on rate revenue compared to all other revenue sources due to government grants increasing by less than cost increases.

Staff

The range of services that Council delivers involves the abilities, efforts and competencies of 219 effective full-time equivalent (EFT) staff as at 30 June 2017. The skills and qualifications of Council's workforce is diverse, from aged care, civil engineering, curatorial, library, environmental health, finance, planning, building, marketing, nursing and many other fields. At Swan Hill Rural City Council, we recognise the importance that each individual plays in achieving our goals.

The employment of Council's staff is governed by the Fair Work Act 2009, Local Authorities Award and the Swan Hill Rural City Council Enterprise Agreement (EBA). These agreements provide for general and performance-based salary increases as well as a number of workplace flexibilities and other benefits aimed at improving efficiency and attracting/retaining staff. Council also uses consultants for specialised work.

Our aim is to ensure that Council is a great place to work, where the capability of our people is nurtured and performance is focused on delivering exceptional service for our communities.

These priorities drive the activities, policies and procedures implemented to ensure that Swan Hill Rural City continues to be a great place to work.

Council's staff strategies include:

- A focus on extending the skills of staff to increase efficiency.
- Ongoing implementation of the Workforce Strategy including:
 - Succession planning
 - Recruitment and retention of staff
 - Apprenticeships, traineeships and/or bursaries
 - Accessing non-customary employment pools.
- Indigenous Employment Strategy.
- Offering phased retirement options to extend the careers of higher skilled staff.
- Ongoing development of systems and processes to continually improve productivity.

Summary of permanent staff

Statement of Human Resources

For the four years ending 30 June 2021

	Forecast Actual	Budget	Strategic Resource Plan Projections		
	2016/17 \$'000	2017/18 \$'000	2018/19 \$'000	2019/20 \$'000	2020/21 \$'000
Staff expenditure					
Employee costs - operating	19,420	19,637	20,214	20,730	21,351
Employee costs - capital	719	572	590	608	626
Total staff expenditure	20,139	20,209	20,804	21,338	21,977
	EFT	EFT	EFT	EFT	EFT
Staff numbers					
Employees	219.2	218.2	217.0	216.0	216.0
Total staff numbers	219.2	218.2	217.0	216.0	216.0

A summary of the Statement of Human Resources categorised according to the organisational structure of Council is included below:

Directorate	Forecast Actual	Budget	Strategic Resource Plan Projections		
	2016/17 \$'000	2017/18 \$'000	2018/19 \$'000	2019/20 \$'000	2020/21 \$'000
Corporate Services					
Permanent full time	3,742	3,842	3,954	4,056	4,177
Permanent part time	1,048	706	727	745	768
Infrastructure					
Permanent full time	5,836	6,352	6,539	6,706	6,906
Permanent part time	53	87	89	92	95
Development and Planning					
Permanent full time	2,682	2,064	2,125	2,179	2,244
Permanent part time	1,328	979	1,008	1,033	1,065
Community and Cultural Services					
Permanent full time	2,039	2,637	2,917	2,991	2,867
Permanent part time	2,692	2,970	2,855	2,928	3,229
Total staff expenditure	19,420	19,637	20,214	20,730	21,351

A summary of the number of full time equivalent (FTE) Council staff in relation to the above expenditure is included below:

Directorate	Forecast Actual	Budget	Strategic Resource Plan		
	2016/17	2017/18	Projections		
	\$'000	\$'000	2018/19 \$'000	2019/20 \$'000	2020/21 \$'000
	EFT	EFT	EFT	EFT	EFT
Corporate Services					
Permanent full time	35	35	35	35	35
Permanent part time	9.8	9.8	9.8	9.8	9.8
Infrastructure					
Permanent full time	74	74	74	74	74
Permanent part time	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7
Development and planning					
Permanent full time	22	22	22	22	22
Permanent part time	10.9	10.9	10.9	10.9	10.9
Community and cultural services					
Permanent full time	31	30	30	30	30
Permanent part time	35.8	35.8	34.6	33.6	33.6
Total staff numbers	219.2	218.2	217.0	216.0	216

Infrastructure

Council provides, maintains and is responsible for the replacement of \$452 million of assets. The majority of these assets comprise infrastructure such as roads, drains, community buildings and recreation centres – all vital to the social wellbeing and economic development of the municipality and its people.

Council's infrastructure strategy includes the ongoing development and review of asset management plans for each infrastructure category. These plans include agreed service levels, replacement schedules, upgrade requirements, appropriate rationalisation, and a process for the development of new infrastructure, that balance community needs and financial capability.

As infrastructure ages, there will be an increasing need for greater funding to replace and maintain the assets we currently have. This will need to be considered in the context of infrastructure growth generated by the ongoing development along the Murray River corridor.

During the four years of the Council Plan, Council is committed to maintaining its existing infrastructure and allocating sufficient resources to ensure that existing infrastructure is maintained to an appropriate standard. Council allocates additional funds annually. Council will also continually review infrastructure assets to ensure the assets are still required to meet community needs, and if this is not the case, rationalise the infrastructure in an appropriate way. Incorporating multi-use or shared-use facilities will also be an ongoing focus over the years of this plan.

On top of additional infrastructure maintenance funds, Council is and will continue to direct more capital funding towards existing infrastructure (replacement and upgrade). Where possible, cash funded reserves will also be established to help future infrastructure replacement demands.

Council will continue as an active partner in the Municipal Association's STEP Program to continually improve the way we manage our infrastructure assets.

Council's four year plan also focuses on establishing the groundwork for its long-term growth targets. To assist in this process, considerable investment in riverfronts and central business districts of Swan Hill and Robinvale are planned. These assets are seen as vital to support business and population growth in the long term. The low interest rate environment and availability of significant government funding make the next four years an excellent time to begin the investment in these projects. Growth will also be assessed through the rezoning of land for residential use in the South West Development Precinct and the ongoing development of Tower Hill Residential Estate in Swan Hill. Council will free-up some of its surplus land holdings to promote appropriate private investment in Robinvale and Swan Hill.

Council's four year capital works program is detailed in the following Statement of Capital Works. It presents the forecast works by asset category, type of works (renewal, upgrade etc.) and how the works are funded.

Statement of Capital Works

For the four years ending 30 June 2021

	Forecast Actual	Budget	Strategic Resource Plan Projections		
	2016/17 \$'000	2017/18 \$'000	2018/19 \$'000	2019/20 \$'000	2020/21 \$'000
Property					
Land	474	1,299	-	1,308	1,452
Buildings	601	1,050	2,115	4,915	715
Total property	1,075	2,349	2,115	6,223	2,167
Plant and equipment					
Plant, machinery and equipment	2,006	1,152	1,129	1,072	1,265
Fixtures, fittings and furniture	15	-	22	22	23
Computers and telecommunications	210	245	248	250	258
Total plant and equipment	2,231	1,397	1,399	1,344	1,546
Infrastructure					
Sealed roads	4,819	5,216	3,386	3,263	4,607
Unsealed roads	1,092	878	1,148	1,165	980
Footpaths and cycleways	429	216	232	438	244
Drainage	1,181	976	220	220	-
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	837	585	75	-	-
Waste management	-	203	255	-	925
Parks, open space and streetscapes	1,142	2,919	323	1,134	967
Other infrastructure	808	1,924	1,512	930	1,680
Total infrastructure	10,308	12,917	7,151	7,150	9,403
Heritage and culture					
Library books	138	142	149	155	160
Pioneer Settlement	204	75	125	-	-
Total heritage and culture	342	217	274	155	160
Total capital works expenditure	13,956	16,880	10,939	14,872	13,276
Represented by:					
New asset expenditure	3,495	6,241	2,205	2,455	3,084
Asset renewal expenditure	9,731	9,955	6,869	7,926	8,460
Asset expansion expenditure	-	-	-	-	-
Asset upgrade expenditure	730	684	1,865	4,491	1,732
Total capital works expenditure	13,956	16,880	10,939	14,872	13,276
Source of funding:					
Grants	4,235	5,714	2,564	5,278	2,349
Contributions	955	108	11	12	9
Council cash	8,466	10,258	7,864	9,082	10,418
Borrowings	300	800	500	500	500
Total funding sources	13,956	16,880	10,939	14,872	13,276