



GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE

AGENDA

Council Meeting

6.00pm Tuesday 22 October 2024

VENUE:
Golden Plains Civic Centre
Council Chambers
2 Pope Street, Bannockburn

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING
6.00pm Tuesday 26 November 2024

Copies of Golden Plains Shire Council's Agendas & Minutes
Can be obtained online at www.goldenplains.vic.gov.au

Code of Conduct Principles

WORKING TOGETHER

We Councillors will:

- acknowledge and respect that a diversity of opinion exists among us;
- recognise that each of us has different life experience, knowledge and values, and that all of these contribute collectively to our discussions;
- behave with courtesy towards each other, Council officers and our citizens;
- conform to the policy and precedents that guide the conduct of meetings;
- attend punctually and participate in all relevant meetings, workshops and briefings;
- share reasonably in the representation, ceremonial and hosting tasks of the full Council; and
- honour the majority decisions made by the Council, irrespective of our own position, and explain these decisions frankly to the community, once made.

BEHAVING WITH INTEGRITY

We Councillors will:

- identify our financial and personal interest, or potential interest, in any matter that comes before the Council;
- be honest and truthful;
- comply with laws and the regulations deriving there from;
- respect Council property and be frugal in its use, where allowed;
- avoid using our position for personal gain or to achieve advantage over others or to obtain preferential treatment;
- be sympathetic to the legitimate concerns of our citizens;
- act impartially when making decisions and have due regard to the needs of the community as a whole, rather than that of narrow vested interest; and
- acknowledge the role of Council officers in providing advice to us and in implementing Council decisions.

MAKING COMPETENT DECISIONS

We Councillors will:

- without diminishing the short term focus, approach decisions with due regard to the long term needs of the municipality;
- form policies with regard to the needs of the entire Shire;
- direct our attentions to the strategic and statutory needs of the municipality rather than short term, transient, operational issues;
- seek to fully inform ourselves on the issues before Council before making a decision;
- take all reasonable steps to improve our knowledge of matters relevant to our municipal duties; and
- use and respect the professional knowledge of Council officers and other advisers to Council.

Members of the Gallery

Welcome to a Golden Plains Shire Council meeting and thank you for joining us.

MEETING PROCEDURES

The procedures for this Council meeting are provided in Council's Governance Rules. A copy of the Governance Rules can be found on Council's [website](#).

Please note: in accordance with Council's Election Period Policy and the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* public questions, presentations and submissions will not be permitted at this meeting.

MEETING FACILITIES

Council meetings are generally held at:

- Golden Plains Shire Council Civic Centre (2 Pope Street, Bannockburn)
- Linton Shire Hall (68 Sussex Street, Linton)
- The Well, Smythesdale (19 Heales Street, Smythesdale)

EXPECTATIONS OF THE GALLERY

Council meetings are decision-making forums and it is important that they are open to the community to attend and view proceedings. Community members may participate in Council meetings in accordance with Chapter 2, Division 7 of the Governance Rules.

Please note: in accordance with Council's Election Period Policy and the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* public questions, presentations and submissions will not be permitted at this meeting.

Members of the public present at Council meetings must remain silent during the proceedings except when specifically invited to address the meeting. Mobile devices are permitted for silent use but must not be used for recording, talking or any usage that generates noise, unless permission is granted by the Chairperson of the meeting.

The Chairperson of the meeting may remove a person from the meeting if the person continues to interject or gesticulate offensively after being asked to desist. The Chairperson may cause the removal of any object or material that is deemed by them to be objectionable or disrespectful.

The Chairperson may call a break in a meeting for either a short time or to resume another day if the behaviour at the Council table or in the gallery is significantly disrupting the meeting.

RECORDING OF MEETINGS

Council meetings are recorded and streamed live on the internet. Recordings are archived and available on Council's [Youtube page](#).

All care is taken to maintain your privacy however as a visitor in the public gallery, your presence may be recorded.

Membership

Councillors

Cr Brett Cunningham, Mayor (Chair)
Cr Gavin Gamble
Cr Ian Getsom
Cr Helena Kirby
Cr Les Rowe
Cr Owen Sharkey
Cr Clayton Whitfield

Officers

Shane Walden, Chief Executive Officer
Phil Josipovic, Director Infrastructure and Environment
Lynnere Gray, Director Corporate Services
Emma Wheatland, Acting Director Community, Planning and Growth

Order Of Business

1	Opening Declaration	6
2	Acknowledgement of Country	6
3	Apologies and Leave of Absence	6
4	Confirmation of Minutes	6
5	Declaration of Conflict of Interest	6
6	Intentionally Blank Due To Election Period Policy	6
7	Business Reports for Decision	7
	7.1 Delegates' Reports & Informal Meetings of Councillors Records	7
	7.2 Annual Financial Statements and Performance Statement for signing	9
	7.3 Annual Report 2023/2024	15
8	Notices of Motion	19
	Nil	
9	Petitions	19
	Nil	
10	Confidential Reports for Decision	19
	Nil	

1 OPENING DECLARATION

We the Councillors of Golden Plains Shire declare that we will undertake, on every occasion, to carry out our duties in the best interest of the community and that our conduct shall maintain the standards of the code of good governance so that we may faithfully represent and uphold the trust placed in this Council by the people of Golden Plains Shire

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Golden Plains Shire spans the Traditional lands of the Wadawurrung and Eastern Maar Peoples.

Council acknowledges them as the Traditional Owners and Custodians and pays its respects to both Wadawurrung and Eastern Maar Elders past, present and emerging.

Council extends that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People who are part of Golden Plains Shire.

3 APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE**4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES****Recommendation**

That Council confirms the minutes of the Council Meeting held on Tuesday 10 September 2024.

5 DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**6 INTENTIONALLY BLANK DUE TO ELECTION PERIOD POLICY**

7 BUSINESS REPORTS FOR DECISION

7.1 DELEGATES' REPORTS & INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS RECORDS

File Number:

Author: Elise Holmes, Executive Assistant to the CEO

Authoriser: Shane Walden, Chief Executive Officer

Attachments: Nil

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive and note the Delegates' Reports and Informal Meetings of Councillors for the past month

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is typically the item on the agenda where Councillors have the opportunity to update their colleagues and the community about attendances at various Delegated Boards/Committees/Meetings that they attended on behalf of the Council and can acknowledge significant community events or Council functions / engagement opportunities that they have attended over the past month. This report contains records of informal meetings of Councillors as defined under Rule 1 of Chapter 5 of Council's Governance Rules.

During the Election Period, the ordinary business of Council must be done a little differently to ensure the election is conducted in a fair and equitable manner.

Council has an Election Period Policy in place to ensure that the ordinary business of Council can continue throughout the Election Period.

Please note that Council has been in the Election Period since 17 September 2024, which means that Councillor functions and engagement opportunities have been limited, to ensure the conduct of a fair and equitable election.

Noting that it is the election period there will not be the opportunity for Councillors to speak to this report.

MANDATORY BOARDS / COMMITTEES / MEETINGS

- Audit Committee
- G21 - Board of Directors
- Ballarat Regional Alliance of Councils
- Peri Urban Group of Rural Councils
- CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee
- Municipal Association of Victoria
- Geelong Regional Library Corporation
- Tourism Greater Geelong and the Bellarine Board
- Golden Plains Emergency Management Committee
- Council Meeting, Strategic Briefing, Councillor Briefing and Portfolio Meetings

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / EVENTS

Cr Cunningham

- Citizenship Ceremony
- Battle of the Bands, Bannockburn P-12 College
- G21 Annual Forum

Cr Gamble

- MAV Annual Conference & Dinner
G21 Annual Forum

Cr Getsom

- Nil

Cr Kirby

- Colac Advisory Group Forum

Cr Rowe

- Nil

Cr Sharkey

- Bannockburn P-12 College - Smoothie Bike Launch
- G21 Regional Forum

Cr Whitfield

- Inverleigh Progress Association - Quarterly Meeting

INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS

Rule 1 of Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules requires that if there is a meeting of Councillors that:

- a) Is scheduled or planned for the purpose of discussing the business of Council or briefing Councillors;
- b) Is attended by an absolute majority of Councillors and one member of Council staff; and
- c) Is not a Council meeting, delegated committee meeting or community asset committee meeting

Then the Chief Executive Officer must ensure that a summary of the matters discussed at the meeting is:

- a) Tabled at the next convenient Council meeting; and
- b) Recorded in the minutes of that Council meeting.

Records of informal meetings of Councillors are reported to an open Council meeting to promote transparency of Council decisions, actions and information, in accordance with the Governance Principles as contained in s9(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020*. The informal meetings of Councillors records are attached to this report. Rule 6 of Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules provides procedures for the declaration of a conflict of interest at a meeting being held under the auspices of Council, which includes a meeting that meets the definition of an informal meeting of Councillors under Rule 1 of Chapter 5. The informal meetings of Councillors records attached include any declarations of conflicts of interest made at these meetings.

7.2 ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE STATEMENT FOR SIGNING

File Number:

Author: Fiona Rae, Manager Finance

Authoriser: Lynnere Gray, Director Corporate Services

Attachments:

1. 2023/24 Financial Statements
2. 2023/24 Performance Statement
3. 2023/24 LGPRF Report
4. 2023/24 Governance & Management Checklist

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Note the Annual Financial Statements and Performance Statement for the financial year ended 30 June 2024 attached;
2. Note the Audit and Risk Committee recommendation for the final audited 2023/24 Financial Statements and Performance Statement to be certified on behalf of Council by Cr Brett Cunningham (Mayor) and Cr Owen Sharkey, in accordance with Section 99 of the *Local Government Act 2020*;
3. Authorises the Mayor and Cr Sharkey to certify the Annual Financial Statements and Performance Statement for the financial year ended 30 June 2024; and
4. Authorises the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer to certify the Governance and Management checklist.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Financial Statements and Performance Statement have been prepared by Council Officers and were subject to a financial audit during the final audit visit by the Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO) from 3-13 September 2024.

The statements were reviewed by the Audit and Risk Committee on 8 October 2024 following the VAGO audit.

The Performance Statement includes results for 2023/24 and 2022/23. Councils are required to establish materiality thresholds to explain movements between reporting periods. If the current year result falls outside the materiality threshold range, Councils are required to explain the movement as a material variance.

Council is required under the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations to prepare the Governance and Management checklist, which is to be certified by the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer.

BACKGROUND

Council is required under Sections 98 and 99 of the Local Government Act 2020 to:

- Prepare an annual report each financial year that contains a report on operations, audited financial statements, an audited performance statement, and copies of the auditor's report on the statements.
- Pass a resolution giving in principle approval to the financial statements and performance statements and submit these to the Auditor-General's Office as soon as possible after the end of financial year for reporting on the audit.
- Authorise two specific Councillors to certify the statements in their final form after any changes recommended or agreed to by audit have been made.

DISCUSSION

Council Officers have prepared the Financial Statements and Performance Statement which were subject to a financial audit during VAGO's final audit visit from 3-13 September 2024, noting that VAGO delayed the final audit completion. The financial audit includes completing work remaining from the interim audit conducted in April and June and a review of the Financial Statements and Performance Statement with an audit opinion issued on completion of the audit. The Financial Statements are subject to final VAGO review which may result in minor changes such as formatting or disclosure details within the notes to the accounts.

The following timetable outlines the process to achieve the requirements of The *Local Government Act 2020*:

DESCRIPTION OF TASK	DUE DATE
TASKS COMPLETED	
Council approval In Principle of draft Financial Statements and Performance Statement and authorise two Councillors to certify the annual statements.	Complete
Performance Statement and Financial Statements submitted to auditor	Complete
Audit of Performance Statement and Financial Statements	Complete
Audit Closing Report issued	Complete
TASKS YET TO COMPLETE	
Council Briefing to consider Financial Statements and Performance Report	15/10/2024
Council meeting to adopt Annual Report including financial statements and auditor's report	22/10/2024
Audit Opinion issued by Auditor-General	23/10/2024

Annual Financial Statements

Council has reported a \$0.1 million operating surplus, which is a reduction of \$3.0 million from the 2022/23 operating surplus. This result has been impacted by several factors:

- Operating Grants – \$4.0 million grants assessed as received in advance due to the outstanding performance obligations at June 2024, and \$7.0 million financial assistance grants not received in advance for 2024/25 allocation;
- Capital Grants – \$2.5 million grants assessed as received in advance due to outstanding performance obligations at June 2024 (\$712k Bannockburn Vic Park Netball Pavilion, \$758k Bannockburn Skate Park Upgrade, \$538k Smart Shires Network);
- Gain/Loss on Disposals – Not all forecast land sales from Lomandra Drive were achieved;
- Gifted Assets \$2.9 million higher than budget reflecting higher development activity;
- \$1.7 million asset adjustments (\$456k impairment for reduction in asset where asset was replaced, \$604k increase in landfill provision, and \$456k asset write-offs of duplications of sections of roads and footpaths included in gifted assets and in roads valuation data).

The 'Adjusted Underlying Result' removes any non-recurrent grants used to fund capital expenditure, non-monetary asset contributions and other capital contributions to fund capital expenditure from the operating result. This formula is prescribed within the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.

The underlying result is a deficit of \$9.3m compared to the underlying result from the Original Budget of \$400k, is a difference of \$8.9m. This is represented materially by:

- Landfill Rehabilitation Reserve movement \$604K
- Financial Assistant Grants for 2024/25 \$7.0 million not being received in advance as per recent practice

- Asset impairment and write-offs \$1.1 million

The Statement of Capital Works reports total expenditure of \$13.6 million on capital projects, \$9.1 million below the original budget, and \$16.4 million below the revised budget. Several projects will continue into 2024/25 as a result of delays in securing grant funding or phased project stages. The revised budget included:

- Projects totalling \$16.0 million that span multiple years rolled forward into 2024/25
- \$1.6 million for Inverleigh Active Youth Space budgeted in one year but however is planned to be delivered over multiple years
- \$887K LRCI Phase 4 funding still to be spent (Phase 4 projects must be completed by June 2025)

Key balances reported in the Balance Sheet include cash of \$12.8 million (\$4.7 million cash and \$8.1 million financial assets) and total borrowings of \$8.33 million. Cash balances have decreased from prior year as the closing balance at 30 June 2023 included the 2023/24 financial assistance grants that were paid early. Council reported a \$1.98 million positive cashflow from operating activities and an overall decrease in cash movements during the year of \$11.7 million, to generate a closing cash balance of \$12.8 million.

Local Government Performance Reporting

Council is required under the *Local Government Act 2020* and *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* to report on its performance in accordance with the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF).

Council's performance against the LGPRF measures is reported to management, the Audit and Risk Committee (the Committee) and Council on a six-monthly basis. Additionally, the Performance Statement (which is a sub-set of these indicators) are included in the Golden Plains Shire Council Annual Report.

The LGPRF, developed by Local Government Victoria (LGV) is a mandatory system of performance reporting that became a requirement for all Victorian Councils from the 2014/15 annual budgeting and reporting cycle. It ensures that Councils measure and report on their performance in a consistent way promoting transparency and accountability in the Local Government sector. The framework is made up of 59 measures from a range of service areas, including animal management, food safety, library services, maternal and child health, roads, planning and waste management. It is complemented by a Governance and Management checklist of 27 items, which show the policies, plans, and procedures in place at each Council, and together they build a comprehensive picture of Council's performance.

The attached 2023/24 LGPRF Report details Council's performance for 2023/24 period and benchmarks it against performance data from the past four financial years. The objective is to sustain areas that are performing within the expected range while tracking areas that may require improvement.

Council officers are pleased to present the report for the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 for Council's information (Attachment 3). The report outlines the 2023/24 results for all Service Performance Indicators, Financial Performance Measures and Sustainable Capacity Indicators. Notably the report underwent an interim review with Local Government Victoria in August, with minimal feedback received. Following the Audit & Risk Committee's meeting, the report will be submitted to Local Government Victoria by Friday, 11 October, allowing for all content to be included in the public release of data through the Know Your Council website.

Performance Report

Section 98 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires Council to prepare an audited Performance Report. The performance report is a sub-set of the Local Government Performance Reporting with the content and indicators included prescribed in the template which is updated and issued annually by the State Government.

The 2023/24 Performance Report (Attachment 2) has been audited by VAGO with no issues identified.

Also attached is the Governance and Management checklist which is included in the annual report.

Following the completion of the VAGO audit a set of audited financial statements and audited performance statement will be provided at the October council meeting for noting.

REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE STATEMENTS

Local Government Act 2020 (LGA 2020)

Implications	Applicable to this Report
Governance Principles (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Policy/Relevant Law (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Environmental/Sustainability Implications (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	No
Community Engagement (Consideration of Community Engagement Principles under s.56 LGA 2020)	Yes
Public Transparency (Consideration of Public Transparency Principles under s.58 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Strategies and Plans (Consideration of Strategic Planning Principles under s.89 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Financial Management (Consideration of Financial Management Principles under s.101 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Service Performance (Consideration of Service Performance Principles under s.106 of LGA 2020)	No
Risk Assessment	Yes
Communication	Yes
Human Rights Charter	Yes
Gender Equality (Gender Impact Assessment required by s.9 of Gender Equality Act 2020)	No

GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

The 2023/24 Financial Statements and Performance Statement have been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board, the *Local Government Act 2020*, and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.

Final changes (if required) will be made to the statements which are then certified by the Principal Accounting Officer, two Councillors and the Chief Executive Officer. The Victorian Auditor-General certifies the statements and issues an independent Audit Report expressing an opinion on the statements.

POLICY/RELEVANT LAW

Local Government Act 2020

*Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020**Audit Act 1994***COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

A formal consultation process was not required.

PUBLIC TRANSPARENCY

The financial audit process and VAGO review supports the principles of public transparency in Section 99 of the *Local Government Act 2020* with results of the audit to be included in the 'Results of the 2023/24 Audits: Local Government' report scheduled for tabling in March 2025.

STRATEGIES/PLANS

Financial reports are prepared ensuring consistency with Council's long term financial plan.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Council's financial management processes are in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements, the *Local Government Act 2020*, and *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.

The financial audit process considers financial management processes, internal controls, accounting policies, and financial sustainability via the use of the going concern basis of accounting. VAGO express an audit opinion on the financial report based on the audit with the objective to obtain a reasonable assurance about whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

RISK ASSESSMENT

There are identified risk implications associated with this report, detailed below:

In accordance with Section 98 of the *Local Government Act 2020* Council is required to prepare an Annual Report containing a report of operations and audited Financial Statements and an audited Performance Statement. Section 99 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires the Annual Report to be discussed at a meeting open to the public by 31 October each year. As this is a Council Election year, the Annual Report must be presented at a meeting open to the public prior to the Election Day 26 October 2024. Therefore, a resolution on the audited Financial Statements and Performance Statement is required tonight.

COMMUNICATION

Council is required to consider the Annual Report at an open Council meeting within four months of the end of the financial year. This meeting will be advertised in the local media. Council must also advertise that the statements have been audited.

The 2023-24 Financial Statements and Performance Statement will be included in the Annual Report and submitted to the Minister. The Annual Report will also be published on Council's website. The Annual Report is also included in tonight's agenda for Council endorsement.

HUMAN RIGHTS CHARTER

It is considered that this report does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (VIC).

OPTIONS

Option 1 – Delegate approval of the Performance Statement and the Financial Statements as per the recommendation

This option is recommended by officers as it is necessary to delegate authority to approve the Performance Statement and Financial Statements at this Council meeting due to the tight timeline.

Option 2 – Note the approval requested but not agree to delegate

This option is not recommended by officers as not delegating approval would extend the timeframe to complete the annual report, would require an unscheduled meeting prior to 26 October 2024 and have the potential of not complying with the timeframes and holding a meeting open to the public in time.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No officer involved in preparing this report has any conflicts of interest in regards to this matter.

CONCLUSION

Due to the relatively tight timetable required to meet the legislative requirements, it is necessary to have appropriate delegations in place to ensure that decisions can be made promptly to comply with the deadlines. In the absence of this delegation, an unscheduled meeting of Council would need to be called at short notice.

This system of delegation has operated effectively in the past and is in accordance with the Charter of the Audit and Risk Committee.

7.3 ANNUAL REPORT 2023/2024

File Number:**Author:** Lisa Baldock, Coordinator Communications and Engagement**Authoriser:** Shane Walden, Chief Executive Officer**Attachments:** 1. Annual Report 2024**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council approves the Golden Plains Shire Council Annual Report 2023/24, in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In accordance with section 133(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council is required to prepare an Annual Report each fiscal year. This year the Annual Report must be presented at a public Council Meeting before Election Day 26 October. Additionally, the Act mandates public notification of the report's availability for inspection, both at Council offices and on the Council's website.

The Annual Report 2023/24 provides a comprehensive insight into Council's achievements and performance supporting the five community outcomes areas as set out in the Council Plan 2021-2025

BACKGROUND

This report aims to fulfill the obligations outlined in section 98 of the *Local Government Act 2020*. It encompasses various components, including the following:

- Report of Operations
- Audited Performance Statement
- Audited Financial Statements
- Auditor's report on the Performance Statement prepared under section 98
- Auditor's report on the Financial Statements under Part 3 of the *Audit Act 1994*, and
- Any other matter required by the regulations.

The Report of Operations and Performance Statement in the Annual Report 2023/24 adhere to the Victorian Government's 'Better Practice Guide' while the Financial Statements follow the Local Government Model Financial Report. Sections 99 to 100 of the Act outline the necessary steps, including the following:

- Council must pass a resolution giving its approval in principle to the Performance Statement and Financial Statements;
- Council must authorise two Councillors to certify the Performance Statement and financial statements in their final form after any changes have been made following the audit; and
- Council must hold a publicly advertised meeting to present the Annual Report.

Council has complied with these requirements.

DISCUSSION

This Annual Report marks the conclusion of this Council's term and provides an overview of the key accomplishments, challenges, and plans.

A major change this year was the departure of our CEO, Eric Braslis, in May.

Council's achievements this year include continued work on infrastructure and services, notably the reconstruction of local bridges and the completion of key projects such as the Leighdale Equestrian Centre and the Lethbridge Play Space. Additionally, Council continues seeking reimbursement through the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements for the flood events of late 2022, and we continue the sale of Teesdale subdivision lots. Financial responsibility remains a key priority, as reflected in our commitment to sound financial management in our quarterly reports, budget preparation, 10-year Financial Plan, and Asset Plan.

In 2023/24, Council continued with its engagement initiatives, including the Community Vision 2040 Refresh, Draft Footpath Strategy Inverleigh Active Youth Space Detailed Design and the Bannockburn Skate Bowl Detail Design. Council remains focused on capital works and services despite economic pressures. We will continue key projects such as the Rokewood Community Hub and the Teesdale Don Wallace Reserve developments. We also welcome the State Government's \$5 million allocation to expand kindergarten programs in the Shire.

Our advocacy efforts have been crucial in securing financial support for local infrastructure, such as the \$1 million Federal contribution for the Hendersons Road Bridge. Through partnerships with State and Federal governments, we ensure our community's needs are addressed, from road improvements to the recent \$100,000 State funding for upgrades at Smythesdale Public Gardens.

The 2023/2024 Annual Report is presented to Council for approval.

AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORTS

The Auditor's Report on the Financial Statements and the Auditor's Report on the Performance Statement are contained within the Financial Section of the Annual Report. Both audit opinions are unqualified.

REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE STATEMENTS

Local Government Act 2020 (LGA 2020)

Implications	Applicable to this Report
Governance Principles (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Policy/Relevant Law (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Environmental/Sustainability Implications (Consideration of the Governance Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)	No
Community Engagement (Consideration of Community Engagement Principles under s.56 LGA 2020)	No
Public Transparency (Consideration of Public Transparency Principles under s.58 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Strategies and Plans (Consideration of Strategic Planning Principles under s.89 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Financial Management (Consideration of Financial Management Principles under s.101 of LGA 2020)	Yes
Service Performance (Consideration of Service Performance Principles under s.106 of LGA 2020)	No
Risk Assessment	Yes

Communication	Yes
Human Rights Charter	Yes

GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

The Golden Plains Shire Council Annual Report 2023/24 has been prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*. The Financial Statements have been prepared utilising the Local Government Model Financial Report, as required by the regulations. Both the Report of Operations and Performance Statement contained in the Annual Report have been prepared based on the 'Better Practice Guide'.

POLICY/RELEVANT LAW

The Golden Plains Shire Council Annual Report 2023/24 has been prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*.

PUBLIC TRANSPARENCY

The Performance Statement and Financial Statements were presented, along with the Auditor's Management Letter and Closing Report, to Council's Audit and Risk Committee at its meeting held on 8 October 2024.

STRATEGIES/PLANS

The following Golden Plains Shire Council strategic plans are relevant to the Annual Report 2023/24:

- Council Plan 2021-2025,
- Long-Term Financial Plan 2021-2031, and
- Annual Budget.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Preparation of the Performance Statement and Financial Statements have been prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014, Australian Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements. The Performance Statement and Financial Statements have been subject to audit and certification by the Victorian Auditor-General's Office.

COMMUNICATION

As required under the *Local Government Act 2020*, the Golden Plains Shire Council Annual Report 2023/24 will be published on Council's website and promoted to the community through traditional and digital media channels. A copy of the Annual Report 2023/24 will also be available to view at Council's Customer Hubs.

HUMAN RIGHTS CHARTER

This report does not negatively impact any rights identified in the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (VIC)*.

OPTIONS

Option 1 – Receive the Golden Plains Shire Council Annual Report 2023/24

Officers recommend this option as the Annual Report 2023/24 has been prepared and presented to Council by 31 October 2024 in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Option 2 – Not receive the Golden Plains Shire Council Annual Report 2023/24

Officers do not recommend this option as failing to adopt the Annual Report will mean the Council does not meet its obligations under the *Local Government Act 2020*.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No officer involved in preparing this report has any conflicts of interest in regard to this matter.

CONCLUSION

The Golden Plains Shire Council Annual Report 2023/24 is an accurate and detailed report of the operations and services of Council in the past financial year, as well as a strategic account of the Council's achievements and challenges in 2023/24. It is recommended that Council approve the Golden Plains Shire Council Annual Report 2023/24.

8 NOTICES OF MOTION

Nil

9 PETITIONS

Nil

10 CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS FOR DECISION

Nil