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East Gippsland Shire Council 2024 Council Elections

Mitchell River

Acknowledgement



East Gippsland Shire Council acknowledges the Gunaikurnai, Monero and the Bidawel people as the Traditional Custodians of this land that encompasses East Gippsland Shire, and their enduring relationship with country. The Traditional Custodians have cared and nurtured East Gippsland for tens of thousands of years.

Council value their living culture and practices and their right to self-determination. Council pays respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in East Gippsland, their Elders, past, present, and future.



Session outline



Overview of Local Government – how Councils work

Snapshot of East Gippsland Shire Council

Role of the Councillors

Wrap up – questions

VEC session



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So, what is Local Government?

Nicholson

Levels of Government



The **FEDERAL GOVERNMENT** raises money through taxing incomes, spending and businesses.



- FEDERAL MATTERS SUCH AS**
- MEDICARE
 - DEFENCE
 - IMMIGRATION
 - FOREIGN POLICY



STATE/TERRITORY GOVERNMENTS receive more than half their money from the federal government and also collect taxes.



- STATE MATTERS SUCH AS**
- ROADS
 - HOUSING
 - PRISONS
 - PUBLIC TRANSPORT
 - POLICE and AMBULANCE SERVICES



LOCAL COUNCILS collect taxes (rates) from all local property owners and receives money from the federal and state governments.



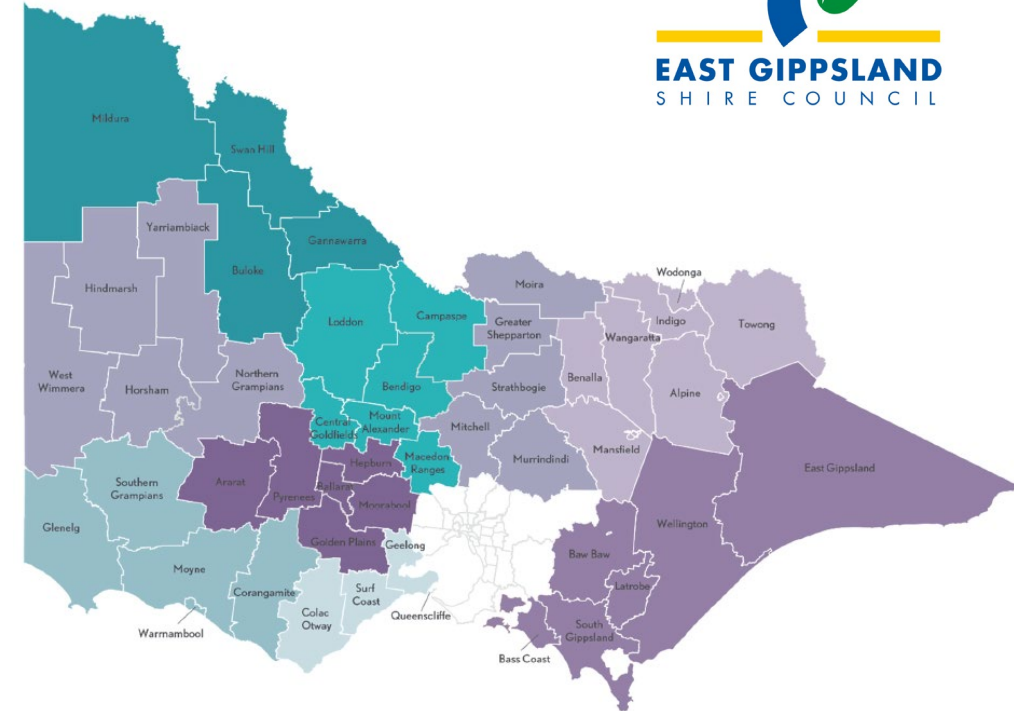
- LOCAL MATTERS SUCH AS**
- TOWN PLANNING
 - SEWERAGE
 - LOCAL ROADS
 - RUBBISH COLLECTION

Local Government in Victoria



- Local government is established by an Act of State Parliament – the *Local Government Act 2020* (LG Act 2020) – which specifies the powers, duties and functions.
- The legal basis for Councils is established under the *Constitution Act 1978 (Vic)*.
- LG Act 2020, related Acts and regulations provide the framework to guide the operations of Victoria’s 79 Councils.
- Recent Local Government reform bill passed through Parliament – with a focus on Councillors
- Councils have the power to set their own local laws and provide a range of community services.

The role of a Council is to provide good governance for the benefit and wellbeing of their community



Local Government Act 2020



Mandatory Training

Welcome to Local
Government Candidate
Training



Mandatory Training covers a lot about Codes of Conduct, the obligations of Councillors etc.

Don't intend to overly dwell on this tonight

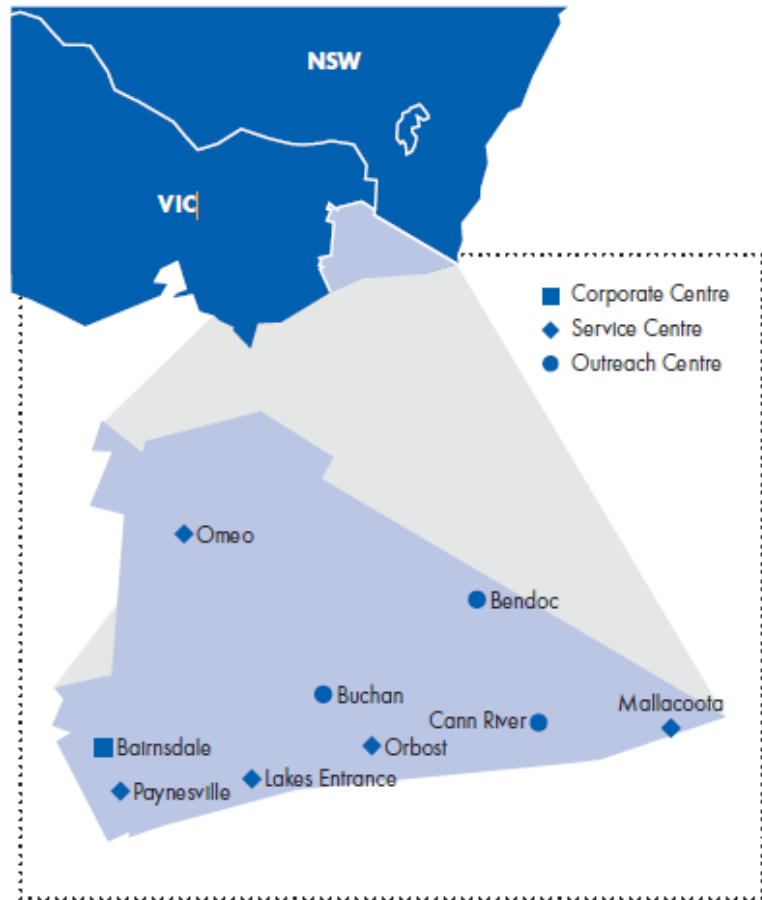


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A bit about us ...

Paynesville

East Gippsland



- East Gippsland Shire is 20,931 sq kms - 10% of Victoria
- Around 75% of its area is public land (State Forest, National Parks etc)
- East Gippsland Shire operates 34 supervised sites across the Shire from libraries and customer service centres to landfills and swimming pools

East Gippsland at a glance

Shire profile – a snapshot

Population



48,922 (2040: 57,799)
 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander: 3.2% (Victoria 1.9%)
 Over 60 years old: 32.7% (Victoria 23.9%)
 Born overseas: 11.9% (Victoria 12.4%)

Major towns by population



Bairnsdale: 17,609
 Lakes Entrance: 8,687
 Paynesville: 6,438
 Orbst: 4,015

Community



Cultural belonging – 41% of the community highly value their long-standing cultural connections and sense of community and belonging
 Connection to country – 77% of community members strongly value the natural environment in which they live

Economy



Registered businesses: 13,562
 Economic output: \$6.196 billion
 Gross Regional Product: \$3.105 billion
 Jobs in the region: 19,190
 Unemployment rate: 4.2%
 Visitors to the region: 1.4 million

Environment



378,470 kWh of solar generated yearly by solar panels on Council facilities
 100% of streetlights are LED
 1 licensed landfill, 1 unlicensed landfill, 45 known legacy landfills, 16 stand-alone waste transfer stations, 10 waste transfer trailers, 600+ public litter bins, 150+ public recycle bins, 22,000+ residential kerbside collection services
 398km of roadside weeds treated

Profile

48,887 People



Female:
50.8%



Male:
49.2%



Born in Australia:
79.6%



Square Kilometres:
20,931



Persons per square km: 2.34



Employment



19,914
Total jobs



4,771
Businesses

49%
Worked full-time

38.4%
Worked part-time

4.4%
Unemployed

8.2%
Other - employed, away from work

Industries – Registered Business by industry (top four)



- Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing – 23.6%
- Construction – 18.8%
- Rental, hiring and Real Estate Services – 9.1%
- Accommodation and Food Services – 6.7%

Our Organisation



Councils vary significantly in population, revenue and geographic size

Here at EGSC we:

Covering more than 21,000 square kms or 10% of the state

Second largest Council by geographic size

640 employees

9 Councillors

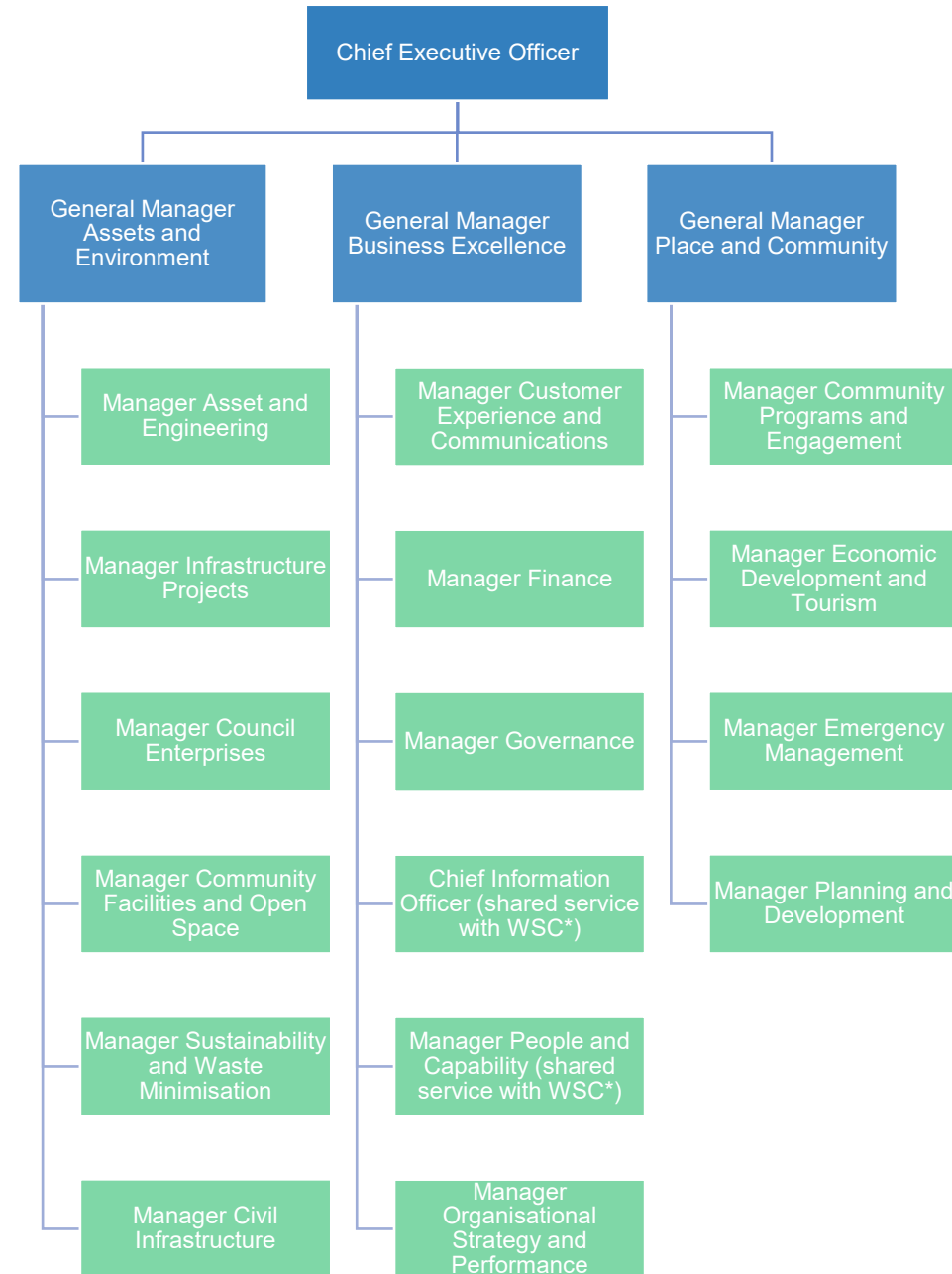
Over 100 services



Our Organisation

The Executive Leadership Team includes:

- Chief Executive Officer
- General Manager Assets and Environment
- General Manager Business Excellence
- General Manager Place and Community



Our Services

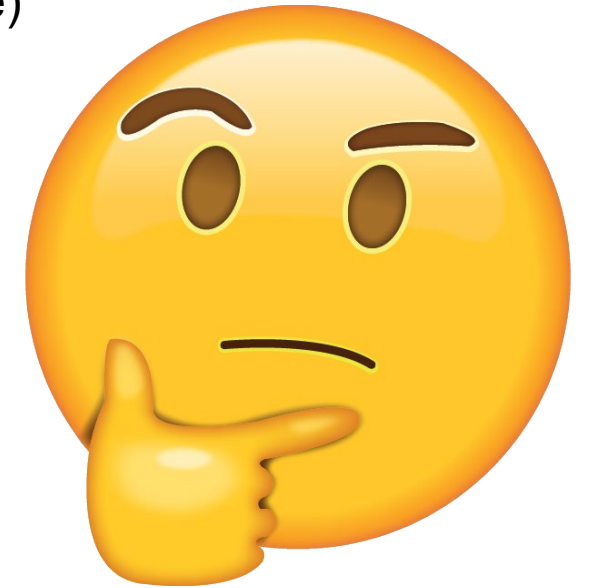
More than Roads, Rates and Rubbish!

- Aquatic and recreation centres
- Asset management and renewal
- Boat ramps and marinas
- Dogs and cats registrations
- Emergency management
- Libraries
- Livestock exchange
- Parks and playgrounds
- Planning and Building
- Recreation Reserves and foreshores
- Waste and recycling



So, what don't we do?

- Direct provision of most health services – we focus on wellbeing
- Public Transport – other than Raymond Island Ferry
- Education – other than provision of some Kindergarten facilities
- Law and Order – other than our Local Laws and our Rangers (Community Laws)
- Migration
- Taxation (other than Rates)
- Legislation (other than our Local Law and some parts of the Planning Scheme)
- Wildlife management
- Arterial Roads
- Ports (though we do manage some Jetties and Boat ramps)
- Vehicle and Vessel registrations



Advocacy

Sometimes when we don't have a direct role we advocate

- Important part of the Mayor and Councillors role to meet with Ministers and represent the interests of East Gippsland
- Guided by an Advocacy Strategy
- Also belong to other groups that advocate
 - MAV
 - LGPro
 - One Gippsland
 - Rural Councils Victoria



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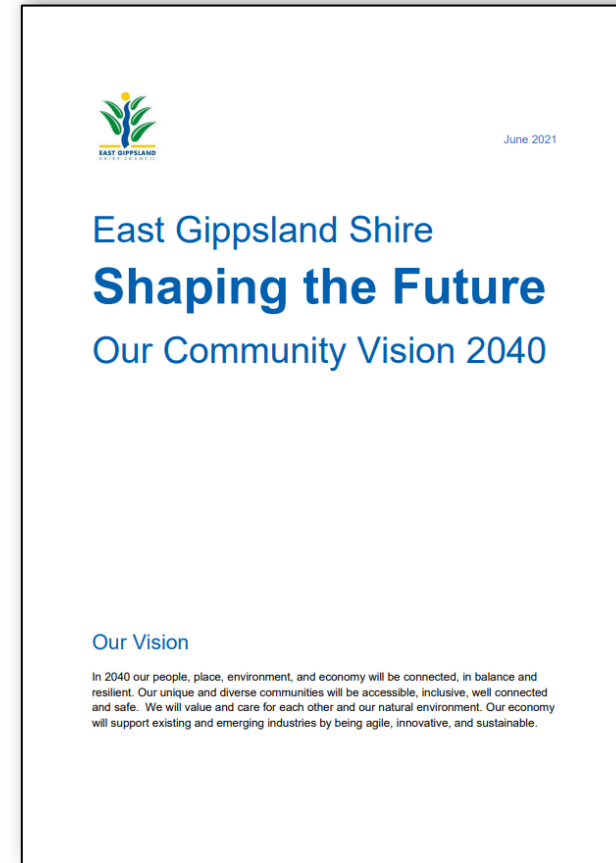
How do we determine our priorities and focus

Community Vision:

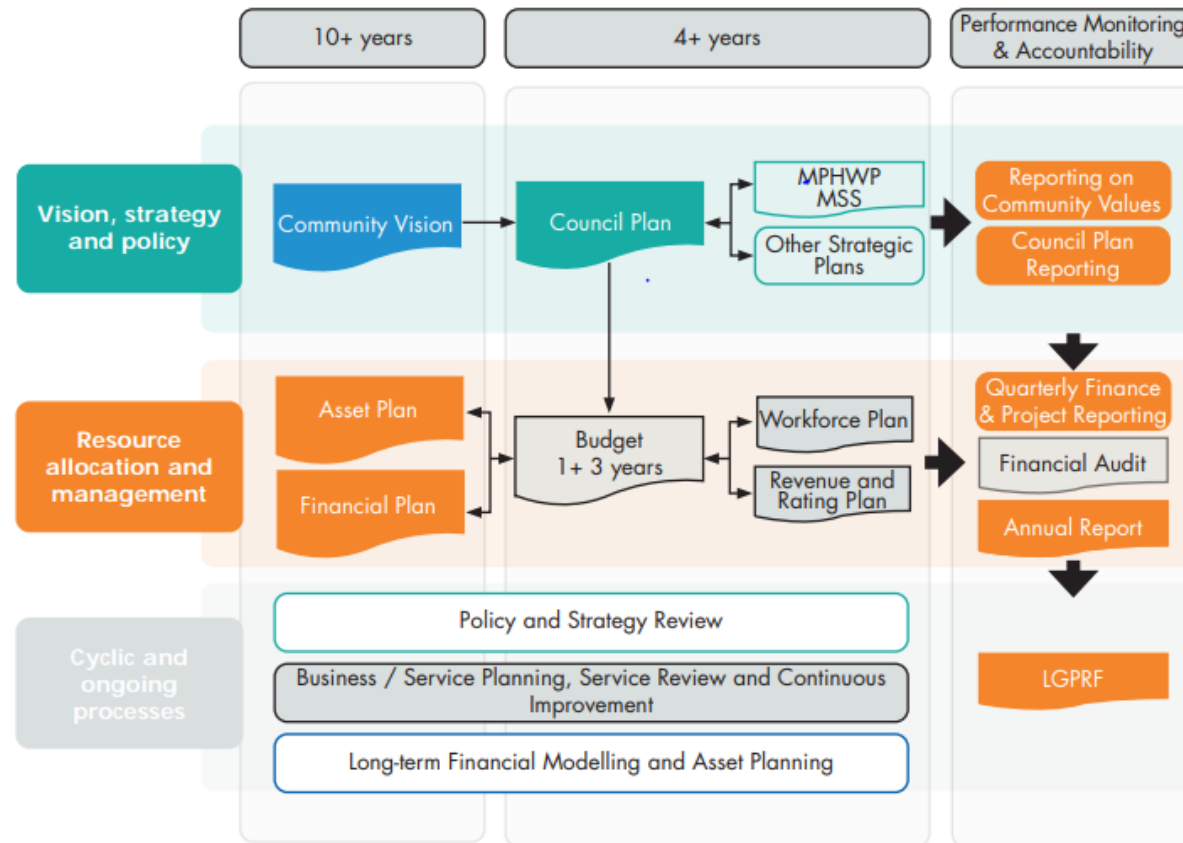
'In 2040, our people, place, environment, and economy will be connected, in balance and resilient. Our unique and diverse communities will be accessible, inclusive, well connected and safe. We will value and care for each other and our natural environment. Our economy will support existing and emerging industries by being agile, innovative, and sustainable.'

Currently in first phase of review

Next phase to occur once new Council on board



Vision informs most of our guiding documents

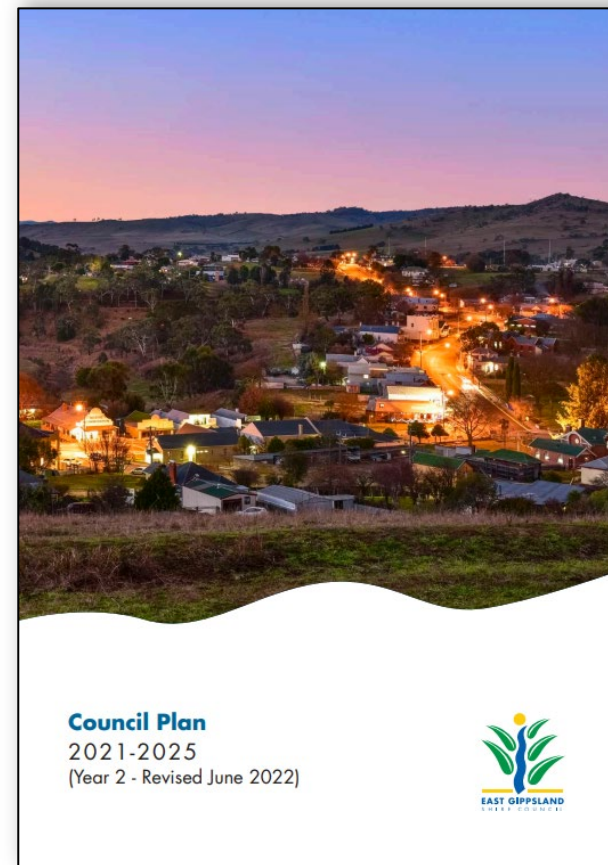


Our (current) Strategic Objectives



- An inclusive and caring community that respects and celebrates diversity
- Planning and infrastructure that enriches the environment, lifestyle, and character of our communities
- A natural environment that is managed and enhanced
- A thriving and diverse economy that attracts investment and generates inclusive local employment
- A transparent organisation that listens and delivers effective, engaging and responsive services

One of the most important documents set by the incoming Council



Local Government Funding



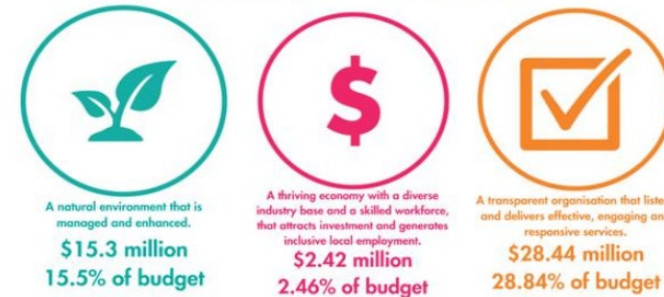
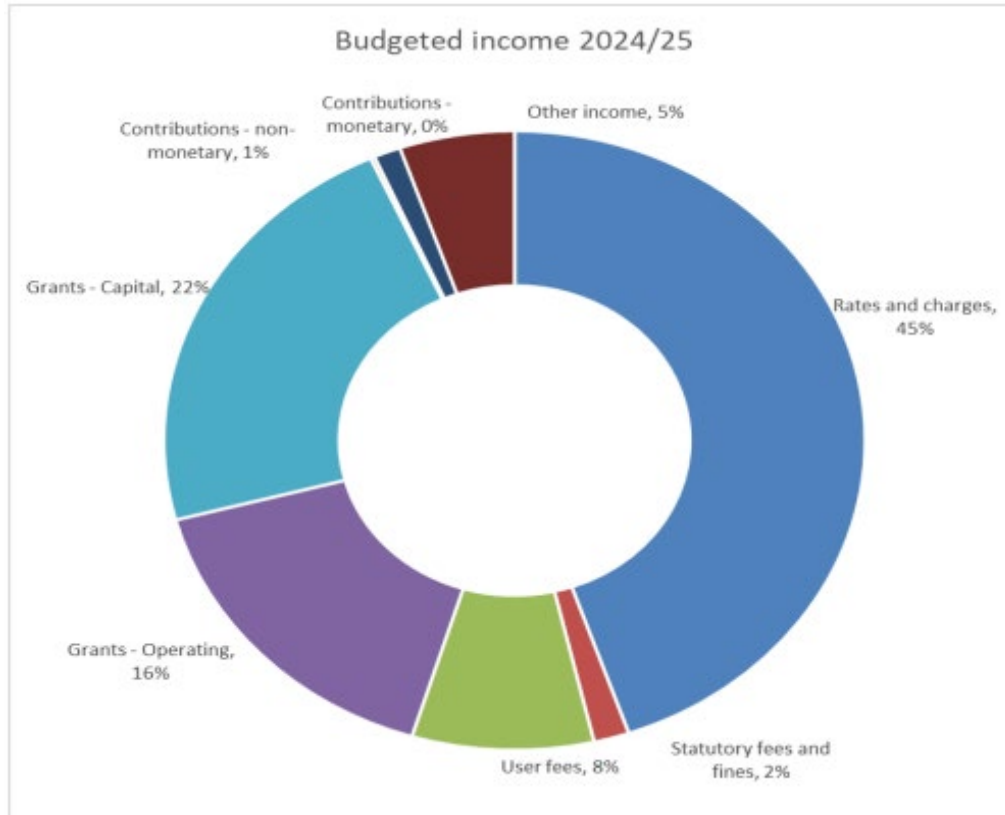
Sources of revenue

- Local government only collects 3.6 cents of every \$1 raised in Australian taxes
- Councils do not collect enough revenue to fund all their responsibilities
- Councils rely substantially on Commonwealth and Victorian Government grants to meet their funding needs and support the delivery of services and infrastructure to their communities
- Currently approx. 45% of Council's budget comes from Rates

Councils' funding sources include rates, government grants, fees, fines and charges, asset sales, interest earned on investments

Funding and budgets

- Misconception that Rates pay for everything
- Rate Cap – what does it mean?
- What about growth
- How do we spend it ?



We cover this in detail during the Councillor induction program



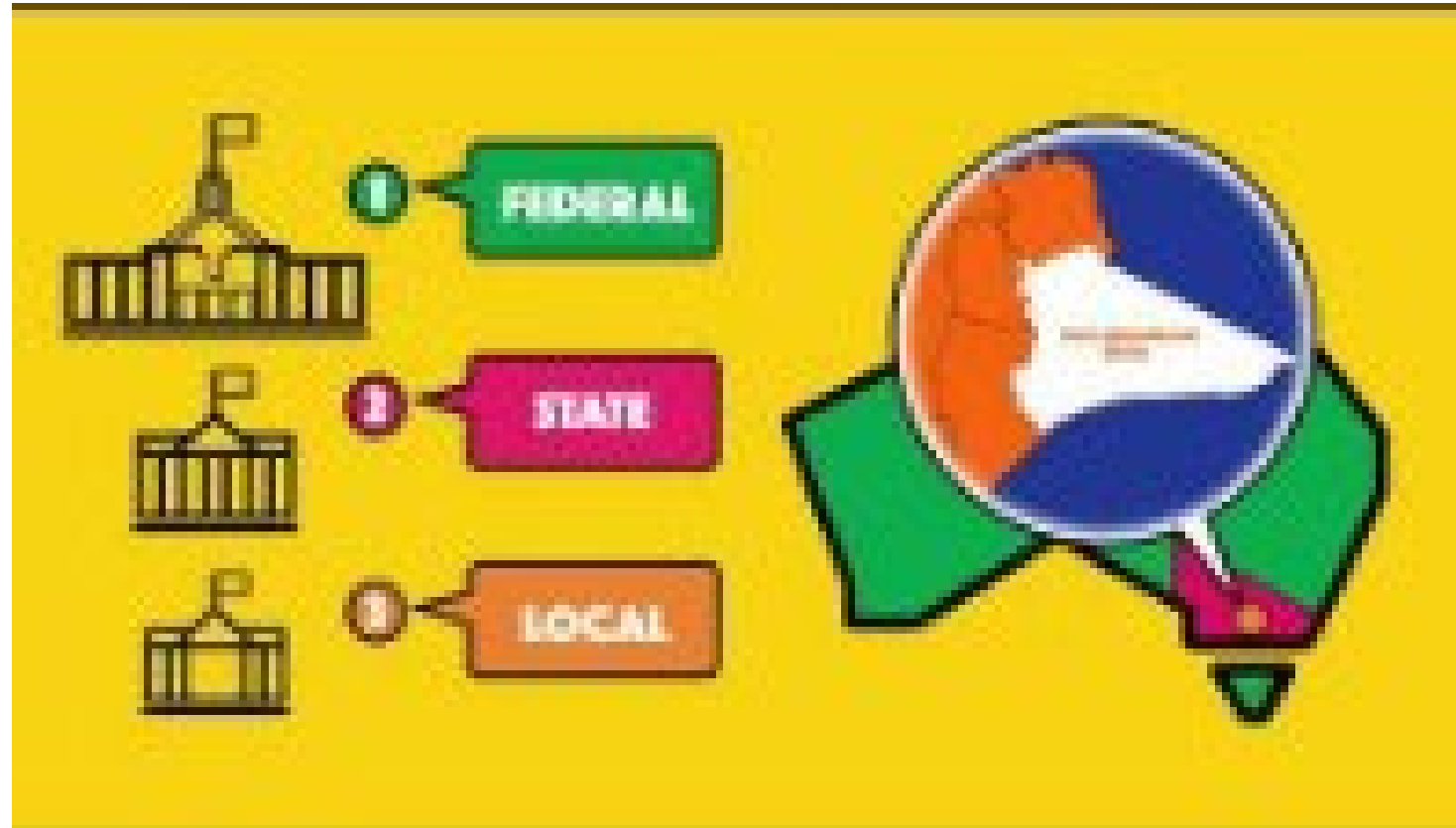
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Role of Councillors – what can you expect?

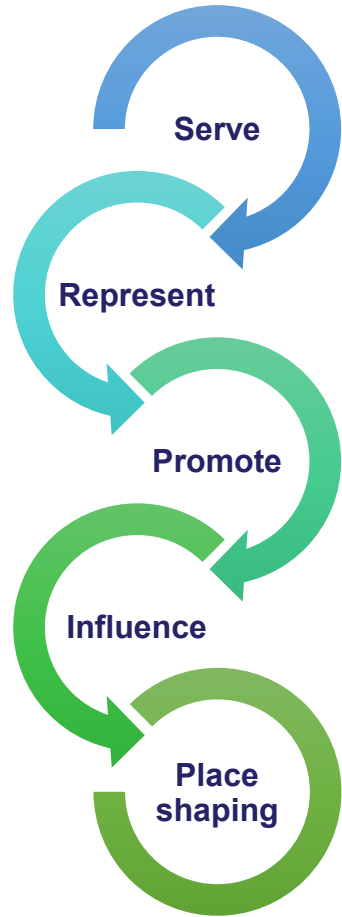
Lakes Entrance

Role of Local Government

East Gippsland



Why become a Councillor?



Serve and support your local community

Engage, consult and represent the diverse needs and views of the entire municipal community

Promote and build public trust and confidence in local democracy

Influence key decision

Make plans and decisions which have a direct effect on the local area

Participating in council decision-making

The Mayor and Councillors collectively serve as the key decision-making body of the council.

Council decisions are made, by the council at formal council meetings or under council's delegated authority by a committee or council officer.

Council decisions at a council meeting are resolved by a majority vote of Councillors present, provided there is a quorum. All Councillors present at a council meeting may vote on a motion, unless they have a conflict of interest.



Role of Mayor



Chairing	Chairing Council meetings
Spokesperson	Acting as Council's principal spokesperson
Promoting	Promoting behaviour among Councillors that meets the standards set in the Councillor Code of Conduct
Mentoring	Assisting Councillors in understanding their role
Leading	Leading regular reviews of the CEO's performance
Advising	Providing advice to the CEO on the setting of Council meeting agendas
Representing	Performing civic duties and representing the Council at official events
Engagement	Leading community engagement on the development of the Council plan
Reporting	Reporting annually to community on the Council plan

Role of a Councillor



Under the LG Act 2020, Councillors are required to:

- **Participate** in the decision-making of the council
- **Represent** the interests of the 'municipal community' in that decision-making
- **Contribute** to the council's strategic direction through the development and review of key council strategic documents, including the council plan

In performing their roles, Councillors must:

- **Consider** the diversity of interests and needs of the municipal community
- **Support** the role of the council
- **Acknowledge and support** the role of the Mayor
- **Act lawfully** and in accordance with the oath or affirmation of office
- **Act in accordance** with the prescribed standards of Councillor conduct
- **Comply** with the council's policies and procedures required for good governance

Setting strategic priorities



The Mayor and Councillors as the governing body, collectively set the overall direction for the council through long-term strategic planning and decision-making.

This requires their participation in the development of a range of key council strategic planning documents, including:

- Community Vision
- Council Plan
- Financial Plan
- Asset Plan
- Revenue and Rating Plan
- Council Budget

This involvement guides the council's strategic agenda, sets immediate and future priorities, and provides oversight of the council's finances and assets.

A week as a Councillor



- **Read Council reports** or briefing papers (two to three hours a week)
- Attend a **Council meeting** (every three weeks) **and** Councillor briefings (weekly)
- Respond to **community feedback and queries** (phone, email or out in the community)
- **Attend or Chair any Advisory Committee** or other forums representing Council (each meet monthly/quarterly on average)
- Attend Council and **community functions and events**

Councillor Briefings and Meetings



Councillors have a responsibility to be well-informed, participate respectfully in debates, and make considered decisions. To support this, **Councillor briefings** are generally held every Tuesday from 12 noon to 5pm, depending on the agenda's length.

Council holds regular **Council Meetings**, general every three weeks, to conduct the ongoing business of the Council and unscheduled Meetings may also be held from time to time.

The incoming Council sets the schedule of Meetings and Briefings

Council Committees



Councillors may be appointed as members of our advisory committees, which play an important role in the governance, decision making and community participation in the municipality. Nominations for Councillor representation on various committees and advisory groups occur annually.

Council's advisory committees currently consist of:

- Audit and Risk Committee
- Chief Executive Employment and Remuneration Committee
- Disability Advisory Committee
- Agriculture Sector Advisory Committee
- Economic Development Advisory Committee
- Livestock Exchange Consultative Committee
- Marina Consultative Committee

Support for Councillors



There is a range of support available to help make serving as a Councillor easier:

- Reimbursement for childcare
- Vehicle access to attend community events
- Financial support for training
- Reimbursement for travel expenses
- Laptops and mobile phones
- Support for people with a disability
- Administrative Support – diary management

Councillor Allowances



Councillors receive a yearly allowance. Paid fortnightly, it includes an amount equivalent to the Superannuation Guarantee Contribution. The allowance is set each year by the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal.

Council's **Councillors Support and Expenses Policy** provides guidance to Councillors on:

1. allowances for the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and Councillors
2. the reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses incurred in the performance of official Council duties for the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Councillors, and members of delegated committees
3. Councillor support to enable the performance of their official Council duties

Some advice from our outgoing Councillors

- Turn up to as many events as possible. The impact and expectation of attendance is profound and unexpected.
- Read all the notes and agendas.
- Be familiar with the key strategic documents and refer to them often.
- Talk to and understand other Councillor's views on subjects.
- Understand and use the budget process to see funding allocated where you feel it's needed.
- **Work hard and earn respect.**
- Create a schedule where you focus on Council time but then clock off otherwise it is 24/7.
- Turn up! People want to see and talk to their Councillors. If you say you will do something – do it. Listen to people, hear what they say and don't be so intent on giving them your thoughts that you alienate them.
- Cultural shift in the organisation starts at the Councillor group. This will be the yard stick of success.
- Take advantage of the Training available to new Councillors
- Understand the budget process
- **Enjoy the experience**



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During The Election Period

Election Period

- Council's Election Period Policy was adopted at the Ordinary Meeting on 30 April 2024 to ensure ethical, fair, and equitable conduct of general elections, with a focus on public perception.
- The Policy mandates compliance from all current Councillors, election candidates, the Chief Executive Officer, Delegated Committee Members, and Council staff during the Election Period, regardless of candidacy intentions.
- The Election Period, also known as caretaker mode, aims to prevent actions or decisions that could influence voters or significantly impact the incoming Council.
- For the 2024 General Election, the Election Period starts at 12.00 pm on Tuesday, 17 September 2024, and ends at 6.00 pm on Saturday, 26 October 2024.



Requesting Information



Equal Access to Information: All candidates must have equal access to information during the Election Period.

Information Request Register: A publicly available register will record all election-related and non-routine information requests. The register includes requests from Councillors and candidates, along with responses provided.

Access to the Register: Candidates can request a copy by contacting the Manager Governance via email: feedback@egipps.vic.gov.au.

Circulation of Responses: The Chief Executive Officer (or delegate) may circulate responses to all candidates as deemed necessary.

Election Campaign Donations



In accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* the Chief Executive Officer must:

- submit a report to the Minister specifying the names of the persons who were candidates in the election, and the names of those candidates who submitted an election campaign donation return; and
- make a summary of each election campaign donation return received available on Council's website until entitlement for the next general election; and
- ensure that a copy of an election campaign donation return is available for inspection for a period of four years from the date it is given.

Newly Elected Council

- **Welcome Pack:** You will receive a comprehensive welcome pack
- **Oath or Affirmation of Office:** Elected Councillors will take the oath or affirmation of office, with family and friends invited to attend
- **Mandatory Forms:** Councillors must submit Personal Interests Returns and election campaign donation forms



Councillor Induction Program



As required by the *Local Government Act 2020*, all candidates elected will be required to undertake mandatory induction training within four months of election, which is aimed at setting you up for success in the role of a Councillor.

- Introduction to key staff members and directorates
- Comprehensive induction program covering roles, responsibilities and Council operations
- Familiarisation with the meeting procedures, agendas and decision-making processes
- Understanding of long-term goals and priorities of Council



Questions

Buchan



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