



Murrindindi Shire Council

annual report 2005/06



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Photographs courtesy
Alexandra Camera Club

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about the report

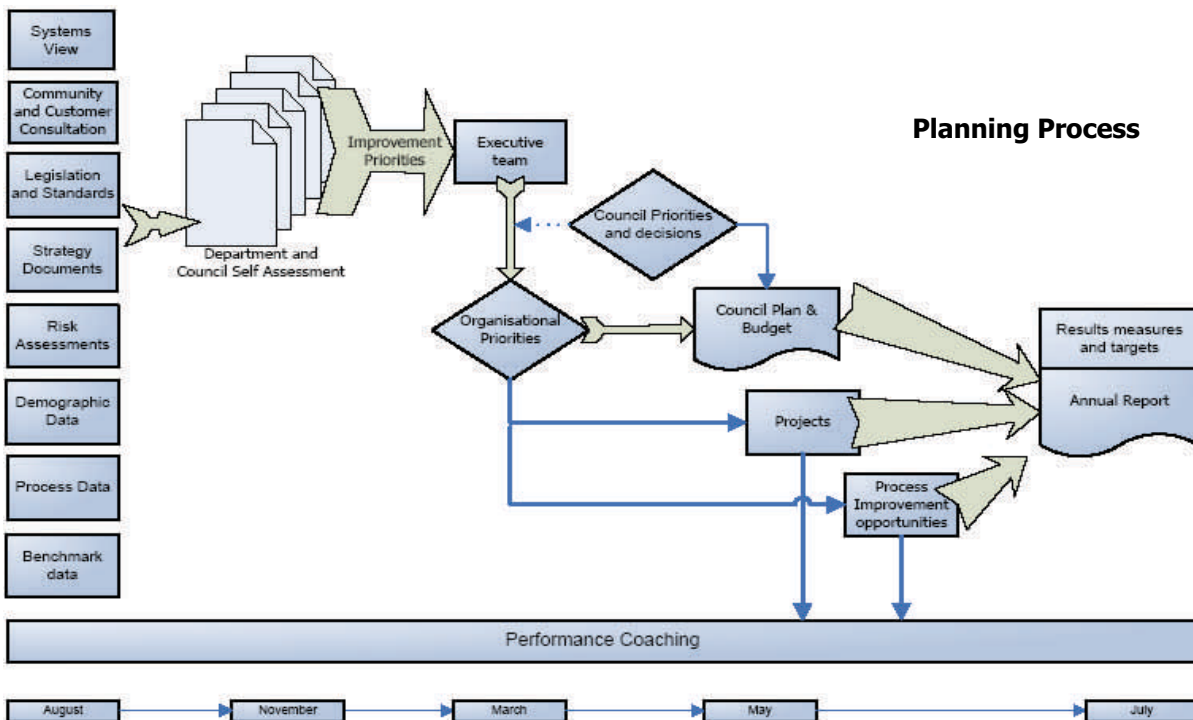
Welcome to the Murrindindi Shire Council Annual Report 2005/06.

The Annual Report is a key document in the annual cycle of review that the Murrindindi Shire Council uses to report back to the community about its performance and achievements for the previous financial year, in this instance 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006.

This report provides an opportunity to demonstrate Council's highlights and significant events and council achievements and potential areas for improvements. This document reports against the actions and initiatives as specified in the Council Plan 2004/05 to 2007/08 and the 2005/06 Annual Budget.

For the convenience of the reader the structure of this report uses the same five themes (Sustainable Growth & Development, Quality of Life, Infrastructure, Natural Beauty and Leadership) as were used in the Council Plan with the addition of a statutory-based governance and financial section.

The 2005/06 Annual Report covers the tenure of two different Councils. Council elections were held in November 2005 and resulted in four new Councillors being elected to the Murrindindi Shire Council.



what we do

Physical Services

Bridges, footpaths, kerb and channel –
design and construction
Drainage maintenance
Road line marking
Plant and equipment
Management of quarries
Parks and gardens
Street beautification and tree planting
Payment of street lighting
Maintenance of public buildings

Waste Management

Garbage collection
Kerbside recycling collection
Public toilets maintenance
Street cleaning
Tip/Landfill maintenance and development
Public bin collection

Planning & Environmental Services

Animal control
Building control
Building permits /inspections
Fire prevention
Food sampling
Health inspections
Local Law enforcement
Municipal Emergency Management
Pest control
Planning permits/inspections
Land use/land development and
subdivisions
Saleyard operations
School crossing supervision
Septic tank inspections
Traffic control

Economic Development & Tourism

Marketing
Strategic planning
Facilitating industry advice and assistance
Hosting of Murrindindi Business Awards
Hosting of Murrindindi Tourism Awards

Administration

Accounting
Corporate systems
Human resources
Information technology
Implementation of Freedom of
Information
Implementation /coordination of Privacy
legislation
Customer service
National Competition Policy
Payroll
Rate collection
Valuations and property

Community Services

Adult Day Care
Family Counselling
Family Day Care
Financial Counselling
Health Promotion
Home Care Service
Home Maintenance
Maternal and Child Health
Meals on Wheels
Playgroups
Pre-schools
Respite Care
Senior Citizens' Centres
Specific Home Care
Welfare counselling
Art show sponsorship
FReeZA Youth Concerts
Leisure centres
Library
Recreation areas
Swimming pools

what drives us

Values:

Integrity, Respect, Consistency, Trust

Mission:

The Murrindindi Shire Council will represent and balance the interests of individuals, its diverse communities, visitors and investors to promote sustainable growth and well-being without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Key Themes:

1. Sustainable Growth and Development

- To generate prosperity, employment and strategic population growth
- To stimulate viable and sustainable investment
- To be a financially-sound organisation

2. Quality of Life

- To support and grow our diverse and vibrant communities so that they enjoy high levels of health, well-being, harmony, safety and lifestyle
- To be an employer of choice

3. Infrastructure

- To protect and enhance the community's physical assets for current and future generations in a sustainable manner

4. Natural Beauty

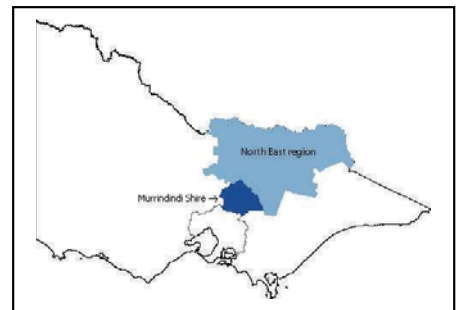
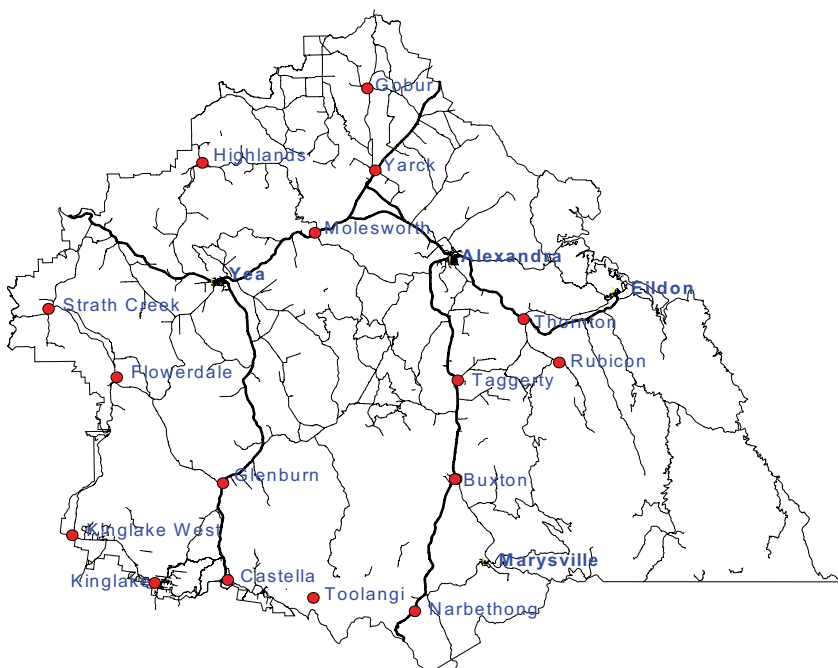
- To ensure the unique and natural beauty of the Murrindindi environment and its natural environmental systems are not compromised for future generations
- To strive for a safe and clean environment

5. Leadership

- Through the process of good governance, provide and develop community leadership
- Deliver Council's corporate and community objectives to the highest possible standard
- To be a community and customer focused organisation
- To represent the interests of Murrindindi and its diverse communities

The previous Council developed a number of strategic indicators to measure performance against these themes. It is these indicators that are reported against throughout this report.

murrindindi community



Murrindindi is a 90-minute drive north-east from Melbourne.

The Shire spans 3,889 sq kms, 48% of which is crown land.

Natural attractions include an array of state forests, scenic reserves and Cathedral Range State Park. Lake Mountain Alpine Resort within the Yarra Ranges National Park, Lake Eildon National Park and Kinglake Ranges National Park also provide many outdoor leisure and recreational pursuits.

The Shire of Murrindindi was created on 18 November 1994 with the amalgamation of the former municipalities of Alexandra and Yea, and the consolidation of part of the former municipalities of Healesville, Broadford, Eltham, Whittlesea and Euroa. The current population is an estimated 14,000 people.

Welcoming towns, villages and hamlets are nestled amongst mountains, valleys, forests, lakes, rivers and sparkling streams and include:

Alexandra, Buxton, Castella, Eildon, Flowerdale, Glenburn, Gobur, Highlands, Homewood, Kinglake, Kinglake West, Limestone, Marysville, Molesworth, Narbethong, Rubicon, Strath Creek, Taggerty, Terip Terip, Thornton, Toolangi, Woodbourne, Yarck and Yea.

murrindindi community

Murrindindi's many communities have a common care for their environment, a strong sense of place and warm and welcoming hospitality, yet each is unique with its own individual character.

The major industries within the Shire are agriculture (beef and dairy cattle, lamb and wool growing, horticulture and aquaculture), forestry (hardwood and softwood), tourism and hospitality.

Other industries include manufacturing, education, health, and wholesale and retail trade. The agriculture, forestry and aquaculture sectors are the largest employers.

The township of Alexandra hosts the main Council Office, with joint shopfront and library facilities also located in Kinglake and Yea.

Fact: The Shire of Murrindindi produces an estimated 70% of the trout consumed in Australia.

SNAPSHOT STATISTICS

Total population (Department Victorian Communities):	14,033 people
Area:	3,889 sq kms
Total operating budget:	\$21,310,001
Total rate revenue:	\$9,296,577
Rateable properties:	9,029
Length of sealed local roads:	442kms
Length of unsealed local roads:	664kms
Industries:	Agriculture, forestry, hospitality, aquaculture, viticulture, tourism

t h e m a y o r

It is my pleasure, on behalf of council, to present the 2005/06 Annual Report. This report provides the progress of the themes contained in the Council Plan 2006-2010 and the achievements of a significant workload over the past financial year. The new Council, in partnership with the community, has set a number of new directions in the Council Plan. We will work together with the community towards these new goals.

NOVEMBER 2005 ELECTIONS

On the 26th of November, four out of six new Councillors were elected. We pass on our thanks to the previous Council and former Mayor, Cr Graeme Brown, for their contribution to the community.

The current Council has changed its meeting procedures. We still meet on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month at 1pm with two Ordinary meetings of Council per month rather than a Committee and a Council meeting. A portfolio system has been established instead of a Committee system taking away the need to have recommendations of committee approved at the following Council meeting.

MAJOR PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

Over \$5.2 million of capital works were completed for our communities during the past year.

A number of significant projects were completed including, the completion of Stage 2 of the Marysville Streetscape (*refer page 15*), the refurbishment of the Alexandra and Yea swimming pools and over \$1 million of road re-sheeting and resealing.

Council supports our many and varying industries through the Economic Development and Tourism Officers. Murrindindi Tourism Association restructured their management system last year, a milestone that will enhance tourism within our Shire.

The Jayco Herald Sun Tour, a professional cycling race, completed its stage 4 in Marysville in October 2005. The Shire received excellent television coverage displaying our natural beauty (*refer page 18*).

The Youth Strategy and Early Years Strategy, whilst not finally completed during the year, will assist Council in providing services to the young people of our Shire.

CONSULTATION WITH THE COMMUNITY

Council recognises the need to continually improve the way we work with and consult our communities. Council has adopted a Community Consultation Policy and Strategy providing a structure on how we will consult and work with our community in the future.

CONCLUSION

Council works for and on behalf of the community striving to achieve the goals outlined in the Council Plan and improve our overall performance. The Chief Executive Officer's report indicates whilst our overall performance was satisfactory over the past financial year, there are still opportunities for improvement.

Councillors and staff are committed to work together with our communities to achieve better levels of service and communication and to improve our community and staff satisfaction levels.



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Lyn Gunter'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written on a white background.

Cr Lyn Gunter, Mayor

the chief executive officer

The Mayor and Chief Executive Officer's message contained in the 2004/05 – 2007/08 Council Plan focussed on providing stronger links between the vision, goals and objectives of the Council Plan, Budget and Annual Report, improved accountability through the use of Key Performance Indicators, financial, community and environmental sustainability and long term viability.

This document reports our performance against these objectives. Our performance has generally improved however there are still some opportunities for further improvement.

Key areas of interest for the past year included:

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The five themes contained in the Council Plan, set out the objectives that guided our decision making. The indicators demonstrate whether we have met our targets.

There has been an improvement in our overall performance. Three key performance measures are:

Council Plan Performance - 77%

Page 44 of the report sets out the 123 activities or initiatives that the Council wished to achieve in 2005/06. 77% were completed by the 30 June 2006 and several key projects were completed shortly after the year end. Shortages in engineering staff and delays in planning scheme amendment processes impacted on our ability to finish off some projects.

I am proud of the staff's effort in pursuing an ambitious workload for the year.

Increase in staff satisfaction – 66%

It was particularly pleasing that the measure of staff satisfaction rose again this year. The overall score now places the satisfaction of Murrindindi Shire Council staff in the top 50% of all businesses surveyed.

Community satisfaction down – 62%

The overall Community satisfaction score of 62, down from 64 in the previous year, was a disappointment and will be addressed through the new Council Plan 2006 – 2010. A greater focus will be given to the appearance of public areas, recreational facilities, enforcement of by laws, economic development and town planning.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

Wind storms

August 2005 saw a significant storm event that affected much of the Shire and in particular Buxton, Marysville and Yea. We thank the Council and State Emergency Service crews that worked tirelessly to enable the community to get back to normal so quickly. Refer page 17

Bushfires

In January fires threatened Kinglake, Glenburn, Yea and Highlands. In the subsequent weeks the community's anxiety was also heightened with further fire breakouts. The State Government has assisted the shire recover financially from the fires. The Bushfire Recovery Committee has also been instrumental in addressing the long recovery for many in our communities. Refer page 16



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "D. Hogan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Danny Hogan
Chief Executive Officer

Commonwealth Games

On a brighter note, the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games preparations saw the Queen's Baton Relay visit the Shire on 21 February 2006 and provided an opportunity for many community activities. The Shire's adopted teams of Antigua and Barbuda, Turks and Caicos and the British Virgin Islands provided several opportunities for cultural exchanges.

The highlight in the lead up to the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games was the willingness of the Murrindindi communities to be involved and the enthusiasm shown by so many, from the aged to the young. It was truly a community event. *Refer page 17*

INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

Investing adequately in the renewal of our infrastructure assets is a continuing focus for Council. Statewide surveys show a significant gap between what councils should be spending on their assets and what they are actually investing. The Council's current gap of around \$1.2 million will be reduced to less than \$500,000 by 2010 based on the recently adopted Road and Bridge Construction Strategy 2006.

TOWN PLANNING

Our proximity to Melbourne and the attractiveness of the Shire as a lifestyle destination continues to place pressure on land use planning. The Rural Residential Study will now provide opportunities for rural living around several main towns.

Discussions regarding the introduction of the Farm Zones were often contentious in the rural community and resulted in Council deciding to directly translate.

INTERNAL AUDIT

The Internal Audit Committee provides an independent review of the Council's operations. During the year, projects on pecuniary interest and insurances were completed. A project on financial sustainability was not finalised by 30 June but will provide a sound basis for ongoing discussions in 2006/07.

FINANCIAL POSITION

The financial statements reflect a positive outcome for the 2005/06 financial year with Council demonstrating an ability to meet operational expenses, statutory requirements and its commitment to achieving the goals as set by the Council Plan and its long term Strategic Resource Plan. At the end of the reporting period Council has maintained the level of cash required to meet its commitments.

The ongoing adoption of the Australian equivalent to International Financial Reporting Standards (AIFRS) has caused a significant adjustment to the 2005 comparatives and the 2006 non current assets. This is reflected in the recognition of a provision for landfill rehabilitation, changes to the accounting treatment for our assets and the recognition of drainage assets not previously recorded. These recognitions do not affect cash balances but significantly increase the Income Statement Surplus and the Balance Sheet outcome. These adjustments are also clearly demonstrated in the Statement of Changes in Equity.

Council experienced a large increase in grants from State and Federal Government in the 2005/06 financial year. These include funds for storm and fire events during the year and advance payments under the Roads to Recovery program and the Yea Children's Precinct Project.

The Council has faced some challenges over the past few years with the changes in legislation, the need to financially back provisions for employee benefits and provisions for landfill as well as endeavouring to commit to a substantial focus on closing the infrastructure gap and enhancing its asset base.

The 2005/06 financial reports indicate that we can continue to proceed with the directions set out in the long term strategic resource plan and the supporting 2006/07 Budget document.

LOOKING FORWARD

My congratulations go to the councillors elected at the November 2005 Election. The new Council has completed its Council Plan 2006 –2010 and I am confident the objectives and strategies contained within the key themes of:

- Environment
- Community
- Infrastructure
- Local Economy and
- Governance,

will enable the organisation to grow stronger and continue to report on its performance to the community.

We are financially sound and our skilled and experienced staff will ensure we continue to deliver high quality services and projects to the communities of the Murrindindi Shire.

2 0 0 5 / 0 6 s u m m a r y

Theme 1: Sustainable Growth & Development

Business Week

Murrindindi Business Week held in October 2005, was highly successful and well attended by businesses with a vast program of events including business breakfasts, business development seminars and a business expo. *Further detail page 14*

Demand Study

The Murrindindi High Priority Training Demand Study is the result of a partnership between the Office of Training & Tertiary Education, the Murrindindi Shire Council Economic Development Unit and the Board of the Central Ranges Local Learning and Employment Network. The primary challenge was to identify training and skills needs to be aggregated across all industries for the Shire as a whole, to ensure that on-going and cost effective training can occur. The study involved input from all key sectors of the local economy including, but not limited to, agriculture, aquaculture, tourism, retail, forestry, health, education, construction and transport. The final report is available on Council's website.

Murrindindi Regional Tourism Association Committee Restructure

The Murrindindi Regional Tourism Association went through a significant restructure during the year, with the assistance of Council officers, enabling it to be more effective as the peak tourism body for the Murrindindi Shire. *Further detail page 14*

Rural Living and Low Density Residential Zoned Land

Implementation of the Rural Residential Study, Murrindindi Shire, March 2004, introduced Rural Living and Low Density Residential rezoning and other scheme changes in Alexandra, Buxton, Eildon, Marysville, Yarck and Yea.

Alexandra Urban Design Framework

The Alexandra Urban Design Framework 2006 was prepared and adopted to guide future land use and development in the township of Alexandra.

Provincial Victoria Marketing Campaign

The local "Live, Work and Invest" campaign, resulted in a number of promotional opportunities for the Shire. *Further detail page 23*

Broadband Broker Project

The successful collaboration between the Central Ranges Local Learning Employment Network and Macedon, Mitchell and Murrindindi Shire Councils led to the identification of broadband demand amongst more than 1,000 businesses and residents. This culminated in two wireless service providers investigating the establishment and provision of broadband services in the Shire.

Improved Tourism Industry Communications

Tourism and Economic Development Officers developed a new Murrindindi Tourism and Business Matters Newsletter to improve information exchange amongst the tourism and other industry sectors across the Shire. Two editions were distributed during the year.

Theme 2: Quality of Life

SunSmart Rural Shade Award

In February the Council was notified that it had been awarded the SunSmart Rural Shade Award 2006 for the best shade structure /design (built or natural) in rural Victoria. The award was made in recognition of the outstanding efforts made by the Council in the development, design and construction of shade provision at Yea and Alexandra swimming pools. *Further detail page 15*

Immunisation

Council's maternal and child health nurses have continued to administer vaccines. A successful media campaign has led to an increase in the total number of childhood immunisations across Murrindindi in 2005/06. *Further detail page 28*

Septic tank monitoring

The Council has been instrumental in developing a regional approach and support for a compliance-monitoring program for councils. Sixteen councils have now joined a special interest group, which is seeking funding support to develop this initiative. The goal of the project is to develop and trial a best practice management model for undertaking compliance monitoring and information management of septic tank systems by councils. *Further detail page 30*

Yea Children's Precinct Project

Council officers worked in partnership with the Yea Children's Centre Steering Committee to prepare and finalise detailed project plans and estimates. A joint application submitted to the Department of Human Services for a capital grant of \$250,000 was successful. It is anticipated that the building works will commence in October 2006 and be finished in February 2007. *Further detail page 29*

Recreation Reserves Overall Plans of Development

The Recreation Reserves Overall Development Plans for Kinglake/Kinglake West, Yea, Alexandra and Thornton were developed in collaboration with the community. The draft reports are currently available for public consultation. *Further detail page 28*

Rail Trail

Tourism officers completed the Concept Design and Business Plan Project and produced a branding strategy for the Rail Trail in collaboration with the Mitchell and Mansfield Shire Councils. Council agreed to establish an advisory committee to develop implementation plans.

Murrindindi Inclusiveness Planning Project

An application for funding has been submitted to the Department of Victorian Communities under its Local Area Planning Support Program to employ a consultant to develop a comprehensive report and training package to ensure that all people are able to gain access to the infrastructure across the five major towns in Murrindindi.

Youth Charter and Youth Strategy

The purpose of the strategy is to provide guidance to the Council about how to ensure the views of the young people are not only heard but are included in decision-making processes. As at the year's end, the strategy was being developed by the consultants for presentation to Council in the 2006/07 year. *Further detail page 28*

Early Years Strategy

Adopted by Council in early July 2006, the Early Years Strategy sets out the Council's key commitments to children aged 0-8years old. *Further detail page 29*

Theme 3: Infrastructure

Marysville Streetscape – Stage 2

Civil works and hard landscaping associated with the Marysville Streetscape - Stage 2 project in Murchison Street, Marysville have been completed with outstanding results. Planting of the streetscape is scheduled for Spring 2006. *Further detail page 15*

Marysville Stormwater Strategy

The Marysville Stormwater Strategy was received by the Council in June 2006, and sets out the priority works required at the following locations:

- Gould Subdivision
- Allison Street
- Sedgwick Street and Pack Road
- Lyell Street and Pack Road
- Kings Road, and
- Lyell Street and Sedgwick Street.

Approximately \$785,000 will need to be invested in infrastructure treatments at the above locations to address stormwater improvements as funding opportunities become available.

Road and Bridge Strategy 2006

The strategic approach to road and bridge construction commenced in 2001. Since that time the Council has set five year plans that have the purpose of guiding the Council's capital expenditure on roads and bridges having regard to legislative requirements such as the Road Management Act, asset conditions rating recorded through the Maloney asset data base, cyclical inspections and customer requests and taking advantage of external funding programs such as the Roads to Recovery Program.

The council's policy statement of September 2003 establishes that where feasible council will renew existing assets rather than replace them.

Through the 2006 Strategy in excess of \$3.2 million will be spent on the renewal of bridges, stormwater and roads as well as new and upgrade projects. This will reduce the gap between what has to be spent to maintain Council assets and what is actually spent. As at the end of the reporting period this was \$1,170,000 per annum: it is expected to be less than \$500,000 per annum in 2010.

Theme 4: Natural Beauty

Heritage Study

Stage 1 of the Murrindindi Heritage Study is nearing completion. Stage 1 comprises a thematic history that provides an explanation of the themes and activities that have been important in shaping the present day Murrindindi Shire.

Yea Wetlands Award / Interpretive Centre

The Yea Wetlands Committee of Management, a delegated committee of council under section 86 of the Local Government Act, received a national award of recognition in June 2006 for its environmental works undertaken to enhance the Yea Wetlands. The Award was conferred by the United Nations Association of Australia as part of its World Environment Day Award Program under the 'best community based environment project' category.

The Committee of volunteers has been very active in restoring and developing the Yea Wetlands for the benefits of the environment, the local community and visitors. During the year the Committee completed a Business Plan for the development of a \$2 million environmental education and visitor centre. Council has supported the project in-principle subject to further work on its financial viability.

Theme 5: Leadership

November Elections

The 26 November 2005 postal vote election was successfully conducted by the Victorian Electoral Commission with four new councillors being elected. *Further detail page 51*

Councillor Code of Conduct

On 16 May 2006 the Council adopted a Councillor Code of Conduct. The Code sets out principles of behaviour for councillors incorporating conflict of interest procedures, dispute resolution procedures, caretaker procedures and electoral issues. *Further detail page 41*

New meeting / portfolio structure

The new Council introduced a new meeting structure. Portfolio responsibilities replace the previous committee structure. From 1 June 2006 Council meetings will be held fortnightly, on the first and third Tuesdays of each month. *Further detail page 53*

Business Excellence

The Business Excellence Program (continuous improvement) continued to be rolled out across the organisation.

Community Consultation Strategy

The Council adopted a Community Consultation Policy and Strategy to improve way in which it consults with its various communities.

Significant input was received from the Community, Council Officers and Councillors to develop the strategy.

Ongoing training of officers and councillors in its use will occur during 2006/07.

Business Week

Murrindindi's inaugural Murrindindi Business Week "and a half" was held between 10 and 19 October 2005 with great success. Nine events were held at various venues across the Shire winding up with the Murrindindi Business Services Expo at the Yea Shire Hall and the 2005 Murrindindi Regional Tourism Awards.



Council would like to acknowledge fellow sponsors of the event including AusIndustry, Regional Development Victoria, Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development and the Municipal Association of Victoria. Local businesses and associations also offered enthusiastic assistance and support.

The key theme was "Don't just work in your business – work on your business".

Business Week was developed by the Council's Tourism and Economic Development Department. Designed around a number of guest speakers, workshops and seminars, the week aimed to:

- Provide training opportunities for business people to extend current skills and knowledge
- Further develop and fine tune the effectiveness of local boards and committees
- Facilitate business people to generate ideas in order to grow their business
- Facilitate business people to seek clarity around local government and other regulations as they relate to business
- Encourage networking for business people throughout the Shire of Murrindindi

Pleased with its success Council will host Business Week again in 2007/08.

Murrindindi Regional Tourism Association Committee Restructure

Developing a new look for Murrindindi Regional Tourism Association (MRTA) was a milestone and an exciting new beginning for the MRTA and all Murrindindi Local and Industry Sector Tourism Associations (LISTA) which will enhance communications between all of the key stakeholders and strengthen LISTA membership benefits.

With strong Tourism Alliance Victoria support, the restructure stemmed from an extensive consultation process with the tourism industry, which identified three key values:

- The need for a clear vision
- A cooperative approach to marketing Murrindindi
- The need to pool resources in order to achieve results



SunSmart Rural Shade Award

Murrindindi Shire Council won the SunSmart Shade Award for the best shade structure/ design (built or natural) in rural Victoria.

The SunSmart Shade Awards aim to increase understanding of the importance of shade and to encourage Local Government to consider shade in urban planning and design. The Council plays a key role in providing the community with public places, facilities and services that provide protection from the sun to reduce the risk of skin cancer. Shade provision is an essential component of healthy urban planning and the built environment.



As a result of its win, Council is now represented on the Local Government Shade Reference Group and staff have access to WebShade, a new subscription-based software program that assists local government to assess, plan and design effective shade.

Provision of additional shade figured prominently in the facility upgrade works at the Alexandra and Yea swimming pools. The pool redevelopment works cost in excess of \$800,000, of which the Victorian Government's Better Pools Program contributed \$400,000.

The award acknowledges the Council's investment in the health and well-being of the Murrindindi community.

Marysville Streetscape – Stage 2

Stage 1 works of the streetscape were constructed during 2004/05 at a cost of \$551,000 and included the landscaping of the North side of Murchison Street between Darwin Street and Pack Road and an off road carpark.

Stage 2 works on Murchison Street, Marysville commenced in October 2005 with the majority of works completed by March 2006, prior to the Melbourne Commonwealth Games and the arrival of the baton relay.

The Marysville retail precinct continues to be revitalised as part of the Victorian State Government's Living Regions Suburbs Program (\$350,000) and the on-going financial commitment of the Council (\$340,000) to the project. The Murchison Street works included stone boulder retaining walls, asphaltting, paving and lighting to complement the 2003/04 Stage 1 works. Planting will be completed in Spring 2006.

The 2006/07 Budget provides \$150,000 for the drainage works to complete this project, which has beautified the main street of Marysville and enhanced it as a tourist destination.

Significant consultation with, and involvement by, local traders and residents minimised disruption and maximised community ownership.



2005/06 highlights



Natural Disasters

BUSHFIRES IN MURRINDINDI

In January and February 2006, the communities of Highlands, Yea, Kinglake, Glenburn and Limestone experienced bushfires. A total of 8,500 hectares was burnt, comprising farmland, crops and state forest. On Sunday 22 January, the 'Melba' fire burnt to within metres of the edge of the Yea township, whilst on Australia Day, the residential communities of Westbridge and Kinglake were under threat from a fire burning out of control in the Kinglake National Park.

Relief centres were set up on several occasions in January and February to respond to other fire events. A heartfelt thank you goes to the Country Fire Authority, Red Cross, Department of Sustainability and Environment and Parks Victoria fire fighters, police and volunteers who responded to the events. Thank you also to the City of Whittlesea who provided relief centres for Murrindindi residents at the height of the Kinglake fires.

One fatality occurred when a fire tanker overturned at Highlands, and five people were hospitalised with injuries sustained whilst fighting the fires. Despite the extreme weather conditions, no homes were lost, although many residential communities were under direct threat for a number of days. Overall, losses included 99 head of cattle and 2,100 sheep, 800 kilometres of fencing, sheds and cattle yards, hay, damage to crops, and reports of loss of income from local businesses and community organisations due to reduced visitor numbers to the area.

The Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre (MECC) was set up for the first time in the purpose-built meeting room at Council's Alexandra Office and operated for 5 days to assist control agencies as well as various elements of the community. Council's Municipal Emergency Response Officer and his deputies provided a coordinated response to the bushfires.

The fires and fire breaks caused significant damage to private property and council owned infrastructure. Council officers and consulting engineers coordinated significant rehabilitation works. Work began immediately to restore containment lines and fences on public and private property with this work, eventually totalling \$140,640, to be claimed from the Victorian State Disaster Relief Fund.

The Murrindindi Bushfire Recovery Committee was formed in early February with representation from Department Human Services, Regional Development Victoria, Department of Victorian Communities, Department of Primary Industries, Country Fire Authority, Department of Sustainability and Environment, Familycare, Berry Street Victoria, Murrindindi Council and local communities. A \$40,000 grant was received from the Department of Human Services for the recovery process, including the employment of the Community Development Officer to work with the fire-affected communities.

The Committee has continued to meet regularly to coordinate the recovery process, examine issues identified at post-fire briefings, develop recommendations about state and local bushfire processes and coordinate recovery events. Community education was identified as a major focus and this inspired the photographic display "Where There's Smoke..." comprising over 165 photographs, from the community, of their experiences during the fires. The collection has been on permanent display and has visited more than ten locations across the shire. Promotion of the Country Fire Authority's Community Fireguard program has been another strategy, with information sessions and new Fireguard groups being formed in Yea, Glenburn and Kinglake.

In May 2006, the Hon. John Pandazopoulos, Minister for Tourism, announced a grant of \$70,000 to assist regional and local tourism initiatives, particularly in the Kinglake Ranges, to offset the serious effect of the fires on the local tourism industry.

As the 2006/07 fire season approaches, the Murrindindi Bushfire Recovery Committee will work to strengthen community resilience and preparedness with prevention the best way to offset the risk of bushfires in rural areas.

STORM DAMAGE

Severe storms and wind gusts swept across the Murrindindi Shire in late August 2005 causing significant damage to trees, roads and drainage infrastructure.

Work crews continue to clean up roadside tree debris prior to the 2006/07 declared fire danger period.

Whilst strong winds are not uncommon, wind speeds of up to 109km/hr are a rare event.

Council concentrated on opening affected roads. Council staff worked long, extended hours. The magnitude of the damage necessitated the efforts of many subcontractors as well as Council staff. The restoration works cost in excess of \$82,000 and Council was reimbursed by the Department of Treasury and Finance.

As part of the clean up project, the fallen/damaged trees that were removed from the road reserves were delivered to service clubs within the Shire. The timber was cut to suitable lengths for use as firewood. Berry Street Victoria worked with the service clubs and coordinated the distribution of the firewood to individuals and families in need during the winter months.

Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games

Queen's Baton Relay

The Relay visited Murrindindi on Tuesday 21 February (Day 28 of its Australian leg) and entered the Shire via the Black Spur. Runners carried the baton through the towns of Marysville, Buxton, Taggerty and Alexandra.

A street party celebration featuring a sausage sizzle, face painting and balloons, interviews with baton runners, a display of emergency vehicles and a performance by the Alexandra School Band was held in Perkins Street Alexandra.

The Queen's Baton Relay celebrations attracted strong support from a range of groups, organisations and individuals, and this support was pivotal to the event's success.

Community Involvement

Council's participation in the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games began in December 2004 with the allocation of adopted teams. Murrindindi Shire was given three Caribbean countries of Antigua and Barbuda, Turks and Caicos and the British Virgin Islands.



significant events

A number of very successful events were held to maximise Murrindindi's community involvement in the Games including:

- 'Caribbean Day' – West Indies v Victoria at Junction Oval
- Commemorative Cricket Match – Mayor's XI v Alexandra and Yea Secondary Schools (the schools won!)
- Warm Up For the Games Events – Eildon and Kinglake West
- Yea Mini Commonwealth Games
- Yea Wetlands Boardwalk Project
- Adopted Second Teams visits
- Colouring Competition
- Banner Competition

Jayco Herald Sun Tour

Stage 4, on Wednesday 12 October, was the longest stage at 172 kms. The stage commenced at Mitchelton Winery in Nagambie and finished outside the Cumberland in Murchison Street, Marysville at approximately 2.15pm.

The Herald Sun Tour is an annual, 7-day, professional cycling race, with 2005 being its 54th year.

Twenty professional, international cycling teams, each composed of eight riders completed the 2005 Tour. Ten countries were represented; Belgium, Canada, Estonia, France, Holland, Ireland, Japan, New Zealand, the United States of America and Australia.

The tour entered Murrindindi at Kerrisdale on the Goulburn Valley Highway and passed through Yea, Molesworth, Alexandra, Eildon, Thornton, Taggerty and Buxton to large groups of cheering spectators. A series of community activities including slow bike races, police speed checks for cyclists and a bike obstacle course took place in Marysville throughout the afternoon of the stage finish.

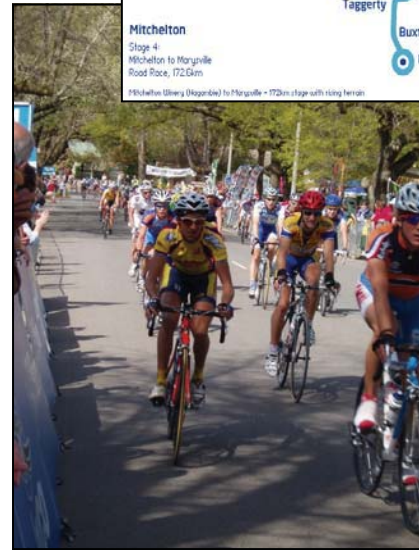
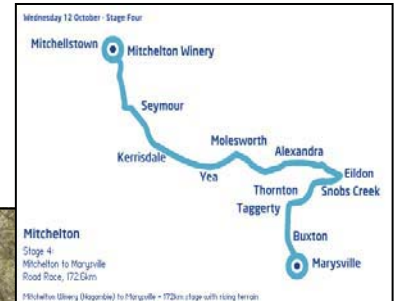
The shire received excellent television coverage on Channel 10's Sports Tonight and a promotional exhibition displaying all that Murrindindi has to offer was a significant part of the final stage in Lygon Street, Carlton.

Inaugural Porsche Lake Mountain Sprint

A very successful inaugural "Lake Mountain Sprint" was held at Lake Mountain, Marysville on the weekend of 27 and 28 May 2006. This tarmac Car Sprint was a 10km stage race that started at the resort ticket office and finished at Gerraty's in the village centre.

Competition started at 9.30am on the Saturday with two individual timed runs, followed by lunch and a further two runs in the afternoon. The same format was followed on the Sunday with a presentation function held in the new alpine visitor centre after the last run. The "Lake Mountain Sprint" is set to be expanded to two events per annum and become part of a series linked to the Mt Buller event.

For further information relating to future events at Lake Mountain, check out the web site www.lakemountainsprint.com.



h o w d i d w e p e r f o r m ?

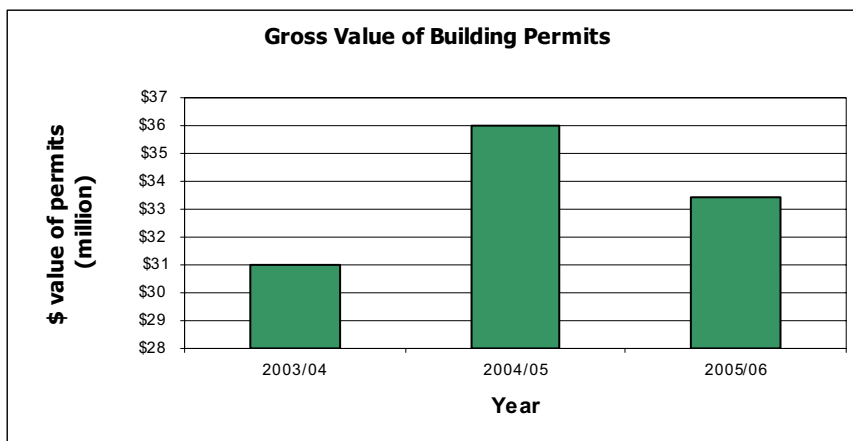




theme 1: sustainable growth & development

Strategic Objectives:

- To generate prosperity, employment and strategic population growth
- To stimulate viable and sustainable investment
- To be a financially sound organisation



Strategic Indicators:

1. Positive trend in the gross value of new building permits

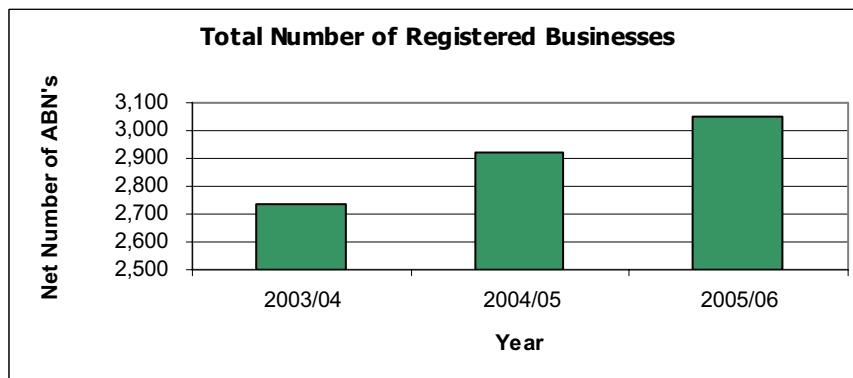
The spike in permit values for 2004/05 includes the completion of the Kinglake District Services Centre and Alexandra Library. Ignoring the 2004/05 figures the gross value of building permits increased from \$31 million 2003/04 to over \$33 million in 2005/ 06.

2. Positive trend in average weekly earnings per household

Data on the earnings per household is taken from the 2001 census data. Until new census data is available there is no change from the previous year. The bulk of households in the Shire earn between \$300 to \$1,499 per week.

3. Positive trend in the net number of businesses opening and closing in the Shire

This is the first year this data has been presented. There has been an increase in the net number of businesses registering Australian Business Numbers.



Implementation of New Rural Zones (Amendment C18)

Amendment C18 to the Murrindindi Planning Scheme addressed the direct translation of the rural and environmental rural zones to the farming and rural conservation zones. This is designed to protect the rights of farmers to farm and prevent ad hoc development in the farming zone.

A Ministerial amendment occurred which implemented the new Farm Zone via "direct translation".

A considerable amount of time and resources was committed to this process due to widespread community concern regarding these proposed zoning changes.

Rural Land Study

The Council committed to undertake a Rural Land Study to further consider the broader application and implications of the new Farm Zone, Rural Conservation Zone and Rural Activity Zone.

Implementation of the Kinglake/Flowerdale Integrated Strategy Plan (Amendment C12)

Implementation of Urban Design Frameworks for Eildon, Marysville And Yea

(Amendment C13)

Implementation of Urban Design Frameworks for Alexandra And Small Towns in Murrindindi Shire (Amendment C17)

Amendments C12, C13 and C17 are in their final stages and are all anticipated to be implemented into the Murrindindi Planning Scheme by December 2006. Extensive community consultation and independent planning panel hearings have contributed to time delays with these amendments.

Amendment C17 to the Murrindindi Planning Scheme is expected to be exhibited in September 2006. This will implement the Small Town Urban Design Frameworks for Buxton, Glenburn, Molesworth, Narbethong, Strath Creek, Taggerty, Thornton, Glenburn, Yarck and the Alexandra Urban Design Framework.

Amendment C13 to the Murrindindi Planning Scheme implements the Eildon Urban Design Framework, August 2003, Marysville Urban Design Framework, December 2001 and Yea Urban Design Framework, August 2003.

Amendment C12 to the Murrindindi Planning Scheme implements the Kinglake West, Pheasant Creek and Flowerdale sections of the Kinglake Flowerdale Integrated Strategy Plan, March 2003.

Murrindindi Training Demand Study

A joint project with the Central Ranges Local Learning and Employment Network (CRLLEN) was completed which profiles the training needs across the industries in the Macedon, Mitchell and Murrindindi Shires.

Industrial Land Developments

Solid progress has been made in both Yea and Alexandra industrial zones with development plans underway in both areas.

Streetlife Project

The Council continued to work co-operatively with the Mansfield Shire and the Upper Goulburn Food Wine and Culture Group to promote linkages between tourism and the promotion of regional food produce through the Streetlife Grant Project.

Business Assistance

With the appointment of the Business Services Officer for three days per week, assistance to individual businesses was greatly enhanced. This included the staging of five business development seminars and workshops across the Shire, the provision of approximately 35 New Business Start Up Kits and an increased capacity to respond to in excess of 20 requests for information, assistance or guidance.

Fraser Camping Ground

Council staff, in co-operation with Parks Victoria staff, facilitated a service improvement process involving a local consultation group to identify and prioritise key improvements to visitor services and visitor satisfaction at the camping ground. The key issues identified included: re-opening of the general store; rubbish collection point; campsite booking facilities; amenity cleaning.

Rail Trail

Tourism Officers successfully completed the Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail Concept Design and Business Plan project and produced a branding strategy for the Rail Trail in collaboration with the Mitchell and Mansfield Shire Councils.

Yea Wetlands Centre

The Council Tourism Officers assisted the Yea Wetlands Committee of Management to develop a business plan for an environmental education and interpretation centre at the Yea Wetlands.

Nature Based Accommodation Project

This important project moved further forward with funding being committed by Tourism Victoria for a feasibility study to be completed in 2006/07.

What could have gone better?

Review of the Murrindindi Planning Scheme Local Planning Policy Framework (Amendment C16)

The review of the Murrindindi Planning Scheme Planning Policy framework, exhibited in 2005 received 93 submissions of which 91 were in the form of an objection. The proposed amendments have never been formally considered and require further consideration in 2006/07.

Implementing the Rural Residential Study (Amendment C14)

The community consultation processes adopted by Council as part of the C14 Amendment to the Murrindindi Planning Scheme were heavily criticised by certain sections of the community, particularly residents from areas outside the main townships of the Shire (eg. rural areas around Glenburn). The concerns related to lack of adequate notification, the complexity of the information presented regarding the proposed re-zoning of land and the initial responses of council to requests to change the zoning proposals. These concerns led to the Council developing and adopting a new community consultation policy and strategy for the organisation.

Branding Strategy

The Council did not complete the development of a new branding strategy for the Shire during the year as intended. This was due in part to the need to delay the project during the year to enable the newly elected council to deal with more pressing issues following the council elections. In addition, community concerns were raised about the proposal to adopt a new logo for the Shire, as recommended in the strategy, with the Council requesting further community consultation before making a final decision on the matter.

Industrial Land Use

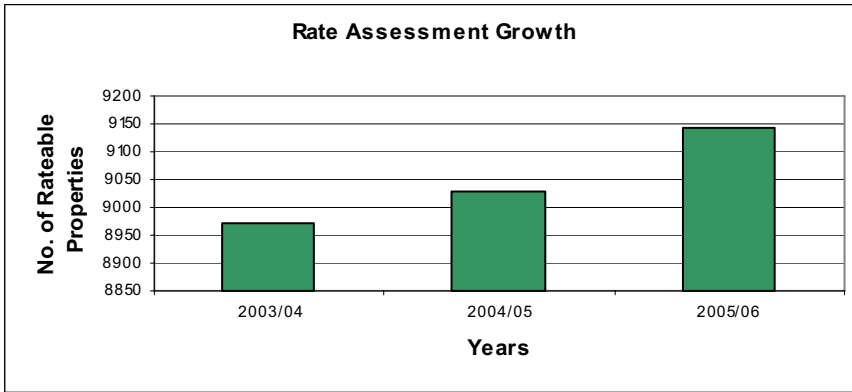
The use of a Development Plan Overlay in the industrial areas of Yea and Alexandra has not allowed any substantial redevelopment or expansion of these areas to occur since the introduction of the Murrindindi Planning Scheme in May 1999.

Lamont Street, Alexandra

The Lamont Street Development Plan was prepared and adopted by the Council in April 2006. The intention is to finalise the Lamont Street Development Plan by March 2007.

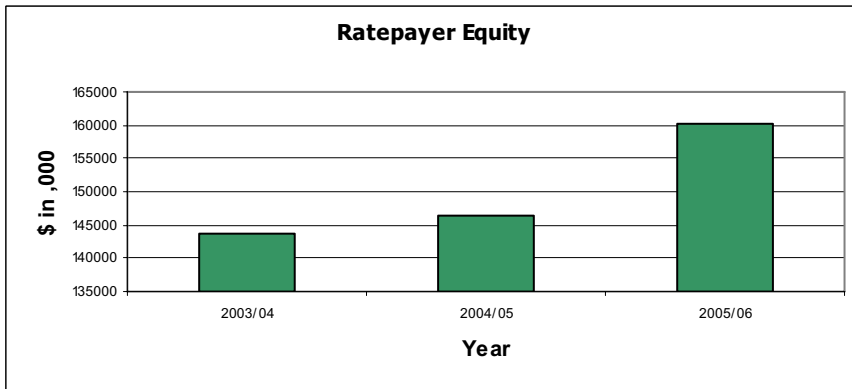
Development Plan - Yea

Preparation of a Development Plan to guide future industrial expansion in Yea has commenced and is expected to be completed by March 2007.



4. Rate assessment growth in excess of 1.3% per annum

The number of rateable properties within the Shire has continued to grow during 2005/06. The growth in the number of rateable assessments is currently tracking at 1% per annum.



5. Positive trend in ratepayer equity

There has been a strong growth in ratepayer's equity (net worth of the Council). This is reflected by the Council's significant investment in non current assets such as roads and bridges and by the revaluation of property plant and equipment that occurs on a cyclical basis.

What went well?

Alexandra Urban Design Framework

The Alexandra Urban Design Framework 2006 was prepared and adopted to guide future land use and development in the township of Alexandra.

Key directions set out in the strategy include parking, traffic management and tree planting.

Other Urban Design Frameworks have also been completed in recent years for the townships of Buxton, Glenburn, Molesworth, Narbethong, Strath Creek, Taggerty, Thornton, Glenburn, Yarck, Eildon, Yea and Marysville.

The Rural Residential Study (Amendment C14)

New areas of rural living and low density residential zoned land have been approved around many towns in the Shire which will meet the demand for properties situated on several acres of land. After a three-year study and planning scheme amendment process, the Minister for Planning has approved Amendment C14 to the Murrindindi Planning Scheme. The amendment provides for new areas of low density residential zoned land at Alexandra, Yea and Buxton and new areas of rural living zoned land at Alexandra, Yea, Buxton, Eildon, Marysville and Yarck. The approval of this amendment is a result of an extensive community led process to consider a sustainable future for many towns in Murrindindi Shire. New areas of low density residential and rural living zones will help build sustainable communities and provide a range of new lot areas that do not exist in these townships at present.

Although the study and amendment originally included rezoning at Glenburn, Taggerty and the Limestone Road area near Yea, the Council has responded to community concerns expressed about these areas by removing them from the proposed rezoning areas.

Broadband Broker Project

The successful collaboration between the Central Ranges Local Learning Employment Network (CRLLEN) and Macedon, Mitchell and Murrindindi Shire Councils led to the identification of broadband demand amongst more than 1000 businesses and residents, which culminated in two wireless service providers investigating the establishment of broadband services in the Shire.

Regulation Reduction Demonstration Project

This federal government grant-funded project has successfully completed in collaboration with seven other Victorian councils involving the establishment of on-line information and council permit application processes to specifically assist small business.

Provincial Victoria Marketing Campaign

The local "Live, Work and Invest" campaign, resulted in a number of promotional opportunities for the Shire including:

- An estimated \$251,979 of editorials (at no cost to the Council) profiling Murrindindi in print media such as the Herald Sun, The Age and Country Style Magazine as well as Radio coverage on the ABC.
- A Goulburn River and Ranges fact sheet/regional profile pamphlet has been produced and is distributed through real estate agents and visitor information centres.
- A four-page lift out emphasising lifestyle based career changes has been distributed across Australia in the Local Government Focus Newspaper and locally through the visitor information centres and real estate agents.

Murrindindi Regional Tourism Awards

The 10th Anniversary of the Murrindindi Regional Tourism Awards was successfully held at Marysville with two award recipients from Murrindindi progressing on to win their categories in the State Awards Program.

Strengthening Visitor Information Centres

The Visitor Information Centre Co-coordinators' Network was further developed and the inaugural Visitor Information Centre Volunteer Summit was held in November that was very well attended with 73 volunteers from across the shire participating on the day.

Tourism Signage Audit

An audit of tourism signage within the Shire was undertaken during the year. This will form the basis of the development of a signage strategy for the region to improve visitor information services.

Improved Industry Communications

Tourism and Economic Development Officers developed a new Murrindindi Tourism and Business Matters Newsletter to improve information exchange amongst the tourism and other industry sectors across the Shire. Two editions were completed during the year and distributed to a subscribers list in excess of 400.

Cooperative Marketing Initiatives

The Murrindindi Regional Tourism Association Marketing Committee in conjunction with the Tourism Unit successfully implemented a range of local and regional marketing and promotional activities throughout the year including participation in co-operative campaigns with Destination Yarra Valley Dandenong Ranges and North East Victoria Tourism.

Tourism Festival and Events Grants Program

Six local tourism events were funded through this council grants program to assist the event organisers to plan, develop, promote and stage their festival or event. The total amount distributed to the events was \$5,750.

Murrindindi Calendar of Events Brochure

This new production, which promotes, free of charge, the diverse range of events within the Shire, has received excellent support. It is distributed from several locations outside the region, such as at the Melbourne Visitor Information Centre at Federation Square and surrounding Visitor Information Centres including Healesville and Mansfield.

Kinglake Wastewater Project

An application for funding through the Victorian Water Trust was made to undertake the Kinglake Innovative Wastewater Project. This will establish an innovative demonstration project showing how to provide water and sewerage services to a small community in a more environmentally sustainable and cost effective way compared to conventional reticulated servicing approaches.

Yarra Valley Water has made the application as part of its drive to improve sustainable alternatives. The Council recognises that this project represents a unique opportunity to explore servicing options for Kinglake, whilst also acknowledging the broader application and benefits to the whole local government sector.

The progress of this project has taken longer than expected.

Business Attraction Incentives

The review of economic development policy relating to business attraction incentives was not undertaken during the year due to timing constraints.

Economic Profile and Prospectus

The development of an Economic Profile and Prospectus was deferred to the 2006/07 financial year pending completion of the Branding Strategy.

Tourism Induction Kit

This project was deferred to 2006/07 pending the outcomes of the Branding Strategy.

Tourism Events Facilitation Kit

This project was also deferred to 2006/07 due to resourcing constraints.

Memorandum of Understanding with the Murrindindi Regional Tourism Association

The revision of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Council and the Murrindindi Regional Tourism Association was not completed, due to the need to complete the MRTA re-structure as an initial step. As set out earlier the re-structure was completed.

Tourism Research

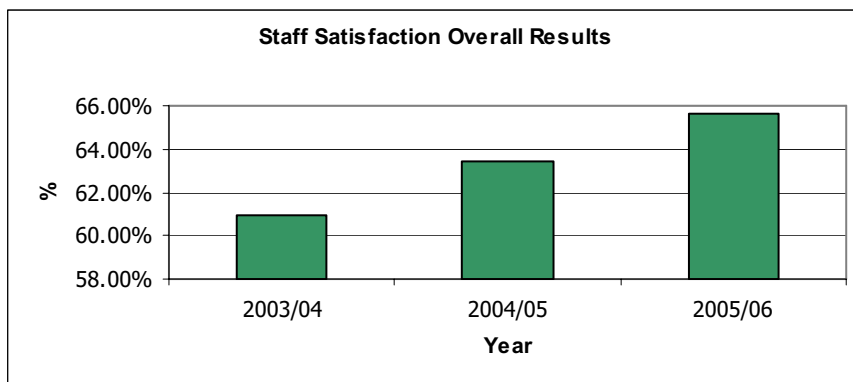
This project was not completed following a re-prioritisation of the work plan for the Tourism Unit during the year.



theme 2: quality of life

Strategic Objectives:

- To support and grow our diverse and vibrant communities so that they enjoy high levels of health, well-being, harmony, safety and lifestyle
- To be an employer of choice

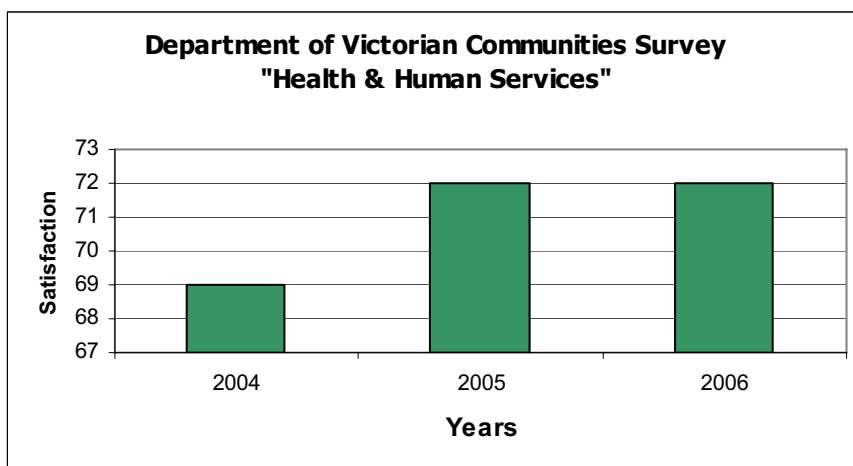


Strategic Indicators:

1. Positive trend in the staff satisfaction survey

The continued improvement in staff satisfaction reflects the benefits of the Council's business excellence program, staff coaching and a greater emphasis on staff well-being.

Staff satisfaction is further explored in the Governance section of this report on page 60.

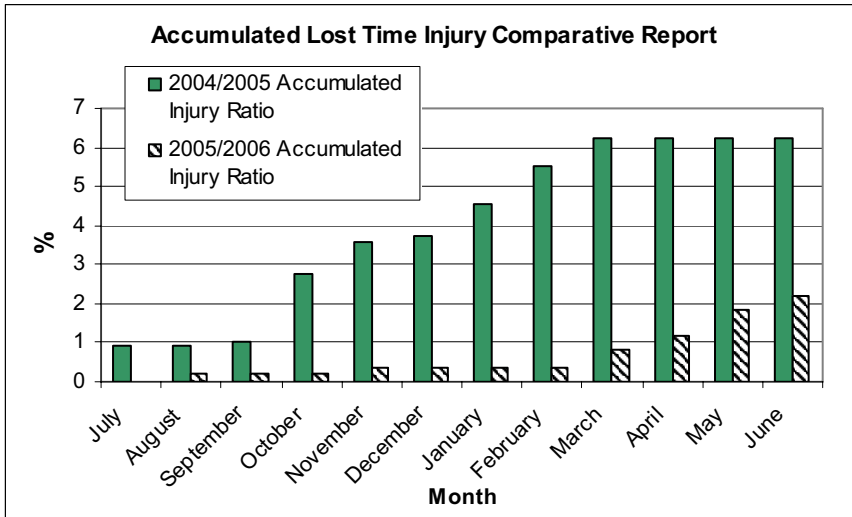


2. Positive trend in the Department of Victorian Communities indicator "Health and Human Services"

The community satisfaction rating for "Health and Human Services" remained the same as the previous year.

Suggested areas for improvement from those surveyed included a need for improved childcare, after school and holiday care services.

The rating was lower than other smaller shires and similar to the results for all the Councils in Victoria.



3. Positive trend in the accumulated lost time injury frequency rate

This chart records the accumulated percentage of time lost caused by injury compared to the total time worked by Council staff.

There has been a significant improvement during 2005/06. The Council's staff are to be commended for the good result. Council has invested significantly in occupational health and safety strategies that have attributed in part to this pleasing result.

In addition to the Council Plan measures set out above the Council considered the following additional performance reports.

4. Positive trend in Municipal Public Health Plan measures

The evaluation of the Murrindindi Public Health Plan 2004 – 2007 measures is planned for the first quarter of 2006/07. The Plan contains a process of evaluation that covers actions for cardiovascular disease, mental health, community capacity building, access to information, immunisation, disability access and early years enhancement.

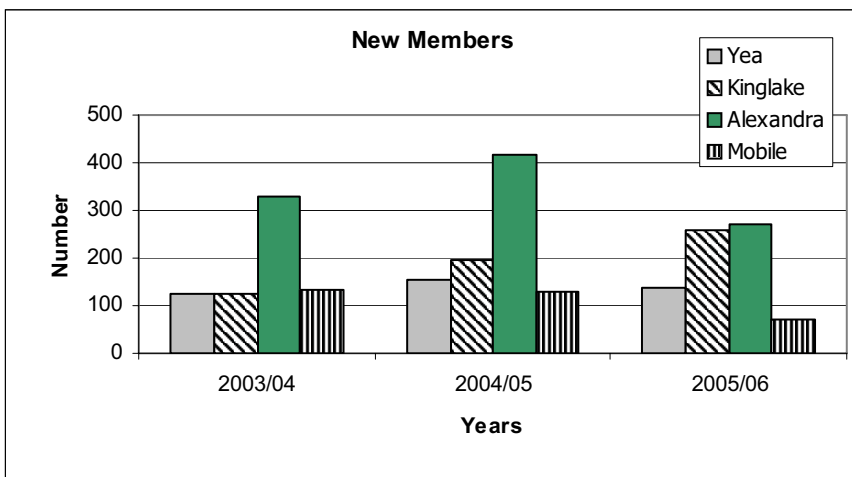
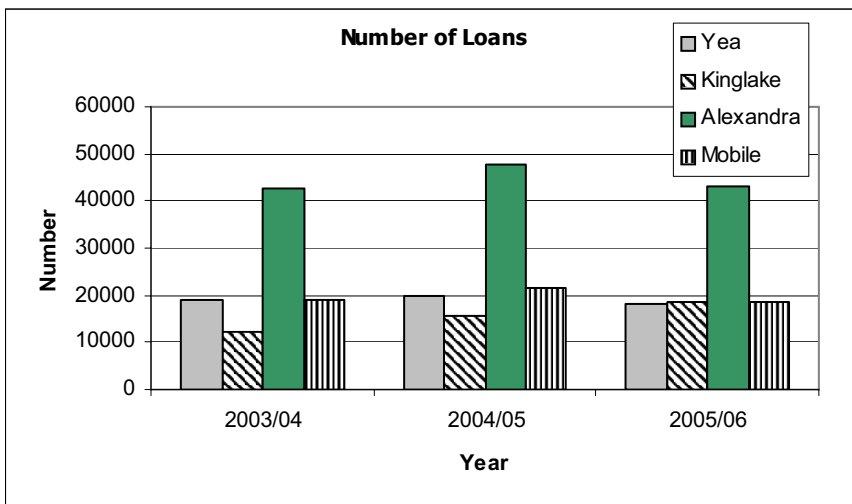
These measures were not implemented to enable reporting for 2005/06.

5. Library Statistics

The 2004/05 spike in the number of loans new members followed the opening of the new Kinglake District Services Centre and the refurbishment and expansion of the Alexandra Branch library.

Following these significant events, loans have decreased to 98,650 from a peak of 104,734, with the 2005/06 figure being 5,450 above the 2003/04 figure.

The Yea Library will be upgraded in the coming year.



What went well?

On-line Community Directory

The on-line Community Directory was regularly updated on the Council's website and further promoted through Hume Net, community networks and community organisations/groups.

Completion of Sport and Recreation Victoria Grant Funded Projects

The reconstruction of the netball court at Alexandra Showgrounds and Recreation Reserve was completed in March and opened in time for the 2006 netball season. Full credit goes to the Netball Club for their commitment to the project.

Swimming Pool Season

Nearly 37,000 people used Council's four swimming pools during the 2005/06 season up from 28,660 in the previous year. The season ended successfully with a "Monster Family Day" at Yea with pool inflatables and special events.

Recreation Reserves and Play Strategy

The community consultation on playground accessibility has resulted in plans being prepared for playgrounds in Rotary Park Alexandra, Alexandra Showground and Recreation Reserve, Jarara Centre Flowerdale and Railway Recreation Reserve, Yea. The upgrade of Rotary Park has commenced and will be completed August 2006. The remaining upgrades will be completed by December 2006.

The Recreation Reserves Overall Development Plans

A successful grant application to Sport and Recreation Victoria enabled Council to engage consultants Jeavons and Jeavons to prepare overall development plans for the Kinglake West Reserve, Kinglake Memorial Reserve, Yea Recreation Reserve, Alexandra Showgrounds and Thornton Recreation Reserve. The Plans set out future actions and concepts to ensure the reserves meet residents and users expectations. A reference group ensured common issues were identified and addressed. Council matched the State Government's \$15,000 grant. The draft is currently on public exhibition.

Immunisation

Council's Maternal and Child Health Nurses have continued to provide the service of administering vaccines. A successful media campaign has led to the continued increase in the total number of childhood immunisations across Murrindindi in 2005/06.

As reported in the Department of Human Services Bulletin the number of immunisations administered by Murrindindi Maternal and Child Health Nurses were:

12 to 15 month olds: 85-90% immunised
24 to 27 month olds: 85-90% immunised
72 to 75 month olds: 85-90% immunised

Total immunisations delivered by Council's Maternal and Child Health Nurses:

2003/04: 61 2004/05: 534 2005/06: 568

Development of Youth Charter and Youth Strategy

The planning and consultations for the Strategy commenced in February 2006. The resultant draft document, Recognition and Respect – A Strategy for Working with Young People 2006-2010, serves four main purposes:

- to provide a clear strategy for service provision to young people aged 12-24 years in Murrindindi Shire for the next four years
- to formulate a collaborative approach to planning
- to obtain formal commitment from key agencies to address identified issues and monitor the performance partners in relation to implementation of the Strategy and Youth Charter
- to inform funding bodies, community organisations and Council staff about the agreed principles and priorities that have been developed locally which will assist in meeting the needs of young people in the Shire.

The draft Youth Charter will provide guidance to the Council and its partners about how to ensure the views of young people are not only heard but are included in decision making processes.

The Youth Strategy and Youth Charter is likely to be available for public comment October 2006.

Early Years Policy and Early Years Strategy

The "Let's Build Together: Early Years Strategic Plan, 2006-2009" was adopted by the Council in July 2006. The Early Years Strategic Plan sets out the Council's key commitments to children aged 0-8 years within the Shire and provides a framework for the Council to work in partnership with the community, local service providers, and other levels of government in order to achieve the objectives of the strategy over the next three (3) years.

The draft Early Years Policy promotes an integrated approach to Council planning and acknowledges the Council's actions in the development and delivery of services for young children and their families will be guided by Community development principles.

Visiting Services at Kinglake District Services Centre

Collaboration with Kinglake Ranges Neighbourhood House and Plenty Valley Community Health resulted in a Women's Health Nurse providing a free service at the Kinglake District Service Centre one day a month. This service has been very successful and is fully subscribed.

Yea Children's Precinct Project

Council officers worked in partnership with the Yea Children's Centre Steering Committee to prepare and finalise detailed project plans and estimates. A joint application submitted to the Department of Human Services for a capital grant of \$250,000 was successful. It is anticipated that the building works will commence in October 2006 and be finished in February 2007.

Aged and Disability Unit

A marketing campaign raised awareness of the availability of personal care and respite care, resulting in all programs being fully utilised.

Kinglake Child Care Centre

During the year, the Centre's status as a Cancer Council Sunsmart Centre was confirmed and work is underway on accreditation with the Asthma Foundation as an "Asthma Friendly Children's Service".

In 2005/06 the Kinglake Child Care Centre delivered 66,131 hours of care for children aged from 12 weeks to 6 years. 138 children from 100 families residing along the Kinglake Ranges and neighbouring shire used the service.

Kinglake Child Care Centre staff undertook a range of professional development initiatives during the year, including workshops on Effective Communication with Parents, Creative Play, Manual Handling, Trust and Co-operation. Formal qualifications were achieved in Emergency Asthma Management, Food Safety and Food Safety for Supervisors.

Professional Development Community Services

Council's Home Care workers updated their professional knowledge and qualifications to enable older people and people with a disability to remain living at home for as long as possible. Of the 33 home care workers, 30 have completed their Certificate III in Home and Community Care and 15 have completed the Carer Education Work Training which is an accredited course provided through Alzheimer's Victoria. The remaining Care Workers have all completed Alzheimer's Victoria's three-hour course "Living with Dementia".

Family Day Care was successful with training carers and co-ordinating staff. Five carers graduated with a Certificate III in Community Services (Children's Services). In November a Registered Training Authority held a one-day carers conference in Child Protection and Communicating in Difficult Situations, with 100% attendance.

All community services staff have now received at least some training in Business Excellence.

Alexandra Swimming Pool

The upgrade of the outdoor pools was finalised late 2005 with work at the Alexandra pool.

Works costing \$757,000 included modifications to the main pool to provide a new 25 metre six lane pool, construction of a new larger program pool with beach entry and integrated toddlers pool, wet deck systems to all pools, new pipe work, balance tank and increased filtration plant and equipment.

Additionally, shade works were also completed at the Alexandra and Yea pools. The Council's award for innovative shade treatments is discussed on page 15 in this report. The total of the works was in excess of \$800,000 of which the Victorian Government's Better Pools Program provided \$400,000.

Domestic Wastewater Management Strategy

The draft Domestic Wastewater Management Strategy has been completed, however has not yet been considered or endorsed by the Council.

Murrindindi Shire Council has been instrumental in developing a compliance-monitoring program for Councils. Sixteen councils have now joined a special interest group, which is seeking funding support to further develop this initiative.

The goal of the project is to develop and trial a best practice management model for undertaking compliance monitoring and information management of septic tank systems by councils.

Eildon Fire Break

Grant funding was obtained through the Country Fire Authority Fire Access Road Subsidy Scheme to assist the Council in completing a major strategic firebreak on the north western side of the Eildon township.

Libraries

Libraries play an important role in developing and consolidating social capital in their communities.

People of all ages are making increasing use of the library facilities, particularly the new facilities at Kinglake and Alexandra.

There are few amenities in the community that offer this type of experience.

A wide-ranging program of events was offered across the three library branches in 2005/06, including:

- Writers on the Road
- Travelling Treasures: State Library of Victoria
- The teddy bear project
- Tuesday Show: Seeking Asylum
- Story times
- Friends of the Library meetings/events
- Pasta and performance evening
- Housebound delivery service

What could have gone better?

Alexandra Swimming Pool

While the upgrade and reconstruction works at the Alexandra Swimming Pool have been well received by the community, the commencement of the project was delayed due to an extended community consultation process and contract finalisation. The work was not finished in time for the scheduled opening of the swimming pool season; instead it opened on Christmas Eve 2005.

Training of Engineering, Building and Planning staff in Disability Legislation

This project has been deferred to 2006/07 and will be included in the planned inclusiveness and access audit by Access Audits Australia in conjunction with engineering and community services staff.

Scoping of a Policy for Aged Persons

This project has been deferred to early 2008 as a significant resource was applied to the Early Years Strategy and Youth Strategy.

Professional Training to be Early Years Sector

Due to limited resources within the Children's Services Section and the small number of kindergartens committed to implementing the Cluster Management Model, this action was not met.

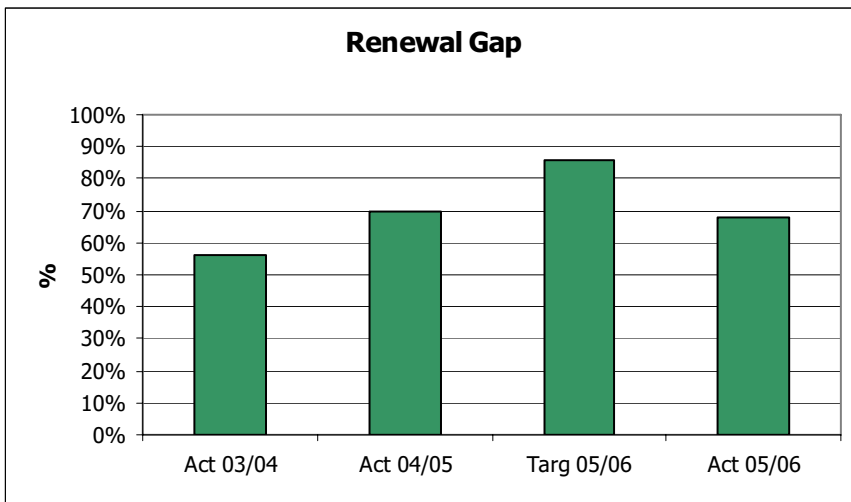
An increased allocation for an Early Years Development Officer should enable this action to be achieved in 2006/07.



theme 3: infrastructure

Strategic Objectives:

- To protect and enhance the community's physical assets for current and future generations in a sustainable manner

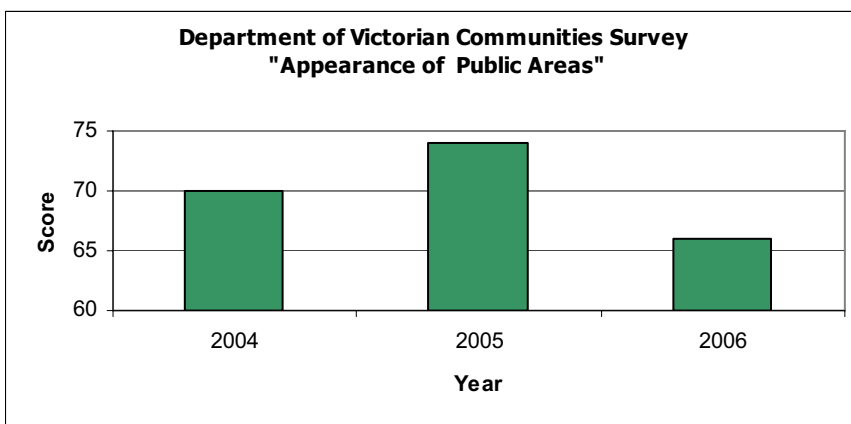


Strategic Indicators:

1. Positive trend in the Auditor General's Renewal Gap measure

The renewal gap is the difference between what Council would need to spend to restore its infrastructure assets as closely as possible to their original condition, and the actual expenditure.

The variation between the target and the actual figures for 2005/06 is attributed to certain capital works not being completed by 30 June 2006.



2. Positive trend in the Department of Victorian Communities indicator – "Appearance of Public Areas"

The significant reduction in the Community's satisfaction with the "Appearance of Public Areas" is disappointing.

The Council has recently allocated dedicated maintenance resources in each of the main towns across the Shire.

Survey comments suggest the community wants better street cleaning, better maintenance of parks and gardens and more frequent slashing and mowing.

What went well?

Road & Bridge Construction

The following road and bridge construction works were completed:

- Resheet and seal Kinglake Glenburn Road, Kinglake (1.6km),
- Pavement & seal widening on Top Road, Terip Terip (2.5km),
- Sealed road resealing program at a cost of \$458,600
- Gravel road resheeting program at a cost of \$695,600
- Replacement of bridge on Kerrs Road, Acheron
- Repair of foundations of Moores Bridge, Flowerdale
- Load capacity upgrade of Hazeldene Bridge

For a complete listing of capital work completed during 2005/06 refer to page 42.

Marysville Streetscape

All of the civil and hard landscaping works in Murchison Street, Marysville were completed as part of the Marysville Streetscape project at a cost of \$690,257.

Marysville Stormwater Strategy

The Marysville Stormwater Strategy, was completed for stormwater infrastructure in the Marysville township.

Road and Bridge Construction Strategy

The Council's Road and Bridge Construction Strategy, which establishes the medium term expenditure on the Council's road network, was completed and adopted. The Strategy sets out capital expenditure in excess of \$3.2 mill over the next three years in a bid to reduce the renewal gap on roads, bridges and stormwater infrastructure assets.

Eildon Lions Park

A sprinkler system was installed in the Eildon Lions Park thanks to the efforts of the Eildon Lions Club. Council officers provided project management assistance.

UT Creek

Bank stabilisation works were completed on the southern bank of UT Creek, Alexandra, east of Grant Street.

Murrindindi Construction

A business unit of the Council, Murrindindi Construction, carries out the delivery of maintenance and capital works, quarry operations and plant management. Murrindindi Construction also competes for tendered works in the private sector.

Murrindindi Construction contributed \$182,000 to council's revenue, of which \$133,000 was from tendered works.

Significant tendered works included the access road works for the Kinross Farm, Kinglake West and the reconstruction of 1.3km of the Longwood Ruffy Road for the Strathbogie Shire Council.

A number of major capital projects were successfully completed including:

- Top Road (2.5km of shoulder sealing)
- Kinglake-Glenburn Road (2km of resheeting and sealing)
- Completion of Stage 2 of the Marysville Streetscape works
- The Council's annual resheeting program was completed and included Larnoo Road, Old Toolangi Road, Cheviot Road, Crusoe Lane, Edwards Road, Macs Road and Carey Road

The management of the Council's public liability and maintenance issues on its road network received a boost with the purchase of the RoadAsyst software package late in 2005/06. Field staff have been trained and commenced an auditing program using Global Positioning System (GPS) technology on a six weekly basis. Defects identified are programmed for repair within timeframes nominated by the Council's Road Management Plan specification.

The introduction of the Suretrak programming system, together with the preparation of individual project management plans for major works has greatly assisted the timely completion of the Council's works program to the required standards.

Plant

Overall, major plant purchases including trade-ins, were within \$3,000 of the annual net budget of approximately \$380,000.

Major plant procurements for 2005/06 included the lease of a new landfill compactor with a capital value of \$600,000 and the delivery of a new purpose built bridge maintenance vehicle.

An excellent plant operating result was also achieved with a surplus of \$20,000 in an operating budget of \$1,350,000.

Significant increase in fuel prices, particularly in the latter half of 2005/06, are having an impact on the operating costs of the Council's plant fleet.

Quarries

The Quarry Division returned a profit of \$70,000, which was in accordance with the budget. The result was achieved however through a doubling of the use of hill gravel material from the Drysdale's Quarry, which dropped the anticipated use of Topsy Gully Quarry material.

As Topsy Gully relies on the Council works program for most of its sales, the location of these works has a significant impact on the income generated at this site.

The use of hill gravel/crushed rock mixtures on the Council's resheeting program is proving to be an effective low cost solution.

The fires, fire breaks and a subsequent storm caused significant damage to private property and council owned infrastructure. Council officers and consulting engineers coordinated the significant rehabilitation works in the aftermath of the January and February wildfire events.

What could have gone better?

Killingworth Road

Pavement and seal widening works on Killingworth Road, Yea (2.2km) were postponed until 2006/07 due to higher costs incurred on other projects.

Castella Bridge

Replacement of the bridge on Castella Road, Castella was delayed until early 2006/07 due to overhead electricity wires that require relocation prior to the bridge construction.

Overall Asset Management Strategy

Development of Overall Asset Management Strategy, which aims to provide a strategic overview of all asset classes, was delayed until 2006/07 because of resourcing issues following the resignation of the Assets and Infrastructure Engineer.

Infrastructure Manual

Completion of the Infrastructure Manual, outlining infrastructure development standards is delayed until 2006/07.

Gallipoli Park Fencing

The local community is constructing the new fence around the oval at Gallipoli Park, Marysville with project management resources from the Council. The Community expects to complete the fence in the first half of 2006/07.

Sedgwick Street Works

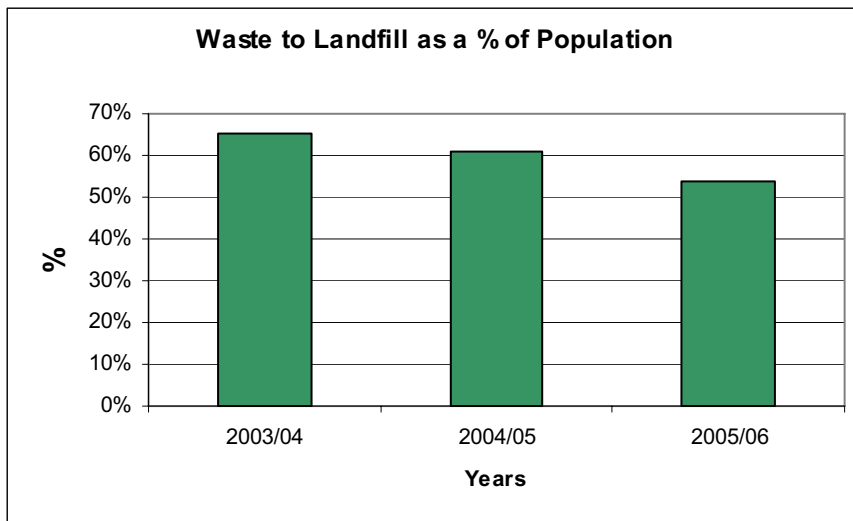
The flood mitigation works in Sedgwick Street and along Learys Creek in Marysville, as well as some of the planting in Murchison Street, which are all part of the Marysville streetscape project, could not be accommodated within the budget and have been scheduled for completion in 2006/07.



theme 4: natural beauty

Strategic Objectives:

- To ensure the unique and natural beauty of the Murrindindi environment and its natural environmental systems are not compromised for future generations
- To strive for a safe and clean environment



Strategic Indicators:

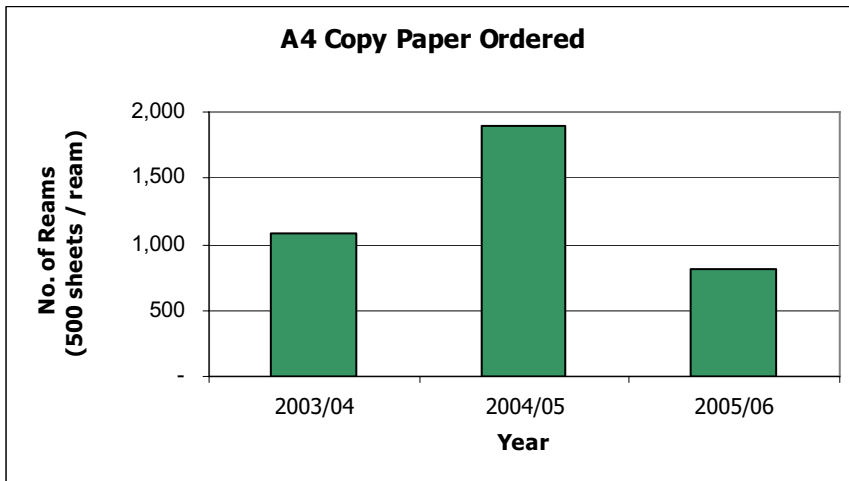
1. Reduce the percentage of waste to landfill per head of population

The reduction in the waste to landfill is a pleasing result and reflects the introduction of 240 litre recycling bins, replacing the plastic crates which has increased the overall quantity of recyclables collected from 150kg per household in 2004/05 to 200kg in 2005/06.

The Council has also recently accepted a new garbage collection contract and allocated increased resources to waste management to drive further improvements.

2. Improved water quality of rivers downstream of major towns

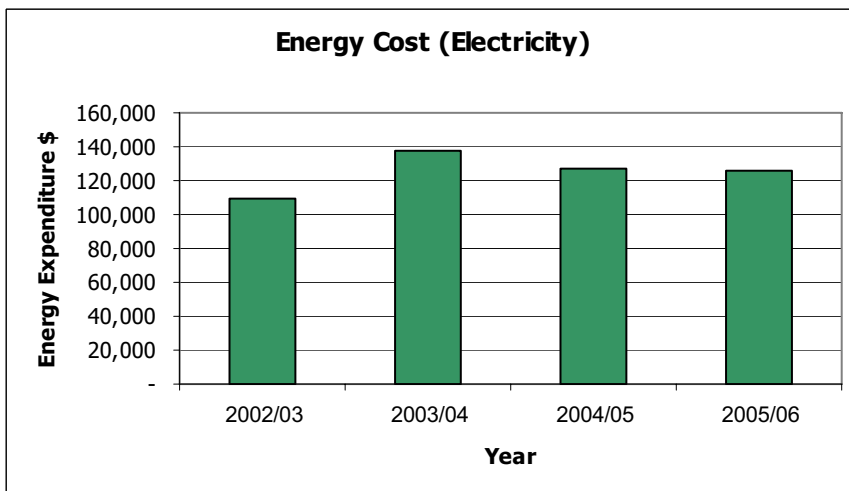
Data for this indicator has been difficult to collect and compare with previous years. As such this indicator has been discontinued.



3. Reduced level of consumption of paper and electricity usage in the Council offices

The amount of A4 copy paper ordered and used in the past year has reduced significantly by providing data electronically, rationalising the amount of information provided in agendas, and publishing on the web.

The cost of electricity consumption has reduced slightly when compared with the past two years.



What went well?

Environmental Monitoring

Environmental monitoring at Alexandra Landfill was completed and reported to Environment Protection Authority in accordance with licence conditions.

Landfill

The amount of waste being deposited into the landfill fell during 2005/06 by 900 tonnes. The leasing of a landfill compactor during the year will significantly boost the life of the landfill site by a further thirty years.

A new garbage collection contract was also accepted during the year that will come into operation in December 2007.

Recycling

Recyclables collected at the kerbside during 2005/06 increased by 437 tonnes over the previous year. This represents an increase in recycling of 55kg per household per year.

The Council was successful in obtaining a \$14,000 Public Place Recycling Grant from Sustainability Victoria for the implementation of public recycling facilities within the Eildon shopping precinct and lower pondage foreshore for 2006/07.

Transfer Stations

Further success was achieved in obtaining a \$7,000 grant from Sustainability Victoria for the implementation of a mechanised drum lifting device at the Yea Transfer Station for 2006/07. This will allow for the collection and recycling of waste farm oil in 205 litre drums.

Murrindindi Heritage Study

Stage 1 of the Murrindindi Heritage Study is nearing completion. Stage 1 comprises a thematic history that provides an explanation of the themes and activities that have been important in shaping the present day Murrindindi Shire.

Management of Significant Landscapes

This study forms part of the Metropolitan Fringe Strategic Planning Project jointly funded by the Department of Sustainability and Environment and the Department for Victorian Communities.

The study of the Murrindindi and Baw Baw Shires developed effective planning policy, suitable for incorporation into the planning scheme, that defines the character of each type of landscape and a model that can be applied across the State to achieve a range of objectives.

The outcomes of this project are to be further considered as part of the Rural Land Study in 2006/07.

What could have gone better?

Transfer Stations

New management arrangements for the Council's Transfer Stations were not implemented in 2005/06 as a low level of response was received to the initial tender offered. The management will be re-tendered and has been scheduled for implementation in 2006/07.

Waste Management Strategy

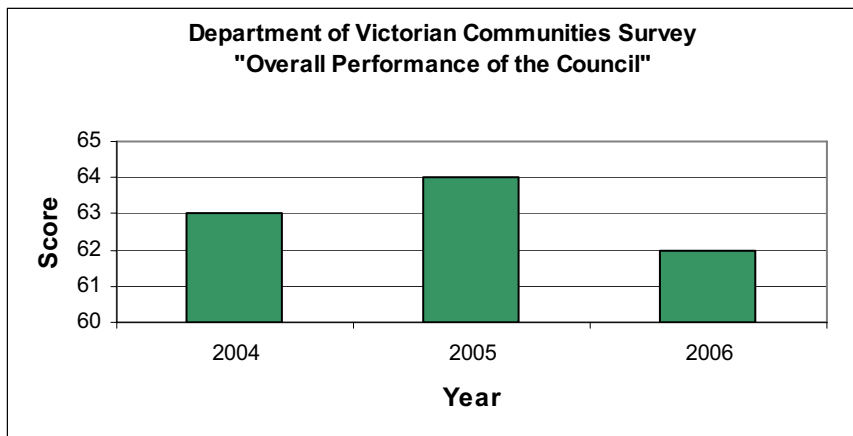
The Council is yet to consider the draft Waste Management Strategy. It is expected that this will occur in November 2006.



theme 5: leadership

Strategic Objectives:

- Through the process of good governance, provide and develop community leadership
- Deliver the Council's corporate and community objectives to the highest possible standard
- To be a community and customer focused organisation
- To represent the interests of Murrindindi and its diverse communities



Strategic Indicators:

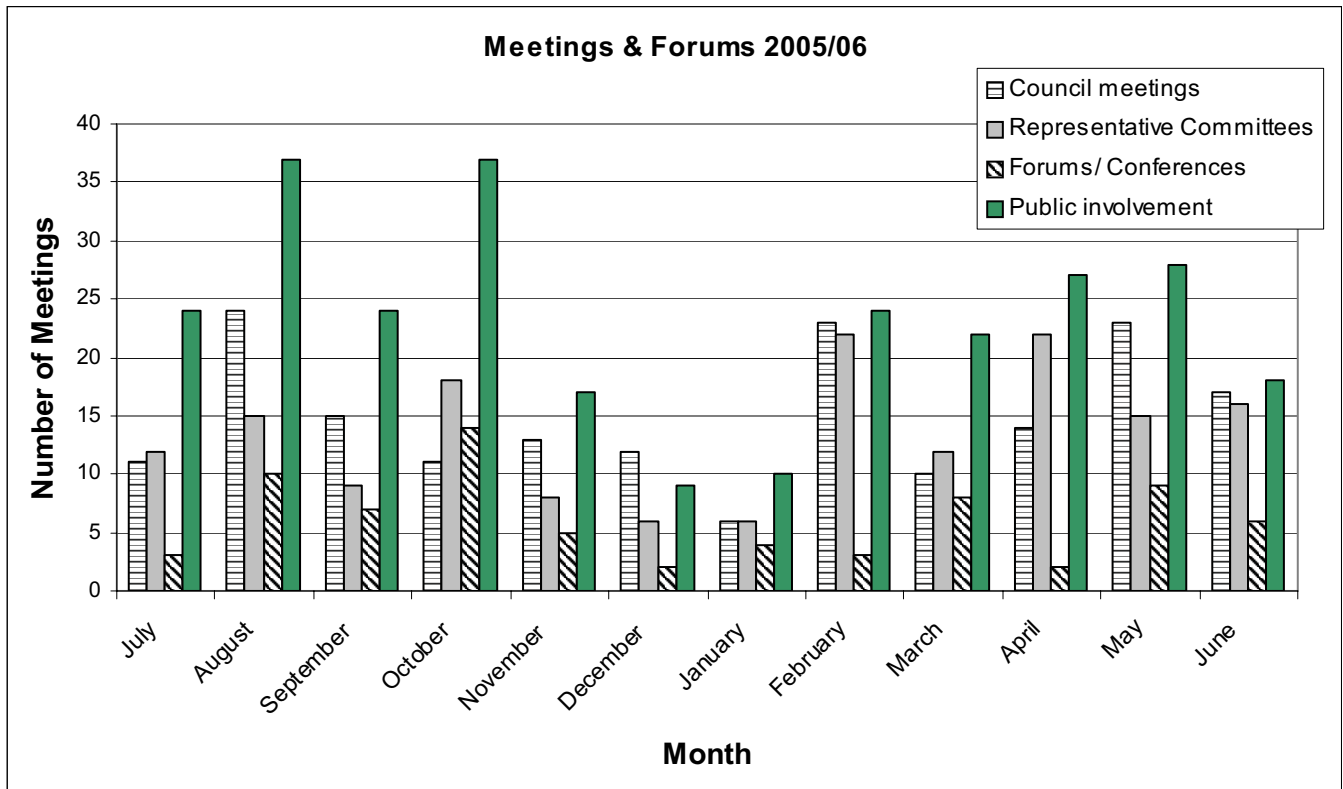
1. Positive trend in the Department of Victorian Communities indicator "Overall Performance of the Council"

Community satisfaction with Council's overall performance decreased from 64 to 62 for the 2005/06 year.

Survey comments suggest that the community wants improved recreational facilities, appearance of public areas, enforcement of By Laws, Economic Development and Town Planning. The activities and measures contained in the new Council Plan 2006 – 2010 should see an improvement for 2006/07.

2. Positive trend in Mystery Shopping survey results

The mystery shopping survey was not undertaken for 2005/06 and as such no graph is available.



3. Number of forums with representation from Murrindindi and number and type of different public involvement opportunities offered

The above graph shows a constant demand on Councillors to attend a range of Council and community related activities over the past year.

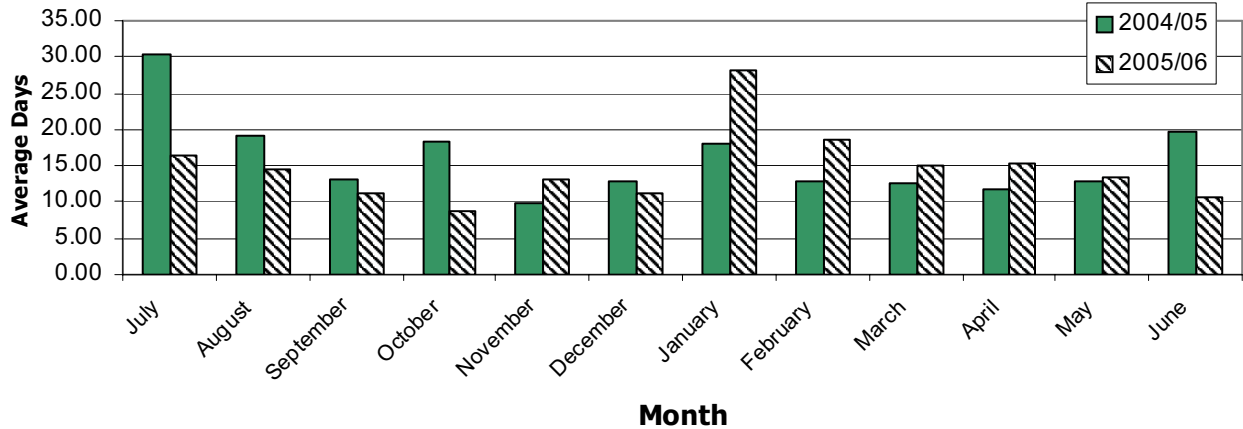
The decrease in meetings and forums between November and January can be attributed to the lead up to the Council election in November, the Christmas holidays and the induction of the new councillors.

4. Positive trend in the membership base of key community groups

There has been difficulty in collecting this data for 2005/06 as in previous years, and as such no graph is available.

In addition to the Council Plan measures set out above, during the year the Council considered the following additional performance reports.

Murrindindi Shire Correspondence Determination Times



5. Replies to Correspondence

The graph above shows that responsiveness to correspondence varies with workload and staff availability, particularly in engineering.

Response times have fallen since January 2006. Filling long-term engineering vacancies should see this continue.

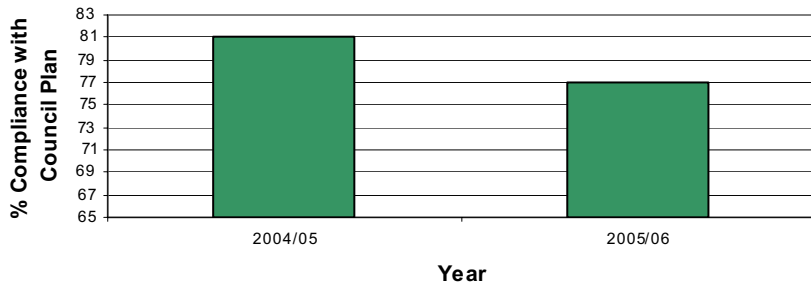
6. Achievement of Council Plan Activities and Initiatives

The above graph tracks the achievement of the activities and initiatives as contained in the Council Plan. The best result would be a 100% compliance. The final result shows that 77% of initiatives contained in the Council Plan for 2005/06 were achieved compared to 81% in 2004/05.

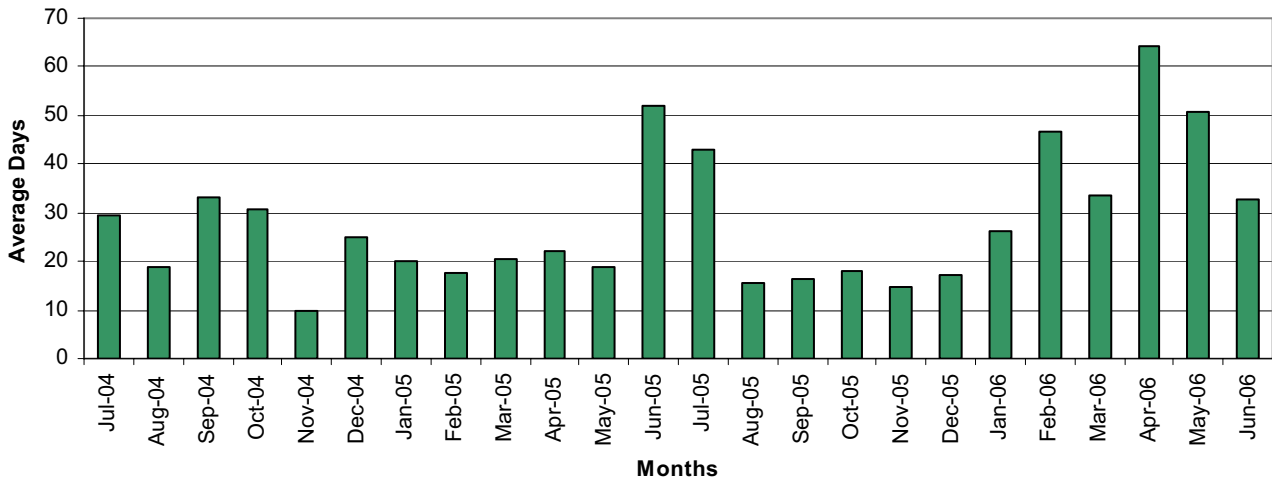
Factors effecting the 2005/06 non-achievement of a number of tasks within the Council Plan were:

- Deferral of the rebranding project to undertake further community consultation – effecting projects in Corporate Services, Tourism and Economic Development departments
- Staff shortages have been experienced in the Engineering department and Council has found it difficult to attract suitably qualified staff
- Tourism Board restructure
- Amendment C16 to the Planning Scheme was not progressed, due to the Council’s desire to pursue an alternative C14 Amendment (Rural Living Zones)

Council Plan Performance



Murrindindi Shire Works Requests Average Response Times



7. Works requests Response Times

Similar to the correspondence chart, actioning work requests is cyclical and relates to the impact of resources being re-allocated to other functions during busy times of the year. The large increase in response times in March 2006 reflects a statistical aberration due to the need to remove requests from Council's system that had already been referred and actioned by Council's Contractors.

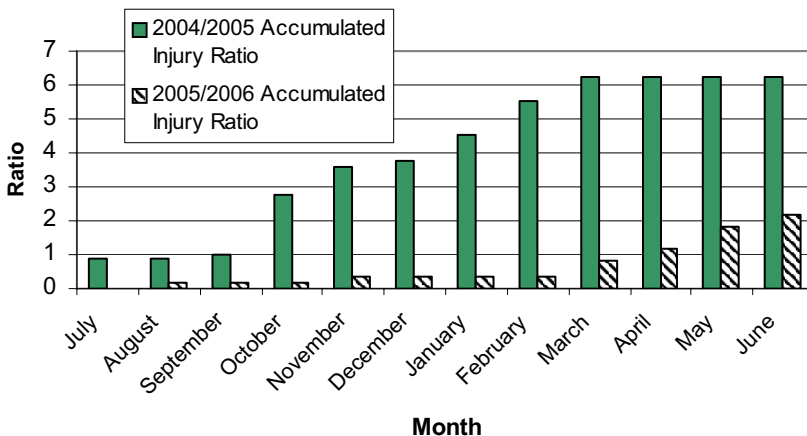
At a sub-organisational level, the Murrindindi Construction Works Request responsiveness has improved from an average 29 days in 2004/05 to 22 days in 2005/06. Unfortunately, the average responsiveness of works requests within the engineering administration component has expanded from 33 days in 2004/05 to 38 days in 2005/06, (excluding the impact of the above garbage variation) and reflects a combination of more complex issues to resolve and the ongoing shortage of engineering personnel at this functional level.

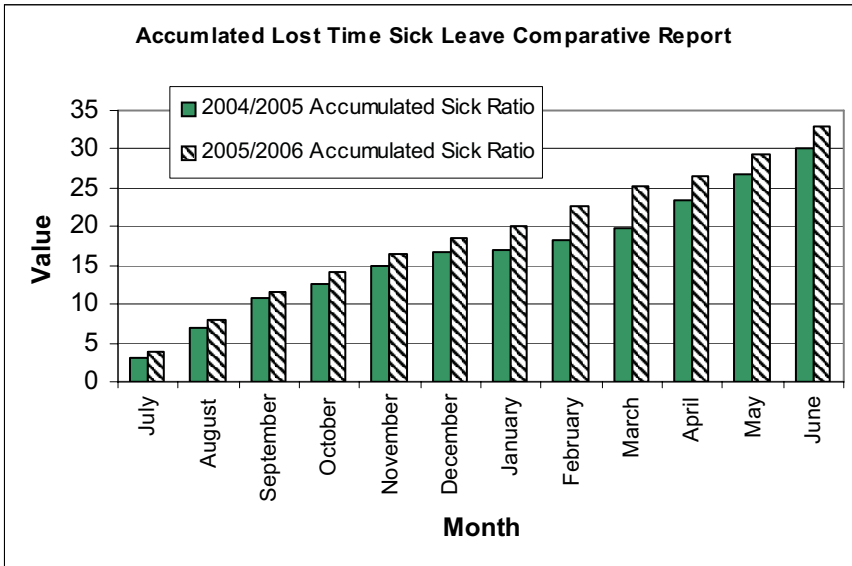
The overall number of works requests completed has increased by 7% in 2005/06 (1,406) compared to 2004/05 (1,312).

8. Safety

This chart to the left reflects the overall safety performance of the organisation. The lost time injury ratio records the percentage of working hours lost through injury compared to the total number of hours worked. The results are particularly pleasing.

Accumulated Lost Time Injury Comparative Report





9. Sick Leave

This chart is a measure of the overall health of the organisation and records the accumulated percentage of time lost caused by sickness compared to the total time worked by Council staff.

The increase in the ratio from 2004/05 to 2005/06 relates to a number of staff requiring extended periods of sick leave for planned medical procedures, possibly reflecting the increasing average age of Council employees.

What went well?

Councillor Code of Conduct

On the 16 May 2006 the Council adopted a Councillor Code of Conduct as required under section 76C of the Local Government Act 1989. This has now been incorporated into Council Policy No. 41. All Councillors have signed the Code.

The Council has affirmed principals of behaviour under the following headings:

- Rules of conduct
- Courtesy and respect
- Integrity and honesty
- Positions of trust
- Public resources
- Council information

Additionally principles and processes are set out under the following headings:

- Conflict of interest procedures
- Dispute resolution procedures
- Caretaker procedures
- Electoral matters
- Use of resources

New Meeting and Portfolio Structure

Refer to page 53

capital works completed 2005/06

Description of Works	Works in progress as at 1 July 2005	Total value of works completed 2005/06	Total value of works completed as at 30 June 2006
	\$	\$	\$
Land			
Purchase 13 Webster Street Alexandra	37,166	162,834	200,000
Total Land	37,166	162,834	200,000
Buildings & Structures			
Purchase 13 Webster Street Alexandra		150,405	150,405
Eildon Transfer Station		20,772	20,772
Alexandra Saleyards		16,020	16,020
Yea Saleyards		4,625	4,625
Pool Development	123,782	756,394	880,176
Public Toilets Alexandra Shire Hall		20,455	20,455
Alexandra Landfill Cell Construction		37,142	37,142
Total Buildings & Structures	123,782	1,005,812	1,129,594
Plant & Machinery			
Major Items		425,888	425,888
Motor Vehicles		462,515	462,515
Total		888,403	888,403

(continued)

Roads, Streets & Bridges

Gravel Resheeting	662,236	662,236
Sealed Roads Reseals	446,276	446,276
Final Reseals	45,435	45,435
Top Road	263,451	263,451
Kinglake Glenburn Road	199,763	199,763
Eildon Retaining Wall	41,725	41,725
Old Melbourne Road	53,326	53,326
Andersons lane	50,093	50,093
Craigie Street Bridge	27,984	27,984
Bus Shelters	4,604	4,604
Bridge Load Capacity Upgrade	97,872	97,872
Taylor Bay Right Arm	20,038	20,038
Footpath Renewal	27,659	27,659
Marysville Streetscape	690,257	690,257
Whittlesea-Kinglake Bike path	10,828	10,828
Total Road, Streets & Bridges	2,641,547	2,641,547

Drainage

Drainage Renewal	39,046	39,046
Total Drainage	39,046	39,046

Heritage Assets

Art Show Prizes	4,000	4,000
Total Heritage Assets	4,000	4,000

Furniture & Equipment

Computers	80,143	80,143
Others	33,557	33,557
Total Furniture & Equipment	113,700	113,700

Library Materials

Books	54,567	54,567
Magazines	4,358	4,358
Videos	38,144	38,144
Total Library Materials	97,069	97,069

Work In Progress

Taylor Bay Left Arm	9,909	9,909
Castella Bridge	33,707	33,707
Kerrs Bridge	101,987	101,987
Moores Bridge	2,587	2,587
James Street Drainage	6,947	6,947
Marks & Pratts Road	3,745	3,745
Yea Community Centre Upgrade	88,801	88,801
Alexandra Shire Hall	2,797	2,797
Gallipoli Park Fence	8,591	8,591
Total Works In Progress	259,071	259,071

Total value of Capital works completed 2005/06

\$160,948	\$5,211,482	\$5,372,430
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council's roll out of activities

Legend:

CEO Chief Executive Officer
 GM Sust General Manager Sustainability
 Eco Dev Economic Development
 EH Environmental Health
 L/Laws Local Laws
 Comm Serv Community Services
 Org Dev Organisational Development
 IT Information Technology
 Cust Serv Customer Service

<i>The Council Plan Task/Activity – 2004/05</i>	Dept	Status as at 30/06/06
<i>Theme 1 - Sustainable Growth & Development</i>		
Participate in the Commonwealth Games events relating to the Shire	GM Sust	Completed
Economic Development		
Support the development of the Yea saleyards and Livestock Exchange	CEO/GM Sust	Completed
Complete the Streetlife Grant project focusing on the promotion of regional food produce	Eco Dev	Ongoing
Develop the Murrindindi sub-committee of the Central Ranges Local Learning and Employment Network (CRLLEN)	Eco Dev	Completed
Facilitate the completion of the Murrindindi education and training sector study in conjunction with the Office of Training and Tertiary Education	Eco Dev	Completed
Implement actions from the Industrial Land Study to promote the further development and utilisation of industrial land in the Shire	Eco Dev/Planning	Completed
Seek funding to employ a Business Development Officer to further develop The Council's capacity to assist small business	Eco Dev	Completed
Review The Council Policy relating to Economic Development, including business attraction incentives	Eco Dev	Ongoing
Develop the concept of Murrindindi Business Week	Eco Dev	Completed
Update the Economic development webpage including the business register	Eco Dev	Ongoing
Create a Murrindindi Business Database	Eco Dev	Ongoing
Create and cost a plan to deal with the industrial land needs and zoning issues affecting business growth in Eildon	Eco Dev	Ongoing
Facilitate the outcomes of the Broadband Broker project for Murrindindi	Eco Dev	Ongoing
Create a business start up kit - including the Council services tree/guide	Eco Dev	Completed
Facilitate economic development outcomes from the Branding and Communications project	Eco Dev	Behind
Facilitate the outcomes from the Regulation Reduction project	Eco Dev	Completed
Complete the Provincial Victoria tactical marketing campaign requirements	Eco Dev	Completed
Facilitate grants for businesses	Eco Dev	Completed
Facilitate the Council requirements with respect to the staging the Herald Sun Tour	Eco Dev	Completed

<i>The Council Plan Task/Activity – 2004/05</i>	Dept	Status as at 30/06/06
Tourism		
Complete production of The Council's Tourism Signage Facilitation Kit	Tourism	2006/07
Complete Tourism Signage Audit	Tourism	Completed
Continue to strengthen co-operative arrangements between Visitor Information Centres	Tourism	Ongoing
Ascertain and allocate an equitable financial contribution to Visitor Information Centres	Tourism	Completed
Develop a Shire-wide program to raise broad community awareness of, and encourage volunteerism in Visitor Information Centres	Tourism	Ongoing
In-partnership with the Tourism Industry implement the Tourism Communication Plan	Tourism	Ongoing
In partnership with the MRTA conduct at least one tourism stakeholder forum	Tourism	Completed
In partnership with the MRTA conduct at least two professional development networking forums	Tourism	Completed
Explore funding opportunities to conduct business planning workshops for Local and Industry Sector Tourism Associations	Tourism	Ongoing
Work co-operatively with the tourism industry to set the strategic direction for Tourism in Murrindindi in 2008	Tourism	Ongoing
Finalise and implement the revised Memorandum of Understanding between the Council and the Murrindindi Regional Tourism Association	Tourism	Ongoing
Complete the Mitchell-Murrindindi-Mansfield Rail Trail Concept Design and Business Plan	Tourism	Ongoing
Complete the Mitchell-Murrindindi-Mansfield Rail Trail Branding Strategy Project	Tourism	Ongoing
Complete a feasibility assessment of the development of a Fishing Lodge	Tourism	Completed
With Parks Victoria progress the future of Fraser Camping Ground and Cabins at Lake Eildon National Park	Tourism	Completed
Complete production of new tourism business industry induction kit	Tourism	Behind
Hold at least one land management agency tourism forum	Tourism	Completed
Complete and implement Murrindindi Tourism's branding strategy	Tourism	Behind
In partnership with MRTA, Local and Industry Sector Tourism Associations and the broader tourism industry, implement the 2005/ 2006 Tourism Marketing Plan	Tourism	Ongoing
Progress Murrindindi's representation in relevant co-operative regional marketing and promotional campaigns	Tourism	Completed
Complete the Building Murrindindi Events Grant Program	Tourism	Completed
Facilitate the completion of the Business Plan for Yea Wetlands Interpretative Centre	Tourism	Completed
Planning		
Complete the Alexandra Urban Design Framework (UDF) Study	Planning	Completed
Finalise the planning scheme review of the Murrindindi Strategic Statement	Planning	Behind
Complete the C14 Rural Residential process, including amendment	Planning	Completed
Kinglake Flowerdale Integrated Land Use Study (Kinglake West - Flowerdale) Amendment process - C12	Planning	Ongoing
Undertake a planning study in relation to further growth potential in Kinglake having regard to the water/wastewater situation	Planning	Ongoing
Pursue grant funding to implement priority UDF outcomes in the context of the Council's sustainability objectives	Planning	Ongoing
Resolve Industrial Land planning issues in Yea	Planning	Completed
Complete High Street Yea Development Plan	Planning	Completed
Complete Development Plan process for Lamont Street	Planning	Behind
Undertake Farm Zone/Rural Activity strategic work (Rural and Study)	Planning	2006/07

<i>The Council Plan Task/Activity – 2004/05</i>	Dept	Status as at 30/06/06
Complete Small Towns UDF Amendment process	Planning	Completed
Complete funded component of Roadside Management Project (Mansfield & Murrindindi)	Planning	Completed
Complete C13 Amendment process – Yea/Eildon /Marysville	Planning	Completed
Finalise the Best Value Review – Environmental Health Services	EH	Behind
Finalise the Best Value Review – Local laws	L/Laws	Behind
Finalise the Best Value Review – Building Services	Building	Behind
Corporate Services		
Implement the Information Technology (IT) Strategy 2005 – 2007	IT	Completed
Undertake a full review of the Council's Strategic Resource Plan including debt, rating and infrastructure strategies and their impact of the financial sustainability of the Council	Finance	Completed
Theme 2 – Quality of Life		
Corporate Services		
Address high priority issues identified through 2005 staff satisfaction survey	Executives / Cteam	Completed
Continue to develop staff skills and abilities	Org Dev	Completed
Further develop and implement the risk management and OHS program across all the Council operations and committees of management.	Org Dev	Ongoing
Review and develop models for assistance to community groups that manage The Council facilities.	Corporate	Completed
Community Services		
Continue to maintain and promote the on-line Murrindindi Community Directory	Comm Serv	Completed
Implement short and medium term playground works as outlined in The Councils Recreation, Reserves and Play Strategy		Behind
Promote access to immunisation through General Practice clinics and Maternal and Child Health centres	Comm Serv	Completed
Provide training to engineering, building and planning staff regarding issues faced by people with disabilities, disability legislation, Australian Building Codes and strategies to include people with disabilities	Comm Serv	Ongoing
Explore the possibility of using large print business cards and purchasing plastic Braille covers as part of the Communications Strategy.	Comm Serv	Behind
Conduct works on the Murrindindi Shire The Council Yea office in accordance with the Building Code and Australian Standards as they refer to disability access	Building	2006/07
Incorporate into development package information details of disability access responsibilities according to the Disability Discrimination Act.	Comm Serv	Ongoing
Promote availability of training and professional development to the early years sector	Comm Serv	Completed
Implement priority actions identified from the Strategic Library Plan in the context of two (2) new facilities.	Library	Completed
Scope an approach for the Council to develop a Community Strengthening Strategy in addition to the completion of the Community Consultation and Engagement Strategy Policy.	Corporate	Completed
In consultation with the Economic Development activity, undertake a detailed demographic study of the Murrindindi Shire communities to assist in the development of long-term community action plans	Eco Dev / Corporate	Completed
Scope out and develop a policy and strategy for youth	Comm Serv	2006/07
Scope out and develop a policy for early years	Comm Serv	Completed
Commence the scoping of a policy for aged persons	Comm Serv	2006/07
Secure visiting services at the Kinglake District Services Centre	Cust Serv / Comm Serv / Eco Dev	Completed
Prepare detailed project and costing proposals for the Yea Children's Precinct project commencement in 2006/07	Comm Serv	Completed
Complete the Sport and Recreation Victoria Grant funded projects including the Alexandra Netball Courts	Comm Serv	Completed
Planning and Environment		
Further develop the Domestic Onsite Wastewater Management Plan, including improved monitoring arrangements	Planning	Completed

<i>The Council Plan Task/Activity – 2004/05</i>	Dept	Status as at 30/06/06
Theme 3 – Infrastructure		
Assets and Infrastructure		
Implement works in accordance with adopted Road Construction, Resealing, Gravel Resheeting and Bridge Replacement Strategies of The Council.	Engineering	Completed
Undertake Load Capacity Upgrades on priority bridges	Engineering	Ongoing
Complete the Marysville Stormwater Strategy	Engineering	Completed
Undertake a review of the Council's adopted Road Management Plan	Engineering	2006/07
Undertake a review of The Council's Road and Bridge Strategies to develop forward capital works programs for the next five (5) to ten (10) years. (Link to Sustainable Growth and Development initiative in relation to Strategic Resource Plan)	Engineering	Completed
Proceed with the development of road upgrade projects under Special Charge Schemes (as determined by The Council following community surveys)	Engineering	Behind
Continue to participate in the MAV STEP Program and develop Asset Management initiatives in accordance with the STEP Program objectives including the completion of the Shire's Overall Asset Management Strategy	Engineering	Completed
Completion of Road Asset Management Plan (RAMP)	Engineering	2006/07
Incorporate priority projects identified through respective Urban Design Frameworks across municipality into future reviews of the Council Plan	Engineering	Completed
Finalisation and adoption of applicable infrastructure standards associated with development and subdivision applications	Engineering	2006/07
Replace the Gallipoli Park oval fence	Engineering	2006/07
Complete next stage of Marysville streetscape project (subject to receipt of funding from State Government)	Engineering	Completed
Install automatic sprinkler irrigation system in Eildon Lions Park in partnership with the Lions Club.	Engineering	Completed
Traffic Eng scoping and design for traffic calming / roundabout – Eildon (\$10,000 late Budget item)	Engineering	2006/07
Actively Pursue CFA Fire Access Road Subsidy Scheme Grant Funding as per Municipal Fire Prevention Strategy	Planning	Completed
Undertake improvement works to southern bank of U.T. Creek at rear of CWA	Engineering	Completed
Theme 4 - Natural Beauty		
Planning and Environment		
Complete Stage 1 of the Murrindindi Shire Heritage Study	Planning	Completed
Exhibit and prepare an amendment for the Significant Landscapes Study	Planning	Ongoing
Develop strategies to implement the Rural Living Development Guidelines	Planning	Behind
Assets and Infrastructure		
Undertake monitoring and necessary rehabilitation works to old landfill sites in accordance with Environment Protection Authority Best Practice Guidelines	Engineering	Completed
Rehabilitation and erosion control works at Eildon	Engineering	Completed
Implement new management arrangements for the Council's Transfer Station	Engineering	Ongoing
Implement the recommendations of the Council's Waste Management Strategy	Engineering	Ongoing
Completion of Environmental Improvement Plan	Engineering	Behind
Landfill Cell Construction - Alexandra (leachate pond)	Engineering	Behind
Rehabilitation of landfill cell - Alexandra	Engineering	Ongoing
Transfer station occupational health and safety works	Engineering	Behind

<i>The Council Plan Task/Activity – 2004/05</i>	Dept	Status as at 30/06/06
Theme 5- Leadership		
All departments		
Business Excellence / Best Value	All	2006/07
Corporate Services		
Consider and implement actions to address issues arising from the 2005 Community Satisfaction Survey	Executives/Cteam	Completed
Refine and further develop the Customer Request System across the organisation	Corporate	Completed
Implement year 1 actions of the PR/Marketing/Communication strategy	GM Sust	Behind
Complete and implement priority actions of the Community Engagement and Consultation policy and strategy	Comm Serv	Completed
Conduct candidate information sessions for potential candidates for the 2005 election	Corporate	Completed
Undertake the November 2005 elections	Corporate	Completed
Induct newly elected Councillors	Executives	Completed
Continue to participate in the Cathedral Cluster Community Consultative Committee (5C's)	Councillors	Completed

governance: our people our processes





the councillors

The Murrindindi Shire Councillors govern on behalf of the Murrindindi Community.

As part of their role, the Councillors are community representatives who are responsible for the development of policies, the development of strategies and visions, corporate governance, community consultation and encouraging active community participation.

The Shire of Murrindindi is divided into six ridings with one Councillor representing each riding. The Councillors are elected by postal vote for a three-year term. The current Councillors came into office in November 2005. Council elections will take place again in November 2008, at which time the term will be for four years.

The Councillors and their responsibilities are listed below:

Cr Lyn Gunter (Mayor)

Riding: King Parrot Riding
First elected: March 2000
Telephone: 03 57802 2382

Portfolio: The Mayor does not have a separate portfolio, however performs a greater role in representing the shire at forums and ceremonies.

Other Committee Representation:

Murrindindi Construction Board, Audit Committee, Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV), MAV Rural Regional Future, MAV Transport Advisory Group, Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee, Yea River Catchment Streamflow Management Plan Committee, King Parrot Catchment Streamflow Management Working Group

Cr Robert Flowers (Deputy Mayor)

Riding: Redgate Riding
First elected: November 2005
Telephone: 03 5772 1690

Portfolio: Infrastructure and Assets

Other Committee Representation:

Alexandra Community Leisure Centre Committee of Management, Alexandra Racecourse Reserve Committee of Management, Alexandra Showgrounds Committee of Management, Alexandra (Bill Clapham) Saleyards Committee of Management, Goulburn Valley Regional Waste Management Authority, Goulburn Valley Road Safety The Council, Municipal Fire Prevention Committee, UT Creek Enhancement Community Support Group

Pictured from left: Cr Robert Flowers, Cr Lyn Gunter (Mayor), Cr Christopher Healy, Cr Peter Beales, Cr Leanne Pleash, Cr Janet Gilmore.

Cr Janet Gilmore

Riding: Cathedral Riding
First elected: November 2005
Telephone: 03 5963 3321

Portfolio: Planning and Environment

Other Committee Representation:

Cathedral Cluster Community Consultative Committee, Gallipoli Park Committee of Management, Marysville Retirement Village Committee of Management, Marysville Village Residents Association, Municipal Association of Victoria Planning and Advisory Committee, Municipal Association of Victoria Strategic Environment Advisory Board, Steavensons Falls/Beauty Spot Scenic Reserve Committee of Management

Cr Leanne Pleash

Riding: Cheviot Riding
First elected: November 2005
Telephone: 03 5796 9200

Portfolio: Community and Customer Services

Other Committee Representation:

Central Ranges Local Learning And Employment Network, Friends of Yea Railway Reserve Committee of Management, Primary Care Partnerships, Yea Cemetery Trust – Advisory Group, Yea Indoor Recreation Centre, Yea Saleyards Committee of Management, Yea Wetlands Committee of Management, Kinglake Memorial Reserve Committee of Management

Cr Peter Beales

Riding: Dennis Riding
First elected: March 1997
Telephone: 03 5786 2193

Portfolio: Economic Development and Tourism

Other Committee Representation:

Bollygum Park Reserve Committee of Management, CJ Dennis Hall and Castella Public Hall Reserve Committee of Management, Timber Towns Victoria, Murrindindi Regional Tourism Association, Plantations North East, Timber Roads Advisory Committee

Cr Christopher Healy

Riding: Koriella Riding
First elected: November 2005
Telephone: 03 5774 2800

Portfolio: Corporate Services

Other Committee Representation:

Eildon Community Centre Committee of Management, Audit Committee

Council Election 2005

Preparations for the November 2005 election commenced in August 2005 with the appointment of the Victorian Electoral Commission to run the election.

Candidate information sessions were held in five locations across the Shire by senior staff and current councillors not re-standing in the Riding in which the meeting was being held.

Condolences

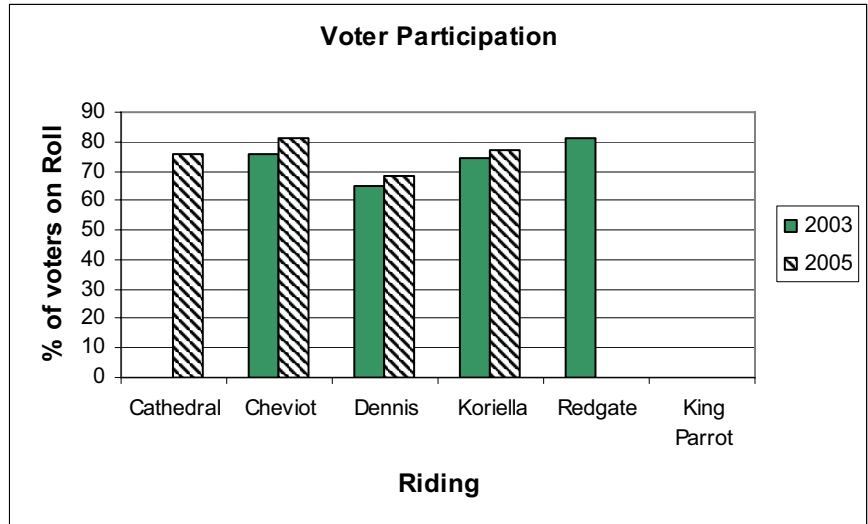
The Council wishes to acknowledge the recent passing of former Councillor Andrew Collier. Drew was a former Shire of Alexandra Councillor 1980 to 1987, former Murrindindi Shire Councillor 2003 to 2005 and Shire President in 1986. The Council extends its condolences to Marion and the family.

Voter Participation

The following graph shows the level of voter participation in the 2005 and 2003 elections.

The blank columns for Cathedral (2003), Redgate (2005) and King Parrot (2003 & 2005) are a consequence of the councillor for the riding being elected unopposed.

In the other ridings voter participation has been fairly consistent over the last two elections, increased slightly from 74.06% in 2003 to 75.66% in 2005.



DECLARATION OF RESULTS

The Returning Officer declared the election results at 6pm on Saturday 26 November 2005. The candidates elected were as follows:

Riding	Successful Candidate	
Cathedral	Gilmore, Janet	Elected by a majority of first preference votes
Cheviot	Pleash, Leanne	Elected by a majority of first preference votes
Dennis	Beales, Peter	Elected by a majority of first preference votes
King Parrot	Gunter, Lyn	Elected unopposed
Koriella	Healy, Chris	Elected by a majority of first preference votes
Red Gate	Flowers, Bob	Elected unopposed

Four new Councillors were elected to the Murrindindi Shire Council replacing;

- Cr Graeme Brown, Cathedral Riding, first elected March 2003, former Mayor
- Cr Mike Dalmau, Redgate Riding, first elected March 1997, (Cr Dalmau did not stand for election)
- Cr Bill Wall, Cheviot Riding, first elected March 2003
- Cr Andrew Coller, Koriella Riding, first elected March 2003

The Committee Structure for the previous Council was:

- Administration & Finance Committee Chair, Cr Andrew Coller
- Planning and Environment Committee Chair, Cr Mike Dalmau
- Recreation & Community Services Committee Chair, Cr Lyn Gunter
- Roads & Waste Management Committee Chair, Cr Bill Wall
- Tourism & Economic Development Committee Chair, Cr Peter Beales

Post 26 November 2005

Early December 2005 saw a new Council eagerly embark on a term that will conclude in November 2008. From 2008 onwards local government elections will occur on the last Saturday in November every four years.

All Councillors participated in the induction and briefing sessions held in December 2005 and January 2006.

Committee Structure for period 26 November 2005 to 31 May 2006.

- Mayor, Cr Lyn Gunter
- Community & Customer Service Committee, Chair - Cr Leanne Pleash
- Corporate Services Committee, Chair, Cr Christopher Healy
- Economic Development & Tourism Committee, Chair, Cr Peter Beales
- Infrastructure & Assets Committee, Chair, Cr Robert Flowers
- Planning & Environment Committee, Chair, Cr Janet Gilmore

Portfolio System

In May 2006, the Council discontinued Committee meetings and adopted a portfolio arrangement whereby each Councillor maintains a specific focus on one of the five functional areas previously covered by the committees.

This arrangement allows the relevant councillor to maintain a close relationship with staff managing issues associated with their portfolio, and the Councillor reports at each Council meeting on issues of interest to the Council that fall under that portfolio.

Council now meets every fortnight rather than monthly, thereby improving the efficiency of decision making.

Councillor and Mayoral Allowances

The allowance paid to the Murrindindi Shire Council Mayor was \$36,000 per annum plus the provision of an executive standard motor vehicle. The Councillor allowance was set at \$12,000 per annum.

Issues Before Council

2005/06 saw Council consider a large number of complex issues.

Issues Before Council

July 2005

- Extensions to Alexandra & District Kindergarten
- 2005 Election
- Management arrangements for Resource Recovery Centres (Transfer stations)
- Road Cleanup protocols at the conclusion of Capital works
- School Crossings
- ABC Radio Self-Help Subsidy Scheme application for Flowerdale
- Request for approval to locate Mobile building at Kinglake Ranges Neighbourhood House
- Yea Saleyards Committee Business Plan Development
- Yea Children's Services Centre
- Murrindindi Branding Strategy and Communications Plan
- Lamont Street Development Plan

August 2005

- KANDO Kick-Start Kinglake 2005 Event
- E-gaps Public Internet Access grant project
- Alexandra Community Market update
- Yea Wetlands Educational Interpretative and Visitor Centre Project
- Review of Murrindindi Planning Scheme

September 2005

- Community Recreation: Arts and Culture Grants Program 2005/2006
- Recreation Reserves Overall Development Plans
- Implementation of Urban Design Frameworks for Eildon, Marysville And Yea
- Murrindindi Heritage Study - Stage 1
- Inaugural Murrindindi Business Week
- Murrindindi Tourism Festivals and Events grants program 2005/2006
- Proposed Road renaming - Pinniger Rd to Eildon Alliance Drive

October 2005

- Request for support for Metropolitan Ambulance Station within township of Whittlesea
- General Practitioners in Community Health Services project
- Caretaker period
- Yea Community Shed - Licence
- Educational Establishment - Holmesglen TAFE, Eildon
- Ongoing management of Eildon Alliance Boat ramp
- Community Planning and Engagement
- High Street, Yea Development Plan

November 2005

- Tsunami Disaster Relief
- Yea Shire Hall clock tower project
- Development Plan - Lamont Street
- Rural Residential Study
- Maintenance of carpark behind Yea shops
- Development of Landscaping plan for Kinglake District Services Centre
- Sport and Recreation Victoria Community Facilities funding program 2006/07
- Alexandra Community Leisure Centre

December 2005

- Early Years Programs
- Thornton Memorial Hall - refurbishment
- Code of conduct issues - Crystal Creek Road
- Country Football and Netball program
- Construction of Bridges on Kerrs Road, Taggerty over Yellow Creek & Castella Road, Castella over the Yea river
- Community Consultation framework
- Crystal Creek Road Code of Conduct issues

January 2006

- Commonwealth Emergency Relief Program
- Commonwealth Games Baton relay
- Murrindindi Training needs study and Murrindindi Local Learning and Employment Network
- Great Victorian Bike Ride 2006

February 2006

- Adoption of UT Creek Reserve 2005 Master Plan
- Tomas Cristeau Estate Resort Development Kinglake
- Victorian Local Sustainability Accord
- The Central Ranges Broadband Demand Aggregation Broker project
- Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail concept design and Business plan
- Proposal to extend Swimming Pool season

March 2006

- Corporate Card policy
- Petty Cash policy
- The Councillor's allowance and expense entitlement policy
- Community Profile
- Small Towns Urban Design Framework
- Taggerty Golf Course application
- Regional Funding Initiatives - Eildon Jamieson Road
- Alexandra Saleyards Committee of Management structure
- Proposed Bridge names - Murrindindi/ Glenburn area

April 2006

- Walking School Bus
- Municipal Association Victoria Lighthouse Community Planning Program
- Expression of Interest from Thornton District Sports Club to develop new netball court
- Marysville Streetscape Stage 2 project
- Implementation of new Rural zones
- Lake Eildon Marine Industries Precinct Development
- Upgrading and redevelopment of Dove Cottage, Alexandra
- Implementation of Urban Design Frameworks for Alexandra and Small Towns in Murrindindi Shire
- Variation of Liquor Licence for Pheasant Creek Store

May 2006

- Murrindindi Inclusiveness Planning project
- Committee of Management for Eildon Alliance Boat ramp
- Adoption of The Councillor Code of Conduct
- The Council Plan
- Farm zones translations

June 2006

- Kindergarten Advocacy Campaign
- IT Strategy 2006/2007 - 2010/2011
- Marysville Stormwater Strategy
- Direct Translation of new zones in Rural area
- Environment Advisory Committee



t h e e x e c u t i v e t e a m

Danny Hogan

Chief Executive Officer
Appointed: April, 2000

The Chief Executive's role is to manage the day-to-day business of the organisation. Council delegates a number of powers to the Chief Executive Officer to ensure that he has the necessary authority to fulfill his role. Danny's contract was renewed for three years from April 2005.

Danny has had in excess of 26 years experience in local government administration with a strong background in corporate and financial management.

Ensuring that he stays in touch with the community, Danny is Secretary of the Kellock Lodge Retirement Village Committee of Management, member of the Taggerty Hall Committee, the Rotary Club of Alexandra and is a participant of the Berry Street Victoria "Alexandra Real Connections" Mentoring Program.

Robert Croxford

Deputy Chief Executive Officer and General Manager Operations/ Municipal Recovery Manager
Appointed: August 2000

Rob's role is the overall management of the operational services within council including corporate services, community services, libraries and customer services, engineering services.

Rob's qualifications include a Bachelor of Business and further studies in marketing and accounting.

Rob's community involvement includes being a committee member for the local Pony and Tennis Clubs and jointly co-ordinates the Royal Children's Hospital Appeal.

Michael Chesworth

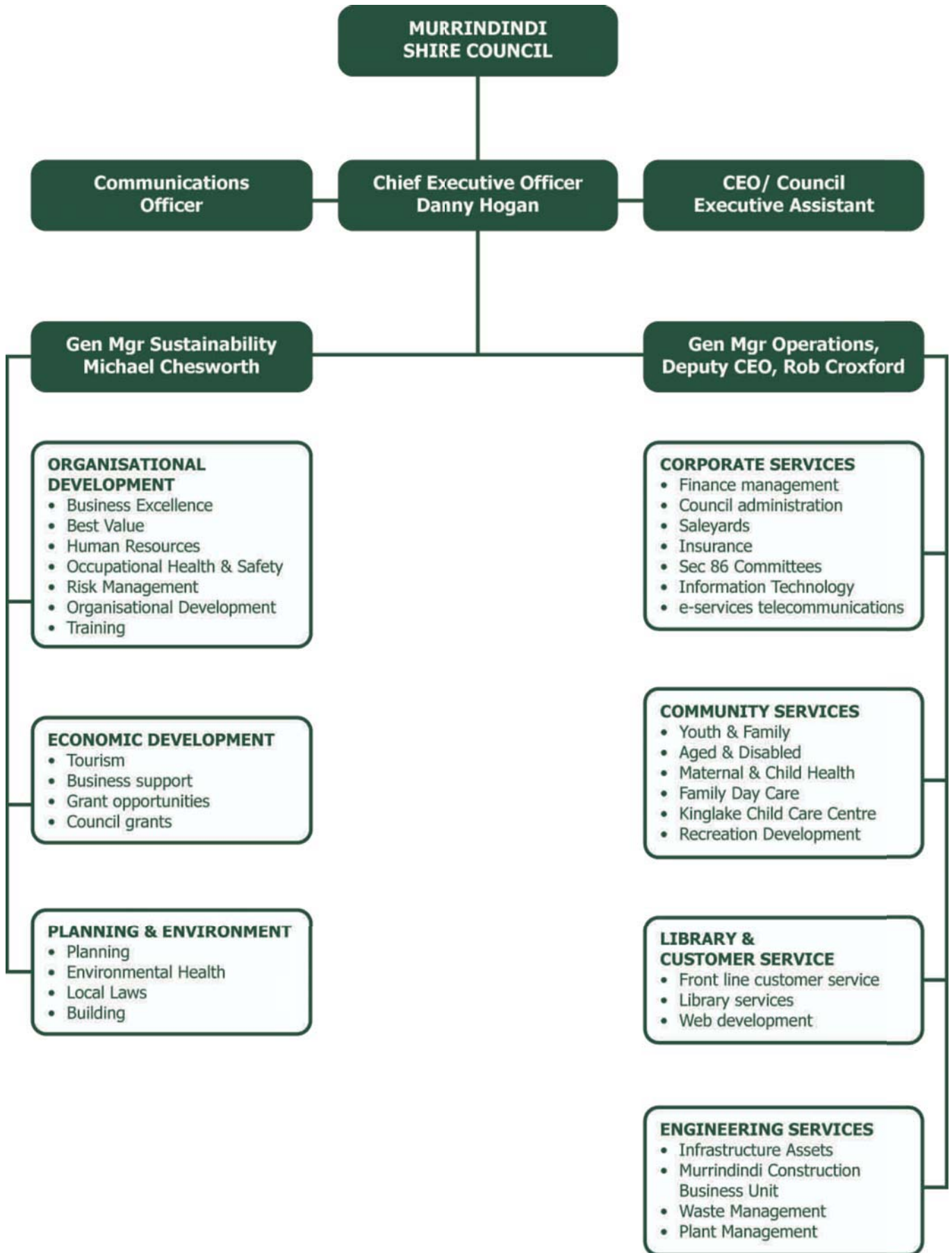
General Manager Sustainability
Appointed: 1997

Michael's role is the overall management of the sustainability services within the Council that include Organisational Development, Economic Development and Tourism and Planning and Environmental Services.

Michael's qualifications include a Bachelor of Behavioural Sciences and he has extensive experience in marketing research in both the public and private sectors.

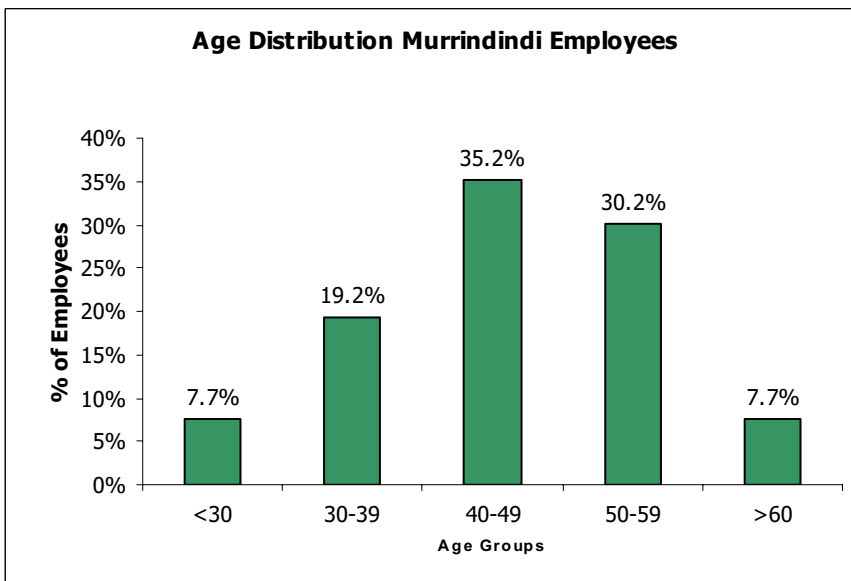
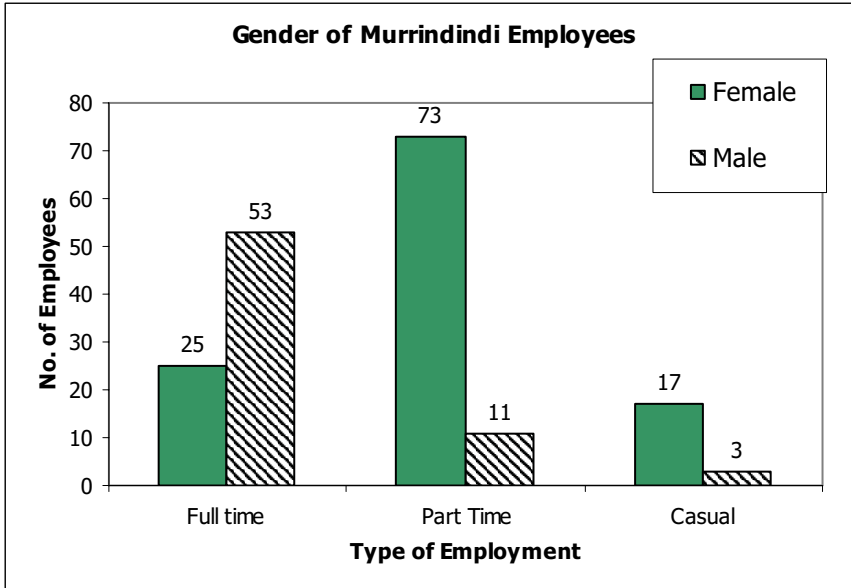
Michael is a Director on the Board of the Outdoor Education Group, is Secretary with the Yea Wetlands Committee and a member of the local Country Fire Authority group.

Organisational Structure



The Team Members

Total number of employees: 182



The large proportion of the Council workforce aged above 50 years indicates that there will be a significant number of staff retirements in the medium term future.

Due to increasing numbers of persons over 45 years living within the Shire, it is anticipated that Council's workforce will continue to contain staff members that reflect this population composition.



Harley & Maureen Shawcross

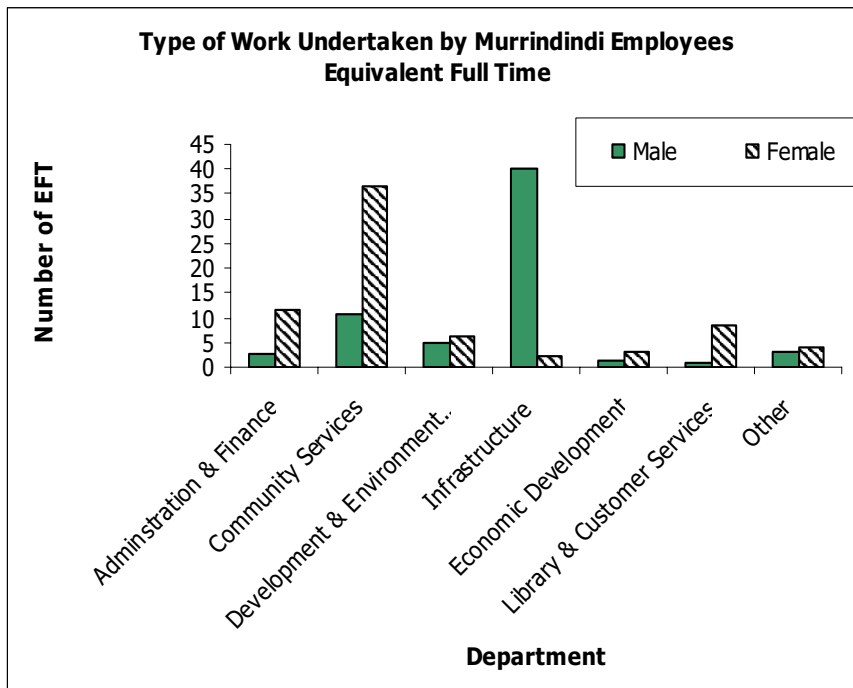
A Combined 61 Years

The Council was sad to say goodbye to two "long term" employees during 2005/06. Maureen and Harley Shawcross retired, having worked for the Council for a combined total of 61 years.

Maureen was a member of the Homecare staff for 28 years, during which time she delivered 26,880 hours of personal care and 17,920 individual client services.

Harley had been with the Council for 33 years and worked in a number of roles as part of the outdoor crew.

The Council wishes them a long and happy retirement.



Equal Employment Opportunity

The Council is committed to the principle of equal opportunity for all employees to ensure that employees are selected, promoted and treated on the basis of their individual talents and capabilities free from bias in any form. The Council recognises that equal opportunity is a fundamental right both in law and practice and commits both within its policies and within its structures to reflect the principles of equal opportunity for all employees. Please see the Council's Equal Employment Opportunity Policy for details.

Performance Coaching

2005/06 year saw the introduction of performance coaching across the Organisation. The principles underpinning performance coaching are that generally people come to work to do a good job, that people are happier when they feel they are contributing well and valued for their contribution and that people perform best when they are intrinsically motivated to do so.

All managers and supervisors have attended performance coaching training and non supervisory employees have received training about what coaching is and how to get the most out of it.

Excellence in Local Government

Business Excellence is a continuous improvement system that the Council has embraced to improve processes through systems and to work on relationships across the organisation. Business Excellence is based on a set of principles, systems, self assessment and well defined process reviews.

The excellence in local government journey has continued. Milestones for 2005/2006 include the design of a process linking service self assessment and Best Value reviews with corporate planning and annual reporting and the introduction of position system views which describe the system for which a position is responsible including the key processes, relationships and result measures.

Risk and safety

The major focus for risk management has been the development of an integrated risk management system that incorporates occupational health and safety, public liability and other risks such as fraud. The new system is linked to the Council's planning and reporting processes. Business continuity planning commenced, including planning for the potential impact of pandemic. Improved processes for risk assessment and hazard identification have been also been introduced.



Staff Satisfaction

Council uses the research company Ambit Insights (incorporating Rodski Survey Research) to survey staff satisfaction.

Employees were asked to rate a series of statements according to their importance for that staff member. In addition, for each of these statements staff were asked to rate their impression of how well Murrindindi Shire Council performed.

The statements were divided into three categories:

- About me
- About my immediate work area
- About Murrindindi Shire Council

Whilst the response rate of 52% was slightly lower than last year (58%), the results showed an improvement of 2.2%.

The following table summarises the top ten importance and performance factors. Of interest is that eight of the top ten performers are also in the top ten for importance.

Top 10 Importance Factors	Top 10 Importance Factors High Importance*
Most Important Factors	Highest Performing Factors
Being satisfied in my job	Providing a safe work environment *
Providing a safe work environment	Working as a team in my work area *
Having the person to whom I report listen and respond to me	Producing quality products and services in my work area *
Working as a team in my work area	Having the person to whom I report listen and respond to me *
Valuing employees in the Murrindindi Shire Council	Balancing work and life demands *
Keeping skilled employees	Understanding where my work area fits into Murrindindi Shire - The Council
Balancing work and life demands	Achieving my work area's goals and objectives *
Producing quality products and services in my work area	Being satisfied in my job *
Achieving my work area's goals and objectives	Demonstration of leadership by the person to whom I report
Trust among people in the Murrindindi Shire Council	My pay and conditions

our processes

Strategies Influencing Council

ENVIRONMENT

Strategic Documents supporting the theme:

- Municipal Strategic Statement
- Kinglake Flowerdale Integrated Strategy Plan - Objectives, Strategic Directions and Actions to Guide the Future Development of the Kinglake and Flowerdale Districts - March 2003
- Management of Significant Landscapes in Murrindindi and Baw Baw (Landscape Assessment Toolkit) - March 2005
- Rural Living Development Guidelines - Murrindindi Shire Council - March 2004
- Rural Residential Study - Murrindindi Shire Council - July 2003
- Yea High Street Development Plan - June 2005
- Urban Design Frameworks - Marysville, Eildon, Alexandra, Buxton, Molesworth, Narbethong, Glenburn, Yea, Strath Creek, Taggerty, Thornton and Yarck
- Lamont Street Development Plan - May 2005.
- Municipal Fire Prevention Strategy
- Industrial Land Demand Study
- Onsite Waste Water Strategy
- Land Capability Assessment Analysis

COMMUNITY

Strategic Documents supporting the theme:

- Municipal Public Health Plan 2004 - 2007
- Early Years Plan – Let's Build Together 2006 – 2009 Murrindindi Early Years Strategy
- Murrindindi Youth Strategy 2006 – 2009
- Management Committees Discussion Paper - January 2006
- Recreation Reserves and Play Strategy 2002
- Recreation Reserves Overall Plans of Development – June 2006
- Bollygum Park Master Plan

INFRASTRUCTURE

Strategic Documents supporting the theme:

- Road Management Act 2004
- Road Management Plan - November 2004
- MAV Step Asset Management Program
- Road & Bridge Construction Strategy 2006
- Urban Design Frameworks (UDF's) - Marysville, Yea, Eildon, Alexandra, Buxton, Molesworth, Narbethong, Glenburn, Yea, Strath Creek, Taggerty, Thornton and Yack
- Moloney Assets Management Systems - Brief report following the survey of road assets - October 2004
- Roads to Recovery 2
- Auslink Program
- Stormwater Management Plan - April 2005
- Marysville Stormwater Strategy 2006
- Yea Flood Study
- Marysville Streetscape Plan
- Kinglake Streetscape Plan
- Buildings Strategy 2002
- Special Charge Scheme Policy and Strategy
- Waste Management Strategy 2006 - 2013
- UT Creek Enhancement Plan
- Murrindindi Construction Annual Budget and Business Plans
- Annual Plant Strategies
- IMS (Integrated Management System) Manual
- Work Plan – Drysdale's Quarry
- Work Plan - Topsie Gully Quarry
- Kinglake District Services Centre Landscaping Plan

LOCAL ECONOMY

Strategic Documents supporting the theme:

- Economic Development Strategy 2003 - 2008
- Industrial Land Demand Study
- Industry Communication Action Plan
- Memorandum of Understanding between Council and the Murrindindi Regional Tourism Association (MRTA)
- Murrindindi Tourism Industry's Strategic Marketing Plan 2005 - 2008

GOVERNANCE

Strategic Documents supporting the theme:

- Strategic Resource Plan (Long Term Financial Plan)
- Debt Strategies
- Rating Strategies
- Annual Budget
- IT Strategy
- Communications Branding Strategy
- Business Continuity Plan
- Community Consultation Policy
- Risk and Safety Strategy
- Risk and Safety System Manual

Council Policies

Organisational

Meeting Rooms and Council Chambers

Administration

Acceptance of Tenders
Compulsory Competitive Tendering
Bids over Budget
Opening of Tenders

Council

Council Vehicle Usage
Customer Services Policy
Annual Leave
Police Checks
Use of Council Seal
Complaints Management
Council Vehicles
Rehabilitation
Risk Management
Human Resources
Equal Employment Opportunity
Councillor's allowance and expense entitlement
Internal Grievance resolution
Confidentiality and Privacy
Email
Study Assistance
Temporary (fixed term) employment
Corporate Card
Attendance at emergencies by volunteers
Staff standards of professional conduct
Community Loan program
Information privacy
Code of ethics for Councillors
Risk and Safety
Community Consultation
Asset Management
Smoke Free workplace
Consumption of Alcohol and Drugs
Business Excellence
Prevention of bullying and occupational violence
Council code of conduct
Employee conduct
Fraud prevention and control
Petty Cash
Councillor Code of Conduct
Sun Smart

Economic Development

Tourism

Community Services

Home and Community Care (HACC)
Youth Services
Home and Community Care (HACC) fees
Sharps
Recreation and Culture
Food Safety Program
Electronic Gaming Machines
Recreation and Leisure

Planning

Development Approvals
Subdivisional roads
Septic tanks
Wastewater treatment associated with development in rural areas
Sheds on vacant land
Tourism sign approvals
Liquor Licence referrals to Council

Engineering

Special rate or charge schemes
Special rate or charge road works property contribution
Mowing of ovals and sporting grounds
Works permits

best value

All of the Council's services must be assessed against the Best Value requirements as set out in the Local Government Act.

The Best Value Principals are:

- Quality and cost standards
- Responsive to community needs
- Accessible to those in the community who need them
- Continuous improvement
- Consult with the community, and
- Report regularly to the community.

Customers were asked to list three factors that indicated good value to them and to rate those items both on how important the item was and how well Council was performing. These results are presented in the customer perception tables on the following pages.

The Council has continued to use the Excellence in Local Government Framework as the basis for assessing services against the Best Value requirements. This process has been further refined and will be used across all services in November 2006.

Best value reviews completed prior to 2005/06:

- Library Services
- Customer Service
- Planning Services
- Maternal & Child Health Services
- Kinglake Child Care Centre
- Cyberbus
- Corporate Services Support
- Aquatic Recreation Facilities
- Family & Youth Services

Services completed during 2005/06:

1. Building Services

Approach

The Municipal Building Surveyor is responsible for the administration and enforcement of the building legislation within the Shire.

Some functions are performed under delegation from the Council and some flow directly from building legislation.

Building services include:

- Issuing of building, final and occupancy permits
- Dealing with a wide range of technical enquiries and approvals
- Managing the Council's register of building activity information
- Establishing constructive relationships with industry professionals ensuring the building service unit keeps up to date with legislative and regulatory changes and passes this information on to the public
- Liaising with statutory planning services
- Investigating complaints
- Enforcing the Building Regulations
- Development of risk assessment policies, plans and reviews for consideration by the Council.

Staffing

Effective Full Time Staff: 2

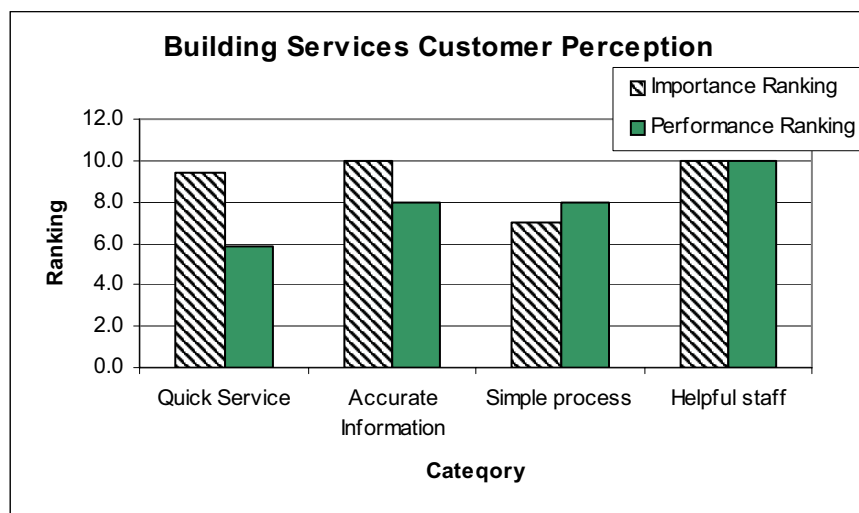
Deployment

The service has one full time building surveyor who travels to all areas of the shire. An all wheel drive vehicle allows access to most areas. In 2004/05 the service issued 255 permits. There are processes in place to track progress of permits so that customers can remain informed.

Community information or education is provided regarding changes to requirements. Information is provided through newspaper articles and pamphlets available in the Council offices.

Results

The top four issues for building services are represented in the table below. The factor identified by the most customers was that the service is "quick". The two highest in relation to importance were that the process is simple and that staff is helpful. The opportunity for improvement identified by these results is to look at improving response time.

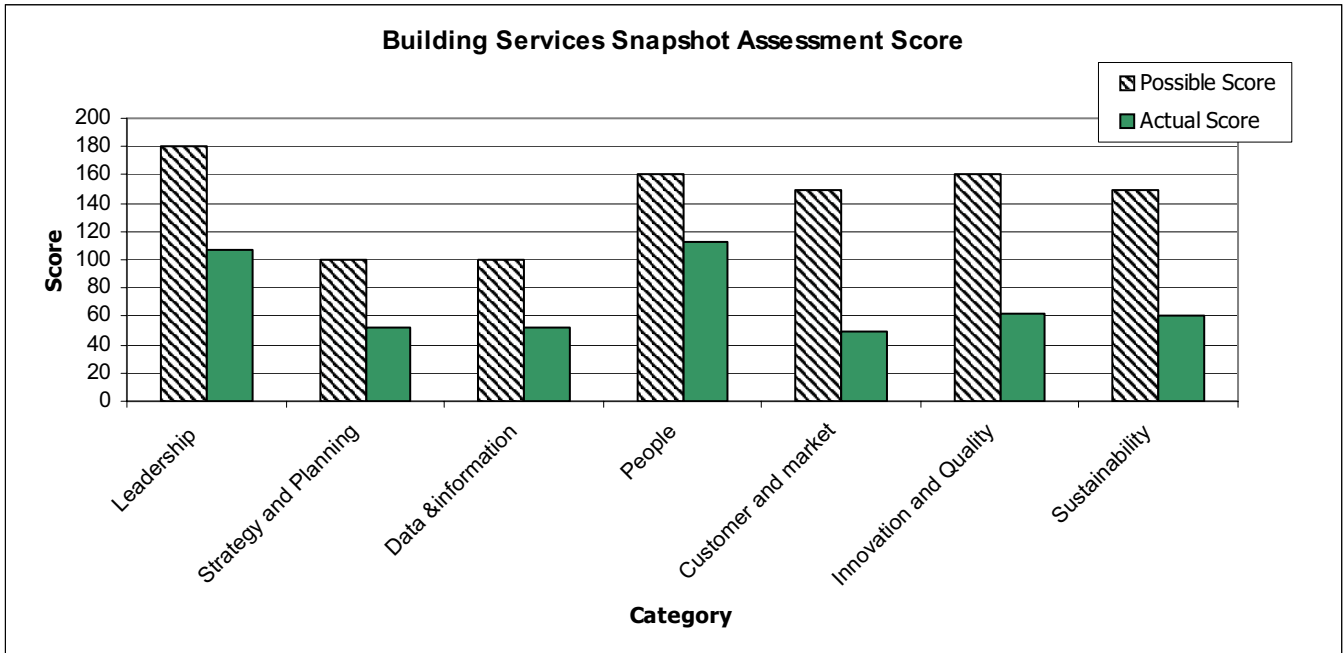


Budget (2004-05)

Total Income:
\$188,600.00

Total Expenditure:
\$151,804.00

Return to The Council:
\$36,796.00



The Australian Business Excellence Framework (ABEF) snapshot score highlighted that the service needs to focus on improving customer and market issues as well as innovation and quality.

The first column in each category above shows what the highest possible score is for the category whilst the second shows the actual score the service has achieved.

Opportunities for Improvement

- analyse customer survey and respond to community requirements
- conduct a service review
- develop a feedback survey as the final step in permit issue process
- Appoint a cadet surveyor
- Provide information on the Council website such as a flowchart of the building permit process which includes links to forms required at various stages
- Development of work activity risk assessment and control plans for the Building Surveying Service.
- Development of individual systems views and work plans for staff that will link into regular reports and performance coaching.
- Development of policy to address the following identified high risk areas (legislative requirement)
 - Essential services safety measures
 - Swimming pool fencing
 - Illegal buildings
 - Public protection

2. Environmental Health Services

Approach

The Environmental Health Service has responsibility for the regulation of safe practices and the promotion of good practice within various industries and activities which impact on public health.

The service ensures that regulations under various state and federal legislation are met and permits and standards are in place if necessary for:

- Food premises
- Food manufacturing
- Septic tanks (new and existing)
- Accommodation providers
- Hairdressers
- Body piercing
- Tattooists
- Waste water disposal
- Infectious diseases surveillance
- Monitoring of tobacco sales and no - smoking regulations

The service is also responsible for providing the following:

- Complaint investigation re breaches of Environment Protection Authority (EPA) standards
- Immunisation program
- Health promotion activities
- Inspection of hygiene standards at the Council pools
- European wasp program

Staffing

Effective Full Time Staff: 1.4

Deployment

The business excellence 'journey' has produced a department systems view which clearly articulates key activities and result areas. The services takes a collaborative and educative rather than enforcement approach, using networks and sharing of information. Legislative regulations and standards as well as organisational policies and processes govern the service.

Significant strategic projects include the Flowerdale Area Improvement Program and the Kinglake Water and Sewerage Innovation Grant for country towns.

NUMBER OF REGISTERED PREMISES 2004/05

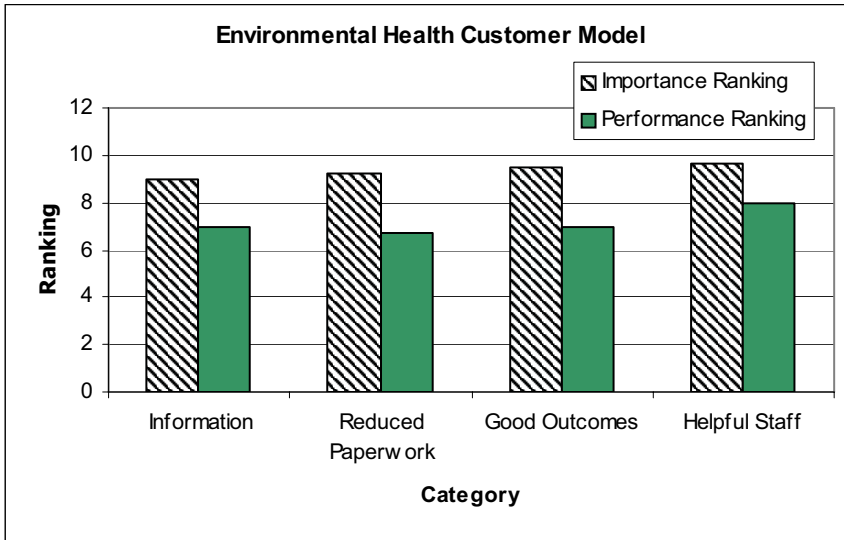
Food	Accommodation	Hairdressers	Caravan Parks	Total
225	49	9	15	298

Budget (2004-05)

Total Income:
\$130,200.00

Total Expenditure:
\$182,560.00

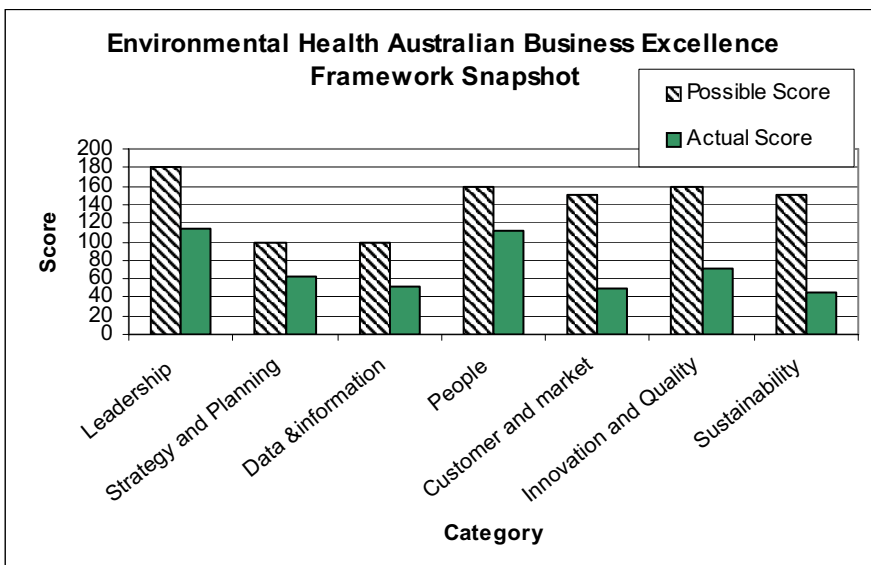
Return to The Council:
\$52,300.00



Results

The priority issues identified by customers were that

- the paperwork involved in the registration process be reduced
- staff were helpful and polite
- information was current and accurate
- outcomes were good



The Australian Business Excellence snapshot score highlighted that the key areas for improvement were sustainability, innovation and quality, and customer and market focus. The first column in each category above shows what the highest possible score is for the category whilst the second shows the actual score the service has achieved.

Opportunities for Improvement:

- Develop a process that recognises the interrelationship of various permits and departments.
- Establish outreach service to various offices.
- Develop a system to track when food premises are due for annual inspection and FSP compliance checks.
- Develop and document food safety program policies and procedures for food premises inspection and compliance.
- Develop individual systems views and work plans which link into regular reporting and performance coaching.
- Develop a policy for registering sporting groups and school canteens under the Food Act.

3. Risk Management Service

Approach

The Risk Management Service has ongoing responsibility for guiding the Council in its ongoing systematic approach to managing risk.

Staffing

Effective Full Time Staff: 0.8 EFT

Deployment

Business Continuity Plans (BCPs) are either in place or being developed as a mechanism to enable delivery of services to the community in the event of significant business interruption.

The Risk Coordinator has been involved in community conferences and providing risk information to community groups.

Risk and safety objectives are incorporated into the Council and department plans and available to the community.

Business excellence is being used to provide the framework for all improvements and is used to incorporate risk into all department plans.

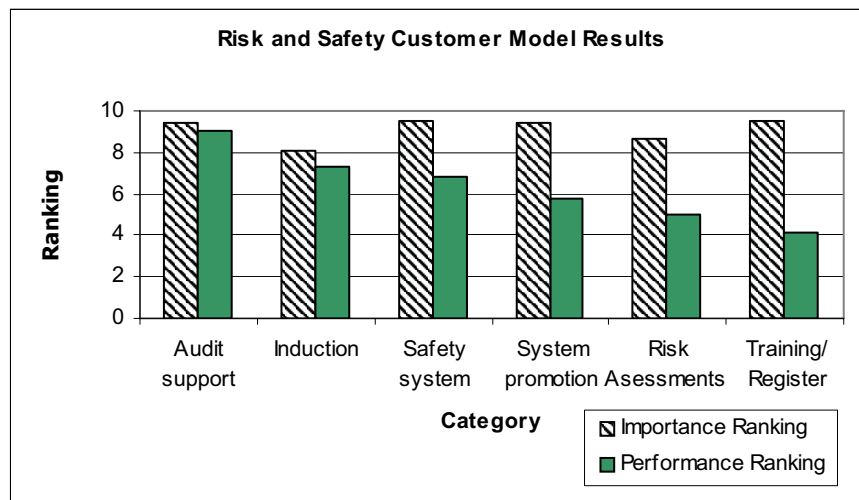
The hazard reporting process has a feedback mechanism built in to it.

The Risk and Safety Committee is actively supported and provides links between the risk coordinator, service units and community user groups.

Results of the external audits are reported publicly through the Council's reporting mechanism.

Budget

Total Expenditure:
\$73,978



Results

The top six requirements from the Risk Management Service identified by customers were:

- Support for external audits such as Work Safe and Civic Mutual Plus (CMP)
- Provision of induction with regard to risk and safety.
- Development of processes, policies and updates regarding legislative requirements
- Promotion and communication of risk and safety requirements
- Assistance to conduct internal risk assessments and audits of internal systems
- Provision and facilitation of training and tracking of skills.

The Australian Business Excellence Framework (ABEF) snapshot score highlighted that the Service needs to focus on improving customer and market issues as well as data and information.

The first columns in each category above shows what the highest possible score is for the category whilst the second shows the actual score the service has achieved.

Opportunities for Improvement:

- Define risk and safety processes clearly so that managers understand what is required of them and can comply
- Develop an annual plan in order to achieve risk and safety system targets
- Promotion and communication of risk and safety requirements
- Assistance to conduct internal risk assessments and audits of internal systems
- Provision and facilitation of training and tracking of skills

4. Local Laws

Approach

The primary focus of this department is achieving a fair standard of 'neighbourhood behaviour' within the Shire. This is done through promotion and education activities for the community as well as the monitoring of statutory requirements.

Specific activities include:

- Increasing community awareness about responsible pet ownership and local laws compliance
- Increasing community awareness of fire prevention and preparedness to minimise fire risk
- Ensuring that requirements of relevant Acts are met by residents and visitors (including the Domestic, Feral & Nuisance Animal Act, the Road Safety Act and the Environmental Protection Act)
- Responding to nuisance complaints
- Coordination of school crossing programs at primary schools

This service provides a 24-hour response. After hours services are targeted at stock on roads and dog attacks.

Staffing

Effective Full Time Staff: 2 EFT By-Laws Officers (office hours) plus 24/7 on-call officers
0.2 EFT School Crossing Supervisors
4 volunteer School Crossing Supervisors

Deployment

Service has two staff members available 9am – 5 pm five days per week, with one person on call at all other times. Staff has vehicles capable of accessing remote areas of the Shire and much of staff time is spent 'on the road'. There is close cooperation with emergency services providers including the police and various regional networks. The Service provides information through newspaper articles, pamphlets available at the Council offices.

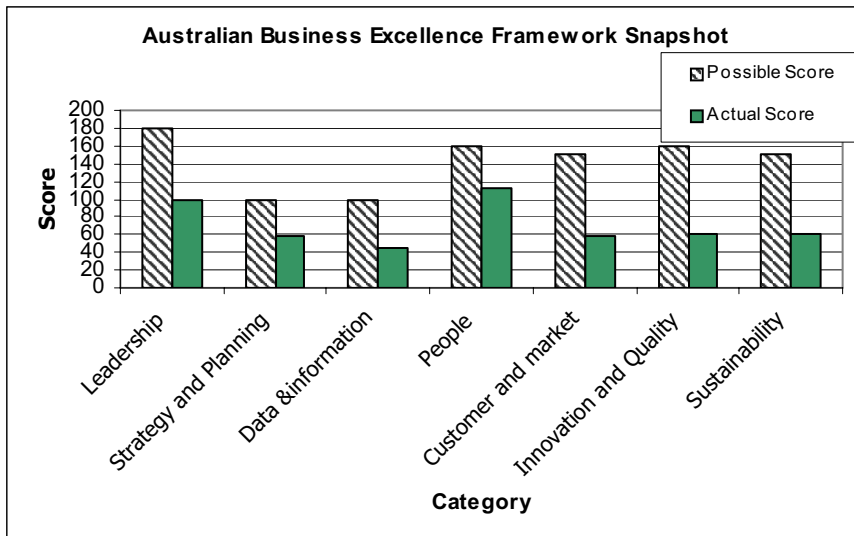
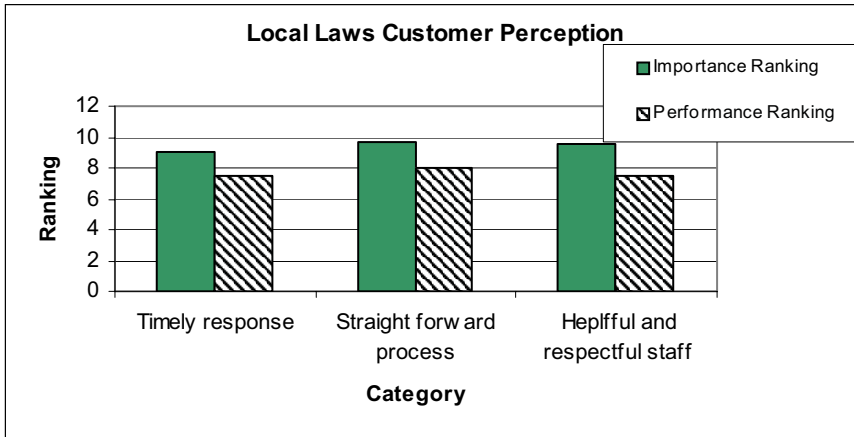
The focus of the Service is to promote strong networking and relationships with community groups and agencies and on the facilitation and enforcement of positive outcomes for nuisance problems identified by community members.

Budget (2004-05)

Total Income:
\$117,500

Total Expenditure:
\$271,000

Return to The Council:
\$153,500



Results

The key issues identified by Local Laws customers were:

- A timely response to enquiries and concerns
- Straight forward processes and
- Helpful and respectful staff

Opportunities for improvement from the above snap shot assessment for Local Laws lie in the areas of leadership, customer and market, innovation and quality and sustainability.

Opportunities for Improvement

- Review of forms and processes with a view to making both simpler and easier to understand
- Use results from customer model survey to improve process and product improvement
- Training program to identify gaps in skills
- Respond to issues raised in customer model survey for clear information and straightforward processes
- Development of work activity risk assessment and control plans for the Local Laws Service
- Development of individual systems views and work plans for staff that will link into regular reports and performance coaching
- Implement the use of GPS technology to improve enforcement of unregistered animals

5. Aged & Disability Services

Approach

The Aged and Disability Unit provides care and support in home and community based settings to older people, younger people with disabilities and their carers. The Service aims to enhance the independence of people in these groups and to avoid their premature or inappropriate admission to long-term residential care. This is achieved through the provision of a comprehensive, co-ordinated and integrated range of basic maintenance and support services that are flexible, delivered in a timely manner and respond to the individual needs of clients.

The Service is provided equitably across the Shire with 626 clients receiving services. Access, however is based on need and not just geographical location. Services provided include home maintenance and garden care, home care, personal care, delivered meals, social support, social support meals and respite.

Services are funded through the Home and Community Care program (HACC) a Commonwealth/State funded program administered through the Victorian Department of Human Services, Veterans Home Care and the Commonwealth for Community Aged Care Packages (CACPS) and the National Respite for Carers Program (NRCP).

Staffing:

Effective Full Time Staff: 34.02

Deployment

Client feedback is received through a range of methods, including informal feedback, complaints and client satisfaction surveys. The information is used to modify/redesign individual client service plans. Quarterly newsletters are produced, items appear regularly in the local media and the local radio station is used.

Monthly monitoring of geographic coverage ensures services are provided across the Shire.

The HACC Cultural Action Plan guides practice that ensures access to services by special needs groups occurs on a non-discriminatory basis. Policies and processes are in place to determine priority of access when available resources cannot meet demand.

Continuous improvement processes are incorporated into everyday practice usually as a response to a particular need. Business excellence provides tools for continuous improvement that enables the unit to comply with external quality reporting processes. All team members have completed business excellence training and have engaged in process improvement activities.

Results

Surveys were distributed to 100 clients ensuring a spread across all service types. 49 clients or almost 50% responded which can be considered a high response rate.

In the following graphs the first column in each category shows what the highest possible score is for the category whilst the second shows the actual score the service has achieved. The snapshot score highlighted that the service needs to focus on improving in the areas of innovation and quality as well as sustainability.

Opportunities for Improvement

- Implement a formal review system to demonstrate quantifiable outcomes of service changes that includes pre and post data analysis
- In the 2005 - 2008 HACC Validation process the Service achieved a "Good Standard" with a score between 17.4 and 15 or higher
- To have documented evidence of quality systems in place (Business Excellence and Best Value) that demonstrate how services meet the standards and other departmental expectations
- Further develop the client information to more clearly inform them of available services and their rights as clients
- Develop a more comprehensive survey that will provide the Council with detailed information on what clients value and their satisfaction with services

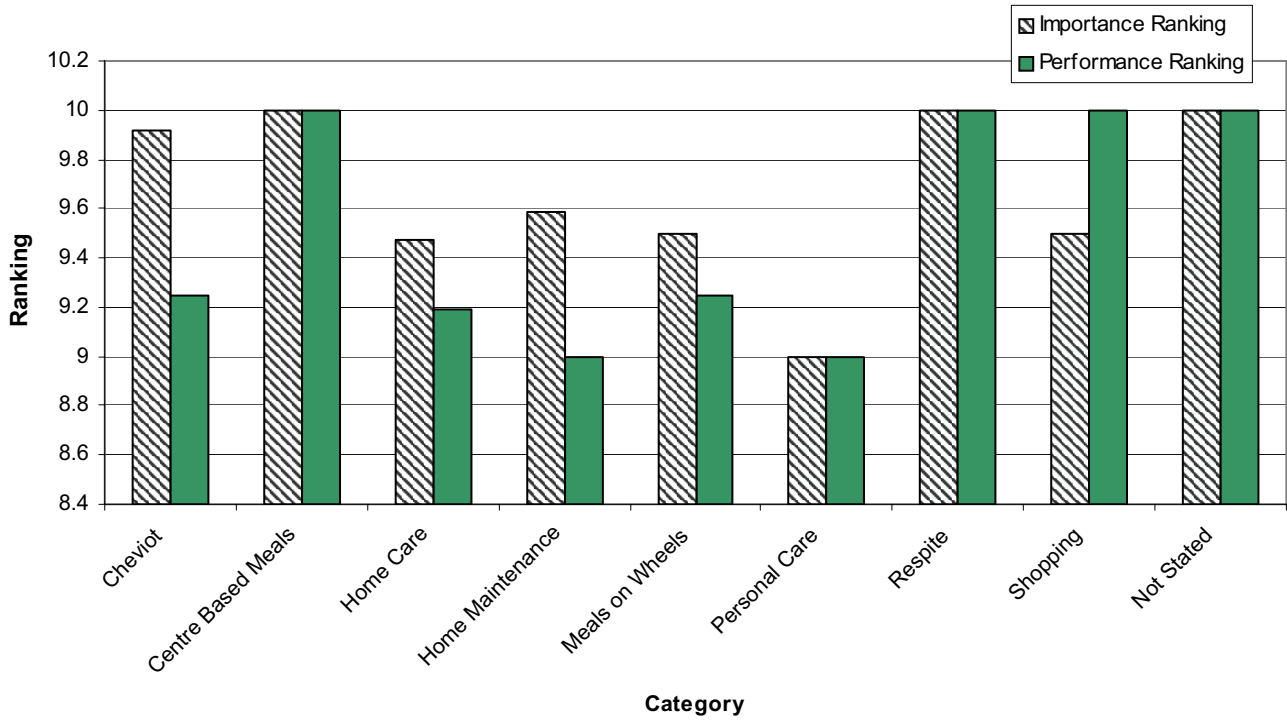
Budget (2004-05)

Total Income:
\$1,182,060

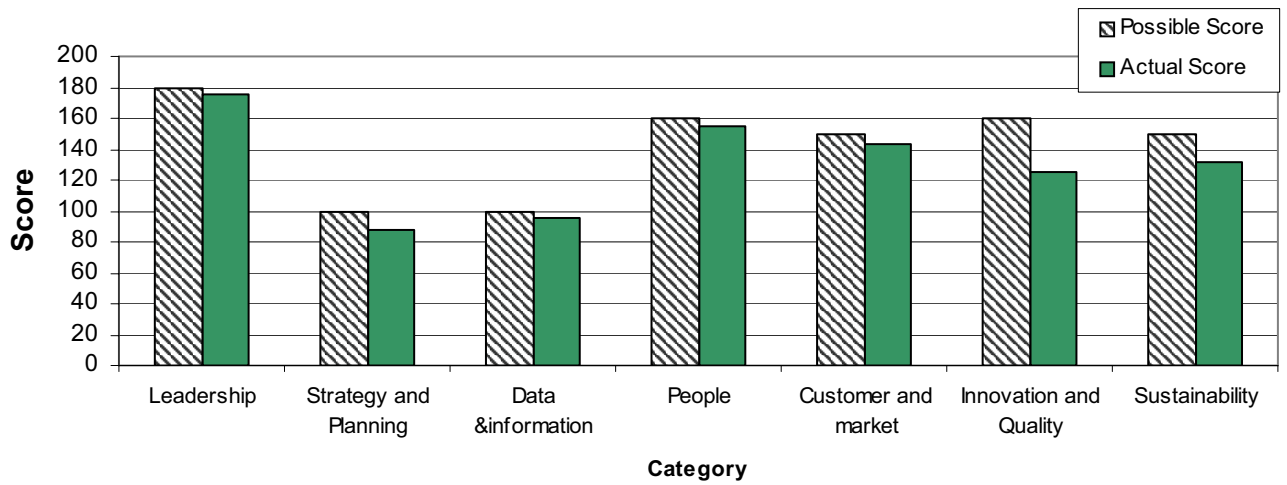
Total Expenditure:
\$1,310,164

Return to The Council:
\$128,104

Age and Disability Customer Perception



Age and Disability Australian Business Excellence Framework Snapshot



Community Grants

During 2005/06 the Murrindindi Shire Council made a number of donations and grants to a wide range of community groups in an effort to enhance local events and extend the number of opportunities available within its communities.

Received By	Amount
1st Yea Scout Group	\$640.00
Alexandra Community Leisure Centre	\$7,000.00
Alexandra Preschool	\$2,825.00
Alexandra Rotary Club	\$1,500.00
Alexandra Secondary College	\$500.00
Alexandra Traders & Tourism	\$950.00
Buxton Progress Association	\$600.00
Buxton Rural Fire Brigade	\$1,410.00
CJ Dennis Reserve Committee of Management	\$2,775.00
Eildon Community Leisure Centre	\$1,000.00
Eildon Preschool	\$4,000.00
Flowerdale Preschool	\$2,000.00
Glenburn Community Progress Association	\$1,480.00
Jarara Community Centre	\$2,000.00
KANDO	\$2,600.00
Kinglake Community Centre	\$2,000.00
Kinglake Pony Club	\$1,664.00
Kinglake Preschool	\$2,000.00
Kinglake Ranges Neighbourhood House	\$1,480.00
Kinglake Recreation Reserve-Bollygum Park	\$1,000.00
Kinglake Senior Citizens	\$4,000.00
Kinglake West Mechanics Institute Hall	\$914.00
Marysville Lions Club	\$1,000.00
Marysville Preschool	\$4,000.00
Marysville Primary School	\$1,000.00
Murrindindi Historical Register	\$3,780.00
Rainbow Lorikeets Steiner Playgroup	\$598.00
Spring Valley Recreation Reserve	\$1,000.00
State Emergency Service - Alexandra	\$9,950.00
State Emergency Service - Kinglake	\$9,950.00
State Emergency Service - Marysville	\$9,950.00
Strath Creek Flowerdale Business & Tourism Assoc	\$500.00
Eildon Action	\$1,250.00
Trevor Day Fund	\$2,000.00
Upper Goulburn Rural Counselling Service	\$2,000.00
Yea Community Services Group	\$2,000.00
Yea High School	\$500.00
Yea Indoor Recreation Centre	\$3,818.00
Yea Preschool	\$1,000.00
Yea Rotary Club	\$1,500.00
Yea Senior Citizens	\$2,000.00
Total of donations and grants with a value of less than \$500 paid to 24 organisations	
Total Grants:	\$102,134.00

Memberships and Subscriptions

During 2005/06 the Murrindindi Shire Council was a member of a range of professional groups and associations as set out below:

Organisation	Membership Fee
Local Government Professionals	\$500.00
Personnel Development	\$2,000.00
Australian Local Government Job Directory	\$528.00
Municipal Association Of Victoria	\$15,600.00
Australian Library	\$280.00
Goulburn Valley Regional Waste Management Group	\$6,000.00
Family Day Care - The Council	\$58.00
Victorian Employers Chamber Of Commerce & Industry	\$2,326.00
Victorian Employers Chamber Of Commerce & Industry-BackPackers	\$300.00
Timber Towns Victoria	\$2,000.00
Viclink	\$500.00
Family Day Care Association	\$145.00
Livestock Saleyards Association Of Victoria	\$825.00
Civil Contractors Federation	\$2,060.00
National Saleyards Quality Assurance Ltd	\$396.00
Life Saving Victoria	\$60.00
Children's Book Council of Australia	\$55.00
Country Public Libraries Group Victoria	\$120.00
SAI Global	\$375.00
Regional Victoria	\$165.00
Total cost of membership:	\$34,293.00

Whistleblower Protection

In accordance with the provisions of the Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001, the Council has put in place procedures to facilitate the making of disclosures. Council does not tolerate improper conduct by its employees, officers or members, nor the taking of reprisals against those who come forward to disclose such conduct.

Daniel Hogan, Chief Executive Officer, is the Council's Protected Disclosure Coordinator.

2005/06 REPORTING

Number of disclosures made: **Nil**

Disclosures referred to Ombudsman for determination: **Nil**

Disclosures referred by Ombudsman: **Nil**

Disclosures referred to Ombudsman to investigate: **Nil**

Investigations taken over by the Ombudsman: **Nil**

Requests made under Sec. 74 during the year to Ombudsman to investigate disclosed matters: **Nil**

Disclosures the public body has declined to investigate: **Nil**

Disclosures that were substantiated on investigation: **Nil**

Recommendations by the Ombudsman under this Act that relate to Murrindindi Shire The Council: **Nil**

Freedom of Information

The purpose of the Freedom of Information Act 1982 is to provide members of the public with a means of access to Murrindindi Shire Council documents and information unless that document is deemed exempt under the Act.

In 2005/06 the Murrindindi Shire Council received five applications under the Freedom of Information Act, the same as 2003/04 and 2004/05.

Of the applications received, the applicant did not proceed with one application and four applications were granted full access under the Freedom of Information Act.

Requests for access to documents under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) are made in writing and lodged with the Freedom of Information Officer, Murrindindi Shire Council, PO Box 138, Alexandra, 3714. Usually a fee of \$21.50 is required to accompany the application.

Information Privacy

The Council believes that the responsible handling of personal information is a key aspect of governance, and is strongly committed to protecting an individual's right to privacy in accordance with the Victorian Information Privacy Act 2000.

Responsibility for the implementation of this legislation lies with all Councillors, staff, contractors and volunteers engaged with the Council.

Individuals may seek access to their own records held by the Council or make a formal complaint if they believe their privacy has been breached. Enquiries to be made to Freedom of Information Officer, Murrindindi Shire Council, PO Box 138, Alexandra, 3714.

Council Information Available for Inspection

The following documents were available for inspection at the Municipal Offices Alexandra, in accordance with Section 222 of the Local Government Act, 1989.

- Financial Statements
- Details of allowances fixed for the Mayor and Councillors
- Details of Senior Officers current gross salaries, allowances and other benefits for the current financial year and two (2) previous financial years
- Details of overseas and interstate travel undertaken in an official capacity by Councillors or any member of Council staff in the previous 12 months
- Names of Council Officers who were required to submit a return of interest during the financial year and the dates returns were submitted
- Names of Councillors who submitted returns of interest during the financial year and the dates the returns were submitted
- Agendas for and Minutes of Ordinary and Special Meetings kept under Section 93 of the Act, except where such minutes relate to parts of meetings, which have been closed to members of the public under Section 89 of the Act
- A list of all special committees established by the Council and the purpose for which each committee was established
- A list of all special committees established by the Council which were abolished or ceased to function during the financial year
- Minutes of meetings of Special Committees established under Section 86 of the Act except where such minutes relate to parts of meetings which have been closed to members of the public under Section 89 of the Act
- Agreements to establish regional libraries under Section 196 of the Act
- Register of delegations kept under Section 87 of the Act
- Register of delegations kept under Section 88 of the Act
- Submissions received under Section 223 of the Act during the previous 12 months
- Register of leases entered into by the Council
- Register of Authorised Officers
- List of donations and grants made by the Council during the financial year.
- List of names of organisations of which the Council was a member during the financial year
- List of contracts valued at \$100,000 or more which the Council entered into during the financial year without first engaging in a competitive process

National Competition Policy Compliance – 2005/06

Certification by Chief Executive Officer

Murrindindi Shire Council has complied with the requirements of the Local Government Improvement Incentive Program in respect of:-

- National Competition Policy (in accordance with *National Competition Policy and Local Government – A Revised Statement of Victorian Government Policy (January 2002)*);

for the financial year 2005/06 as set out below:

	A. Trade Practices Compliance <i>State whether the Council is compliant or non-compliant. If non-compliant, justify or cite actions to redress.</i>	Compliant
	B. Local Laws Compliance <i>State whether the Council is compliant or non-compliant. If non-compliant, justify or cite actions to redress.</i>	Compliant
	C. Competitive Neutrality Compliance <i>State whether the Council is compliant or non-compliant for all significant businesses. If non-compliant, justify or cite actions to redress.</i>	Compliant

I certify that:

this statement has been prepared in accordance with the 2005/06 Local Government Improvement Incentive guidelines issued in August 2006 for reporting on the following criterion :- National Competition Policy in accordance with *National Competition Policy and Local Government – A Revised Statement of Victorian Government Policy (January 2002)*; and

this statement presents fairly the Council's implementation of the National Competition Policy.

Signed:



D D Hogan
(Chief Executive Officer)

Date: 7 September 2006.

a u d i t c o m m i t t e e

The Internal Audit Committee comprises two independent external members, the Internal Auditor, the Mayor and the Chair of the Corporate Services Portfolio. Senior Officers including the Chief Executive Officer also attend to present information and reports and to service the Committee.

Rodney Thomas, as an independent member, chairs the Committee. Other members of the Committee include Jeff Hunter (independent member), Cr Chris Healy (Chair of Corporate Services Portfolio) and Cr Lyn Gunter (Mayor).

The Committee operates under best practice guidelines issued by the State Government.

The Committee meets four times per year.

An internal audit program is prepared and implemented each year.

In 2005 / 06 the Committee considered the following audits:

- Pecuniary Interest – the objectives of the audit was to ensure that statutory pecuniary interest returns and registers are being prepared for councillors and staff and that commercial relationships and remuneration received by councillors is monitored by the council for appropriateness.
- Insurances – the objectives of the audit was to ensure insurance policies are up to date, adequate procedures are in place to identify insurable risks, an appropriate level of insurance cover exists and that the insurance policies are appropriate to the Council's needs.
- Financial Sustainability – the objective of the audit was to assess the Council's medium and long-term financial sustainability.
- Review of Chief Executive Officer's credit card – this review occurs annually in accordance with the Corporate Card Policy.

The financial sustainability audit was not finalised by the 30 June 2006 due to budget and year end financial processes. It is anticipated that the audit will be presented to the Committee at the November 2006 meeting.

i n t r o d u c t i o n t o f i n a n c i a l s

The Financial Report presents Council's financial performance and financial position for the year ended 30 June 2006.

This financial report is a general purpose financial report that consists of an Income Statement, Balance Sheet, Statement of Changes in Equity, Cash Flow Statement and notes accompanying these financial statements. The general purpose financial report complies with Australian Accounting Standards and other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board, Urgent Issues Group Interpretations, the Local Government Act 1989 and the Local Government (Finance and Reporting) Regulations 2004.

Note 1 to the accounts outlines the significant accounting policies adopted in preparation of the financial statements.

The report has been examined by Council's Audit Committee and the Council. The Victorian Auditor General has audited the report and given audit clearance in the form of an 'unqualified' audit opinion.

The Income Statement

The Income Statement sets out the movement in relation to revenue, expenses and other adjustments from all activities and compares these figures to the previous financial year. The Income Statement requires revenues to be separately disclosed where the item is of such a size, nature and incidence that its disclosure is relevant in explaining the performance of the Council.

The increase in revenue for the 2006 financial year reflects an increase in rate revenue as a result of increase in the valuation base and a higher rate in the dollar for capital improved values. Council also reports an increase in the non recurrent grants received during the year. The most significant increase is in grants for roads to recovery and for initiatives in human services.

Balance Sheet

The Balance Sheet shows a snap shot of the financial situation at the end of the period. It shows the total of what is owned (assets) less what is owed (liabilities). The Assets and liabilities are separated into current and non-current. Current means those assets or liabilities that fall due in the next twelve months.

The 'bottom line' of this statement is net assets, which is the net worth of the Council.

The change in net assets between the two (2) years shows how the financial position has changed over the period.

The most significant changes to assets include the increase in current assets, trade and other receivables. Note 18 indicates an increase in debtors which is as a result of major works being completed and invoiced at the end of the financial year where payment would not be expected to be received until the beginning of the new financial year. Had these works been completed and paid earlier in the year it would be fair to say that the increase would be reflected in 'cash and cash equivalents'.

The increase in non current assets is as a result of Council's commitment to addressing the infrastructure gap. Strategic planning for the replacement of plant and equipment combined with long term strategic planning for the upgrade, replacement and improvement of its infrastructure is reflected in the increase in value of its assets. A more detailed explanation of this increase is outlined in note 22 of the financial report.

The increase in liabilities is mainly due to an increase in interest bearing loans and borrowings in line with Council's long term financial plan and debt strategies. The increase in borrowings has been as a result of funding major projects, plant replacement and capital works. The result of this borrowing strategy is reflected in the increase in assets as described above.

The balance sheet also reflects an increase in total equity and demonstrates Council's ability to meet its commitments in accordance with long term strategic plans.

Statement of Changes in Equity

The statement of changes in equity tables the types of movement and adjustments in the financial reporting that determines the balance of ratepayers equity at the end of the reporting period.

The most significant item in this table is the net asset revaluation of \$12,948,979 that is the result of the recognition and revaluation of drainage assets and the indexation of valuations of infrastructure, roads and bridges and land and buildings (refer Note 27)

Cash Flow Statement

The Cash Flows Statement shows what has happened during the year in terms of cash. It explains what cash movements have resulted in the difference in the cash balance at the beginning and end of the year.

The net cash flows from operating activities shows how much cash is remaining after paying for Council operations and commitments. The information in the Cash Flow Statement assists in the assessment of the ability to generate cash flows, meet financial commitments as they fall due including the servicing of borrowings and fund changes in the scope or nature of activities.

The Cash Flow Statement also reports on Restriction on cash assets. Note 31 of the accounts more fully outlines the legislative restrictions to provide for employee entitlements, and reserve funds.

Performance Statement

The performance statement provides indicators that measure the targets of Council and compare these to the previous financial year. It is worth noting that the sustainability indicator reports an increase of average liabilities per assessment of \$93.44 and an operating result increase of \$80.31. This is a reflection of Council's debt management strategy whereby borrowing has been increased to fund capital improvement and the provision for landfill rehabilitation. The increase in the value of assets, as a result of planned works and the recognition and revaluation processes, far outweighs the cost of borrowing and extends the future life of our investments.

The performance indicator for Infrastructure reflects a decline in capital expenditure per assessment and below target results for Renewal and Maintenance Gaps and the percentage of Capital Works Budget achieved. This result has been influenced by the need to defer some planned capital works in order to address the natural disasters of floods and fires and the shortage of engineering staff to finalise a number of projects including road management plan, special charge projects and the infrastructure management plan. However, the variance in the percentage of capital works budget achieved is minimal.

Summary

The financial statements represent a positive outcome for the 2005/06 financial year. Council has demonstrated an ability to meet operational expenses, statutory requirements and its commitment to achieving the goals as set by the Council Plan 2004-2007 and its long term Strategic Resource Plan. At the end of the reporting period Council has maintained the level of cash required to be able to proceed into the new financial year in the manner as outlined in the new Council Plan.

The ongoing adoption of the Australian equivalent to International Financial Reporting Standards (AIFRS) has caused a significant adjustment to the 2005 comparatives and the 2006 non current assets.

In the 2005 financial reports there was recognition of a provision for landfill rehabilitation expense to the value of \$787,685 under AASB1044 'Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets'. To fully comply with the AIFRS the recognition of the landfill should have been capitalised and depreciated over the life of the asset. The prior year balances have been adjusted to move the reporting from the expense account to the asset account in accordance with AASB 116 'Property, Plant and Equipment'.

The main impact on Council's financial reports for the 2005-06 financial year relate to revaluation of assets and recognition of assets also under AASB 116 'Property, Plant and Equipment'. The revaluation of assets has impacted on the amount of depreciation and in turn report significant variances in the Standard Statements. These recognitions do not affect cash balances but significantly increase the Balance Sheet outcome. These adjustments are clearly demonstrated in the Statement of Changes in Equity.

Council experienced a large increase in grants from State and Federal Government in the 2005/06 financial year.

Funds made available for disaster recovery for storm damage and fires in the vicinity of \$473,000 inflates revenue balances and the cost for these operations also inflates the total expenses figures. However these amounts are intended to be cost neutral, except for the first \$70,000, and do not materially affect the surplus figures for the period.

Funds made available for other projects including roads to recovery (\$775,000) and Yea Children's Precinct (\$250,000) were received late in the reporting period and will carry forward into the 2006/07 financial year.

As reported in the Standard Statement of Income, the total expenses for the reporting period are over the budgeted figure by \$349,651. The major influences on this variance is as follows:

- The decreased cost of employee benefits as a result of not being able to fill positions
- The increased cost of items reported under Materials & Services including the increased cost of consultants to cover vacant positions and also the expenditure in relation to disaster recovery that has been recouped from State and Federal sources.
- An increase in the depreciation and amortisation is as a result of the increase in the value of Council's assets which has occurred because of the revaluation process, Council's asset management plans for the renewal, replacement and maintenance of assets

The Council has faced some challenges over the past few years with the changes in legislation, the need to financially back provisions for employee benefits and provisions for landfill as well as endeavouring to commit to a substantial focus on closing the infrastructure gap and enhancing its asset base.

Council believes that the 2005/06 financial year end reports indicate that it can continue to proceed with its long term strategic plan as indicated in the 2006/07 budget document.