

ANNUAL REPORT



Bega Valley Shire Council

2007/2008

annual report 07/08

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begavally shire council

annual report 2007/08

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Bega Valley Shire Council
your place, **our place, great place**

The Bega Valley Shire will remain a community that works together to achieve a balance between quality of life, sustainable development and conservation of the environment.

council's goal future success



Who we are

The Bega Valley Shire is located at the south-eastern extremity of New South Wales. The Shire's coastal fringe extends from Wallaga Lake in the north to Cape Howe and the Victorian border in the south. Collectively this 225-kilometre section of coastline forms the beautiful Sapphire Coast. Inland the higher peaks of the Great Dividing Range give way to rolling hills and numerous rivers and streams. Approximately 73% of the Shire's 6,280 square kilometres is National Park or State Forest.

The Bega Valley Shire was formed in 1981 through the amalgamation of the Imlay Shire Council, the Mumbulla Shire Council and the Bega Valley Municipality.

The Shire has a relatively small population of approximately 32,900 people. The Shire's combination of natural beauty, temperate climate, its proximity to Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra and its range of towns, villages and recreational opportunities and commercial enterprises has attracted visitors and new residents for many years.

Our Vision Banner and Mission Statement

Your place, our place, great place.

The Bega Valley Shire will remain a community that works together to achieve a balance between quality of life, sustainable development and conservation of the environment.

The Future

It is anticipated that financial pressure on Council and the broader community will continue for the foreseeable future. Council has implemented a series of general rate increases over recent years and implemented a variety of cost saving initiatives.

Implementation of difficult decisions over the past three or four years has increased financial sustainability and begun to address Council's infrastructure shortfall, albeit with a reduction in some service delivery areas and additional financial burden for ratepayers.

The challenge for Council now is to continue the reform program by continuing to secure targeted grant funds and implementing actions that achieve greater outcomes for the same or reduced resources.

Council also looks forward to the release of the Department of Local Government's new Integrated Community Strategic Planning framework. It is hoped that these guidelines will enable Council to build upon its current tiered corporate planning and reporting model and to more comprehensively integrate social, environmental and economic considerations into all of its activities.

Change management continues to be a focus and priority for Council as state, national and international issues increasingly impact at the local level.

Council is committed to continuing to play a role in addressing financial, social and environmental issues and ensuring that the Shire continues to be a destination of choice for residential, business and visitor activity.

elected members **councillors**



Mayor
Cr Tony Allen
110 Country Boundary Road
Cobargo 2550



Cr John Aveyard
24 Ida Rodd Drive, Eden 2551
(retired September 2008)



Deputy Mayor
Cr Michael Britten
PO Box 204, Merimbula 2548
(elected September 2008)



Cr Pat Campbell
PO Box 7169, Tathra 2550
(elected September 2008)



Cr Fraser Buchanan
PO Box 281, Pambula 2549
(not returned)



Cr Keith Hughes
PO Box 915, Bega 2550



Cr David Hede
42 Lake Street, Merimbula
2548



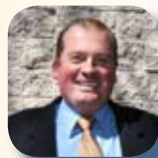
Deputy Mayor
Cr Janette Neilson
PO Box 87, Bermagui 2546
(retired September 2008)



Cr Joyce McGill
2/84 Surf Circle, Tura Beach
2548
(retired September 2008)



Cr Adrian Sandrey
158 Imlay Street, Eden 2551
(elected September 2008)



Cr Paul Pincini
327 Bald Hills Road, Pambula
2547
(elected September 2008)



Cr Michael Skitt
27 Bramble Street, Eden 2551
(retired September 2008)



Cr Liz Seckold
C/- Bega Valley Shire Council,
PO Box 492, Bega 2550
(elected September 2008)



Cr Graeme Wykes
C/- Bega Valley Shire Council,
PO Box 492, Bega 2550
(elected September 2008)



Cr Bill Taylor
PO Box 491, Bega 2550
(retired September 2008)

your council what we do



How council operates

Council is a local statutory authority with powers and responsibilities conferred from State and Federal Parliament. The main piece of legislation that details the powers of local councils is the Local Government Act 1993. Council provides a range of day-to-day services for our community and is responsible for issues that affect our daily lives. Bega Valley Shire Council is committed to ensuring that the Council and the community work in partnership to achieve the best outcome for the Shire.

Councillors

Bega Valley Shire Council is controlled by nine elected Councillors. The Councillors are elected every four years. Councillors provide policy and strategic direction for the organisation.

Councillors vote for the Mayor each year and in September 2008, Councillor Tony Allen was re-elected as Mayor of Bega Valley Shire Council. Five standing councillors (2004-2008) retired at the September 2008 elections, Janette Neilson Deputy Mayor, John Aveyard, Bill Taylor, Joyce McGill and Michael Skitt with Councillor Fraser Buchanan not returned.

Corporate structure

Council's General Manager, Peter Tegart, controls day-to-day operations.

Responsible to the General Manager are Group Managers and the Chief Operations Officer

Council meetings

Everyone is invited to attend meetings of Council. Council meetings were held on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month until September 2008 and are now held every third Tuesday. The meetings start at 2pm and are held in the Council Chambers at Zingel Place Bega. Extraordinary meetings are held from time to time to attend to urgent matters which require the decision of the full council.

The meeting agenda is available on Council's web site after 5pm on the Thursday or at Council's Offices on the Friday prior to the meetings. You can also subscribe to Council's E-Agenda which will be emailed to you on the Thursday evening prior to a council meeting.

Committees of Council

Council has statutory authority under Section 355 of the Local Government Act (1993) to establish committees to undertake identified tasks and functions. There are more than 63 different Section 355 committees that operate within the Shire. The majority of these committees are 'management committees', responsible for the day to day care and control of a Council facility. The main groups of these management committees deal with halls, sports grounds and cemeteries. The other common committee type are 'advisory committees', these provide guidance and recommendations to Council about specific interest areas such as social planning, disability access, youth services, cultural matters and environmental issues.

Volunteers

All of the Council committees are served by a host of volunteers. Currently more than 500 individuals volunteer their time, skills and energy to providing facilities and services to the broader community. Without this effort, Council would not be able to provide the range and quantity of services that are currently enjoyed. Volunteers are a critical resource giving Council the capacity to provide the services it does.

Where we are and how to contact us

Bega Valley Shire Council Administration Centre is located in Zingel Place Bega and is open from Monday to Friday between 8.30am and 5pm.

You can contact Council by visiting the office or by post, DX, phone, fax and email or you can ring the after hours number for emergencies.

Postal Address: PO Box 492, Bega NSW 2550
DX: 4904 Bega
Phone: (02) 6499 2222, Fax: (02) 6499 2200
Email: council@begavalley.nsw.gov.au
After Hours Phone: 6492 4499

Council's main library is located in Council's Administration Building in Zingel Place Bega with branch offices in Bermagui, Merimbula and Eden and a mobile service that runs daily.

Opening Hours:

- Bega Library: Open from Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 5.30pm and Saturday 9am to noon. Contact number is 6499 2127.
- Bermagui Branch Library: Open on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 9.30am to 5pm. Contact number is 6499 2411.
- Eden Branch Library: Open from Tuesday to Friday 9.30am to 5pm and 9am to noon on Saturday. Contact number is 6499 2451.
- Merimbula Branch Library: Open Monday to Thursday from 9.30am to 5pm and Saturday 9am to noon. Contact number is 6499 2482.

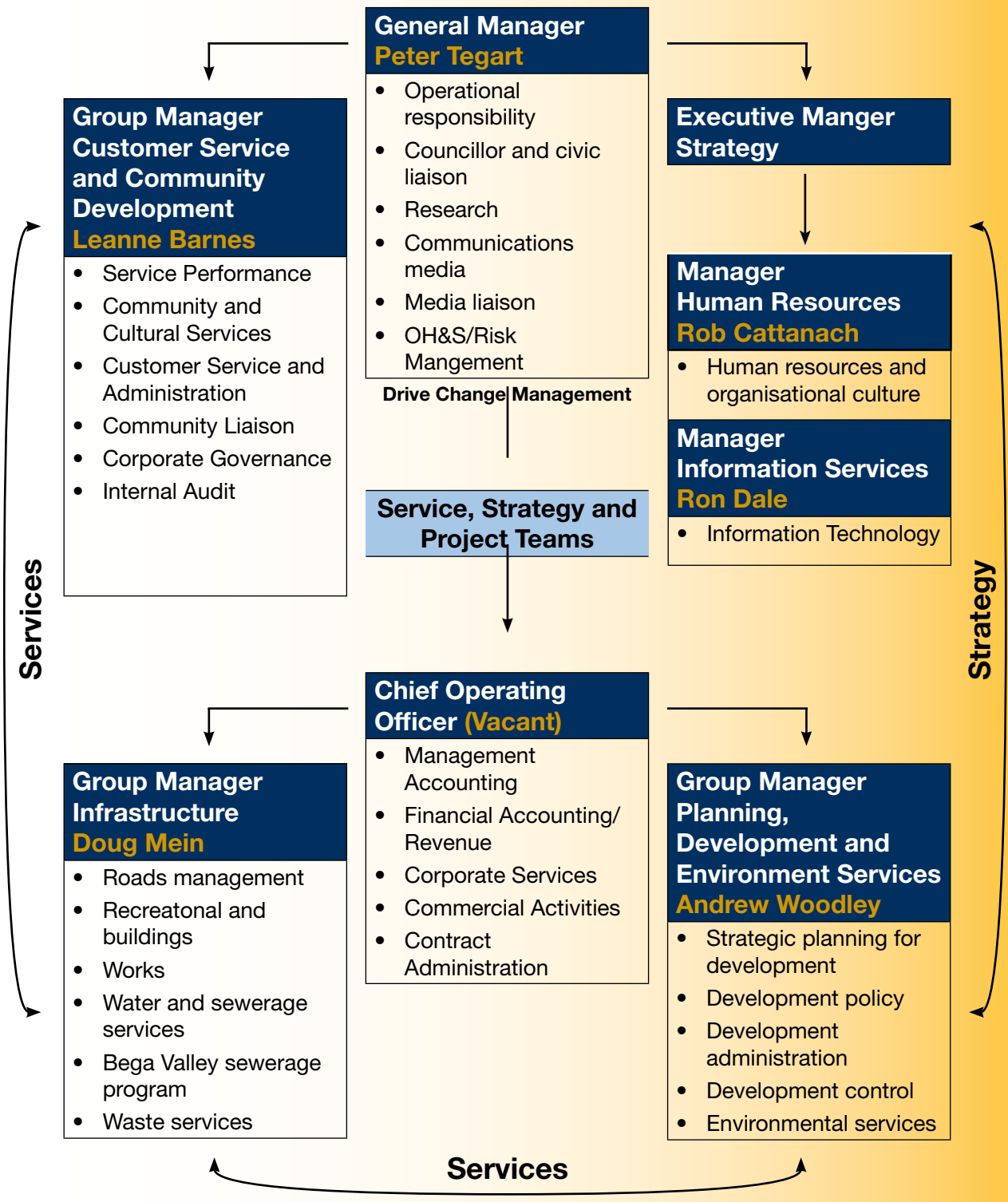
Council also has a Regional Gallery, located in Zingel Place, Bega, just a few hundred metres from the town's main street. It is open from Tuesday to Friday, 10am to 4pm and Saturday 9am to noon

How we keep you informed

The Bega Valley Shire Council keeps the community informed in the following ways:

- Annual Reports
- Management Plan
- Council Website
- Mayor's Column which appears monthly in all newspapers
- Council Meetings
- Media Releases
- E-News
- E-Agenda
- Brochures

the organisation structure



mayors message

Councillor Tony Allen
Mayor



The Annual Report informs the community and the State Government about our activities over the past financial year and in an opportunity to review our performance against what we stated we would do. I am proud of the achievements of the organisation and my fellow councillors.

Council recruited and appointed General Manager Graeme Faulkner who commenced duties as General Manager elect in July 2007 and moved to the General Managers position on 9 August with the resignation of David Jesson. Mr Faulkner undertook some hard decisions for the organisation implementing many of the Operational Examination recommendations and put in place a new organisational structure to Council which was formally adopted in November 2007. A number of other initiatives followed including natural attrition of a number of staffing positions, voluntary redundancies, the establishment of the Markets and Industry Committee and formal reviews of several operational sections. In May 2008 Mr Faulkner resigned due to family reasons and was replaced in August 2008 by Mr Peter Tegart.

The organisation has risen to the challenge of operating in this new environment and the majority of Operational Examination recommendations have now been addressed and a formal status report was adopted by Council in June 2008.

As an organisation and community we have faced a number of significant issues including: the restructuring of Council's role in tourism; the decision by the State government to fund the \$100 million Shire hospital and debate surrounding this issue; the Merimbula development cap; opportunities offered by major developer Woolworths in the Bega regional centre; the opening of the Bermagui Community Centre; major planning works; progressing of the investigations, assessments and consultation in relation to the central waste management facility; the completion of the \$76m sewer project; and the commencement of design for the Yellowpinch pipeline following announcement of \$10 million funding from the Federal Government.

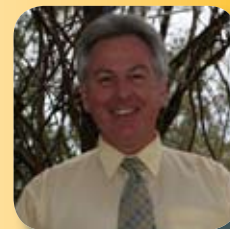
Along with the provision of core services such as roads, waste management, water and sewer, we have been advocating and lobbying on behalf of our community for improved services and facilities in areas such as health, education and community services. The recent Rudd government announcement of funding for community infrastructure points to new opportunities for local government into the future.

Bega Valley is well placed to see the realisation of a number of very significant projects for the region in the near future across the Shire. As always I encourage residents to participate in the activities and processes of the Council and to contribute to ensuring our Shire remains a great place to live, work and enjoy.

Councillor Tony Allen
Mayor

general managers comments

Peter Tegart
General Manger



It is exciting to write my first comment for the community although it is for a period prior to my commencing in the role as General Manager. I am pleased to have the opportunity to be living and working in a particularly special part of the state..

The Council has been through a period of considerable change and refocussing over the past three years. The series of special rate variations, the operational examination, changes in senior personnel and restructuring have all impacted in different and significant ways. My initial assessment is that the organisation is placed well to move into a new growth phase in the coming period. The issue of recruiting staff continues to be a challenge particularly in areas of planning, building, engineering and specialist areas.

Significant work has been done in the area of strategic land use planning over the past two years with the new Local Environment Plan, Development Control Plan and Development Contribution Plans on track for consultation and subsequent adoption in 2009.

The Council has been working strategically with key players such as Greater Southern Area Health, the Sapphire Aquatic Centre Incorporated, the Sapphire Coast Marine Discovery Centre, Sapphire Coast Tourism Board, the Wilderness Coast, Woolworths, the Department of Lands, and RTA to achieve outcomes across a raft of areas for the community.

My assessment is that the organisation has significantly achieved the outcomes identified in its plan for 2007/08 and met all obligations as required under the Local Government Act 1993 and other relevant Acts. The Auditor made special comment of the diligence of the organisation led by the Mayor and former councillors working to retrieve the difficult financial situation the council was in several years ago.

I believe that the next twelve months provide an unprecedented opportunity for the community and the Council to walk forward together – I'd like to think we'll look back and say: 'Looks good, feels good, done right'.

Peter Tegart
General Manager

the year in review

July 2007

- The Federal Government committed \$10 million towards the construction of the Bega to Yellow Pinch Dam pipeline as a major step in drought proofing the southern end of the shire.
- More than 260 representatives from across NSW and country Victoria attended the Country Public Libraries conference in Merimbula with funding dominating talks.
- The Minister for Local Government, Paul Lynch, approved a 9.76% rate increase which would enable Council to retain many services that were under threat.
- Branch offices were closed and a “hot phone” service was introduced to link Shire libraries to Bega to enable ratepayers to make administration queries.
- The work and commitment to the Bega Valley community by Council’s retiring general manager David Jesson was recognised by Bega Valley Shire Councillors who wished him well for the future on his retirement. Mr Jesson made an outstanding contribution to the Council and the community he served for 15 years.
- Council approved a \$1 million redevelopment of the Twyford Hall site in Merimbula but will continue to work with the Twyford Hall Committee to explore all avenues for the construction of public toilets either in the building or a nearby location.

August 2007

- Mr Graema Faulkner officially commenced as General Manager on 22 August 2007 after his appointment as General Manager Elect on 2 July 2007.
- Work was carried out at Meakers Gully, Dignams Creek and Tantawanglo Mountain bridges.
- Candelo Public School Year 5 students helped plant 130 screening native trees and shrubs to the Bega Valley Sewerage Program sewage treatment plant at the showground.
- The future look and building guidelines for the Bega central business district and commercial centre were outlined at public meetings.
- Council commits to spend more than \$260,000 on a detailed hydrology study, dam break analysis, seismic assessment and piping failure assessment for the Yellow Pinch, Ben Boyd and Tilba dams a statutory requirement with the findings passed on to the NSW Dams Safety Committee.

September 2007

- Members representing the Bega Valley Shire Business Forum and the Bermagui Visitor Information Centre signed agreements with Council to take control of their respective visitor information centres.
- Cr Tony Allen was re-elected Mayor and Cr Janette Neilson was re-elected Deputy Mayor.
- Council moved engage an independent EPA accredited site environmental auditor to examine potential contamination at the former Bega Gas Works.
- The Bega Regional Gallery was selected to host the 2007 Archibald Prize on its NSW Regional Tour with a selection of the year’s entries on display.

October 2007

- There was an extraordinary response to the call for public submissions regarding the Bega Civic Centre rezoning with more than 200 received.
- Council approves and extension of its trainee program in the light of six retirements expected over the next two years.
- Surf Life Saving Services Pty Ltd was contracted to provide patrol the Shire's beaches for the 2007-08 season following the axing of a number of staff positions and a reduction of services.
- The Mayor called for community calm over the siting of the new regional hospital in Bega saying continued parochialism between south and north would put the whole project at risk. Cr Allen said the process of selecting a site had been and continued to be the responsibility of the Department of Health and as such there had been no influence by the Bega Valley Shire Council.
- Tathra Beach virtually scooped the pool in the Keep Australia Beautiful NSW Clean Beach Challenge for 2008 taking out the prestigious South Coast regional winner's award.

November 2007

- The Land and Environment Court dismissed an appeal for the development of a 4000 square metre supermarket at Merimbula. The applicant, Merimbula Nominees, challenged the circumstances surrounding a decision by the Land and Environment Court earlier in the year to reject the supermarket application. The challenge related to points of law and not the merits of the application.
- Council's waste services manager said claims that the Merimbula tip was a danger to waterways and people's health were creating unnecessary anxiety in the community.
- It was decided to disband area committees and to establish instead project-focused committees with specific terms of reference, reporting and performance criteria and a specific end date. Coastal management committees were to be replaced with a single Coastal Committee.
- Bermagui's Community Centre was officially opened by the Member for Eden-Monaro Gary Nairn and Bega Valley Shire Council Deputy Mayor Janette Neilson after a \$2.4 million refurbishment and renovation.
- Meeting the demands of residential land needs in the Merimbula district for the next 20 years were highlighted as part of Bega Valley Shire Council's draft structure report for Merimbula, Tura Beach, Pambula, Pambula Beach and South Pambula and the surrounding rural areas. The draft report that made recommendations concerning the zoning of most land in the area went on public exhibition.
- Council adopted a plan to restructure its senior administration to create greater communication and a focus on economic outcomes to drive the shire into the future.

December 2007

- Council agrees to work with the Department of Environment and Climate Change in a scientific investigation into algal growth outside of Merimbula Bay.
- Agreement in principle was reached with Woolworths for the sale of part of Zingle Place in Bega to Woolworths for \$4.1 million preparing the way for a major retail development in the town.
- A new Access Committee was formed with members Steve Bragg, Jamie Aulbury, Cara Hay, Graham Morgan, Lyn Smith, Peter Harvey, Ian Dalwood, Michael Cutmore, Duane Kelly and Phillip Skillin.
- Following consideration of the draft rezoning of land at Meads Bay by the Department's Local Environmental Plan Review Panel, it advised that it would support that part of the rezoning at Meads Bay that was included in the recommendations for the Sensitive Urban Sites Review Panel. Other proposed rezonings included in the Bermagui Structure Plan were fully supported by the Department of Planning. The proposed rezoning of the Bermagui Country Club was supported in full.

January 2008

- Bega Valley Shire Council's Australia Day celebrations recognised three outstanding citizens. Matthew Nott and Noel Watson shared the honour of Citizen of the Year and Thomas Robson was named Junior Citizen of the Year.
- Mayor Tony Allen presented a cheque for \$30,000 as Council's annual contribution to the Mumbulla Foundation philanthropic to fund community projects.

February 2008

- An Environment Protection Authority investigation into allegations of pollution from the Merimbula Landfill recommended that Council investigate alternative leachate management practices at the site and prepare an irrigation plan for the leachate.
- Expressions of interest are called for project research groups to report a new Council committee – the Markets and Industry Committee.
- An electronic newsletter is established to provide commentary on current issues as well as links to media releases, reports and other documents.
- Councillors vote to oppose the sale of the State's electricity system and to call on the Government to better manage the State's future energy needs and to take urgent action in response to climate change by investing in energy efficiency and increasing its renewable energy targets.
- A draft management plan for the Bega River Estuary went on public exhibition. It focussed on the estuarine section of the Bega River catchment upstream to Jellat Jellat and the Penooka Wetlands.
- Opening hours for the Shire's libraries were changed to enable the libraries to be open across the whole day, from 9.30am to 5pm and from 9am to noon on Saturdays for Bega, Merimbula and Eden but they would be closed one day a week.

March 2008

- Voluntary redundancy has been offered to eight Bega Valley Shire Council employees as part of a restructuring process in the wake of the Operational Examination conducted in 2006 by outside consultants.
- The Regional Gallery hosts an exhibition of the work of internationally renowned glass master craftsman and Bega Valley local Klaus Moje.
- Rural landholders with existing concessional lot provisions they had not taken up were advised to make immediate application in view of reports that the Planning Minister was going to abolish concessional lots.
- Bega Valley Shire Medallions in recognition of their contribution to the community over many years were presented to Jean Billingham, Cor Brandenburg, Max Brown, Annterese Caulfield, Reg Dew, Lori Hammerton, Ralph Hetehrington, Arthur McDonald, Phil McManus, Marie Moffitt, Graham Parr, Lenna Pearce, Anne Tyrrell and Joan Whitby. Laura Crew accepted a medallion on behalf of her husband, John Crew, who died last December.
- Council resolved to endorse a proposal from the Bega Valley Shire Business Forum (the combined chambers of commerce) to register a new incorporated organisation to manage the tourism industry in the shire.

April 2008

- Council took over from contractors the landfill operations at its recycling and waste depots and to facilitate the move it bought \$900,000 worth of plant and appointed two new operators to undertake the landfill operations.
- Council renewed its commitment the provision of Library and Gallery services to the shire after the restructure Council's community and cultural services section.
- Two new appointments are announced, Andrew Ireland as Chief Operating Officer and Andrew

Woodley as group manager of Planning, Development and Environmental Services.

- Bega Aboriginal elder Margaret Dixon was named Senior Citizen of the Year at the annual Seniors Week golden gig concert and luncheon in Merimbula.
- Council proposes a rate increase of 9.26 per cent for 2008-09.
- General Manager Graeme Faulkner resigned after 10 months in the job. Leanne Barnes was appointed to act in the position pending a new appointment.

May 2008

- Council reaffirms its position that development of up to 300 dwellings on Stage 2 of the Tathra River Estate would be inappropriate.
- The State Environmental Planning Policy (Rural Lands) 2008 was gazetted, removing the concessional lots subdivision provisions from the Bega Valley Local Environmental Plan 2002.
- A further subsidy payment of \$7.65 million from the State Government was secured for the Bega Valley Sewerage Program.

June 2008

- Melbourne artist Andrew Forsythe won the prestigious 2008 Shirley Hannan National Portrait Award, hosted by the Bega Valley Regional Gallery. The prize was \$30,000.
- The Board of Sapphire Coast Tourism Limited was appointed, along with a Council representative. Members are Tony Allen (Councillor representative), Gordon Beattie, Barry Harrison, Bruce Leaver, Geoffrey Morrissey, Lyn Mott, Adrian Sandrey, Tim Shepherd and Grant Webster. Bruce Leaver was elected chair.
- The official launch of the National Landscapes initiative in Perth included the area from Bermagui to Lakes Entrance as one of the seven initial “landscapes”, acknowledging that the region has one of Australia’s most distinct and rich environments, making it a highly desirable visitor destination.

special variation report

Application to Minister for Local Government for Special Variation

The 2007/08 operational plan implemented a special variation approved by the Minister for Local Government of 9.76% and service level reductions in customer service, tourism, community services, environmental services, planning and lifeguard services impacting a total of 12 permanent positions and the casual lifeguards.

The special variation raised an additional \$720,572 which was used to fund the continued services in branch libraries, the regional gallery, tourism visitor information centres and the weeds program. This variation was approved on an ongoing basis.

The Minister announced the rate peg increase of 3.4% on Wednesday 16 May 2007. Council considered a report on 22 May 2007 and resolved to prepare and lodge a special variation application for 6.4% above the announced rate capping increase of 3.4%. At this meeting Council also approved an allocation of a one off \$100,000 commitment from the Operational Examination reserve for the implementation of a smooth transition to an independent tourism body over the 2007/08 financial year. It was also resolved that surplus funds at the end of the 2006/07 year reimburse the Operational Examination reserve.

Staff lodged the special variation application with the Department of Local Government on 28 May 2007. Supplementary information on the number and content of submissions was lodged with the Department following the close of the public exhibition period.

Council's approved special variation provides additional 9.76% general rate revenue (inclusive of the rate capping amount).

Program Budget amount offsets in 2007/08

Branch libraries \$150,000
Regional Gallery \$100,000
Visitor Information Centres \$150,000
Weeds management \$320,572
Total \$720,572

environmental levy achievements

The Environmental Levy

Bega Valley Shire Council's Environmental Levy has now been in operation for six years. Council has permanent approval from the Minister for Local Government for this levy and as such has an ongoing source of funds to complete planned annual environmental protection and enhancement projects. Environmental levy projects planned for 2007 / 08 were completed as well as some expenditure (approximately \$20,000) of carried forward funds.

The sixth year of the levy saw expenditure in line with the Departmental approval.

- Actual net income (2007 / 2008) \$310,170
- Actual expenditure (2007 / 2008) \$330,563

The information below outlines accomplishments for the 2007 / 08 financial year as required in the Minister's Environmental Levy ongoing special variation approval dated 26 June 2006.

Nadgee Road Sediment Stabilisation:

This project (approximately \$ 24,700) involved the sealing of a further section of gravel road above Myrtle Cove together with the upgrading of drainage and stormwater to prevent sediment reaching the Lake.

LIDAR project:

\$28,688 was expended as matching funds for acquisition of LIDAR (airborne laser survey) data to provide a digital elevation model to an accuracy of 15cm. This data can be analysed and will be used in a number of diverse environmental applications including:

- generation of digital vegetation maps for use in vegetation assessment associated with natural resource management and vegetation assessment,
- generation of digital terrain maps for use in understanding and planning for sea level rise associated with climate change, and
- flood modelling.

Merimbula lake rock walling:

Funding of just over \$53,000 was used as matching funds for DECC Estuary Program grant funds to complete rock walling at Merimbula Lake near Spencer Park.

Stormwater management:

Maintenance on a number of storm water projects was completed during the year at a cost of almost \$60,000.

On-site Sewage Management:

\$37,280 was expended improving the environmental performance of the on-site sewage systems at public amenity blocks at Eden, Bemboka, Tathra and Beauty Point. These works eliminated the risk of effluent entering the nearby waterways.

Weed Management Projects:

Funding of almost \$45,000 was expended on weed management in 2007 2008. \$3,422 was expended printing the 'Grow Me Instead' environmental weed community Guide. Almost \$1,000 was expended continuing the control of an outbreak of Chilean Needle Grass. \$40,000 was expended on roadside weed control work including Lovegrass, Fireweed, Serrated Tussock and Blackberry.

Vegetation Management & Recovery:

The management of trees located on public lands was funded during 2007 / 08 with \$60,000 from the Levy. Vegetation management, particularly tree preservation, remained a focus of the Levy. Works included aboricultural assessment by a consultant and other maintenance functions on street and reserve trees.

A contribution of \$13,287 of Environmental Levy funds was used in conjunction with the Vegetation Recovery Project for assisting with community based environmental restoration projects at Pambula Wetlands. This funding also represented matching funding for the SRCMA funds.

State of the Environment Report:

This statutory report is undertaken on a Regional basis with the ACT Regional Group of Councils. Levy funds were expended (\$8,000.00) in preparation of the 2004 2008 Comprehensive State of the Environment (SoE) Report. The SoE Report is located at the following site
<http://www.envcomm.act.gov.au/rsoe>

Summary:

The 2007 / 08 (Year 6) of the Bega Valley Shire Council Environmental Levy saw a continuation of the implementation of environmental improvement projects identified in the Levy application. Expenditure was \$330,563. Significant planning has been undertaken for 2009 / 10 projects and Council is well placed for the continuation of the Levy as the key contributor to environmental improvement and protection measures for the Shire into the future. Projects in environmental management, estuary management, weed and vegetation management and erosion and sediment control will likely remain a focus with funds used to leverage matching government grants.

planning our framework

How we plan what we do

Bega Valley Shire Council has a tiered corporate planning framework that cascades organisational plans from a 20 Year Plan timeframe through to annual Operational Plans. Linking the visionary and operational levels allows our teams to make the transition from concept to action.

20 year plan

Our 20 Year Plan, Bega Valley Shire 2025 has a 20 year focus. It identifies and expresses the vision held for the Bega Valley Shire over that period and develops clear values for the Shire. The community, Councillors and staff all worked together to identify the direction for Bega Valley Shire’s future in this plan.

input > councillors > officers > community > feedback

Annual operational plans

Operational plans are linked to each functional area and help to address issues and achieve objectives set out in the 20 Year Plan. The operational plans are developed with input from the community and council and provide detailed action plans. They also provide operational information relating to workplace management as well as service delivery. The operational plans are linked to an annual budget and are produced on an annual basis and submitted to executive management and council for review and endorsement.

input > workgroups > management > executive > councillors > feedback

Section plans

Each section has its own work plan which guides their operations. Each section plan outlines specific activities, major tasks, key performance indicators and responsible officer. Each employee, or work team, is assessed on the extent to which they have fulfilled their objectives over the previous twelve month period.

Input > employees > management > feedback



reporting our process

How we report what we do

Complementing our planning framework is a tiered reporting process that defines our progress in meeting our objectives. This connection allows management and employees to further refine their strategies to achieve the organisation's vision.

Progress reports

Each section reports its outcomes to its executive management for consideration. The reports outline budgeting and other key financial information as part of this process.

input > workgroups > management > executive > feedback

Quarterly operational plan reviews

The quarterly operational plan reviews report on progress on the specific activities, key outcomes and performance indicators outlined within the operational plan. If necessary, the quarterly reporting process allows for adjustments or fine tuning to be made to the operational plan. The reviews ensure that the community is regularly updated on the progress of all initiatives contained within the operational plan.

input > management > executive > councillors > feedback

Annual report

The annual report details our success, or otherwise, in meeting the specific activities, key outcomes and performance indicators outlined in the operational plan. The annual report also provides information required under the Local Government Act, General Regulation, Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act and Freedom of Information Act, that must be disclosed by councils each year. These relate to corporate governance, access and equity, public disclosure and special needs services. The annual report also contains detailed externally audited financial statements. In all, it is a comprehensive document aimed at accountability and clarity in reporting organisational performance.

input > management > executive > councillors > department of local government > feedback

Feedback mechanisms

Opportunities exist at each stage of the planning and reporting process to seek and receive feedback from the community. Feedback is crucial in planning and delivering services within a sound performance management framework.



management plan performance

Each year council identifies specific activities within each section that will be carried out to achieve council's strategic direction within the financial year.

The performances of these activities are reported to council every three months (quarterly). This Annual Report outlines the overall performance of each of the specific activities for 2007/08.

Corporate Governance

All corporate governance functions were achieved as planned. The position of General Manager was filled following the retirement of the former General Manager David Jesson. Incoming General Manager Graeme Faulkner implemented some significant changes however resigned due to personal commitments in May 2008. The recruitment for a replacement General Manager was completed in the period with the new General Manager Peter Tegart commencing in August 2008.

Operational examination report recommendations were considered and implemented as appropriate and a final report was presented to Council in June 2008.

- Election processes for the Council were managed through Council's liaison with the NSW Electoral Commission.
- Operational examination report recommendations in relation organisational structure implemented.
- Chief Operations Officer and Group Managers recruited and appointed.
- New position of Contracts Officer appointed to overview all Council tenders, leases and licences.
- Natural attrition, voluntary redundancies applied to staffing profile with a total of 21 staff positions removed from the structure.
- Restructuring of remaining positions to cover tasks carried out through former positions completed with a formal review to be completed in 2008/09.
- Several Code of Conduct matters were addressed over the period, all but one were finally resolved.
- Internal Audit Committee guidelines adopted and are being reviewed in line with recently released Department of Local Government circular.
- Cross organisation staff teams have been established to address a range of major issues such as funding opportunities, information technology programs, customer service processes, skills shortages, economic development and several others.

Corporate Management

- Lodgement of a strong application for a 9.76% special rate variation, supported by the finding of the Operational Examination, infrastructure condition reports and a relatively small number of written objections.
- Creation of an independent Sapphire Coast Tourism Limited company and the appointment of a well qualified Board of nine members.



Leanne Barnes
Group Manager
Customer Service and
Community Development



(Vacant)
Executive Manager
Strategy



Andrew Woodley
Group Manager
Planning, Development
and Environment Services



Doug Mein
Group Manager
Infrastructure Services

- Implementation of a range of position and responsibility changes in line with the recommendations of the Operational Examination relating to the management of legal matters and volunteer committees.
- Full review of Council's Section 355 committees commenced with Area Committees and Foreshore Committees being restructured. The first stage of a formal review of the governance and financial management of all committees commenced and will be completed in 2008/09.

Customer Service and Administration

- Section 149 Certificates automated and working well. Savings in time and more efficient process for both staff and customers.
- Counter and call centre staff roles expanded to take on new tasks and additional responsibilities.
- Staff number reductions have resulted in new work processes being implemented to minimise impacts.
- New call monitoring software implemented.

Economic Development and Tourism

- Establishment of Sapphire Coast Tourism Limited and appointment of Board
- Announcement of area as Australia's Coastal Wilderness as part of the National Landscapes program.
- Markets and Industry Committee established with research groups addressing telecommunications and home based business.
- Agreements in place for management of Sapphire Coast Tourism, SCT Booking Service and Visitor Information Centres in Bermagui, Merimbula and Eden. Some considerable community concern in Merimbula about the VIC addressed over the period.

Community and Cultural Services

Children's Services

- New management structure implemented to streamline systems, reporting and monitoring.
- Licensee for services modified to reflect General Manager appointments.
- Utilisation of the services has been consistent throughout the year, with increased support for low income families, Indigenous families and families with children who have disabilities.
- Research and community consultation commenced re Council role in managing Eden Pre School and Sapphire Mobile Service. Funding provided to appoint project officer to assist in the process.
- Families have been provided with opportunities for involvement in the services, and with clear complaints processes.
- The National Child Care Accreditation Council has provided a high quality rating for the long day care programs at Eden and Bandara Children's Services.
- There has been increased liaison with other agencies supporting families and children in the Shire including BVSC Brighter Futures, Greater Southern Area Health Services, Illawarra Children's Services, TAFE, schools, Department of Community Services.
- Cost savings have been achieved by integration of key management and human resource functions into BVSC systems, sharing of strategic children's services resources between centres and replication of children's services specific software, processes and procedures at both children's services centres.

Ageing and Disability Services

- All requirements met and high rating achieved in the Integrated Monitoring Framework (IMF)
- IMF action plan developed and implemented.
- Review of service undertaken
- ComPacks funding from NSW Health considered
- Equipment pool handed to Auswide Services to manage following tender process and service review

Art Gallery

- Provided exhibitions across the year including the Shirley Hannan National Portrait Prize which achieved increased profile nationally, the Klaus Mjoe glass exhibition and a number of community exhibitions
- Strengthened relationships with the local educational institutions and established a schools sub committee.
- Increased liaison with other community groups.
- Introduction of film nights, children's holiday workshops, workshops for artist, and music nights.
- Increase number of people attending the gallery's public programmes.
- Increase in the volunteer numbers.
- The gallery has been used by different community groups as an alternative venue to host various functions including book launches.

Library Services

- Provided programs to support literacy in adults, children and young adults.
- Expansion of local history, university, indigenous and young peoples collections and services.
- New and refurbished buildings offer a welcoming presence with the new Bermagui Library, new mobile van and refurbishment of Bega Library. Further refurbishments underway for the remainder of the year in Eden with the Indigenous Knowledge Centre commenced.
- Planning for home bound service commenced through partnership with Meals on Wheels with the use of volunteers.
- Continuing partnership with UOW further strengthened with new course, Graduate Diploma in education and cataloguing of new material to support the course and literacy classes and reference services continue to be strongly attended.

Brighter Futures

- Provided Brighter Futures services to 33 families in Bega Valley Shire.
- Developed strong partnership and working relationships with other Early Intervention service providers.
- Worked effectively in the Indigenous community.
- Effectively implemented and managed the DoCS Connect Portal.

Social Planning

- Shire Social and Housing Strategy developed.
- Strengthened relationships with key stakeholders including community and government sectors
- Expanded the Summer Bus program to incorporate Transport Vouchers
- Music NSW funding received to implement the Youth Week Project – Boom Box
- Introduced Youth Week and Seniors Week small grants programs
- Facilitated training and capacity building in the community sector including facilitation of Philanthropy Australia's grant seekers workshop.
- Managed the liaison with a range of community processes and funding programs including Mumbulla grants, Community Development and Engagement Program (CDEP) funding, the Liquor Accord, establishment of local Police Liaison Committee, review of Memorandum of Understanding with the Aboriginal community.

Financial Services

- All statutory financial reporting requirements met on time.
- Continued receipt of unqualified audit reports.
- Continual improvement of ten year financial plan.
- Contributed to the preparation of a successful rate special variation application.
- Continual improvement of internal financial reporting procedures.
- Ongoing improvements in debt recovery processes resulting in outstanding rates and charges ratios exceeding industry standards.

Human Resources

- Section has been significantly involved with the implementation of the revised staff structure, the service level reductions and the voluntary redundancy program.
- A number of initiatives have been developed to assist Council attract and retain quality employees including relocation procedures, long service leave portability, tertiary study programs and salary flexibility to recognise market rates in skills shortage positions.
- A cross functional team has reviewed training procedures and developed a comprehensive skills audit to be completed early 2008/09.
- Strong links have been maintained with unions throughout the extensive change processes and the organisation continues to enjoy excellent industrial relationships internally and externally.
- There was a seamless transition of payroll administration for the Children's Services staff (approx 23 positions) who transferred to Council's payroll this financial year.
- Occupational health and safety processes have been maintained with minimal available resources reflecting that the systems are working effectively.
- Workers compensation premiums remain at less than the industry average through prudent claims management.

Information Services

- A review of Council's IT DR plan saw some changes implemented to ensure the continued integrity of council's data.
- An Upgrade to council's EDMS (DataWorks) was implemented with additional functionality introduced.
- All warranty expired PCs were replaced and the old equipment was offered for sale to community groups.
- Centralisation of council's 149 system onto the property system has streamlined the process for production of these certificates.
- Council moved its mobile phone fleet across to the Telstra Next G network.
- Exponare was upgraded across the organisation to enhance the capabilities of all staff that use this general mapping enquiry tool.
- There were major enhancements implemented to the Fujitsu Financial/Property system this year, specifically in the areas of Creditors/Store and purchasing.
- Electronic timesheets introduced.

Building and Health Services

- Finalisation of the review of the on-site sewage management policy.
- Implementation of the Food Regulation Partnership and improved inspection regime of food premises.
- Ongoing effort of the Building Services staff to maintain a reasonable level of service given staff resignations and restriction on resources available to undertake the many tasks within the section.

Environmental Services

- Key input to the comprehensive LEP process in the areas of threatened species and natural resource management has been made during the year as well as significant assistance with mapping requirements.
- Commencement of the Business Treading Lightly (Southern Councils Group) project via the DECC Urban Sustainability program for project works aimed at improving sustainability and environmental management for businesses in the region.
- The development of the draft Bega River Estuary Management Plan was finalised. This Plan was prepared as required by the Statement of Intent for the implementation of the Bega River Healthy Rivers Commission report. Exhibition of the draft EMP has been completed and the Plan will be reported to Council early in the next financial year.
- Project management of the investigations into the potential contamination associated with the ex Bega Gasworks operations. This matter is still being investigated by DECC and is not likely to be resolved for some time.
- The transfer of responsibility for alcohol free zones to Engineering Services has been completed and work practices put in place to ensure efficient determination of applications.
- Development and implementation of the Council role in the Bega Cheese EMS / SRCMA project with respect developing, implementing and funding environmental management and improvement initiatives on dairy farms throughout the Shire particularly with respect effluent management, riparian zone protection and improvement to dairy laneways.
- Completion of the Coastal Environmental Weed Management Project. This project was a joint Council, SRCMA and DECC project and has been very well received. Further work in this area is required and funding applications through the SRCMA have recently been completed.
- Preparation of regional comprehensive State of the Environment report.

Planning Services

- Reports prepared include:
 - Bega Town Centre Study.
 - Bermagui Structure Report.
 - Merimbula and District Structure Report.
 - Economic, Social and Heritage Studies.
 - Review of all Development Control Plans.
 - Bega Employment Lands.
 - Bega Civic Centre.
- Development Control Planners assisted the Strategic Planning Section in the review and preparation of DCP's, review of draft reports and preparation of the draft CLEP.
- Planning staff processed a total of 317 development applications with the mean being 49 days and median 81 days with 47.5% being processed within 40 days. Whilst this is outside Council's target of 70% within 40 days it is considered to be a good result having regard to staff shortages and focus on the CLEP.
- General high level of customer satisfaction recognised by receipt of very few written complaints.

- The draft CLEP prepared in line with the timeframes set by the Department of Planning.
- Timely assessment of state significant and major project application with comments provided to the Department of Planning eg Boydtown and Cattle Bay.
- Achievement of majority of strategic planning program for the year within target.
- Engineering Direction
- Emergency risk management plan has been completed for the Shire.
- The construction phase of the Bega Valley sewer program has progressed and is close to completion.
- The design component of the water transfer system from the Bega River bores to Yellow Pinch Dam commenced and is soon to be completed.
- Progress is being made with the assessment of and design work for the proposed central waste facility south of Bega.
- Council staff are now successfully operating the three landfill sites at Eden, Merimbula and Bermagui in lieu of contractors.

Civil Assets & Urban Projects Unit

- Lifeguard program reinstated
- Coach and Bus Shelter program facility Bermagui
- Bermagui Community Centre completed and opened
- New toilet construction at Bar Beach, Blue Pool, Bemboka and Candelo
- Fishpen and Spencer Park retaining wall works
- Bermabool sportsground building extensions and skate park repairs
- Reduced water consumption at sportsgrounds
- Upgrades to community halls
- Hazard reduction works on reserves
- Cycleway repairs Merimbula and Pambula
- Car par sealed Pambula sportsground
- Bega Recreational round upgrade
- Sinclair Cove pontoon removal

Bega Valley Sewerage Program

- The innovative approach to this major sewerage program of works has been successful in providing high quality outcomes at very competitive pricing in a difficult market. The operational requirements of the contract arrangement guarantee that Council has a long term performance warranty at known costs.
- Design, Development and Road Asset Management
- 2007/08 Road & Bridge projects & maintenance activities generally delivered on time and within budget. Some projects that commenced in late June will be completed in July 2008/09.
- Roads and bridges – sealing sections of Dr George Mountain Road, Corridgeree Lane, Mines Road, Ballantynes Road, Towamba Road, and Wonboyn Road. Gravel overlays Tathra Road Bega, and Mt Darragh Road.
- Bridge repairs / replacement work at Pretty Point, Deep Creek, Dignams Creek, Cuttagee Lake, Watergums Creek, Russells Creek.
- Drainage work in Rawlinson Street Bega, Imlay Street Eden
- Various kerb and gutter and footpath projects.
- Restructure of maintenance and construction teams.

Waste Services

- The total amount of waste to landfill was 21,700 cub. metres and is a decrease of 19.4% of waste to landfill.
- The total amount of recyclables delivered to the Materials Recovery Facility was 3,900 tonnes and is an increase of 7.3%.
- A consultant is undertaking the detailed design work for the proposed Central Waste Facility and it should be available for public comment in September 08.
- New waste and recycling collection calendars have been circulated specific to each area of collection for ease of reading.
- Mailout of new waste and recycling brochures to all residents with education material focusing on home composting.
- Report prepared for the Southern Councils Group (SCG) investigating opportunities for joint initiatives in resource recovery in the South Coast Region.
- SCG Resource Recovery Project extended to include the development of tender documentation for Alternative Waste Technology options.

Water and Sewerage Services

- Substantial compliance with regulator licensing requirements.
- The Integrated Water Cycle Management (IWCM) plan study stage 1 is 90% completed.
- Bega to Yellow Pinch Dam pipeline detailed design 50% completed.
- Management of water resources resulting in storages at very high levels.
- Completion of capital works including Brogo Pump Station controls, Bega valve replacement, sewer vent shafts, water mains at Pambula Beach and Brogo, telemetry systems at three dams and a sewer main renewal at Bega soccer ground.
- New CCTV equipment has been delivered and it will help in sewer main condition assessment and planing for future capital works.
- Negotiations between DECC and BVSC have commenced regarding future STP licence conditions.
- The Water Loss Management Program has been completed in Merimbula, Tura, Candelo and Wolumla areas.
- Further leak detection work in Eden, Pambula and Pambula Beach areas has commenced.
- Completion of the Bega Valley Water Storages Project.
- Capital works associated with the Bega Valley Sewerage Program.
- Capital works associated with water and sewerage system renewals.

Works

- Bridge construction
- Road works as per program
- Kerb and gutter works as per program
- RTA repairs to cycle way Pambula
- Town Team cleaning and works particularly impacted in some areas by vandalism.
- Continued to deliver services within reducing budgets.
- High standard of construction works for both Council and private works.
- Continued high standard of plant and machinery for staff to use, management of plant including acquisition of two replacement graders, two tracked excavators for the landfills, mobile library, trailers, caravan, tractors, mowers, trucks, utilities, passenger vehicles and minor plant.

financial position overview

Financial performance

Income Statement for the financial year ended 30 June 2008		Actual 2007	Actual 2007
Budget 2008	\$'000		
	Income from Continuing Operations		
	Revenue:		
31,662	Rates and annual charges	30,760	25,733
12,340	User charges and fees	12,430	10,140
1,022	Interest and investment revenue	2,993	2,096
316	Other revenues	334	480
8,223	Grants & contributions - Operating Purposes	9,475	9,158
8,552	Grants and contributions - Capital Purposes	14,204	14,583
	Other Income:		
300	Net gains from disposal of assets	249	40
62,415	Total Income from continuing operations	70,445	62,230
	Expenses from continuing operations		
17,334	Employee benefits and on-costs	18,329	16,697
2,791	Borrowing costs	2,674	1,653
19,849	Materials and contracts	15,696	15,203
10,870	Depreciation and amortisation	12,192	3,591
3,365	Other expenses	4,968	4,517
	Interest and Investment Losses	-	-
	Net Losses from the Disposal of Assets	-	-
54,209	Total Expenses from continuing operations	53,859	41,661
8,206	Operating result from continuation operations	16,589	20,569
8,206	Net operating result for the Year	16,586	20,569
(346)	Net Operating Result for the year before Grants and Contributions provided for Capital Purposes	2,382	5,986

(1) Original Budget as approved by Council - refer Note 16

Financial position

Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2008	Actual 2008 \$'000	Actual 2007 \$'000
Assets		
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	33,077	17,965
Investments	6,745	26,407
Receivables	5,487	5,282
Inventories	475	472
Other	-	-
Total current assets	45,784	50,126
Non-current assets		
Investments	-	-
Receivables	98	194
Inventories	-	-
Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	571,944	509,302
Investment Property	-	-
Other	-	-
Total non-current assets	572,042	509,496
Total assets	617,828	559,622
Liabilities		
Current liabilities		
Payables	7,764	5,322
Borrowings	2,468	2,250
Provisions	5,580	5,341
Total current liabilities	15,812	12,913
Non-current liabilities		
Payables	-	-
Interest bearing liabilities	35,117	36,385
Provision	5,217	4,929
Investments Accounted for using the equity method	-	-
Total non-current liabilities	40,334	41,314
Total liabilities	56,146	54,227
Net assets	561,680	505,395
Equity		
Retained earnings	492,061	475,691
Revaluation reserves	69,619	29,704
Council equity interest	561,680	505,395
Minority equity interests	-	-
Total equity	561,680	505,395

Income from Continuing Operations

Actual 2007 \$'000	Year ended 30 June 2008	Actual 2008 \$'000
3	Governance	5
403	Administration	904
691	Public order and safety	747
383	Health	291
1,106	Community services and education	2,393
7,017	Housing and community amenities	7,873
7,630	Water supplies	9,065
18,113	Sewerage services	20,408
860	Recreation and culture	867
896	Mining manufacturing and construction	1,005
4,367	Transport and communication	4,762
2,436	Economic affairs	2,575
43,905	Total functions and activities	50,895
18,325	General purpose revenues	19,550
62,230	Operating result from continuing operations	70,445

Expenses from Continuing Operations

Actual 2007 \$'000	Year ended 30 June 2008	Actual 2008 \$'000
1,532	Governance	1,620
3,571	Administration	3,630
1,483	Public order and safety	1,516
667	Health	745
1,131	Community services and education	2,675
9,830	Housing and community amenities	9,656
(4,609)	Water supplies	6,490
12,029	Sewerage services	11,224
3,025	Recreation and culture	3,122
1,106	Mining manufacturing and construction	1,160
9,480	Transport and communication	9,716
2,416	Economic affairs	2,305
41,661	Total functions and activities	53,859
-	General purpose revenues	
41,661	Operating result from continuing operations	53,859

Comparison of actual performance against projected performance of Principal Activities

(report on material variances (<>10%) between actual performance against projected performance of Principal Activities)

Public Order and Safety

(unfavourable variance of 20% or \$126,000)

The original budget for beach control was \$49,000 which was increased in a subsequent review to \$150,810.

Community Services and Education

(favourable variance of 12% or \$38,000)

Council received additional grants during 2007/2008 which remained unexpended at 30 June 2008.

Water Supplies

(unfavourable 13% or \$375,000)

Main factors were reduced income from water user changers \$948K; additional interest on investments \$203K; reduced exp on loans interest of \$259K due to delayed take-up on borrowings.

Sewer Services

(favourable 166% or \$5,736,000)

Increased interest on investments \$620K; increase in grants during 2007/2008 for capital projects which were not included in original budget \$5M.

Recreation and Cultura

(favourable 20% or \$569,000)

The main variance was in the parks gardens and reserves section where there was a delay in completing anticipated grant works and an increase in contributions received.

Mining Manufacturing and Construction

(favourable 83% or \$743,000)

This is due to higher than anticipated revenue in gravel pits (\$260K) and lower expenditure in building control (\$197K).

Transport and Communication

(favourable 22% or \$1,420,000)

This is mainly due to increased funds for capital expenditure projects.

Economic Affairs

(favourable 3275% or \$262,000)

The main factor is capital funding not anticipated in original budget for the Bermagui Community Centre.

Financial performance

The financial performance of the Council during this 12 month reporting period is shown in the financial reports. The comparison of that performance with the adopted budget shown in Council's Operational Plan for the period is summarised below:

1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008	Budget \$'000	Actual \$'000
Operating result	8,206	16,586
Add:		
Expenses not involving the flow of funds	10,870	12,264
	19,076	28,850
Add:		
Non operating funds employed	21,577	21,063
	40,653	49,913
Less:		
Funds deployed for non operating purposes	(40,942)	(48,091)
Surplus/(Deficit)	(289)	1,822
Balance brought forward	2,767	5,457
Balance carried forward	2,478	7,279

These comparisons of budget versus actual performance are affected by expenditure transfers between accounting periods, where expenditure budgeted in one accounting period is not expended in that period and is revoted into the following period.

In 2007/2008 expenditure of \$3,842,014 was revoted to the 2008/2009 financial year. After allowing for this revoting of expenditure the net variation between the budgeted and actual result is a deficit of \$1,731,000. This was however funded by additional surplus funds brought forward from 2006/07.

Overall the Council ends the 2007/2008 financial period on a sound financial footing and carried an accumulated surplus of \$7,279,000 forward into the 2008/2009 financial period. After the revoting of expenditure of \$3,842,014 this is an improvement of \$959,000 compared to the original budget.

local government and other legislation statutory info

Rates written off

Rates and Charges totalling \$97,083.47 were written off for the period 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008 and these are detailed as follows:

	1 July 06 to 30 June 07	1 July 07 to 30 June 08
General Rates	33,168.08	92,619.43
Water Access Charges	1,256.19	220.57
Sewerage Availability Charge	2,608.17	8.54
Interest	7,470.33	3,869.58
Waste Charges	1,918.76	326.69
Base Waste Management Charge	692.76	38.66
Total	\$47,114.11	97,083.47

All of these rates and charges were written off as a result of the following adjustments:

- Conservation Agreements
- Postponed Rates adjustments
- Adjustments to properties exceeding the 20% farmland cap.
- Re-classification of non ratable properties to ratable
- Re-classification of ratable properties to non ratable

State of Environment report

The State of Environment Report (SoER) for 2007/08 has been undertaken as a regional report with the Australian Capital Region of Councils. It covers the reporting year but also includes a comprehensive analysis for the period 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2008.

The report is available at <http://www.envcomm.act.gov.au/rsoe/begavalley> or via link from Council's website.

Council has proceeded with a comprehensive report to ensure the dataset established with the 2000 and 2004 comprehensive reports is continued. Council will again undertake a regional approach to environmental reporting for the 2008/09 year building on the current report. This report and the follow on 2008/09 report will comprise Council's comprehensive report as required under the Local Government Act 1993.

This SoE report has been prepared in accordance with section 428 of the Local Government Act 1993 and Clause 221 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005. The report covers all theme areas and utilises indicators for air quality, weather, ecological communities, fire, native species, pest animals and plants, riparian condition, contaminated sites, discharges to waters, groundwater, land degradation, landuse, surface water quality, drinking water quality, hazardous and solid waste, heritage, noise, population and water use / demand management.

Public buildings

Council Offices (Bega, Bermagui, Eden and Merimbula)

The Bermagui Community Centre project was completed in November 2007.

The new centre will and is providing the Bermagui local community and broader region with a much improved community centre. Services and facilities available include the refurbished hall, a new library, a new visitor information centre offices.

The planned refurbishment at the Merimbula office has again been postponed given the continued consideration of other options for total redevelopment of the site. The building remains in poor condition and is being maintained with minimal input of funding at the present time to ensure that the building at least is functional.

Council halls

All Council's halls are managed by volunteer committees. The halls are in most part maintained by community members with emphasis on operational maintenance and hall management to ensure community activity/s are catered for.

Funding for halls for the year 2007/08 was a total of \$55,000. The theme of works planned with most halls committees directing works to kitchen refurbishment/ repairs.

Swimming pool facilities

Council's has six pool facilities at Bega, Bemboka, Candelo, Cobargo, Eden and Pambula. Each of the facilities are in a reasonable condition however none are operational year round.

The amount of money estimated to bring facilities up to a satisfactory standard is now in the order of \$580,000.

Public roads

Council maintains a total length of 1,420 kms of public road throughout the Shire, which is made up as follows.

- **Local roads**
467 kms sealed
705 kms unsealed
- **Regional roads**
223 kms sealed
27 kms unsealed

Some of the unsealed roads carry significant traffic and there is considerable community pressure to seal these unsealed rural arterial roads. The cost to seal these roads would be in the order of \$140m.

The estimated cost to bring the network to a standard considered satisfactory by the community is \$32.6m, while the estimated annual funding required to maintain the roads at that standard is \$8.2m.

In 2007/08 Council spent \$6.9m on road maintenance works.

There are a total of 227 bridges on Council's road network, of these 67 are timber and 160 are concrete/steel. There are also approximately 2,400 other miscellaneous drainage structures on the network comprising culverts and causeways.

The estimated cost to bring the bridges to a satisfactory standard is \$3m while the estimated annual funding required to maintain them at that standard is \$1.4m.

In 2007/2008 Council spent \$1.3m on bridge improvements, replacements, and maintenance.

Drainage works

Council has an 111km stormwater drainage network in the urban areas for which it is responsible.

The estimated cost to bring the existing systems to a satisfactory standard is \$2.5m with the estimated annual funding to maintain at that standard being \$0.4m.

In 2007/2008 Council spent \$150,000 maintaining the drainage systems, a further \$214,000 on capital works and \$177,000 on urban water levy funded works.

Water supply

1. Water supply assets were in a satisfactory condition.
2. Total operating expenses excluding depreciation were \$4.645m.
3. Direct operations expenses were \$2.476m.
4. Total depreciation of system assets, plant and equipment was \$1.845m.
5. A total of \$2.874m was expended on capital works, capital equipment and asset refurbishment this year. This includes Federal and NSW State Government subsidised capital works.
6. The \$20m Bega to Yellow Pinch Dam pipeline project commenced.
7. The following maintenance, repair and management activities were undertaken for the year:
 - a. Reticulation system work including water main flushing, house service repairs, water main repairs and reservoir cleaning.
 - b. Trunk main maintenance work including flushing, air valve repairs and access track clearing.
 - c. Electrical and mechanical maintenance work on pump stations including valve maintenance, switchboard repairs and servicing of pumps.
 - d. Dam safety surveillance.
 - e. Water quality monitoring and water resources management activities were carried out during the year.
 - f. Water meter reading and data maintenance activities were carried out during the year.

Sewerage services

1. Sewerage system assets were in a satisfactory condition, particularly the new and upgraded sewage treatment plants and reticulation systems.
2. Total operating expenses excluding depreciation were \$8.541m.
3. Direct operations expenses were \$4.395m. This includes expenditure of \$2.776m associated with sewage treatment plant operation.
4. Total depreciation for system assets, plant and equipment was \$2.788m.
5. A total of \$21.398m was spent on capital works, capital equipment and asset refurbishment this year. This expenditure includes \$18.979m associated with the NSW State Government subsidised Bega Valley Sewerage Program.
6. The following maintenance program activities were undertaken for the year:
 - a. Reticulation system operation and maintenance including CCTV inspections, flushing and jetting.
 - b. Electrical and mechanical work including switchboard maintenance, valve maintenance and pump servicing.
 - c. Electrical and mechanical contract maintenance of treatment works associated with the Bega Valley Sewerage Program.
 - d. Effluent quality monitoring and management activities associated with effluent reuse systems.

Summary of Assets

Asset	Current Cost	Written Down Current Cost	Nominal Life of Asset	Estimate (current values) of amount required to bring works to satisfactory standard	Estimate (current values) of maintain works at satisfactory standard	Maintenance Program for Past Year (2007/2008)
Land						
Council owned land operational	\$23,976,000	\$23,976,000				
Council owned land community	\$12,259,000	\$12,259,000				
Water fund land operational	\$1,431,000	\$1,431,000				
Sewer fund land operational	\$722,000	\$722,000				
Crown land	\$10,204,000	\$10,204,000				
Land improvements						
Rubbish tips	\$3,704,000	\$3,504,000	20			\$547,000
Parks and gardens	\$11,911,000	\$8,530,000	20			\$248,000
Buildings						
Halls	\$13,532,000	\$6,795,000	50-100	\$1,895,000	\$125,000	\$51,000
Council offices/library/art gallery	\$9,455,000	\$4,964,000	50-100	\$3,120,000	\$205,000	\$173,000
Museum	\$5,666,000	\$2,975,000	50-100	\$680,000	\$45,000	
Retirement Villages	\$984,000	\$516,000	50-100	\$195,000	\$15,000	
Childcare centres	\$3,465,000	\$1,819,000	50-100	\$355,000	\$25,000	\$15,000
Sports complexes	\$13,915,000	\$6,048,000	50	\$1,085,000	\$180,000	\$281,000
Misc buildings	\$20,981,000	\$11,283,000	50	\$1,785,000	\$120,000	\$53,000
Amenities/toilets	\$5,022,000	\$2,578,000	50	\$608,000	\$655,000	\$536,000
Other (depots)	\$3,328,000	\$1,433,000	50	\$82,000	\$5,000	incl above
Roads bridges & f'paths						
Roads	\$273,442,000	\$193,310,000	30-100	\$28,000,000	\$7,470,000	\$5,516,000
Bridges	\$54,164,000	\$37,239,000	80	\$3,090,000	\$1,430,000	\$668,000
Footpaths/kerb & gutter	\$14,376,000	\$9,605,000	50	\$1,700,000	\$210,000	\$92,000
Roadside furniture	\$1,225,000	\$155,000	10	\$2,875,000	\$500,000	\$329,000
Aerodromes	\$2,926,000	\$1,610,000	50	leased		
Parking Areas	\$5,462,000	\$3,126,000	50	\$565,000	\$57,000	\$20,000
Boat Ramps/Jetties	\$689,000	\$439,000	50	\$1,270,000	\$170,000	\$39,000
Stormwater drainage						
Urban drainage assets	\$19,660,000	\$14,925,000	100	\$2,575,000	\$350,000	\$242,000
Water supply network						
Water supply system	\$155,010,000	\$94,671,000	20-100	\$3,300,000	\$1,495,000	\$1,640,000
Sewerage network						
Sewerage system assets	\$169,704,000	\$107,785,000	20-100	\$3,545,000	\$3,870,000	\$3,870,000
Total	\$837,213,000	\$561,902,000		\$56,725,000	\$16,927,000	\$14,320,000

Legal proceedings

Set out below is a summary of amounts incurred by Council in relation to legal proceedings taken by or against the Council in the period 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008.

Subject	Particulars of proceedings	Result	Cost to council
Animal control	Dog infringements	Detrmined in Concil's favour	\$6,787.27
Debt recovery **	Recovery of rates and charges	Ongoing	\$152,444.75
Planning	Planning matters	Ongoing	\$52,986.89
Waste	Contract issues	Ongoing	\$34,048.94
Sundry costs	General legal action	Ongoing	\$34,099.72

** Note: Expenses recouped through the rate recovery process

Councillors expenditure

Fees payable to Councillors

Effective from July 2007 Council increased the Mayoral allowance from \$30,520 to \$31,400. This remained unchanged for 2007/2008 financial year. Effective from July 2007 Council also increased the annual allowance for each Councillor from \$13,980 to \$14,378. This remained unchanged for 2007/2008. A total of \$160,802 was paid to the Mayor and Councillors from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008.

A further \$62,932 was expended on the provision of councillor facilities and payment of councillor expenses comprising the following:

• Provision of dedicated office equipment allocated to councillors	\$8,415
• Telephone calls made by councillors	\$8,911
• Attendance of councillors at conferences and seminars	\$13,423
• Training of councillors and provision of skill development	\$6,073
• Interstate visits by councillors, including transport, accommodation and other out of pocket travelling expenses	Nil
• Overseas visits by councillors, including transport, accommodation and other out of pocket travelling expenses	Nil
• Expenses of any spouse, partner or other person who accompanied a councillor	Nil
• Expenses involved in the provision of care for a child or an immediate family member of a councillor	Nil
• Mayoral vehicle expenses	\$7,783
• Travelling expenses and sustenance	\$15,208
• Other meetings and functions	\$980
• Insurance	\$1,273
• Other miscellaneous expenses	\$866

Policy

Council has adopted a policy on Behaviour of Councillors and Staff with an attached procedure for the Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities for Councillors. This policy and procedure can be viewed at any of Council's offices or on Council's web site www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au The policy outlines the services and facilities provided to Councillors, the Deputy Mayor and the Mayor to enable them to carry out the duties and functions of their civic office.

Senior staff payments

Council has four senior staff designated and employed on four and five year performance contracts in accordance with Section 338 of the Local Government Act 1993. The designated positions are set out below together with the value of salary packages paid during the period 2006/2007 and 2007/2008.

	2006/2007 \$'000	2007/2008 \$'000
General Manager	170	* 345
Chief Operating Officer	Nil	** 31
Group Manager Engineering Services	145	148
Group Manager Environment Planning and Development Services	140	* 69
Group Manager Corporate and Community Services	142	150
total	\$597	\$743

* Includes leave entitlements paid on resignation and position vacant for part of the year.

** Position vacant for part of year.

Contracts

In accordance with Section 428(h) of the Local Government Act 1993, the following is a list of contracts awarded during 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008 (whether as a result of tender or otherwise) other than employment contracts and contracts less than \$150,000.

Tender number	Contractor	Work Provided	Amount (ex GST)
16/06	Construct Maintain. Manage. (CMM)	Upgrade/augmentation of Sewage Pump Station and associated works	\$343,673
03/07	GHD Pty Ltd.	Detail hydrology study, dam break analysis, seismic assessment, piping failure assessment for Yellow Pinch, Ben Boyd and Tilba dams.	\$240,266
06/07	Elfcom Pty Ltd.	Design, manufacture, supply, installation, testing & commissioning of the electrical and control system for Brogo River water pump station.	\$212,832
Order No. 80916	HELTEC Industries	Screw piles supplied and installed for Russell's bridge replacement	\$166,296

Note: This was a new application for screw piling and part of a trial council is participating in to develop a timber bridge replacement package with Bluescope Steel.

Bush fire risk management

2007/08 saw Council undertake an extensive capital works program to extend and enhance its reserve Asset Protection Zone (APZ) Network. These works were funded with the support of a \$200,000 grant from the NSW Rural Fire Service. The works were carried out using heavy mulching equipment which produces a superior end result than traditional heavy machinery and leaves the APZs ready for ongoing, low cost maintenance. Works funded through this program were undertaken throughout the Shire's major coastal settlements.

Over and above the capital works program, Council implemented its annual maintenance program. The program incorporated inspections, some physical works and maintenance of the APZs and access tracks that have been created and rehabilitated in the last six years. The program took in Council property (Community Land Reserves and Operational Lands) and Council managed Crown Reserves. Council has also undertaken maintenance of APZs on Crown Land managed by the Department of

Lands, under a contract arrangement.

Council continued its role as a member of the Bega Valley Shire Bushfire Committee and worked co-operatively with the other member agencies in the development of a new Bushfire Risk Management Plan for the Shire.

Works and maintenance were undertaken in the following locations;

Tathra <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mulching • Slashing Maintenance 	Oceanveiw Cres Wildlife Drive Panorama Drive Panamuna Road Bay Street	Pimms Court Bay Street (west) Tathra Pre-School Lawrence Park Thompson Drive
Bermagui <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mulching • Slashing Maintenance 	Fairhaven Point Bleakley Street Bermagui Cemetery	Main Road 272 Beauty Point Road Wallaga Lake Heights
Wonboyn	Ivor Jones Drive Accacia Avenue Nadgee Road	
Eden <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mulching • Slashing Maintenance 	Flinders Street Chandos Street Ida Rodd Drive	Bass Street Cosham Close Bay St
Merimbula <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mulching • Slashing Maintenance 	Sapphire Crescent Kowarra Crescent Wildewoods Cres Seaview Avenue Marine Parade Arthur Kaine Drive Wyebo St	Tern Close Lake St Beverly St John Close Lake St Berrambool Drive
Tura Beach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firetrail clearing/ upgrading • Mulching • New asset protection zones • Slashing maintenance 	Tura Beach Drive Dress Circle Dolphin Cove The Point Headland Drive Pacific Way Fauna Crescent Tura Forest Reserve	Dolphin Cove Surf Circle Tura Beach Drive Nolan Drive Casuarina Place High Crescent Crown Land / Sapphire Coast Drive Tristania Crscent

Social planning framework - access and equity activities

Community development and social planning

Each year Council undertakes a wide range of social planning and community development activities. The social planning, community development and community service provision objectives 2007/2008 have been met and detailed quarterly reports reflecting this were prepared.

Council works in partnership with other levels of government, community organisations and stakeholders to plan, promote and support activities and initiatives to meet the needs of isolated and disadvantaged communities in the Bega Valley Shire.

Activities included:

- Implementation of strategies in the Bega Valley Shire Council Social Plan 2006-2011.
- Regularly providing information on Council and other services to community groups.
- Promoting Council facilities and services through inter agencies and forums involving government and non-government agencies.
- Providing grants through the Mumbulla Foundation to local non government organisations.
- Coordination and support of the Community Development Support Expenditure Scheme with local CDSE Registered Clubs.
- Progressing meetings with key human service government agencies representatives through the Integrated Social Plan project facilitated by the NSW Premiers Department.
- Maintaining and distributing a Community Services Directory for residents in the Bega Valley Shire which is available in a printed version or can be accessed via the internet.

Aboriginal services and activities

The Bega Valley Shire has a relatively high proportion of Aboriginal people and this population tends to be significantly younger than the population as a whole. During 2007/2008 Council has continued to acknowledge, through a range of activities, a commitment to improve access for Aboriginal people.

- Represented Council at Community Working Group to workshop consultation methods to determine preferred model of representation for Aboriginal community.
- Aboriginal flag continues to be displayed in Council Chambers.
- Ongoing commitment to the Memorandum of Understanding with the local Aboriginal community.
- Support given to NAIDOC Week celebrations in Bega and Merrimans communities.
- Continuing to observe and work with the Aboriginal community on a range of protocols including Welcome to Country.
- Ongoing commitment to the Aboriginal Employment program within Council.

Young people

The proportion of young people in the Bega Valley Shire is significantly less than the NSW average and the exodus of young people was mentioned in consultations for the 2006-2011 social plan. Significant issues for young people are transport, employment and training and leisure activities. Continuing activities included:

- Implementation, promotion, planning and successful implementation of Summer Bus 2007/08 services, an alternative transport system for young people over the summer months.
- Youth Week – the successful coordination of a Calendar of events for youth week including the Youth Council Project – ARCH (Anti Racism Community Harmony) involving the production and launch of a CD featuring young local artists.
- Continuing facilitation of the Youth Service network.
- New Youth Council elected in June 2008.
- Implementation of a small grants program in youth week – resulting in and additional 5 youth events held across the shire

People with a disability

Council continues to recognise the importance of the need to improve access and quality of life for people with disabilities. This includes planning, recognition and community awareness activities and the provision of direct support services funded through the HACC (Home and Community Care) program. Continuing activities included:

- Coordination of Council's Access Advisory Committee.
- Access Advisory Committee regularly meets to assess DAs.
- Participation in the local Disability Forum.
- International Day for People with Disability events coordinated with community organisations including a 4 page lift out in local papers outlining the positive contribution people with disabilities

make to the community.

- Community Development Officer attended Regional interagency for workers in local Government.
- Council's funded Community Options Program provides services to older people and young people with disabilities.

Older people

The Bega Valley Shire has an ageing population, consistent with the national demographic trend but also influenced by the trend for older people to move to coastal areas. In addition to recognising the need to plan for ageing communities, Council provides a range of HACC funded services to address the needs of frail older people, people with disabilities and their careers. Activities included:

- Participation in the local HACC forum.
- Implementation of a small grants program to promote seniors week events – resulting in 9 additional events across the shire
- During Seniors Week, Council organised the “Senior of the Year” Awards including a senior’s concert.

Ageing and disability services (HACC)

Council has continued to meet set objectives in the provision of HACC funded services. Outcomes include:

- Community Options case load maintained at more than 95 percent.
- Waiting list has been reviewed and reduced.
- One-off, non-recurrent DVA COPS funding rolled over into 07-08 financial year with new referrals accepted.
- Episodic case management dollars providing a boost to resources.
- Ongoing support and care management of 40 Community Options clients.
- Ongoing coordination of existing Emergency Response funding and disability support funded care packages.
- Average equipment pool loans maintained at in excess of 200 items per quarter.

Children

Council has continued to provide a range of services for children and their families with the objective of providing quality child care and support to families in the Local Government area. In addition, the importance of planning for the needs of children is recognised.

In 2006/2007, Council continued to provide a range of quality child care services through Bandara Children’s Services at Bega and the Eden Child Care Centre. The Children’s Services Committee of Council planned and implemented strategies that provided cost-savings and improvements to the management structure of the two services. The two services were fully integrated into Council’s operation as of 30 June 2007 and the Committee was dissolved.

The two services:

- Maintained the affordability and accessibility of the services to the community, particularly to Aboriginal, low income and vulnerable families. Some of these improvements have also ensured that the financial management of the two services is now operating using recognised Council systems.
- Worked with the Brighter Futures program to provide quality child care services to vulnerable families who are taking part in programs that build on the strengths of these families.
- Used successful strategies and continued to build partnerships with community organisations to ensure that the child care services are accessible for Aboriginal families. Aboriginal enrolments have continued to increase across both sites.
- Implemented a range of community engagement strategies aimed at enhancing the involvement of parents, families and the broader community in planning and delivering quality services to children.

The DoCs supported early intervention program, Brighter Futures, was successfully rolled out in April

2007 in partnership with Far South Coast Family Support Service. The program targeted families who face specific problems or vulnerabilities and have children aged eight years and younger. Services provided to families under the Brighter Futures program include case management support, brokerage, home visiting, quality child care and parenting programs.

Steady growth occurred within the program as it works towards capacity of forty families. Strong relations have been developed with the Aboriginal community and Indigenous participation in the program is currently at 1.6%

Approval to retain surplus program funds will allow for a second program vehicle to be purchased.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities (CALD)

Council's Access and Equity Policy, endorsed in early 2005, acknowledges the different cultural needs of people. It stresses the importance of building flexibility into decision-making and consultation processes that takes into consideration the cultural needs of particular ethnic groups. This will ensure that people are not excluded from local government processes due to a lack of alignment between cultural practices.

At the last census only 3.9 percent of residents were born in a non-English speaking country. This is an issue in itself because it means that there are no large communities and a lack of appropriate services, particularly to provide support to newly arrived people.

- Council continues to celebrate Harmony Day.
- Social Planning coordinator works with Multicultural Development and Support worker on issues affecting people from CALD backgrounds.

Women

Domestic violence remains one of the most significant social problems affecting women in rural areas. Council has participated in a number of initiatives to undermine community acceptance of violence against women. This has included:

- Working on specific strategies to address the needs of women and young women as part of the 2006-2011 Social Plan.
- Participating in the Bega Valley Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Committee to support White Ribbon Day, 16 Days of Activism, Reclaim the night and projects such as Staying Home Leaving Violence.

Subsidised works on private property

Council's Water and Sewerage Services Section carried out subsidised works on private property as part of the Bega Valley Sewerage Program. The subsidised works were carried out at Wallaga Lake, Kalaru, Wolumla and Candelo townships.

The works involved installation of a pumping unit, control unit and ancillary fixtures associated with a pressure sewer system on each developed property within designated village boundaries. The works cost in excess of \$6 million (500 properties at \$12,000 per property) however precise costs are not available as the contract was combined with other works on public lands.

Community grants

Contributions by way of grants under Section 356 of the Local Government Act for this period were \$58,041.

- Community Grants - \$30,000
- Other - \$28,041

Human resources

Training and Development

A wide variety of training occurred during 2007/2008 including:

Skills based training 2007/08

- 123 magic/parent workshop
- ABS users session
- Advanced building regulations
- Advanced development assessment
- AGIS Gas inspection examiner
- Asset management - NAMS plus IPWEA
- Autism spectrum disorders
- Brighter futures partners' seminar
- CCTV Conduit inspection and reporting
- Cert 2 - library information services
- Cert 2 - local government - operational works
- Cert 2 - water industry operations
- Cert 3 - auto (mech - heavy vehicle road transport)
- Cert 3 - local government - governance and administration
- Cert 4 - assess and workplace training
- Cert 4 - civil engineering
- Cert 4 - in hydrology
- Cert 4 - local government - regulatory services
- Childrens librarian SE zone regional meeting
- CivilCad - roads and advanced roads
- Community options regional meeting
- Community options state conference
- Construction carpentry
- Consultative committee - refresh & review
- Contract management
- EHO network meeting
- ELPRO Scada-C user group conference
- Emergency management
- Emergency management and EOC operations
- Environmental health degree
- Excel budget skills
- Excel training
- Excelling as a first time manager
- Fair value and asset revaluation
- FBT
- Finance for non-financial people
- Fleet conference / training
- Food surveillance / handling / temp control.
- Framework for assessment of vulnerable children
- Freedom of information workshop
- Gallery - object handling skills - new trends
- Good practice guidelines
- Grad diploma - information studies
- Graduate cert. arts
- GST refresher workshop
- Improving the NSW planning system - info session
- Integrating wetland management into property management
- Landfill and transfer conference
- Lead auditor in environmental management systems
- LIAC training program
- Library workplace visit
- Managing conflict and communication in the workplace
- MapInfo - pro user
- Mobile muster
- MS excel
- NAMS workshop
- NSW coastal conference
- NSW youth work conference
- OHS consultation in the workplace
- Oiled shoreline assessment and cleanup
- On-Site OSSM conference
- On-site wastewater management
- Partners seminar - research to practice
- Playground inspectors course
- Rangers conference
- Rates / property fujitsu
- Rates financial and property controls
- Rating fundamentals plus Intro to local government
- Rating professionals conference
- Recycled water and risk assess processes
- RYDON annual conference for youth workers
- Standards for NSW libraries
- StateCover workshop
- Strategic asset management - AMP's.
- Strengthening indigenous communities
- Taxation and payroll
- Team communication and values
- Tourism regional board meeting

Skills based training 2007/08 continued

- Councils as information guardians
- CPLA annual conference
- CPLA general meeting
- Dam safety surveillance
- Database development
- Diploma of childcare
- E books workshop
- Effective workplace leadership
- Local government aboriginal network conference
- Local government annual accounting workshop
- Local government CMA forum
- Local government customer service network conference
- Local government finance managers annual conference
- Local government leadership
- Local government super training conference
- Towards better tendering
- Treating complex trauma / DOCS portal
- Typequick typing tutor
- Water industry fundamentals
- Water sampling
- Web form training

Corporate training 2007/08

- BVSC general induction
- Handling difficult people
- Manual handling
- OHS construction induction ticket (CIT)
- Preventing bullying and harassment
- Preventing bullying and harassment – managers
- Train the trainer - bullying and harassment

OHS / Legislative training 2007/08

- Backhoe - assessment only
- Bonded asbestos sheet removal
- Chainsaw - level 1 and 2
- Chainsaw - level 1 cross cut
- Chainsaw operations - cross cutting
- Chemcert - full course
- Chemcert - refresher
- Confined spaces - full course
- Confined spaces - refresher
- Crane and plant electrical safety course
- Dangerous goods
- Dogging - basic
- Electrical connect disconnect licence only
- First Aid
- First Aid refresher
- Forklift - assessment only
- Front end loader - assessment only
- Heavy combination truck licence training
- Heavy vehicle initial training
- HR heavy rigid truck licence
- HR learners permit only
- Manual handling
- Medium rigid truck driver training
- MR driver's licence
- MR learners permit
- MR truck training / licence
- OHS consultation in the workplace
- OHS safety awareness refresher
- OHS waste management safety system
- Plant training - general initial / various plant
- RTA select / modify traffic control plans
- RTA traffic control - worksite
- RTA design audit traffic plans
- RTA stop slow bat
- RTA traffic controller - stop slow
- Skidsteer assessment only
- Working near overhead power lines
- Working near overhead power lines - refresher

Traineeships

Local government operational works	6 trainees
Construction carpentry	2 apprentices
Auto/heavy vehicle apprentices	2 apprentices
Water industry operations	3 trainees plus 3 existing worker trainees
Local government governance and admin	5 existing worker trainees
Total	21 trainees and apprentices

Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S)

18 Workers' Compensation claims were lodged during the 2007/2008 reporting year which is an improvement of nearly 38% over the previous year. There were 8 lost time claims.

A total of 275 days were lost during the year with 61 days directly attributed to the 8 lost time claims lodged during 2007/2008.

The remaining 214 days were related to claims lodged in previous years.

- 8 hours 2002/2003 (1 claim)
- 244 hours 2004/2005 (2 claims)
- 237 hours 2005/2006 (2 claims)

Lost time injuries (expressed in days) for the previous nine years are:

Year	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	007/08
Days Lost	550	433	250.75	227.75	100.5	113.12	94.42	36.64	185.61	61

Return to work programs

There were five return to work plans designed and implemented for injured workers during 2007/08.

Four of these plans resulted in the injured workers returning to their pre-injury position and the remaining plan had the injured worker performing most of their normal duties within agreed medical constraints.

Three additional return to work plans were successfully completed this year for workers who were injured in previous reporting years.

OHS Systems developed or reviewed during 2007/08

Volunteer management system

A system of managing Council's significant volunteer workforce has been developed utilising the resources of a cross-functional team. A volunteer registration procedure has been developed and all details are now recorded in a database. A volunteer induction program has also been developed and includes information and guidance on all aspects of OHS.

Health monitoring

A voluntary influenza immunisation was implemented with approximately 100 employees being vaccinated. An analysis of the program will be completed and included in the 2008/2009 report.

Risk Chase audit completed

Council's workers' compensation insurer, StateCover Mutual undertakes an annual audit of OHS systems and procedures for the 126 NSW Councils insured by the company. Council's compliance rating as at the end of June 2008 was 92%. The StateCover average for NSW Local Government Councils is approximately 80%.

Particular areas for improvement have emerged from the audit so far. These areas will be the focus of attention in the next year and include the development of a business continuity plan in the event of minor or major emergency events

General

Council’s 2007/08 adjusted premium is estimated to be \$476,473 (excluding capital levy) following an increase of \$154,111 on the deposit premium.

This translates into a premium for Bega Valley Shire Council of 3.03% of salaries (salaries for this purpose are defined as total gross payroll). There are 126 NSW Councils insured with State Cover Mutual and the adjusted premium for Bega Valley for 2007/2008 is 36% less than the State average.

In addition to the savings and refunds on premium detailed above, it is appropriate to note that Council also attracted an incentive payment of \$41,635 from State Cover Mutual (our insurer) to recognise the progress made in implementing OHS systems.

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)

Bullying and Harassment Prevention training was held for all employees to give a greater insight into these inappropriate behaviours. Council has made it patently clear that it will not tolerate these activities and managers were provided with additional training to define their responsibilities in these areas.

Council currently employs two female trainee in non-traditional roles within the Works section and is planning to encourage female applicants into traineeships over the next two years.

Average female salaries at Council are 92% of the male average compared to 89% across the NSW Public Sector.

During 2007/2008, there were 67 positions within Council that require degree level qualifications with 41 positions with male incumbents, 19 with females and 7 vacant.

Aboriginal employment numbers have reduced slightly across Council with representation in engineering works, child care and environmental health areas. Steps are being taken to increase Aboriginal employment levels.

Functions delegated to other organisations

Body	Function
<p>Hall/Building Committees</p> <p>Bega Bega Sports Stadium Bemboka Bermagui Bermagui Sports Stadium Brogo Candelo Cobargo Eden Log Cabin Kiah Murrah Narira Village (Cobargo) Pambula Courthouse Pambula Quaama Rocky Hall Tanja Tarraganda Towamba Twyford (Merimbula) Wandella Wyndham</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management of council halls and buildings, including arranging bookings and carry out maintenance and improvements.

Body	Function
Cemetery Committee Bega Bemboka Bermagui Candelo Cobargo Eden Pambula Rocky Hall Towamba	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care, control and management of the cemeteries. The role of each committee is to provide a dignified final resting place for members of our community.
Cemetery Committee Cont. Wolumla Wonboyn Wyndham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care, control and management of the cemeteries. The role of each committee is to provide a dignified final resting place for members of our community.
Reserve Committees Bermagui Sportsground Berrambool Eden Sportsground George Brown sportsground Lawrence Park Montreal Goldfields Pambula Sports Complex Kianinny Bay Reserve Towamba Sportsground Tura Beach Flora Reserve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversee the care of council facilities.
Other Committees Children's Services Bega Valley Regional Gallery Bega Valley Bush Fire Management Bega Valley Shire Medallion Bega Valley Shire Youth Club Economic Development and Tourism Eden Port Development Road Safety Group Social Planning Waste Committee 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management of childcare centres at Bega and Eden. Advisory of Bega Regional Gallery. Bush fire management. Considers nominations for community serve awards. Provides a youth perspective on council decisions. Forum to consider local development and coordination. Representative group providing advice on Eden Port. Representative group providing advice on road safety. Community development and grant programs. Planning for future waste management.

Companies controlled by council

Bega Valley Shire Council is the majority shareholder in the registered company Sapphire Coast Tourism Booking Service Pty Ltd (ACN 094 363 925). Council holds 150,000 normal shares in the company. The General Manager holds two voting only shares as does Councillor David Hede.

With the creation of an independent company to manage tourism activities in the Shire, Sapphire Coast Tourism Booking Service P/L is currently being deregistered.

Partnerships with other organisations

Tenix Alliance

Council entered into an alliance contract with Tenix in the 2003/2004 financial year. On October 27, 2003 a contract was signed with Tenix. The deed of agreement provides for construction of sewer schemes in four of the Shire's inland villages and for the coastal settlements of Wallaga Lake and Beauty Point. The contractor also became responsible for the operation of the Shire's sewage treatment plants from March 1, 2004 and will operate them for an initial period, which finishes 10 years after the completion of the last village plant. The joint venture is also required to upgrade Council's six existing sewage treatment plants. All major construction works under the contract are due to be completed by the end of 2008.

During 2007/08 the installation of sewerage infrastructure in Bega, Kalaru, Wolumla, Candelo, Bermagui and Wallaga Lake was completed and work commenced in Merimbula. This progress complimented works previously completed at Tura Beach, Cobargo and Tathra in the preceding four years.

The overall cost of the program is expected to be in the order of \$76m. All sewage treatment plants were operated satisfactorily with good monitoring results achieved.

Statewide Mutual

Council is a member of three Statewide Mutual Insurance schemes, which are operated for Local Government throughout New South Wales. The benefit of a Mutual Scheme is that the members spread their risk so that the impact on each individual member Council is reduced in the event of a major claim. There are three schemes that operate for the following classes of Insurance:

- Statewide Mutual Liability Scheme which, covers Council for Public Liability and Professional indemnity Insurance Claims
- Property Mutual Liability Scheme which, provides insurance cover for all Council buildings
- Fidelity Mutual Liability Scheme is an insurance scheme designed to cover Councils against any fraudulent activity by staff and Council Committee members

The additional benefit is that insurance premiums are contained. The schemes are controlled by a Board of Management comprising of representatives of Councils and expert insurance personnel from Jardine Lloyd Thompson Local Government Insurance. The schemes operate on the pooling of insurance premiums, which are used to pay claims below a certain level, and for premiums for insurance claims that may exceed those levels. Any profits from these schemes are redirected back to the member Councils. The Mutual Liability Scheme and the Fidelity Mutual Liability Scheme each achieved an operating surplus in 2007/2008.

Overseas visits

There were no overseas visits by staff for this financial period.

Stormwater management

All proposed works as outlined in Council's 2007/08 Capital Works were completed, except for one project that had commenced and was completed in July 2008.

Activities undertaken to comply with Companion Animal ACT 1998

Companion animal management functions and activities are conducted by Council in accordance with the Companion Animals Act 1998 and Regulations.

During 2007/08 an estimated total of \$ 240,000 was expended on companion animal management responsibilities and associated activities. Council employs 4 Rangers with responsibility for companion animal management amongst a number of their activities.

The companion animal pound management data collection returns were lodged with the Department of Local Government on 9 July 2008.

Dog attack investigations consume considerable Council resources. Council's Rangers investigate all claims of dog attack with a total of 23 attacks confirmed and details lodged with the Department of Local Government, as required.

Community education is an important component of Council's companion animal management activities. Rangers are involved in presentations to local groups including libraries and schools as well as the Animal Welfare League. In addition Council has a well developed web site with details regarding companion animal management including Council's Guide to Companion Animal Management. This Guide is scheduled for review during the next financial year.

The Guide forms an integral part of Council's community education program and is popular with locals and the many visitors to the Shire. The Companion Animal Management Guide details the 10 leash free areas available in the Shire. All leash free areas have faeces disposal bags and waste bins provided. The Guide also details areas in the Shire where dogs are prohibited.

Council has a companion animal re-homing procedure that achieves very good outcomes in requiring the mandatory de-sexing of all companion animals that are re-homed from the Council companion animal facility at Kalaru. This has been achieved via a successful partnership with the Animal Welfare League to not only maximise the re-homing of de-sexed animals but also to reduce the number of euthanased companion animals through strategies such as rehoming assessments and de-sexing vouchers.

Freedom of Information (FOI)

Council is required to report on the number of formal requests for access to information under the Freedom of Information Act 1998. These details are provided in table below.

Council's Freedom of Information Officer/Public Officer is Leanne Barnes, Group Manager Customer Service and Community Development.

Applications made under Freedom of Information should be made in writing and submitted to the Freedom of Information Officer with a fee of \$30. A discount may apply in certain circumstances. Under the Freedom of Information Act 1998 Council must reply to applications within 21 days.

	30 June 2007	30 June 2008
Requests Received		
Personal	8	14
Other	1	-
Requests Granted		
Personal	8	14
Other	1	-
Requests Refused		
Personal	Nil	Nil
Other	Nil	Nil
Fees Received	\$270	\$360
Days to Process		
0-14	8	13
15-28	1	1
over 28 days	0	0

Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (PPIP)

Council adopted a new policy framework, including Access to Information Policy in November 2007 as anticipated in the 2007/08 Annual Report. This policy is supported by a comprehensive set of guidelines and procedures.

The policy and procedures are augmented by the attendance of staff from several sections of the organisation including, corporate management, customer service and planning at formal training sessions regarding FOI, PPIPA and general information management, conducted by Timmins Consulting.

There were no reviews conducted by or on behalf of Council under Part 5.

Planning Agreements

Bega Valley Shire Council has no planning agreements in place.

National competition policy

The National Competition Policy (NCP) was ratified by the Council of Australian Government in April 1995. The policy is being applied to all government business throughout Australia. A key component of the NCP is the Competition Principles Agreement. This agreement identifies six key principles through which governments can distinguish between the regulatory and commercial business activities exposed to competition.

The first four principles are the responsibility of State government. The impact of this work in Local Government is evidenced by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal review of pricing policies for water and sewer charges and the application of benchmarking to various activities undertaken by councils.

Councils are required to recognise and address the impact of the last two principles on their own operations.

Key principles

- Provision of independent pricing oversight of government business enterprises.
- Structural reform of public monopolies.
- Review of legislation with a view to removing anti competitive provisions where the cost out weights the benefits.
- Provision of third party access to essential infrastructure owned by the public and private sectors.
- Extension of the Trade Practices Act to Local Government.
- Application of competitive neutrality to significant business activities.

Trade Practices Act

All Council business activities have been subject to the Trade Practices Act since July 1, 1996.

Council has undertaken a review of policies, procedures and practices to ensure that they are consistent with the provisions of the Act. In particular, those sections focusing on anti-competitive behaviour, price agreements, exclusive dealing and misuse of market power.

Competitive neutrality

The aim of this principle is to ensure that government owned activities and services operate under similar competitive pressures to those experienced by the private sector.

Even though Council may have advantages as a result of size, buying power, specialist expertise etc competition policy does not require that Council competes on an equal footing with private businesses.

However, competitive neutrality does apply to those activities of Council operated as 'businesses'. It does not apply to non-business, non profit activities.

In accordance with this principle Council is required to determine those activities that are classified as 'business'. In order to determine these activities Council has observed the State Government guidelines that suggest consideration should be given to the following

- What are the objectives that Council has for the activity?
- Is the activity intended to make a profit?

- Is the activity or service provided for a fee or a charge?
- Does the activity bid for external contracts?
- Is the activity in competition with other providers? And
- What economic impact does the activity have in its market?

Once Council has identified those activities that it will treat as business they are required to be classified into two categories according to annual sales turnover. The categories are:

- **Category 1 business**
those with an annual sales turnover of \$2 million or more per annum
- **Category 2 business**
those with an annual sales turnover of less than \$2 million per annum

Based on Council's 2007/08 financial statements, the following activities have a turnover of \$2 million or more:

- Water supply operations
- Sewerage service operations

Using the recommended State Government guidelines, Council has identified these operations as Category 1 businesses.

Financial Statement

A statement of income and expenses from continuing operations together with a statement of assets and liabilities for the Category 1 businesses is included.

The comparison of actual performance against projected performance and statement of reasons for difference for each is as follows:

(report on material variances (<>10%) between actual performance against projected performance of Principal Activities)

- **Water Supplies**
(unfavourable 13% or \$375,000)
Main factors were reduced income from water user changers \$948K; additional interest on investments \$203K; reduced exp on loans interest of \$259K due to delayed take-up on borrowings.
- **Sewer Services**
(favourable 166% or \$5,736,000)
Increased interest on investments \$620K; increase in grants during 2007/2008 for capital projects which were not included in original budget \$5M.

Progressive implementation of competitive neutrality

Council has undertaken a review of its business activities and developed a basis on which it will rely to identify and classify Category 1 and Category 2 businesses.

During the reporting period Council has undertaken a review of its Category 1 businesses to identify and define any basis to fund subsidies provided to customers.

Council has also identified any business benefits arising from Local Government's borrowing position in comparison with commercial rates.

It has also identified a basis for determining a rate of return on capital investment and any areas of cost advantage arising from its status as a Local Government.

Complaints handling

Council has established a complaint handling policy and procedure for competitive neutrality complaints.

Council has not received any competitive neutrality complaints during the review period.

Business Activity – Water Supply Income Statement for Year ended 30 June 2008	Actual 2008	Actual 2007
Income from continuing operations		
Access charges	1,845	1,667
User charges	5,074	4,388
Fees	183	165
Interest	1,101	260
Grants and contributions provided for non capital purposes	139	130
Profit from the sale of assets		
Other income	68	38
Total income from continuing operations	8,410	6,649
Expenses from continuing operations		
Employee benefits and on-costs	1,150	1,119
Borrowing costs	8	8
Materials and contracts	3,483	3,670
Depreciation and impairment	1,846	1,669
Depreciation Adjustment - residual life reassessment		(11,105)
Water purchase charges		-
Loss on sale of assets	11	7
Calculated taxation equivalents	3	2
Debt guarantee fee (if applicable)	-	22
Other expenses		-
Total expenses from continuing operations	6,501	(4,608)
Surplus (deficit) from continuing operations before capital amounts	1,909	11,257
Grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	665	981
Surplus (deficit) from continuing operations after capital amounts	2,574	12,238
Surplus (deficit) from ALL operations before tax	2,574	12,238
less: Corporate Taxation Equivalent (30%) [based on result before capital]	(573)	(3,377)
Surplus (deficit) after tax	2,001	8,861
plus Opening Retained Profits	84,662	72,424
plus adjustments for amounts unpaid:		
- Taxation equivalent payments	3	2
- Debt guarantee fees	-	22
- Corporate taxation equivalent	573	3,377
less:		(24)
- Tax Equivalent Dividend paid		
Closing Retained Profits	87,239	84,662
Return on Capital %	0	0
Subsidy from Council	4,105	-
Calculation of dividend payable:		
Surplus (deficit) after tax	2,001	8,861
Less: Capital grants and contributions (excluding developer contributions)	(18)	(16)
Surplus for dividend calculation purposes	1,983	8,845
Potential Dividend calculated from Surplus	992	4,422

Business Activity – Sewerage Income Statement for Year ended 30 June 2008	Actual 2008	Actual 2007
Income from continuing operations		
Access charges	10,272	7,160
User charges	525	476
Fees	181	105
Interest	891	470
Grants and contributions provided for non capital purposes	116	103
Other income	40	20
Total income from continuing operations	12,025	8,334
Expenses from continuing operations		
Employee benefits and on-costs	1,285	1,035
Borrowing costs	1,756	735
Materials and contracts	5,383	4,501
Depreciation and impairment	2,789	2,375
Depreciation Adjustment - residual life reassessment		3,364
Loss on sale of assets	13	15
Calculated taxation equivalents	11	4
Total expenses from continuing operations	11,237	12,029
Surplus (deficit) from continuing operations before capital amounts	788	(3,695)
Grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	8,396	9,780
Surplus (deficit) from continuing operations after capital amounts	9,184	6,085
Surplus (deficit) from discontinued operations		-
Surplus (deficit) from ALL operations before tax	9,184	6,085
less: Corporate Taxation Equivalent (30%) [based on result before capital]	(236)	-
Surplus (deficit) after tax	8,948	6,085
plus Opening Retained Profits	66,415	60,330
adjustments for amounts unpaid:		
- Taxation equivalent payments	11	4
- Corporate taxation equivalent	236	-
less:		
- Tax Equivalent Dividend paid		(4)
Closing Retained Profits	75,610	66,415
Return on Capital %	0	(0)
Subsidy from Council	4,250	8,341
Calculation of dividend payable:		
Surplus (deficit) after tax	8,948	6,085
Less: Capital grants and contributions (excluding developer contributions)	(7,930)	(9,390)
Surplus for dividend calculation purposes	1,018	-
Potential Dividend calculated from Surplus	509	-

Business Activity – Water Supply	2008	2007
Balance Sheet for Year ended 30 June 2008	\$'000	\$'000
Assets		
Current Assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	16,642	15,100
Investment		-
Receivables	539	292
Inventories	76	69
Other		-
Non-current assets classified as held for sale		-
Total Current Assets	17,257	15,461
Non-Current Assets		
Investment		-
Receivables		-
Inventories		-
Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	96,355	89,793
Investments accounted for using equity method		-
Investment property		-
Other		-
Total Non-Current Assets	96,355	89,793
Total Assets	113,612	105,254
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
Payables	873	728
Interest Bearing Liabilities	2	2
Provisions	49	35
Total Current Liabilities	924	765
Non-Current Liabilities		
Payables		-
Interest Bearing Liabilities	117	119
Provisions	15	24
Total Non-Current Liabilities	132	143
Total Liabilities	1,056	908
Net Assets	112,556	104,346
Equity		
Retained earnings	87,238	84,662
Revaluation reserves	25,318	19,684
Council equity interest	112,556	104,346
Minority equity interest		-
Total Equity	112,556	104,346

Business Activity – Sewerage	2008	2007
Balance Sheet for Year ended 30 June 2008	\$'000	\$'000
Assets		
Current Assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	9,915	17,801
Investment	-	-
Receivables	705	2,003
Inventories	5	4
Other	-	-
Non-current assets classified as held for sale	-	-
Total Current Assets	10,625	19,808
Non-Current Assets		
Inventories	-	-
Receivables	1	-
Inventories	-	-
Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	108,710	86,098
Investments accounted for using equity method	-	-
Investment property	-	-
Other	-	-
Total Non-Current Assets	108,711	86,098
Total Assets	119,336	105,906
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
Payables	2,121	1,973
Interest Bearing Liabilities	612	574
Provisions	126	118
Total Current Liabilities	2,859	2,665
Non-Current Liabilities		
Payables	-	-
Interest Bearing Liabilities	26,163	26,775
Provisions	16	31
Total Non-Current Liabilities	26,179	26,806
Total Liabilities	29,038	29,471
Net Assets	90,298	76,435
Equity		
Retained earnings	75,599	66,415
Revaluation reserves	14,699	10,020
Council equity interest	90,298	76,435
Minority equity interest	-	-
Total Equity	90,298	76,435

Bega Valley Shire Council

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