



Meander Valley Council  
Working Together

# Annual Plan 2021-22





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# Mayor's Message

## Wayne Johnston

On behalf of Council I am proud to present this year's annual plan.

As we continue to adapt to adequately manage the changing circumstances of COVID-19, we do so with a growing sense of optimism.

For, despite the challenges, Meander Valley has an exceptionally positive outlook.

More people are choosing to live in here than ever before and, in turn there has been an increase in local jobs. This has supported our tourism and retail businesses at a time when local trade is crucial.

As we emerge from the constraints of COVID-19, Council has set an ambitious agenda that seeks to engage and collaborate with the community on a new Strategic Plan that will inform our future directions.

Our annual plan is service focused and seeks to set the course for a transformation of how we deliver value to our residents.

Our online service capability will be improved to create greater efficiencies, streamline processes for improved customer experiences and provide for greater accessibility to services outside traditional business open hours.

This years' annual plan does not seek to capture all of the operational activity we will do this year.

Rather, it focuses on work that is significant in terms of importance to the community and the effectiveness of our service provision and the organisational transformation required to achieve a well governed and efficient Council that is able to progress the ambitions and priorities of the community.

As we commence what will be a multi-year journey to implement change, we do so with a measured approach.

We are mindful that the rate of change needs to match our financial resources and the capacity of our staff and ensure that everyone, including the community join us on the journey.

Whilst there will always be challenges, Meander Valley is rich with opportunities across incredibly diverse and growing sectors including industry, agriculture, the arts, health and tourism.

The actions within our annual plan allow us to respond effectively to the changing face of our community and contribute to the lifestyle, health and wellbeing of all our residents and I look forward to working with you throughout the exciting times ahead.

# Foreword

John Jordan, General Manager

I am proud to present the 2021-2022 Annual Plan.

Amid the unprecedented circumstances of a lingering global pandemic, the people of Meander Valley and staff of Council have continued to get on with the job of supporting the community in uncertain times. Fortunately, Tasmania has fared better than other areas, but risks and challenges still remain.

Financially, our 2021-22 budget puts Council on track to recover from the impacts of the pandemic. Council remains in a strong and viable position after a deliberate decision to spend money in response to COVID-19 and the need to support the community. A return to a balanced budget will be achieved in 2022-23.

This year's program of work will see \$11.4m spent on community infrastructure across Meander Valley. This includes upgrades to Las Vegas Drive Reserve at Prospect Vale, new lighting and drainage for the Deloraine Football Club and the construction of a pump track at Alveston Drive, Deloraine. These projects are in addition to the many business as usual activities such as road resurfacing and reconstruction, bridge upgrades, and much more.

We anticipate our capital works and infrastructure programs will be particularly challenging to deliver this year as, like so many other organisations, we confront the headwinds of increased material and labour costs and a shortage of contractors able to undertake work in a timely manner.

A key agenda for Council is to continue to support the community through a vibrant and renewed community program. This year we will engage with the community to update the Community Strategic Plan which guides overall decision making and priorities for Council.

We will continue to support local organisations and volunteers with \$100k allocated to the community grants program and maintaining support for the community cars.

Council has been very successful in extracting value out of its business systems and processes. However, we have reached the point where we have to upgrade our information systems and processes to ensure we are able to provide a contemporary service that spans beyond traditional office hours.

We will commence renewing our corporate systems and re-designing our products and services to boost operational efficiency and better meet customer expectations.

Our waste infrastructure is also nearing end of life and needs renewal. Our budget has been adjusted to accommodate the costs of this. Council will finalise a new waste management strategy, renew kerbside collection contracts, introduce tip vouchers, and invest to achieve long term landfill capacity to replace our end of life facilities at Deloraine and Cluan.

In an increasingly competitive landscape there is great demand for highly skilled workers and our capacity to deliver relies on our ability to treat employees well, develop our brand, and offer a contemporary and safe work environment. Council will focus on this as we negotiate a new enterprise agreement and take stock of our culture and offering as an employer.

As we approach the challenge of delivering an ambitious program I take great pride in knowing our staff and Councillors are part of an energetic, supportive and highly qualified team that is committed to working together to achieve the best possible outcomes for the residents.

# Introduction

## What's in the purpose of the operational plan?

The operational plan contains the programs, projects and services Council plans to deliver over the 2021-22 financial year. The operational plan outlines the practical actions we intend to undertake that are in addition to the many business as usual activities undertaken to ensure services are delivered and Council is well run. The operational plan complements the annual budget and both are developed in parallel to provide consistency between Council's work program and the resourcing allocations determined in the budget.

## How does Council decide what to include in the operational plan?

Actions contained in the operational plan are drawn from Council endorsed strategic plans, Council decisions, legislative requirements from the Local Government Act and the state and federal governments, essential reforms and emerging issues.

Each operational activity aligns with Council's six future directions, contained in the Community Strategic Plan 2014-2024 (see diagram below).

Together, the structure that determines what is contained in the operational plan provides us with an informed, relevant and integrated approach to deliver value in the services we provide to the Meander Valley community.

### Community Strategic Plan 2014 -2024

Our Six Future Directions



Council decisions, legislation, essential reforms, strategies and plans

Annual Plan

# Snapshot: Meander Valley



**6,500**

kerbside collection services every year



**9**

elected members



**36**

community playgrounds and fitness stations

**3,620**

dogs were registered in 2021



**52** lost dogs were reunited with their owners



**4.1**

Council operates with an average of 4.1 staff per 1,000 residents.

This is below the 5.4 staff average for comparable Councils.

*(based on latest available data)*



**\$829**

Our average residential general rates are almost the lowest in Tasmania



**20,037**

People live here

in 2020, our population increased by 193, which was the largest annual increase in the last decade.



**1,000**

public bins are serviced every week and Council operates

**3**

municipal waste facilities



**100+**

street and amenity trees planted annually



**821** kilometres of road networks renewed and maintained



**1,200+**

customer service requests actioned every year



**13**

community halls



Who is working and doing business in Meander Valley?

Meander Valley is home to **1,672** registered businesses.

The unemployment rate in Meander Valley is **3.5%**, below the Tasmanian state average of **6%**



**40+**

sporting facilities



we are classified as a large, rural Council with

**3,331**

square kilometres of land area



**8**

municipal sports grounds



**223**

bridges maintained



**10,000+**

rateable properties



**63**

parks and reserves managed and maintained



**2**

municipal swimming pools

# Highlights of the Year Ahead

## Investing in our people and culture

The strength of Meander Valley Council is its people, who often wear many different hats to get the job done. This year our work will include renewal of the Enterprise Agreement, investment to understand and enhance a happy, collaborative and inclusive culture within the organisation and improvements towards a zero harm workplace and safety culture.

## Community and lifestyle

Our community is changing and facing new challenges including population growth, a change in the mix of people, higher expectations of services, and varying attitudes to many of the things that will ultimately define the Meander Valley way of life. Against this backdrop, we will ask the community to help renew the Community Strategic Plan to ensure we clearly understand what our focus should be.

The impact of COVID-19 has been drawn out but a transition to a more certain circumstance is emerging. We will revitalise our community and lifestyle programs. Our services and activities will be focused on ensuring our community remains vibrant, engaged and resilient by supporting groups and individuals to achieve their goals, whether this is through events and community grants or providing other opportunities.

## New ways to support economic development and business

Meander Valley is a region of increasing prosperity and economic growth. Council plays a leadership and promoting role to ensure businesses and investors wishing to contribute to the region's ongoing prosperity are well informed and supported in their efforts to establish and grow their enterprise or, to partner within the region. As we emerge from the COVID-19 Disease Emergency we will deliver initiatives aimed at recovering and growing the Meander Valley regional economy.

Council wants to make it easy for business to understand the potential of the region and make the task of establishing and operating a business in our local government area easier. A new economic development and business support strategy will be developed to guide work to achieve this outcome.

## Modernisation of Council

Council is rethinking how it works and uses technology, people, and processes in pursuit of new business models and better ways to meet customer expectations around products and services.

A key component of this work will be starting a multi-year journey to integrate digital technology into all areas of our business, fundamentally changing how we operate and deliver value to our residents and customers. This work also has a cultural element that requires our people to continually challenge the status quo, experiment, and get comfortable with letting go of some outdated approaches. We will invest time and energy to learn new ways of thinking and working so we can recognise where and how opportunities to improve can be progressed.

This year we will tender to renew many of our corporate (Enterprise Resource Planning) systems. We will also automate and simplify our governance and support for Council and other meetings.

A re-design of our products and services to boost operational efficiency and respond to evolving customer expectations will also commence. This year, we will grow our range of online services, enhance the information available to people and plan the introduction of digital forms.

## Long term solutions for waste management

Our waste infrastructure is nearing end-of-life and needs renewal. Council will finalise and implement a waste management strategy to ensure the municipality has contemporary solutions for the sustainable management of waste across the diversity of our urban, towns and rural communities. This year we will renew the kerbside collection contracts, introduce tip vouchers and invest to achieve long term landfill capacity to replace our end of life facilities at Deloraine and Cluan.

## Delivering community infrastructure

Council will deliver an \$11.4 million community infrastructure program. Highlights include upgrades to Las Vegas Drive Reserve Prospect Vale, the Deloraine Football Club and the construction of a pump track in Alveston Drive, Deloraine. These projects are in addition to the replacement of the Selbourne Road Bridge, Hagley and delivery of an extensive road resurfacing and reconstruction program to improve safety and serviceability. We will also progress construction of the community hall at Bracknell, new squash courts and football ground lighting at Deloraine.

## Implementing the new Tasmanian Planning Scheme

Planning applications are now subject to the Tasmanian Planning Scheme and applications will be assessed under the State Planning Provisions and the Meander Valley Local Provisions Schedule which commenced on 19 April 2021. Council will continue work to ensure planning staff are fully conversant with the new planning arrangements and that information and processes are updated to efficiently support planning applications.

## Customer service performance review

We are committed to enhancing the service we provide to residents and customers. Council will undertake a full review of customer service standards, performance indicators and the processes through which our services are experienced.

# 1

## A sustainable natural and built environment

### Strategic Pathways

- 1.1 Contemporary planning supports and guides growth and development across Meander Valley.
- 1.2 Liveable townships, urban and rural areas across the local government area with individual character.
- 1.3 The natural, cultural and built heritage of Meander Valley is protected and maintained.
- 1.4 Meander Valley is environmentally sustainable.
- 1.5 Public health and the environment is protected by the responsible management of liquid and solid waste at a local and regional level.
- 1.6 Participate and support programs that improve water quality in our waterways.

Operational Activity		Department Lead
1.1, 1.2	Implement the new Tasmanian Planning Scheme - State Planning Provisions and the Meander Valley Local Provisions Schedule.	Development & Regulatory Services
1.1, 1.2, 1.3	Progress regional land use planning in conjunction with neighbouring councils.	Development & Regulatory Services
1.1, 1.2, 1.3	Support the review of the Prospect Vale - Blackstone Heights Structure Plan.	
1.1, 1.2, 1.3	Process planning applications in accordance with delegated authority and statutory timeframes.	
1.5	Ensure environmental health monitoring is compliant and incidents effectively managed.	
1.4,1.5	Progress the Meander Valley Council Waste Management Strategy.	Infrastructure
1.4, 1.5	Manage the Westbury Town Common in line with the Management Plan.	Works
1.3,1.4, 1.6	Participate in the Tamar Estuary and Esk Rivers Program (NRM North)	Community, Wellbeing & Lifestyle and Development & Regulatory Services
1.1, 1.2, 1.3	Collaborate through regional and state initiatives to understand and respond to the local impacts of climate change.	Development & Regulatory Services

# 2

## A thriving local economy

### Strategic Pathways

- 2.1 The strengths of Meander Valley attract investment and provide opportunities for employment.
- 2.2 Economic development in Meander Valley is planned, maximising existing assets and investment in infrastructure.
- 2.3 People are attracted to live in the townships, rural and urban areas of Meander Valley.
- 2.4 A high level of recognition and demand for Great Western Tiers products and experiences.
- 2.5 Current and emerging technology is available to benefit both business and the community.

Operational Activity		Department Lead
2.1, 2.2	Work with State Development to renew and release regional prospectus.	Community, Wellbeing & Lifestyle
2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5	Deliver a new economic development and business support strategy.	
2.1, 2.4, 2.5	Deliver business information forums covering key economic indicators and major issues.	
2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5	Develop an incentives program to support business relocation and growth in Meander Valley.	
2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5	Lobby for increased and accelerated regional infrastructure investment to sustain growth.	Community, Wellbeing & Lifestyle and Governance
2.4	Deliver year one milestones for the short walks project.	Community, Wellbeing & Lifestyle
2.1, 2.2	Develop and cost a branding and marketing strategy to support promotion of Meander Valley as a lifestyle, tourism and investment destination.	
2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5	Progress feasibility assessment and financial model to achieve bioenergy / bio waste facility in Meander Valley.	Infrastructure

# 3

## Vibrant and engaged communities

### Strategic Pathways

- 3.1 Creativity and learning are part of daily life across the communities of Meander Valley.
- 3.2 Successful local events enhance community life.
- 3.3 Education and training opportunities are available to everyone across the local government area.
- 3.4 Meander Valley communities have the resilience and capacity to address and overcome life's challenges and emergencies.
- 3.5 Young people have the opportunity to be engaged in community life.

Operational Activity		Department Lead
3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4,3.5, 4.1	Complete consultation and drafting of the Community Strategic Plan.	Community, Wellbeing & Lifestyle
3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4,3.5, 4.1	Review and update Council's Community Program.	
3.1, 3.2, 3.4 4.1	Deliver the grants and sponsorship program to enable community initiatives.	
3.4, 4.1	Deliver online and print versions of the Valley News.	Governance
3.1, 3.2, 3.4 4.1	Deliver Council events program including the Australia Day awards and quarterly citizenship ceremonies.	Community, Wellbeing & Lifestyle
3.4, 4.1	Develop a volunteer framework to promote and support volunteering in the community.	
3.1,3.2,3.4	Implement measures to acknowledge Indigenous Australians.	Governance
3.1, 3.5	Collaborate to support young people in the community.	Community, Wellbeing & Lifestyle
3.3, 3.4	Collaborate with not for profit and volunteer groups to support wellbeing and life-long learning across the community.	

# 4

## A healthy and safe community

### Strategic Pathways

- 4.1 The health and wellbeing needs of all sectors in the community are planned, met and managed.
- 4.2 Infrastructure, facilities and programs encourage increased participation in all forms of active and passive recreation.
- 4.3 Public health and safety standards are regulated, managed and maintained.
- 4.4 Prepare and maintain emergency management plans and documents and work with our communities to educate and plan for emergencies.

Operational Activity		Department Lead
4.1	Progress delivery of new community facilities including Bracknell Memorial Hall, Deloraine Squash Courts and Deloraine AFL lighting Upgrade.	Infrastructure
4.1,4.2	Deliver planned and reactive maintenance of community facilities to ensure safe, well used facilities.	
4.4	Review and test the municipal emergency management and social recovery functions of Council in line with legislation.	
4.4	Support the operation of the Meander Valley SES unit through ongoing management of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).	
4.1, 1.5	Manage public health risk through monitoring and sampling of recreational water.	Development & Regulatory Services
4.1, 4.3	Promote safe food practices; ensure inspection and registration of food premises in accordance with the Food Act 2003.	
4.1, 4.3	Coordinate the school based immunisation as part of the National Immunisation Program.	
4.3	Complete a review of dog management policy and practice.	
4.3	Complete annual fire abatement inspections and investigate complaints.	
4.3	Investigate incidents and complaints regarding animal control.	
4.1, 6.4	Renew operating contract for the Deloraine Swimming Pool and enable continuing community management of the Caveside Pool.	Infrastructure
6.4	Review and update booking processes and user Guides for indoor facilities.	

# 5

## Innovative leadership and community governance

### Strategic Pathways

- 5.1 Meander Valley Council programs are regularly reviewed to support the achievement of the Community Strategic Plan.
- 5.2 Long term financial planning and asset management underpins the ongoing viability of Meander Valley.
- 5.3 Evidence based decision-making engages the community and is honest, open and transparent.
- 5.4 Meander Valley councillors and employees have the knowledge, skills and attitude to responsibly undertake community governance and operational responsibilities.
- 5.5 Councils in the region collaborate and share resources for the collective good of their communities.
- 5.6 Meander Valley Council is recognised as a responsibly managed organisation.

Operational Activity		Department Lead
5.1, 5.6	Negotiate and renew Council's Enterprise Agreement.	Governance
5.1, 5.6	Deliver Annual Plan, Annual Report and Annual General Meeting.	
5.1, 5.2, 5.6	Develop 2022-23 budget including a review of long term financial review and forward estimates to align with renewal of the Community Strategic Plan.	Corporate Services
5.4, 5.6	Complete a workplace culture "health check" and review measures to promote and maintain a healthy and positive workplace.	
5.1, 5.3, 5.6	Renew the Customer Service Charter and a roadmap to refine systems, reporting and processes to enhance customer outcomes.	Governance
5.1, 5.2	Develop a digital transformation and modernisation of services roadmap.	
5.3, 5.5	Develop a communication strategy and implement measures to enhance community information and engagement.	Governance and Community, Wellbeing & Lifestyle
5.4	Refresh and promote "Good Governance" program for staff and councillors.	Governance
5.1, 5.2, 5.6	Renew workplace health and safety systems and implement measures to monitor compliance and achieve a 'zero harm' culture.	Corporate Services
5.1, 5.2, 5.6	Renew the risk management framework and review risks and mitigations.	Governance
5.1, 5.2, 5.6	Progress planning and procurement to upgrade Council's Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Systems.	Corporate Services
5.1, 5.2, 5.6	Plan and progressively upgrade operating systems to support contemporary software and service delivery solutions.	Corporate Services
5.4, 5.5, 5.6	Introduce contemporary software solutions to better support Council Meetings, record keeping and public information.	Governance

# 6

## Planned infrastructure services

### Strategic Pathways

- 6.1 The future of Meander Valley's infrastructure assets is assured through affordable, planned maintenance and renewal strategies.
- 6.2 Regional infrastructure and transport is collaboratively planned and managed by all levels of government.
- 6.3 The Meander Valley transport network meets the present and future needs of the community and business.
- 6.4 Open space, parklands, recreation facilities, cemeteries and public buildings are well utilised and maintained.
- 6.5 Stormwater and flooding cause no adverse impacts.
- 6.6 Infrastructure services are affordable and meet the community's needs into the future.

Operational Activity	Department Lead	
6.1, 6.4	Complete proactive inspections of footpaths, parks and recreation assets and rail interfaces.	Infrastructure
5.2, 6.1, 6.3, 6.6	Update asset information and road asset re-valuation data.	
5.2, 6.1, 6.3, 6.4, 6.6	Review Strategic Asset Management and Asset Management Plans.	
6.1, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6	Deliver capital work projects in line with the 2021-22 programs.	Infrastructure and Works
6.1, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6	Plan the 2022-23 Capital Works and Forward Works programs.	
6.2, 6.3	Deliver the Hadspen Meander Valley Road intersection upgrades design and procurement documentation.	Infrastructure
6.1, 6.3	Deliver the bridge inspection and maintenance program.	
6.6	Renew the kerbside collection contract for waste, recyclables and organics.	
1.4, 1.5, 6.1, 6.6	Commission additional landfill cell capacity at Cluan.	
1.3, 1.4, 1.5	Obtain environmental approvals and decommission the existing landfill cell at Deloraine.	
6.6	Progress land acquisition, EPA approvals and design for a new landfill cell at Deloraine.	
6.6	Design and construct new waste transfer station at Deloraine.	

## Statutory Estimates

<b>Operating Revenue</b>	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2019-20</b>
Rates and Charges	\$14,641,800	\$13,046,800	\$12,966,400
Fees and User Charges	\$1,282,300	\$1,150,100	\$1,255,000
Contributions	\$95,900	\$95,500	\$51,500
Interest	\$420,700	\$645,800	\$835,600
Operating Grants	\$4,387,300	\$4,350,400	\$4,441,200
TasWater Distributions	\$667,200	\$0	\$556,000
Other Revenue	\$181,700	\$184,800	\$192,700
<b>Total Operating Revenue</b>	<b>\$21,676,900</b>	<b>\$19,473,400</b>	<b>\$20,298,400</b>

<b>Operating Expenditure</b>	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2019-20</b>
Operating Wages	\$7,847,600	\$7,737,900	\$6,798,100
Operating Materials and Contracts	\$7,287,800	\$7,305,100	\$6,427,500
Finance Costs	\$248,800	\$271,600	\$266,000
Depreciation	\$5,400,400	\$5,132,200	\$5,088,000
State Fire Contribution	\$1,294,700	\$1,264,900	\$1,264,900
Other Expenditure	\$250,800	\$276,500	\$286,800
<b>Total Operating Expenditure</b>	<b>(\$22,330,100)</b>	<b>(\$21,988,200)</b>	<b>(\$20,131,300)</b>
<b>Underlying Surplus/Deficit</b>	<b>(\$653,200)</b>	<b>(\$2,514,800)</b>	<b>\$167,100</b>

<b>Capital, Cash and Investments</b>	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2019-20</b>
Capital Revenue	\$5,454,100	\$5,781,600	\$1,900,300
Capital Expenditure	(\$11,382,400)	(\$15,225,800)	(\$11,978,100)
Opening Cash and Investment Balance	\$18,701,800	\$18,721,900	\$20,729,700
<b>Closing Cash and Investment Balance</b>	<b>\$17,983,700</b>	<b>\$11,718,800</b>	<b>\$15,767,800</b>

## Public Health Goals and Objectives

Council's Environmental Health Officers are responsible for ensuring the statutory obligations in relation to public and environmental health are met. This includes the Public Health Act 1997, Food Act 2003, Local Government Act 1993 and Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994.

As part of Meander Valley Council's 2021-22 public health goals and objectives, the Environmental Health Officers will seek to:

- Ensure safe food practices at food businesses and events, and provide food handler training for community groups;
- Promptly investigate public and environmental health complaints;
- Continue to actively participate and contribute to policy and legislative development at a regional and state level to further the public and environmental health of our community;
- Coordinate a school based immunisation program in accordance with the National Immunisation Program and directives from the Department of Health;
- Undertake routine inspections of public health risk activities, water carriers and public events;
- Continue to actively participate in the Tamar Estuary and Esk Rivers program (TEER) including the Lake Trevallyn algal bloom working group; and
- Coordinate a monitoring program of public recreational water and pools to ensure water quality is suitable for swimming.



Meander Valley Council  
Working Together

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