

Appendix A:

Submissions and comments

We have consulted with LGV and the reviewed councils, and we considered their views when reaching our review conclusions. As required by the *Audit Act 1994*, we gave a draft copy of this report, or relevant extracts, to those agencies and asked for their submissions and comments.

Responsibility for the accuracy, fairness and balance of those comments rests solely with the relevant agency head.

Responses received

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Borough of Queenscliffe	A-7



Department of Government Services

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Andrew Greaves
Auditor-General
Level 31, 35 Collins Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000
enquiries@audit.vic.gov.au

Dear Auditor-General

PROPOSED REPORT: REPORTING ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE: FOLLOW UP

Thank you for your letter of 18 November 2024 and the attached proposed follow up report to the 2019 performance audit Reporting on Local Government Performance.

I note the report's findings that Local Government Victoria – a division of the Department of Government Services – has fully completed 4 out of the 5 recommendations made by you in 2019.

The substance of the outstanding recommendation to improve performance benchmarking will continue to be a focus of my department, with a commitment to ongoing improvement of www.KnowYourCouncil.vic.gov.au and the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework. We will also pursue efficiencies in local government data collection - including automation and further digitisation - to reduce reporting burden and add public value.

I appreciate the professional engagement of your office with my department throughout the conduct of the follow up audit and thank you for the opportunity to comment on the report.

Yours sincerely



Jo de Morton
Secretary

02/12/2024

Your details will be dealt with in accordance with the *Public Records Act 1973* and the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*. Should you have any queries or wish to gain access to your personal information held by this department please contact our Privacy Officer at the above address.



OFFICIAL

Response provided by the Chief Executive Officer, Baw Baw Shire Council



2 December 2024

VAGO Andrew Greaves
Auditor-General
Victorian Auditor-General's Office
Level 31/35 Collins Street
Melbourne VIC 3000

Dear Mr Greaves

Re: Proposed Report: Reporting on local government performance: follow-up

Thank you for your letter dated 18 November 2024 regarding the above follow-up audit and draft report.

We welcomed the opportunity to formally review our progress since the original 2019 audit, and are pleased to note the Victorian Auditor General's Office opinion that Council has completed all actions arising from the original audit recommendations.

It was particularly encouraging to see elements of Council's performance reporting practices highlighted as a case study in the report, focusing on Council's quality assurance processes. Consistent with the principles of the Baw Baw Shire Council Performance Monitoring and Reporting Policy, Council remains committed to continuous improvement and meaningful measurement practices. These efforts are designed to support strategic decision making for the organisation and transparent reporting of service delivery to the community.

I sincerely thank the Victorian Auditor General's Office for their professional and constructive approach throughout the audit process and for their engagement with Council.

Yours sincerely



Mark Dupe
Chief Executive Officer

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Shire Council**

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Response provided by the Chief Executive Officer, Horsham Rural City Council

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29 November 2024

Andrew Greaves
Auditor General
Victorian Auditor-General's Office
Level 31, 35 Collins Street
Melbourne Vic 3000

RE: Reporting on Local Government Performance

Dear Mr Greaves

Council has found the participation in the abovementioned audit to be of significant benefit to the organisation and community.

Following the initial 2019 Audit process, Council has worked towards improving its reporting of performance and continues to develop processes across several areas, including:

- internal reporting,
- statutory or legislative reporting and
- reporting to the community.

Council also acknowledges that whilst progress has been made, there is still further room for improvement. Outcomes of this report with further recommendations, will be actioned through Council's Audit and Risk Committee and tabled before Council.

The continuous review and improvement of reporting to the community, demonstrating progression of activities and performance against indicators, aligns with Council's values which include accountability and transparency.

Council looks forward to the final report being released for the benefit of other councils and communities.

Yours sincerely



Craig Niemann
Chief Executive Officer

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Civic Centre 18 Roberts Avenue Horsham Victoria 3400
Ph 03 5382 9777 Email council@hrcc.vic.gov.au Website: www.hrcc.vic.gov.au



File: [24/354546](#)

Enquiries: [REDACTED]

Wednesday, 29 November 2024

Mr Andrew Greaves
Auditor-General
Victorian Auditor-General's Office
Level 31, 35 Collins Street
Melbourne VIC 3000

Dear Auditor-General,

Response to Reporting on Local Government Performance: Follow-up

Thank you for providing Moonee Valley City Council with a copy of the proposed report *Reporting on Local Government Performance: Follow-up* for our consideration and comment.

As the report notes, effective performance reporting is essential for Councils to stay accountable to their communities and improve services. We are proud to note that Moonee Valley City Council has been assessed as having completed all six of the agreed actions for audited Councils. This is evidence of our commitment to transparent reporting, in the best interests of our community.

In 2019, Moonee Valley City Council was assessed as already demonstrating a "consistent and rigorous quality assurance process across all LGPRF service areas". We are pleased to note that the results of VAGO's 2024 follow-up demonstrate a continued commitment to excellence in quality assurance as well as in other areas of performance monitoring, evaluation and reporting. We plan to maintain an approach of continuous improvement in each of these areas.

We would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the VAGO staff, who made this audit process a positive one.



Moonee Valley City Council
9 Kellaway Ave, Moonee Ponds VIC 3039
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Should you require any further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact
Manager Community & Corporate Planning, Meghan Hopper at
[redacted] or [redacted]

Yours sincerely,



Cr Ava Adams
Mayor



Ms Helen Sui
Chief Executive Officer

Response provided by the Mayor and the Chief Executive Officer, Borough of Queenscliffe



Borough of Queenscliffe
Queenscliff & Point Lonsdale, Victoria, Australia

27 November 2024

Mr. Andrew Greaves
Auditor-General
Victorian Auditor General's Office
Level 31, 35 Collins Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Reporting on local government performance: follow-up

Dear Mr. Greaves

Thank you for your letter dated 18 November 2024 providing the proposed report on "Reporting on local government performance: follow-up".

We confirm the facts outlined in the report are correct and are a fair representation, noting the audit process has been valuable in highlighting areas of compliance and areas where council can continue to improve.

Our responses in relation to the partially completed recommendations from the initial audit are summarized in Table 1 attached.

The initial response provided to VAGO regarding how the Council would report performance was made before the introduction of the Integrated Strategic Planning Framework (ISPF) under the Local Government Act 2020 (The Act).

The Act's emphasis on principles creates an opportunity to tailor reporting to be more responsive and aligned with the specific interests of the community.

With the introduction of the ISPF, the Council was able to enhance its quarterly reporting by also focusing on activities prioritized to advance the objectives of the Council Plan. Progress on these annual priorities is tracked against milestones outlined in quarterly reports. These milestones serve as performance indicators or targets to assess progress in achieving the Council's broader strategic objectives.

We would like to acknowledge the constructive engagement between the audit team and the Borough of Queenscliffe. The conduct of the audit was an open and transparent process with positive discussions enabling a constructive outcome.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments in advance of the publication of your audit report.

Yours sincerely

Cr Di Rule

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Mayor

Martin Gill

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Chief Executive Officer



Borough of Queenscliffe
Queenscliff & Point Lonsdale, Victoria, Australia

Table 1 – Responses to partially completed recommendations

No.	VAGO recommendation, that councils:	Queenscliffe action agreed
7	Ensure strategic indicators in their annual reports communicate the outcomes of services for the community.	Council has incorporated this recommendation in developing 2023-24 Annual report.
9	Develop and report against targets for all performance indicators.	<p>As the smallest Council in Victoria, the Borough of Queenscliffe operates under unique circumstances.</p> <p>In this context, setting and frequently reporting on all indicators may not add significant value, particularly given the resources required to implement such reporting mechanisms in a small organization.</p> <p>Instead, the Council prioritizes the development of contemporary and relevant targets through its Council Plan and provides quarterly reports on these key priorities.</p>