

Ararat Rural City Council

Group: Small shire

This fact sheet uses graphs and data to examine this council's revenue, expenditure and financial sustainability over recent years. The information aims to help readers understand the impacts of rate capping. This was introduced in 2016–17 to restrict the amount councils can increase their general rates and municipal charges each financial year.

You can compare this council's data against its 'group' by looking at the fact sheet for small shires. Further information is available at <http://www.esc.vic.gov.au/outcomes-reports>. You'll find an interactive version of this fact sheet, a reader's guide to help you understand key terms and information about the sector as a whole.



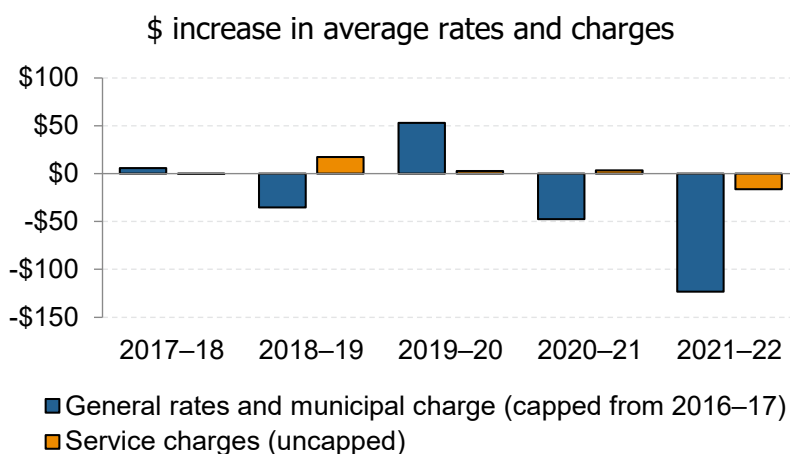
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Key facts

Population (June 2021):	11,821
Size (km ²):	4,211
Length of local roads (km):	2,437
Population per km of roads:	5
Council employees (FTE, 2021–22):	135
Higher cap approved for any year between 2016–17 and 2021–22	No

Rates

What happened to average rates and charges (2021–22 dollars)?



Year	Average rates and charges	Applicable rate cap
2016–17	\$2,474	2.50%
2017–18	\$2,479	2.00%
2018–19	\$2,462	2.25%
2019–20	\$2,517	2.50%
2020–21	\$2,473	2.00%
2021–22	\$2,334	1.50%

Rates (continued)



See the reader's guide for data sources and useful information. Note: The numbers in this fact sheet have been adjusted for inflation and are expressed in 2021–22 dollars.

Did council's average rates comply with the applicable rate caps?

2020–21 (2.00%)	2021–22 (1.50%)	2022–23 (1.75%)
Yes	Yes	Yes

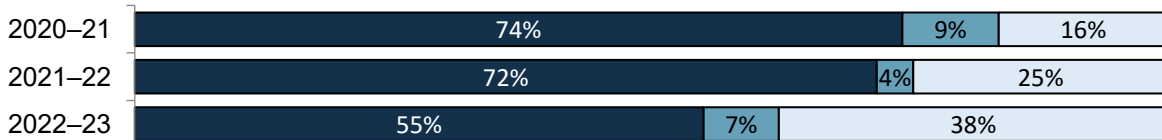
How did rates change for different ratepayers?

Council's rating strategy 2022–23

Council applies 3 differential rates for different types of property, a municipal charge and recovers the cost of waste, drainage, and water supply services using service charges. The adopted budget contains more information about rate categories and charges.

Distribution of rates increases and decreases

The applicable rate cap is applied to council's average rate. So, some individual rates increased by more and some increased by less than the applicable cap (or even decreased).



- % of rates notices decreasing
- % of rates notices increasing by less than the applicable cap
- % of rates notices increasing by more than the applicable cap

Ratepayers by property class (2021–22 dollars)

	Residential ratepayers	Commercial ratepayers	Industrial ratepayers	Rural ratepayers
	72% of ratepayers in 2021–22	5% of ratepayers in 2021–22	1% of ratepayers in 2021–22	22% of ratepayers in 2021–22
	\$9.4m (56%) of rates and charges revenue in 2021–22	\$1m (6%) of rates and charges revenue in 2021–22	\$0.3m (2%) of rates and charges revenue in 2021–22	\$6.1m (37%) of rates and charges revenue in 2021–22
	-1.9% average annual change between 2017–18 and 2021–22	-10.0% average annual change between 2017–18 and 2021–22	-5.2% average annual change between 2017–18 and 2021–22	2.8% average annual change between 2017–18 and 2021–22

Source: Victorian Local Government Grants Commission (unaudited data). Includes both capped and uncapped rates and charges. 'Other' category of property class has been omitted.

Revenue



See the reader's guide for data sources and useful information.
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Where did council's money come from?

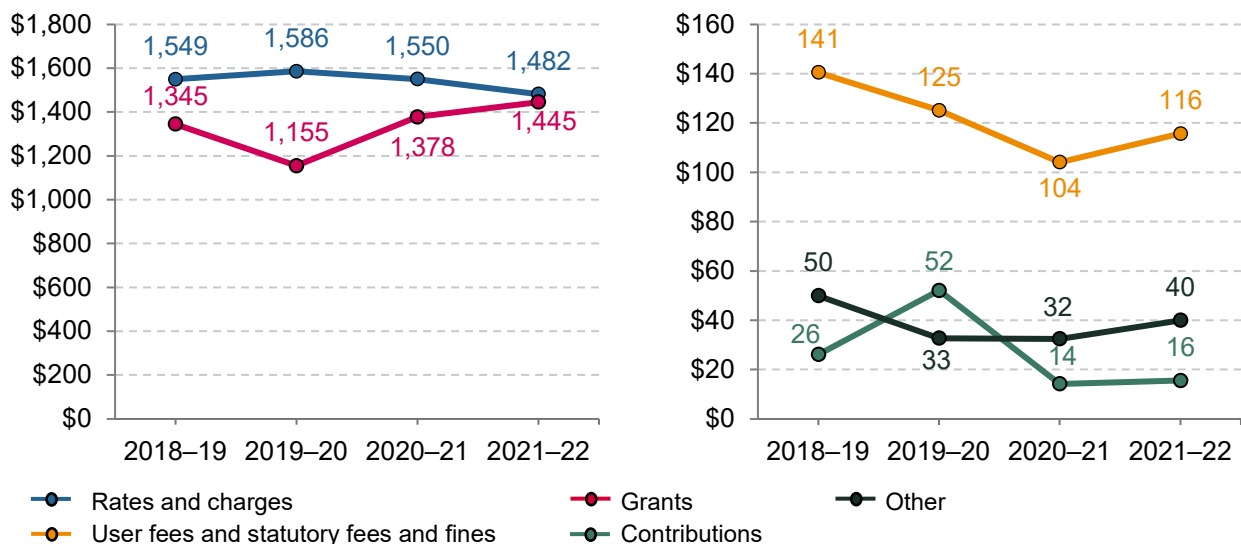
Revenue (2021–22 \$m and % of total revenue)

	2018–19		2019–20		2020–21		2021–22	
	\$m	%	\$m	%	\$m	%	\$m	%
Rates and charges	18.3	(50%)	18.7	(54%)	18.4	(50%)	17.5	(48%)
User fees and statutory fees and fines	1.7	(5%)	1.5	(4%)	1.2	(3%)	1.4	(4%)
Grants	15.9	(43%)	13.7	(39%)	16.4	(45%)	17.1	(47%)
Contributions	0.3	(1%)	0.6	(2%)	0.2	(0%)	0.2	(1%)
Other	0.6	(2%)	0.4	(1%)	0.4	(1%)	0.5	(1%)
Total	36.7		34.9		36.6		36.6	

Ararat Rural City Council's total revenue remained stable in real terms between 2018–19 and 2021–22.

Rates and charges, and grants were the largest sources of revenue, accounting for 94 per cent of total revenue between 2018–19 and 2021–22.

Revenue per person (2021–22 dollars)



In terms of revenue per person (which adjusts for changes in population), revenue from grants increased between 2018–19 and 2021–22. This compares with a downward trend in revenue per person from rates and charges, user fees and statutory fees and fines, and contributions.

Expenditure



See the reader's guide for data sources and useful information.
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How much money did council spend?

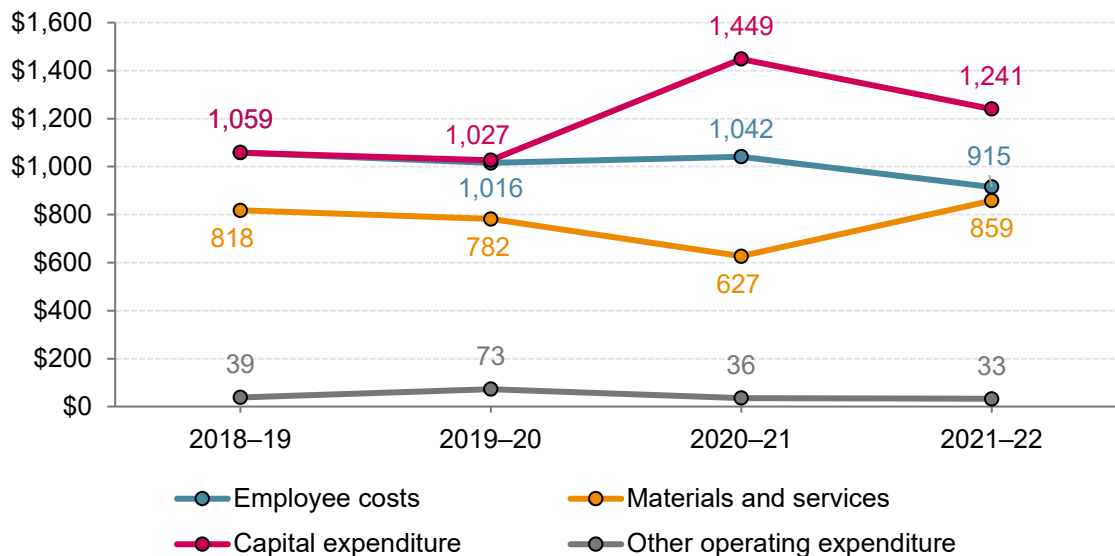
Expenditure (2021–22 \$m and % of total expenditure)

	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22
	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m
Operating expenditure	22.6 (64%)	22.1 (65%)	20.3 (54%)	21.4 (59%)
Employee costs	12.5 (36%)	12.0 (35%)	12.4 (33%)	10.8 (30%)
Materials and services	9.6 (27%)	9.2 (27%)	7.5 (20%)	10.1 (28%)
Other operating expenditure	0.5 (1%)	0.9 (3%)	0.4 (1%)	0.4 (1%)
Capital expenditure	12.5 (36%)	12.1 (35%)	17.2 (46%)	14.7 (41%)
Total	35.1	34.3	37.5	36.0

Ararat Rural City Council's total expenditure increased in real terms between 2018–19 and 2021–22. This reflected increases in capital expenditure and expenditure on materials and services.

Capital expenditure was the largest area of expenditure, accounting for 40 per cent of total expenditure between 2018–19 and 2021–22.

Expenditure per person (2021–22 dollars)



In terms of expenditure per person (which adjusts for changes in population), council's capital expenditure and expenditure on materials and services increased between 2018–19 and 2021–22. This compares with a downward trend in expenditure on employee costs and 'other operating expenditure' per person.



See the reader's guide for data sources and useful information.
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Did council's capital expenditure pattern change?

Capital expenditure (2021–22 \$m and % of total capital expenditure)

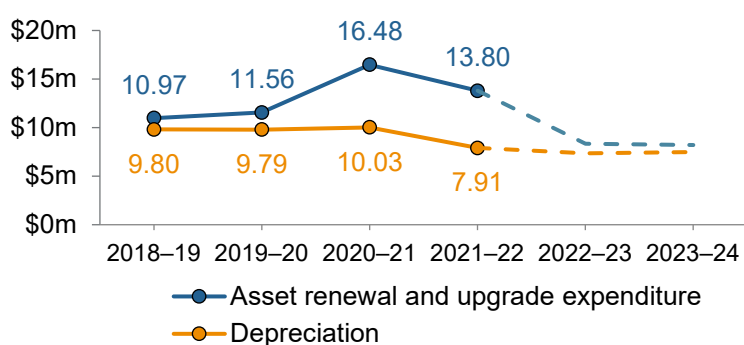
	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22
	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m
Renewal	9.2 (74%)	8.5 (70%)	12.2 (71%)	11.7 (80%)
Upgrade	1.8 (14%)	3.1 (25%)	4.2 (25%)	2.1 (14%)
Expansion	0.0 (0%)	0.0 (0%)	0.0 (0%)	0.0 (0%)
New	1.5 (12%)	0.6 (5%)	0.8 (4%)	0.9 (6%)
Total	12.5	12.1	17.2	14.7

Ararat Rural City Council's spending on asset renewal trended upwards in real terms, despite fluctuating between 2018–19 and 2021–22. Asset renewal accounted for the highest share of capital expenditure over this period (74 per cent).

Council's spending on asset upgrades increased in real terms between 2018–19 and 2021–22, while spending on new assets declined.

Did council renew assets (such as roads, parks and buildings)?

Council assets: comparing renewal and upgrade expenditure with depreciation (2021–22 dollars)



Renewal & upgrade expenditure as a percentage of depreciation

2018–19	112%
2019–20	118%
2020–21	164%
2021–22	175%
2022–23	114% (forecast data)
2023–24	110% (forecast data)

Council's spending on renewing and upgrading of assets trended upwards in real terms between 2018–19 and 2020–21, before decreasing in 2021–22. Renewal and upgrade expenditure remained above the amount of depreciation (the decline in value of council's assets caused by age and use) between 2018–19 and 2021–22. It was forecast to remain above the amount of depreciation in 2022–23 and 2023–24.



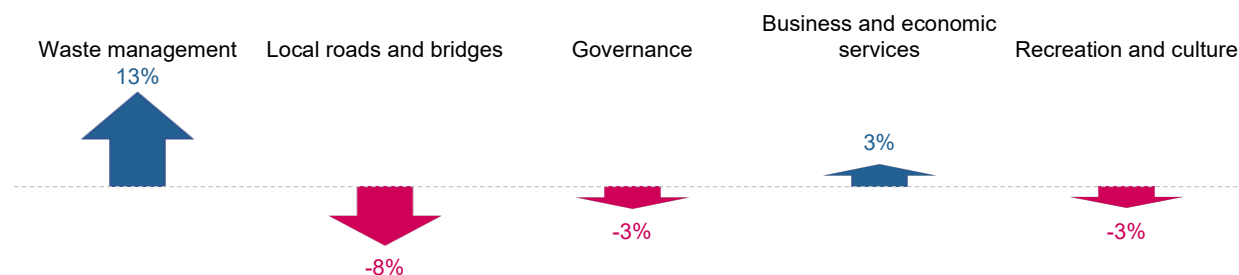
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Which service areas did council spend its money on?

Expenditure by function (2021–22 \$m and % of total services expenditure)

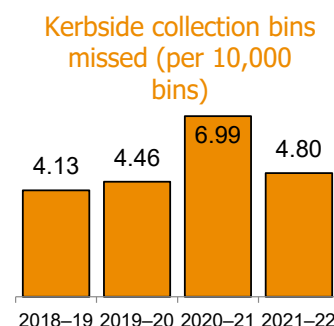
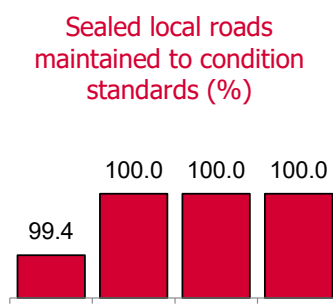
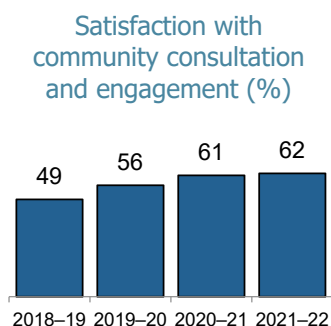
	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22
	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m
Aged and disabled services	0.9 (3%)	0.9 (3%)	0.7 (2%)	0.8 (3%)
Business and economic services	2.5 (8%)	1.9 (6%)	2.2 (7%)	2.7 (9%)
Environment	1.0 (3%)	0.7 (2%)	0.5 (1%)	0.7 (2%)
Family and community services	0.4 (1%)	0.4 (1%)	0.3 (1%)	0.4 (1%)
Governance	5.2 (16%)	4.8 (15%)	5.5 (18%)	4.7 (16%)
Local roads and bridges	11.9 (37%)	12.6 (40%)	11.7 (38%)	9.2 (32%)
Recreation and culture	7.2 (22%)	6.9 (22%)	6.6 (22%)	6.6 (23%)
Traffic and street management	1.2 (4%)	1.1 (4%)	0.8 (3%)	1.0 (4%)
Waste management	2.1 (7%)	2.1 (7%)	2.1 (7%)	3.1 (11%)
Other	0.0 (0%)	0.0 (0%)	0.0 (0%)	0.0 (0%)
Total	32.4	31.5	30.3	29.3

Which areas experienced the biggest changes from 2018–19 to 2021–22?



Source: Victorian Local Government Grants Commission (unaudited). Council Annual Reports may provide further explanation of these expenditure changes.

Did service quality or community satisfaction change?

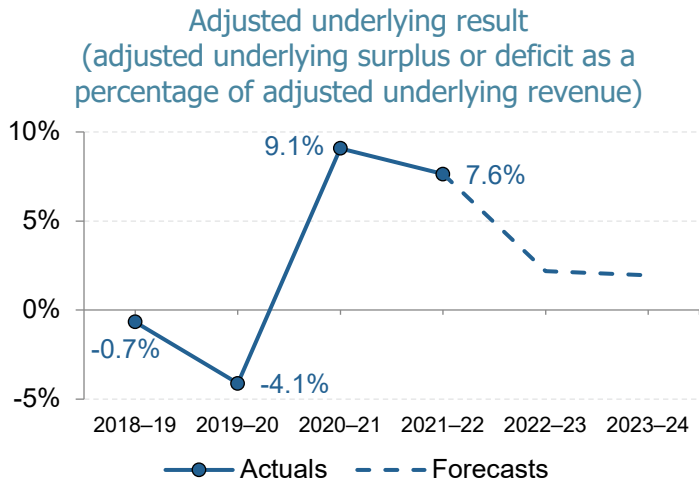


Financial position

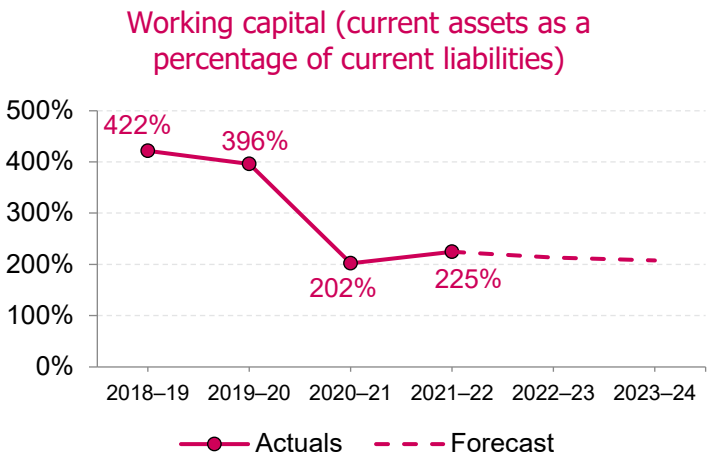


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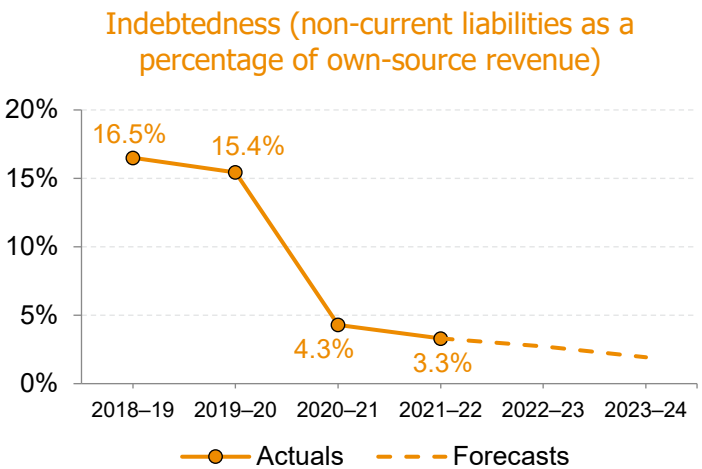
Did council operate sustainably?



Between 2018–19 and 2021–22, Ararat Rural City Council reported an average **adjusted underlying result** of 3 per cent. An ongoing positive result suggests ongoing revenue can fund the current level of service provision.



Council could meet its current financial obligations with a reported average **working capital ratio** of 311 per cent between 2018–19 and 2021–22.



Between 2018–19 and 2021–22, council reported an average **indebtedness ratio** of 9.9 per cent. The lower the percentage, the greater a council's ability is to repay debt from revenue it controls.

Note: Some of the year-on-year changes in these financial indicators may be due to changes to accounting standards or the impact of coronavirus. See the reader's guide for more information.