



# Legislative Council Economy and Infrastructure Committee

**Inquiry:** Inquiry into Local Government funding and services

**Hearing Date:** 4 September 2024

**Question[s] taken on notice**

**Directed to:** East Gippsland Shire Council

**Received Date:** 24 October 2024

## 1. The DEPUTY CHAIR, Page 20

**Question asked:**

**The DEPUTY CHAIR:** Can I thank both councils for their submissions formally but also the submission today. I have got one question for both at the start which relates to roads and what you have received in road funding. You have both got very large lengths of roads. So maybe that is a simple first question: state money, federal money – how much have you received in the last two or three years?

**Taryn ABRAHAMSSON:** I can answer first. Roads recovery funding from the Commonwealth government in the previous financial year for us was \$2.4 million, almost. Non-recurrent funding for roads was \$4.3 million. From the state government for roads it was \$2.5 million.

**The DEPUTY CHAIR:** \$2.5 million. And do you have a time series on that at all? That might be helpful. You may not be able to do it now.

**Taryn ABRAHAMSSON:** Not now, but yes, I can provide that, for sure.

**The DEPUTY CHAIR:** Thank you.

**Sarah JOHNSTON:** At our end, the recurrent amount that we got this year was about \$6 million for local government roads. I would have to come back to you on the exact Roads to Recovery figure, though. My apologies – my CFO should have been with me today, but she is in the throes of our VAGO annual end-of-year audit.

**The DEPUTY CHAIR:** That is all right. We do not mind. If you could do that, that would be much appreciated.

**Response:**

For 2024/25 we have a budget line for R2R of \$3.601M.

The VGC road allocation, as per final 2024/25 advice, is \$6.050M.

## 2. Sarah MANSFIELD, Page 22

**Question asked:**

**Sarah MANSFIELD:** Thank you. Thank you for appearing. I know this was brought up a little bit earlier in the context of dealing with the impacts of climate change and needing to apply for grant funding. I want to speak about grant funding more broadly. Are you able to give an indication of the time and resources that the councils spend on applying for grants?

**Allison JONES:** That is a tricky one because it is so spread out across small councils. It is different teams. There are the country football and netball grants out at the moment, so that is what came to my mind in terms of applications. I would probably have to have a think about that and come back, because it is so disparate. Except for our emergency event person, who is going for the emergency grants, the rest is just disparate across the organisation. Can we provide that information afterwards?

**Sarah MANSFIELD:** Yes, that is fine.

**Response:**

### 3. **Bev McARTHUR, Page 26**

**Question asked:**

**Bev MCARTHUR:** This whole business of the cost for you to do these grant applications seems bizarre. You are wasting a whole lot of time not only in the preparation but then the compliance if you happen by chance to have the good luck to get one. How should we go about doing that – by having totally untied grants?

**Sarah JOHNSTON:** I will start off on that one. I do not think the answer is totally untied grants. I think that grants for specific purposes that are above perhaps what would be a typical core service – and I know that is hard to define – are still very valid and relevant. To me it is going back to looking at it from a needs basis again. What does a rural and a regional council need because of all these other challenges that we have got to be able to balance it? You make such a good point about libraries and: ‘If the community are going to pay, what are you going to do?’ Drawing it back to what Tom said before, though, what they saw in these libraries and these service centres was not just that tangibility of using the service; it was actually the mental health piece, the wellbeing piece, of knowing that the mobile library service is going to turn up once a week and they are going to have a chat and they are going to have their favourite CD and all those sorts of things. It is sometimes difficult to quantify in a really pure financial sense, which is exactly the feedback that we got from community when we went out with that evidence-based piece. And if you pulled out of some of those other services based on those pure figures, you might see spikes in other things, i.e. mental health, down the track as well.

**Bev McARTHUR:** Could you provide us with a copy of that work you did?

**Sarah JOHNSTON:** I can, absolutely. It is a live council report.

**Response:**

Copy of Council report –Service Centres and Library 12-month Trial April 2024 attached.

**Bev MCARTHUR, Page 27**

**Question asked:**

**Bev McARTHUR:** What about vaccinations? Did you get the bill from the government to fund their administration and then a per-shot charge?

**Allison JONES:** Yes, we absolutely have.

**Bev McARTHUR:** What have you done with that? Sent it back to them?

**Sarah JOHNSTON:** I do not know if that was an option. My understanding is the bill has reduced per immunisation shot. We are looking at what the cost is.

**Bev McARTHUR:** It has been halved, hasn't it?

**Sarah JOHNSTON:** Yes.

**The DEPUTY CHAIR:** It is down to a dollar now, isn't it?

**Sarah JOHNSTON:** Correct.

**Bev McARTHUR:** It is a dollar per person.

**The DEPUTY CHAIR:** Per child.

**Sarah JOHNSTON:** I cannot give an answer to that at this point. We are looking at it. We will have to build some sort of efficiency. There will have to be something coming off to be able to use that.

**Bev McARTHUR:** Why don't you say the state government can provide the service themselves through the healthcare network?

**Sarah JOHNSTON:** I will have to take that question on notice.

**Response:** The Department of Health has now announced it would be delaying its implementation of a Central Immunisation Records Victoria co-funding model – meaning there is no co-contribution required by Councils at this time.