

Ballarat City Council

Group: regional city

This fact sheet uses graphs and data to examine this council's revenue, expenditure and financial sustainability over recent years. The information is intended to help readers understand the impacts of rate capping, which 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 regional city councils. 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.



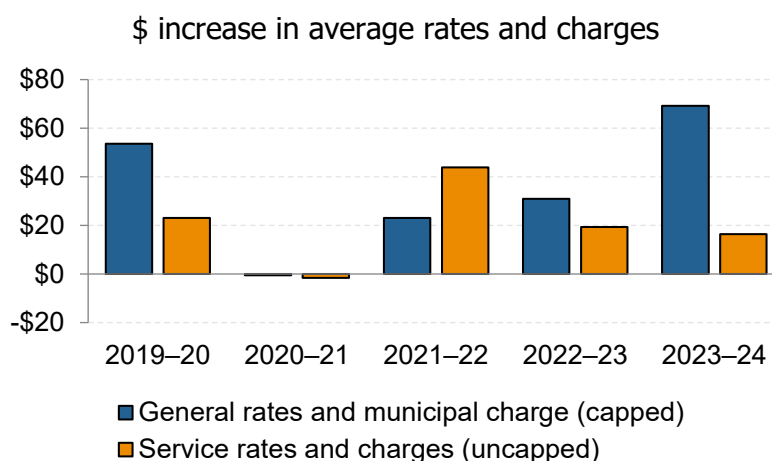
© OpenStreetMap contributors

Key facts

Population (June 2023):	118,137
Size (km ²):	739
Length of local roads (km):	1,537
Population per km of roads:	77
Council employees (FTE, 2023–24):	850
Higher cap approved for any year between 2018–19 and 2023–24	No

Rates

What has happened to average rates and charges?



Year	Average rates and charges	Applicable rate cap
2018–19	\$2,168	2.25%
2019–20	\$2,245	2.50%
2020–21	\$2,242	2.00%
2021–22	\$2,310	1.50%
2022–23	\$2,360	1.75%
2023–24	\$2,446	3.50%

Rates (continued)



See the reader's guide for data sources and useful information. Where noted, the numbers in this fact sheet have been adjusted for inflation and are expressed in 2023–24 dollars.

Have council's average rates complied with the applicable rate caps?

2022–23 (1.75%)	2023–24 (3.50%)	2024–25 (2.75%)
Yes	Yes	Yes

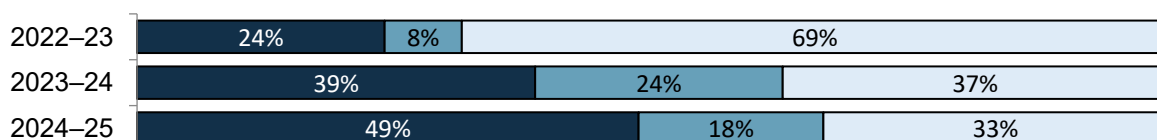
How have rates changed for different ratepayers?

Council's rating strategy 2024–25

Council levies 3 differential rates for different types of property and uses service charges to recover the cost of waste services. More information about council's differential rate categories and charges can be found in council's adopted budget.

Distribution of rates increases and decreases

The applicable rate cap is applied to council's average rate, which means 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

	Residential ratepayers	Commercial ratepayers	Industrial ratepayers	Rural ratepayers
	92% of ratepayers	4% of ratepayers	3% of ratepayers	1% of ratepayers
	\$118.0m (78%) of rates and charges revenue in 2023–24	\$19.7m (13%) of rates and charges revenue in 2023–24	\$11.3m (7%) of rates and charges revenue in 2023–24	\$2.4m (2%) of rates and charges revenue in 2023–24
	3.9% average annual increase between 2019–20 and 2023–24	–3.9% average annual increase between 2019–20 and 2023–24	0.7% average annual increase between 2019–20 and 2023–24	7.6% average annual increase between 2019–20 and 2023–24

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.
Where noted, the numbers in this fact sheet have been adjusted for inflation and are expressed in 2023–24 dollars.

Where is council's money coming from?

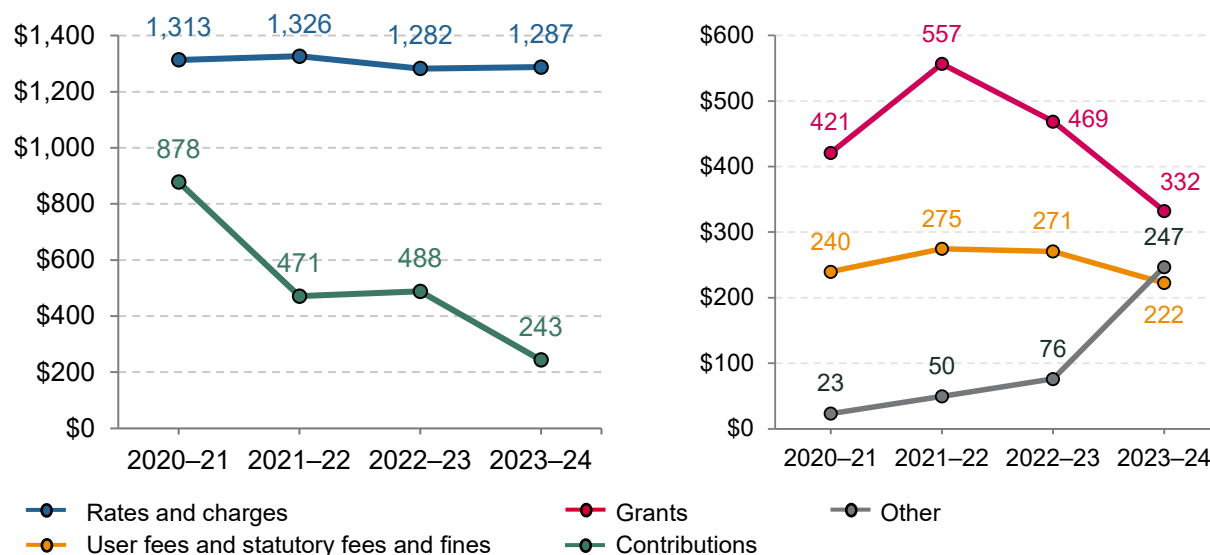
Revenue (2023–24 \$m and % of total revenue)

	2020–21		2021–22		2022–23		2023–24	
	\$m		\$m		\$m		\$m	
Rates and charges	146.6	(46%)	150.6	(50%)	148.8	(50%)	152.1	(55%)
User fees and statutory fees and fines	26.7	(8%)	31.2	(10%)	31.4	(10%)	26.3	(10%)
Grants	47.0	(15%)	63.2	(21%)	54.4	(18%)	39.3	(14%)
Contributions	98.0	(31%)	53.4	(18%)	56.6	(19%)	28.7	(10%)
Other	2.6	(1%)	5.6	(2%)	8.8	(3%)	29.2	(11%)
Total	321.0		304.0		300.0		275.5	

Ballarat City Council's total revenue decreased in real terms between 2020–21 and 2023–24, reflecting a decrease in revenue from contributions.

Rates and charges, and contributions were the largest sources of council's revenue, accounting for 70 per cent of total revenue between 2020–21 and 2023–24.

Revenue per person (2023–24 dollars)



In terms of revenue per person (which adjusts for population growth), council's revenue from rates and charges, grants and contributions decreased in real terms between 2020–21 and 2023–24.

Expenditure



See the reader's guide for data sources and useful information.
Where noted, the numbers in this fact sheet have been adjusted for inflation and are expressed in 2023–24 dollars.

How much money is council spending?

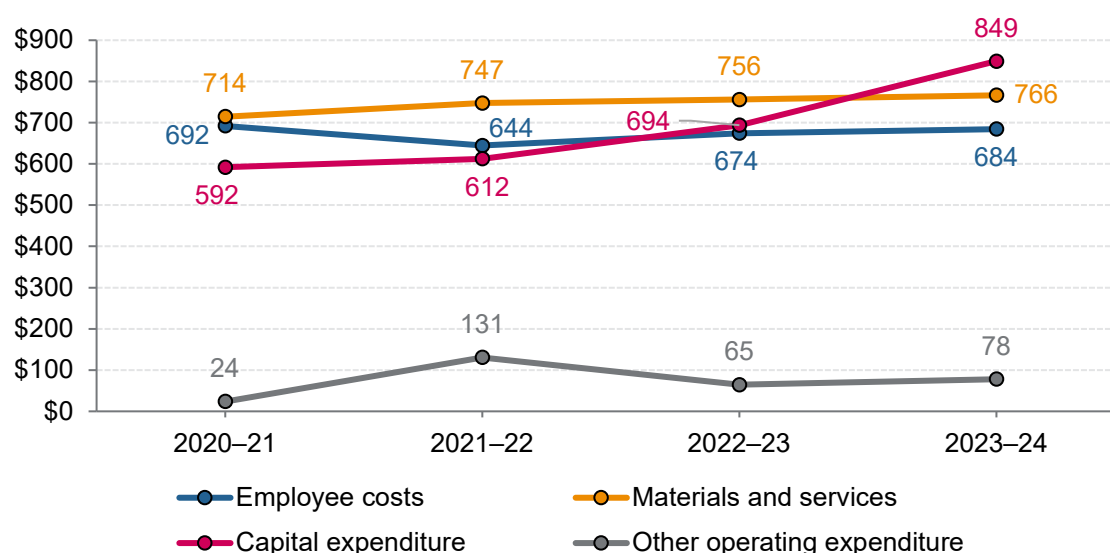
Expenditure (2023–24 \$m and % of total expenditure)

	2020–21		2021–22		2022–23		2023–24	
	\$m		\$m		\$m		\$m	
Operating expenditure	159.7	(71%)	172.8	(71%)	173.4	(68%)	180.6	(64%)
Employee costs	77.3	(34%)	73.1	(30%)	78.2	(31%)	80.8	(29%)
Materials and services	79.8	(35%)	84.8	(35%)	87.7	(35%)	90.5	(32%)
Other operating expenditure	2.7	(1%)	14.9	(6%)	7.5	(3%)	9.2	(3%)
Capital expenditure	66.1	(29%)	69.5	(29%)	80.5	(32%)	100.3	(36%)
Total	225.8		242.3		253.8		280.9	

Ballarat City Council's total expenditure increased in real terms between 2020–21 and 2023–24, reflecting increases in capital expenditure, expenditure on materials and services and 'other operating expenditure'.

Materials and services was the largest area of expenditure, which accounted for 34 per cent of total expenditure between 2020–21 and 2023–24.

Expenditure per person (2023–24 dollars)



In terms of expenditure per person (which adjusts for population growth), council's spending on all categories increased in real terms between 2020–21 and 2023–24.

Has council's capital expenditure pattern changed?

Capital expenditure (2023–24 \$m and % of total capital expenditure)

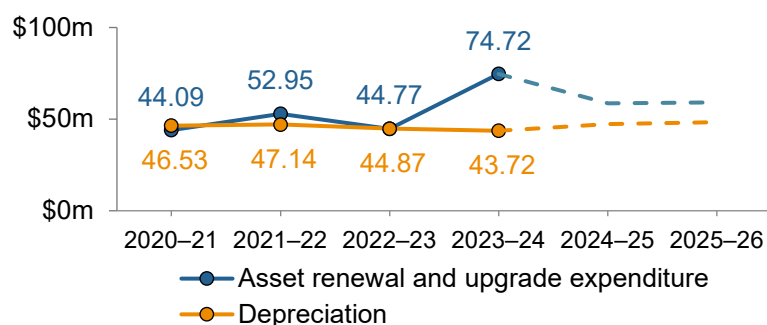
	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m
Renewal	41.2 (62%)	38.1 (55%)	26.5 (33%)	43.2 (43%)
Upgrade	2.9 (4%)	14.8 (21%)	18.2 (23%)	31.5 (31%)
Expansion	0.0 (0%)	0.0 (0%)	0.0 (0%)	0.1 (0%)
New	22.0 (33%)	16.5 (24%)	35.7 (44%)	25.5 (25%)
Total	66.1	69.5	80.5	100.3

Ballarat City Council's spending on asset renewal trended downwards in real terms, despite fluctuating between 2020–21 and 2023–24. Asset renewal accounted for the highest share of capital expenditure over this period (47 per cent).

Council's spending on all other categories increased in real terms between 2020–21 and 2023–24.

Is council renewing its assets (such as roads, parks and buildings)?

Council assets: comparing renewal and upgrade expenditure with depreciation (2023–24 dollars)



Renewal & upgrade expenditure as a percentage of depreciation

2020–21	95%
2021–22	112%
2022–23	100%
2023–24	171%
2024–25	124% (forecast data)
2025–26	122% (forecast data)

Council's spending on the renewal and upgrade of its assets trended upwards in real terms, despite fluctuating between 2020–21 and 2023–24.

Renewal and upgrade expenditure was below the amount of depreciation (the decline in value of council's assets caused by age and use) in 2020–21 and 2022–23, and above 100 per cent of depreciation in 2021–23 and 2023–24. This spending was forecast to remain above the amount of depreciation in 2024–25 and 2025–26.

Which service areas is council spending its money in?

Expenditure by function (2023–24 \$m and % of total services expenditure)

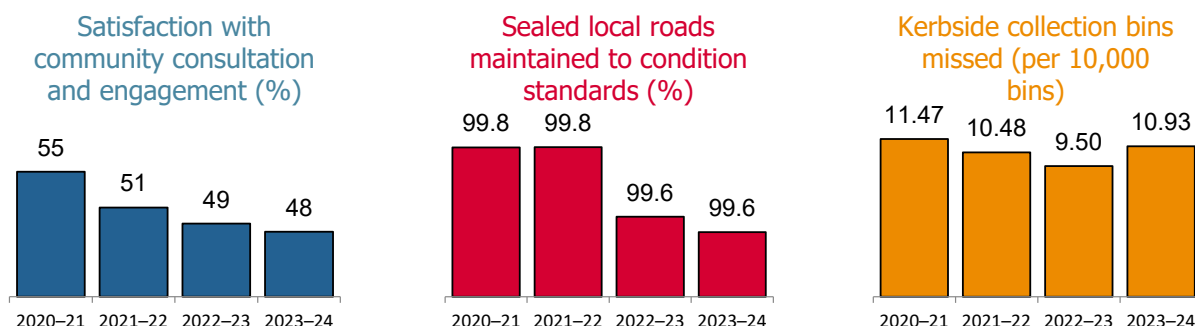
	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m
Aged and disabled services	7.1 (3%)	7.0 (3%)	9.4 (4%)	1.9 (1%)
Business and economic services	19.8 (10%)	27.0 (12%)	26.9 (12%)	33.2 (15%)
Environment	12.4 (6%)	10.6 (5%)	10.9 (5%)	12.2 (6%)
Family and community services	12.4 (6%)	12.0 (5%)	12.3 (6%)	12.9 (6%)
Governance	44.2 (21%)	38.6 (17%)	40.6 (18%)	42.1 (19%)
Local roads and bridges	34.3 (16%)	34.5 (16%)	30.1 (14%)	31.1 (14%)
Recreation and culture	41.5 (20%)	39.7 (18%)	40.4 (18%)	44.5 (20%)
Traffic and street management	16.1 (8%)	13.6 (6%)	16.3 (7%)	14.5 (7%)
Waste management	20.7 (10%)	27.3 (12%)	32.7 (15%)	28.2 (13%)
Other	0.0 (0%)	11.2 (5%)	0.0 (0%)	0.0 (0%)
Total	208.4	221.5	219.7	220.5

Which service areas have experienced the biggest changes in spending?



Source: Victorian Local Government Grants Commission (unaudited). Average annual change between 2020–21 and 2023–24. Excludes small service areas (<5% of expenditure). Council Annual Reports may provide further explanation of these changes.

Has there been a change in service quality and community satisfaction?

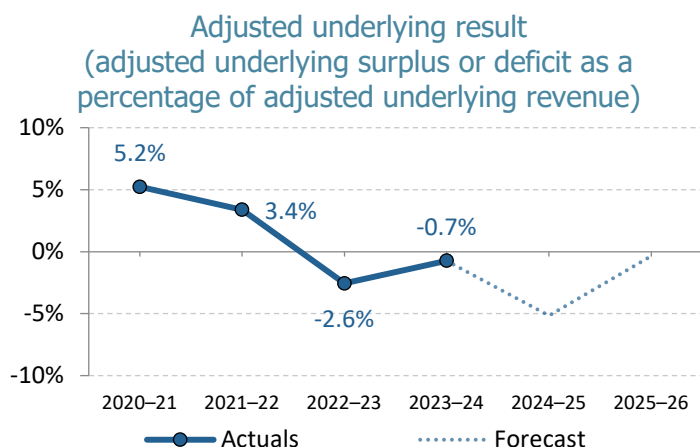


Financial position



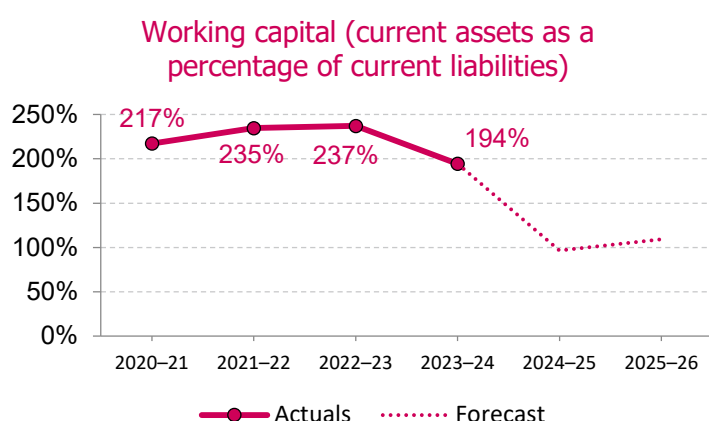
See the reader's guide for data sources and useful information. Where noted, the numbers in this fact sheet have been adjusted for inflation and are expressed in 2023–24 dollars.

Is council operating sustainably?

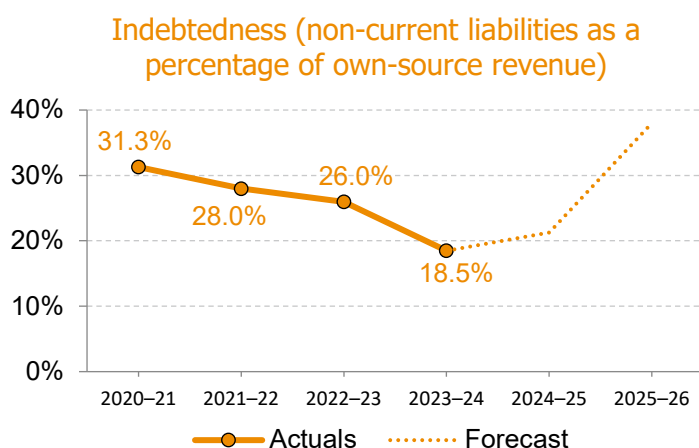


Between 2020–21 and 2023–24, Ballarat City Council reported an average **adjusted underlying result** of **1.3 per cent**.

An ongoing positive result suggests there is enough ongoing revenue to continue to fund the current level of service provision.



Council could meet its current financial obligations with a reported average **working capital ratio** of **221 per cent** between 2020–21 and 2023–24.



Between 2020–21 and 2023–24, council reported an average **indebtedness ratio** of **25.9 per cent**. The lower the percentage, the greater a council's ability to repay debt from revenue it controls.

Note: The year-on-year changes in the financial indicators can be affected by the timing of financial assistance grant payments.