

Merri-bek City Council

Group: metropolitan

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 metropolitan 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.

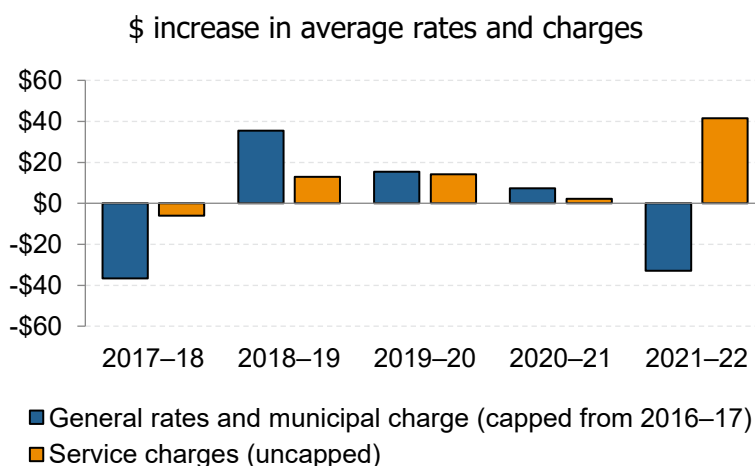


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Key facts	
Population (June 2021):	173,541
Size (km ²):	51
Length of local roads (km):	521
Population per km of roads:	333
Council employees (FTE, 2021–22):	919
Higher cap approved for any year between 2016–17 and 2021–22	No

Rates

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



Year	Average rates and charges	Applicable rate cap
2016–17	\$1,958	2.50%
2017–18	\$1,916	2.00%
2018–19	\$1,964	2.25%
2019–20	\$1,994	2.50%
2020–21	\$2,003	2.00%
2021–22	\$2,012	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

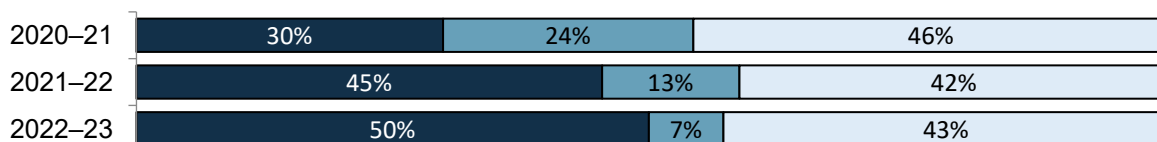
How did rates change for different ratepayers?

Council's rating strategy 2022–23

Council applies a single differential rate to all property types and recovers the cost of waste services using service charges. The adopted budget contains more information about council's differential 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
	93% of ratepayers in 2021–22	4% of ratepayers in 2021–22	3% of ratepayers in 2021–22	0% of ratepayers in 2021–22
	\$158.9m (92%) of rates and charges revenue in 2021–22	\$8.7m (5%) of rates and charges revenue in 2021–22	\$5m (3%) of rates and charges revenue in 2021–22	\$0m (0%) of rates and charges revenue in 2021–22
	2.1% average annual change between 2017–18 and 2021–22	-0.1% average annual change between 2017–18 and 2021–22	-2.16% average annual change between 2017–18 and 2021–22	0.0% 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?

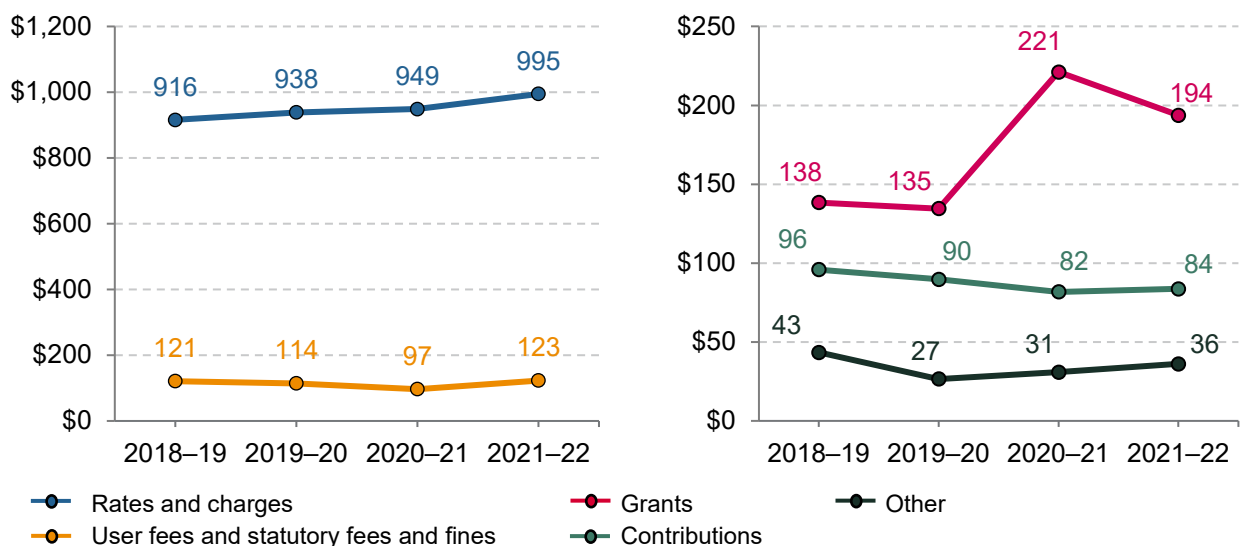
Revenue (2021–22 \$m and % of total revenue)

	2018–19		2019–20		2020–21		2021–22	
	\$m	%	\$m	%	\$m	%	\$m	%
Rates and charges	162.6	(70%)	168.1	(72%)	170.6	(69%)	172.7	(70%)
User fees and statutory fees and fines	21.5	(9%)	20.5	(9%)	17.4	(7%)	21.3	(9%)
Grants	24.6	(11%)	24.1	(10%)	39.8	(16%)	33.6	(14%)
Contributions	17.0	(7%)	16.1	(7%)	14.7	(6%)	14.5	(6%)
Other	7.7	(3%)	4.8	(2%)	5.5	(2%)	6.3	(3%)
Total	233.3		233.5		248.0		248.4	

Merri-bek City Council's total revenue increased in real terms between 2018–19 and 2021–22, reflecting increases in revenue from rates and charges, and grants.

Rates and charges was the largest source of council's revenue, accounting for 70 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 rates and charges, and grants increased between 2018–19 and 2021–22. This compares with a downward trend in revenue per person from contributions and 'other' revenue.

Expenditure



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

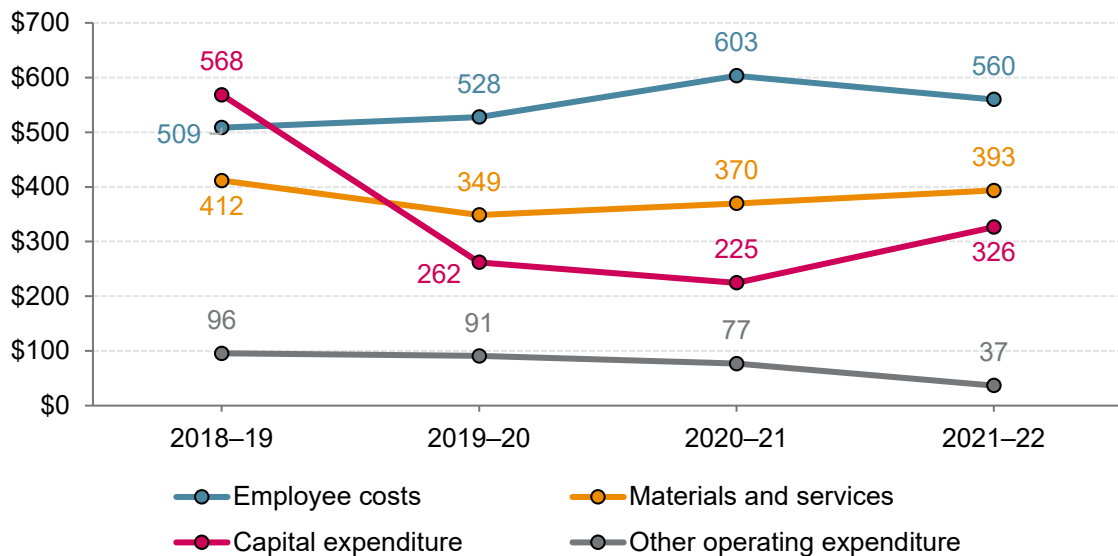
Expenditure (2021–22 \$m and % of total expenditure)

	2018–19		2019–20		2020–21		2021–22	
	\$m	%	\$m	%	\$m	%	\$m	%
Operating expenditure	180.4	(64%)	173.3	(79%)	188.8	(82%)	171.8	(75%)
Employee costs	90.3	(32%)	94.6	(43%)	108.5	(47%)	97.2	(43%)
Materials and services	73.1	(26%)	62.5	(28%)	66.5	(29%)	68.3	(30%)
Other operating expenditure	17.0	(6%)	16.3	(7%)	13.8	(6%)	6.4	(3%)
Capital expenditure	100.9	(36%)	46.9	(21%)	40.4	(18%)	56.7	(25%)
Total	281.3		220.3		229.2		228.5	

Merri-bek City Council's total expenditure fluctuated in real terms between 2018–19 and 2021–22. This reflected changes in capital expenditure.

Employee costs was the largest area of expenditure, accounting for 41 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 expenditure on materials and services, 'other operating expenditure' and capital expenditure decreased between 2018–19 and 2021–22. This compares with an upward trend in expenditure on employee costs 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)

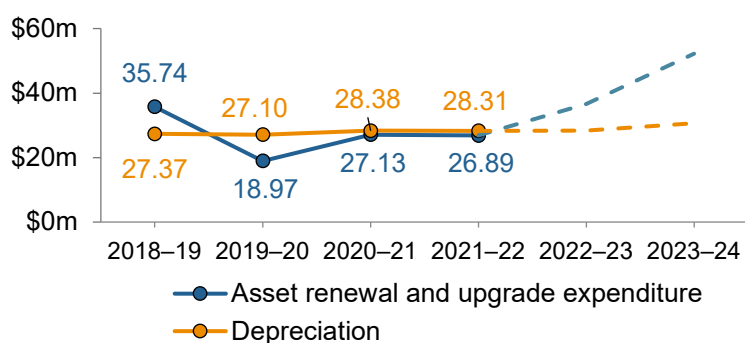
	2018–19		2019–20		2020–21		2021–22	
	\$m		\$m		\$m		\$m	
Renewal	32.5	(32%)	17.8	(38%)	24.5	(61%)	25.8	(45%)
Upgrade	3.3	(3%)	1.2	(3%)	2.6	(7%)	1.1	(2%)
Expansion	6.1	(6%)	3.7	(8%)	0.0	(0%)	19.3	(34%)
New	59.1	(59%)	24.2	(52%)	13.3	(33%)	10.4	(18%)
Total	100.9		46.9		40.4		56.7	

Merri-bek City Council's spending on new assets trended downwards in real terms between 2018–19 and 2021–22. New assets accounted for the highest share of capital expenditure over this period (44 per cent).

Council's spending on asset expansion increased in real terms between 2018–19 and 2021–22, while spending on asset renewal and asset upgrades 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	131%
2019–20	70%
2020–21	96%
2021–22	95%
2022–23	129% (forecast data)
2023–24	170% (forecast data)

Council's spending on renewing and upgrading assets trended downwards in real terms between 2018–19 and 2021–22. Renewal and upgrade expenditure decreased below the amount of depreciation (the decline in value of council's assets caused by age and use) in 2019–20. It was forecast to increase above the amount of depreciation in 2022–23 and 2023–24.



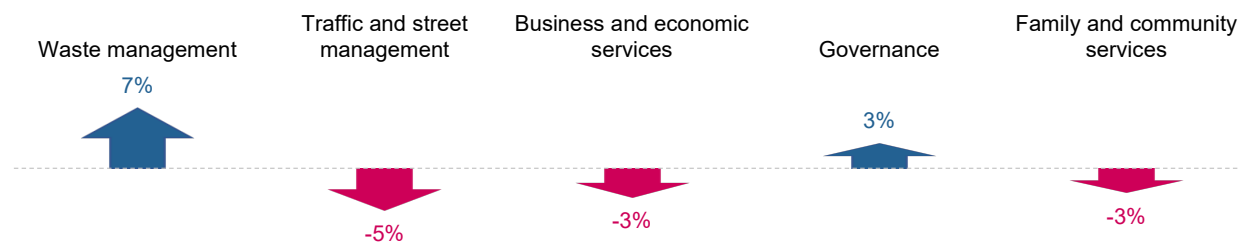
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Which service areas did council spend its money on?

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

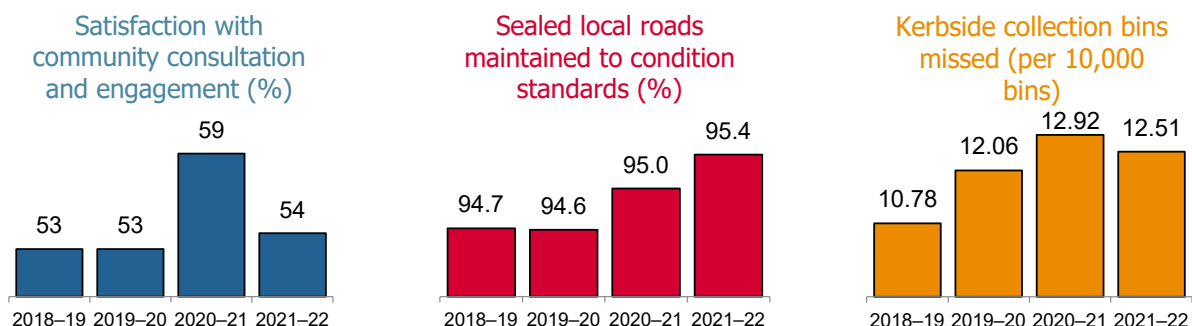
	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22
	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m
Aged and disabled services	16.0 (8%)	16.2 (8%)	16.3 (8%)	16.0 (8%)
Business and economic services	17.0 (9%)	16.4 (8%)	17.1 (8%)	15.4 (8%)
Environment	5.7 (3%)	5.9 (3%)	7.6 (4%)	6.2 (3%)
Family and community services	17.0 (9%)	16.4 (8%)	16.5 (8%)	15.6 (8%)
Governance	38.9 (20%)	40.6 (21%)	43.7 (21%)	42.2 (21%)
Local roads and bridges	9.8 (5%)	10.1 (5%)	10.3 (5%)	9.8 (5%)
Recreation and culture	45.9 (23%)	40.2 (21%)	48.7 (23%)	46.7 (24%)
Traffic and street management	29.0 (15%)	28.8 (15%)	31.4 (15%)	25.2 (13%)
Waste management	16.9 (9%)	19.4 (10%)	20.5 (10%)	20.4 (10%)
Other	0.0 (0%)	0.0 (0%)	0.0 (0%)	0.0 (0%)
Total	196.1	194.1	212.2	197.6

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?



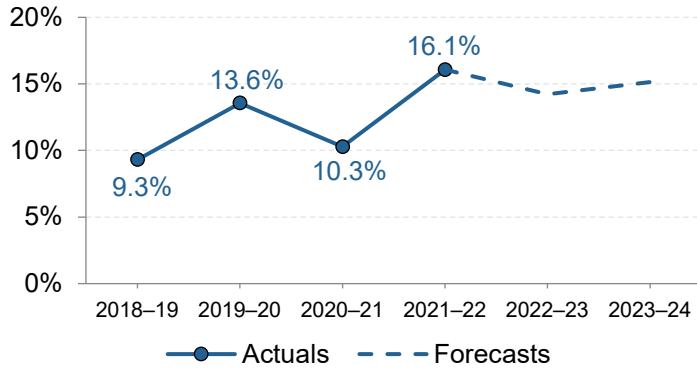
Financial position



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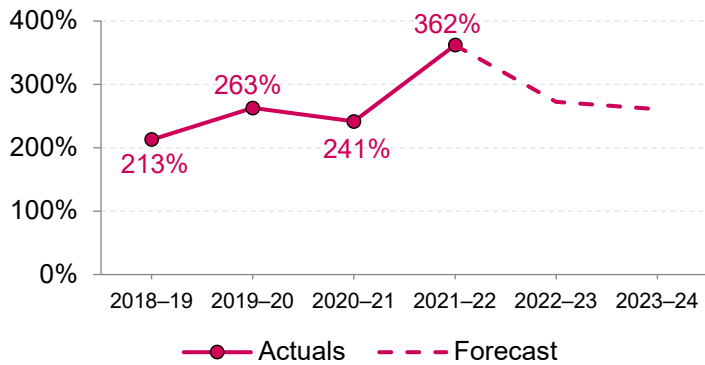
Did council operate sustainably?

Adjusted underlying result
 (adjusted underlying surplus or deficit as a percentage of adjusted underlying revenue)



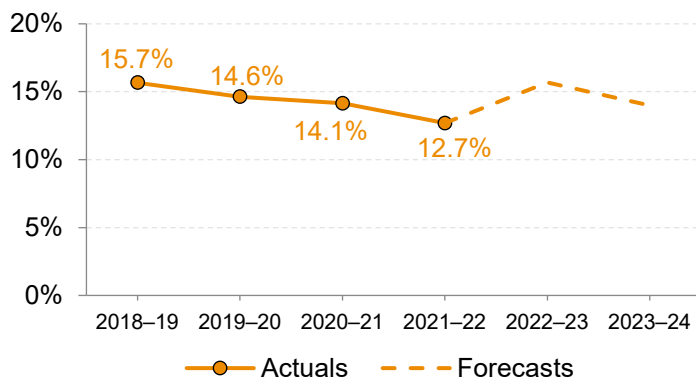
Between 2018–19 and 2021–22, Merri-bek City Council reported an average **adjusted underlying result** of 12.3 per cent. An ongoing positive result suggests ongoing revenue can fund the current level of service provision.

Working capital (current assets as a percentage of current liabilities)



Council could meet its current financial obligations with a reported average **working capital ratio** of 270 per cent between 2018–19 and 2021–22.

Indebtedness (non-current liabilities as a percentage of own-source revenue)



Between 2018–19 and 2021–22, council reported an average **indebtedness ratio** of 14.3 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.