

Town Hall,
7th. July, 1932.

To The Mayor and Councilors,
City of Bendigo.

Gentlemen,

As instructed we beg to report upon the question of making the necessary finance arrangements for carrying out the provisions of the Unemployment Relief Act to provide for male persons receiving sustenance performing work for the Municipality.

In considering the financing of this proposal certain difficulties are presented because of the absence of definite information as to what will be involved. For instance, it is unknown for what period it will be necessary to carry out the scheme. The number of men to be absorbed is also largely unknown and at present there is no information available as to how the scheme is likely to be effected by the provision of Unemployment Relief Works by the Government. We are therefore of the opinion that the Council should at present make provision for putting the scheme into operation for a period of one year and review the proposal at the end of that period.

According to the figures submitted by the City Engineer the minimum weekly cost to the Council exclusive of materials will be £65 and this would involve an annual cost of £5,380. Provision is made in the Act that advances may be made out of the Unemployment Relief fund to Municipalities free of interest, repayable in 10 equal annual instalments.

We therefore, recommend that application should be made for an advance of say £4,000 to cover the first years operations. This would involve an annual repayment for the next 10 years of £400 per annum. Should it be necessary for the Council at the end of the first year to continue the scheme, application will then be made for a further advance as required by the existing circumstances and this would increase the annual payment by the amount required.

The only alternative to this method of financing the scheme would be to provide the amount out of revenue. As the act requires

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that no person ordinarily employed by the Municipality can be dismissed in consequence of the work performed out of the scheme, the ordinary maintenance vote could not be reduced. To provide the amount out of the Municipal fund would therefore necessitate an increase in the rate which would be from 3d. to 4d. in the pound.

At Ballarat the cost of administering the scheme has so far been paid out the Municipal fund but the scheme was put in operation there prior to the passing of the present Act.

With regard to the Creek works upon which the City Engineer is submitting his report to-day, we consider that as these works are of a distinctly permanent nature involving a very substantial sum, a fairly long dated loan should be obtained under the provisions of the local Government Act. A Bill is at present before the State Parliament making provision for advances for Relief Works and it might be possible to secure the money required from this source. Consideration of this phase of the question could be considered when the Bill has been finally dealt with.

H C Ingletton

TOWN CLERK.

F J Amer

CITY TREASURER.

R J D

CITY ENGINEER.