



Yarriambiack
SHIRE COUNCIL

Agenda

Ordinary Meeting of Council

22 July 2026

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

34 Lyle Street, Warracknabeal

MEETING OF COUNCIL TO COMMENCE AT 9.30am

We acknowledge that the activities of Yarriambiack Shire Council are being held under the traditional skies and in the waterways and lands of the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk people.

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OUR VISION

A strong and connected community prioritising sustainable and innovative approaches to support the wellbeing of our people, economy and environment.

We will achieve this shared vision by:

- ✓ Looking after our communities, with an aim of enhancing social connection through better infrastructure, safety, wellbeing, advocacy, health and education services.
- ✓ Supporting the diversification of our economy by focusing on tourism and agriculture.
- ✓ Committing to environmental responsibility by making decisions that consider the impact on our community ecosystem.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

We drive continuous and sustainable improvement in service provision, operational efficiency, and stakeholder relations to create a leading organisation.

RECORDING AND MINUTES

The recording of this Council Meeting will be made publicly available on Council's YouTube channel until the next scheduled Council Meeting, providing the community with enhanced access to Council decision-making and deliberations without the need for in-person attendance.

Council Meeting Minutes from the preceding 12 months are available on Council's website. The Minutes of this meeting will be published within 3 business days of the meeting's conclusion.

1 WELCOME

2 RECORDING PREAMBLE

The Chief Executive Officer reads this section as part of the Meeting Governance process.

This Open Council Meeting is to be recorded and published online.

I give notice to anyone who is in the gallery, that they may be recorded, and their image may be published online.

The agenda, minutes and recording of this meeting will be made available to the public on the Council's website, accessible via the 'Council Meetings' page located on the homepage.

Anyone who submits a question as part of item 13 – Public Questions (of this Agenda) will have their name stated and recorded as part of the recording, which is published online.

The Mayor and/or the Chief Executive Officer have the discretion and authority at any time to direct the termination or interruption of the recording. Such direction will only be given in exceptional circumstances, where deemed relevant. Circumstances may include instances where the content of debate is considered misleading, defamatory, or potentially inappropriate to be published.

The recording will stop prior to the closed section of the meeting, and that will conclude the Meeting of Council, open to the public.

The public can view the recording via Council's YouTube Channel, with the link available via Council's website. The recording of Council Meetings will be available for viewing until the next scheduled Council Meeting.

Should technical issues prevent the continuation of the recording, the meeting may continue provided the gallery remains open to the public in accordance with Council's meeting procedures and Governance Rules, clause 2.42.3 (g).

3 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND PRAYER

Mayor to open the meeting at **9.30am** by acknowledging the Traditional Owners and offering the opening prayer.

3.1 ACKNOWLEDGING TRADITIONAL OWNERS OF THE LAND

'We acknowledge that the activities of Yarriambiack Shire Council are held under the traditional skies and in the waterways and lands of the Wotjobaluk Nations and Council pays respects to their Elders past, and present.'

3.2 PRAYER

Almighty God, without whom no Council can stand, nor anything prosper we ask that you be present and guide us in our deliberations today. We pray that we will be fair in our judgements and wise in our actions and that decisions will be made with goodwill and a clear conscience for the betterment and welfare of the people of Yarriambiack Shire.

Amen

4 PRESENT

Mayor	Andrew McLean	Hopetoun Ward
Deputy Mayor	Corinne Heintze	Dunmunkle Ward
Councillor	Melinda Keel	Dunmunkle Ward
Councillor	Kylie Zanker	Warracknabeal Ward
Councillor	Karly Kirk	Warracknabeal Ward
Councillor	Chris Lehmann	Hopetoun Ward

Council Officer	Tammy Smith	Chief Executive Officer
Council Officer	Tim Rose	Chief Operating Officer
Council Officer	Monique Metlika	Governance Support Officer
Council Officer	Anita McFarlane	Chief Financial Officer
Council Officer	Joel Turner	Chief Engineering Officer

5 APOLOGIES

Name / Role	Description of Leave / Absence

6 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

6.1 MINUTES 24 JUNE 2026 – ORDINARY MEETING

Minutes of the Ordinary meeting of Council held on 24 June 2026 be taken as an accurate record and confirmed.

Recommended Motion:

That the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 24 June 2026, as circulated be taken as read and confirmed.

6.2 MINUTES 24 JUNE 2026 – CLOSED (CONFIDENTIAL) MEETING

Minutes of the Closed (Confidential) meeting of Council held on 24 June 2026 be taken as an accurate record and confirmed.

Recommended Motion:

That the minutes of the Closed (Confidential) Meeting of Council held on 24 June 2026, as circulated be taken as read and confirmed.

7 DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Pursuant to Division 2 – Conflict of Interest, of the *Local Government Act 2020* general and material conflict of interest must be declared prior to debate on specific items within the agenda; or in writing to the Chief Executive Officer before the meeting.

A Councillor who has declared a conflict of interest in respect of a matter must:

- a) Disclose the conflict of interest in the manner required by the Yarriambiack Shire Council Governance Rules (Chapter 5- Disclosure of Conflict of Interest at Council Meetings).
- b) Exclude themselves from the decision-making process in relation to that matter, including any discussion or votes on the matter at any Council meeting or delegated committee, and any action in relation to the matter.

General conflict of interest is if a relevant person has an interest in a matter if an impartial, fair-minded person would consider that the person's private interests could result in that person acting in a manner that is contrary to their public duty.

- a) *Private interests* mean any direct or indirect interest of a relevant person that does not derive from their public duty and does not include an interest that is only a matter of personal opinion or belief.
- b) *Public duty* means the responsibilities and obligations that a relevant person has to members of the public in their role as a relevant person.

Material conflict of interest is if a relevant person has an interest in respect of a matter if an affected person would gain a benefit or suffer a loss depending on the outcome of the matter,

- a) The benefit or loss incurred may be directly or indirectly,

OR

- b) In a pecuniary or non-pecuniary form.

Councillors are also encouraged to declare circumstances where there may be a perceived conflict of interest.

7.1 CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARED

Conflict Declared by	Agenda Item	Reason - Explanation

8 BUSINESS ARISING

8.1 BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

As per ongoing and pending actions list, Item 8.2.

8.2 ONGOING AND PENDING ACTIONS

Council Meeting	Recommendation Action	Action Taken
30 June 2025 Item 15.5	Enter into an agreement with the Rupanyup Recreation Reserve outlining that the funds received from the NBN Tower rental must be utilised towards infrastructure upgrades and/or ground and building maintenance at the Rupanyup Recreation Reserve.	Not yet commenced. Agreement to be developed.
29 October 2025 Item 15.8	Provide a report back to Council in 12 months' time, outlining the progress of sourcing alternative grants and/or revenue streams to fund the Automated Weather Station maintenance. Report due by 29 October 2026.	Report to be provided in October 2026.
26 November 2025 Item 14.3	Ensure that sanitary bins are available in Council's public toilets, wherever female disposal facilities exist.	Sanitary bin now available in Warracknabeal male toilets.
10 December 2025 Item 15.1	Land transfer of land, Wheatlands Agriculture Museum, to the Warracknabeal and District Historical Society.	Hunt & Hunt Lawyers acting for both parties. S173 Agreement, Gifting and Land Transfer Agreement have been fully executed. PEXA Client Authorisations have been signed. Next steps are recognition of charitable status and to lodge with Land Office to transfer titles and then register S173 Agreement to add conditions to title.
10 December 2025 Item 15.2	Transfer of land, 40 Anderson Street Warracknabeal, to E2E Growth.	This will occur once funding is secured to develop the site.
28 January 2026 Item 15.4	Sell the former depot sites in Hopetoun known as: 92 Cummings Street, Hopetoun (Lot 9 LP26623, Lot 10 LP26623, and Lot 11 LP26623), comprising a total area of 3,036 square metres; and 74-76 Cummings Street, Hopetoun (Lot 2 LP147375), comprising a total area of 1,543 square metres.	Real Estate Agent engaged to commence the sale process. Offer received for 74-76 Cummings Street Hopetoun.
28 January 2026 Item 15.5	Gift 2 Wood Street, Rupanyup to the Victorian State Emergency Services (VICSES).	Lawyer engaged to commence the process. All Agreements executed and title has been transferred. Council is awaiting confirmation that the S173 Agreement has been registered on the Title.
27 May 2026 Item 15.4	Enact the Licence between Yarriambiack Shire Council and Murtoa Events Incorporated for the use of the Shed located on the Old Kindergarten Site, located at 38-40 Marma Street, Murtoa.	CLOSED Licence fully executed by both parties.

Council Meeting	Recommendation Action	Action Taken
27 May 2026 Item 15.5	Enact the Lease between Yarriambiack Shire Council and Warracknabeal District Historical Society Inc for the building and land known as the Warracknabeal Historical Centre, 81 Scott Street, Warracknabeal, Vic 3393.	CLOSED Licence fully executed by both parties and dated 27 May 2026.
27 May 2026 Item 15.6	Enact the Lease between Yarriambiack Shire Council and Sheep Hills Mechanics Institute Inc for the building and land known as Sheep Hills Hall, 463 Sheep Hills-Minyip Road, Sheep Hills, Vic 3392.	CLOSED Lease has been fully executed by both parties and dated 27 May 2026.
27 May 2026 Item 15.9	Prepare a planning scheme amendment documentation based on the recommendations outlined in Volume 1 of the Yarriambiack Heritage Review. Additionally, seek Authorisation from the Minister for Planning to amend the Yarriambiack Planning Scheme to implement the Yarriambiack Heritage Review.	CLOSED Lease has been fully executed by both parties and dated 27 May 2026.
24 June 2026 Item 15.12	Execute deed of variation of lease between Yarriambiack Shire Council and NBN Co Limited for the land known as Certificate of Title Volume 11192 Folio 081, in Gibson Street, Rupanyup, Vic 3388	CLOSED Deed of Variation has been fully executed by Council dated 27 May 2026 and returned to NBN for their execution.

9 PETITIONS

No petitions received.

10 MINISTERIAL AND GOVERNMENT CORRESPONDENCE TO COUNCILLORS ONLY

Outgoing		
Date	Recipient	Details
Nil.		

Incoming		
Date	Sender	Details
04/06/26	The Hon. Natalie Suleyman MP	Letter approving substitute public holiday arrangements for Yarriambiack Shire in place of Melbourne Cup Day 2026. • Murtoa and district: ○ Tuesday 03 November 2026 is not a public holiday. ○ Friday 02 October 2026 is appointed as a full-day public holiday. • Warracknabeal and district: ○ Tuesday 03 November 2026 is not a full-day public holiday. ○ Thursday 08 October 2026 and Tuesday 3 November 2026 are appointed as half-day public holidays (from 12.00 pm). These arrangements align local public holidays with each township's annual show days and have been formally declared under the <i>Public Holidays Act 1993</i>.
02/07/26	The Hon Kristy McBain MP	Letter regarding proposed reforms to Australia's disaster management system.

11 SPECIAL COMMITTEES

11.1 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE

The proposed scheduled meeting program is as follows for the next 12 months for the Audit and Risk Committee:

Date	Description
10 August 2026	Ordinary Meeting
21 September 2026	Special Financial Statements and Performance Report Meeting
09 November 2026	Ordinary Meeting
08 February 2027	Ordinary Meeting
10 May 2027	Ordinary Meeting

11.2 WOOMELANG RETIREMENT UNITS COMMUNITY ASSET COMMITTEE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Woomelang Retirement Units Community Asset Committee Annual General Meeting was held on 24 June 2026.

[Confidential Attachment: Woomelang Retirement Units AGM Minutes - 24 June 2026](#)

The attachments are confidential information for the purpose of section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2020, specifically s3(1)(a), s3(1)(g).

Recommended Motion

That the Minutes of the Woomelang Retirement Units Community Asset Committee Annual General Meeting held on 24 June 2026, circulated to Councillors on the 17 July 2026 be taken as read and confirmed.

12 ACTIVITY REPORTS

12.1 MAYOR ACTIVITY REPORT

Mayor Andrew McLean (July)		
Date	Activity	Location
25/06/26	Mayor, Councillor and CEO Roadshow	Hopetoun
25/06/26	Mayor, Councillor and CEO Roadshow	Hopetoun
25/06/26	Meeting with West Wind Executives regarding Housing Update	Warracknabeal
30/06/26	Session 2 of WJJWJ People Land Use Activity Agreement	Online
01/07/26	Meeting with Minister D'Ambrosio's Staff*	Online
01/07/26	Rotary Club of Warracknabeal's Change Over Dinner	Warracknabeal
03/07/26	Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Acting CEO Catch Up	Online
07/07/26	AusAlert Overview	Online
07/07/26	Warracknabeal Probus Club 40 th Anniversary Dinner	Warracknabeal
08/07/26	Council Forum	Warracknabeal
08/07/26	Citizenship Ceremony	Warracknabeal
09/07/26	Wimmera Southern Mallee Council Alliance Mayors Lunch	Horsham
09/07/26	Wimmera Southern Mallee Council Alliance Meeting	Horsham
14/07/26	Mayor, Councillor and CEO Roadshow	Warracknabeal
17/07/26	MAV Regional Meeting	Online
20/07/26	Resource Ready Presentation to One Nation*	Warracknabeal
21/07/26	Qube Logistics Community Meeting	Murtoa

*Represent advocacy meetings

12.2 COUNCILLOR ACTIVITY REPORTS

Deputy Mayor Corinne Heintze – Dunmunkle Ward (July)		
Date	Activity	Location
26/06/26	WSMTG meeting	Horsham
08/07/26	Council Forum	Warracknabeal
08/07/26	Citizenship Ceremony	Warracknabeal
17/07/26	Mayor, CEO and Deputy Mayor Catch Up	Online
21/07/26	Qube Community Meeting	Murtoa

Cr Melinda Keel – Dunmunkle Ward (July)		
Date	Activity	Location
Nil.		

Cr Chris Lehmann – Hopetoun Ward (July)		
Date	Activity	Location
08/07/26	Council Forum	Warracknabeal

Cr Karly Kirk – Warracknabeal Ward (July)		
Date	Activity	Location
03/07/26	Tourism Committee Discussion	Warracknabeal
08/07/26	Council Forum	Warracknabeal
14/07/26	Mayor, Councillor and CEO Roadshow	Warracknabeal

Cr Kylie Zanker – Warracknabeal Ward (July)		
Date	Activity	Location
07/07/26	WAG Meeting	Warracknabeal
07/07/26	Street Scape Meeting	Warracknabeal
08/07/26	Council Forum	Warracknabeal
08/07/26	MAV Social Media Training	Online

Cr Kylie Zanker – Warracknabeal Ward (July)		
14/07/26	Council Roadshow	Warracknabeal

12.3 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER ACTIVITY REPORT

Tammy Smith (July)		
Date	Activity	Location
24/06/26	Attended the Annual General Meeting of the Woomelang Retirement Units Community Asset Committee of Council	Woomelang
25/06/26	Mayor, Councillor and CEO Drop In Session – Budget and Council Plan – Brim	Brim
25/06/26	Mayor, Councillor and CEO Drop In Session – Budget and Council Plan – Hopetoun	Hopetoun
25/06/26	Meeting with West Wind Energy and Mayor to discuss housing strategy	Warracknabeal
26/06/26	Meeting with Minyip business to discuss development	Online
29/06/26 – 10/07/26	On Annual Leave – Tim Rose, Acting Chief Executive Officer during this period.	
14/07/26	Mayor, Councillor and CEO Presentation – Budget and Council Plan – Warracknabeal	Warracknabeal
14/07/26	Information session on the WJJWJ People Land Use Activity Agreement for CEO's and Executives	Online
15/07/26	Restoration Working Group Meeting	Online
16/07/26	Rural Councils Victoria Executive Meeting	Online
16/07/26	Victoria Auditor General's Office consultation with Rural Councils Victoria	Online
16/07/26	Rural Councils Victoria Election Advocacy and Enterprise Bargaining Support	Online
16/07/26	VLGA consultation regarding Councillor Training	Online
17/07/26	Mayor, Deputy Mayor, CEO and Governance Support Officer Meeting	Online
17/07/26	MAV Regional Meeting – Wimmera Southern Mallee Central Highlands Meeting	Online
17/07/26	Woomelang Retirement Units Residents Meeting	Woomelang
20/07/26	Meeting with Rikkie-Lee Tyrrell MP with Northwest Councils*	Warracknabeal
21/07/26	Qube Logistics Community Meeting Murtoa Residents	Murtoa

*Represent advocacy meetings

13 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Division 8 – Public Question Time (Yarriambiack Shire Council Governance Rules)

Community Members (excluding Councillors) may submit a question to Council.

Questions must be submitted in writing, stating the name and address of the person submitting the question, on an approved or permitted form by Council.

[Public Questions for Council – Yarriambiack Shire Council.](#)

Questions must be submitted 24 hours prior to a Council Meeting.

The questions will be answered at a Council meeting by the Mayor (Chairperson), or if delegated by the Chairperson, the Chief Executive Officer, a Councillor or a nominated Officer.

If questions are submitted less than 24 hours before the Council meeting, they will be answered at the meeting where possible, and if no answer can be given, then a written answer will be given to the person as soon as possible after the Council meeting.

No person can submit more than two questions at any Council meeting (unless permitted by the Chair – Mayor).

The question will not be allowed if:

- i. relates to a matter outside the duties, functions and powers of Council;
- ii. is defamatory, indecent, abusive, offensive, irrelevant, trivial or objectionable in language or substance;
- iii. deals with a subject matter already answered;
- iv. is aimed at embarrassing a Councillor or an Officer;
- v. relates to a personnel matter; or
- vi. contains or refers or relates to Confidential Information.

Questions and answers must be as brief as possible, and no discussion is allowed other than for the purpose of clarification.

The Name of Person and Question will be read out by either the Mayor or Chief Executive Officer, and the nominated Councillor / Officer is to respond.

The party submitting the question need not physically attend the Council Meeting, however if they are not physically present at the part of the meeting allocated for public question time, the Mayor (Chairperson) may determine that a verbal answer will not be provided at the meeting and a written answer will instead be communicated after the meeting.

13.1 QUESTIONS SUBMITTED

Name:	Town:
Question:	
Respondent:	
Response:	

14 COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND NOTICE OF MOTIONS

14.1 MAYORS REPORT

The Resource Ready Strategy has continued to be a focus of advocacy for Yarriambiack Shire Council and the Northwest Councils who commissioned the strategy.

I joined fellow Northwest Council representatives at a meeting with Minister D'Ambrosio's advisor on 01 July to advocate for investment into our region and Shire if our local government areas have to host mining and renewable energy infrastructure.

The Northwest Councils will be provided with the opportunity to present to Rikkie-Lee Tyrrell MP from Pauline Hansons One Nation Party on Monday 20 July.

Advocacy will continue with a visit from Liberal Party members in September.

Our advocacy remains strong, with Councillors continuing to promote our priority projects and housing initiatives.

On 9 July, I attended the Wimmera Southern Mallee Councils Alliance Mayors and Chief Executive Officers meeting. Guest speakers highlighted the significant mental health challenges facing our region, including the urgent need for mental health beds in the Wimmera. Residents currently need to travel to Mildura or Ballarat to access inpatient psychiatric care. Greater investment is needed in both preventative and inpatient mental health services to improve support across the region.

Council is also pleased to announce that the Hopetoun affordable home is now complete. Once the subdivision's power supply is rectified, we look forward to handing the property over to Dunmunkle Lodge.

In closing, I look forward to attending the Mallee Machinery Field Days on Thursday 06 August with our Chief Executive Officer. We encourage visitors to pop into our site to hear about the latest developments in our Shire.

14.2 MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA – DELEGATE QUARTERLY REPORT

Presented by Mayor Andrew McLean

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a quarterly summary of the work of the Municipal Association of Victoria for the period of April to June 2026.

Recommended Motion

That Council:

- a) Notes the Municipal Association Victoria Delegates Report for the period of April to June 2026.

DISCUSSION

1. MAV Overview

The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) is the peak body representing Victoria's 79 local councils. It plays a central role in supporting, advocating for, and strengthening the local government sector across the state. MAV works to influence other levels of government, coordinate sector-wide priorities, and build council capability to respond to current and emerging challenges.

2. MAV Delegate Engagement

The MAV Delegate Engagement Framework ensures delegates are equipped to represent their councils, participate in State Council, contribute to shaping MAV policy directions and have regard for the MAV protocols. In the April – June quarter the following delegate engagement events occurred to further support delegates in their role:

- MAV May State Council
- MAV Delegate Connect Session
- MAV National General Assembly Session
- ALGA National General Assembly

State Council

State Council is the MAV's overarching governing body, comprising all appointed delegates from participating member councils. It meets twice each calendar year, bringing together delegates from member councils across metropolitan, regional and rural Victoria to debate and vote on motions that set the sector's collective advocacy and policy priorities.

The May 2026 meeting was delivered against the backdrop of an upcoming November State Election, which heightened interest in a number of the motions before the forum. to form the policy direction of the MAV, which is set in alignment with the MAV Strategic Plan (2024-2027).

The May State Council again demonstrated the strength of the sector when it united to advance shared priorities ahead of the 2026 State Election. This saw 170+ event attendees, 84 motions considered and 83 resolutions passed. [State of the Sector](#), the MAV report on the May 2026 State Council, highlights key resolutions that shape the advocacy agenda for MAV on behalf of the sector.

Many priorities raised at our May 2026 State Council directly align with the MAV's The Future is Local 2026 State Election Campaign and its five key pillars: Connected Housing, Safe and Cohesive Communities, Safer Roads and Local Transport Connections, Energy Transition through Community Legacy Benefit Sharing, and Securing the Future of Local Government.

These priorities, together with the resolutions of this State Council, provide a clear roadmap for the next State Government to partner with councils in delivering local solutions to statewide challenges.

National General Assembly

The MAV is continuing to strengthen how Victoria engages at the national level through ALGA and the National General Assembly, held from the 22nd – 26th June. This is about ensuring Victorian priorities are not only represented, but strategically aligned with our broader Federal advocacy platform, [Make Good Happen](#).

The alignment of motions, advocacy priorities and engagement activities, resulted in a more coordinated and influential Victorian voice nationally.

Victoria is at the forefront of national conversations and that we as a state are already spearheading the conversations as a sector nationally. Of the submissions received and approved for ALGA Board debate, Victoria contributed:

- 93 of 388 single motions, representing 24.0% of all single motions nationally.
- 41 of 144 combined motions, representing 28.5% of all combined motions nationally.
- 134 of 532 total motions, accounting for 25.2% of all motions nationally.

Whilst in Canberra for the National General Assembly, Victorian Delegates also participated in MAV hosted events such as the MAVLab Welcome Delegation, 2026 National Coastal Advocacy Roundtable and Back your Neighbour Campaign.

MAV Regional Meetings

Regional Meetings will be held across the 10 MAV regions in July, bringing together Mayors, MAV Delegates and CEOs. These meetings provide a forum to strengthen regional collaboration, discuss shared challenges and priorities and coordinate advocacy positions, including the development of State Council motions.

3. MAV Advocacy Initiatives

The Future Is Local: MAV 2026 State Election Campaign

The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) has launched its [2026 State Election Campaign](#) with a clear message to MPs and candidates: The future is local. The time is now.

Victorian communities are facing rapid and complex change, and councils are on the frontline of both responding now and preparing for the future. They are first responders in times of crisis; and they are long-term partners in community recovery, resilience, and innovation.

Communities are feeling the pressure of climate impacts, rising costs, digital disruption and demographic shifts. And when these pressures intensify, people turn to their local council.

Councils are the level of government they experience every day, through footpaths, libraries, maternal and child health services, open spaces, planning decisions, and community programs.

The future is local. The time is now.

All 79 Victorian councils have come together to identify the five statewide priorities communities say matter most:

- **Growing Futures:** Connected Housing
- **Local Futures:** Safe and Cohesive Communities
- **Productive Futures:** Safer Roads and Local Transport Connections
- **Regenerative Futures:** Community Legacy Benefit Sharing
- **Transformative Futures:** Securing the Future of Local Government.

These priorities form a blueprint for a stronger, fairer, and more resilient Victoria.

Councils are ready to work with the next State Government to deliver local solutions to global challenges.

Sector Submissions

The MAV advocates on behalf of the local government sector by participating in consultations and contributing to strategy development, discussion papers and proposed changes to legislation. In the April to June Quarter the MAV represented the views of the local government sector via the following [sector submissions](#):

- Productivity Commission Inquiry into Housing Supply Regulation
- National Disability Insurance Scheme Amendment (Securing the NDIS for Future Generations) Bill 2026
- Inquiry into Racism, Hate and Violence directed at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People
- Inquiry into anti-LGBTIQA+ Hate Crimes in Victoria
- Parliamentary Inquiry into the 2026 Summer Fires across Victoria

4. Measuring MAV Progress and Performance

Strategic Plan Implementation

MAV's work is framed by its strategic plan [Shaping Our Future \(2024–2027\)](#), which identifies ten key strategic directions reflecting what matters most to Victorian communities. The plan focuses on enabling councils to create sustainable, resilient futures through evidence based research, strong collaboration, and -sector wide- leadership. It reflects the MAV's commitment to lead and strengthen councils as they navigate emerging challenges and seize opportunities to shape the future for generations to come.

To measure progress, MAV supports transparent reporting on strategic actions, 95% of which are either completed or underway with an 84% confidence level for completion at the end of financial year and 16% carry over into 2026/27.

Progress of State Council Motions

The MAV has introduced the [State Council Resolution Dashboard](#) which has been developed to strengthen MAV's monitoring and reporting of the implementation of State Council resolutions. The Dashboard provides councils with clear visibility of which resolutions have been actioned and which are currently in progress. This dashboard improves visibility of the status of the 144 State Council motions, 50% of which are currently completed and 50% in progress. Motions from the 29 May 2026 State Council will be included in the Dashboard from July with progress updated quarterly.

LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY CONTEXT

This report supports the Yarriambiack Shire Council's Council Plan 2025 – 2029 strategic direction and objective of:

- A Council that serves its Community – Advocate for our community, on matters that are important to the entire municipal district.

OVERARCHING GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

This Council report has been prepared in accordance with, and to give effect to, the overarching governance principles articulated in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, to the extent practicable.

15 REPORTS FOR DECISION

15.1 DECLARATION OF 2026/2027 RATES AND CHARGES

Prepared by Chantelle Pitt, Revenue Coordinator

SUMMARY

The 2026/27 Council Budget was adopted at the Council Meeting on 24 June 2026, which included the amount Council intended to raise by rates and charges for 2026/27. Council is now presented with the declaration of rates and charges for adoption.

Recommended Motion:

That Council pursuant to the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Local Government Act 1989*:

1. Declare the rates, municipal charge and annual service charges for the 2026/27 financial year as follows:
 - a) That an amount of \$16,223,542 be declared as the amount which Council intends to raise by general rates, municipal charge, annual service charges and Payments in lieu of rates, which the amount is calculated as follows:

General Rates	\$12,967,029
Municipal Charge	\$453,106
Kerbside Waste Collection	\$2,302,926
Payments in lieu of rates	\$500,481
Total	\$16,223,542

- b) A general rate of 0.003097 cents in the dollar of the Capital Improved Value be declared for the period 01 July 2026 to 30 June 2027.
 - c) A farm differential rate of 0.001801 cents in the dollar of the Capital Improved Value be declared for the period 01 July 2026 to 30 June 2027.
 - d) A municipal charge of \$88.98 per assessment be declared for the period 01 July 2026 to 30 June 2027.
 - e) Annual services charges be declared for the period 01 July 2026 to 30 June 2027 as follows:

80L Waste & Recycling & Glass - Residential	\$517.22
120L Waste & Recycling & Glass - Residential	\$598.86
240L Waste & Recycling & Glass - Residential	\$875.11
120L Waste & Recycling & Glass - Commercial	\$816.63
240L Waste & Recycling & Glass - Commercial	\$1,193.33
80L Waste & Recycling & Glass - Rural	\$517.22
120L Waste & Recycling & Glass - Rural	\$598.86
240L Waste & Recycling & Glass - Rural	\$875.11
120L Commercial Garbage Service	\$398.07
240L Commercial Garbage Service	\$774.77
80L Rural Garbage Service	\$210.28
120L Rural Garbage Service	\$291.92
240L Rural Garbage Service	\$568.16
80L Residential Garbage Service	\$210.28
120L Residential Garbage Service	\$291.92
240L Residential Garbage Service	\$568.16
Commercial Kerbside Recycling	\$279.03
Residential Kerbside Recycling	\$204.62
Rural Kerbside Recycling	\$204.62
Glass Recycling Collection - Residential	\$102.32
Glass Recycling Collection - Rural	\$102.32
Glass Recycling Collection - Commercial	\$139.53

- f) That Council adopts the return of the revaluation of properties within the Yarriambiack Shire as at 01 January 2026 from the Valuer General Victoria.
- g) That interest at the rate prescribed in the *Local Government Act 1989* be payable in respect of any of the aforesaid rates and charges which are not paid by the dates prescribed in the *Local Government Act 1989*.
- h) That the Chief Executive Officer be authorised to levy and recover the aforesaid general rates, annual service charges and municipal charge.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil.

DISCUSSION

The adopted 2026/27 Council Budget provides an increase in general rate revenue of 2.75% for the 2026/27 year. The rate cap has been set at 2.75% by the Minister for Local Government.

Council intends to raise \$16,223,542 which includes rates (\$12,967,029), municipal charge (\$453,106), service charges (\$2,302,926) and Payments in lieu of rates (\$500,481).

The council believes differential rates contribute to the equitable and efficient distribution of the rate burden to ratepayers. The differential rate ratios are as follows:

- a) General Land (100% of the general rate in the dollar)
- b) Farm Land (58% of the general rate in the dollar)

The rates in the dollar to be applied for the 2026/27 year are as follows:

Type cents/\$CIV

General Land	0.3097
Farm Land	0.1801

The municipal charge will increase from \$86.60 to \$88.98 per rateable assessment for the 2026/27 year. A person may apply to Council for an exemption from the payment of a municipal charge on rateable land in accordance with Section 159(3) of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

Annual service charges for the collection and disposal of refuse and recycling will increase by 10.00%. A waste service charge, a recycling service charge and a glass recycling charge will be made on all improved properties within Council, excluding commercial and rural properties where such services are provided only upon request.

Interest will be charged at the rate prescribed by Section 172(2)(a) of the *Local Government Act 1989* to rates and charges which are not paid by the dates fixed by the Minister pursuant to Section 167(2) of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

Council will treat all valid pensioner rebate applications applicable for the 2025/26 financial year as continuing applications for the 2026/27 financial year, subject to applicable certification by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing and Services Australia.

Other rebates and concessions (subject to further resolution by Council) are as follows:

1. The rate reduction for new housing developments, in accordance with the Yarriambiack Shire Council's Debt Management, Relief and Hardship Policy.
2. Interest will be waived for employees using payroll deductions for the payment of rates. This is in accordance with the Yarriambiack Shire Council Enterprise Agreement No. 10 – 2024.

RELEVANT LAW

Local Government Act 2020

c) Section 94 – the Budget

Local Government Act 1989

d) Section 159 - Municipal charge

e) Section 172 - Council may charge interest on unpaid rates and charges

f) Section 167 - Payment of rates and charges

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Council Plan 2025 – 2029 Strategic Objectives	Priorities
A Council that serves its Community	- Undertake robust and transparent planning and risk management to ensure our organisation is sustainable now and into the future. - Embed good governance practices into all decision making.
Policies, Procedures, Guidelines, Plans, Strategies and Frameworks	
Policy	Debt Management, Relief and Hardship Policy
Plan	Revenue and Rating Plan
	Long Term Financial Plan
Other	Yarriambiack Shire Council Consolidated Enterprise Agreement Number Ten (10) 2024 - Clause 10.9 Payroll Deductions

OVERARCHING GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

This Council report has been prepared in accordance with, and to give effect to, the overarching governance principles articulated in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, to the extent practicable.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

Yarriambiack Shire Council Ordinary Meeting of Council Minutes 24 June 2026.

15.1 Adoption of the 2026/27 Budget

- That in accordance with Section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) the 2026-27 Budget as tabled and attached to this report be adopted.

OPTIONS

Not applicable.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Economic	Economic issues have been taken into account during the budget process.
Financial	The rates and charges to be levied have been calculated in compliance with the State Government's Fair Go Rates system, with the rate cap having been set at 2.75% by the Minister for Local Government.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The proposed Budget 2026/27 was made available for community feedback in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy and Procedure. The engagement process comprised of media information across print, social media, and was placed on Council's website. The community engagement process was also supported by in person community consultation forums across the Shire. Feedback was invited from 14 May 2026 to 11 June 2026.

GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Not required for this report.

RISK

Utilising the Risk Management Framework the following assessment has been made:

Strategic Risk Description and Residual Risk Level	Action to Mitigate/Reduce Risk	Does Action maintain or reduce Residual Risk Level
Corporate Governance, Compliance and Liability Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	External Audit Program - Crowe appointed by VAGO as external auditor.	Maintains Residual Risk Level
Financial Risk - Residual Risk Level Medium	Financial Systems and Reports – Best of Breed System implemented to provide greater financial compliance and monitoring. Financial Reports developed and dashboards for greater compliance monitoring.	Maintains Residual Risk Level
Strategy Execution and Change Management Risk - Residual Risk Level Medium	Community Consultation and Council Plan - Council Plan being built on Community expectations and legislative governance requirements. Reporting to Council and Audit and Risk Committee - Financial and Non- Financial Performance Reporting, KPI progress on Council Plan.	Maintains Residual Risk Level

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not applicable.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have declared that they do not have a conflict of interest in the subject matter of this report.

15.2 COUNCIL PLAN AMENDMENTS, YEAR 1 ACTION PLAN CLOSE OUT AND ADOPTION OF YEAR 2 ACTION PLAN

Prepared by Tammy Smith, Chief Executive Officer

SUMMARY

Council must adopt and prepare a Council Plan for the period of at least the next four financial years after a general election. Council must also prepare a Community Vision with an outlook of at least the next 10 years. The Council Plan 2025 – 2029 was adopted on 30 June 2025 and incorporates the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan.

This report provides an update on the recommended change to the Council Plan, presents the final report for the Year 1 Action Plan, and recommends that Councillors adopt the Year 2 Action Plan.

Recommended Motion:

That Council:

- a) Adopt the update to the Council Plan 2025-2029 as attached to this report, and rescind the version adopted on 30 June 2025;
- b) Adopt the Council Plan Year 1 Actions 2025-2029 Close Out Report as attached to this report; and
- c) Adopt the Council Plan Year 2 Actions 2025-2029 as attached to this report.

ATTACHMENTS

[Attachment: Council Plan 2025-2029 \(update 23.6.26\)](#)

[Attachment: Year 1 Actions - Council Plan - Quarter 4 - Close Out Report](#)

[Attachment: Year 2 Actions - Council Plan](#)

[Attachment: Submission \(1\)](#)

DISCUSSION

1. Background

The Council Plan 2025–2029 is a comprehensive strategic document that integrates the Community Vision, and the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, whilst also reflecting on the Long-Term Financial Plan, and the Community Engagement Policy and Procedure. This plan was formally adopted by Council on 30 June 2025, following an extensive and inclusive community consultation process conducted in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy and Procedure. This process ensured that the voices and perspectives of residents, stakeholders, and community groups were actively considered in shaping the future direction of the Shire.

The Council Plan sets out four overarching strategic objectives that will guide Council's decision-making, resource allocation, and service delivery over the next four years. These objectives reflect Council's commitment to fostering a resilient, healthy, and connected community, promoting sustainable economic growth, protecting the natural environment, and upholding principles of good governance.

Each action within the Council Plan has been carefully developed to align with these strategic objectives. The actions were developed through community consultation, ensuring that they are responsive to local needs and aspirations, and that Council remains accountable and transparent in its operations.

2. Council Plan Amendments

Following consultation with Councillors, a minor administrative amendment is proposed for page 22 of the Council Plan. The word 'Fund' has been replaced with 'Champion', as Melbourne University is now undertaking the project and Council is no longer required to contribute to the research.

3. Council Plan 2025-2029 Year 1 Actions Close Out Report

The final Quarter 4 close-out report for the Year 1 Actions is attached. Council has made significant progress in completing the identified actions, with some continuing into Year 2.

4. Council Plan 2025-2029 Year 2 Actions for Adoption

The Year 2 Actions have been compiled in consultation with the Councillors and the Leadership Team and are based on the strategic objectives identified in the Council Plan.

The document has undertaken community consultation and is now presented to Councillors for adoption.

RELEVANT LAW

The obligation for Council to prepare and maintain a Council Plan, a 10-year Community Vision, and a 10-year Long Term Financial Plan is set out in Part 4, Division 1 – Strategic Planning and Division 4 – Financial Management of the *Local Government Act 2020*. These provisions ensure that Council's planning and financial management processes are transparent, forward-looking, and responsive to community needs.

Additionally, Council is required to develop and implement a Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, as mandated by the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*. This requirement reflects the importance of promoting and protecting the health and wellbeing of the community through strategic planning and coordinated action.

Together, these legislative frameworks provide the foundation for Council's long-term vision, strategic priorities, and commitment to the health, wellbeing, and prosperity of the Yarriambiack Shire community.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

The Council Plan serves as the principal strategic framework for Council, establishing the key objectives and priorities that will guide Council's direction over the four-year term. These strategic objectives provide the foundation for the development of all other plans, policies, services, and activities, ensuring that every initiative undertaken is aligned with the broader vision and goals of the Shire.

OVERARCHING GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

This Council report has been prepared in accordance with, and to give effect to, the overarching governance principles articulated in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, to the extent practicable.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

On 30 June 2025, Council adopted the Council Plan 2025-2029.

- 30 June 2025 – Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes – Item 15.1 Council Plan 2025-2029
- 29 October 2025 – Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes – Item 15.3 Council Plan 2025-2029 Year 1 Actions – Quarter 1
- 28 January 2026 – Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes – Item 15.3 Council Plan 2025-2029 Year 1 Actions – Quarter 2
- 22 April 2026 – Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes – Item 15.11 Council Plan 2025-2029 Year 1 Actions – Quarter 3

OPTIONS

Councillors could choose to continue to revise the Council Plan actions and strategic priorities.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The Council Plan is the overarching strategic document guiding the operations and future direction of Council over its four-year term. It establishes clear priorities for Council and outlines how these priorities will be resourced, both financially and through staff

allocation. The Plan also incorporates measurable indicators to track progress and ensure accountability in achieving its objectives.

Central to the Council Plan are objectives focused on driving economic growth through diversification, enhancing environmental sustainability by implementing measures to reduce emissions and improve waste recovery, and delivering community wellbeing services that are vital to the health of our townships. Furthermore, the Plan emphasises the importance of robust governance, ensuring that Council consistently serves the community with transparency, integrity, and responsiveness across all areas of its operations.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Council undertook a comprehensive community consultation process to inform the development of the Council Plan. Engagement activities included a series of community sessions held across multiple townships, with both day and evening meetings to ensure broad participation. Hard copy surveys were distributed at these sessions and made available at Yarriambiack Libraries branches, while the survey was also accessible online, resulting in 229 responses that were carefully collated and considered.

To further encourage dialogue and gather feedback, Councillors hosted 'Coffee with a Councillor' sessions in eleven townships throughout the municipality. These informal gatherings provided residents with the opportunity to discuss local priorities and share their perspectives directly with Council representatives.

Additionally, Council organised a Budget and Council Plan Roadshow servicing eleven townships across the Shire, offering residents the chance to provide in-person feedback on both the draft Budget and the Council Plan.

The draft Council Plan was also placed on public exhibition, from 03 June 2025 to 29 June 2025, inviting further community input and ensuring transparency throughout the planning process.

This extensive engagement ensured that the Council Plan reflects the diverse needs and aspirations of the Yarriambiack Shire community, and demonstrates Council's commitment to open, inclusive, and responsive governance.

No public comments or submissions were received regarding the revision of the Council Plan. Following this period of public exhibition and consultation, the revised plan was formally adopted by Council on 30 June 2025.

The Year 2 Action Plan was developed, and community engagement has occurred in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy and Procedure. The consultation period was open for 28 days, closing on 30 June 2026. One submission was received which contained the following feedback:

"From my perspective as a Murtoa resident, Council needs to be ready to capture future industrial growth opportunities associated with the introduction of QUBE to the region. This represents a significant opportunity that Yarriambiack Shire has not seen for many years. I believe this plan should more clearly acknowledge the potential for industrial growth and be honest with the community about the opportunities this investment may bring. Murtoa is well positioned to benefit from this growth, and Council should ensure appropriate planning is undertaken now so the Shire is prepared to support and attract future industry investment."

Council acknowledges the significant economic development and industrial growth opportunities that may arise from major future investment in the region, including investment associated with the QUBE terminal development. The draft Structure plans for Murtoa, Warracknabeal and Hopetoun all identify each town has a suitable amount of industrially zoned land for the short term but recommends Council monitors this into the medium to longer term. The Council Plan makes commitments to support economic development and investment, undertake strategic township and land-use planning, and advocate for the infrastructure, housing and workforce requirements needed to attract and support future industry growth. Council recognises the importance of being prepared to capture emerging opportunities across the Shire, including within Murtoa, and will

continue to support planning initiatives that enable sustainable future investment and employment outcomes.

GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A gender impact assessment is not required for this report.

RISK

Utilising the Risk Management Framework the following assessment has been made:

Strategic Risk Description and Residual Risk Level	Action to Mitigate/Reduce Risk	Does Action maintain or reduce Residual Risk Level
Corporate Governance, Compliance and Liability Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	Progress on Council Plan actions is reported quarterly in alignment with Council's Performance Management Framework. In addition, the Mayor provides an annual report on the achievement of these objectives, as required under the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> . This approach ensures ongoing transparency and accountability in tracking Council's strategic priorities and outcomes.	Maintains Residual Risk Level
Strategy Execution and Change Management Risk - Residual Risk Level Medium	Operational resources, including dedicated staff and financial allocations, are assigned to support the achievement of Council Plan objectives. This ensures that each strategic priority is adequately resourced, enabling effective implementation and delivery of Council's commitments to the community.	Maintains Residual Risk Level
Reputational Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	Quarterly reporting on Council Plan objectives and actions tracks progress and communicates updates to the community. In addition, it ensures accountability and transparency.	Maintains Residual Risk Level

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

The Council Plan relies on a number of regional and state plans and policies including:

- Wimmera Mallee Destination Management Plan
- Victorian Government Active Recreation Strategy
- Victorian Government Recycling Victoria
- Regional Development Economic Development Strategies
- [State Government Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2023-2027](#)

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have declared that they do not have a conflict of interest in the subject matter of this report.

15.3 PERFORMANCE REPORTING FRAMEWORK REVISION

Prepared by Tammy Smith, Chief Executive Officer

SUMMARY

The Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020 outlines that Councils via the Governance and Management Checklist in the Report of Operations, must maintain a Performance Reporting Framework. Council's framework includes financial and non-financial performance indicators aligned with its adopted Risk Appetite.

Leadership Team, in consultation with the Audit and Risk Committee, has reviewed the Risk Management Manual and Risk Appetite Statement. As a result, the Risk Appetite Statement has been updated, and the financial and non-financial performance indicators have been revised.

The updated Performance Reporting Framework sets out Council's reporting requirements for the Leadership Team, Audit and Risk Committee, and Councillors.

These reporting arrangements support compliance and promote transparency for all parties.

Recommended Motion:

That Council:

- a) Revoke the prior version of the Yarriambiack Shire Council Performance Reporting Framework as adopted on 22 May 2024; and
- b) Adopt the revised Yarriambiack Shire Council Performance Reporting Framework as attached to this report.

ATTACHMENTS

[Attachment: Performance Reporting Framework](#)

DISCUSSION

The Performance Reporting Framework outlines the legislative context within which Council operates, including the reporting timelines and the documentation required to be presented to Council in order to meet statutory obligations and internal governance requirements.

The Framework has undergone a comprehensive review and update. This includes:

- The incorporation of the Council Plan 2025–2029 strategic priorities;
- Clarification of how Council develops and reports on the annual budget to the community;
- Revisions to the planning and reporting regulatory document checklist;
- Updated management exception reporting; and
- The inclusion of customer request management reporting.

The update also removes the non-financial performance indicators, which are now only captured within the Risk Management Manual. To reduce duplication and improve consistency across documents, the Framework now includes references to the Risk Management Manual and the Risk Appetite Statement, opposed to duplicating information across documents.

RELEVANT LAW

- *Local Government Act 2020*
- Local Government Planning and Reporting Regulation 2020

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Council Plan 2025 – 2029 Strategic Objectives	Priorities
A Council that serves its Community	- Undertake robust and transparent planning and risk management to ensure our organisation is sustainable now and into the future. - Embed good governance practices into all decision making. - Build trust through engaging with our community, delivering quality services and outcomes. - Consider a broad base of evidence before making decisions, ensuring value for money and responsive, innovative services and solutions are provided.
Policies, Procedures, Guidelines, Plans, Strategies and Frameworks	
Policy	Risk Management Manual
Framework	Budget Framework and Guidelines Manual
Other	Risk Appetite

OVERARCHING GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

This Council report has been prepared in accordance with, and to give effect to, the overarching governance principles articulated in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, to the extent practicable.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

- 28 September 2022 – Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes - Item 14.1 Performance Reporting Framework
- 22 May 2024 – Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes - Item 15.6 Performance Reporting Framework

OPTIONS

This report presents Council with a revised Performance Reporting Framework, which sets out when performance reports are to be provided to the Leadership Team, Council, and the Audit and Risk Committee. The Framework strengthens governance and oversight and supports transparent decision-making.

Councillors may choose to propose further additions or amendments to the Performance Reporting Framework.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Financial	Yarriambiack Shire Council is heavily reliant on operational and capital grants as a source of revenue funding. This poses a significant financial risk to Council. The reduction in the rate cap decreases Councils' ability to raise source revenue. Meaningful financial reporting is vital to undertake effective financial governance management.
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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Engagement has not been undertaken to develop the Performance Reporting Framework. However, consultation with the Audit and Risk Committee has occurred.

In accordance with section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council must in the performance of its role give effect to the overarching governance principles.

The financial and non-financial performance indicators are utilised as a tool for decision making to achieve good governance.

GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A gender impact assessment is not required for this report.

RISK

Utilising the Risk Management Framework the following assessment has been made:

Strategic Risk Description and Residual Risk Level	Action to Mitigate/Reduce Risk	Does Action maintain or reduce Residual Risk Level
Corporate Governance, Compliance and Liability Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	Quarterly exception management reporting to Council Forum and the Audit and Risk Committee covers legislative compliance, supporting oversight of activities that may affect Council's strategic risk levels. Reports should be provided as exception-based summaries highlighting key risks and challenges for Councillors and the Committee.	Maintains Residual Risk Level
Financial Risk - Residual Risk Level Medium	The quarterly Financial and Non-Financial Performance Report included in the Performance Reporting Framework includes budget compared to actuals reporting, which enables management, Audit and Risk Committee and Councillors to monitor the financial performance of Council and assess and address risks as they arise.	Maintains Residual Risk Level
Program and Project Risk - Residual Risk Level Medium	The quarterly Financial and Non-Financial Performance Report incorporates detailed project reporting to Council Forum, providing enhanced oversight on the performance of projects.	Maintains Residual Risk Level
Strategy Execution and Change Management Risk - Residual Risk Level Medium	The quarterly Council Plan actions update enables Council to monitor its strategy execution and assess its performance against its Council Plan actions.	Maintains Residual Risk Level

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not applicable.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have declared that they do not have a conflict of interest in the subject matter of this report.

15.4 RISK MANAGEMENT MANUAL

Prepared by Monique Metlika, Governance Support Officer

SUMMARY

Council's Risk Management Manual provides a structured framework for identifying, managing and monitoring risks across the organisation. It supports informed decision-making, strengthens governance and accountability, and aligns risk management practices with the Council Plan, with oversight by Councillors, management, and the Audit and Risk Committee.

Following an extensive review and update of Council's Risk Register, the Risk Management Manual has been thoroughly reviewed to ensure it remains current, accurate and aligned with Council's risk management framework. This report seeks Council's endorsement to adopt the revised Manual.

Recommended Motion:

That Council:

- a) Rescind the Risk Management Manual adopted on 22 May 2024; and
- b) Adopt the Risk Management Manual as attached to this report.

ATTACHMENTS

[Attachment: Risk Management Manual](#)

DISCUSSION

Background

Schedule 1 of the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020 (Regulations) requires Council to have a risk policy in place that outlines its commitment and approach to minimising risks to Council operations. It also requires Council to maintain a risk management framework that sets out its approach to identifying, managing and monitoring risks across the organisation.

Council's Risk Management Manual provides a structured and consistent framework for identifying, assessing, managing and monitoring risks across the organisation. By integrating the Risk Management Strategy, Policy, Framework and Guidelines into one document, the Manual supports sound governance, informed decision-making and clear accountability across Council. It outlines key roles and responsibilities, promotes ongoing oversight through reporting, internal controls, audit activity and fraud prevention measures, and reinforces risk management as a shared responsibility essential to effective service delivery, financial sustainability, continuous improvement and maintaining community trust.

The Risk Management Manual, which incorporates Council's risk appetite, together with the Performance Reporting Framework and Council's Risk Register maintained in RelianSys, collectively form the Risk Management Framework required under the Regulations.

Risk Register Update and Enhancement

As part of Council's broader governance and assurance improvement program, a comprehensive review, restoration and assurance mapping project was undertaken in late 2025. This project included a detailed review and restructure of Council's Risk Register to improve clarity, consistency and alignment with Council's strategic and operational objectives. It also established an assurance mapping process to identify the key controls, oversight mechanisms and reporting processes in place across identified risk areas.

This work is important to effective governance as it strengthens visibility of Council's risk environment, supports informed decision-making, reduces duplication and potential gaps in assurance activities, and provides a clearer basis for monitoring whether risks are

being appropriately managed. The updated approach was presented to the Audit and Risk Committee, which commended the overall structure and establishment of the framework.

Risk Management Manual Revision

Building on the Risk Register review and enhancement work outlined above, the Risk Management Manual (the Manual) was comprehensively reviewed to ensure it accurately reflects Council's revised Risk Register structure, functionality and intended use. The review resulted in the following key amendments:

- Insertion of a new section 1 - *Purpose*, to clearly articulate the intent and application of the Manual;
- Clarification of section - *Roles and Responsibilities*, to improve understanding of accountabilities across Council;
- Minor wording amendments and additions throughout the Manual to improve clarity, consistency and readability;
- Alignment of section 5 with section 53 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and the Audit and Risk Committee Charter;
- Inclusion of guidance in section 6 confirming that administrative reviews do not require Council endorsement, except where a proposed update may materially alter the intent of the policy;
- Addition of further definitions in section 8 to support transparency and consistent interpretation;
- Stronger alignment with Council's obligation to give effect to the overarching governance principles and supporting principles under the *Local Government Act 2020*;
- Update of Council's Community Vision to reflect the current Council Plan;
- Revision of section 12.2 to accurately reflect Council's key risk areas, including alignment with RelianSys and the Municipal Association of Victoria insurance program risk categories;
- Clarification of communication and training requirements under section 12.9;
- Retitling of section 13 to clarify that the section outlines the purpose and overview of the Risk Management Policy;
- Amendment of section 16 to highlight that Council's commitment to risk management aligns with the strategic objectives of the Council Plan;
- Addition of risk appetite definitions under section 16.1, including cautious, controlled and accepting risk appetites, and clarification that risks within these appetite levels remain subject to transparency, governance oversight and regular review;
- Inclusion of further detail in section 16.2 regarding the measures that support a positive risk culture, including a three-yearly strategy review, annual CEO desktop review, effective risk communication and Council's commitment to continuous improvement;
- Clarification of risk management practices under section 16.3 and amendment of the associated table to accurately reflect Council's Risk Register environment;
- Amendment of the table in section 19.5 to reflect the updated Risk Register control measure types and descriptions introduced through the register revamp;
- Addition of wording in section 19.6 to recognise the collaborative environment in which the Risk Register now operates;
- Insertion of a table in section 19.6.1 setting out how control measure effectiveness is determined by percentage ranges to improve ease of reference and interpretation;
- Addition of section 26 outlining the quarterly Risk Register review process; and

- Review, revision and alignment of Council's Risk Appetite in Appendix One to ensure it clearly reflects Council's current position.

The review and revision of the Risk Management Manual ensures Council's risk management framework remains current, practical and aligned with legislative requirements, Council's strategic objectives and the revised Risk Register environment. The updated Manual strengthens clarity around roles, responsibilities, risk appetite, control effectiveness, reporting and review processes, while supporting a more consistent and transparent approach to identifying, managing and monitoring risk across the organisation.

Adoption of the revised Manual will further embed risk management as an integral part of Council's governance, decision-making and continuous improvement practices, and will support Council in maintaining an effective framework for managing risks to its operations, services, financial sustainability and community outcomes.

RELEVANT LAW

- *Local Government Act 2020*
- Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020 – Schedule 1
- *Financial Management Act 1994* – Standing Direction 3.7.1 – Risk Management Framework and Processes

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Council Plan 2025 – 2029 Strategic Objectives	Priorities
A Council that serves its Community	• Undertake robust and transparent planning and risk management to ensure our organisation is sustainable now and into the future. • Embed good governance practices into all decision making. • Build trust through engaging with our community, delivering quality services and outcomes. • Consider a broad base of evidence before making decisions, ensuring value for money and responsive, innovative services and solutions are provided.
Policies, Procedures, Guidelines, Plans, Strategies and Frameworks	
Policy	Human Resource Policy and Guidelines Manual
	Employee Code of Conduct
	Occupational Health and Safety Policy and Manual
Procedure	Incident Investigation Procedure
	Project Management Procedure
Guideline	Occupational Health and Safety and Wellbeing Guidelines
Plan	Council Plan
	Business Continuity Plan
Framework	Performance Reporting Framework
Other	Risk Register
	Audit and Risk Committee Charter

OVERARCHING GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

This Council report has been prepared in accordance with, and to give effect to, the overarching governance principles articulated in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, to the extent practicable.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

- 22 May 2024 – Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes – Item 15.5 Risk Management Manual Revision
- 25 August 2021 – Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes – Item 13.2 Risk Management Manual
- 24 July 2019 – Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes – Item 13.6 Risk Management Framework, Policy and Strategy

OPTIONS

- a) Request further amendments to the revised Risk Management Manual prior to adoption; or
- b) Resolve not to adopt the revised Risk Management Manual.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Economic	The revised Risk Management Manual supports economic sustainability by strengthening Council's ability to identify, assess and manage risks that may impact service delivery, infrastructure planning, business continuity and long-term organisational performance. A structured approach to risk management assists Council to make informed decisions and protect community and economic outcomes.
Social	The revised Manual supports social sustainability by promoting transparent, accountable and consistent decision-making across Council. Effective risk management assists Council to maintain safe, reliable and responsive services for the community and supports community trust in Council's governance and operations.
Environmental	The revised Manual supports environmental sustainability by ensuring environmental risks are considered as part of Council's broader risk management framework. This assists Council to identify, monitor and respond to risks that may affect the natural environment, community assets and Council operations.
Climate Change	The revised Manual provides a framework for identifying and managing climate-related risks where relevant, including risks associated with extreme weather events, infrastructure resilience, service continuity and emergency management. This supports Council's ability to consider climate impacts in planning, operations and decision-making.
Financial	The revised Manual supports financial sustainability by strengthening oversight of financial, operational and strategic risks. Improved risk identification, control assessment and regular review processes assist Council to reduce potential losses, improve resource allocation, support audit readiness and maintain responsible financial management.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Not applicable.

GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Not required for this report.

RISK

Utilising the Risk Management Framework the following assessment has been made:

Strategic Risk Description and Residual Risk Level	Action to Mitigate/Reduce Risk	Does Action maintain or reduce Residual Risk Level
Innovation Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	The revised Risk Management Manual supports a consistent yet flexible approach to identifying and managing risk, enabling Council to consider innovation opportunities within clearly defined risk appetite settings and governance oversight.	Maintains Residual Risk Level
Corporate Governance, Compliance and Liability Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	The revised Manual strengthens Council's governance, compliance and liability controls by aligning the Manual with legislative requirements, the Audit and Risk Committee Charter, Council's risk appetite and the updated Risk Register environment.	Maintains Residual Risk Level
Strategy Execution and Change Management Risk - Residual Risk Level Medium	The revised Manual supports effective strategy execution and change management by clarifying risk management roles, review processes and reporting expectations, ensuring risks associated with strategic and operational change are identified, monitored and managed.	Maintains Residual Risk Level
Security and Technology Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	The revised Manual maintains oversight of security and technology-related risks by ensuring these risks are captured within Council's broader risk management framework, Risk Register and review processes.	Maintains Residual Risk Level
Program and Project Risk - Residual Risk Level Medium	The revised Manual supports improved program and project risk management by providing a structured framework for identifying, assessing, monitoring and reporting project-related risks, controls and assurance activities.	Maintains Residual Risk Level
People and Talent Management Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	The revised Manual supports people and talent management by clarifying risk ownership, responsibilities, communication and training expectations, assisting staff to understand their role in managing organisational risk.	Maintains Residual Risk Level
Financial Risk - Residual Risk Level Medium	The revised Manual supports financial risk management by improving the identification, assessment and monitoring of risks that may impact Council's financial sustainability, resource allocation, internal controls and long-term planning.	Maintains Residual Risk Level
Environmental Sustainability Risk - Residual Risk Level Medium	The revised Manual supports the identification and management of environmental sustainability risks by ensuring these risks are considered within Council's key risk areas, control measures and regular review processes.	Maintains Residual Risk Level
Reputational Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	The revised Manual supports reputational risk management by strengthening transparency, accountability, governance oversight and consistent reporting of risks across the organisation.	Maintains Residual Risk Level
Political Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	The revised Manual supports management of political risk by promoting evidence-based, transparent and accountable decision-making	Maintains Residual Risk Level

Strategic Risk Description and Residual Risk Level	Action to Mitigate/Reduce Risk	Does Action maintain or reduce Residual Risk Level
	consistent with legislative obligations, governance principles and Council's endorsed risk appetite.	
Occupational Health and Safety Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	The revised Manual supports occupational health and safety risk management by reinforcing clear responsibilities, reporting pathways, control assessment and regular monitoring of risks that may impact staff, contractors, volunteers and the community.	Maintains Residual Risk Level

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

While no specific regional, state or national plans or policies directly apply to the proposed adoption of the revised Risk Management Manual, the Manual is informed by recognised risk management principles, including ISO 31000 - Risk Management Guidelines.

ISO 31000 provides internationally recognised guidance for establishing a structured, consistent and integrated approach to risk management. The revised Manual supports Council's alignment with these principles by strengthening risk identification, assessment, treatment, monitoring, reporting and continuous improvement practices.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have declared that they do not have a conflict of interest in the subject matter of this report.

15.5 ASSETS AND OPERATIONS GUIDELINES

Prepared by Vanessa Lantzakis, Business Lead Assets Systems, Networks and Planning

SUMMARY

The Assets and Operations Guidelines, which provide guidance on the processes and practices relating to the operations of Council assets, have been reviewed in line with the three yearly review cycle.

Recommended Motion:

That Council:

- a) Rescind the Assets and Operations Guidelines adopted on 26 June 2022; and
- b) Adopt the Assets and Operations Guidelines as attached to this report.

ATTACHMENTS

[Attachment: Assets and Operations Guideline](#)

DISCUSSION

The Assets and Operations Guidelines have been updated to reflect the current internal and external requirements covering the following areas;

- Access to rural properties (including Quarries)
Providing guidance in relation to primary residence, farming and other property access, road reserve responsibility, road reclassification and improvement processes and requirements as well expectations around new development areas.
- Local Roads deemed School Bus Routes
Ensuring alignment with Department of Education and Department of Transport and Planning, Councils responsibility of school bus routes and bus stops is covered here.
- Slashing and spraying of roadsides, water tanks and hydrants
This guideline is written with fire safety at the forefront ensuring we stay compliant and safe all year round.
- Playgrounds
Covering inspection, maintenance and renewal aspects of playground management, this guideline helps to ensure we remain compliant against safety standards and audit requirements, keeping our users safe in and around these Council facilities.
- Fire Plugs and Hydrants
Fire plugs and hydrants are a shared responsibility with Water Authorities. This guideline helps to identify where the responsibility is split between Council and GWMWater.
- Working Hours
Ensuring our outdoor staff are safely working within set times which have been developed to align with expected sun rise times and amended to reflect the shift in time during daylight savings. Individualisation of these times remains flexible at the discretion of supervisors and managers.

Special care has been taken to ensure alignment with the Council Plan and updated policies of Victorian Government departments.

RELEVANT LAW

- *Road Management Act 2004* (Vic)
- *Country Fire Authority Act 1958* (Vic)
- *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (Vic)
- *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* (Vic)

- *Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals (Control of Use) Act 1992 (Vic)*
- *Environment Protection Act 2017 (Vic)*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*
- *Tobacco Act 1987*
- Health Act and Regulations 1958
- *Water Act 1989*

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Council Plan 2025 – 2029 Strategic Objectives	Priorities
An Innovative and Diversified Economy	• Advocate for continued and enhanced funding to enable strategic investment in our roads, footpaths, and associated assets to support tourism, economic development and social inclusion and connection across our Shire.
A Healthy and Inclusive Community	• Develop and/or maintain strong partnerships to deliver high quality services and sustainable infrastructure to enhance the social health and wellbeing outcomes for all our residents. • Advocate, prioritise, and invest in infrastructure that supports an accessible, inclusive, and socially connected community to improve liveability. • Advocate and support community safety initiatives, that enhance community safety and the liveability of our communities.
A Resilient and Sustainable Natural Environment	• Advocate for responsible land use, with consideration for the natural environment. • Embed climate change action into everything we do with a focus on decreased emissions, heat reduction and emergency management preparedness.
A Council that serves its Community	• Undertake robust and transparent planning and risk management to ensure our organisation is sustainable now and into the future. • Embed good governance practices into all decision making. • Advocate for our community, on matters that are important to the entire municipal district. • Build trust through engaging with our community, delivering quality services and outcomes. • Consider a broad base of evidence before making decisions, ensuring value for money and responsive, innovative services and solutions are provided.
Policies, Procedures, Guidelines, Plans, Strategies and Frameworks	
Policy	Asset Lifecycle Policy
	Asset Management Policy
	YSC Events Policy and Procedure
	Asset Management Policy
	External Private Works Policy
Plan	Business Continuity Plan
	Road Management Plan

	Footpath Hierarchy and Implementation Plan
Strategy	Asset Management Strategy
Other	Road Hierarchy
	Road Register Local Roads and Streets

OVERARCHING GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

This Council report has been prepared in accordance with, and to give effect to, the overarching governance principles articulated in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, to the extent practicable.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

29 June 2022 – Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes – Item 15.4 Assets and Operations Guidelines Manual

OPTIONS

- a) Council could choose to request changes, and/or not adopt the Guidelines as attached to this report.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Economic	To ensure the economic sustainability of Yarriambiack Shire Council, the guidelines outline how to maintain our service level standards within our currently available and expected future resources.
Social	Ensuring publicly utilised council assets and facilities are managed to meet service level expectations.
Environmental	These guidelines align with the expectations set by environmental regulation.
Financial	To ensure the financial sustainability of Yarriambiack Shire Council, the guidelines outline how to maintain our service level standards within our currently available and expected future resources.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Not applicable.

GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Not applicable.

RISK

Utilising the Risk Management Framework the following assessment has been made:

Strategic Risk Description and Residual Risk Level	Action to Mitigate/Reduce Risk	Does Action maintain or reduce Residual Risk Level
Corporate Governance, Compliance and Liability Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	Ensuring the Assets and Operations Guidelines are reviewed and updated in line with relevant legislation, Council policies, governance requirements and current operational practices. Endorsement of the Guidelines provides clear direction for staff, supports consistent decision-making, clarifies roles and responsibilities, and reduces the likelihood of non-compliance, liability exposure or inconsistent asset management practices.	Maintains Residual Risk Level

Strategic Risk Description and Residual Risk Level	Action to Mitigate/Reduce Risk	Does Action maintain or reduce Residual Risk Level
Program and Project Risk - Residual Risk Level Medium	The Guidelines provide clear direction for asset management and operational activities, supporting consistent decision-making, efficient resource use, and delivery of Council services. This helps reduce the risk of inconsistent practices and project delivery issues.	Maintains Residual Risk Level
Occupational Health and Safety Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	The Guidelines support safe work practices by outlining requirements for activities such as roadside maintenance, playground inspections, fire hydrant management, and staff working hours. This assists compliance with safety obligations and reduces the risk of injury to staff and the public.	Maintains Residual Risk Level

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Section 4 of the Assets and Operations Guidelines has been updated to reflect the State Government Department of Transport and Planning's School Bus Program: Policy.

The following Australian Standards are also reflected within the Guidelines:

- AS 1742.3:2019 – Manual of uniform traffic control, devices;
- AS 4685 Playground equipment and surfacing (All section); and
- AS 4422 Playground surfacing – Specifications, requirements, and test method.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have declared that they do not have a conflict of interest in the subject matter of this report.

15.6 DEBT MANAGEMENT AND HARDSHIP POLICY UPDATE

Prepared by Anita McFarlane, Chief Financial Officer

SUMMARY

The Council's Debt Management, Relief and Hardship Policy establishes a consistent framework for managing, recovering and reporting debts owed to Council. The policy aims to ensure debt collection is fair, impartial, efficient, legally compliant and aligns with good governance, while recognising that some ratepayers, debtors, organisations and companies may experience hardship or financial hardship.

The Policy has been reviewed as outlined in this report and is presented to Council for consideration and adoption.

Recommended Motion:

That Council:

- a) Rescind the previous version adopted on the 28 June 2023; and
- b) Adopt the revised Debt Management, Relief and Hardship Policy as attached to this report.

ATTACHMENTS

[Attachment: Debt Management, Relief and Hardship Policy](#)

DISCUSSION

On 24 December 2025, the Minister for Local Government published ministerial guidelines (Guidelines) under section 181AA of the *Local Government Act 1989* (1989 Act). These are the first guidelines to be published under this provision and so impose entirely new obligations on Councils.

Section 181AA empowers the Minister to publish guidelines to clarify various matters relating to hardship, financial hardship, waiver of rates, charges and interest, payment plans and charging interest.

The Guidelines direct Councils to review and update their policies against the principles set out in the Guidelines.

The Mandatory Principles include:

- *Flexible, place-based approach* - Councils must offer modern and flexible payment options tailored to their community's needs.
- *Clear and accessible communication* - Councils must provide simple and multiple methods of communication about payment of rates and charges.
- *Fair, equitable, and compassionate treatment* - All ratepayers must be treated equitably, compassionately and proportionately, including any hardship or financial hardship applications.
- *Protect privacy and confidentiality* - Councils must treat all applicants' information in accordance with privacy legislation.

In addition to the mandatory principles, Councils are 'strongly encouraged' to:

- *Reduce costs associated with debt collection* - Councils should manage rates proactively to lower expenses for themselves and ratepayers.
- *Continuous improvement* - Councils should regularly review and improve their policies.
- *Place-based approach* - Councils should tailor their support and processes to their local community.

The Debt Management, Relief and Hardship Policy has been subject to its periodic review in accordance with Council's review cycle. The review has resulted in the following amendments and additions so that the policy will align with the ministerial guidelines:

- Hardship provisions expanded: References to "Hardship and/or Financial Hardship" have been added throughout the policy, broadening the scope beyond financial hardship alone.
- Legislation updated: References to the *Fire Services Property Levies Act 2012* have been replaced with the *Fire Services Property Amendment (Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund) Act 2025*, and references to Ministerial Guidelines have been added.
- Decision-making authority changed: Several responsibilities and approvals have shifted from the Manager Corporate Services or relevant Director to the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) or Chief Executive Officer (CEO).
- Debt recovery process refined: Timeframes and thresholds have been updated, including the final notice period changing from 14 days to 7 days, and references to 24-month restrictions before rate recovery action.
- Payment methods updated: Direct Debit in exceptional circumstances has been added, and some location-specific customer service wording has been removed.
- Payment plan and recovery references corrected: Section references have been updated to reflect the revised numbering, including debt recovery and waiver/deferment sections.
- Refund, credit note and write-off approval processes revised: Approval pathways now more clearly identify the CFO, CEO and relevant managers depending on the matter.
- Doubtful debt categories updated: Ageing categories have been amended, including replacing 90–150 days with 90–180 days and updating the next category to 180+ days.
- Lease provisions simplified: The lease section has been rewritten in clearer language, confirming lease agreements should be reviewed and the policy applies where lease terms are silent.
- Review rights added: Applicants dissatisfied with a financial hardship decision can request a written review by the CEO, with escalation to the Victorian Ombudsman.
- References updated: The references section now includes the updated fire services legislation, Ministerial Guidelines, and revised hardship application terminology.

This policy will continue to be reviewed on a three-year cycle.

RELEVANT LAW

- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Local Government Act 1989*
- *Local Government Legislation Amendment (Rating and Other Matters) Act 2022*

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Council Plan 2025 – 2029 Strategic Objectives	Priorities
A Council that serves its Community	• Undertake robust and transparent planning and risk management to ensure our organisation is sustainable now and into the future. • Embed good governance practices into all decision making. • Consider a broad base of evidence before making decisions, ensuring value for money and responsive, innovative services and solutions are provided.

Policies, Procedures, Guidelines, Plans, Strategies and Frameworks	
Policy	Debt Management, Relief and Hardship Policy
	Finance and Payroll Management Manual
Plan	Long Term Financial Plan
	Revenue and Rating Plan
Framework	Budget Framework and Guidelines Manual

OVERARCHING GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

This Council report has been prepared in accordance with, and to give effect to, the overarching governance principles articulated in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, to the extent practicable.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

- 28 June 2023 – Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes – Item 16.4 Debt Management, Relief and Hardship Policy
- 27 May 2020 – Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes – Item 13.1 Debt Management, Relief and Hardship Policy

OPTIONS

That Council does not adopt the updated Debt Management, Relief and Hardship Policy. This option is not recommended by Council Officers as the updated policy reflects changes to legislation and more contemporary practices.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Financial	This policy promotes the use of payment plans by ratepayers experiencing hardship or financial hardship breaking payments down to smaller regular instalments. This assists ratepayers in managing their debt and continues to provide cash flows for Council.
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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This policy was not the subject of community engagement.

GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Not applicable.

RISK

Utilising the Risk Management Framework the following assessment has been made:

Strategic Risk Description and Residual Risk Level	Action to Mitigate/Reduce Risk	Does Action maintain or reduce Residual Risk Level
Corporate Governance, Compliance and Liability Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	The revised Policy will continue to enable Council to meet its corporate governance and compliance obligations and reduces its liability risk.	Maintains Residual Risk Level
Political Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	The revised Policy has been updated to incorporate the recommendations from the new ministerial guidelines.	Maintains Residual Risk Level
Reputational Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	The revised Policy shows clear and concise governance minimising any reputational damage or negative feedback to Council.	Maintains Residual Risk Level

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not applicable.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have declared that they do not have a conflict of interest in the subject matter of this report.

15.7 YARRIAMBIACK TOURISM ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL AND TOURISM STRATEGY YEAR 3 PROGRESS UPDATE

Prepared by Sarah Christian, Manager Community Strengthening and Engagement

SUMMARY

This report seeks Council endorsement to dissolve the Yarriambiack Tourism Advisory Committee of Council at the conclusion of its current term. The Committee has provided valuable input over a number of years, including supporting the development of town-based tourism materials and contributing to the formation and early implementation of the Yarriambiack Shire Council Tourism Strategy 2023–2027. However, as Council's tourism work has matured, the Committee's original purpose has largely been fulfilled, and the current meeting structure is no longer providing the strategic, industry-focused advice required to support contemporary tourism outcomes.

It is proposed that Council transition from a standing advisory committee model to a more flexible and targeted tourism delivery approach, supported by Council's membership of Grampians Wimmera Mallee Tourism through the Visitor Economy Partnership. This approach will allow Council Officers to focus resources on priority actions within the Tourism Strategy, engage directly with operators and community groups when specific initiatives arise, and seek specialist industry support where required. A Tourism Strategy 2023–2027 progress update is also provided within this report, noting the significant work already undertaken to strengthen visitor servicing, destination promotion, accommodation planning, tourism infrastructure and regional collaboration.

Recommended Motion:

That Council:

- a) Dissolve the Yarriambiack Tourism Advisory Committee of Council at the conclusion of its current term;
- b) Acknowledge and thank current and past Committee members for their contribution to tourism planning and visitor economy initiatives across Yarriambiack Shire;
- c) Acknowledge that the Councillor delegation to the Yarriambiack Tourism Advisory Committee of Council will be rescinded;
- d) Endorse a transition to a targeted tourism engagement model, whereby Council Officers engage directly with tourism operators, community groups, regional tourism partners and other stakeholders as required for specific tourism initiatives; and
- e) Note the Tourism Strategy 2023–2027 progress update provided in this report and the attachment.

ATTACHMENTS

[Attachment: Yarriambiack Tourism Strategy 2023-2027 Year 3 Update](#)

DISCUSSION

The Yarriambiack Tourism Advisory Committee of Council was established to provide advice to Council on tourism matters, support communication between Council and township representatives, and assist with tourism-related projects and strategic planning. The Committee has made a positive contribution over time, particularly through its input into the development of the Yarriambiack Shire Council Tourism Strategy 2023–2027 (Tourism Strategy) and earlier tourism materials, including town-based visitor information.

Since adoption of the Tourism Strategy, Council's tourism priorities have become more clearly defined and are now being progressed through the Strategy's action plan, Council Plan actions, internal operational planning, and regional partnerships. Council has also

resolved not to continue printing town brochures, instead moving toward digital visitor information, online itineraries, updated destination content, and broader participation in regional visitor servicing platforms. This has reduced the need for a standing committee to provide advice on printed visitor materials or township brochure content.

Council Officers have attempted to refocus the Committee toward contemporary tourism priorities, including the creation of digital tourism content, development of online itineraries, implementation of Tourism Strategy action items, and consideration of strategic amendments relating to camping and caravanning opportunities. While individual members continue to hold valuable local knowledge and a genuine interest in their communities, the Committee as a formal structure has become less effective in generating strategic advice or progressing deliverable outcomes.

Recent meetings have increasingly operated as information-sharing sessions led by Council Officers, rather than forums that generate targeted advice, recommendations or project input. The matters raised by members often reflect broader township concerns, which are important for Council to understand but are not always tourism-specific or within the capacity of an advisory committee to resolve. This has created an administrative burden for Council without a corresponding level of strategic benefit.

Committee members have also indicated that some are unlikely to nominate for a further term, reinforcing that the current structure may no longer provide members with a clear or meaningful purpose. Rather than readvertising for a new term of the Committee without a clearly defined role, it is considered appropriate to formally dissolve the Committee and redirect Council's resources toward direct tourism delivery, targeted stakeholder engagement and industry-specific support.

Council remains committed to growing the visitor economy and supporting tourism outcomes across the municipality. Dissolving the Committee does not reduce this commitment. Instead, it provides an opportunity to modernise the way Council engages with the tourism sector by using more flexible, fit-for-purpose methods. This may include direct engagement with tourism operators, community groups, Progress Associations, event organisers, land managers, regional tourism bodies and other stakeholders when their input is relevant to a specific initiative or project.

Council's membership of Grampians Wimmera Mallee Tourism through the Visitor Economy Partnership provides an important mechanism to support this shift. Grampians Wimmera Mallee Tourism is already delivering regional marketing, destination development, visitor servicing support and industry capability initiatives across the region. Officers have discussed the opportunity to lean more strongly on this partnership to provide tourism operator support where required, noting that some activities may be delivered within Council's existing membership while others may require a separate project-based or fee-for-service arrangement.

Council has made considerable progress in the tourism space since adoption of the Yarriambiack Tourism Strategy 2023–2027. This includes ongoing investment in caravan park improvements, the development of digital visitor information and itineraries, participation in regional campaigns and visitor servicing platforms, continued advocacy for accommodation and visitor economy investment, development of tourism-related planning work, and collaboration with Grampians Wimmera Mallee Tourism on regional destination promotion. The Strategy continues to provide the framework for Council's tourism priorities and will be supported by the attached progress update.

The proposed approach will allow Council Officers to strategically prioritise tourism initiatives based on timing, available resources, funding opportunities, visitor demand, operator readiness and alignment with adopted strategies. It will also ensure Council can engage the right stakeholders at the right time, rather than relying on a standing committee structure that may not have the required industry expertise, operational role or decision-making capacity to progress specific tourism matters.

RELEVANT LAW

Local Government Act 2020.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Council Plan 2025 – 2029 Strategic Objectives	Priorities
An Innovative and Diversified Economy	- Advocate and support agriculture, economic development and investment in our region. - Proactively communicate and advocate to Government bodies, to deliver positive tourism outcomes for our community, capitalising on opportunities as they arise. - Advocate for continued and enhanced funding to enable strategic investment in our roads, footpaths, and associated assets to support tourism, economic development and social inclusion and connection across our Shire.
A Healthy and Inclusive Community	- Develop and/or maintain strong partnerships to deliver high quality services and sustainable infrastructure to enhance the social health and wellbeing outcomes for all our residents. - Advocate, prioritise, and invest in infrastructure that supports an accessible, inclusive, and socially connected community to improve liveability. - Promote and support volunteerism throughout our Shire, recognising that collaborative efforts can lead to enhanced outcomes for our communities.
A Resilient and Sustainable Natural Environment	- Advocate for responsible land use, with consideration for the natural environment. - Elevate community education and positive engagement experience as a key priority while performing regulatory functions.
A Council that serves its Community	- Undertake robust and transparent planning and risk management to ensure our organisation is sustainable now and into the future. - Embed good governance practices into all decision making. - Advocate for our community, on matters that are important to the entire municipal district. - Build trust through engaging with our community, delivering quality services and outcomes. - Consider a broad base of evidence before making decisions, ensuring value for money and responsive, innovative services and solutions are provided.
Policies, Procedures, Guidelines, Plans, Strategies and Frameworks	
Policy	Community Assistance and Fee Waiver Policy
	Advisory Committees of Council Policy
Procedure	Caravan Park Management Manual
Plan	Council Plan
Strategy	Tourism Strategy
	Economic Development Strategy
Framework	Priority Projects Framework
	Service Level Planning Framework

OVERARCHING GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

This Council report has been prepared in accordance with, and to give effect to, the overarching governance principles articulated in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, to the extent practicable.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

Council resolved on 23 November 2022 to establish the Yarriambiack Tourism Advisory Committee of Council and endorse the Committee's Terms of Reference. Council resolved on 24 May 2023 to appoint community members to the Committee for a three-year term. Council adopted the Yarriambiack Shire Council Tourism Strategy 2023–2027 at the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 13 December 2023 and has subsequently received Tourism Strategy progress reports.

- 26 November 2025 – Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes – Item 15.8 Tourism Strategy Progress Report Year 2
- 27 November 2024 – Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes – Item 15.2 Tourism Strategy Progress Report for Year 1
- 13 December 2023 – Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes – Item 15.4 Tourism Strategy 2023-2027
- 24 May 2023 – Closed Council Meeting Minutes – Item 20.4 Yarriambiack Tourism Advisory Committee of Council Appointment of Members
- 23 November 2022 – Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes – Item 13.1 Advisory Committees of Council Terms of Reference

OPTIONS

Option 1: Dissolve the Yarriambiack Tourism Advisory Committee of Council and transition to targeted tourism engagement and delivery. This is the recommended option. It recognises the Committee's contribution while acknowledging that the current structure is no longer the most effective mechanism to support Council's tourism priorities. This option allows Council to reduce administrative burden, engage directly with relevant stakeholders as needed, and focus officer resources on delivering Tourism Strategy actions and supporting industry outcomes.

Option 2: Readvertise for a further term of the Committee with revised Terms of Reference. This option may retain a formal consultation mechanism but risks continuing a structure that has limited strategic purpose and requires ongoing administrative support.

Option 3: Retain the Committee in its current form. This is not recommended, as the current model is no longer delivering sufficient strategic benefit relative to the resources required to administer it.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The recommendation supports more efficient and targeted delivery of tourism initiatives that contribute to the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipality.

The proposed approach will allow Council to prioritise initiatives that are strategically aligned, financially responsible and responsive to visitor economy opportunities as they arise.

Economic	Supports targeted delivery of tourism initiatives that increase visitation, support local businesses and strengthen the visitor economy.
Social	Maintains opportunities for community and operator input through targeted engagement, while acknowledging the contribution of current Committee members.
Financial	The recommendation reduces ongoing administrative resourcing associated with the Committee. Any future tourism initiatives or industry support activities

	requiring expenditure will be considered through existing budgets or separate Council approval processes.
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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Yarriambiack Tourism Advisory Committee has been engaged throughout its current term and has considered a range of tourism matters, including the Tourism Strategy, visitor servicing, digital tourism content, regional tourism updates and future committee objectives. At the 02 March 2026 meeting, members discussed future direction and endorsed Council Officers to collate ideas and present amended Terms of Reference to Council prior to opening nominations for a new term.

Following further officer review, it is recommended that Council not proceed with a further term of the Committee. Future engagement will occur through targeted consultation with tourism operators, community groups, Progress Associations, regional tourism partners and other stakeholders relevant to specific initiatives.

GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Not required for this report.

RISK

Utilising the Risk Management Framework the following assessment has been made:

Strategic Risk Description and Residual Risk Level	Action to Mitigate/Reduce Risk	Does Action maintain or reduce Residual Risk Level
Strategy Execution and Change Management Risk - Residual Risk Level Medium	Dissolving the Committee and adopting a targeted engagement model enables Council to focus resources on Tourism Strategy delivery and engage appropriate stakeholders for specific initiatives.	Maintains Residual Risk Level
Reputational Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	Acknowledge the Committee's contribution and communicate that Council remains committed to tourism through direct engagement, regional partnerships and implementation of the Tourism Strategy.	Maintains Residual Risk Level
Financial Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	Future tourism support activities delivered through Grampians Wimmera Mallee Tourism or other partners will be scoped and considered within existing budgets or through separate approval processes.	Maintains Residual Risk Level

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

- Wimmera Mallee Destination Management Plan; and
- Yarriambiack Shire Council Local Area Action Plan.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have declared that they do not have a conflict of interest in the subject matter of this report.

15.8 PROPOSAL FOR DUNMUNKLE LODGE INC. TO ASSUME MANAGEMENT OF THE WOOMELANG RETIREMENT UNITS

Prepared by Jo White, Governance Officer

SUMMARY

The Woomelang Retirement Units were originally managed by a Committee of Management under the Woomelang and District Development Association. Following the introduction of the *Local Government Act 2020*, they transitioned to the Woomelang Retirement Units Community Asset Committee of Council.

At its Annual General Meeting on 24 June 2026, the Committee was unable to appoint an Executive, with no nominations received for any positions. The Committee has therefore entered a four-month recess.

Following earlier and recent discussions, Dunmunkle Lodge Inc. has formally expressed interest in managing the Woomelang Retirement Units, building on its existing role managing seven Council-owned houses.

This report seeks Council's endorsement to commence the community engagement process for Dunmunkle Lodge Inc. to assume management of the Woomelang Retirement Units.

Recommended Motion:

That Council:

- a) In accordance with section 115 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Council's Community Engagement Policy and Procedure, prepare a Public Notice and undertake a 28-day community consultation process to extend Council's existing 50-year lease with Dunmunkle Lodge Inc, by Deed of Variation, to include the management and control of the Woomelang Retirement Units located at 24 Gloucester Avenue and 2 Dettman Lane Woomelang.

ATTACHMENTS

The attachments are confidential information for the purpose of section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2020, specifically s3(1)(a), s3(1)(g).

[Confidential Attachment: Letter - Interest in assuming management of Woomelang Retirement Units – Dunmunkle Lodge](#)

DISCUSSION

Background and Community Value

The Woomelang Retirement Units have been a valued community asset for almost 40 years. Community advocacy for the units began in 1989, with the aim of providing local residents with retirement accommodation options that allowed them to age in place and remain connected to the Woomelang community.

Two additional units were completed in 2024, bringing the total number of units to seven. Council recognises the importance of the units and acknowledges the longstanding contribution and stewardship of the Committees of Management, and later the Community Asset Committee over many years. Council and the Committee take pride in continuing to provide affordable housing for the Woomelang community.

Governance Changes

In 2020, legislative changes led to the phasing out of Section 86 Sub-Committees established under the *Local Government Act 1989*. This was the structure under which the Committee of Management had previously operated through the Woomelang and District Development Association.

In 2024, the Committee transitioned from the Woomelang and District Development Association to become a Community Asset Committee of Council. Under this

arrangement, the Committee operates under an adopted Charter and is required to meet defined compliance obligations in accordance with Council policies and guidelines.

Committee Status

A key requirement of the Community Asset Committee structure is the establishment and ongoing operation of an Executive. At the Annual General Meeting (AGM) held on 24 June 2026, no nominations were received for the positions of President, Vice President, Secretary or Treasurer.

As the Committee cannot operate without an Executive, it has been placed into recess for four months to allow alternative management options to be explored.

Before the AGM, several Executive members indicated they would not renominate. Subsequent discussions with Committee members and community advertising confirmed limited community interest in forming a new Executive Committee, making its reconstitution unlikely.

Dunmunkle Lodge Inc

Council currently holds a 50-year lease agreement with Dunmunkle Lodge Inc., an experienced aged care provider that manages nursing homes and independent living facilities in the Wimmera. Council's 50-year lease agreement enables Dunmunkle Lodge Inc. to assume management and control of Council's Murtoa, Rupanyup, Warracknabeal, and Hopetoun units.

Council has been particularly impressed with the organisation's governance and management model, including its operation of the Murtoa units, which are comparable to the Woomelang Retirement Units. Dunmunkle Lodge Inc. is a not-for-profit entity governed by a volunteer, skills-based Board of Management.

Exploration of Alternative Management Arrangements

In response to the current circumstances, Council approached Dunmunkle Lodge Inc. to explore its interest in potentially assuming management of the Woomelang Retirement Units if the Committee could not be re-established.

On 12 June 2026, Dunmunkle Lodge Inc's Chief Executive Officer and two Board members visited Woomelang to inspect the units and tour one of the residences. Following the visit, Dunmunkle Lodge Inc. indicated a willingness to further consider the opportunity.

Proposed Next Steps

Following the AGM, Council re-engaged with Dunmunkle Lodge Inc., which has now formally confirmed its interest in having the Woomelang Retirement Units added to its management arrangements.

The Chief Executive Officer met with the Residents of the Woomelang Retirement Units on Friday 17 July 2026 to discuss the process of Dunmunkle Lodge Inc. assuming management. Residents were provided with the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback and received a letter outlining the process.

It is recommended that Council commence the required process, including a 28-day community consultation period, before seeking endorsement to extend its existing lease (via a Deed of Variation) with Dunmunkle Lodge Inc. to incorporate the seven units in Woomelang.

Operational Continuity

The proposed change is expected to have minimal impact on day-to-day operations. The health and wellbeing of residents will remain the highest priority, and the following arrangements will continue:

- The current fee structure will remain unchanged;
- Funds held for the Woomelang Retirement Units will continue to be managed by Council for the benefit of the units; and
- The selection process for future residents will remain unchanged.

Dunmunkle Lodge Inc. has committed to establishing an Advisory Committee to support ongoing communication between residents and Dunmunkle Lodge Inc.

The existing Community Asset Committee of Council and the associated Council Officers consider this proposal to be the most appropriate option for the ongoing management of the units moving forward.

RELEVANT LAW

Section 115 of the Local Government Act 2020

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Council Plan 2025 – 2029 Strategic Objectives	Priorities
A Healthy and Inclusive Community	- Develop and/or maintain strong partnerships to deliver high quality services and sustainable infrastructure to enhance the social health and wellbeing outcomes for all our residents. - Plan for and support diverse housing options to meet community needs now and into the future. - Promote and support volunteerism throughout our Shire, recognising that collaborative efforts can lead to enhanced outcomes for our communities.
A Council that serves its Community	- Undertake robust and transparent planning and risk management to ensure our organisation is sustainable now and into the future. - Embed good governance practices into all decision making. - Advocate for our community, on matters that are important to the entire municipal district. - Build trust through engaging with our community, delivering quality services and outcomes.
Policies, Procedures, Guidelines, Plans, Strategies and Frameworks	
Policy	Community Engagement Policy and Procedure
	Leases and Licences Policy

OVERARCHING GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

This Council report has been prepared in accordance with, and to give effect to, the overarching governance principles articulated in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, to the extent practicable.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

26 August 2020 – Ordinary Meeting of Council Minutes – Item 12.9 Appointment of Woomelang Retirement Units as a Community Asset Committee

23 August 2023 - Confidential Meeting of Council Minutes – Item 19.1 Housing Units Management Expression of Interest

22 November 2023 - Ordinary Meeting of Council Minutes – Item 16.2 Dunmunkle Lodge Housing Lease

OPTIONS

- Council could assume the management of Woomelang Retirement Units, however, Council would need to increase its resources up to an additional full time equivalent staff member to ensure the units were appropriately managed and maintained.
- Council could approach other Aged Care Providers in the region, however, Dunmunkle Lodge Inc. are considered an experienced, established, well-resourced and respected provider in this field. The existing Committee were impressed with their Board Structure and felt a strong alignment with their values and purpose.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Economic	Housing is an important asset to support economic development and growth across the Shire. Supporting a local not-for-profit entity to expand and provide housing opportunities to its clientele, enhances economic prosperity within the Shire.
Social	The residents will notice little change in the day-to-day operation of the units. Both this and the ongoing availability of affordable retirement accommodation in Woomelang will be of great health and wellbeing benefit to the residents and local community.
Financial	Outsourcing management of the units is financially sustainable, as Council does not have the specialist skills or expertise required to manage aged care facilities, residential properties or tenancy arrangements.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The community engagement process is to commence on 22 July 2026 pending further consideration of the recommendations above.

GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Not applicable.

RISK

Utilising the Risk Management Framework the following assessment has been made:

Strategic Risk Description and Residual Risk Level	Action to Mitigate/Reduce Risk	Does Action maintain or reduce Residual Risk Level
Corporate Governance, Compliance and Liability Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	Outsourcing the management of the units to an organisation that is experienced meeting the Residential Tenancies Act requirements reduces Council's compliance risk.	Reduces Residual Risk Level
Reputational Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	Outsourcing the management of the Retirement Units by adding them to the existing 50-year lease will ensure the long term health and wellbeing of current and future residents.	Reduces Residual Risk Level
Strategic Execution and Change Management Risk – Residual Risk Level Medium	The management of Retirement Units is not Council's core business, and engaging a business that is skilled and experienced in residential unit management would ensure Council's strategic vision is fulfilled, without having to manage the compliance obligations in relation the Residential Tenancies Act.	Reduces Residual Risk Level

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not applicable.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have declared that they do not have a conflict of interest in the subject matter of this report.

16 COUNCIL REPORTS FOR NOTING

16.1 GIFTING OF PART 16 CROMIE STREET, MURTOA TO MURTOA HOUSING INNOVATION PTY LTD

Prepared by Jo White, Governance Officer

SUMMARY

At the 11 September 2024 Council Meeting, Council resolved to subdivide Lot 2 PS905866 into two lots and gift one of them to the Murtoa Housing Innovations Pty Ltd for the purposes of constructing additional housing.

Council then determined to issue a planning permit for subdivision, subject to several conditions, at the Council Meeting on 29 January 2025.

This report updates Council on the successful subdivision of the land, execution of the Section 173 Agreement, and transfer of title to Murtoa Housing Innovations Pty Ltd, and the registering of the Section 173 Agreement against that Title.

Recommended Motion:

That Council:

- a) Note the outcomes of the Gifting and Transfer of Land of part 16 Cromie Street Murtoa to Murtoa Housing Innovation Pty Ltd.

ATTACHMENTS

[Attachment: Fully Executed Section 173 Agreement \(Planning and Environment Act 1987\)](#)

[Attachment: LTO Notification of new Titles \(post Sub Division\) Lot 2 is the parcel being transferred](#)

[Attachment – PEXA document showing S173 Agreement registered against Title Lot 2 PS928445L 16 Cromie Street](#)

DISCUSSION

Background

The land at 16 Cromie Street, Murtoa was initially purchased, in consultation with the former Murtoa Community Housing Asset Committee of Council, to expand the housing stock within Murtoa. Council has built two units on the site, with \$240,000 thousand being contributed from the former Murtoa Community Housing Asset Committee of Council towards the project.

The land had not been fully developed, and Council attempted to seek further funding to build more homes, with no success.

An opportunity arose with Wimmera Southern Mallee Development (WSMD) to establish a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) called the Wimmera Housing Innovation (WHIP).

WHIP proposed the establishment of a further SPV called the Murtoa Housing Innovation.

As the land known as 16 Cromie Street was initially purchased with monies generated from the Murtoa community, it was recommended and then endorsed by Council in September 2024, to subdivide the land known as 16 Cromie Street Murtoa into two parcels and gift one of the undeveloped parcels to the Murtoa Housing Innovation Pty LTD (Murtoa Housing Innovation), to further grow and develop the housing stock within the community.

Timeline, Progress and Outcomes since August 2024

Council commenced the land gifting and subdivision process in August 2024 by obtaining legal advice from Russell Kennedy Lawyers regarding the gifting of land process and

commissioning Preston Rowe Patterson Valuers to undertake a market valuation of part of 16 Cromie Street, Murtoa, which assessed the land at \$85,000 (excluding GST).

Council resolved on 11 September 2024 to support the subdivision and gifting of land recommendation.

In January 2025, Council initiated the Planning Permit PS905866 for the subdivision of Lot 2, 16 Cromie Street, Murtoa, engaging Ferguson and Perry to manage the subdivision process. Throughout 2025, the plan of subdivision progressed through the necessary planning and registration stages.

In February 2026, Council engaged Power and Bennett Lawyers to register the plan of subdivision, creating two separate parcels from Lot 2 Cromie Street, and to facilitate the gifting of one parcel to Murtoa Housing Innovations Pty Ltd. Power and Bennett Lawyers were also engaged to draft, develop and finalise a Section 173 Agreement associated with the transfer.

A revised valuation of part of 16 Cromie Street (section to be gifted) was completed by Preston Rowe Patterson Valuers in April 2026, which assessed the market value of the land at \$120,000 (excluding GST).

Significant progress was achieved in May 2026, with Power and Bennett Lawyers acting on all conveyancing matters relating to the transfer. The draft Section 173 Agreement was finalised and agreed in principle by both parties before being fully executed later that month. Power and Bennett Lawyers also confirmed that the pre-lodgement check with Land Use Victoria for the registration of Plan of Subdivision 928445L had been completed. In addition, confirmation was received from the Department of Transport and Planning – Land Titles Office that separate titles had been allocated for Lot 1 (Yarriambiack Shire Council) and Lot 2 (Murtoa Housing Innovations Pty Ltd) under Plan of Subdivision 928445L.

In June 2026, Power and Bennett Lawyers lodged the Transferor Statement with the State Revenue Office. Council also provided an invoice to Power and Bennett Lawyers for the GST component payable by Murtoa Housing Innovations Pty Ltd, noting that GST was applicable to the land value despite the land being gifted due to the recipient being a for-profit entity. Later that month, Power and Bennett Lawyers confirmed that the transfer of the land to Murtoa Housing Innovations Pty Ltd had been successfully registered and lodged the executed Section 173 Agreement with the Land Registry, completing the transfer and associated registration processes.

Murtoa Housing Innovation Pty Ltd Building Development on Gifted Land Parcel

The Murtoa Housing Innovation has commenced the planning and building development process with a contractor appointed to build four dwellings. Noting land is still available to build a fifth dwelling on the site.

Landscaping designs have been commissioned, and the sewer is being installed. Construction deadline is late June 2027.

RELEVANT LAW

- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Planning and Environment Act 1987*

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Council Plan 2025 – 2029 Strategic Objectives	Priorities
An Innovative and Diversified Economy	• Advocate and support agriculture, economic development and investment in our region. • Advocate for continued and enhanced funding to enable strategic investment in our roads, footpaths, and associated assets to support tourism, economic development and social inclusion and connection across our Shire.

Council Plan 2025 – 2029 Strategic Objectives	Priorities
A Healthy and Inclusive Community	- Develop and/or maintain strong partnerships to deliver high quality services and sustainable infrastructure to enhance the social health and wellbeing outcomes for all our residents. - Advocate, prioritise, and invest in infrastructure that supports an accessible, inclusive, and socially connected community to improve liveability. - Plan for and support diverse housing options to meet community needs now and into the future.
A Council that serves its Community	- Undertake robust and transparent planning and risk management to ensure our organisation is sustainable now and into the future. - Embed good governance practices into all decision making. - Advocate for our community, on matters that are important to the entire municipal district. - Build trust through engaging with our community, delivering quality services and outcomes. - Consider a broad base of evidence before making decisions, ensuring value for money and responsive, innovative services and solutions are provided.
Policies, Procedures, Guidelines, Plans, Strategies and Frameworks	
Policy	Community Engagement Policy and Procedure
Plan	Council Plan

OVERARCHING GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

This Council report has been prepared in accordance with, and to give effect to, the overarching governance principles articulated in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, to the extent practicable.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

- 29 January 2025 – Council Minutes Ordinary Meeting Item 15.2 Planning Permit Application PA20240043 Cromie Street, Murtoa
- 11 September 2024 – Council Minutes Unscheduled Ordinary Meeting – Item 8.6 Murtoa Land Transfer – 16 Cromie Street, Murtoa
- 23 March 2022 – Council Minutes Ordinary Meeting – Item 14.3 Planning Permit TP56-21 Subdivision of Land (2 Lots), Cromie Street, Murtoa

OPTIONS

Not applicable.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.

Sustainability Implications were addressed in the Council Report endorsed at the Council Meeting 11 September 2024 (attached for your reference).

There is no further sustainability implications identified in this report.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Council sought feedback on this proposal from 29 July 2024 to 26 August 2024. The feedback encouraged people to have their say regarding if they did or did not support

the proposal – there were eight submissions which were addressed in the minutes of the Council Meeting held 11 September 2024.

GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Not applicable.

RISK

Utilising the Risk Management Framework the following assessment has been made:

Strategic Risk Description and Residual Risk Level	Action to Mitigate/Reduce Risk	Does Action maintain or reduce Residual Risk Level
Strategy Execution and Change Management Risk - Residual Risk Level Medium	Gifting the land has enabled Council to enact its Housing priorities and objectives outlined in the Council Plan 2025-2029 (and prior Council Plan).	Reduces Residual Risk Level
Financial Risk - Residual Risk Level Medium	Gifting the land has reduced the pressure on Council to utilise its own source revenue to develop the site into the future. As a financially unsustainable Council it is difficult for Council to focus on activities that are outside of core responsibilities and duties.	Reduces Residual Risk Level
Innovation Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	The Murtoa Private Housing Innovation is an innovative option to increasing housing options within the Shire.	Maintains Residual Risk Level

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not applicable.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have declared that they do not have a conflict of interest in the subject matter of this report.

16.2 WARRACKNABEAL SECONDARY COLLEGE YOUTH VOICE

Prepared by Tammy Smith, Chief Executive Officer

SUMMARY

On Friday 19 June 2026, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) received 15 letters from Physical Education students at Warracknabeal Secondary College. Their teacher advised that the students had used AI in a positive way to develop letters outlining ideas for their community. Council is pleased to provide a summary of the ideas received, together with Council's response, for noting.

Recommended Motion:

That Council:

- a) Note the Warracknabeal Secondary College Students ideas and the Chief Executive Officer's response.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil.

DISCUSSION

The Warracknabeal Secondary College students raised thoughtful and practical suggestions, including improved recreational facilities, safer and more accessible public spaces, and more opportunities to stay active and connected within the community.

It is encouraging to see their strong focus on inclusive, safe and engaging environments for young people. Their feedback helps Council better understand the needs and priorities of younger residents and will inform future planning and decision-making.

Overall, the letters highlight a clear focus on improving local infrastructure, recreation and accessibility for young people and the broader community. The key requests are summarised below, together with the CEO's response.

1. Increased Access to Recreational Facilities

- Extend opening hours of the Warracknabeal Stadium to allow access after school, evenings, and weekends.
- Provide more structured activities (e.g. sports programs, competitions, beginner sessions).
- Improve opportunities for youth participation, social interaction, and physical activity.

CEO's response: We will review the Stadium's opening hours and consider opportunities to increase access without disrupting the basketball program. We have committed to reviewing and providing an update to the students by no later than 30 September 2026.

While Council does not currently have funding for a dedicated officer to deliver structured programs, we will explore opportunities with the Wimmera Regional Sports Assembly for programs that could be operated from the Stadium.

2. New or Expanded Sporting Infrastructure

- Build a gym in Minyip to improve fitness opportunities and reduce travel to other towns.
- Construct additional facilities such as an outdoor basketball court.
- Establish new recreation options, including an archery club.
- Increase the number of running tracks.

CEO's response: Council and the Minyip Progress Association have discussed the proposal for a community gym in Minyip. We are continuing to work with the Progress

Association to explore options for establishing a gym that supports local health and wellbeing outcomes.

We recently delivered an outdoor basketball court at Rabl Park in Murtoa and recognise the strong community support for facilities that encourage active participation and improve young people's health and wellbeing. We propose developing a plan to activate the land around the Stadium and Shire Office in Warracknabeal by introducing a half-court basketball court, outdoor seating and phone charging stations to support activity, social connection and engagement. We welcome the opportunity to work with students on this project and committed to working with the school to form a project group to support the development of designs, which will be used to seek funding for delivery.

The Warracknabeal Action Group has been considering improvements to the "Run the Beal" track. Council will discuss this with the Yarriambiack Creek Committee and the Warracknabeal Action Group to identify potential funding opportunities to improve running and walking tracks around Warracknabeal.

While Council does not establish sports programs, we will refer the request for archery classes to the Wimmera Regional Sports Assembly to explore whether such a program could be offered in Warracknabeal.

3. Improved Public Safety and Accessibility

- Install additional street lighting across Warracknabeal, particularly in poorly lit areas.
- Add lighting along walking tracks (e.g. the creek track) to improve safety and usability.
- Develop more footpaths to improve connectivity, safety, and accessibility for pedestrians.

CEO's response: Council strongly supports this vision; however, current funding limits our ability to deliver additional infrastructure such as footpaths, lighting and walking tracks. Council has secured TAC funding to deliver significant safety and pedestrian upgrades around the Warracknabeal education precinct, specifically along Werrigar Street and Anderson Street. These works will include raised pedestrian crossings, traffic-calming measures, connecting footpaths, street lighting and signage.

Council funding is a complex matter, and Council Officers have welcomed an opportunity to present to students on how funding is allocated and Councils financial challenges.

4. Improved Public Transport

- Enhance public transport connections to improve access to education, employment, and social opportunities, particularly for young people without licences.

CEO's response: Council recognises that transport is a barrier to participation for young people and the wider community. Councillors continue to advocate strongly for improved transport options, including meeting with the CEO of V/Line and writing to Minister Carroll, the Minister for Education, about concerns regarding funding for the School to Work program – specifically the transport component. Council will continue to raise awareness of this important issue.

The CEO committed to sharing the feedback with the Warracknabeal Action Group Executive Committee and seek to have these projects and ideas included in the Warracknabeal Community Action Plan (if not already referenced).

In addition, the CEO committed to providing feedback to the Minyip Progress Association on the gym request, which aligns with their current advocacy and community action plan.

The CEO has welcomed the opportunity to report back to students on progress in late September and as outlined above, work with them to help inform planning and design for the Office and Stadium precinct.

Young people's voices are vital to planning for our community. Council was very pleased to receive their letters and encourage students to continue sharing their ideas and feedback.

RELEVANT LAW

- *Local Government Act 2020*

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Council Plan 2025 – 2029 Strategic Objectives	Priorities
An Innovative and Diversified Economy	• Advocate for continued and enhanced funding to enable strategic investment in our roads, footpaths, and associated assets to support tourism, economic development and social inclusion and connection across our Shire.
A Healthy and Inclusive Community	• Develop and/or maintain strong partnerships to deliver high quality services and sustainable infrastructure to enhance the social health and wellbeing outcomes for all our residents. • Advocate, prioritise, and invest in infrastructure that supports an accessible, inclusive, and socially connected community to improve liveability. •
A Council that serves its Community	• Undertake robust and transparent planning and risk management to ensure our organisation is sustainable now and into the future. • Embed good governance practices into all decision making. • Advocate for our community, on matters that are important to the entire municipal district. • Build trust through engaging with our community, delivering quality services and outcomes. • Consider a broad base of evidence before making decisions, ensuring value for money and responsive, innovative services and solutions are provided.
Policies, Procedures, Guidelines, Plans, Strategies and Frameworks	
Policy	Community Engagement Policy and Procedure
Plan	Council Plan

OVERARCHING GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

This Council report has been prepared in accordance with, and to give effect to, the overarching governance principles articulated in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, to the extent practicable.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

Not applicable.

OPTIONS

Not applicable.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.

No sustainability implications are noted for this report.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

As outlined above, the students of Warracknabeal Secondary College wrote letters to Council's CEO. The CEO has responded and Council Officers will work with the students to advance many of their ideas.

GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Not applicable.

RISK

Utilising the Risk Management Framework the following assessment has been made:

Strategic Risk Description and Residual Risk Level	Action to Mitigate/Reduce Risk	Does Action maintain or reduce Residual Risk Level
Strategy Execution and Change Management Risk - Residual Risk Level Medium	The letters captured young people's views on what matters most to youth in Warracknabeal. This insight helps Council shape and deliver strategic priorities that are relevant and beneficial to the community.	Reduces Residual Risk Level

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not applicable.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have declared that they do not have a conflict of interest in the subject matter of this report.

17 PERMITS ISSUED

List of permits issued in June 2026 is listed below for noting.

Recommended Motion:

That Council:

Note the permits issued by Council between 01 June 2026 to 30 June 2026.

Reference No	Description	Address	Date of Issue
Local Law Permits			
13-26	Place skip bin on public land	Warracknabeal	16/06/2026
15-26	Place skip bin on public land	Hopetoun	18/06/2026
14-26	Keeping more than the allowed number of animals	Warracknabeal	30/06/2026
Planning Permits			
PA20260096	External building and works associated with the installation of an ATM	Hopetoun	11/06/2026
PA20260104	Construction of a single storey dwelling.	Warracknabeal	30/06/2026
RRWP & APP Permits			
2026-8	Rabbit Control Works	Yaapeet State Forest	02/06/2026
2026-9	Installing Sign Posts	Barrat Quarry Road, Murra Warra	22/06/2026

18 CLOSED DECISIONS TO BE RECORDED IN OPEN COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

The following Council decisions have been made in a Closed Confidential Council Meeting and are being recorded, where appropriate, in the Agenda of an open Council meeting for public transparency.

Recommended Motion:

That Council:

- a) Determines, pursuant to section 125(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, that the Resolution(s) made and outlined in the table below, while a meeting was closed to the public be made publicly available; and recorded in the public Minutes of this meeting.

Date	Item Number and Title	Decision
24 June 2026	Unscheduled Council (Confidential) Meeting Minutes – Item 4.3 C368-2026 – Hopetoun Swimming Pool Major Repairs Contract Variation (Variation 2)	Resolution: That Council: a) Approve Variation 2 to Contract C368-2026 – Hopetoun Swimming Pool Major Repairs with Hydrilla Pty Ltd to allow for modifications to the ramp handrails at a cost of \$5,417.50 (ex GST), increasing the total contract value to \$1,664,681.50 (ex GST). Moved Mayor McLean Seconded Cr Heintze That the recommendation be adopted. <u>Carried Unanimously</u>

19 URGENT BUSINESS

Business cannot be admitted as urgent business, other than by resolution of Council. Council must only admit business as urgent if the business:

- a) Cannot safely or conveniently be deferred until the next Council meeting; or
- b) Involves a matter of urgency, as determined by the CEO.

Councillors may ensure that an issue is listed on an Agenda by submitting a Notice of Motion in accordance with Governance rules, item 2.13.

If the CEO rejects the Notice of Motion, they must provide a response to the Councillor as outlined in 2.13 (e) of the Governance Rules.

20 NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 26 August 2026.

21 CLOSED

Council will close the Ordinary Meeting of Council and move to the Closed (Confidential) Meeting of Council. Noting the meetings will be considered as two separate meetings.

Recommended Motion:

That the Ordinary Meeting of Council is now closed at (time).

Council will now proceed to the Closed (Confidential) Meeting of Council.

SUMMARY CLOSED (CONFIDENTIAL) MEETING AGENDA

That, in accordance with sections 66(1) and 66(2)(a) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, the meeting be closed to members of the public for consideration of the following confidential items:

1. Permit Application to Store Unregistered Vehicles - Warracknabeal

This Agenda item is confidential information for the purpose of section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*:

- a) Because it is law enforcement information, being information that if released would be reasonably likely to prejudice the investigation into an alleged breach of the local law, or the fair trial or hearing of any person (section 3(1)(d)); and
- b) Because it contains personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs (section 3(1)(f));

This ground applies because the Agenda Item concerns personal information about a rate payer that would, if prematurely released, compromise Council's position in relation to the requirement to comply with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* and enforcement activities.

2. Chief Executive Officer Annual Performance Review 2025-26

This Agenda item is confidential information for the purpose of section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*:

- a) Because it is personal information, being information which if released would result in unreasonable disclosure of information about any person (section 3(1)(f)); and
- b) This ground applies because the Agenda Item concerns human resource information about the Chief Executive Officer, that would, if prematurely released, compromise Council's position in relation to the requirement to comply with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*.