



Yarriambiack
SHIRE COUNCIL

Minutes

Ordinary Meeting of Council

22 April 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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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	WELCOME.....	4
2	RECORDING PREAMBLE	4
3	ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND PRAYER.....	4
3.1	Acknowledging Traditional Owners of the Land	4
3.2	Prayer	4
4	PRESENT	5
5	APOLOGIES.....	5
6	CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES	6
6.1	Minutes 25 March 2026 – Ordinary Meeting.....	6
6.2	Minutes 25 March 2026 – Closed (Confidential) Meeting.....	6
7	DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST	7
7.1	Conflict of Interest Declared.....	7
8	BUSINESS ARISING	8
8.1	Business Arising from Previous Minutes	8
8.2	Ongoing and Pending Actions	8
9	PETITIONS.....	9
10	MINISTERIAL AND GOVERNMENT CORRESPONDENCE TO COUNCILLORS ONLY	9
11	SPECIAL COMMITTEES.....	10
11.1	Audit and Risk Committee Meeting Schedule	10
12	ACTIVITY REPORTS	11
12.1	Mayor Activity Report.....	11
12.2	Councillor Activity Reports	12
12.3	Chief Executive Officer Activity Report.....	14
13	PUBLIC QUESTIONS	16
13.1	Questions Submitted	16
14	COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND NOTICE OF MOTIONS	17
14.1	Mayors Report	17
14.2	Municipal Association of Victoria – Quarterly Delegate Report	18
15	REPORTS FOR DECISION	21
15.1	Tree Management Policy and Strategy.....	21
15.2	Derelict Buildings policy and Procedure.....	26
15.3	Inappropriate Use of Land Policy and Procedure.....	29
15.4	Licence Agreement for the Elite Contender Gym	32
15.5	Licence for 95 Dyer Street Rupanyup with Riordan Fuels.....	36
15.6	Community Share Grants Program Policy.....	39
15.7	Yarriambiack Tourism Strategy 2023-2027 Amendments	44
15.8	Councillor Obligations for CEO Psychological Safety Policy	48
15.9	Motor Vehicle Manual.....	52

15.10 Funding Application Endorsement: ANZAC Park Netball, Tennis and AFL Infrastructure Planning and Upgrade Project (2025-26 Victorian Government Budget Allocation)	55
15.11 Council Plan Year 1 Actions Report - Quarter 3	60
15.12 Early Years Commitment Statement.....	63
16 COUNCIL REPORTS FOR NOTING.....	67
17 PERMITS ISSUED	67
18 CLOSED DECISIONS TO BE RECORDED IN OPEN COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA	68
19 URGENT BUSINESS	68
20 NEXT MEETING	68
21 CLOSED.....	68
SUMMARY CLOSED (CONFIDENTIAL) MEETING AGENDA	69

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

5 APOLOGIES

Name / Role	Description of Leave / Absence

6 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

6.1 MINUTES 25 MARCH 2026 – ORDINARY MEETING

Minutes of the Ordinary meeting of Council held on 25 March 2026 be taken as an accurate record and confirmed.

Resolution

That the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 25 March 2026, as circulated be taken as read and confirmed.

Moved Cr Heintze

Seconded Cr Kirk

That the recommendation be adopted.

Carried Unanimously

6.2 MINUTES 25 MARCH 2026 – CLOSED (CONFIDENTIAL) MEETING

Minutes of the Closed (Confidential) meeting of Council held on 25 March 2026 be taken as an accurate record and confirmed.

Resolution

That the minutes of the Closed (Confidential) Meeting of Council held on 25 March 2026, as circulated be taken as read and confirmed.

Moved Cr Zanker

Seconded Cr Keel

That the recommendation be adopted.

Carried Unanimously

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
Tammy Smith	15.8 Councillor Obligations for CEO Psychological Safety Policy	The Policy relates directly to the CEO's employment and Councillors obligations for CEO Psychological Safety.

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
28 August 2024 Item 15.13	Resheet a section of Mellis Road, from Stawell Warracknabeal Road to a property 4.3km to the East.	This job aims to be completed by 30 June 2026.
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.	Implementation plan being enacted.
10 December 2025 Item 15.1	Land transfer of land, Wheatlands Agriculture Museum, to the Warracknabeal and District Historical Society.	Lawyer engaged to commence the process.
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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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.
28 January 2026 Item 15.5	Gift 2 Wood Street, Rupanyup to the Victorian State Emergency Services (VICSES).	In progress.
25 March 2026 Item 15.9	Enact the Lease between Yarriambiack Shire Council and Brim Sports & Social Club Inc for the building and land known as Brim Memorial Hall, 28A and 28B Swann Street, Brim.	CLOSED Enacted 25 March 2026.

9 PETITIONS

No petitions received.

10 MINISTERIAL AND GOVERNMENT CORRESPONDENCE TO COUNCILLORS ONLY

Outgoing		
Date	Recipient	Details
26/03/2026	The Hon Steve Dimopoulos MP	Letter - Support for Urgent Action on Battery Action
18/04/2026	Legislative Council Environment and Planning Committee – Parliament of Victoria	WSMCA Submission to the Inquiry into 2026 Summer fires across Victoria

Incoming		
Date	Sender	Details
07/04/2026	The Hon Sonya Kilkenny MP	Response letter regarding the EES process
08/04/2026	The Hon Nick Staikos MP	Response Letter - Funding Roads and Council Assets
14/04/2026	The Hon Melissa Horne MP	Response Letter – Sunshine Regional Crossovers

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
11 May 2026	Ordinary Meeting
10 August 2026	Ordinary Meeting
21 September 2026	Special Financial Statements and Performance Report Meeting

12 ACTIVITY REPORTS

12.1 MAYOR ACTIVITY REPORT

Mayor Andrew McLean (April)		
Date	Activity	Location
26/03/26	ACE Radio Interview	Horsham
27/03/26	VLGA Lunch and Learn: Psychosocial Hazards - The Councils Role as the CEO's Employer	Online
01/04/26	Mayor and CEO Debrief	Warracknabeal
08/04/26	Council Forum	Warracknabeal
09/04/26	Mayor and CEO Debrief	Warracknabeal
09/04/26	Meeting with Acting Superintendent of Victoria Police*	Warracknabeal
16/04/26	Officially Opened – Hopetoun Recreation Reserve Netball Sports Lighting Upgrade Project	Hopetoun
17/04/26	Mayor, Deputy Mayor and CEO Catch Up	Online
17/04/26	Meeting with WIM Resources and Yarriambiack Shire Council – Project Update	Online
20/04/26	ANZAC Park Control Group Meeting	Warracknabeal
21/04/26	Meeting with CEO and Minister D'Ambrosio*	Melbourne

*Represent advocacy meetings

12.2 COUNCILLOR ACTIVITY REPORTS

Deputy Mayor Corinne Heintze – Dunmunkle Ward (April)		
Date	Activity	Location
27/03/26	VLGA Lunch and Learn: Psychosocial Hazards - The Councils Role as the CEO's Employer	Online
08/04/26	Council Forum	Warracknabeal
17/04/26	Mayor, Deputy Mayor and CEO Catch Up	Online
17/04/26	Meeting with WIM Resources and Yarriambiack Shire Council – Project Update	Online

Cr Melinda Keel – Dunmunkle Ward (April)		
Date	Activity	Location
08/04/26	Council Forum	Warracknabeal
21/04/26	Murtoa Progress Meeting	Murtoa

Cr Chris Lehmann – Hopetoun Ward (April)		
Date	Activity	Location
08/04/26	Council Forum	Warracknabeal
16/04/26	Official Opening of the Hopetoun Recreation Reserve Netball Sports Lighting Upgrade Project	Hopetoun

Cr Karly Kirk – Warracknabeal Ward (April)		
Date	Activity	Location
08/04/26	Council Forum	Warracknabeal
17/04/26	Meeting with WIM Resources	Online

Cr Kylie Zanker – Warracknabeal Ward (April)		
Date	Activity	Location
04/04/26	MC for the Easter Street Parade	Warracknabeal
05/04/26	Easter Sunday Music at the Museum	Warracknabeal
08/04/26	Council Forum	Warracknabeal
14/04/26	Warracknabeal Action Group General Meeting	Warracknabeal
20/04/26	ANZAC Park Project Control Group Meeting	Warracknabeal

12.3 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER ACTIVITY REPORT

Tammy Smith (April)		
Date	Activity	Location
25/03/26	Invitation to participate in the Development of the Victorian Rail Freight Plan	Online
26/03/26	West Wimmera Health Service Health and Wellbeing Grant Discussion	Online
26/03/26	Meeting with Warracknabeal Show Committee to discuss building works and public amenities	Warracknabeal
26/03/26	Interview with Curtin University regarding Housing study	Online
26/03/26	Rural Councils Victoria Committee Meeting	Online
30/03/26	Municipal Association Victoria (MAV) Special CEO Briefing Australian Fuel Shortage	Online
31/03/26	Resilient and Cost-Effective Pavements Online Briefing	Online
01/04/26	Recycling Victoria Grampians regional Visit and Roundtable Discussion*	Ararat
01/04/26	Meeting with Sheep Hills Mechanics Hall Committee	Warracknabeal
01/04/26	Mayor and CEO Debrief	Warracknabeal
07/04/26	Townscape Meeting	Warracknabeal
08/04/26	Council Forum	Warracknabeal
09/04/26	Mayor and CEO Debrief	Warracknabeal
09/04/26	Meeting with Acting Superintendent of Victoria Police*	Warracknabeal
09/04/26	Rural Councils Victoria Executive Meeting	Warracknabeal
10/04/26	Governor of Victoria Visit Planning Meeting	Online
10/04/26	Wimmera Southern Mallee LLEN Work to School Program discussion	Online
10/04/26	Department of Transport and Planning, Planning HUB Meeting	Online
13/04/26	Meeting with Victorian Farming Federation*	Online
16/04/26	Grampians Wimmera Mallee Tourism Board Pre-Briefing	Online
16/04/26	Wimmera Southern Mallee Councils Alliance CEO meeting	Horsham

Tammy Smith (April)		
16/04/26	Meeting with Dr Anne Webster and CEO's of Northwest region, Resource Ready Strategy Briefing*	Online
16/04/26	Hopetoun Lighting Upgrade Official Opening – Hopetoun Recreation Reserve	Hopetoun
17/04/26	Meeting with WIM Resources and Yarriambiack Shire Council – Project Update	Online
20/04/26	MAV Monday Connect – CEO Briefing	Online
20/04/26	ANZAC Park Project Control Group Meeting	Warracknabeal
21/04/26	Meeting with Department Secretaries DJSIR, DEECA and DTP*	Melbourne
21/04/26	Meeting with the Mayor and Minister D'Ambrosio*	Melbourne

**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

I am pleased to report that over the last month there have been several exciting activities occurring throughout our shire.

Warracknabeal enjoyed another successful year with Easter in the Beal, featuring a wide variety of events, including the popular street parade that attracted many tourists and visitors.

It was wonderful to see people enjoying themselves during the Easter holiday, despite the ongoing fuel difficulties. The region was bustling with activity for Easter, especially thanks to our waterways and silo art, which attracted many visitors.

It was a privilege to officially open the Hopetoun Recreation Reserve Netball Sports Lighting Upgrade Project on 16 April. This project was prioritised through local masterplans and strategies to improve inadequate netball court lighting. Led by the Reserve Committee with support from Southern Mallee Thunder Football Netball Club, the project aimed to enhance safety, accessibility, and participation. Council submitted a successful funding application to the 2024–25 Country Football and Netball Program, securing \$132,402 from the Victorian Government and \$45,000 from the Reserve Committee for a total cost of \$177,402. Council managed delivery, which included installing six new 200 LUX LED lighting poles, dimmer controls, and an electrical upgrade to meet Australian standards. The upgraded lighting now offers safer, more inclusive facilities, supports increased participation, and improves match-day experiences for the community.

I am delighted to report that the Murtoa Netball and Tennis Court project has been substantially completed, with the Minyip–Murtoa Football Netball Club holding its first training session on the new courts on 09 April 2026. Minor outstanding works remain, including the installation of safety bollards and asphalt works in the car park area, which will be finalised in the near future. We look forward to attending the official opening event which is being planned for May 2026.

The Hopetoun Swimming Pool and Changeroom project is taking shape. The changeroom component is under construction and will be completed prior to 30 June 2026. The Swimming Pool Upgrades component is nearing commencement from 20 April 2026 and is expected to be completed prior to the start of the upcoming pool season.

We also look forward to works commencing in the coming months at the Minyip Recreation Reserve for the installation of their new football oval lighting towers.

In matters pertaining to advocacy, the Chief Executive Officer and I are scheduled to meet with Minister D'Ambrosio in Melbourne during the week of 20 April. At the time of preparing this agenda, the meeting had not yet occurred; an update will be provided at the Council meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to address a request from the previous year regarding the financial impacts of environmental effects statement processes on communities and local Councils. Following our involvement in this process, we aim to share key insights, observations, and recommendations for enhancing these procedures for rural communities in the future.

Finally, we extend our congratulations to Yarriambiack Shire resident Ryan Milgate for his appointment as President of the Victorian Farmers Federation. Ryan is a dedicated champion for farming, highly regarded throughout both the region and the industry. We wish him every success as he represents and supports a significant part of our community.

14.2 MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA – QUARTERLY DELEGATE 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 January to March 2026.

Resolution

That Council:

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

Moved Cr Kirk

Seconded Cr Heintze

That the recommendation be adopted.

Carried Unanimously

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.

Since the appointment of MAV delegates in December 2025, the following delegate engagement events occurred:

- **MAV Delegate Induction Session**

This session welcomed Delegates into their role and provided an overview of the MAV including the organisations governance framework, State Council and delegate roles and responsibilities.

- **MAV Regional Meetings**

The purpose of MAV bi-annual Regional Meetings is to strengthen collaboration, provide a forum to discuss shared challenges and priorities and to support councils to coordinate advocacy positions through the development of State Council motions.

Throughout February, across the 10 MAV regions, 75 of 79 councils were represented with state-wide participation of a total of 182 Mayors, MAV Delegates and CEOs. The Regional Meeting Insights Report provides a snapshot of data thematically grouped to the 10 Strategic Directions from the MAV Strategic Plan. These insights are drawn upon to inform the future work of the MAV.

- **MAV Delegate Connect Session**

This session provided a snapshot of Regional Meetings themes and insights, as well as an overview of The Future Is Local: MAV 2026 State Election Campaign.

3. 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, 94% of which are either completed or underway with a 93% confidence level for completion at the end of financial year.

- **Progress of State Council Motions**

This quarter the MAV 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, 33% of which are currently completed and 64% in progress.

4. MAV Advocacy Initiatives

- **The Future Is Local: MAV 2026 State Election Campaign**

MAV continues to serve as a key advocate for the sector, evident through the launch of the 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, with councils ready to work with the next State Government to deliver local solutions to global challenges. The MAV is currently meeting with MP's and Candidates across Victoria.

- **MAV in Motion Publication**

In the January to March quarter the publication, '[MAV in Motion](#)', served as a key communication tool providing updates on advocacy actions, strategic initiatives, and sector initiatives across Victoria. This edition informed delegates and members about 13 recent [policy submissions](#), the MAV [Annual Report](#) and updates on live advocacy actions.

4. Upcoming 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, to

form the policy direction of the MAV, which is set in alignment with the MAV Strategic Plan (2024-2027). State Council will meet on the 29 May 2026 to review and vote upon motions or other items of business proposed by member councils and the MAV Board.

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 TREE MANAGEMENT POLICY AND STRATEGY

Prepared by Adam Moar, Manager Development and Environmental Services

SUMMARY

Council engaged LatStudios (Landscape Architects) and TreeLogic (Arborists) to develop a suite of documents and a tree planting program to address key actions from Councils Master Environment Strategy. This report outlines the community consultation undertaken and presents the final documents for adoption by Council.

Resolution

That Council:

- a) Adopts the Tree Management Policy as attached to this Council report;
- b) Rescinds the Tree Management Policy adopted by Council on 24 August 2022;
- c) Adopts the Yarriambiack Street and Reserve Tree Strategy; and the Species Listing as attached to this Council report.

Moved Cr Heintze

Seconded Cr Zanker

That the recommendation be adopted.

Carried Unanimously

ATTACHMENTS

[Attachment: Tree Management Policy](#)

[Attachment: Yarriambiack Street and Reserves Tree Strategy](#)

[Attachment: Final Draft Species Listing](#)

DISCUSSION

On 13 August 2025, the Manager Development and Environmental Services and the Waste and Sustainability Coordinator presented the Yarriambiack Street and Reserves Tree Strategy, Species listing and revised Tree Management Policy to Councillors prior to undertaking community consultation.

Council's Tree Management Policy was developed in 2011 with minimal updates since. In its last update (2022) some procedural sections were added, however no significant changes were made to the policy.

LatStudios and TreeLogic have redrafted the Tree Management Policy which outlines how Council will manage trees across the Shire and provides guidance of how we assess aspects like removal, planting and pruning of trees. It also is accompanied by a Tree Management Procedure and Manual (internal operations documents).

Furthermore, the Tree Management Policy and the Yarriambiack Street and Reserves Tree Strategy are accompanied by a Species List that outlines recommended tree species for planting throughout the Shire. The selected species are a mix of exotic and native trees, species that are infrastructure friendly, drought tolerant, and suitable for our location.

The revision of the Tree Management Policy provides a practical and balanced approach to tree management which seeks to maximise the abundance and health of trees on Council land while ensuring public safety and allowing controlled development. It acknowledges that trees sometimes come into conflict with other elements of the streetscape, particularly hard structures and services, but recognises that all are essential components of a pleasant and functional landscape.

The policy attempts to maximise community support for a well treed environment through prudent management of all trees for which Council is responsible.

The Yarriambiack Street and Reserves Strategy outlines the value of trees and their importance to the towns of Yarriambiack. It provides guidance on how to establish healthy trees - overcoming the unique climatic, financial and physical constraints of the area - and supports appropriate species selection. It also sets a long-term vision for Council-owned and maintained trees across the Shire.

As part of the Strategy, a street typology approach was developed to classify common street types in Yarriambiack towns. This allows for practical, implementable guidance on tree planting, even where detailed site assessments are not feasible.

On-site assessments were conducted in seven key towns across Yarriambiack to better understand the unique community characteristics and environmental, financial and cultural contexts of the area. These assessments also involved identifying specific areas and individual opportunity sites for increased tree planting. The towns assessed were:

- Warracknabeal
- Beulah
- Hopetoun
- Murtoa
- Minyip
- Woomelang
- Rupanyup

The identification of specific planting opportunity locations, complemented by the overarching guidance provided through the street typology classification, will effectively support future tree management across Yarriambiack.

It is proposed to commence implementing the Strategy in 2026/27 with street plantings in one of the Shires towns.

RELEVANT LAW

Not applicable.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Council Plan 2025 – 2029 Strategic Objectives	Priorities
An Innovative and Diversified Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embed climate change action into everything we do with a focus on decreased emissions, heat reduction and emergency management preparedness. • Elevate community education and positive engagement experience as a key priority while performing regulatory functions.
A Council that serves its Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.

Council Plan 2025 – 2029 Strategic Objectives	Priorities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	Tree Management Policy
Strategy	Master Environment Strategy

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

- 14 December 2011 – Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes – Item 11.5 Tree Policy
- 24 August 2022 – Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes – Item 15.2 Tree Management Policy
- 11 September 2024 – Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes – Item 8.1 Master Environment Strategy 2024-2034

OPTIONS

The Council may opt not to adopt either or both documents. The documents presented for public consultation garnered predominantly favourable responses from stakeholders.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The proposed Tree Management Plan and the Yarriambiack Street and Reserves Tree Strategy have been prepared from the recommendations of Council’s Master Environment Strategy where action 2.7 states ‘*Carry out streetscape works targeted at reducing heat impacts in main street districts e.g. create more shaded areas and green spaces.*’.

Economic	The Tree Management Policy outlines how decisions are to be made for the removal, replacement and pruning of trees. The selection and maintenance of trees will minimise the need for replacement into the future and to maintain them in a manner that reduces the risks of branch failures.
Social	Tree lined streets could encourage use of footpaths by providing shade during the heat of the day.
Environmental	Recommendations from the Street and Reserves Tree Strategy outlines plantings that will reduce heat impacts in streets within towns and increase shaded areas.
Climate Change	Both documents encourage the planting of additional trees within the Shire. The documents guide the use of the correct trees to be located in the correct locations to minimise the need to remove and replace inappropriate trees.
Financial	Planting the right tree in the right location reduces impacts on underground infrastructure and reduces the need for replacement of both the tree and infrastructure. Properly managed trees should result in healthier trees which reduces the chances of branch failures and dropping on to the ground.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Tree Management Policy and the Yarriambiack Street and Reserves Tree Strategy were placed on public exhibition from mid-February to mid-March 2026 in accordance

with Councils Community Engagement Policy and Procedure. A combined survey was available to receive feedback.

Council received five (5) online submissions with submitters being located in Warracknabeal, Minyip and Woomelang. One (1) written submission was also received.

In response to the yes/no questions that were asked, the following responses were received:

- a) Does the proposed Policy cover the tree management needs of Council managed trees? Yes – 5 responses, No – 1 response
- b) Will the approach used in the Yarriambiack Street and Reserve Tree Strategy achieve the desired outcomes? Yes – 5 responses, No – 1 response

Respondents were also given the option to add additional comments to each question. The following comments were provided to the “no” responses:

- *That the funds used for the preparation of the plans could have been spent on tree purchasing and planting;*
- *These policies are 'very nice' but without the funds both in prioritising and availability they will not be actionable;*
- *The continued diversion of funding to often useless and unneeded so-called facilities and works has to be downgraded – e.g. Substandard unnecessary roadworks*
- *Suggestion for improving the documents: more attention to the essential importance of Shire Affairs*

Further comment regarding the community consultation were provided:

- *Yes – Money wasted that could have been diverted to more practical activities*
- *Perhaps the education and implementation in the schools – both – tree planting exercises. Dual purpose – activity. Knowledge and labour.*

This submission included additional comments not reproduced above, however were on the same theme.

In regard to customer requests Council receives approximately 9% of requests related to trees or overgrown vegetation. The Tree Management Policy will guide how Council responds to these requests.

The Yarriambiack Street and Reserve Tree Strategy has been designed in a way to allow Council to implement gradually. It will guide the direction of street planting into the future. The whole Shire was considered so that ad hoc planting is reduced and that any planting is a step towards a uniform and coordinated approach to tree management.

Having the schools and community groups involved in planting is considered as an important part of the implementation of the strategy.

The final question that received comments was:

Do you have suggestions for improving the Tree Management Policy or the Yarriambiack Street and Reserve Tree Strategy?

- *In addition to the many community health and amenity benefits listed in 1.3 The Benefits of Trees in Yarriambiack in the draft 'Yarriambiack Street and Reserve Tree Strategy' - natural tree shade also helps protect communities from harmful UV exposure. Over 95% of skin cancers in Australia are due to UV exposure. This is particularly important for Yarriambiack Shire as regional Victorians are 51% more likely to be diagnosed with melanoma than those living in major cities. Shade from trees and vegetation can reduce both direct and indirect UV. Dense tree canopies with minimal sky view can reduce UV by up to 90%, and when combined with surrounding green, low UV reflective surfaces, UV can be further reduced, helping lower skin cancer risk.*

- *"Main St and Church st are definitely the primary focus for renewal of tree Plantings. Existing trees are Dead, Dying or Inappropriate. Council should not shy away from total replacement and expansion. Tree types for these 2 streets, I believe should be of a same species throughout. rather than diversified. To create a stately presentation of avenues.*
- *The proposal does not address the failure of VicRoads to honour the agreement to replace the avenue of trees they have destroyed for the length of James Barnes Avenue (Warracknabeal Rd)"*
- *No, looks good.*

The comments provided will be considered when implementing the strategy.

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
Environmental Sustainability Risk - Residual Risk Level Medium	The documents for adoption aim to continue the implementation of the Master Environment Strategy. The Strategy should result in additional trees being planted within the Shire.	Maintains Residual Risk Level
Financial Risk - Residual Risk Level Medium	The policy and strategy should result in trees managed in a manner that promotes the health of the tree, which should reduce the number of trees that require replacement and minimises impacts on underground infrastructure.	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 DERELICT BUILDINGS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Prepared by Adam Moar, Manager Development and Environmental Services

SUMMARY

The Council has observed an increase in complaints concerning derelict buildings that present safety hazards to the public. To address this, the Derelict Buildings Policy and Procedure document guides Council Officers on how to investigate and take action against landowners responsible for such properties.

First adopted in 2022, the document has been reviewed according to Council's established review schedule. The purpose of the policy and procedure remains unchanged and the updates are administrative in nature only.

Resolution

That Council:

- a) Adopt the revised Derelict Buildings Policy and Procedure as attached to this Council report;
- b) Rescind the prior Derelict Building Policy and Procedure adopted on 14 December 2022; and
- c) Endorse that the Derelict Buildings Policy and Procedure remain as an internal document only and is not published on Council's website, as it is a confidential document in accordance with section 3 (b) and 3 (d) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Moved Cr Lehmann

Seconded Cr Heintze

That the recommendation be adopted.

Carried Unanimously

ATTACHMENTS

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

[Confidential Attachment: Derelict Buildings Policy and Procedure](#)

DISCUSSION

The Derelict Buildings Policy and Procedure covers buildings that have been neglected, poorly maintained, damaged by events like storms or fires, or left partially constructed and abandoned. Terms such as 'run-down' or 'dilapidated' may also apply to these structures. Developed in accordance with relevant sections of the *Building Act 1993*, the policy sets out responsibilities for Council Officers and the Municipal Building Surveyor.

Council actions follow the Building Act and Regulations, and are carried out by the Development and Environmental Services team. The policy lays out steps for issuing notices or orders, and, if necessary, pursuing enforcement through the courts. While court proceedings are not preferred, they may be required in some circumstances.

The policy was revised as part of a scheduled review; all changes made were administrative, and the overall intent remains unchanged.

RELEVANT LAW

- *Building Act 1993*
- Building Regulations 2018

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Council Plan 2025 – 2029 Strategic Objectives	Priorities
A Council that serves its Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	Derelict Buildings Policy Risk Management 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

14 December 2022 – Closed Council Meeting Minutes – Item 17.1 Derelict Buildings and Inappropriate Use of Land Policy and Procedures

OPTIONS

- a) That Council does not adopt the revised policy and procedure, and that Councillors stipulate amendments and or changes they wish to see reflected in the policy and procedure.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Social	The policy and procedure had been developed in response to complaints submitted by the public about private properties. The implications for no action on the complaints received is that public safety may be at risk. The additional implication for action to be taken on the complaint is that there is the potential that the subject landowners may be undergoing some form of hardship which has resulted in the nature of the property or the actions taken to trigger the complaints.
Financial	Enforcement action could consume significant Council Officer time, in addition once it is determined that Court action is required then associated costs will be required to be covered.

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
Corporate Governance, Compliance and Liability Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	To take appropriate action as nominated in the relevant legislation to protect the environment and public safety.	Maintains Residual Risk Level

Reputational Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	Taking appropriate action against landowners to maintain the amenity and the environment of the relevant locality.	Maintains Residual Risk Level
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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.

15.3 INAPPROPRIATE USE OF LAND POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Prepared by Adam Moar, Manager Development and Environmental Services

SUMMARY

The Council has experienced an increase in reports regarding improper land use, which may present potential risks to public health and safety. The Inappropriate Use of Land Policy and Procedure provides Council Officers with a structured framework for conducting investigations and enforcing compliance among landowners who do not adhere to legislative requirements.

First adopted in 2022, the document has been reviewed according to Council's established review schedule. The purpose of the policy and procedure remains unchanged and all updates have been administrative in nature.

Resolution

That Council:

- a) Rescind the previous Inappropriate Use of Land Policy and Procedure adopted on 14 December 2022;
- b) Adopt the revised Inappropriate Use of Land Policy and Procedure, as attached to this report; and
- c) Endorse that the Inappropriate Use of Land Policy and Procedure remain as an internal document only and is not published on Council's website, as it is a confidential document in accordance with section 3 (b) and 3 (d) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Moved Cr Zanker

Seconded Cr Keel

That the recommendation be adopted.

Carried Unanimously

ATTACHMENTS

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

[Confidential Attachment: Inappropriate Use of Land Policy and Procedure](#)

DISCUSSION

The Inappropriate Use of Land Policy and Procedure is intended to cover the following issues in relation to the inappropriate use of land:

- Building safety and illegal building work; and
- Environmental amenity and public health issues including land that is unsightly and land that is dangerous to the health, safety or wellbeing of any person including in relation to the storage of goods, rubbish, living in a caravan, tent or temporary dwelling on land and wastewater management.

This policy and procedure address the above issues through the relevant sections of the Building Act and Regulations, Public Health and Wellbeing Act, Environment Protection Act, and the Council's General Local Law.

Actions coming out of this policy will be implemented through the Development and Environmental Services and the Community Health teams.

The policy and procedure provide directions for action to be undertaken by Council Officers for issuing notices or orders through to seeking enforcement through the relevant Courts. Court action would not be the preferred option, however in some cases it may be the only option for action on the relevant issues.

The policy and procedure have undergone revision as part of the scheduled review process. The intent of the policy remains unchanged, and all amendments are strictly administrative in nature.

RELEVANT LAW

- *Building Act 1993*
- *Planning and Environment Act 1987*
- *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*
- General Local Law 2024
- *Local Government Act 1989*
- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Environment and Protection Act 2017*

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Council Plan 2025 – 2029 Strategic Objectives	Priorities
A Council that serves its Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	Inappropriate Use of Land Policy
	Risk Management 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

14 December 2022 – Closed Council Meeting Minutes – Item 17.1 Derelict Buildings and Inappropriate Use of Land Policy and Procedures

OPTIONS

That Council does not adopt the revised policy and procedure, and that Councillors stipulate amendments and or changes they wish to see reflected in the policy and procedure.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Social	The policy and procedure had been developed in response to complaints submitted by the public about private properties. The implications for no action on the complaints received is that public safety may be at risk. The additional implication for action to be taken on the complaint is that there is the potential that the subject landowners may be undergoing some form of hardship which has resulted in the nature of the property or the actions taken to trigger the complaints.
Financial	Enforcement action could consume significant Council Officer time, in addition once it is determined that Court action is required then associated costs will be required to be covered.

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
Corporate Governance, Compliance and Liability Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	To take appropriate action as nominated in the relevant legislation to protect the environment and public safety.	Maintains Residual Risk Level
Reputational Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	Taking appropriate action against landowners to maintain the amenity and the environment of the relevant locality.	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 LICENCE AGREEMENT FOR THE ELITE CONTENDER GYM

Prepared by Jo White, Governance Officer

SUMMARY

Yarriambiack Shire Council are the land and building owner of the Warracknabeal Leisure Complex located in Anderson Street, Warracknabeal. The current licence holder has held a Commercial Licence with Council for the area known as the Gym since 2021. The current licence holder has sold the Warracknabeal franchise of Elite Contender to the trustees of Elite Contender Warracknabeal Family Trust. A formal and updated Licence Agreement is required to be implemented in line with Council's Leases and Licencing Policy. The proposed Licence will ensure the continued operation of the Warracknabeal Gym within Council-owned facilities, outlining the rights and responsibilities of both parties.

Resolution

That Council:

- a) Endorse the Licence (as attached) between Yarriambiack Shire Council and The Trustee Elite Contender Warracknabeal Family Trust for the area known as Elite Contender 24/7 Gym, located within the Warracknabeal Leisure Complex, 33 Anderson Street, Warracknabeal;
- b) Endorse the Licence for a period of seven years in accordance with Councils Leases and Licencing Policy;
- c) Endorse for the Licence to be a Commercial Licence in accordance with the Leases and Licencing Policy, Schedule 1 – Category C, with a licence fee of \$417.88 per month including GST to be increased by the CPI rate on the 01 August of each applicable year of the term of the Licence;
- d) Endorse the Chief Executive Officer to make any administrative changes required for the Licence to be executed, providing the intent of the Licence is not altered; and
- e) Endorse the affixing of the Common Seal to the Licence in accordance with Council's Common Seal and Conduct at Meetings Local Law 2024.

Moved Cr Kirk

Seconded Cr Lehmann

That the recommendation be adopted.

Carried Unanimously

ATTACHMENTS

[Attachment: Licence Agreement - The Trustee Elite Contender Warracknabeal Family Trust](#)

[Attachment: Maintenance and Servicing Guidelines – Yarriambiack Council Owned Buildings – Elite Contender](#)

Link: [Fair Access Policy and Action Plan](#)

Link: [Leases and Licencing Policy](#)

DISCUSSION

Background

The gym located within the Warracknabeal Leisure Complex has undergone several operational arrangements since the facility opened in the 1990s. For many years, the gym was directly managed by Council, with Stadium Managers employed to oversee day-to-day operations.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Council undertook capital improvements to the gym, including an extension of the gym area and the construction of a separate front

entrance. These works enabled the gym to operate independently from the remainder of the Leisure Complex. Concurrently, Council ceased employing a Stadium Manager, creating an opportunity for the gym to be operated by an external provider. This model was intended to reduce Council's operational responsibilities, generate revenue to offset Council expenses, and deliver enhanced benefits to the community.

Following these modifications, the gym was licensed to operate under the Elite Contender franchise.

Current Licence Arrangement

The current licence holder entered into a Commercial Licence with Council in 2021. Despite the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, the gym has continued to operate successfully over the past five years. The facility provides 24-hour access to the community, maintains a strong and diverse membership base, and caters to both individual users and group activities. The Elite Contender franchise has since expanded, with multiple locations established across Victoria.

Proposed Change of Ownership

In late February 2026, the current licence holder advised Council that he had sold Elite Contender franchise locations, including Warracknabeal, to The Trustee Elite Contender Warracknabeal Family Trust. Settlement of the sale was initially planned for 18 March 2026. The current licence holder requested that the existing licence be transferred to the new owners to align with the proposed settlement date and sought a letter from Council to support this process.

Governance and Compliance Considerations

A review of the request identified several issues that prevented the transfer from proceeding as proposed:

- Only Council has the authority to endorse either a Transfer of Rights and Obligations under an existing licence or the issue of a new licence. Either option requires presentation at a Council Forum prior to endorsement at a Council Meeting. Due to timing constraints, endorsement could not occur prior to the proposed settlement date of 18 March 2026, nor at the Council Meeting scheduled for 25 March 2026. The earliest available Council Meeting for endorsement was 22 April 2026.
- The existing licence document was assessed as non-compliant with Council's current Leases and Licensing Policy. Notably, the licence did not include an expiry date. At the time of execution in 2021, the standard term for a Commercial Licence was five years, and the agreement had been recorded in the RelianSys system on this basis, with a review due later in 2026.
- Since 2021, Council's licence template has been updated and was prepared by Council's legal advisers.
- In light of the above, the existing licence was deemed unsuitable for transfer. A new licence is required to ensure compliance with Council policy and legal standards.

Current Status

The proposed licensees have agreed in principle to the draft licence, Council's Maintenance and Servicing Guidelines for Council-owned buildings, and Council's Fair Access Policy and Procedure. They have been advised that the commencement date of the new licence will be 22 April 2026, if adopted via Council and have already provided a Certificate of Currency for \$20 million public liability insurance.

RELEVANT LAW

Local Government Act 2020.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Council Plan 2025 – 2029 Strategic Objectives	Priorities
An Innovative and Diversified Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate and support agriculture, economic development and investment in our region
A Healthy and Inclusive Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	Leases and Licences Policy
	Fair Access Policy and Procedure

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

Council could choose to undertake a public advertisement of the Licence for The Trustee for Elite Contender Warracknabeal Family Trust Licence, however, it should be noted:

- Community consultation is not required under Section 115 of the *Local Government Act 2020* due to the value of the lease.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Economic	The Elite Contender 24/7 Gym is a valued and convenient resource to the local community. Twenty-Four-hour access ensures all community members, regardless of their working hours and/or responsibilities, are able to access the Gym. Having an accessible gym in Warracknabeal enhances and contributes to economic prosperity.
Social	The Elite Contender 24/7Gym promotes community engagement by offering a community venue and social interaction. The licence provides stability for continued memberships and programs, attracting new members and enhancing the mental and physical well-being of residents.
Financial	Council benefits from the Commercial Licence in regard to the monthly Licence Fee paid by the Tenant.

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 Licence enables Council to meet its corporate governance and compliance obligations and reduces its liability risk.	Reduces Residual Risk Level
Reputational Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	The Licence will ensure that Ther Trustee for Elite Contender Warracknabeal Family Trust will continue to operate and manage the Elite Contender 24/7 Gym avoiding any reputational damage or negative feedback to Council.	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.

15.5 LICENCE FOR 95 DYER STREET RUPANYUP WITH RIORDAN FUELS

Prepared by Jo White, Governance Officer

SUMMARY

Since 2016, Riordan Fuels has been responsible for managing and operating a section of land at 95 Dyer Street, Rupanyup as a 24-hour Transtank Refuelling System. The initial nine-year licence term concluded in April 2025. Renewal discussions have taken longer than anticipated due to updated templates and Council requirements. The licence is now ready to be submitted to Councillors for endorsement.

Resolution

That Council:

- a) Endorse the License (as attached) between Yarriambiack Shire Council and United Retail Group Pty Ltd T/A Riordan Fuels for the land known as Part 95 Dyer Street, Rupanyup;
- b) Endorse the Licence for a period of seven (7) years;
- c) Endorse for the Licence to be a Commercial licence in accordance with the Leases and Licensing Policy, Schedule 1 – Category C, with an annual rental fee of \$3,368.00 + GST with a 3% increase on each anniversary of the Commencement Date;
- d) Endorse the Chief Executive Officer to make any administrative changes required for the License to be executed, providing the intent of the Licence is not altered;
- e) Endorse the affixing of the Common Seal to the Licence in accordance with Council's Common Seal and Conduct at Meetings Local Law 2024.

Moved Cr Heintze

Seconded Cr Keel

That the recommendation be adopted.

Carried Unanimously

ATTACHMENTS

[Attachment: Licence Agreement United Retail Group Pty Ltd - 95 Dyer Street Rupanyup](#)

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: Market Rate Valuation – Preston Rowe Paterson](#)

DISCUSSION

The original Licence for the Transtank Refuelling system was issued in April 2016 for a term of 9 years.

Riordan Fuels have been the operator of the 24-hour unmanned rapid fill fuel outlet for the duration, providing a reliable and appreciated fuel supply to customers in and around Rupanyup.

In June 2025, Council engaged the services of local professional valuers Preston Rowe Paterson to conduct a rental market valuation, facilitating the preparation of a draft License and the commencement of negotiations. Negotiations have experienced some delays due to Riordan's rejection of the initial License Draft and submission of a Lease draft instead. Council deemed this proposal unsuitable, as the land at 95 Dyer Street is utilised both by Telstra (for the tower) and Council (as a road reserve), as clearly indicated in the Plan of the Licence Area. Typically, a Lease grants exclusive use of the property to a single tenant, which is not feasible in this scenario. Additionally, a minor adjustment was made to the Plan boundary to exclude the area currently used by Telstra.

After additional legal review and adjustments, both parties have reached agreement in principle on the attached Licence Agreement draft.

Council Officers support the current Tenant maintaining the arrangement with United Retail Group Pty Ltd t/as Riordan Fuels for the benefit of the Rupanyup Community.

RELEVANT LAW

Local Government Act 2020.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Council Plan 2025 – 2029 Strategic Objectives	Priorities
An Innovative and Diversified Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate and support agriculture, economic development and investment in our region.
A Council that serves its Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	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

Not applicable.

OPTIONS

Council could choose to undertake a public advertisement of the United Retail Group Pty Ltd Licence, however, it should be noted:

- Community consultation is not required under Section 115 of the *Local Government Act 2020*

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Economic	The Transtank Refuelling System is a valued and convenient resource to the local community. Twenty-Four-hour bulk fuel and large vehicle access keeps business local.
Financial	Council benefits from the Commercial Licence in regard to the annual income paid by the Tenant.

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 Licence enables Council to meet its corporate governance and compliance obligations and reduces its liability risk.	Reduces Residual Risk Level
Reputational Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	The Licence will ensure that United Retail Group Pty Ltd T/A Riordan Fuels will continue to operate and manage the Transtank Refuelling System avoiding any reputational damage or negative feedback to Council.	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.

15.6 COMMUNITY SHARE GRANTS PROGRAM POLICY

Prepared by Sarah Collins, Manager Community Strengthening and Engagement

SUMMARY

This report seeks Council endorsement of amendments to the Community Share Grants Program Policy. Changes to the policy relate to recommendations set out in a Victorian Auditor General Office (VAGO) report published in 2022, with a focus on enhancing our governance framework when administering the Share Grant Program. The amendments do not alter the intent, scope, or funding levels of the Community Share Grants Program.

Resolution

That Council:

- a) Rescind the Community Share Grants Program Policy adopted by Council on 25 January 2023; and
- b) Rescind the Community Share Grants Guidelines adopted by Council on the 25 January 2023 for the:
 - i. Business and Streetscapes,
 - ii. Community Building - Major,
 - iii. Community Building – Minor; and
 - iv. Community Events
- c) Adopt the revised Community Share Grants Program Policy as attached to this report.
- d) Adopt the updated Community Share Grant Program Guidelines as attached to this report and authorise the Chief Executive Officer to review and implement future amendments to the Guidelines, provided that such changes remain consistent with the overarching policy objectives.

Moved Cr Kirk

Seconded Cr Zanker

That the recommendation be adopted.

Carried Unanimously

ATTACHMENTS

[Attachment: Community Share Grants Program Policy](#)

[Attachment: Community Share Grant Program Guidelines](#)

DISCUSSION

In May 2022 VAGO published Fraud Control Over Local Government Grants after undertaking an audit of a select number of Victorian Councils to understand if fraud controls over local government grants are well-designed and operating as intended.

In the report, it pointed shortcomings in:

- Inconsistency declaring conflicts of interest;
- Lack of eligibility and assessment criteria;
- Councillors assessing grant applications;
- Not documenting funding decisions (including not communicating outcomes to applicants);
- Inconsistently applying acquittal processes (including inconsistently documenting acquittal processes); and
- Not regularly evaluating grant programs.

As a result, recommendations were made to all Victorian councils about strengthening fraud controls and improving their guidance and training for grant-related fraud.

In general, Yarriambiack Shire's Community Share Grants Program Policy performed well against the recommendations, with minor amendments required to strengthen our governance, particularly in Conflict of Interest and alignment to Council's governance frameworks. Additionally, Clearer recordkeeping and training have been implemented as part of this review.

Recommendations from the VAGO Report are as follows, and an assessment of Councils performance against these recommendations:

Improvements to conflict-of-interest processes

While the previous Community Share Grant Program Policy included a section relating conflict of interest (COI), and the evaluation process included documenting Council Officer COI, there was no explicit mention of the Councillor COI expectations. During Council meetings seeking endorsement, Councillors noted any conflicts of interest and followed Council meeting procedures. If several Councillors abstain from voting, there is a risk that a quorum will not be reached and voting cannot proceed, which could prevent grants from being administered. It was decided that the policy should explicitly state how Councillors are removed from the decision-making process and how authority for sign-off is delegated to the Chief Executive Officer.

Development of eligibility and assessment criteria:

The Council has performed strongly in this space with clearly presented Eligibility Criteria and Scoring Matrix made publicly available. This is further supported by ensuring that scorers access the scoring matrix when assessing applications to ensure a transparent, robust, and trustworthy scoring process.

Exclusion of Councillors from assessing and making recommendations on grant applications:

As stated in point one, the recommendation is made to remove Councillors from the decision-making process entirely. This has been the process for the 2024/25 and the 2025/26 funding rounds and Councillors have empowered the Chief Executive Officer to have the final approval powers. An Evaluation Report is presented to Councillors that outlines the scoring and evaluation process, declarations of conflict of interest, and recommendation made to the Chief Executive Officer. A Council Paper is presented to Councillors noting the outcome of the funding program for each financial year. This is now explicitly stated in the revised Community Share Grant Program Policy.

Verification that all grant recipients use grant funds for their intended purpose:

While it is stated in the Community Share Grant Program Policy and the Funding Agreements that those that do not acquit their funds within the stated timeframe are removed from being able to reapply for further funding, there were discrepancies between the length of time applicants are unable to reapply for Share Grant funding.

Alignment has been applied and stated that no further funding is available until acquittals are received. Funding Acquittals are also added to RelianSys to ensure they are being captured in a central location, and staff training in this space has occurred to make sure Council is doing their best to receive acquittals. Variations to project scope is also assessed on a case-by-case basis and documented.

Evaluate benefits of recurring and non-recurring grants:

The Council provides non-recurring grant funding, with funding being a one-time payment for specific, short-term projects or capital items. There are no changes being recommended on this topic.

Document all funding decisions in a consistent and structured way within a centralised system to ensure decision-making is transparent:

The Council have a robust evaluation process that produces an Evaluation Report at the conclusion of each funding round which is the foundation to decision making for the Chief Executive Officer. The Community Share Grant Program Policy clearly states that the

Evaluation Report is to be presented to the Chief Executive Officer to gain acceptance on funding recommendations and is to be presented to Councillors when noting the outcome paper. Outcome letters are sent to all applicants notifying if they have been successful or unsuccessful. Unsuccessful letters include a brief note about why they were unsuccessful and invite applicants to chat with Council Officers to learn more about their application. These outcome letters are now saved into RelianSys to improve recordkeeping and centralise information.

Assess the benefits of its ward-based approach to allocating grants:

The Council does not award grants using a ward-based approach. All funding submissions received are scored on merit and are funded to the highest scored applicants until funds are exhausted, with the exception that projects in the Community Building – Major stream are capped at 50% of the total Share Grant funding budget. There are no changes being recommended on this topic.

Develop an overarching grants policy:

The Council already has a Community Share Grant Program Policy and is reviewed in accordance with the review cycle. It has been added into Councils RelianSys system to ensure reviews occur on time, unless done so earlier. There are no changes being recommended on this topic.

Include grant-related fraud risks in risk management and fraud and corruption plans and assign responsibility for managing these risks:

Council has a robust risk management framework, system (RelianSys) and the Community Share Grant Program Policy and supporting guidelines to reduce the risk of fraud and corruption.

In addition, risks relating to the administering of the share grant program are identified and assigned to responsible officers.

Develop mandatory training for staff and councillors:

Councillors undertake a schedule of training in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* and supporting regulations. Council Officers undertake Good Governance and In-situ training annually to minimise risk of fraud and corruption. Prior to each round of Share Grant Funding, Council Officers involved in the administration and assessment process meet to confirm understanding of proper procedure.

Recordkeeping is something that was noted as needing improvement, while the correct process has been followed, registers and recordkeeping have been improved in case of audits.

RELEVANT LAW

Local Government Act 2020

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Council Plan 2025 – 2029 Strategic Objectives	Priorities
A Healthy and Inclusive Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Promote and support volunteerism throughout our Shire, recognising that collaborative efforts can lead to enhanced outcomes for our communities.

Council Plan 2025 – 2029 Strategic Objectives	Priorities
A Resilient and Sustainable Natural Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elevate community education and positive engagement experience as a key priority while performing regulatory functions. Support community groups to deliver on the Sport and Recreation Strategy and Recreation Reserve Master Plan initiatives, in alignment with Council’s policies
A Council that serves its Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. Promote initiatives ensuring safety, respect, and equal opportunities for all genders, aiming to end family violence.
Policies, Procedures, Guidelines, Plans, Strategies and Frameworks	
Policy	Community Share Grants Program Policy
	Employee Code of Conduct
	Fraud and Corruption Prevention Policy
	Risk Management Manual
	Councillor and Staff Interaction Policy and Procedure
	Information Management Policy
	Information Management Procedure
Guideline	Community Share Grant Guidelines – Events and Sponsorship
	Community Share Grant Guidelines – Business and Streetscapes
	Community Share Grant Guidelines – Community Building Major
	Community Share Grant Guidelines – Community Building Minor
Plan	Council Plan
Strategy	Economic Development Strategy
Framework	Priority Projects Framework
Other	Customer Service Charter
	Media and Communications Work Instruction

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

- 25 January 2023 – Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes – Item 16.3 Community Share Grant and Spark Tank Program
- 27 April 2022 – Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes – Item 13.4 Community Share Grants Program Policy and Guidelines

OPTIONS

- Councillors could choose to make additional changes to the Policy.
- Councillors have the discretion to retain responsibility for reviewing and endorsing the guidelines annually, rather than delegating this duty to the Chief Executive Officer.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Economic	The share grant administration aims to provide an economic benefit enhancing community services for the betterment and prosperity of the Shire.
Social	The Community Share Grants Program continues to support community participation, inclusion and local initiatives.
Financial	The amendments do not result in any additional financial impact beyond existing approved grant budgets.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This policy has been reviewed in line with Policy review cycles and has been compared against the recommendations drawn from the VAGO assessment report. Community Engagement was not undertaken for this revision.

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	The proposed amendments mitigate governance and compliance risk by clarifying accountability, delegations and alignment with Council’s Governance Frameworks.	Maintains Residual Risk Level
Reputational Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	The revision mitigates reputational risk in relation to transparency and accountability to the community.	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 STRATEGY 2023-2027 AMENDMENTS

Prepared by Sarah Collins, Manager Community Strengthening and Engagement

SUMMARY

This report seeks Council endorsement of proposed amendments to the Yarriambiack Shire Council Tourism Strategy 2023–2027 to strengthen Council’s strategic position in relation to expanding camping and caravanning opportunities across the municipality.

The amendments have been initiated in response to Council’s current investigations into a potential planning scheme amendment at the Warracknabeal Showgrounds and are intended to ensure the Tourism Strategy provides clear strategic support for this investigation.

The proposed changes are deliberately framed to apply at a whole-of-municipality level, enabling the Strategy to also support any future planning investigations or planning scheme amendment requests should Council wish to pursue additional camping and caravanning opportunities elsewhere within the Shire.

Resolution

That Council:

- a) Adopt the proposed amendments to the Yarriambiack Shire Council Tourism Strategy 2023–2027 to strengthen Council’s strategic position in relation to expanding camping and caravanning opportunities across the municipality; and
- b) Endorses that the amended Strategy will support Council’s current planning investigations, including those relating to the Warracknabeal Showgrounds, and provide a strengthened strategic framework to support future planning investigations and, where appropriate, planning scheme amendment processes to enable additional camping and caravanning opportunities across the Shire.

Moved Cr Zanker

Seconded Cr Kirk

That the recommendation be adopted.

Carried Unanimously

ATTACHMENTS

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

DISCUSSION

The Yarriambiack Shire Council Tourism Strategy 2023–2027 provides Council’s strategic framework for tourism development and promotion across the municipality. The proposed amendments have been initiated in response to Council’s current investigations into a potential planning scheme amendment relating to the Warracknabeal Showgrounds, 142 Henty Hwy, Warracknabeal, to enable camping and caravanning uses on that site.

In undertaking this work, it has been identified that the existing Tourism Strategy does not sufficiently articulate Council’s strategic position in relation to expanding camping and caravanning opportunities across the municipality. As a result, the proposed amendments are intended to not only support the Warracknabeal Showgrounds investigation but also establish a clear and consistent strategic framework to support any future investigations or requests should Council wish to pursue additional camping and caravanning opportunities elsewhere in the Shire.

Camping and caravanning represent a significant and growing segment of the visitor economy, particularly in regional and rural Victoria. Feedback from visitors and stakeholders indicates that limited provision of suitable camping and caravanning options restricts the Shire’s capacity to attract, accommodate and retain visitors, particularly those seeking affordable, flexible and nature-based accommodation.

To address this gap, it is proposed that the Tourism Strategy be amended to:

- Emphasise the need to expand camping and caravanning opportunities across the municipality;
- Identify and assess additional built and semi-built sites (including crown land, showgrounds and underutilised Council land) that may be suitable for camping and caravanning use; and
- Acknowledge that some sites may require planning scheme amendments or other statutory mechanisms to permit camping or caravanning activities and outline a high-level process for assessing and progressing such amendments in consultation with relevant authorities.

While the current investigation relates specifically to the Warracknabeal Showgrounds, the proposed amendments are deliberately framed at a whole-of-municipality level. This approach ensures that Council’s strategic tourism policy is sufficiently robust to support future site-specific planning investigations, including those involving Council-owned land, crown land or other suitable sites, without requiring further amendments to the Tourism Strategy each time a new opportunity is considered.

RELEVANT LAW

Local Government Act 2020

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Council Plan 2025 – 2029 Strategic Objectives	Priorities
An Innovative and Diversified Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively communicate and advocate to Government bodies, to deliver positive tourism outcomes for our community, capitalising on opportunities as they arise.
A Healthy and Inclusive Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for responsible land use, with consideration for the natural environment.
A Council that serves its Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	Advisory Committees of Council Policy
Guideline	Maintenance and Servicing Guidelines
Plan	Council Plan
Strategy	Tourism Strategy

Council Plan 2025 – 2029 Strategic Objectives	Priorities
Other	Yarri Planning Amendment Scheme

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

13 December 2023 – Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes – Item 15.4 Tourism Strategy 2023-2027

OPTIONS

- a) Do not endorse the proposed amendments.

This option would retain the current Strategy, limiting Council’s strategic capacity to support expanded camping and caravanning opportunities and associated planning work.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Economic	Increased visitation, longer stays and broader economic benefits to townships and local businesses.
Social	Improved access to affordable accommodation options and enhanced visitor experiences.
Environmental	Opportunity to assess and manage environmental impacts through strategic site selection and planning controls.
Climate Change	Supports low-impact, nature-based tourism options when appropriately planned and managed.
Financial	No immediate financial implications. Future projects subject to separate Council consideration and budgeting processes.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The proposed amendments to the Yarriambiack Tourism Strategy 2023–2027 were considered by the Yarriambiack Tourism Advisory Committee of Council on 01 December 2025 (Item 7), where draft amendments were endorsed to be further developed and presented back to the Committee.

The revised draft amendments were subsequently considered by the Committee on 02 March 2026 (Item 6), with endorsement provided for the amendments to be presented to Council for consideration and approval.

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
Program and Project Risk - Residual Risk Level Medium	Clear acknowledgment of planning scheme considerations and statutory processes to prevent misalignment between tourism strategy and statutory planning framework.	Maintains Residual Risk Level

Strategic Risk Description and Residual Risk Level	Action to Mitigate/Reduce Risk	Does Action maintain or reduce Residual Risk Level
Reputational Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	High-level strategic framing without pre-empting outcomes to mitigate unrealistic expectations regarding delivery timelines.	Maintains Residual Risk Level
Environmental Sustainability Risk - Residual Risk Level Medium	Future site-specific consultation and statutory processes to occur to mitigate community or stakeholder concern regarding land use changes.	Maintains Residual Risk Level

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

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

Conflict Declared by	Reason - Explanation	Time Officer Left Chambers
Tammy Smith	The Policy relates directly to the CEO’s employment and Councillors obligations for CEO Psychological Safety.	10.19am

15.8 COUNCILLOR OBLIGATIONS FOR CEO PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY POLICY

Prepared by Monique Metlika, Governance Support Officer

SUMMARY

The Occupational Health and Safety (Psychological Health) Regulations 2025 (the Regulations), which came into effect on 01 December 2025, introduce explicit obligations for councils to proactively identify, assess and manage psychosocial health and safety risks.

For elected Councillors, these changes mean there are now defined legal responsibilities to take reasonable steps to protect and promote the psychological health and safety of the Chief Executive Officer.

Accordingly, the Councillor Obligations for CEO Psychological Safety Policy has been developed and is presented in this report for Council’s adoption.

Resolution

That Council:

- a) Adopt the Councillor Obligations for CEO Psychological Safety Policy, as attached to this report; and
- b) Commit to complying with its obligations under the Occupational Health and Safety (Psychological Health) Regulations 2025.

Moved Cr Kirk

Seconded Cr Heintze

That the recommendation be adopted.

Carried Unanimously

ATTACHMENTS

[Attachment: Councillor Obligations for CEO Psychological Safety Policy](#)

DISCUSSION

The Councillor Obligations for CEO Psychological Safety Policy (the Policy) establishes a governance framework to ensure Councillors meet their legal and ethical obligations to protect the psychological health and safety of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), as required under the Occupational Health and Safety (Psychological Health) Regulations 2025.

As the employer of the CEO, Council holds a non-delegable responsibility to identify, assess, manage and regularly review psychosocial hazards associated with the role, so far as is reasonably practicable. The Policy affirms that psychological health is to be treated with the same importance as physical health and safety and must be proactively managed through sound governance, appropriate conduct and effective systems of work.

The Policy defines the respective responsibilities of Council, the Mayor, the Chief Executive Officer, the Governance Support Officer, and the Independent Advisor of the CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee, ensuring clear accountability and procedural support while maintaining Council’s collective responsibility for compliance.

It identifies common psychosocial hazards relevant to the CEO role, including public aggression, bullying or unreasonable behaviour, excessive workloads, exposure to traumatic events, poor workplace relationships, media scrutiny, and remote or isolated work arrangements. The Policy emphasises the use of higher-order controls, prioritising changes to work design, governance systems, behaviours and decision-making processes over reliance on individual coping strategies or training alone.

A structured four-stage psychosocial risk management process is adopted, requiring Council to:

1. Identify psychosocial risks;
2. Consider opportunities to eliminate risks;
3. Implement appropriate control measures where risks cannot be eliminated; and
4. Regularly review risks and controls to ensure ongoing effectiveness.

Psychosocial risk management is embedded into the CEO performance oversight framework through the use of a CEO Psychological Hazards Survey, standing agenda items at CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee meetings, dedicated prevention planning workshops, and ongoing monitoring as part of mid-year and annual performance reviews.

The Policy also provides for regular wellbeing check-ins between the Mayor and the CEO to support early identification of emerging issues, while recognising the heightened confidentiality and privacy considerations arising from there being only one CEO. Strict controls are applied to the handling, recording and discussion of psychosocial health information to protect dignity, privacy and trust.

Overall, the Policy supports compliance with occupational health and safety legislation, reinforces ethical leadership and respectful conduct, and strengthens Council’s governance arrangements by embedding psychosocial risk management into established decision-making and performance review processes.

RELEVANT LAW

- *Local Government Act 2020*
- Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020
- *Occupational Health and Safety 2004*
- Occupational Health and Safety (Psychological Health) Regulations 2025

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Council Plan 2025 – 2029 Strategic Objectives	Priorities
A Council that serves its Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Promote initiatives ensuring safety, respect, and equal opportunities for all genders, aiming to end family violence.
Policies, Procedures, Guidelines, Plans, Strategies and Frameworks	
Policy	CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy
	Model Councillor Code of Conduct
Other	Councillor Values Statement

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

- a) Councillors may choose not to adopt the Policy; however, doing so may result in non-compliance with their obligations under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*.
- b) Councillors may request further amendments to the Policy prior to its adoption.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Social	Supports a safe and respectful workplace and promotes psychological health and wellbeing through clearer governance responsibilities and psychosocial risk management for the CEO.
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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
Corporate Governance, Compliance and Liability Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	The Councillor Obligations for CEO Psychological Safety Policy establishes a clear governance framework and documented controls to support Councillors, as the CEO’s employer, to meet and demonstrate compliance with the Occupational Health and Safety (Psychological Health) Regulations 2025. It clarifies roles and accountability, embeds psychosocial risk management into routine decision-making and oversight processes, and reduces corporate governance, compliance and liability exposure arising from non-compliance or unmanaged psychosocial hazards.	Maintains Residual Risk Level
People and Talent Management Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	Maintaining the CEO’s psychological safety is essential to attract and retain a high-performing CEO and to support sustained, effective performance in a high-pressure role. By setting clear expectations for Councillor conduct and establishing consistent psychosocial risk management and support arrangements, the Policy helps reduce the likelihood of harm, burnout or premature turnover, strengthening leadership continuity and organisational capability.	Maintains Residual Risk Level
Occupational Health and Safety Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	The Policy supports Council to meet its duties under the <i>Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004</i> by establishing a practical framework to identify, assess and control psychosocial hazards for the CEO, and to regularly review	Maintains Residual Risk Level

	<p>the effectiveness of those controls. By embedding these requirements into routine governance and oversight, it helps ensure risks are managed so far as is reasonably practicable.</p>	
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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.

Conflict Declared by	Reason - Explanation	Time Officer Returned to Chambers
<p>Tammy Smith</p>	<p>The Policy relates directly to the CEO’s employment and Councillors obligations for CEO Psychological Safety.</p>	<p>10.23am</p>

15.9 MOTOR VEHICLE MANUAL

Prepared by Tammy Smith, Chief Executive Officer

SUMMARY

In August 2022, the Council developed and adopted the Motor Vehicle Policy along with a comprehensive suite of procedures to effectively manage motor vehicle assets and define standards for acceptable use of the motor vehicle fleet.

During 2024, all policy and procedure documents were carefully reviewed, resulting in the creation of a detailed 10-year fleet replacement plan. This plan, along with its supporting documentation, was consolidated into a comprehensive Motor Vehicle Manual.

Since then, an evaluation of the fleet replacement plan has been conducted, identifying the need for policy modifications concerning fleet size and privately used vehicles.

This report outlines changes to the Motor Vehicle Manual being presented to Council for adoption.

Resolution

That Council:

- a) Rescind the Motor Vehicle Manual as adopted by Council on 29 January 2025; and
- b) Adopt the revised Motor Vehicle Manual as attached to this report, to be effective from 22 April 2026.

Moved Cr Kirk

Seconded Cr Lehmann

That the recommendation be adopted.

Carried Unanimously

ATTACHMENTS

[Attachment: Motor Vehicle Manual](#)

DISCUSSION

The review of motor vehicle documentation adopted a comprehensive approach, which included examining existing motor vehicle fleet data, understanding the work functions and requirements of each department, exploring opportunities for innovation and efficiency, considering long-term financial sustainability, and assessing the economic, social, and environmental impacts of different options and approaches.

The attached draft Motor Vehicle Manual is aimed at guiding Councils strategic decision making into the future, including informing the annual budget process, and long-term financial planning.

The draft Motor Vehicle Manual incorporates updates with the major changes being as follows:

- The Manual has been revised to specifically define that a private use vehicle will be designated for the Chief Executive Officer and CEO's direct reports only. Private use vehicles are employed as a retention strategy, recognising that rural Councils face challenges in matching the salaries offered by regional and metropolitan Councils. All other staff will be remunerated and/or offered novating leasing options where they require a use of a vehicle for their position.
- Councils vehicle numbers have been revised and reduced moving forward, with a focus on financial sustainability.
- The reference to the Mayor and Councillor motor vehicle use has been removed from the motor vehicle manual and is to be incorporated into the Council Expense Policy and Procedure.

RELEVANT LAW

- Occupational Health and Safety Act (2004)
- Local Government Act 2020

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Council Plan 2025 – 2029 Strategic Objectives	Priorities
A Council that serves its Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	Motor Vehicle Manual Council Expense Policy and Procedure
Other	Employee Code of Conduct Model Councillor Code of Conduct

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

- 27 May 2020 – Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes – Item 13.12 Motor Vehicle Policy
- 24 August 2022 – Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes – Item 14.2 Motor Vehicle Policy, Fleet Ownership Procedure, Operating Use Procedure, Private Use Procedure
- 29 January 2025 – Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes – Item 15.6 Motor Vehicle Manual

OPTIONS

Councillors could choose not to support the strategic vision changes as outlined in the discussion of this report and not endorse the adoption of the manual.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Environmental	The Manual incorporates the assessment of environmental factors when purchasing a vehicle.
Financial	Currently, Council is paying a supplier for the privilege of utilising their vehicles under a hire arrangement. This is a more costly model to that of leasing and/or owning vehicles. A 10-year replacement plan scenario modelling has been completed, with the option to hire, lease or own operational vehicles outright considered. The ownership model is the most viable option. This is the model that management will continue to put forward annually as part of the budget process. The Manual also facilitates the transition to remunerating management for the use of their personal vehicles instead of providing vehicles. The aim is to lessen the number of privately used and provided vehicles, however recognising that it is a retention strategy for key roles, recognising our Council is limited on the remuneration it can pay to staff.

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
Reputational Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	The Manual creates a clear process for decision making, which is readily available to community members, Councillors and staff.	Maintains Residual Risk Level
Financial Risk - Residual Risk Level Medium	The Manual aims to ensure that Council motor vehicles are owned and used in the most cost-effective manner possible.	Maintains Residual Risk Level
Environmental Sustainability Risk - Residual Risk Level Medium	The Manual aims to reduce the level of greenhouse gas emissions generated by Council motor vehicles.	Maintains Residual Risk Level
Corporate Governance, Compliance and Liability Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	The Manual aims to manage compliance and risks relating to the ownership and use of Council motor vehicles.	Maintains Residual Risk Level

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Victorian Public Sector Motor Vehicle Policy

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.

15.10 FUNDING APPLICATION ENDORSEMENT: ANZAC PARK NETBALL, TENNIS AND AFL INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING AND UPGRADE PROJECT (2025-26 VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT BUDGET ALLOCATION)

Prepared by Rebecca Botheras, Sport and Recreation Coordinator

SUMMARY

The Victorian Government's 2025–26 State Budget has allocated \$250,000 to Yarriambiack Shire Council through the Community Sport and Recreation Projects Funding program to support the ANZAC Park Netball, Tennis and AFL Infrastructure Planning and Upgrade Project. This allocation delivers on an announcement made to the Warracknabeal community in May 2025 as part of the State Budget release.

While the funding commitment has already been announced, Council is required to complete a retrospective funding application process to formally secure the funds and enter into a funding agreement with the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions.

This report seeks Council's endorsement to proceed with the funding application based on a revised scope of works that has been developed in consultation with Sport and Recreation Victoria (SRV).

Resolution

That Council:

- a) Endorses the submission of a funding application to the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions to formally secure the \$250,000 2025–26 State Budget allocation for the ANZAC Park Netball, Tennis and AFL Infrastructure Planning and Upgrade Project; and
- b) Agree to underwrite any cost escalation to the project budget to deliver the full scope of the project as outlined in the application.

Moved Cr Kirk

Seconded Cr Zanker

That the recommendation be adopted.

Carried Unanimously

ATTACHMENTS

[Attachment: ANZAC Park Proposal for Consideration 2025-26](#)

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

[Confidential Attachment: ANZAC Memorial Park Electrical Infrastructure Report](#)

DISCUSSION

As part of the Victorian Government's 2025–26 State Budget, Yarriambiack Shire Council was allocated \$250,000 through the Community Sport and Recreation Projects Funding program to support upgrades at ANZAC Park, Warracknabeal. The funding announcement was made publicly in May 2025 and indicated that the allocation was intended to deliver lighting for the existing netball and tennis courts.

Although the funding commitment has been announced, Council is required to complete a retrospective funding application process to formally secure the funds and enter into a funding agreement with the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions.

Following the budget announcement, Council Officers undertook detailed discussions with SRV and confirmed that the existing netball and tennis courts are not suitable for lighting installation without first addressing underlying compliance, safety and infrastructure issues. At present, there are no detailed court designs, no completed site investigations, and insufficient confirmed electrical capacity to support compliant lighting. As a result,

installation of lighting as originally announced is not feasible within the scope of the current allocation.

In response, Council worked collaboratively with SRV to prepare and submit a Funding Proposal for Consideration, seeking approval to revise the scope of works. The revised approach reallocates the funding to priority enabling works that must occur before lighting can be installed and before further stages of the ANZAC Park redevelopment can proceed. SRV has confirmed support for Council to proceed with the revised scope and submit the retrospective funding application.

The revised scope focuses on delivering essential planning, design and preparatory works that will maximise community benefit within the current budget and strategically position the precinct for future funding opportunities. The scope of works includes completion of detailed designs and site investigations for new netball and tennis courts incorporating compliant lighting, supply and installation of new AFL goal nets, and undertaking onsite electrical upgrades that will enable future lighting and infrastructure upgrades across the precinct.

This approach ensures that the funding delivers tangible outcomes while aligning with the ANZAC Park Masterplan, Council’s Sport and Recreation Strategy, and broader community priorities. Importantly, the project has a strong focus on supporting women and girls’ participation across netball, tennis, AFL, cricket and swimming by improving safety, functionality and long-term accessibility of facilities at ANZAC Park.

Since the funding announcement, Council has continued to consult with ANZAC Park user groups through the established Project Control Group (PCG). User groups have been informed of the funding allocation, Council’s engagement with SRV, and the proposed revised scope of works, ensuring transparency and ongoing stakeholder alignment.

The proposed scope of works and associated budget are outlined below.

Scope Element	Cost (\$)
Netball & Tennis Court Designs and Site Investigations	\$43,904
Supply & Install - 2x AFL Goal Nets	\$100,920
Onsite Electrical Upgrades	\$63,000
Project Management	\$17,176
Contingency (10%)	\$25,000
Total Project Cost	\$250,000

Endorsing the funding application will enable Council to formally secure the State Budget allocation and deliver critical enabling works that support the staged, long-term redevelopment of ANZAC Park and improved outcomes for the Warracknabeal community.

RELEVANT LAW

Local Government Act 2020

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Council Plan 2025 – 2029 Strategic Objectives	Priorities
An Innovative and Diversified Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support community groups to deliver on the Sport and Recreation Strategy and Recreation Reserve Master Plan initiatives, in alignment with Council’s policies
A Council that serves its Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build trust through engaging with our community, delivering quality services and outcomes.
Policies, Procedures, Guidelines, Plans, Strategies and Frameworks	
Policy	Project Management Policy
	Grant Management Policy
	Procurement Policy
Procedure	Project Management Procedure
Strategy	Sport and Recreation Strategy
Framework	Priority Projects 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

Not applicable.

OPTIONS

- a) Council may wish to reject the recommendation and reconsider the Victorian Government Budget Allocation Funding Opportunity
- b) Council may wish to reject the recommendation and request further community consultation be undertaken prior to lodging a funding application.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Economic	The project will provide a positive economic outcome for the Warracknabeal community by ensuring the \$250,000 Victorian Government budget allocation is secured and invested locally. Delivery of planning, design and enabling works will position Council and user groups to leverage future State and Federal funding opportunities, reducing long-term financial risk and maximising return on investment.
Social	The project will deliver significant social benefits by supporting the long-term sustainability of ANZAC Park as a key multi-sport and community precinct. Improved planning and infrastructure readiness will enhance safety, accessibility and usability for a wide range of users, with a strong focus on supporting women and girls’ participation across netball, tennis, AFL, cricket and swimming. Ongoing engagement with user groups through the Project Control Group

	ensures community voices are represented and that upgrades align with local needs.
Environmental	Undertaking detailed design and site investigations prior to future construction will enable environmentally responsible planning outcomes, including consideration of efficient electrical infrastructure, reduced rework and minimised environmental impacts during later project stages. The staged approach supports sustainable asset management by ensuring future lighting and infrastructure upgrades are appropriately designed, compliant and efficient.
Financial	The project will be fully funded through the \$250,000 allocation provided in the Victorian Government’s 2025–26 State Budget, with no additional Council contribution required. Endorsing the funding application will enable Council to formally secure the allocation and deliver the project within the approved budget.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement has been a core component of planning and decision-making for the ANZAC Park Netball, Tennis and AFL Infrastructure Planning and Upgrade Project.

In late 2025, Council established the ANZAC Park Project Control Group (PCG) to guide coordinated planning and future development of the precinct in line with the ANZAC Park Masterplan. The PCG comprises Council Officers and nominated representatives from each ANZAC Park user group, with members responsible for ensuring two-way communication between their respective organisations and the broader PCG.

Since the Victorian Government’s 2025–26 Budget announcement, Council has continued to engage with PCG members and user groups to provide updates on the funding allocation and Council’s ongoing discussions with Sport and Recreation Victoria (SRV). User groups have been informed of the requirement for a retrospective funding application and the constraints associated with installing lighting on the existing netball and tennis courts.

Through these discussions, Council outlined the proposed revised scope of works developed in consultation with SRV, which reallocates the funding to priority planning, design and enabling works that must occur prior to lighting installation. This engagement has ensured user groups clearly understand the rationale for the revised approach and how the proposed works align with longer-term precinct development.

Ongoing engagement through the PCG will continue throughout delivery of the project and into future stages of the ANZAC Park redevelopment. This approach supports transparent decision-making, coordinated advocacy, and ensures that facility upgrades reflect community needs and support participation across multiple sports, including a strong focus on women and girls.

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
Reputational Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	Failure to progress the funding application may present a reputational risk given the funding has been publicly announced as part of the Victorian Government’s 2025–26 State Budget. Proceeding with the application and revised scope, developed in consultation with Sport and Recreation Victoria, mitigates this risk and demonstrates Council’s commitment to delivering outcomes for the Warracknabeal community.	Reduces 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	Supporting the funding application and accepting the budget allocation demonstrates Council's commitment to a project identified in the ANZAC Park Masterplan, and as a priority in Council's Project Listing.	Reduces Residual Risk Level
Financial Risk - Residual Risk Level Medium	Pursuing the project with funding support from the Victorian Government reduces the financial impact on Council, as no Council or community contribution is required. Additionally, the upgrade of the existing facilities is expected to lower future maintenance costs, providing longer-term financial benefits.	Reduces Residual Risk Level

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

- Active Victoria 2022-2026 - Strategic Framework Objectives: Connecting Communities and Building Value.
- Victorian Public Health & Wellbeing Plan 2023-2027 – Priority 3: Improving Wellbeing, Priority 5: Increasing Active Living.

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.

15.11 COUNCIL PLAN YEAR 1 ACTIONS REPORT - QUARTER 3

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 a quarterly update on the Year 1 Actions of the Council Plan, outlining their alignment with the plan's strategic priorities and objectives, as well as summarising progress for each action.

Resolution

That Council:

- a) Endorse the progress of the Council Plan 2025-2029, Year 1, Quarterly Report – Quarter 3, as attached to this report.

Moved Cr Heintze

Seconded Cr Keel

That the recommendation be adopted.

Carried Unanimously

ATTACHMENTS

[Attachment: Council Plan - Year 1 Actions Report - Quarter 3 Update](#)

DISCUSSION

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 in 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.

The enclosed quarterly report offers Councillors and the community a comprehensive update on Council's progress in achieving its Council Plan objectives and priorities.

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 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

OPTIONS

Councillors could choose 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.

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.

15.12 EARLY YEARS COMMITMENT STATEMENT

Prepared by Tammy Smith, Chief Executive Officer

Following the transfer of kindergarten and maternal child health services to Emerge Early Years Services and West Wimmera Health Service, Council no longer manages early years programs directly. As a result, on 28 January 2026, Councillors voted to rescind the Yarriambiack Shire Council Early Years Plan 2023–2028 and replace it with an Early Years Commitment Statement.

This report recommends Council formally adopt the Early Years Commitment Statement 2026-2029 and integrate its objectives into the future Council Plan.

Resolution

That Council:

- a) Adopt the Early Years Commitment Statement 2026-2029 as attached to this report; and
- b) Endorse to embed the commitment statement objectives into future Council Plans.

Moved Cr Zanker

Seconded Cr Lehmann

That the recommendation be adopted.

Carried Unanimously

ATTACHMENTS

[Attachment: Early Years Commitment Statement 2026-2029](#)

DISCUSSION

The Early Years Plan 2023–2028 provided a comprehensive framework for Council’s approach to planning, delivery, partnership, and advocacy aimed at achieving optimal outcomes for Early Years communities. This plan informed Council’s strategies across leadership, advocacy, inclusive service delivery, infrastructure development, and partnership building, with a focus on reducing barriers and strengthening community capacity.

In 2025, Council resolved to discontinue its role as the direct provider of Early Years services. Subsequently, in January 2026, the Early Years Plan was formally rescinded, and Councillors agreed to develop and adopt an Early Years Commitment Statement.

The Early Years Commitment Statement demonstrates Council’s unwavering support for early years development and aligns closely with the objectives specified in the Council Plan. This ensures that early childhood priorities are integrated within the broader strategic framework, directing decision-making throughout relevant initiatives.

It is recommended that the Early Years Commitment Statement be incorporated into future Council Plans as part of Council’s ongoing strategy, rather than maintained as an independent document.

RELEVANT LAW

Local Government Act 2020 – Section 9 ‘Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles’.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Council Plan 2025 – 2029 Strategic Objectives	Priorities
An Innovative and Diversified Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for continued and enhanced funding to enable strategic investment in our roads, footpaths, and associated

Council Plan 2025 – 2029 Strategic Objectives	Priorities
	assets to support tourism, economic development and social inclusion and connection across our Shire. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand, support and advocate for services and associated skilled workforces to unlock economic and community development opportunities across our Shire.
A Healthy and Inclusive Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	Child Safety Code of Conduct
	Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
Guideline	Maintenance and Servicing Guidelines
Plan	Council Plan
	Asset Management Plan
	Long Term Financial Plan
Strategy	Economic Development Strategy
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

- 10 December 2025 – Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes – Item 15.6 Emerge Early Years Services Building Leases and Service Agreement
- 27 August 2025 – Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes – Item 15.6 Transfer of Warracknabeal, Rupanyup and Minyip Kindergarten Services
- 26 March 2025 – Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes – Item 15.3 West Wimmera Health Services Leases for Maternal and Child Health Services
- 26 February 2025 – Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes – Item 15.8 Endorsement of Emerge Lease and Service Agreement for Hopetoun Early Years Centre

- 26 February 2025 – Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes – Item 14.2 Maternal Child Health Funding Municipal Association Victoria State Council Motion
- 26 February 2025 - Closed Council Meeting Minutes – Item 4.1 Endorsement of Communication and Engagement Plan Early Years Services
- 29 January 2025 - Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes – Item 15.4 Endorsement of Transition - Maternal Child Health (including Immunisation Services)
- 27 November 2024 - Closed Council Meeting Minutes - Item 4.3 Future Direction of Early Childhood Services Part 2
- 24 July 2024 - Closed Council Meeting Minutes – Item 4.4 Future Direction of Early Childhood Services
- 25 October 2023 – Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes – Item 15.5 Municipal Early Years Plan 2023-2028
- 28 January 2026 - Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes – Item 15.6 Rescission of Early Years Plan 2023-2028

OPTIONS

The Council might decide to consult the community about the commitment statement; however, it was created using feedback collected during the consultation phase for transitioning away from direct service delivery.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

<p>Economic</p>	<p>The lack of adequate Early Years services represents a critical constraint on the region’s economic growth and long-term prosperity. Persistent shortages of qualified educators and carers have limited families’ ability to return to the workforce, reducing household income and overall productivity. This issue is further exacerbated by a severe skills and labour shortage across the Shire and surrounding region. Without accessible childcare, parents are unable to accept available positions or increase their working hours, directly restricting workforce participation and impeding business development. Transitioning Early Years services to a clustered model under Emerge is a strategic and necessary response to remove these barriers, strengthen workforce capacity, and safeguard the region’s economic sustainability and competitiveness.</p>
<p>Social</p>	<p>Early Years services support children's social health, wellbeing, and development, forming the basis for lifelong learning. The Council prioritises equitable access to ensure all children can thrive. Moving to a cluster model with Emerge improves service quality, accessibility, and social sustainability by promoting inclusion and community connections. Similarly, shifting MCH services to West Wimmera Health Service increases inclusivity.</p> <p>This approach supports families, builds resilience, and ensures positive outcomes for young people, contributing to a more cohesive and vibrant community.</p>
<p>Financial</p>	<p>Transitioning Early Years services to Emerge and WWHS enabled Council to optimise financial sustainability by reallocating valuable resources away from direct service delivery. This shift allows Council to concentrate on its core responsibilities, such as strategic planning, advocacy, and infrastructure development.</p>

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Early Years Commitment Statement was developed based on feedback received when developing the Municipal Early Years Plan and transitioning out of direct service delivery for early years and maternal child health services.

Further community engagement is not required, based on the extensive engagement undertaken with the three separate outlined processes.

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	Developing and adopting a commitment statement provides assurance to the community that Council still values early years services and is committed to advocacy and supporting such services to thrive in our region.	Maintains Residual Risk Level
Reputational Risk - Residual Risk Level Low	As above, developing and adopting a commitment statement provides assurance to the community and mitigate reputational risk.	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 COUNCIL REPORTS FOR NOTING

Nil.

17 PERMITS ISSUED

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

Resolution

That Council:

Note the permits issued by Council between 01 March 2026 to 31 March 2026.

Moved Cr Zanker

Seconded Cr Heintze

That the recommendation be adopted.

Carried Unanimously

Reference No	Description	Address	Date of Issue
Local Law Permits			
JW1-26	Camping in public Place	Beulah	11/03/2026
05-26	WAG – Conduct a festival – YFest Easter Parade	Warracknabeal	16/03/2026
06-26	Rupanyup Major Events – Conduct a festival – Rupanyup Dirt Music Festival	Rupanyup	23/03/2026
JW2-26	Conduct Festival on roadway	Beulah	16/03/2026
01-26	Roadside Trading Activity Permit – Ladies Rest Rooms	Warracknabeal	17/03/2026
02-26	Roadside Trading Activity Permit – Small Business Bus	Warracknabeal	23/03/2026
03-26	Roadside Trading Activity Permit – Rupanyup Major Events	Rupanyup	24/03/2026
Planning Permits			
PA20260084	Construction of a bird enclosure	Warracknabeal	20/03/2026
PA20260085	Two lot subdivision	Rupanyup	20/03/2026
PA20260086	Demolition of the Minapre Hotel	Lascelles	06/03/2026
RRWP & APP Permits			
2026-1	Water Tapping	Minyip	11/03/2026

18 CLOSED DECISIONS TO BE RECORDED IN OPEN COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

Nil.

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 27 May 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.

Resolution

That the Ordinary Meeting of Council is now closed at 10.36am.

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

Moved Cr Kirk

Seconded Cr Keel

That the recommendation be adopted.

Carried Unanimously

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. C365-2026 Wet and Dry Plant, Equipment and Labour Hire

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

- a) Because it is Council business information, being information that would prejudice Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released (section 3(1)(a)); and
- b) This ground applies because the Agenda Item concerns the progress of ongoing contractual negotiations that would, if prematurely released, diminish the strength of Council's position in those negotiations.