



Minutes

Council Meeting

Tuesday 19 August 2025 at 6.00 pm

**Council Chambers (and by video conferencing)
East Gippsland Shire Council Corporate Centre
273 Main Street, Bairnsdale 3875**

Councillors

John White (Mayor), Sonia Buckley (Deputy Mayor), Arthur Allen, Jodie Ashworth, Tom Crook, Barry Davis, Joanne Eastman (Online), Bernie Farquhar, and Ian Trevaskis

Attachments referenced in these minutes can be located in the meeting agenda on East Gippsland Shire Council's [website](#).

Vision

To foster inclusive, connected, communities and places where all East Gippslanders prosper, and endeavour not to leave anyone behind.

Our Strategic Themes

1. Community Wellbeing and Social Responsibility
2. Prosperity
3. Making the Most of What We've Got
4. Managing Council Well

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1 Procedural

1.1 Recognition of Traditional Custodians

Mayor Cr John White welcomed all to the Council meeting and acknowledged the traditional custodians.

East Gippsland Shire Council acknowledges the Gunaikurnai, Monero and Bidawel people as the Traditional Custodians of this land that encompasses East Gippsland Shire, and their enduring relationship with country. The Traditional Custodians have cared and nurtured East Gippsland for tens of thousands of years.

Council values their living culture and practices and their right to self-determination. Council pays respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in East Gippsland, their Elders, past, present, and future.

1.2 Apologies

Nil

1.3 Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Sarah Johnston General Manager Business Excellence declared a conflict of interest in relation to item 5.2.1 CON2025 1732 *Construction of Buchan-Orbost Road Landslip Repair*, as a general interest due to a family connection with one of the tenderers.

Procedural Motion

That item 5.3.1 Municipal Association of Victoria October 2025 State Council Meeting Motions be brought forward and considered before item 5.1.2.

Moved: Cr Sonia Buckley

Seconded: Cr Arthur Allen

Spoke for the motion: Nil

Spoke against the motion: Nil

Closed the debate: Nil

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

For: Cr Arthur Allen, Cr Jodie Ashworth, Cr Sonia Buckley, Cr Tom Crook,
Cr Barry Davis, Cr Joanne Eastman, Cr Bernie Farquhar, Cr Ian Trevaskis and
Cr John White

Against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

1.4 Confirmation of Minutes

Motion

That the minutes of the Council meeting held Tuesday 15 July 2025 be confirmed.

Moved: Cr Ian Trevaskis

Seconded: Cr Tom Crook

Spoke for the motion: Cr Tom Crook

Spoke against the motion: Nil

Closed the debate: Nil

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

For: Cr Arthur Allen, Cr Jodie Ashworth, Cr Sonia Buckley, Cr Tom Crook,
Cr Barry Davis, Cr Joanne Eastman, Cr Bernie Farquhar, Cr Ian Trevaskis and
Cr John White

Against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

1.5 Next Meeting

The next Council Meeting is scheduled to be held on Tuesday 16 September 2025 at the Corporate Centre, 273 Main Street Bairnsdale commencing at 6.00 pm.

1.6 Requests for Leave of Absence

Nil

Procedural Note

Cr Arthur Allen noted his apology for the Council meeting scheduled on Tuesday 16 September 2025.

Procedural Note

At this point in proceedings, Mayor Cr John White acknowledged Miss Jasmine Lynch from West Bairnsdale Primary School, who observed the meeting from the public gallery as part of her Rotary Junior Community Awards program.

To acknowledge Jasmine's participation in this community program, the Mayor presented Jasmine with a Council pin.

1.7 Open Forum

1.7.1 Petitions

1.7.1.1 Objection 2025-26 Jetty Licence Fee Increase - Riviera Harbour, Paynesville

Authorised by General Manager Business Excellence

Public Submission

Mr Colin Frisch

Motion

That Council:

- 1. receives the petition lodged by Mr Colin Frisch requesting “Petitioners are seeking that East Gippsland Shire Council review the decision to increase the Riviera Harbour Jetty licence fee and modify that fee increase in line with other East Gippsland Shire jetty/berth price rises - not exceeding 12%”;***
- 2. notes that the petition will be referred to General Manager Assets and Environment for consideration and response; and***
- 3. notes that the Chief Executive Officer will arrange for Council Officers to write to the head petitioner advising them of these actions.***

Moved: Cr Arthur Allen

Seconded: Cr Sonia Buckley

Spoke for the motion: Cr Arthur Allen and Cr Sonia Buckley

Spoke against the motion: Nil

Closed the debate: Nil

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

For: Cr Arthur Allen, Cr Jodie Ashworth, Cr Sonia Buckley, Cr Tom Crook,
Cr Barry Davis, Cr Joanne Eastman, Cr Bernie Farquhar, Cr Ian Trevaskis and
Cr John White

Against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

1.7.2 Questions of Council

1.7.2.1 Chilas Road, Wy Yung

Ms Ceilidh Eadie submitted the following questions which were read out on her behalf by Fiona Weigall Chief Executive Officer:

Question 1: *“On 26th March 2025 the Chilas road petitioners received a letter directly from Fiona Weigall council, CEO it stated, “Council will continue to maintain the existing gravel road to the standards within our Road Management Plan,” The Road management plan clearly states that there is a gravel road resurfacing program “The development of the annual gravel road resurfacing program” Residents can only recall resurfacing works occurring to the road once, therefore at each grading the integrity of the road continues to be further compromised. When was the last time Chilas road was resurfaced according to council records?”.*

Question 2: *“Chilas Road was last graded (maintained) in May 2025 at the request of the residents. Potholes have already developed, while waiting for council to meet the IDM standards and upgrade Chilas road when will it next be resurfaced?”.*

Stuart McConnell General Manager Assets and Environment provided a response which is summarised below:

Response 1: Recent maintenance grading was completed on Chilas Road on 21 May 2025. A budget is allocated each year to undertake gravel resurfacing on its rural roads.

While grading may occur more regularly, gravel resurfacing is only undertaken when the circumstances dictate, and not as a matter of course.

In relation to resurfacing, 44 tonnes of new material were incorporated into Chilas Road when grading works took place on 24 June 2024.

Response 2: Council inspects all its roads over a continuous cycle, as per the definitions outline in the Road Management Plan.

In between this, Area Road Supervisors will undertake proactive inspections of roads, along with reacting to requests made by residents about defect concerns.

As with all defects, intervention level is determined by specifications set out again in our Road Management Plan and if remedial work is required it will be undertaken.

1.7.2.2 Chilas Road, Wy Yung

Ms Emily Jackson submitted the following questions which were read out on her behalf by Fiona Weigall Chief Executive Officer:

Question 1: *"After petitioning council in March 2024 (Chilas Road Wy Yung), Council contracted a report which it received on 27/8/2024. It clearly states on page 4 "the intersection sight distance particularly looking east towards Wy Yung is extremely limited, and particularly dangerous." How long can I expect not only my own children, 3 of which are L or P plater drivers, but all resident of Chilas road to have to use this "particularly dangerous" intersection?"*

Question 2: *"In the above-mentioned report prepared by Chris Whelan Civil Engineering, it clearly details that Chilas Road Wy Yung requires significant upgrade to meet the IDM standards. As East Gippsland Shire is a signatory to the IDM standards, what is the required action to ensure these upgrades occur?"*

Stuart McConnell General Manager Assets and Environment provided a response which is summarised below:

Response 1: I would like to acknowledge that the sight lines at this intersection are limited due to the location of the road relative to the crest of the hill.

To improve the safety of this intersection, Council previously investigated a speed limit reduction for Wy Yung-Calulu Road with the community response being that it was not supportive of this action.

With the new development starting at the start of Wy Yung-Calulu Road, Council has determined that when completed, will have an impact. As a result, we will again be seeking a speed reduction from the Department of Transport and Planning from Bullumwaal Road through to Bellevue Road.

Council will also continue to investigate sealing the intersection.

Response 2: The report was commissioned to answer the question on what would need to be done in accordance with the Infrastructure Design Manual (IDM) if the road was to be sealed.

Chilas Road meets the IDM requirements as an unsealed road of the relevant classification.

The report states that the road does not meet the IDM if it was to be sealed.

Chilas Road currently has a gravel surface width of 4mts meeting the IDM requirement of a Rural Access Gravel Road. If the road was to be sealed, the IDM then dictates that the sealed surface has a 6.2mt with gravel shoulders either side of 1.5mts meaning an overall total width of 9.2mts.

It is normal for the upgrade of roads to be part of the subdivision and development of land. In fact, the last nearly 300 m (of just over 900 m) was constructed as a condition of a planning permit issued as recently as 2020 (and amended in 2022).

Again, if the landholders would like to pursue a road upgrade through a special charge scheme we are happy to discuss this.

1.7.2.3 Bairnsdale Outdoor Pool

Mr Greg Savage submitted the following questions which were read out on his behalf by Fiona Weigall Chief Executive Officer:

Question 1: *"Where will the youth of Bairnsdale seek refuge from the summer heat to keep cool? Rivers are full of hazards."*

Question 2: *"Please explain the extent of the works that are required in the Plant room causing it to be "unsafe posing unacceptable risks under the Occ health & Safety Act of 2004"*

Chris Stephenson General Manager Place and Community provided a response which is summarised below:

Response 1: The data demonstrates not many of Bairnsdale's youth currently access the pool over summer, excluding school carnivals.

However, the Bairnsdale Aquatic and Recreation Centre (while heated) will still be available all year round for community to access for swimming and has high usage. So too will other facilities like our local splash parks in Metung and Lakes Entrance.

Council will also be continuing aquatic education for our youth, promoting water safety with watch around water promotions and financially supporting beach lifeguard patrols at our popular beaches.

Response 2: Several risks identified in the plant room are rated 'extreme' including:

- confined space entry in the backwash pump pit that extends to engulfment risk
- Manual chemical handling issues due to the poor and outdated chemical dosing plant design
- risks of slips, trips and falls owing to raised and cracked concrete
- falls from height (around 3 to 4 metres) owing to the backwash tank design in place with current plant.
- corrosion on safety equipment due to age and deuteriation of asset.
- issues with electrical infrastructure requiring significant works.

Some initial cost estimates to address plant issues have been obtained and are more than \$500k. However, this investment would still fail to meet our obligations in providing a safe workplace.

To fully remove the risk would require the plant room to be decommissioned and redeveloped.

Addressing these issues is not achievable prior to the 2025/26 season and needs to be considered in context with all of the infrastructure on site.

Council expects to obtain further expert information about replacement costs, as part of future strategy work aligned with the recommendation that will be presented tonight.

1.7.2.4 Bairnsdale Outdoor Pool

Mr Harry Barton submitted the following questions which were read out on his behalf by Fiona Weigall Chief Executive Officer:

Question 1: *“What appropriate planning for building a new pool (same or different site) has taken place in the last 15 years since the business case for rejuvenation of the pool was presented to the council?”*

Question 2: *What actions need to happen to keep the outdoor pool running until a new pool is built?”*

Chris Stephenson General Manager Place and Community provided a response which is summarised below:

Response 1: I refer you to the report that outlines that Council developed and adopted an Aquatic Strategy in 2016 that acknowledged that the pool was nearing end of life and should not be invested in heavily to extend its life. Officers have followed that direction. However, we are now proposing to revisit the strategy with the community.

Response 2: The Officers opinion is that there are no short-term solutions that will address the health and safety hazards onsite intime for the upcoming season.

To fully remove the risk would require the plant room to be decommissioned and redeveloped. Concourse and drainage to be replaced which may require the whole pool shell replacement also.

Council expects to obtain further expert information about replacement costs as part of future strategy work aligned with the recommendation that will be presented tonight.

1.7.2.5 Bairnsdale Outdoor Pool

Ms Andrea Savage asked the following questions:

Question 1: *“What measures has Council put in place to retain the use of the land as a functional Community Outdoor pool?”*

Question 2: *“What consultation has Council undertaken with other local Councils to gain advice about access to funding- including funding available through investments in renewable energy projects in our region?”*

Chris Stephenson General Manager Place and Community provided a response which is summarised below:

Response 1: Council decided in 2016 to not make any major investment in this site and to manage it through to end of life. The last few years have been difficult to manage, and to get the facility into an operational state.

Officers have completed annual scheduled maintenance plans that have been developed by pool specialist.

These schedules are developed following a Pool Plant Asset Condition audit that Council commissions every three years. The last was completed in May 2025.

The yearly maintenance and repairs have also occurred on related infrastructure and buildings.

A Geotechnical report was commissioned that highlights challenges for any redevelopment of the site that need to be taken into account for any future plans.

Response 2: Council has not engaged with other Local Government Associations' regarding external funding for outdoor pool upgrades due to the direction of the East Gippsland Aquatic strategy 2015.

More broadly, Council regularly consults with neighbouring local governments to share knowledge and strategies for accessing funding. These discussions have informed our advocacy efforts to ensure our communities benefit from renewable energy investments.

1.7.2.6 Bairnsdale Outdoor Pool

Ms Anne Daffy asked the following questions:

Question 1: *“How do you feel the East Gippsland Shire currently rates when compared to other Local Government Associations?”*

Question 2: *“In light of this, and remembering that 50 m pool is a prestigious asset for Local Government Associations throughout of Australian and a benchmark upon which location is judged, what can be done to ensure that we maintain ours.”*

Chris Stephenson General Manager Place and Community provided a response which is summarised below:

Response 1: Officers have spoken with other Local Government Associations including some you have listed.

Not all facilities you have listed are like facilities, whether that be regarding design, capital investment and maintenance programming.

Not all councils listed have the same strategic direction. This can be associated with things like their proximity to the coast etc.

So, when benchmarking and making comparisons, we look at attendance, and Council subsidy. And what we can confirm is due to lack of community attendance and engagement onsite, the Bairnsdale Outdoor pool has the highest council subsidy per visit of all Council pools we have benchmarked against.

Response 2: In answer to this I would refer you to our report for tonight and our recommendation to revisit our strategy to determine the best way forward for East Gippsland

1.7.2.7 Bairnsdale Outdoor Pool

Ms Genevieve Wilks asked the following questions:

- Question 1: *“What advertising have you done over the last 5 years to promote the existence of the Outdoor Pool to residents and promote visitation that may have reduced the council subsidy cost per swim?”*
- Question 2: *“What is required for Bairnsdale Outdoor Pool to meet safety standards and OHS requirements to open for the 25-26 summer season so that community can contribute to the solution?”*

Chris Stephenson General Manager Place and Community provided a response which is summarised below:

- Response 1: Council has run advertising such as radio advertisements, social media posts and held events such as free swim Fridays.
- Response 2: In addition to the requirements outlined with the plant room there are issues with the concourse, the pool shell and issues with other buildings on site.

1.7.2.8 Bairnsdale Outdoor Pool

Ms Stephanie Buckland asked the following questions:

- Question 1: *“What community consultation has taken place for this report and recommendations over the past ten years since the 2015 Aquatic Strategy was developed, especially during and since the end of the 2024-25 season and with main user groups?”*
- Question 2: *“Why doesn’t the council report speak to the significantly reduced season and opening hours that undoubtedly contributed to reduced visitation numbers for 2024-25 season?”*

Chris Stephenson General Manager Place and Community provided a response which is summarised below:

- Response 1: Following significant consultation in developing the East Gippsland Aquatic Strategy 2015, no further consultation has been had with community due to the outcome of the strategy directly advising no further improvements or investment would be made to the site. The main user groups of the Bairnsdale Outdoor Pool are the schools who lead their annual carnivals onsite, and the water dragons, who although didn’t use the pool last season, have a lease for the clubrooms onsite.

Officers have contacted the user groups to start the conversation on how Council can support alternative arrangements for this summer. The recommendation in the report is that community is consulted on the future of the Outdoor pool in the creation of a new Aquatic strategy.

- Response 2: The seasonal operating hours for the Bairnsdale and Orbost outdoor pools are shaped by a combination of weather conditions, historical community usage patterns, and resourcing to ensure financial sustainability. Data demonstrates the Bairnsdale Outdoor Pool attendance was not significantly impacted due to the operating hour changes as it witnessed low patronage in advance of this being introduced.

1.7.2.9 Rates Hardship

Ms Colette Sylvia Maraczy-Lawley asked the following question:

Question 1: *“Is East Gippsland Shire Council Rates Levies and Charges Team following correct Hardship grant of Acceptance legal procedures by service tender securement of a first step taken against the land owner and dwelling/s, possessions and rate payer entitlement and rights regardless whether or not interest attributing arrears or waiver be granted to procure and deploy the business of a debt collector prior to legal staff or contractor service engagement? Lawyers such as Maddocks Lawyers cannot function or act as debt collectors. Debt collectors can only be engaged after filing and subsequent set court mention date is obtained through the Law Courts system. An Australian Company Number of ML+C COLLECTORS that misses the duplication of the first two digits of the Australian Business Number of East Gippsland Shire Council as a legislation governed body under the Local Government Act would deceptively be a scheme unearthed by me, Ms Colette Sylvia Maraczy-Lawley of 145-145A Wallace Street Bairnsdale Victoria 3875 Australia a retired registered nurse, Workplace Health and Safety Officer and current Queensland Justice of the Peace (Qualified) 99550 to by manipulation include a breach of Local Government Act to introduce the acceptance of a lawyer and debt collector under a ill begotten profit, sovereignty entitlement and erode, challenge or strip the owner's right to autonomy and asset and estate and conduct and ethical adoptions to self-govern ones or ownerships of it repressed freedoms and obligations under agreement to securing contract with another or part of the owner's business structure/s.”*

Summarised: Is East Gippsland Shire Council legally permitted to take action to recover unpaid rates and charges under its hardship arrangements?

Sarah Johnston General Manager Business Excellence provided a response which is summarised below:

Response: Yes, Council under the *Local Government Act* 1989 (Act) is legally able to take action to recover unpaid rates and charges. Last year we undertook a review of our Hardship Policy to align with the Act and the Ministerial and Interim Hardship Guidelines, which came into effect on 20 June 2023.

If you are having trouble paying your rates or charges, our Policy explains the help you can get and the steps you need to take.

We also worked closely with groups like Anglicare when we were updating our Hardship Policy so that it is easier for people to get the help they need. There is also a section of our website where you can quickly find the different types of support available.

So, if you need assistance in any way, please reach out to us or reach out to Anglicare.

1.7.2.10 Chilas Road, Wy Yung

Ms Virginia Armstrong asked the following questions:

Question 1: *“After receiving a report from Chris Whelan Civil engineering with it stating Council is not meeting IDM standards for Chilas Road (to which East Gippsland Shire is a signatory) what are the requirements of council to address these issues in a timely way?”*

Question 2: *“Without appropriate upgrade and maintenance what is councils’ strategy to protect the ever-increasing number of residents on Chilas Road, this includes vulnerable residents, pedestrians, horse riders and to reduce the dust that has an impact on residents’ health and home environments?”*

Stuart McConnell General Manager Assets and Environment provided a response which is summarised below:

Response 1: Firstly, to acknowledge Chilas Road is a special area with great views across Bairnsdale. I have recently driven the road to see for myself.

There are currently five houses located on this no-through road (one of which is part of a farm) and so there is no through traffic and limited local traffic as indicated by the traffic counts.

In response to previous concerns, Council has engaged Chris Whelan to provide an independent assessment.

The question the report was commissioned to answer is if Council was to seal the road what would need to be done – it does not answer the question of whether the road meets the Infrastructure Design Manual (IDM) as an unsealed road.

Chilas Road is classified as a Rural Access Road.

Chilas Road meets the required IDM as it stands, whilst remaining a gravel road. If a seal was added to this Road, it would no longer meet the IDM in its current form and would need to be significantly widened to accommodate this change. This would be a significant investment and would need to be assessed and prioritised against other competing road needs.

Alternatively, and particularly in circumstances where there is limited or no broader community benefit associated with the upgrade, a Special Charge Scheme is an option, and we are happy to talk with landholders about this.

Response 2: Again, for context, there are currently 5 houses on Chilas Road, and it is a no through road. Council inspects both its sealed and gravel roads as per the requirements set out in its Road Management Plan in conjunction with the *Road Management Act 2004*.

Inspections of Chilas Road conditions were undertaken as recently as the 22/07/2025 by Councils Asset Inspection Officer. Councils Road Management plan sets out the guidelines as to when a road defect is determined to be out of intervention requiring repair, and the time frames these repairs are expected to be completed by.

Where defects are identified they will be addressed in accordance with the Road Management Plan.

Council's infrastructure team aware of the importance of a safe and functional road network and invests significantly each year in the maintenance of this infrastructure. As the warmer weather approaches, the road will again be assessed for condition and the need for any dust suppression that may be required.

Again, if landholders wish to pursue an upgrade of the current road, we are happy to discuss the option of a special charge scheme.

1.7.3 Public Submissions

1.7.3.1 Objection 2025-26 Jetty Licence Fee Increase - Riviera Harbour, Paynesville

Mr Colin Frisch addressed Council on the petition and spoke at item 1.7.1.1.

1.7.3.2 Bairnsdale Outdoor Pool

The following community members spoke on the Bairnsdale Outdoor pool and spoke at item 5.1.1.

Mr Richard Brownlow
Ms Andrea Savage
Ms Genevieve Wilks
Ms Anne Daffy
Mr Jamie Croft
Ms Stephanie Buckland
Ms Sophie Brown
Mr Cooper Sampson
Mr Nick O'Brien

1.7.3.3 Municipal Association of Victoria October 2025 State Council Meeting Motions

Ms Michelle Rodwell addressed Council on Clare's Law and spoke at item 5.3.1.

1.7.3.4 Planning Permit Application - 5.2025.96.1 Two Lot Subdivision and Development of a Dwelling 34-36 Eighth Avenue, Raymond Island

Ms Kate Young addressed Council on the Planning Permit and spoke at item 5.1.2.

1.8 Items for Noting

Nil

2 Notices of Motion

Nil

3 Deferred Business

Nil

4 Councillor Delegate Reports

4.1 Cr Arthur Allen

As we emerge from winter it has been a busy time.

21-22/07/25 - The Councillor group and I travelled to Mallacoota via Cann River for a series of meetings with the Mallacoota community. This was a great opportunity to hear directly from residents, visit the Wilderness Collective, and see this exciting project firsthand. Our visit to the medical facilities also provided a valuable chance to meet staff and practitioners.

25/07/25 - I joined the Mayor at Nagle College for a tree-planting day. Thanks to the school for organising the event, and to our staff who did a lot of the preparation work.

01/08/25 I attended the Rail Freight Alliance meeting in Melbourne (report submitted).

04/08/25 - Along with other Councillors, I joined Tom McIntosh MP in Benambra where we made two farm visits and attended a community meeting. Later, Tom met with fishermen affected by proposed wind farms over dinner at Soda Fish. All meetings allowed a free exchange of views and were well appreciated. Thank you again to our staff for their organisation.

07/08/25 - The Marina Consultative Committee met.

14-15/08/25 – The South East Australia Transport Strategy (SEATS) Conference was held at our Palmers Road Office in Lakes.

- On Thursday morning, the Executive meeting recommended a 3% fee increase, the first in four years.
- Mayor Cr John White officially opened the general conference and stayed for some of the presentations.
- General Manager Assets and Environment, Stuart McConnell welcomed delegates and presented an economic overview of the shire.

Presentations included:

- NSW Roads and the Department of Transport Victoria on current and upcoming projects
- Jamie Crouchie (Department of Government Services, Victoria) on the Regional Roads Australia Mobile Program, addressing mobile blackspots and alternative solutions
- Tanya Egan (Cross Border Commissioner) on cross-border community and shire issues – of particular interest to our region
- Jarrod Andinsall (Forestry NSW, Eden Area Manager) on the unique nature of Mt Imlay Road and Edron Road. Both are sealed forest roads – Mt Imlay Road linking to the Monaro Highway with rare B-double access across the escarpment, and Edron Road connecting the commercial port to the highway.
- Ryan Leslie (Gippsland Critical Minerals) on their project, lessons from the failed Environmental Effects Statement (EES) process, and preferred rail freight solutions.
- William Karavan (Pentrach Group) on their vision for developing the Two-Fold Bay facility, highlighting freight opportunities in and out of the port, as well as potential for offshore energy industry assembly given the deep-water capacity and available land.

Special thanks to Manager Infrastructure and Open Space, Paul Rooney for his work before and during the conference.

4.2 Cr Sonia Buckley

Community Meeting in the Omeo District with State MP Tom McIntosh

This document has been prepared for submission for the upcoming general meeting, and for wider distribution. It provides an overview of major topics and recommendations taken from Community Consultation, that was initiated by MP Tom McIntosh.

Introduction

This report addresses critical issues affecting the Omeo District and High Country, highlighting key priorities for infrastructure development, feral animal management, localised decision-making, and economic diversification. The recommendations are community-driven and reflect the practical needs of those living and working in the region.

Key Issues and Recommendations:

1. Feral Animal Management

Current Situation:

- Deer and wild dogs are managed by Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA).
- Pigs and brumbies are managed by Parks Victoria.
- All four species are causing escalating damage to farms, private land, and natural environments.

Challenges:

- Fragmented agency responsibilities lead to ineffective on-ground outcomes.
- Red tape discourages landholders from participating in control programs.
- Lack of local support services for navigating complex paperwork.

Recommendations:

- Staff the Swifts Creek DEECA/Parks Victoria office with officers who can assist landholders with forms and program applications.
- Establish Feral-to-Plate Abattoirs and carcass removal initiatives.
- Fund micro-abattoirs for deer meat production as an economic incentive.
- Create dedicated feral pig eradication funding programs and creation of local employment.
- Allocate funding for dog exclusion fencing, provide government assistance for building the fencing and provide monitoring systems to protect livestock and create defined protection area for native species, reducing long-term negative outcomes and addressing economic and environmental losses.
- Amend the Omeo Rodeo Grounds to facilitate Brumby Management Programs, including holding yards and equine tourism facilities.
- To ensure the long-term success of these initiatives, it is essential to create local employment opportunities within project delivery and empower stakeholder-based decision making throughout every phase. Actively engaging community members, landholders, Traditional Owners, and local organizations in planning and implementation will enable programs to better reflect local needs, foster stronger regional engagement, and deliver more meaningful results. Prioritising the use of local labour not only builds regional capacity but also strengthens economic resilience and stewardship of the land. Importantly, to achieve these goals, dedicated funding must be sourced and secured to support both the employment and decision-making processes that are at the heart of

effective, community-led outcomes. There is a clear need for strategic partnerships to be built on mutual respect, that addresses the divide between community who have felt disempowered and government who would benefit from local input.

2. Infrastructure Development – Corryong-Benambra Road

Immediate Priorities:

- \$6.5 million is urgently required to commence works and seal dangerous corners of the Corryong-Benambra Road, addressing immediate safety risks.
- Strategic Investment:
- \$60 million is needed to complete the full sealing of the Corryong-Benambra Road.
- This arterial route would provide critical northern access to the Omeo District, enhancing:
- Freight efficiency for agriculture.
- Tourism access to the High Country and Alpine regions.
- Emergency response capabilities.
- The economic benefits to East Gippsland and Victoria from opening this access route are substantial and long-term, bolstering both regional and state economies through improved logistics, agricultural access, increased tourism, and greater resilience to natural disasters. A pledge was made by previous governments to complete the upgrade by 2021.

Subsidies and Resource Support:

- Current drought assistance criteria unfairly exclude small farms while favouring larger businesses, even those not directly impacted. Eligibility should be based on actual drought impact, not business size or income. Many small producers face closure, risking family departures, loss of generational knowledge and corporate takeovers.
- Targeted support by postcode, not broad region, would direct help to those most affected. Reforming financial criteria to reflect true impact—rather than income or scale—ensures small, family-run farms receive fair access and rural communities remain resilient.

Fuel Subsidies:

- Implement a red-dye diesel subsidy for farm vehicles to alleviate rising operational costs.

Fertiliser Subsidies:

- Introduce targeted fertiliser subsidies to support farmers amidst escalating input costs.

Water Infrastructure:

- Recognise that bore water is not always a viable solution in the high country.
- Develop alternative water security strategies suited to high-altitude farming conditions.

3. Local Decision-Making and Governance

- Reinstate local decision-making officers and action managers at Swifts Creek with the authority to implement on-ground solutions.
- Establish a Stakeholder Consultation and Local Decision-Making Board, comprising:
- Landholders
- Business owners
- Indigenous representatives
- Local government officials
- Environmental groups

- This board will ensure that decisions reflect local knowledge, experience, and needs, fostering community ownership of initiatives and improving program effectiveness.

4. Invasive Weed Control

Current Situation:

- Invasive weeds, particularly blackberries, are choking waterways and agricultural land in Swifts Creek and surrounds. Many areas are infested with English Broom and African Love grass have started to be identified along rd sides.
- Recommendations:
- Prioritise funding for invasive species control programs. East Gippsland Shire Council funding for control is minimal and needs to be addressed.
- Allocate resources for coordinated eradication efforts targeting waterways and farmland.

5. Animal Health and Biosecurity

Theileriosis (Cattle Tick Fever):

- This disease is affecting stressed cattle and poses a significant biosecurity threat.
- There is no vaccine available in Australia.

Recommendation:

- Facilitate the urgent importation and approval of Theileriosis vaccines for Australian use.

6. Fire Levy Reform

Issue:

- The current Fire Services Property Levy (FSPL) places an unfair burden on farmers, particularly those with multiple properties.
- Farmers often act as first responders in fire events.

Recommendation:

- Restructure the levy to reflect the real role of rural landholders in emergency fire response and reduce the rate for agricultural properties.
- Create a different pathway from general revenue to fund Emergency Services not burdening the Council and rates system.
- Consider abolishing the levy.

7. Economic Diversification and Tourism

Tourism Development:

- Tourism is a vital pillar of economic survival for the Omeo district.
- Strategic investment in tourism infrastructure, event development, and marketing is essential for economic diversification and regional resilience.

Equine Tourism:

- Develop wild horse tourism experiences leveraging the Omeo Rodeo Grounds as a central facility.
- Support for Tourism operators.
- Employment of local people that would combine sustainable Brumby Management to lesson impact on the environment and development of programs with educational and tourist activities to drive regional visitation.
- For a comprehensive analysis and detailed recommendations related to equine and brumby tourism opportunities in the region, please refer to the Equine Tourism Pre-Feasibility Report.

- If you would like a copy of the report, please send an email to feedback@egipps.vic.gov.au with your request.

8. Social Cohesion and Cultural Understanding

- Address ongoing culture wars surrounding feral animal management and land use.
- Establish community forums and mediation strategies to foster balanced, locally driven solutions that protect both environmental values and livelihoods.

Conclusion

The Omeo District and High Country face multifaceted challenges that require practical, decentralised, and community-informed solutions. By empowering local decision-making, investing in critical infrastructure, and fostering economic diversification, government agencies can ensure a sustainable future for the region. The proposed initiatives, particularly the sealing of the Corryong-Benambra Road and the establishment of effective feral animal control programs that combines management and business opportunities will deliver broad economic benefits for both East Gippsland and Victoria as a whole.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Tom and his associate Sam for taking the time to visit our district and for his ongoing commitment to these important issues. My gratitude also goes to the local community, whose insights and dedication continue to shape our shared vision for a vibrant and sustainable future. Together, through collaboration and mutual respect, we can realise the full potential of the Omeo District and High Country.

4.3 Cr Tom Crook

Cr Tom Crook submitted the below delegates report on his attendance at the 2025 Australian Coastal Councils Conference.

[Cr Tom Crook - Delegates Report - 2025 Australian Coastal Councils Conference](#)

4.4 Cr John White

18/07/2025	One Gippsland Closed Mayoral, Board and Local Government Meetings
20/07/2025	Twin Rivers Bream Classic – Johnsonville
21–22/07/2025	Council in the Community – Mallacoota Listening Tour
25/07/2025	National Tree Planting Day – Nagle College
25/07/2025	East Gippsland Ratepayers and Residents Quarterly Meeting
26/07/2025	Australian Red Cross Community Resilience Day
28/07/2025	Parliamentary Inquiry into Fraud and Corruption Control in Local Government
29/07/2025	CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee Meeting
30/07/2025	Omeo District Stakeholders Meeting
31/07–01/08/2025	Rural Councils Victoria Forum
04/08/2025	High Country Tour with Tom McIntosh MP
04/08/2025	Fishing Industry Dinner
05/08/2025	Agriculture Sector Advisory Committee New Member Welcome Breakfast
05/08/2025	Meeting with the Hon. Ros Spence MP
05/08/2025	TAFE Gippsland Board of Directors Event
06/08/2025	Good Friday Appeal 2025 – Lakes Entrance and Surrounds Thank You Event
08/08/2025	Mallacoota District Stakeholders Meeting
11/08/2025	Youth Ambassadors Committee Meeting
11/08/2025	Paynesville Business Tourism Association Networking Night
14/08/2025	Welcome Speech at the South East Australian Transport Strategy Meetings – Lakes Entrance
14/08/2025	Gippstar Annual Awards Night
15/08/2025	One Gippsland Mayoral and Councillor Discussions and Planning Meeting
17/08/2025	Club Marine East Gippsland Bream Classic

5 Officer Reports

5.1 Place and Community

5.1.1 Bairnsdale Outdoor Pool

Authorised by General Manager Place and Community

Public Submissions

Mr Richard Brownlow
Ms Andrea Savage
Ms Genevieve Wilks
Ms Anne Daffy
Ms Jamie Croft
Ms Stephanie Buckland
Ms Sophie Brown
Mr Cooper Sampson
Mr Nick O'Brien

Procedural Note

Cr Bernie Farquhar moved his own motion.

Motion

That Council:

- 1. *commission an independent safety inspection and detailed report on the Bairnsdale Outdoor Pool to:***
 - a) *identify any safety risks to staff and patrons;***
 - b) *assess compliance with relevant occupational health and safety legislation, standards, and guidelines; and***
 - c) *highlight any areas of non-compliance or concern requiring remediation.***
- 2. *request that officers obtain quotes for any necessary repairs or upgrades identified through the inspection to ensure the facility is compliant with occupational health and safety legislation;***
- 3. *request that the inspection findings and repair quotes be presented to Council for further consideration, including any recommended actions or improvements;***
- 4. *endorses the commissioning of a new East Gippsland Aquatic Strategy to determine the future of the Bairnsdale Outdoor Pool site, and future planning of aquatic facilities in the shire; and***
- 5. *undertakes comprehensive community engagement including the use of a community reference group when developing the new East Gippsland Aquatic Strategy and determining the future use of the site.***

Moved: Cr Bernie Farquhar
Seconded: Cr Tom Crook

Spoke for the motion: Cr Jodie Ashworth, Cr Sonia Buckley, Cr Tom Crook,
Cr Joanne Eastman and Cr Bernie Farquhar

Spoke against the motion: Nil

Closed the debate: Nil

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

For: Cr Arthur Allen, Cr Jodie Ashworth, Cr Sonia Buckley, Cr Tom Crook,
Cr Barry Davis, Cr Joanne Eastman, Cr Bernie Farquhar, Cr Ian Trevaskis and
Cr John White

Against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

Procedural Note

The meeting was adjourned for a short recess at 8.29 pm and resumed at 8.37 pm.

Procedural Motion

That Council resolves to extend the duration of the meeting for two hours.

Moved: Cr Arthur Allen
Seconded: Cr Tom Crook

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

For: Cr Arthur Allen, Cr Jodie Ashworth, Cr Sonia Buckley, Cr Tom Crook,
Cr Barry Davis, Cr Joanne Eastman, Cr Bernie Farquhar, Cr Ian Trevaskis and
Cr John White

Against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

5.3.1 Municipal Association of Victoria October 2025 State Council Meeting Motions

Authorised by Chief Executive Officer

Public Submission

Ms Michelle Rodwell

Motion

That Council

- 1. endorses the Health and Social Supports motion, provided as Attachment 1 for submission to the Municipal Association of Victoria State Council on 10 October 2025;***
- 2. endorses the Social Housing Mandated Targets motion provided as Attachment 2 for submission to the Municipal Association of Victoria State Council on 10 October 2025;***
- 3. endorses the Victorian Transmission and Renewable Energy Zones Benefits Plans motion provided as Attachment 3 for submission to the Municipal Association of Victoria State Council on 10 October 2025; and***
- 4. endorses the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme motion provided as Attachment 4 for submission to the Municipal Association of Victoria State Council on 10 October 2025.***

Moved: Cr Sonia Buckley

Seconded: Cr Ian Trevaskis

Spoke for the motion: Cr Arthur Allen, Cr Sonia Buckley, Cr Tom Crook and
Cr Ian Trevaskis

Spoke against the motion: Nil

Closed the debate: Nil

CARRIED

For: Cr Arthur Allen, Cr Jodie Ashworth, Cr Sonia Buckley, Cr Tom Crook,
Cr Barry Davis, Cr Joanne Eastman, Cr Ian Trevaskis and Cr John White

Against: Cr Bernie Farquhar

Abstained: Nil

5.1.2 Planning Permit Application - 5.2025.96.1 Two Lot Subdivision and Development of a Dwelling 34-36 Eighth Avenue, Raymond Island

Authorised by General Manager Place and Community

Public Submission

Ms Kate Young

Procedural Note

Cr Sonia Buckley moved her own motion.

Motion

That Council, being the Responsible Authority and having considered all the relevant planning matters, determines that Planning Permit Application 5.2025.96.1 is consistent with the requirements and objectives of the East Gippsland Planning Scheme and therefore resolves to issue a Notice of Decision to Grant a Permit for a two-lot subdivision and development of a dwelling, subject to the following permit conditions:

Endorsed Plans

1. At all times, what the permit allows must be carried out generally in accordance with the requirements of any document approved under this permit to the satisfaction of the responsible authority, unless with the written consent of the responsible authority.

Telecommunications

2. The owner of the land must enter into an agreement with:
 - a) a telecommunications network or service provider for the provision of telecommunication services to each lot shown on the endorsed plan in accordance with the provider's requirements and relevant legislation at the time; and
 - b) a suitably qualified person for the provision of fibre ready telecommunication facilities to each lot shown on the endorsed plan in accordance with any industry specifications or any standards set by the Australian Communications and Media Authority, unless the applicant can demonstrate that the land is in an area where the National Broadband Network (NBN) will not be provided by optical fibre.
3. Before the issue of a Statement of Compliance for any stage of the subdivision under the Subdivision Act 1988, the owner of the land must provide written confirmation from:
 - a) a telecommunications network or service provider that all lots are connected to or are ready for connection to telecommunications services in accordance with the provider's requirements and relevant legislation at the time; and
 - b) a suitably qualified person that fibre ready telecommunications facilities have been provided in accordance with any industry specifications or any standards set by the Australian Communications and Media Authority, unless the applicant can demonstrate that the land is in an area where the National Broadband Network will not be provided by optical fibre.

Servicing

4. The owner of the land must enter into agreements with the relevant authorities for the provision of water supply, drainage, sewerage facilities, electricity and gas (where it is proposed to be connected) services to each lot shown on the endorsed plan in accordance with the authority's requirements and relevant legislation at the time.

All existing and proposed easements and sites for existing or required utility services and roads on the land must be set aside in the plan of subdivision submitted for certification in favour of the relevant authority for which the easement or site is to be created.

The plan of subdivision submitted for certification under the *Subdivision Act 1988* must be referred to the relevant authority in accordance with Section 8 of that Act.

Drainage

5. Before the issue of a statement of compliance, each lot as shown on the endorsed plans must be drained to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
6. Before the dwelling/building is occupied all stormwater runoff from the roofed and paved areas must be discharged by an underground drainage system connected to an approved point of discharge to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority

New Rural Vehicular Gravel Crossings

7. Before the issue of a Statement of Compliance a standard gravel crossover must be constructed at right angles to the road to suit the proposed driveway to Lot 2 to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

Protection of Council Infrastructure

8. Before the issue of a Statement of Compliance any portion of Council's existing infrastructure damaged as a result of work undertaken on the site or associated with the development must be repaired/reinstated to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

Section 173 Agreement

9. Before the issue of a Statement of Compliance, the owner of the land must enter into an agreement with the Responsible Authority in accordance with Section 173 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, which will provide that:
 - a) The land must not be further subdivided to create an additional lot, and
 - b) Any dwelling on each lot must include a rainwater tank having a minimum storage capacity of 2,000 litres; and
 - c) The rainwater tank must collect rainwater runoff from the roof of the dwelling; and
 - d) The rainwater tank must be used as the primary water source for flushing of toilets, laundry services and also include an external tap for garden irrigation.

This agreement must be prepared by the owner. The cost of the preparation, review and recording on the title of the agreement in accordance with Section 181 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority must be borne by the owner of the land.

Conditions Relating to Inundation

10. The finished floor level of the dwelling must be a minimum of 2.5 metres AHD. This is referred to as the Nominal Flood Protection Level (NFPL).
11. All electrical outlets must be fixed above the Nominal Flood Protection Level (NFPL) of 2.5 Metres AHD.
12. Stumps rather than fill must be used to raise the finished floor level of the dwelling up to the NFPL if required. If the sub-floor is to be enclosed, it must have sufficient openings to allow for the free passage of floodwaters underneath the building.
13. Water resistant building materials that minimise the physical effects of flooding on the building structure and its contents must be used for foundations, footings, floor and walls up to the NFPL of 2.5 metres AHD.
14. Any high value and/or hazardous materials in the shed must be stored at or above the NFPL of 2.5 metres AHD.
15. The fencing must be of an open style to enable water to pass through freely. No solid brick, paling, panel, chain or fine mesh fence is to be constructed.

Operation and Expiry of the Permit

16. This permit will operate from the issued date of this permit.
17. This permit as it relates to development (subdivision and development) will expire if one of the following circumstances applies:
 - a) The buildings and works are not commenced within 2 years of the issued date of this permit.
 - b) The buildings and works, having commenced, are not completed within 4 years of the issued date of this permit.
 - c) The plan of subdivision has not been certified under the Subdivision Act 1988 within 2 years of the issued date of this permit.
 - d) A statement of compliance is not issued within 5 years of the date of certification.

In accordance with Section 69 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, an application may be submitted to the responsible authority for an extension of the periods referred to in this condition.

Country Fire Authority conditions

18. Bushfire Management Plan Required

Prior to certification under the *Subdivision Act 1988*, an amended Bushfire Management Plan must be submitted to and endorsed by the Responsible Authority. Once endorsed the Bushfire Management Plan must be included as an annexure to the section 173 agreement prepared to give effect to clause 44.06-5 of the Planning Scheme and not be altered unless agreed to in writing by CFA and the Responsible Authority.

The plan must be generally in accordance with 21146-BMP, Version 1 – Drawn 26/03/2025 and prepared by Crowther & Sadler Pty Ltd but amended to include or replace the conditions for Water Supply with:

a) Water supply (with remote outlet)

10,000 litres of effective water supply for fire fighting purposes must be provided which meets the following requirements:

- The static water supply must be stored in an above ground tank constructed of concrete or metal.
- The static water supply must be provided with an outlet for CFA (CFA outlet) that includes a 64 mm CFA 3 thread per inch male coupling.
- The location of the CFA outlet must be within 4 m of the driveway (or other suitable 'hardstand') and within 60 m of the building.
- The CFA outlet must be located to achieve gravity feed from the static water supply (the CFA outlet must be lower than the pipework outlet on the tank).
- All water pipes and fittings to the remote CFA outlet must be a minimum pipe size of 100 mm (Class A Copper or Class 12 PVC) or 125 mm PN 12.5 HDPE. This includes the outlet at the tank.
- The static water supply must include a separate outlet for the private use of the owner/occupier of the land that incorporates a ball or gate valve.
- All fixed above-ground water pipes and fittings must be made of corrosive resistant metal.
- A 65mm British Standard Pipe (BSP) ball or gate valve must be provided at the CFA outlet to control the flow of water to the CFA coupling. Any other valves between the CFA outlet and the tank must be locked in the open position.
- The CFA outlet must be:
 - easily accessible by a fire-fighter in the event of a bushfire
 - Clear of all vegetation for a distance of 1.5 metres
 - Setback from flammable objects (including timber fences and timber retaining walls) for a minimum distance of 1.5 metres
 - Oriented horizontally.
- The centreline of the CFA outlet must be a minimum of 300mm and maximum 600mm in height above the finished ground level.
- The riser for the CFA outlet must be supported by a galvanised steel post at least 50mm x 50mm or equivalent which is concreted in the ground to a depth of at least 450mm.
- The CFA outlet must be easily identifiable from dwelling or signage must be provided that meets the following requirements:
 - Has an arrow pointing to the location of the fire authority outlet.
 - Has dimensions of not less than 310mm high and 400mm long.
 - Is red in colour, with a blue reflective marker attached.
 - Is labelled with a 'W' that is not less than 15cm high and 3cm thick.
- The CFA outlet must include fade-resistant or engraved signage that:
 - Is to be fixed to the post supporting the fire authority outlet riser.
 - Has a minimum height of at least 1m from the ground surface level.
 - Includes the words "FIRE WATER TANK OUTLET" in lettering that is a minimum of 50mm in height and written in a colour contrasting with that of the signage background.
 - Includes the capacity of the water supply (in litres) in lettering that is a minimum of 50mm in height and written in a colour contrasting with that of the signage background.
- A blue reflective disc at least 50mm in diameter must be attached to the post holding the sign. The blue reflective disk must be located immediately below the sign.

- All below-ground water pipes must be installed to provide at least the following cover below the finished surface; 300 mm for pipes subject to vehicle traffic; 75 mm for pipes under dwellings or concrete slabs; and 225 mm for all other locations.

19. Additional matters to be set out in the Section 173 agreement

In addition to the requirements of Clause 44.06-5 of the Scheme, the section 173 Agreement prepared in accordance with that clause must also:

- a) Explicitly exclude Lot 1 from the following exemption under Clause 44.06-2 of the Scheme:
“A building or works consistent with an agreement under section 173 of the Act prepared in accordance with a condition of permit issued under the requirements of Clause 44.06-5”.
- b) Note that the subdivision includes areas of shared defensible space. These are areas where a lot owner maintains the defensible space on their land for the benefit of themselves and the owners of other lots.
- c) Require that the defensible space shown on the endorsed Bushfire Management Plan must be implemented and maintained on an ongoing basis to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority, regardless of whether there is a dwelling constructed on that land or not.

No Reticulated Gas Connection

20. Any new dwelling allowed by this permit must not be connected to a reticulated gas service (within the meaning of clause 53.03 of the relevant planning scheme). This condition continues to have force and effect after the development authorised by this permit has been completed.

Notes

1. Before undertaking works within a Council Road reserve, a non-utility – minor works consent of works within road reserve application must be lodged with the Roads and Traffic unit of Council and approved. Refer to the Infrastructure Design Manual (IDM) for crossover designs.

Moved: **Cr Sonia Buckley**

Seconded: **Cr Arthur Allen**

Spoke for the motion: Cr Arthur Allen and Cr Sonia Buckley

Spoke against the motion: Cr Jodie Ashworth and Cr Tom Crook

Closed the debate: Cr Sonia Buckley

CARRIED

For: Cr Arthur Allen, Cr Sonia Buckley, Cr Barry Davis, Cr Joanne Eastman, Cr Bernie Farquhar, Cr Ian Trevaskis and Cr John White

Against: Cr Jodie Ashworth and Cr Tom Crook

Abstained: Nil

5.1.3 Planning Scheme Amendment C169egip - Update Municipal Planning Strategy and Planning Policy Framework (Post Exhibition Adoption)

Authorised by General Manager Place and Community

Procedural Note

Cr Sonia Buckley moved her own motion.

Motion

That Council:

- 1. having formally considered all written submissions received to Amendment C169egip, notes the issues raised by the submissions and the officer's response to those issues, as outlined in Attachment 3;***
- 2. adopts Amendment C169egip with post exhibition changes, as outlined in Attachments 1 and 4, in accordance with section 29 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987;***
- 3. adopts the following changes resulting from a late submission:***
 - a) amend the following strategy at Clause 17.04-1L to state 'Encourage tourism proposals that are site responsive and well located to make use of existing services and infrastructure where service connections are required'; and***
 - b) retain the following strategy at Clause 17.04-1L 'Support staged development for residential use of resort sites, where these adjoin existing urban areas, are capable of being serviced and form a logical extension of a town';***
- 4. submits adopted Amendment C169egip being Attachment 1 together with prescribed information, to the Minister for Planning for approval, in accordance with section 31 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987;***
- 5. authorises the Chief Executive Officer (or delegate) to advise those persons who made written submissions to Amendment C169egip of Council's decision; and***
- 6. recognising the need for reform of the Victorian Planning System, requests officers to prepare a position paper outlining advocacy to the Victorian Government to pursue the recommendations outlined in the Housing and Settlement Strategy and Council's submission on the Inquiry into the supply of homes in regional Victoria, including:***
 - a) provide policy certainty to ensure new large lot yield subdivisions include lot size diversity that makes provision for medium density housing, retirement villages, and residential aged care with easy access to transport, shops, and services;***
 - b) provide stronger legislative and planning policy guidance for the provision of innovative, compact, affordable homes such as residential villages and tiny homes;***

- c) *continue strengthening Environmentally Sustainable Development (ESD) policy in the Victorian Planning Provisions;*
- d) *support the capacity and capability of the development sector to deliver more diverse homes that incorporate ESD principles;*
- e) *legislate for social housing quotas in new development;*
- f) *remove Windfall Gains Tax in regional areas for small rezonings (of a size to be determined);*
- g) *provide funding to expand the capacity of existing water, wastewater and electricity infrastructure;*
- h) *promote greater diversity of housing and housing affordability in new housing estates and subdivision;*
- i) *remove regulatory obstacles for infill housing development to promote medium-density housing in appropriate locations; and*
- j) *simplify planning requirements for infill development and mixed use development to create more “as of right” use and development in locations that have access to community infrastructure and services.*

Moved: Cr Sonia Buckley

Seconded: Cr Arthur Allen

Spoke for the motion: Cr Arthur Allen, Cr Sonia Buckley and Cr Tom Crook

Spoke against the motion: Cr Joanne Eastman

Closed the debate: Cr Sonia Buckley

CARRIED

For: Cr Arthur Allen, Cr Jodie Ashworth, Cr Sonia Buckley, Cr Tom Crook, Cr Barry Davis, Cr Joanne Eastman, Cr Bernie Farquhar, Cr Ian Trevaskis and Cr John White

Against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

Attendance

Cr Arthur Allen left the Council Chamber at 9.48 pm and returned 9.50 pm.

5.1.4 Business Engagement Approach

Authorised by General Manager Place and Community

Motion

That Council:

- 1. endorses the Business and Industry Engagement Framework (July 2025) as the primary mechanism for engaging with the local business community, as provided at Attachment 1;***
- 2. acknowledges the contributions of Economic Development Advisory Committee members and ensures appropriate recognition and communication regarding the transition;***
- 3. formally dissolves the Economic Development Advisory Committee in recognition of the enhanced engagement mechanisms provided by the Business and Industry Engagement Framework;***
- 4. supports the integration of key stakeholders from Economic Development Advisory Committee into the new engagement tiers; and***
- 5. approves the operationalisation of the Framework, including stakeholder mapping, engagement activity planning, feedback mechanisms, and internal capacity building as outlined in Attachment 1.***

Moved: Cr Tom Crook

Seconded: Cr Arthur Allen

Spoke for the motion: Cr Arthur Allen, Cr Sonia Buckley and Cr Tom Crook

Spoke against the motion: Nil

Closed the debate: Nil

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

For: Cr Arthur Allen, Cr Jodie Ashworth, Cr Sonia Buckley, Cr Tom Crook,
Cr Barry Davis, Cr Joanne Eastman, Cr Bernie Farquhar, Cr Ian Trevaskis and
Cr John White

Against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

5.2 Assets and Environment

5.2.1 CON2025 1732 Construction of Buchan-Orbost Road Landslip Repair

Authorised by General Manager Assets and Environment

Confidentiality Notice

The information contained in **Confidential Attachment 1** is confidential under section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* because it relates to: (g) Private Commercial Information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that—(ii) if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

Pursuant to section 66(5)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, if released, the information discussed or considered in relation to this agenda item would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage, by disclosing financial information to competitors.

Conflict of Interest

Sarah Johnston General Manager Business Excellence, having declared a conflict of interest in relation to 5.2.1 left the meeting at 9.52 pm and was absent during the discussion on this item.

Motion

That Council:

- 1. accepts the tender submitted by Jarvis Norwood Constructions Pty Ltd for CON2025 1732 Construction of Buchan-Orbost Road Landslip Repair for the Contract amount of \$539,535.00 exclusive of GST;***
- 2. authorises the Chief Executive Officer or delegate to finalise the terms and to sign the contract in the form proposed; and***
- 3. resolve that Confidential Attachment 1 to this report and all discussions relating to that attachment remain confidential.***

Moved: Cr Bernie Farquhar

Seconded: Cr Ian Trevaskis

Spoke for the motion: Cr Sonia Buckley, Cr Bernie Farquhar and Cr Ian Trevaskis

Spoke against the motion: Nil

Closed the debate: Nil

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

For: Cr Arthur Allen, Cr Jodie Ashworth, Cr Sonia Buckley, Cr Tom Crook,
Cr Barry Davis, Cr Joanne Eastman, Cr Bernie Farquhar, Cr Ian Trevaskis and
Cr John White

Against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

5.3 Business Excellence

5.3.1 Municipal Association of Victoria October 2025 State Council Meeting Motions

Authorised by Chief Executive Officer

Procedural Note

Following the Procedural Motion to alter the order of business, this item was considered before item 5.1.2.

Attendance

Cr Tom Crook left Council Chamber at 9.56 pm and returned at 9.58 pm

5.3.2 Council Meeting Resolution Register

Authorised by General Manager Business Excellence

Procedural Motion

That Council resolves to move into confidential business pursuant to section 66(2) of the Local Government Act 2020.

Moved: Cr Tom Crook

Seconded: Cr Bernie Farquhar

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

For: Cr Arthur Allen, Cr Jodie Ashworth, Cr Sonia Buckley, Cr Tom Crook,
Cr Barry Davis, Cr Joanne Eastman, Cr Bernie Farquhar, Cr Ian Trevaskis and
Cr John White

Against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

Confidentiality Notice

The meeting was closed to the public to discuss **Confidential Attachment 4**, which is confidential under section 3(1)(h) of *the Local Government Act 2020* because it relates to confidential meeting information, being the records of meetings closed to the public under section 66(2)(a).

Pursuant to section 66(5)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, if released, the information discussed in relation to **Confidential Attachment 4** would disclose the contents of confidential Council business, which was considered in a meeting closed to the public under section 66(2)(a).

The meeting was closed to the public at 10.05 pm.

Procedural Motion

That the meeting be re-opened to the public.

Moved: Cr Arthur Allen

Seconded: Cr Barry Davis

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

For: Cr Arthur Allen, Cr Jodie Ashworth, Cr Sonia Buckley, Cr Tom Crook,
Cr Barry Davis, Cr Joanne Eastman, Cr Bernie Farquhar, Cr Ian Trevaskis and
Cr John White

Against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

The meeting was re-opened to the public at 10.07 pm.

Motion

That Council receives and notes this report and all attachments pertaining to this report.

Moved: Cr Barry Davis

Seconded: Cr Sonia Buckley

Spoke for the motion: Cr Sonia Buckley

Spoke against the motion: Nil

Closed the debate: Nil

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

For: Cr Arthur Allen, Cr Jodie Ashworth, Cr Sonia Buckley, Cr Tom Crook,
Cr Barry Davis, Cr Joanne Eastman, Cr Bernie Farquhar, Cr Ian Trevaskis and
Cr John White

Against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

5.3.3 Summary of Councillor Briefing Sessions

Authorised by General Manager Business Excellence

Motion

That Council receives and notes this report and all attachments pertaining to this report.

Moved: Cr Tom Crook

Seconded: Cr Ian Trevaskis

Spoke for the motion: Cr Sonia Buckley and Cr Tom Crook

Spoke against the motion: Nil

Closed the debate: Nil

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

For: Cr Arthur Allen, Cr Jodie Ashworth, Cr Sonia Buckley, Cr Tom Crook,
Cr Barry Davis, Cr Joanne Eastman, Cr Bernie Farquhar, Cr Ian Trevaskis and
Cr John White

Against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

6 Urgent Business

Nil

7 Confidential Business

Nil

8 Close of Meeting

Mayor Cr John White declared the Council Meeting closed at 10.12 pm.