



07 May 2026

MINUTES

Ordinary Council Meeting

Date: Wednesday 6 May 2026

Time: 3:00pm

Venue: Nhill Council Chamber,
92 Nelson Street, Nhill

Council: Cr Ron Ismay – Mayor
Cr Rosie Barker – Deputy Mayor
Cr Roger Aitken
Cr James Barry
Cr Tony Clark
Cr Chan Uoy

Officers: Monica Revell – Chief Executive Officer
Petra Croot – Director Corporate & Community Services
Ram Upadhyaya – Director Infrastructure Services

Public Access: This meeting is open to the public and can be attended in-person or viewed online via Live Stream at <https://www.youtube.com/@hindmarshshirecouncil>.



Cr Ron Ismay - Mayor
West Ward



Cr Rosie Barker – Deputy Mayor
West Ward



Cr Roger Aitken
North Ward



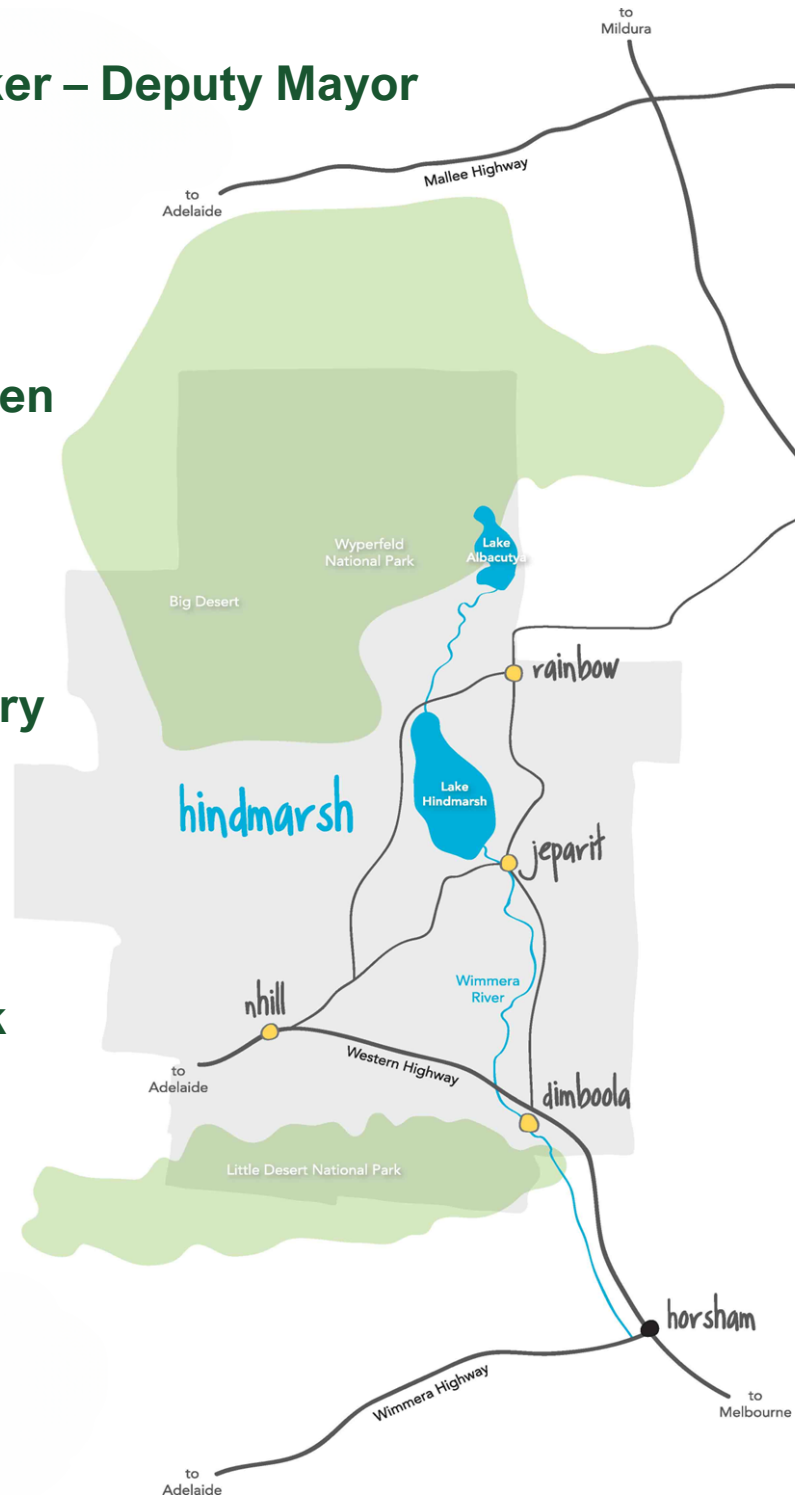
Cr James Barry
East Ward



Cr Tony Clark
North Ward



Cr Chan Uoy
East Ward



Councillor Statement of Values

Our commitment is to come prepared to every meeting, fostering a respectful and inclusive environment where accountability and approachability are at the core of our actions. We value and encourage innovation, collaboration, and open communication, always keeping in mind the well-being and needs of our community. Together, we stand united as one, working towards shared goals with mutual respect and consideration.

Our Vision

Working together to welcome new possibilities and create vibrant towns, connected communities and opportunities for all.

Our Values

We value:

- Engaging, listening and meeting people where they are at
- Doing the best we can with the people and funding that we have
- Showing respect and embracing diversity
- Taking pride in our community and achievements
- Being bold, creative and ambitious

Our Mission

Our mission is to be leaders in creating:

- Positive change
- A safe environment where everyone feels heard and appreciated
- Inclusive consultation

Purpose of Council Meetings

Council conducts its formal decision-making process through Ordinary Meetings of Council and Special Meetings of Council.

Ordinary meetings are held regularly to conduct the ongoing business of the Council and Special meetings are held from time to time for specific purposes.

Council adopts a schedule for its Ordinary Council Meetings annually. This schedule can be found on Council's website www.hindmarsh.vic.gov.au/Council-meetings.

From time to time the Mayor and Councillors may call a Special Meeting of Council to deal with urgent items. These meetings are generally held at the Council Chambers at the specified time and date advertised in the public notices in local newspapers and on Council's website.

Meetings, or parts of meetings, are only closed to the public when topics of a confidential nature are discussed, such as an individual's personal or financial circumstances, contractual or legal matters. Grounds for closing the meeting are defined in more detail within Section 3(1) and Section 66 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act).

Before each Ordinary or Special Council Meeting an Agenda is prepared by the Chief Executive Officer detailing the items that are to be presented to the meeting for Council's consideration and decision.

Copies of agendas are available at Council offices and on Council's website. The decisions of Council become resolutions of Council and are recorded in the official Council Minutes. Except for matters classified as confidential, all Agenda reports, Minutes and recordings of meetings are available on Council's website.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION	7
1.1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY.....	7
1.2 LIVE STREAMING STATEMENT	7
1.3 STATEMENT OF VALUES	7
2 APOLOGIES	7
3 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS	8
4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES AND BUSINESS ARISING	9
4.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES.....	9
4.2 BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES	10
5 PUBLIC QUESTION AND SUBMISSION TIME.....	12
6 ACTIVITY REPORTS	13
6.1 CR RON ISMAY, MAYOR	13
6.2 CR ROSIE BARKER, DEPUTY MAYOR.....	14
6.3 CR ROGER AITKEN	16
6.4 CR JAMES BARRY	17
6.5 CR TONY CLARK.....	18
6.6 CR CHAN UOY	19
6.7 MS MONICA REVELL, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	20
7 CORRESPONDENCE	24
8 ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLOR RECORDS.....	25
9 PLANNING PERMITS	25
10 REPORTS REQUIRING A DECISION.....	26
10.1 DRAFT ANNUAL BUDGET 2026/2027 INCORPORATING REVENUE AND RATING PLAN	26
10.2 COUNCIL PLAN ACTIONS Q3 UPDATE 2025/2026.....	32
10.3 QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORT Q3 2025/2026	50
10.4 COMMUNITY ACTIONS GRANTS 2025/2026 ROUND TWO	54

10.5	CAPITAL WORKS PROGRESS UPDATE 2025/2026	62
10.6	GRANT PROGRAM REVIEW	73
10.7	HINDMARSH DOMESTIC ANIMAL DE-SEXING POLICY	79
10.8	SUMMARY OF PLANNING PERMITS APPROVED UNDER DELEGATION Q1 2026	84
10.9	TARRANYURK QUARRY	88
10.10	CONTRACT VARIATIONS DUE TO IMPACTS ON FUEL PRICING	92
10.11	RE-ALLOCATION OF FUNDING TO THE 2025/2026 RESEAL PROGRAM.....	96
10.12	POLICY UPDATES.....	99
11	COUNCIL COMMITTEES.....	105
11.1	ADVISORY COMMITTEES	105
11.2	COMMUNITY ASSET COMMITTEES	107
12	LATE REPORTS	108
13	NOTICES OF MOTION.....	108
14	OTHER BUSINESS.....	108
15	CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS.....	108
16	LATE CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS.....	108
17	MEETING CLOSE.....	108

In Attendance:**Councillors:**

Cr Ron Ismay (Mayor), Cr Roger Aitken, Cr James Barry, Cr Tony Clark and Cr Chan Uoy.

Officers:

Ms Monica Revell (Chief Executive Officer), Ms Petra Croot (Director Corporate and Community Services), Mr Ram Upadhyaya (Director Infrastructure Services) and Ms Mary-Ann Speakman (Customer Service and Councillor Support Officer).

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Cr Ron Ismay, Mayor, opened the meeting at 3:01pm and read the Acknowledgement of Country.

1.2 LIVE STREAMING STATEMENT

Cr Ron Ismay read the Live Streaming Statement.

1.3 STATEMENT OF VALUES

Cr Tony Clark read the Councillor Statement of Values.

2 APOLOGIES

Cr Rosie Barker

3 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

A Councillor or Officer with a conflict of interest in an item on the Agenda must indicate that they have a conflict of interest by clearly stating:

- the item for which they have a conflict of interest;
- whether their conflict is **general** or **material**; and
- the circumstances that give rise to the conflict of interest.

Declaration of material or general conflict of interest must also be advised by Councillors and Officers at the commencement of discussion of the specific item.

Cr Chan Uoy declared a general conflict of interest in item 10.4 as he was formerly a member of the Dimboola Arts Inc. Committee, who have applied for a grant, and continues to provide them support.

Cr Chan Uoy declared a material conflict of interest in item 10.6 as he is an event organiser for Steampunk, who have and are likely to apply for Council grants.

Cr Ron Ismay declared a material conflict of interest in item 10.4 as he has provided a quote for one of the grant applications.

Cr Ron Ismay declared a material conflict of interest in item 10.12 as it relates to his role as Mayor and he currently benefits from full private use of the mayoral vehicle.

Ms Monica Revell declared a general conflict of interest in item 10.4 as her husband is a member of Dimboola Golf Club.

4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES AND BUSINESS ARISING

4.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on Wednesday 01 April 2026 at the Nhill Council Chamber, 92 Nelson Street, Nhill, as circulated to Councillors be taken as read and confirmed.

MOVED: Cr T Clark/Cr J Barry

That the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on Wednesday 01 April 2026 at the Nhill Council Chamber, 92 Nelson Street, Nhill, as circulated to Councillors be taken as read and confirmed.

CARRIED**Attachments:**

1. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED - 2026 04 01 Council Meeting Minutes [4.1.1]
 2. 2026 04 01 Council Meeting Minutes - MEDIA [4.1.2]
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4.2 BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

Council Meeting	Recommendation Action	Action Taken	Complete / In Progress / Delayed
01 April 2026 Item 10.1	Council officers to engage a suitably qualified consultant to prepare the Investment Attraction Prospectus and develop investor-ready materials.	Draft Expression of Interest documentation has been prepared for review by ELT.	IN PROGRESS
01 April 2026 Item 10.2	Council officers to prepare Council's intention to enter into a lease agreement for the Ambulance Station, Rainbow Recreation Reserve to be advertised to the community for public submissions on Council's Have Your Say Page.	Consultation published on Have Your Say Hindmarsh where the community can provide submissions regarding the proposal.	COMPLETE
01 April 2026 Item 10.3	Council officers to prepare and submit a speed reduction application for Dimboola Rainbow Road, Rainbow Lake to the Department of Transport.	Application has been submitted and awaiting notification of outcome.	COMPLETE
01 April 2026 Item 10.4	Council officers to use the Jeparit Weir Feasibility Study to support applications for funding.	Report will be used to apply for funding and has also been included in the Wimmera Catchment Management Authority Strategic Directions Statement.	ONGOING / COMPLETE
01 April 2026 Item 10.5	Council officers to prepare policies for community consultation on Council's Have Your Say Page.	Draft policies published on Have Your Say Hindmarsh for the approved consultation period.	COMPLETE
01 April 2026 Item 11.1	Council officers to prepare a letter to accept Simon Coutts resignation and thank him for his time on the Audit and Risk Committee.	Letter has been prepared and sent to Simon Coutts.	COMPLETE
01 April 2026 Item 11.2	Council officer to publish Advisory Committee Minutes on Council's website.	Advisory Committee minutes have been published on Council's website.	COMPLETE
01 April 2026 Item 12.1	Council officers to continue to procure product for RFQ 2025-2026-14 Supply of Cold-Mix to Hindmarsh Shire Council.	Completed, Council officers to continue procuring until 30 June 2026.	COMPLETE

Council Meeting	Recommendation Action	Action Taken	Complete / In Progress / Delayed
01 April 2026 Item 15.1	Council officers to notify all tenderers and prepare letter of contract for Contract 2025-2026-25 Provision of Resources to Extract Quarry Materials and Associated Services at Council Quarries.	Council officers have notified all tenderers and prepared letter of contract for successful tenderers.	COMPLETE
01 April 2026 Item 15.2	Adopted KPIs to be provided to CEO and CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee.	Adopted KPIs provided to both CEO and CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee.	COMPLETE

5 PUBLIC QUESTION AND SUBMISSION TIME

Community members wishing to ask questions at council meetings may do so, in writing, at least 24 hours prior to the council meeting. Both the question and answer will be read out at the meeting. Questions may be submitted by mail, email info@hindmarsh.vic.gov.au or delivered in person to a council customer centre but are limited to two questions and 100 words including any pre-amble. Offensive, trivial and repetitive questions, questions which have been recently answered, or questions that may contain defamatory comments, may be excluded at the discretion of the Mayor.

The question must be accompanied by a name and the locality where the questioner resides or works, which will be read out at the meeting. By submitting a question, the questioner gives consent to this information being read out in public. Anonymous questions will not be answered.

No public questions or submissions received.

6 ACTIVITY REPORTS

COUNCILLOR ACTIVITIES: 24 March 2026 – 27 April 2026

6.1 CR RON ISMAY, MAYOR

Date	Meeting/Event	Location	Comments
25/03/2026	Deliberative Panel Session	Dimboola	
26/03/2026	Industrial Land and Housing Discussions	Rainbow	
01/04/2026	Mayor and CEO Monthly Catch-up	Nhill	
01/04/2026	Briefing Meeting	Council Chambers, Nhill	
01/04/2026	Council Meeting	Council Chambers, Nhill	
02/04/2026	Tour of Jeparit Weir Pool	Jeparit	
07/04/2026	Nhill Town Committee Meeting	Nhill	
10/04/2026	Show Ambassador Gala Dinner	Horsham	
11/04/2026	Davis Park Grandstand Opening	Nhill	
15/04/2026	Tour of Dimboola and Nhill	Both	
22/04/2026	Briefing Meeting	Council Chambers, Nhill	
25/04/2026	ANZAC Day Dawn Service	Nhill	
25/04/2026	ANZAC Service	Dimboola	
25/04/2026	ANZAC Service	Jeparit	

6.2 CR ROSIE BARKER, DEPUTY MAYOR

Date	Meeting/Event	Location	Comments
25/03/2026	Deliberative Panel Session	Dimboola	A group of community members who wanted to express their perspective of what was proactive for our Shire. It was amazing to hear their views.
26/03/2026	Settling Well in Regional Australia	Online	Review of academic research on the pros/cons of settling in regional Australia.
27/03/2026	VLGA Psychosocial Hazards Webinar	Online	Interesting to consider the impacts of mental health challenges on being a Councillor.
31/03/2026	Tribunal Oral Presentation	Online	Presented perspective of the cost to Councillors who devote their time to their community.
01/04/2026	Meeting with Mayor and CEO	Nhill	Meeting to review the potential concerns that may arise in the Council meeting with the community.
01/04/2026	Hindmarsh Shire Council Briefing	Council Chambers, Nhill	It is vital to receive presentations of what is happening in our community and the supports that our constituents are looking for.
01/04/2026	Hindmarsh Shire Council Meeting	Council Chambers, Nhill	Working through governance and presentations that affect our community.
02/04/2026	Jeparit Weir Pool Tour	Jeparit Weir Pool	The most amazing tour of the Jeparit Weir Pool and the imminent failure of the Jeparit Weir and how it will affect the community within Hindmarsh Shire who live and utilise the Wimmera River.
03/04/2026	CFA Royal Children's Hospital Appeal	CFA Nhill	A great community gathering to raise money for the Royal Children's Hospital Appeal in conjunction with the Nhill Lions. It was great to see so much of the community enjoying the day.
04/04/2026	Nhill Town Committee Easter Egg Hunt	Jaypex Park, Nhill	What a wonderful morning run by the Leos in conjunction with the Lions themselves. So many of the community

			having a great time together finding the Easter eggs and having fun.
07/04/2026	Nhill Town Committee	Council Chambers, Nhill	Proactive team of the community coming together to consider the potential budget for the year ahead.
09/04/2026	ALGWA Election tips	Webinar	Informative webinar about considering working in local or state or federal government.
09/04/2026	Nhill Town Centre decoration for the Gather Round Traffic	Nhill Town Centre	Met with Hindmarsh Shire Council Economic Development and other Council workers and their children to put balloons around the town to attract the significant traffic moving through Nhill on their way to the Adelaide AFL Gather Round program.
10/04/2026	Wimmera Agricultural Show Ambassadors Dinner	Show Grounds, Horsham	Wonderful to meet the ambassadors of youth who are proactively advocating for the local Agricultural Shows in our region. Powerful evening listening to the young in our Shires.
11/04/2026	Nhill District and Sporting Association	Davis Park, Nhill	Attended the official opening of the new Davis Park Grandstand. The crowd was warm and welcoming, and it is wonderful to see all the Netball and Football at our home ground. We look forward to advocating for the new Club Rooms, netball courts and lighting!
14/04/2026	Women for Election	Online	Seminar about what it takes for women to stand for election across all government levels.
15/04/2026	Hindmarsh Shire Councillor and Executive Tour	Across Nhill and Dimboola	It was impressive to meet and engage with several community groups and entrepreneurs in Dimboola who are proactively working to build community.

22/04/2026	Hindmarsh Shire Council Briefing	Council Chambers, Nhill	Briefed on the financial sustainability of Hindmarsh Shire Council and the concerns for our community into the future.
25/04/2026	ANZAC Day Dawn Service	Goldsworthy Park, Nhill	Meeting at dawn with the community to reflect on war and conflict and the members of the ADF, family and community.
25/04/2026	ANZAC Day Celebration	Nhill Memorial Community Centre	The Nhill Brass Band, the march with community, including the school groups, Merv Schindler who is over 100 years old and served in WWII amongst all the people of Nhill being present and engaged with reflecting on what ANZAC Day means. Outstanding!
25/04/2026	ANZAC Day Luncheon	Nhill Soldiers Lounge	Wonderful coming together of community to reflect on the meaning of ANZAC day. Tasty luncheon presented by the RSL women who are so supportive of the people impacted across all the wars and peace keeping forces.

6.3 CR ROGER AITKEN

Date	Meeting/Event	Location	Comments
27/03/2026	VLGA Lunch & Learn Online	Rainbow	
01/04/2026	Briefing and Council meeting	Council Chambers, Nhill	
02/04/2026	Wimmera River Tour	Jeparit	Discussion regarding the Weir and Wimmera River
25/04/2026	ANZAC Day Dawn Service	Nhill	
25/04/2026	ANZAC Day Morning Service	Dimboola	
25/04/2026	ANZAC Day Morning Service	Jeparit	
25/04/2026	ANZAC Day Hospital Visit	Rainbow	

6.4 CR JAMES BARRY

Date	Meeting/Event	Location	Comments
25/03/2026	Heavy Transport and Freight Working Group Meeting	Council Chambers, Nhill	Good Discussions on working with local heavy transports users.
01/04/2026	Council Briefing and Meeting	Council Chambers, Nhill	
02/04/2026	Wimmera River Jeparit Boat Trip	Jeparit	Afternoon spent exploring all opportunities and discussing with locals how important the weir is to our community, as we all know the weir is at its end-of-life expectancy and requires major funds to replace.
1/04/2026	Davis Park Grandstand and Changeroom Opening	Davis Park	Great new venue for club, great win in front of a large crowd for the senior Tigers.
15/04/2026	Councillor Bus Trip - Dimboola and Nhill	Dimboola and Nhill	Good day visiting up and coming projects, lots of great things to come for our area.
22/04/2026	Council Briefing	Council Chambers, Nhill	
25/04/2026	ANZAC Day Ceremony	Dimboola Memorial Secondary College	Lest we Forget and hope war never happens again.

6.5 CR TONY CLARK

Date	Meeting/Event	Location	Comments
27/03/2026	VLGA Psychosocial Hazards	Online	
30/03/2026	Friends of Rainbow RSL	Rainbow	
31/03/2026	Rainbow Lions Club Working Bee	Rainbow	
01/04/2026	Council Briefing	Council Chambers, Nhill	
01/04/2026	Council Meeting	Council Chambers, Nhill	
13/04/2026	Jeparit Town Advisory Committee Meeting	Jeparit	
21/04/2026	Wimmera Pioneer Museum Meeting	Jeparit	
22/04/2026	Council Briefing	Council Chambers, Nhill	
25/04/2026	ANZAC Dawn Service	Jeparit	
25/04/2026	ANZAC Commemorative Service	Rainbow	
25/04/2026	ANZAC Commemorative Service	Jeparit	

6.6 CR CHAN UOY

Date	Meeting/Event	Location	Comments
25/03/2026	Top Small Towns Tourism Awards	Online via Teams	Discuss the VTIC application with the Economic Development & Tourism team. Decided on who the target market was for Dimboola. Must produce an editorial, itinerary and video clip to appeal to that audience.
25/03/2026	Deliberative Panel Session	Dimboola Community Hub	Great to see community engagement with the Council Plan.
26/03/2026	Settling Well in Regional Australia	Online via Teams	Interim report by Melbourne University on the experiences of refugees settling in regional Australia. 81% reported positive experiences.
26/03/2026	Shared Table Documentary	Federation University Horsham	Guest panel speaker for WSMD Settlement Services.
27/03/2026	VLGA Psychological Hazards	Online via Teams	The Councillors' Role as the CEO's employers. Discuss the psychosocial injuries and risks.
28/03/2026	Harmony Day	Nhill's Jaypex Park	Multiculturalism and diversity celebrated via the Pride Committee. It was a fun day.
01/04/2026	Council Briefing & Meeting	Council Chambers, Nhill	
02/04/2026	Jeparit Wimmera River Boat Cruise	Jeparit	Experienced first-hand the beauty of the ecology of the river and inspecting the weir that urgently needs replacing.
11/04/2026	Davis Park Grandstand Opening	Nhill	It was great to see the grandstand full of people watching a football match.
12/04/2026	Dimboola Dash	Wimmera Discovery Trail	Nearly 300 people registered for the inaugural event where I had to ring the start bell for all the races. There were hardly any car spaces available in the morning.
15/04/2026	Councillor Bus Trip	Nhill & Dimboola	Great to visit the various sites in the shire to better understand future developments.
15/04/2026	Pride Committee	Online via Teams	People outside the shire have remarked how Hindmarsh is progressive through Harmony

			Day and its presence at the Chillout Festival.
22/04/2026	Council Briefing	Council Chambers, Nhill	

6.7 MS MONICA REVELL, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Date	Meeting/Event	Location	Comments
24/03/2026	Meeting with Customer Service and Councillor Support Officer	Nhill	
24/03/2026	Aegis Risk Management Services Facilitated Discussion	Nhill	Workshop to identify gaps in current processes and identify improvements that ultimately have a positive impact on our workers compensation outcomes and subsequently premiums.
24/03/2026	Dattner Group Webinar	Online	Webinar on the Leadership Bottleneck, Planning for succession in Councils through capability uplift and unearthing emerging leaders.
24/03/2026	Health and Safety Committee Meeting	Nhill	
25/03/2026	Infrastructure Meeting	Nhill	Meeting with Infrastructure Director, Team Manager, Coordinator and Team Leadership regarding Farmer consultation feedback, roads to recovery funding, efficiencies, and team focus through until 30 June 2026.
25/03/2026	Executive Leadership Team Meeting	Nhill	Weekly ELT meeting with Directors.
25/03/2026	Deliberative Panel Session	Dimboola	Thank you to the community members who nominated for the deliberative panel, it was fantastic to hear the discussion.
26/03/2026	PRIME Mentoring Meeting	Dimboola	Working with consultant to uplift accommodation bookings at Hindmarsh Holiday Parks. A GWM Tourism funded initiative.

26/03/2026	Settling Well in Regional Australia Project Launch	Online	Launch of the research report
27/03/2026	VLGA – Psychosocial Hazards	Online	Webinar hosted by VLGA on psychosocial hazard considerations for the CEO.
30/03/2026	Meeting with Director Infrastructure Services	Nhill	
30/03/2026	MAV Special CEO Briefing	Online	MAV briefing on the Australian Fuel Shortage including risks and advice.
31/03/2026	Meeting with Customer Service and Councillor Support Officer	Nhill	
31/03/2026	Senior Management Team Meeting	Online	
01/04/2026	Meeting with Mayor	Nhill	
01/04/2026	Meeting with Mayor and Deputy Mayor	Nhill	
01/04/2026	Council Briefing and Council Meeting	Nhill	
02/04/2026	Staff Meeting	Nhill	Hybrid staff meeting to discuss Council meeting held on 01 April including reports and resolutions requiring action.
02/04/2026	BEEF Small-Scale Grant Round WSM Discussion	Online	Discussion regarding the Building Early Education Fund (BEEF) grant opportunities across the region.
02/04/2026	Tour Jeparit Weir	Jeparit	Councillor and Executive boat ride to tour the Wimmera River in Jeparit and the Jeparit Weir.
07/04/2026 – 10/04/2026	Annual Leave		
13/04/2026	Facilities Meeting	Nhill	Discussion with Director Infrastructure Services and Manager Assets and Facilities regarding development of a

			Building Management Hierarchy Plan.
14/04/2026	Meeting with Customer Service and Councillor Support Officer	Nhill	
14/04/2026	Senior Management Team Meeting	Nhill	
14/04/2026	Meeting with Executive Leadership Team	Nhill	
15/04/2026	Councillor Bus Trip	Nhill & Dimboola	Following the success of the Rainbow and Jeparit Councillor tour last year, the Councillors visited Nhill and Dimboola to look at Council projects, Hindmarsh Holiday Parks, Davis Park, Nhill Aviation Heritage Centre, Dimboola Ski Club and Industrial site options in both Nhill and Dimboola.
16/04/2026	GWM Tourism Pre-Board Meeting Discussion	Online	Briefing Wimmera Southern Mallee CEOs on the agenda items for the GWM Tourism Board Meeting.
16/04/2026	WSCMA CEO Meeting	Horsham	Included a meeting with Dr Anne Webster MP.
16/04/2026	Meeting with Cr Chan Uoy	Dimboola	
17/04/2026	GWM Tourism Board Meeting	Ararat	Commenced discussions regarding developing a new strategic plan for the region.
20/04/2026	MAV Monday Connect	Online	
20/04/2026	Economic Development & Tourism Monthly Update	Nhill	
20/04/2026	Meeting with Director Corporate and Community Services	Nhill	
20/04/2026	Meeting with Executive Leadership Team	Nhill	

20/04/2026	Long-term Financial Plan Meeting	Nhill	Meeting with consultant regarding the Long-Term Financial Plan.
20/04/2026	Dattner Group Meeting	Online	Meeting with Dattner Group regarding training for Senior Management Team.
20/04/2026	Roads to Recovery Meeting	Nhill	Discussion with Director Infrastructure Services and Manager Works and Operations regarding the Roads to Recovery program.
21/04/2026	Meeting with Customer Service and Councillor Support Officer	Nhill	
21/04/2026	Senior Management Team Meeting	Online	
22/04/2026	GWM Tourism - Women in Tourism Forum	Horsham	MC the GWM Tourism – Women in Tourism Forum.

7 CORRESPONDENCE

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer

Introduction:

The following correspondence is attached for noting by Council.

Inwards:

None.

Outwards:

- 2026/04/02 - Council to Simon Coutts re Resignation – Audit and Risk Committee – (Attachment Number: 7.1.1)

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council notes the attached correspondence.

MOVED: Cr C Uoy/Cr R Aitken

That Council notes the attached correspondence.

CARRIED

8 ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLOR RECORDS

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer

Attachments:

1. 2026 04 01 Assembly of Councillors Record [8.1.1]
2. 2026 04 22 Assembly of Councillors Record [8.1.2]

Introduction:

As required under Section 33(9) of Hindmarsh Shire Council's Governance Rules, the attached Assembly of Councillors Records are presented as attachments to the Council Agenda for the information of Councillors.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council notes the Assembly of Councillor Records as presented.

MOVED: Cr T Clark/Cr J Barry

That Council notes the Assembly of Councillor Records as presented.

CARRIED

9 PLANNING PERMITS

No planning permits.

10 REPORTS REQUIRING A DECISION

10.1 DRAFT ANNUAL BUDGET 2026/2027 INCORPORATING REVENUE AND RATING PLAN

Responsible Officer: Director Corporate and Community Services

Attachments:

1. 2026/2027 Budget - DRAFT [10.1.1]

Executive Summary:

This report presents the draft 2026/2027 Annual Budget, incorporating the draft Revenue and Rating Plan, in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*. The report includes a recommendation that Council approve the draft 2026/2027 Annual Budget incorporating the draft Revenue and Rating Plan for the purposes of public consultation for the period 7 May 2026 to 7 June 2026.

The draft budget has been developed to balance the retention of existing community service levels, maintenance and renewal of assets, and new initiatives to improve amenity and make Hindmarsh a better place to live. One of the key focuses of this draft budget – shaped significantly by community consultation – is addressing the priorities identified by our residents. The community has told us that roads and pedestrian infrastructure are the highest priority, so we are investing \$4.411m in road construction, resheets, reseals and final seals, kerb and channel, and footpaths (both maintenance and capital works).

The total amount to be raised by general rates and charges in 2026/2027 is \$10.630m which is an increase of \$0.285m from 2025/2026. The draft Revenue and Rating Plan includes differentials for farms and commercial/industrial properties (10 percent discount), recreational properties (50 percent discount) and non-farm vacant land (100 percent penalty).

The draft 2026/2027 Annual Budget includes capital works of \$6.435m. Key initiatives for 2026/2027 include:

- Roads
 - Gravel resheet of Perenna Road
 - Shoulder resheet of Old Minyip Road
 - Shoulder resheet of Pigick Bus Route Road
 - Road construction of Diapur Swamp Road
 - Road construction of Dimboola Minyip Road
 - Road construction of Lorquon Netherby Road
- Drainage
 - Major culvert replacement

Other major capital works include replacement of essential plant and equipment as well as upgrades to the Dimboola pool.

Other initiatives include continuing to provide Council grants for events, community groups and businesses, an allocation towards the Nhill Aviation Heritage Centre foyer upgrades, continued provision of Hindmarsh Outdoor Pools (including the scoping of an unstaffed access model), increased promotion of Holiday Parks, including membership to Big4 as a partner park, and standardising community forms across Council,.

Discussion:

Council is required under Section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020* to prepare a budget for each financial year and the subsequent three (3) financial years by 30 June each year or any other date fixed by the Minister by notice published in the Government Gazette.

The draft 2026/2027 Annual Budget has been prepared in accordance with relevant statutory requirements, including the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) and Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020.

A requirement of the Act is that all Victorian Local Governments adopted a Revenue and Rating Plan by 30 June 2021. The Revenue and Rating Plan was developed and adopted by 23 June 2021 and has been revised in conjunction with preparation of the 2026/2027 Budget. The updated draft Revenue and Rating Plan was developed to retain the current differentials for farm and commercial/industrial properties (10 percent discount), recreational properties (50 percent discount) and non-farm vacant land (100 percent penalty).

When revising the plan consideration was given to the capacity for each class of ratepayer to pay rates and benchmarking against similar councils was undertaken.

The draft 2026/2027 Annual Budget has been developed to balance the retention of existing community service levels and maintenance and renewal of assets, as well as new initiatives to improve amenity and make Hindmarsh a better place to live. It replicates the format of the four Key Results Areas used in the 2025-2029 Council Plan, namely:

- Our Community
- Built & Natural Environment
- Competitive & Innovative Economy
- Good Governance & Financial Sustainability

The draft budget has been prepared based on available information to inform forecasts and assumptions.

Rates and Charges

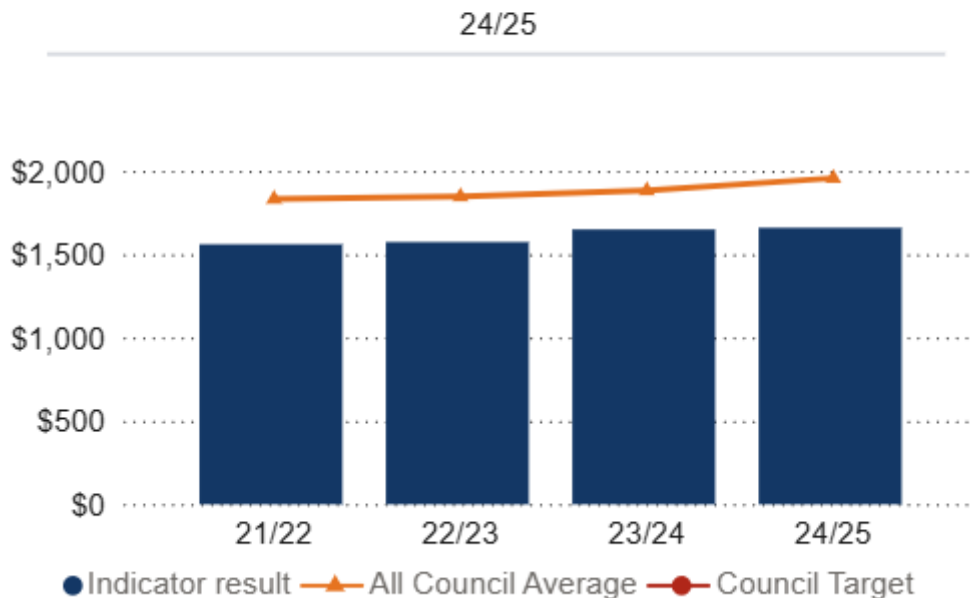
The rates and charges calculated for 2026/2027 are based on revaluation figures as at 1 January 2026. The draft Revenue and Rating Plan includes differentials for farm and commercial/industrial properties (10 percent discount), recreational properties (50 percent discount) and non-farm vacant land (100 percent penalty).

The Victorian State Government rate cap for 2026/2027 has been set at 2.75%. The rate cap, in line with the Essential Services Commission (ESC) calculation method, applies the increase to the average rates payable per assessment.

The total amount to be raised by general rates and charges in 2026/2027 is \$10.630m which is an increase of \$0.285m from 2025/2026.

Hindmarsh Shire Councils' average rate in 2024/2025 was \$1,660.06 compared to an average rate for similar Councils of \$1,864.78 (Figure 1)

Hindmarsh Shire
\$1.66K



Source: Know Your Council, 2024/2025 Annual Reporting Data

Capital Works

The draft 2026/2027 Annual Budget includes capital works expenditure of \$6.435m. The proposed key initiatives for the 2026/2027 financial year are outlined below. Further details are included in the relevant sections of the budget document attached to this report.

Community Infrastructure

- \$430,000 on the Dimboola Pool

Infrastructure

- \$602,000 on unsealed road construction
- \$363,000 on shoulder resheets
- \$2,416,000 on sealed road construction
- \$572,000 on reseals
- \$134,000 on drainage
- \$225,000 on kerb & channel

The draft 2026/2027 Annual budget incorporating the updated draft Revenue and Rating Plan has been prepared for approval by Council. Under Council's Community Engagement Policy, the draft budget and updated Revenue and Rating Plan will be made available for public inspection and the receiving of submissions for the period Thursday 7 May 2026 to Sunday 7 June 2026. Council will be advised of any submissions received at the 24 June 2026 Council meeting.

Council conducted an initial survey that informed the development of the draft 2026/2027 annual Budgett through the identification of service priorities. Several drop-in sessions have been planned across the Shire, as well as engagement with Hindmarsh Shire Council's Town Advisory Committees.

The draft 2026/2027 Annual Budget incorporating the revised Revenue and Rating Plan will also be available for public inspection at Councils Customer Service Centres, online on Council's website including on Council's Have Your Say Hindmarsh community consultation site.

Link to Council Plan:

Theme Four: Good Governance and Financial Sustainability

4.3 We manage our resources responsibly and strategically.

Financial Implications:

The 2026/2027 Budget is consistent with the parameters set out in Council's adopted Long Term Financial Plan.

Risk Management Implications:

Strategic Risk Description	Risk Management Discussion
Financial Sustainability	The preparation of a budget that incorporates long-term financial planning is a key pillar of Council's financial sustainability risk management program.

Relevant Legislation:

Local Government Act 2020

Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020

Community Engagement:

Drop-in sessions will be conducted in Dimboola, Jeparit, Nhill and Rainbow in May 2026.

Gender Equality Implications:

Gender Impact Assessments to be completed for specific initiatives within the Budget as the projects are planned and delivered.

Confidential Declaration:

Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest:

Under Section 130(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, officers providing advice to Council must disclose any conflict of interest, including the type of interest.

Officer Responsible – Petra Croot, Director Corporate and Community Services

In providing this advice as the Officer Responsible, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Author – Petra Croot, Director Corporate and Community Services

In providing this advice as the Author, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Communications Strategy:

Council must give notice of the development of the draft Budget 2026/2027 incorporating the Revenue and Rating Plan. A public notice will be published in the Dimboola Banner, Rainbow Jeparit Argus, Nhill Free Press and Weekly Advertiser advising of the draft Budget 2026/2027.

The draft Budget 2026/2027 will also be placed on Council's website and hard copies will be made available from Hindmarsh Shire Council Customer Service Centres. Drop-in sessions will also be held in Dimboola, Jeparit, Rainbow and Nhill during May 2026.

Next Steps:

After the consultation period is complete, the reviewed draft 2026/2027 Budget will be presented to Council for adoption at the Council meeting on 24 June 2026.

RECOMMENDATION:**That Council:**

- 1. approves the draft 2026/2027 Budget incorporating the draft Revenue and Rating Plan for the purposes of public consultation in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020;**
- 2. gives public notice of the preparation of the draft 2026/2027 Budget, incorporating the draft Revenue and Rating Plan, inviting written submissions from the public for the period from Thursday 7 May 2026 to Sunday 7 June 2026;**
- 3. considers public submissions and the formal adoption of the draft budget incorporating the draft Revenue and Rating Plan at the Council meeting on Wednesday 24 June 2026; and**
- 4. authorises the Chief Executive Officer to undertake minor editorial changes to the draft 2025/2026 Budget incorporating the draft Revenue and Rating Plan if required.**

MOVED: Cr C Uoy/Cr R Aitken**That Council:**

- 1. approves the draft 2026/2027 Budget incorporating the draft Revenue and Rating Plan for the purposes of public consultation in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020;**
- 2. gives public notice of the preparation of the draft 2026/2027 Budget, incorporating the draft Revenue and Rating Plan, inviting written submissions from the public for the period from Thursday 7 May 2026 to Sunday 7 June 2026;**
- 3. considers public submissions and the formal adoption of the draft budget incorporating the draft Revenue and Rating Plan at the Council meeting on Wednesday 24 June 2026; and**
- 4. authorises the Chief Executive Officer to undertake minor editorial changes to the draft 2025/2026 Budget incorporating the draft Revenue and Rating Plan if required.**

CARRIED

10.2 COUNCIL PLAN ACTIONS Q3 UPDATE 2025/2026

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer

Attachments:

Nil

Executive Summary:

This report presents Council with an update on the progress of items identified in the Council Plan Actions for delivery in the 2025/2026 financial year.

Annually, Council adopts a set of actions that aid in the achievement of the objectives within the Council Plan 2025-2029. The actions correspond to the themes identified in the Council Plan:

- Our Community
- Built and Natural Environment
- Competitive and Innovative Economy
- Good Governance and Financial Sustainability

Quarter three (3) covers 01 January 2026 to 31 March 2026, with actions against each item detailed with a progress indicator in the table within this report.

Key achievements in quarter three (3) include:

- Completion of the Hindmarsh Outdoor Pool season and commencement of the post-season review
- Screening of Shared Table: Regional Heroes at the Nhill Cinema
- Commencement of participation in the Business-Friendly Councils program
- Completion of the MacPherson Street raised pedestrian crossing in Nhill
- Curations works completed at the Wimmera Mallee Pioneer Museum
- Starting the roll-out of the online business directory, MyCities, on Council's website
- Completion of the Industrial Land Business Case

Discussion:

The table below provides a detailed update on the Council Plan Actions 2025/2026.

Council Plan Actions 2025-2026	Q3 Update	Q3 % Progress
Theme 1 Our Community		
1.1 Our Community is active, healthy and connected		
Create and maintain shared spaces		
Complete the Centenary Park projects as part of the Streetscape Masterplan	No further works have been completed on Centenary Park during Q3; however, engagement has commenced with Nhill Town Committee on future project components.	90%

Council Plan Actions 2025-2026	Q3 Update	Q3 % Progress
Assist the Rainbow Trailblazers with the establishment of a bike track	The project is being managed by the Rainbow Progress Association, with Council continuing to work through insurance requirements based on land management responsibilities.	60%
Complete and officially open the Wimmera River Discovery Trail	Complete, with additional signage still to be installed (rolling) and the Dimboola Dash event scheduled in early April.	100%
Review the Youth Strategy, including a plan for sustainable regular out-of-school hours activities that promote use of public facilities and reserves	The renewed Youth Strategy was adopted in Q2.	100%
Provide accessible programs for all ages and abilities		
Continually diversify the resources, activities and services provided by libraries to be innovative, inclusive and meeting community need – focus year 1: Cultural Diversity	The Karen-Sgaw bilingual books arrived in late March and will be a valuable addition to our libraries for our community.	100%
Adopt a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy	Draft prepared to be presented to Council meeting in Q3.	25%
Through the FFVLGP, work with local sporting clubs to improve participation rates for women and girls	NDSC have confirmed a 15-minute timeslot for Free from Violence Project Officer to present FFV training to the club. Council will pursue this option with other local clubs.	20%
Youth events and school holiday activities are inclusive and free for all to participate	Pool parties were held throughout the Shire during Q3, planning for the April School Holidays Program was undertaken during Q3.	Ongoing
Support local events that bring people together		
Collaborate with Luv-a-Duck on a regional festival	Luv-a-Duck held a successful community event at Jaypex Park on 13 March 2026 with food, music and other activities. Seymour Rail event continues to be planned. Discussions ongoing to revive a Duck 'n Jazz style event/weekend.	25%
Deliver bi-monthly movies at the Nhill Cinema that are targeted at adults	Shared Table documentary was screened at the Nhill Cinema during Q3. GOAT and Wuthering Heights movies are planned for Q4.	Ongoing
Audit commonly used Council-managed spaces and facilities to ensure that relevant amenities and services are maintained to provide accessibility for all	Building conditions audit undertaken by external contractors which provides detailed maintenance requirements for buildings. Council is currently addressing high priority maintenance tasks. An additional routine audit will be undertaken in Q3.	100%

Council Plan Actions 2025-2026	Q3 Update	Q3 % Progress
Ongoing Regional Community Events Grants Program, Fee Waiver Policy and reduced fees for Council Facilities Hire for community groups.	Revised grants programs to be presented to Council for consideration in Q4 in line with budget processes.	Ongoing
1.2 Our towns are inclusive, welcoming and growing		
Attract new residents and encourage multicultural inclusion		
Commence drafting New Residents Guides for the Shire and specific localities	Manager Community Strategy and Engagement to commence in Q4, it is likely that this item will be considered for carry-over into 2026/2027.	10%
Participate in Careers Expos within the region that attract young workers to the Shire	Attendance at Careers Expo scheduled for 23 June 2026 (Q4). A working group will be formed in April to develop content to take to the Expo.	25%
Develop calendar of key events that activities that are important to our CALD community in, collaboration with residents	No updates, however Council has supported Harmony Day in March 2026 and had Councillor representatives at the Karen water festival acknowledging Karen elders.	Ongoing
Deliver activities contained in the Cultural Inclusion Review	Completed in previous quarter (Q2).	100%
Invest in liveability and town planning		
Review Hindmarsh Council's Local Laws and consider amendments that encourage innovative living options	Draft has been issued to ELT, further changes required, redrafting is in process.	50%
Complete the Safer Local Roads Project in MacPherson Street, Nhill	Asphalt, line marking and signage has been completed.	100%
Strengthen ties between towns through events and shared goals		
Review Council Grant Guidelines and amend to encourage cross-community collaboration	Review of grants program and proposed changes underway and due for presentation to Council in Q4.	75%
Host an annual Town Committee/Progress Association Summit that brings together volunteers from across the Shire to collaborate and plan for the year	To be commenced in Q4, following engagement of Manager Community Strategy and Engagement.	10%
Offer transport options between towns for major Council-run events	Limited major events in this period, however transport was provided from Horsham for Harmony Day (collaboratively) as well as transport provided for Youth Councillors to attend meetings and support local events.	Ongoing
Showcase new lifestyle and development possibilities		
Create a webpage on Council's website for developers to access information on Council's development opportunities and processes	This work will be done in conjunction with the Business-Friendly Council (BFC) actions. A meeting to discuss how we intend to implement the BFC changes has occurred, and further meetings are scheduled to work through the website updates.	30%

Council Plan Actions 2025-2026	Q3 Update	Q3 % Progress
Draft policy and procedure for showcasing completed/approved subdivisions on Council's channels to establish Council as pro-development	Policy completed and reviewed by Corporate and Community Services, it is now ready for ELT approval and implementation.	90%
Increase Council publications around service providers, including WWHS, aged care, early years and long-daycare centres	Council collaborated with WWHS Cancer Support Nurse to attend our Cuppa Connection sessions. We also promoted support services available for carers impacted by fires, Subsidised Cat Desexing Clinics in Nhill and Rainbow, Free Ambulance Training Courses and the Australian Government Mobile Service Centre's visits to Hindmarsh Shire.	Ongoing
1.3 Our community can access services when and where they need them		
Collaborate with regional partners and networks to achieve greater impact through collective effort		
Develop a draft Political Engagement Plan, identifying key contacts and priorities for advocacy	Advocacy has occurred in line with State Election timeline and advocacy priorities identified in the Council Plan. WSM Council Alliance is also planning collaborative political engagement.	Ongoing
Develop a schedule of meetings between Councillors and regional partners and networks to ensure connection and collaboration	We've had representatives from WEMT, IBAC, Street Ryan, GAIA, West Wind and SCOA attend Council briefing sessions. We have organisations scheduled for the remainder of 2026.	Ongoing
Engage and work with Barengi Gadjin Land Council on projects within our Shire	CEO and Directors met with BGLC representatives on 30 January and 26 February to discuss working together to develop interpretive signage for the Wimmera River Discovery Trail and QR Codes for people to listen to WJJWJ stories. BGLC are seeking funding to undertake this work with the support of Hindmarsh Shire Council.	Ongoing
Explore flexible and innovative services		
Undertake a scoping plan for unstaffed access to Hindmarsh Outdoor Pools	Initial planning has commenced in line with completion of the pool season and overall service review. Set-up costs to be considered as budget submission for 2026/2027.	20%
Complete service reviews for Local Laws, Hindmarsh Outdoor Pools, Customer Service and Libraries, Planning and Building	Hindmarsh Outdoor Pools Service Review underway, community survey to be circulated in Q4. Other service reviews planned for completed by EOFY.	30%

Council Plan Actions 2025-2026	Q3 Update	Q3 % Progress
Adopt a Generative AI Policy	Generative AI Policy adopted (operational).	100%
Ensure community needs shape future service planning		
Develop a project management framework that best positions Council to succeed in applications for grants for community-identified projects	Although progress has slowed, we are now integrating the recommendations from the internal Project Management Framework Audit into our system. Additional documentation is required.	75%
Leverage RCCC to begin implementing a CRM, incorporating complaints management	Not yet commenced. RCCC focus is the SOE project. Exploring CRM option as key action in 2026/2027 as it was identified as a community priority at the deliberative panel session in March 2026.	10%
Develop a Service Promotion Plan that sets out when key services will be promoted, explained and reviewed	Services Promotion Plan is well underway.	50%
Review Advocacy Strategy in preparation for the 2026 State Election	Advocacy priorities have been prepared and circulated.	100%
Theme 2 Built and Natural Environment		
2.1 We care for and connect with our natural environment		
Complete and promote walking and cycling trail networks		
Install signage for the Wimmera River Discovery Trail	Most signage has been installed, with additional signage considered through continued use where users identify issues with directional signage. Council is also working with BGLC on signage that provides information on cultural heritage and significance of sites on the trail.	Ongoing
Create a portfolio of media showcasing cycling and walking trails, to utilise on Council platforms	The Wimmera River Discovery Trail has been promoted across Council platforms, as well as intermittent marketing of other walking trails through Visit Hindmarsh and Grampians Wimmera Mallee Tourism.	Ongoing
Investigate viability of Council supporting Park Run establishment in Jeparit, Rainbow and Dimboola	Dimboola Dash has been completed, with no progress currently on opportunities for Park Run in Jeparit, Rainbow and Dimboola.	0%
Maintain and enhance recreational spaces		
Complete Masterplans for the Dimboola Recreation Reservice, Davis Park Precinct and Jeparit Riverbank Tennis Court / Caravan Park Precinct	A consultant has been engaged to deliver the Master Plans and is commencing groundwork early in Q4.	50%
Complete the Davis Park Changeroom and Tiered Seating upgrades	Additional minor site works have been completed to better integrate the new facility with its surrounds (steps, ramp, pathways etc). Opening event to be held on 11 April 2026.	100%

Council Plan Actions 2025-2026	Q3 Update	Q3 % Progress
Commence Dimboola Swimming Pool accessibility upgrade and wet deck	Design Documentation completed and released for Tender on 26 March 2026.	25%
Support environmental tourism and stewardship		
Update Council's website to link to existing information around birdwatching opportunities within the Shire	Initial works commenced on locations, Landcare Facilitator working on information page on Council's Landcare section on the website.	75%
Advocate for the re-opening of the Little Desert National Park and continued investment in its tourism opportunities	Council continues to work with Parks and DEECA as needs arise in relation to the Little Desert National Park. This item is considered 'ongoing' now that major components of the park are re-opened following the Little Desert Bushfire in 2025.	Ongoing
Advocate for appropriate management of trees on and in the Wimmera River	Council continues to work with Wimmera CMA and DEECA regarding the management of trees that are in or may impact on the Wimmera River waterway.	Ongoing
Manage wild animals and invasive weeds on Council owned and managed land to maintain ecological balance and protect local diversity		
Engage with WWAG, Landcare and other pertinent community groups to attend briefings and talk to Councillors and Council about what they see is required in this area	Landcare update and discussion occurred in February 2026.	75%
Design the Roadside Pests and Weed Management Plan in collaboration Landcare groups	Works are ongoing, Previous RWPP is now live on POZI.	80%
Publish education material to support property owners to 'do their bit' to manage pests and weeds	Communications being produced to be publicised in Q4.	Ongoing
2.2 Our infrastructure supports liveability and resilience		
Focus on maintenance that priorities function for our farming network		
Host sessions with stakeholders and farmers that identify and resolve issues and opportunities relating to local agricultural road networks	Farmer consultations completed in Q3 in Netherby, Broughton, Jeparit, Rainbow, Nhill and Dimboola, including the identification of priority roads and projects.	100%
Ongoing inspections and maintenance of road and footpath networks to meet the requirement set in Road Management Plan	Ongoing inspections as per Council's inspection regime.	80%
Adopt the Asset Management Plan	Asset Management Plan was adopted by Council in October 2025.	100%
Invest in essential infrastructure that supports our townships and agricultural industries		
Leverage the Road Management Plan to identify key footpaths used by our ageing community, and develop and communicate a maintenance plan	Improved inspection frequency has been implemented which has been identifying maintenance requirement in various townships in a timely	Ongoing

Council Plan Actions 2025-2026	Q3 Update	Q3 % Progress
	fashion. Upgrade of Whitehead Avenue and Lloyd Street Footpath, as well as Park Street Shared paths are now progressing.	
Maintain the condition of existing road infrastructure within the municipality by prioritising capital investment on renewal over new and upgrade projects	The draft 2026/27 capital works program has been developed with priority focussing on renewal of existing road infrastructure. The 2025/26 program is on track to complete or start all Council funded projects.	75%
Complete the Jeparit Weir Feasibility Study	The Jeparit Weir Redevelopment Report is now complete. It has been provided to WCMA for review. The next step is to secure funding for full design and specification of the replacement Weir.	100%
Plan for climate resilience and risk mitigation		
Work with key community, government and emergency management stakeholders to build community capacity and resilience to support response and recovery	Council continues to work with MEMPC and WEMT to build emergency management capabilities and preparedness. MEMP and MFMP review has commenced and progressed.	Ongoing
Deliver a communications campaign in the lead-up to summer to educate about emergency planning, vulnerable persons and keeping informed	Social media posts were published in January around travelling on hot, dry and windy days. We also published educational posts on how to prepare for a heat wave as well as fire preparedness posts from AgVic. Council also promoted Total Fire Ban days in the Wimmera.	100%
Implement activities from the Climate Adaption Strategy	Update scheduled to be presented to Council in Q4.	Ongoing
2.3 We support development that enhances needs-based growth		
Engage with developers, community stakeholders, and Traditional Owners to ensure inclusive, well-planned growth		
Meet with representatives from Traditional Owners Groups to improve understanding of Cultural Heritage Overlays and Cultural Heritage Management Planning	A proposal has been prepared and issued to BGLC to engage with Council on contemporary cultural heritage matters, BGLC have not yet responded.	50%
Host information sessions regarding subdivision, shed construction and re-zoning	This will follow the website works.	10%
Enable housing that is more flexible, sustainable and affordable		
Promote and enable subdivision opportunities in central areas of townships	This will follow the website works.	10%
Seek funding to undertake Settlement Strategy within the municipality	The ordinance changes from the Planning Scheme Review are to be implemented before we can make	25%

Council Plan Actions 2025-2026	Q3 Update	Q3 % Progress
	application to the Hub for assistance with Settlement. No further work on this action at this time.	
Refine anomalies amendment for implementation into Planning Scheme	Discussed with DTP again, we are still working though the spreadsheet to separate the non-exhibited and exhibited planning scheme amendments. Percentage refers to refinement of the anomalies.	70%
Invest in essential infrastructure upgrades that support new housing developments and population growth		
Investigate cost-effective ways to upgrade Council infrastructure to support housing developments	Policy has been developed and approved by Council's governance team, now with ELT for approval and progress to community consultation.	70%
Theme 3 Competitive and Innovative Economy		
3.1 Our local businesses are supported to grow		
Reduce red tape and simplify planning and business approval processes through engagement with current and future applicants		
Produce simple fact sheets on starting a hospitality business, the planning process, and other relevant topics	Business Friendly Councils program workshops were largely completed in Q3. Implementation plan is being planned. The program has many resources that can be used and rebranded to suit with plain English fact sheets and other resources.	25%
Develop business workshop plan for year 2 that covers budgeting, forecasting, finance and procurement	Council staff are refocussing on this area. Business Directory with assist to reconnect with businesses especially in Nhill.	10%
Support local procurement and small business networks		
Review the Procurement Policy and amend to strengthen local supply provisions	Procurement Policy adopted in Q2 but re-presented to Council in Q3 with minor adjustments and for community consultation prior to adoption in Q4.	100%
Finalise the additional Goods and Services Panel of Suppliers, supporting applications from local businesses	Panel was appointed in Q2.	100%
Publish 'shop local' campaigns in the lead up to Christmas, to encourage people to purchase gifts locally	Looking to roll out additional shop local campaign a couple of times during the year subject to funding. Have programmed social tiles to be used in the ongoing socials campaigns.	100%
Encourage entrepreneurship and innovation		
Encourage and support community co-op entrepreneurship	Council has requested quotations from a number of consultants which could possibly lead social enterprise workshops, and Jeparit revitalisation strategy work.	10%

Council Plan Actions 2025-2026	Q3 Update	Q3 % Progress
Develop a briefing document that considers use of the former Mechanics Workshop in Jeparit as a community co-op	Ongoing discussion with Menzies Symposium. Council assessing whether this facility will be retained or disposed of depending on legislative, land and building requirements.	30%
3.2 We attract investment that aligns with community values		
Promote regional strengths and investment readiness		
Partner with GWMT to deliver LAAP for Hindmarsh	Curation work undertaken at the WMPM as part of Masterplan and GWMT LAAP. Funding for other works being sought. GWMT relationship continues to be strong.	40%
Explore joint ventures and development incentives		
Commence working on a briefing piece that considers Council's potential involvement in joint ventures	Industrial Land prospectus project to be used to explore this opportunity and how Council and Investors/Developers can work more closely. Initial conversations planned with two large Horsham Real Estate operators involved in Private/Public partnerships.	10%
Support development that reflects local character		
Welcoming developers with an interest in creating retirement villages or diverse home developments that fit within town planning and community needs for new residents	Council is working through documents and processes, including the Planning Scheme, which relate to priority types of development. The BFC program will also provide resourcing to improve processes for businesses, small and large, who wish to start and grow in Hindmarsh Shire.	100%
3.3 We advocate for and support diverse and innovative industries		
Be leaders in positive change that creates investment in the direction of our community		
Support activities and training with staff that encourages innovation and creative thinking for community benefit	No further action has been undertaken on this item. The focus has been on values driven behaviour and improving psychosocial well-being as being in a safe space is a major contributor to enable creative and innovative thought.	10%
Deliver actions within the Economic Development Strategy	Update presented to Council, with work continuing on both short- and long-term projects.	30%
Explore community social enterprise opportunities and philanthropy		
Develop a briefing document that considers use of the former Mechanics Workshop in Jeparit as a community co-op	No further activity until it is known whether the Council will be keeping or disposing of the asset.	30%
Plan an information session for community members on what social	Quotes being sought for consultant that can facilitate the social enterprise	10%

Council Plan Actions 2025-2026	Q3 Update	Q3 % Progress
enterprise opportunities could be possible within the Shire	discussion as well as towards a reutilisation strategy.	
Consider amending the Fees and Charges section of Council's budget or review fee-based policies to support access to Council spaces for this purpose	Fees and Charges have been reviewed in line with budget development processes and Council Plan objectives and will be presented to Council for endorsement in Q4.	75%
Foster industry collaboration and innovation		
Identify networks of like businesses and industries, and explore options for collaboration, connection and innovation	Business Directory rollout has commenced. Aim to visit businesses for signup in May. This will be able to promote businesses by sector list once listings have been completed.	50%
Expand farmer consultations to include industry collaboration opportunities relating to shared goals and issues	Have commenced including Ag information in HSC monthly newsletters. New business listing is currently being built for our website. Commence signups May.	20%
Showcase our history to create rich visitor experiences		
Develop action plan to implement the Wimmera Mallee Pioneer Museum Masterplan	Curation work undertaken at the WMPM as part of Masterplan and GWMT LAAP. Additional storyboards have been produced. Detpa School registered as a School Museum, Dr Rosalie Triolo has stocktaken the school for items of significance. Funding for other works being sought. Committee leading many new initiatives to build visitation and raise the asset's profile.	40%
Develop priority projects list for Yurunga and WMPM to be considered for project scoping	WMPM currently awaiting a quantity surveyor and quote from a builder for works on Briarly House and Albacutya Homestead. Yurunga list being completed as part of the Conservation Management Plan	50%
Support community efforts to deliver Heritage events, such as the Nhill Heritage Weekend	Heritage Weekend completed in 2025. Council's Economic Development, Tourism and Planning Teams working closely together to improve event application and management processes.	Ongoing
Theme 4 Good Governance and Financial Sustainability		
4.1 We are a transparent and responsive organisation		
Provide regular updates on Council decisions and actions		
Continue with the regular newsletters and social media posts that are communicated in plain language	Council circulated one quarterly newsletter (March-May), two monthly newsletters, 6 fortnightly e-newsletters and published 146 posts on the Hindmarsh Shire Council page (497.9K views during this quarter).	Ongoing

Council Plan Actions 2025-2026	Q3 Update	Q3 % Progress
Promote our services, projects and activities throughout their lifecycle	<p>Council provided progress updates on the following projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – construction of a raised pedestrian crossing in Macpherson Street, Nhill – completion of Grandstand and Changerooms at Davis Park, Nhill – construction of a multi-unit cabin at Nhill Holiday Park – Road and footpath work throughout the shire 	Ongoing
Mayor to record a short summary following a Council meeting to be published online	A Council meeting summary reel has been published on Council's social media after the February and March Council meetings.	Ongoing
Improve follow-up systems and response times		
Commence implementation of CRM	Until CRM program selected, unable to begin implementation.	10%
Undertake Complaints Handling training with the Victorian Ombudsman	Other more cost-effective options are being investigated.	10%
Review the Customer Service Charter	Review has not yet progressed.	10%
Increase use of autoreplies after contact is made across generic email addresses, linking to key information available for that service area	Autoreplies have been reviewed across generic email servers (where customer facing).	Ongoing
Share decision-making processes in plain language		
Ensure communication is transparent, even when the news is bad	Council is in the process of preparing communications in relation to the Jeparit Weir Feasibility study, with significant funding required as the Weir is not fit-for-purpose. Additional communications were circulated regarding responsible pet ownership and silo art closures.	Ongoing
Improve Have Your Say Hindmarsh processes to ensure project information is updated and published after a decision is made	The outcome of each consultation is added to the Have Your Say website once a decision has been made by Council and Officers.	Ongoing
Update and adopt the Hindmarsh Shire Council Governance Rules	Officers are in initial stages of reviewing the Governance Rules and are currently seeking an update on the planned release date for the Model Governance Rules to avoid duplication. Draft Model Governance Rules have been sighted, but these have not been formally progressed.	10%
4.2 We engage our community with respect and openness		
Build capacity in staff and Councillors for engagement		

Council Plan Actions 2025-2026	Q3 Update	Q3 % Progress
Undertake authentic engagement training as part of the annual Councillor Professional Development training	Completed in previous quarter (Q2).	100%
Support staff in undertaking de-escalation and managing difficult conversations training	Not yet commenced in a formal capacity, though coaching and upskilling occurs as BAU.	10%
Review the Community Engagement Policy to ensure communication is clear around the outcomes that can and cannot be influenced by the engagement process	Not yet commenced, this has been rescheduled to coincide with the Public Transparency Policy review in Q4.	10%
Deliver Free from Violence/Primary Prevention Training with staff and Councillors	Second Councillor training completed successfully. There are two more sessions scheduled for April and May 2026.	90%
Be present at community events and spaces		
Councillors to demonstrate availability and engagement in activity reports	Activity reports published as part of Council Agenda along with Councillor out and about posts included in Council's newsletters and on Social Media.	Ongoing
Support Councillor and Executive staff attendance at community markets	Councillors and Executive Staff have attended various events throughout January, February and March across Hindmarsh Shire.	Ongoing
Create a calendar of community events and identify a Council representative who is best positioned to attend	Currently this is managed informally through the Senior and Executive Management Teams and ongoing engagement with community groups and Committees. Council's new Manager Community Strategy and Engagement commenced in early Q4 - this position will be responsible for this action.	Ongoing
Publish a Councillor Out and About post to complement Councillors activity reports	A Councillor Out and About post was published on Council's Facebook page on 11 March 2026. This was also promoted in our fortnightly e-newsletters and March monthly newsletter.	Ongoing
Use varied channels to reach diverse groups		
Explore a partnership with local schools to enable Council content to be published in school newsletters	Council provides content to schools to publish in newsletters.	Ongoing
Contact key businesses, organisations and community groups to ensure that they can subscribe to Council communications	Email will be sent to contacts in April/May after Council has gone live with its new online Community and Business Directory so we can include information about this in the email.	90%
4.3 We manage our resources responsibly and strategically		
Explore revenue streams beyond rates		

Council Plan Actions 2025-2026	Q3 Update	Q3 % Progress
Complete the Industrial Land business case	Industrial Land Business Case has been completed and will be presented to Council in Q4 at the April meeting.	100%
Ensure processes enable effective use of developer contributions	Contribution will be proposed to support the master planning of Davis Park, specifically children's playgrounds.	100%
Develop a Sponsorships and Donations Policy that enables private investment in community events and initiatives	Completed and adopted in September 2025 (Q2).	100%
Report annually on Hindmarsh Holiday Parks revenue and investment to grow patronage	Have continued to work with RMS to work through statistic issues that mean comparative data analysis is challenging. Will report on 2025/26 financial year versus 2024/25 at the end of June 2026. Financially parks are performing well.	40%
Prioritise spending aligned with community goals		
Improve internal systems for prioritising completion of existing projects within community expectations, and communicate transparently about delays	Auditor report on Project Management completed. Recommendations noted and programmed for implementation with new Project Management Framework.	90%
Develop the Workforce Plan to account for the implementation of the Council Plan	Completed in Q2.	100%
Review, amend and adopt the Hindmarsh Shire Council Procurement Policy	Updated Procurement Policy was adopted in Q2, with minor revisions scheduled for adoption in Q4.	100%
Report clearly on how much money is spent and what value it delivers		
Review the Revenue and Rating Plan in accordance with the Local Government Act and present to Council for adoption by 30 June 2026	Commenced, rate calculation in draft ready for review. The Revenue and Rating plan has been reviewed in conjunction with the budget process.	70%
Develop simple guides to financial reporting information that includes graphs and images to community budget and rating information to the community	Completed in Q2 and published with the quarterly report, as well as published on Council's social media.	Ongoing
Publish information that explains how Council projects are funded, including own-source and grant-funded projects	Whenever Council provides project updates, we include a spiel about how the project was funded and who by.	Ongoing
Advocacy Priorities		
Sports and recreation reserves and facilities that meet community need		
Davis Park precinct project completion	Minor adjacent projects around new building completed prior to public opening scheduled for 11 April 2026.	90%
Lighting upgrades at high-use ovals	To be considered under the Country Football Netball Program following the completion of Masterplans for Davis	50%

Council Plan Actions 2025-2026	Q3 Update	Q3 % Progress
	Park and Dimboola Recreation Reserve. Masterplan development currently progressing.	
Masterplans for key sporting precincts	Master plans underway with contractor delivering on-the-ground consultation in Q3.	Ongoing
Improved and protected rail network and crossings		
Improved access to the rail line for grain receival and transport sites	Council has continued to work with Graincorp, the Rail Freight Alliance and DTP on improved and safer access to rail line grain receival and transport sites.	Ongoing
Improved level crossings, including upgrading High Street, Dimboola, to improve safety for pedestrians and vehicles and be all-abilities friendly	Council officers continue to review possibilities for external funding and project scoping. Ongoing advocacy through Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Transport Group. Crossings have been included in the Rail Freight Alliance Strategic Plan.	Ongoing
Recreational water protection		
Replacement of Jeparit Weir	Feasibility Study Report completed and endorsed by the Council. Officers are discussion with WCMA and DEECA to seek additional funding for Detailed Design of the Weir. The WSM Council Alliance are in the process of setting meetings with Ministers in Canberra while attending ALGA National General Assembly in June.	Ongoing
Commitment for water retention at Lake Hindmarsh and along the Wimmera River.	Ongoing maintenance of Jeparit Weir to ensure that the weir pool is retained. WCMA and GWM water commencing a project to create 3 waters top up location in the river between Dimboola and Jeparit as a draught refuse points.	Ongoing
Funding to enhance tourism opportunities at the Jeparit Weir Pool	Councillors and ELT recently undertook an 'on river' tour of the Jeparit Weir pool. Further discussions continuing to secure future funding for the Jeparit weir renewal estimated at \$5.6m. Investigating further funding opportunities to upgrade Holiday Park amenities block.	Ongoing
Sustainable Local Government funding model that supports key infrastructure renewal		
Fair allocation of Federal Assistance Grants and settling of the Rate Cap	Council and the WSM Council Alliance continue to advocate through RCV and stakeholder relationships for the sustainable design and funding of Local Government.	Ongoing

Council Plan Actions 2025-2026	Q3 Update	Q3 % Progress
	The WSM Council Alliance are in the process of setting meetings with Ministers in Canberra while attending ALGA National General Assembly in June.	
Fair State Government levies	Council and the WSM Council Alliance continue to advocate through RCV and stakeholder relationships for the sustainable design and funding of Local Government.	Ongoing
Grant co-contributions that Council can afford	Council and the WSM Council Alliance continue to advocate through RCV and stakeholder relationships for the sustainable design and funding of Local Government.	Ongoing
Public amenities that support our diverse community		
Mecca all-abilities amenities	Council continues to advocate for all-abilities amenities at Rainbow MECCA through election priorities.	Ongoing
Changing Places facilities in key locations	Council officers are continuing to seek funding for a changing places facility and will look to resource a project scope in 2026/2027 subject to other Council project priorities.	Ongoing
Safer local roads		
Reduced speed limits in central business districts and high pedestrian areas, like schools, that keep pedestrians safe	Speed Reduction in Dimboola CBD is now complete. Speed reduction in Nhill has been approved by DTP and is scheduled to be completed before 30 June 2026. Speed reduction in Rainbow has also been completed.	Ongoing
Increased funding for road maintenance and upgrades	Council continues to advocate for increased funding for road maintenance and upgrades. Has been successful in securing funding for Dimboola Minyip Road upgrade under SLRIP. Secured funding for Raised Pedestrian Crossing at Hindmarsh Street, Dimboola. Applications for Leahy Street footpath upgrade and Broughton Kaniva/Block 40 Road intersection upgrades under SLRSP.	Ongoing
Affordable and appropriate services for children and parents		
Early years centre at the Rainbow P-12 site	Council continues to advocate for various priorities through the WSM Alliance, RCV, MAV and stakeholder relationships.	Ongoing
Childcare in Rainbow and Jeparit		Ongoing
Equitable access to education, paediatrics and other family services	Council continues to advocate for various priorities through the WSM Alliance, RCV, MAV and stakeholder relationships.	Ongoing

Council Plan Actions 2025-2026	Q3 Update	Q3 % Progress
Health and aged care services that are comprehensive and accessible		
Providing local access to specialists and treatments that don't disadvantage the community through distance	Council continues to advocate for various priorities through the WSM Alliance, RCV, MAV and stakeholder relationships.	Ongoing
Greater access to aged care and at-home support services	Council continues to advocate for various priorities through the WSM Alliance, RCV, MAV and stakeholder relationships.	Ongoing
Communities that feel heard where State and Federal decisions impact them		
Meaningful engagement with communities around State levies and charges that are collected through Councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ongoing CEO Drop in sessions. – Farmer Consultation Sessions organised at 6 different locations during March. – Ongoing discussions with farmers via 6 monthly Heavy Transport and Freight Working Group meetings. – Ongoing consultation with farming community on various matters. 	Ongoing
Consultation with agricultural communities around the management of national parks that border farmland	Farmer consultation has been completed, including discussion around native vegetation adjacent to farmland. This has resulted in a planned review of Council's Landcare Management Agreements and conservation covenant rate rebates.	Ongoing
A workforce that meets the needs of a growing region		
Advocate with stakeholders about attracting and retaining skilled professionals in priority sectors	Council will be attending the careers expo later in the year, has promoted Hindmarsh as place to live and work at the ChillOut festival (also supported WWHS), and has attended meetings with the Wimmera LLEN.	Ongoing
Contribute to the mapping of future workforce needs across industries	As above.	Ongoing
Promote the region as a place to live and work	Hindmarsh Shire was represented at the Melbourne and Adelaide Caravan & Camping Shows. Whilst these are great Tourism opportunities, many visitors will choose to relocate once they have had a good experience in a region vs a city. The RAI Regional Movers Index shows positive growth for Hindmarsh in the past 12 month period.	Ongoing

Link to Council Plan:**Theme Four: Good Governance and Financial Sustainability**

4.1 We are a transparent and responsive organisation.

Financial Implications:

Council Plan Actions are considered in the 2025/2026 Budget. There are no additional financial implications associated with this decision.

Risk Management Implications:

Strategic Risk Description	Risk Management Discussion
Project Management and Strategic Execution	The preparation of the Council Plan, incorporating the Health and Wellbeing Plan and Community Vision, is a statutory requirement. The actions contained within the Annual Action Plan represent and demonstrate progress on projects, events and services relevant to the community. This ensures that Council is expending resources efficiently and in line with community needs.

Relevant Legislation:

Local Government Act 2020

Gender Equality Act 2020

Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008

Community Engagement:

Community engagement was undertaken as part of the development and adoption of the Council Plan 2025-2029; additional engagement is undertaken in the development of the Annual Actions. Annual Actions are also informed by ongoing engagement programs and the development of other Council strategies and plans, including Community Action Plans and the Economic Development Strategy.

Gender Equality Implications:

In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, a Gender Impact Assessment is not required as this decision does not have a direct and significant impact on the community.

Confidential Declaration:

Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest:

Under Section 130(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, officers providing advice to Council must disclose any conflict of interest, including the type of interest.

Officer Responsible – Monica Revell, Chief Executive Officer

In providing this advice as the Officer Responsible, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Author – Petra Croot, Director Corporate and Community Services

In providing this advice as the Author, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Communications Strategy:

The Council Plan Actions Q3 Update will be published via a media release to ensure that the information is available to the community.

Next Steps:

Council officers to continue implementation of the Council Plan Actions 2025/2026 and work with Councillors and the community to develop 2026/2027 Council Plan Actions.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council receives the Council Plan Actions 2025/2026 third quarter update.

MOVED: Cr J Barry/Cr T Clark

That Council receives the Council Plan Actions 2025/2026 third quarter update.

CARRIED

10.3 QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORT Q3 2025/2026

Responsible Officer: Director Corporate and Community Services

Attachments:

1. Finance Report - Q3 2025/2026 [10.3.1]

Executive Summary:

The Quarter three (3) Financial Report for the 2025/26 financial year has been prepared, including explanations for material variances. This report provides Council with a summary of financial performance against budget, highlights emerging financial risks, and outlines other relevant matters for the quarter.

As of 31 March 2026, Council reports a year-to-date surplus of \$909,587, compared to the budgeted surplus of \$3.5 million. The variance is primarily attributable to the early receipt of 50% of the Financial Assistance Grant in 2024/25, whereas the budget anticipated quarterly payments. Additionally, actual depreciation expense is high due to asset revaluation and indexation conducted in June 2025, after the finalisation of the budget.

Cash held at the end of quarter three (3) is \$12.5 million. The higher cash balance is attributable to the early receipt of the Financial Assistance Grant and the timing of capital expenditure, with several projects carried forward from 2024/25 for delivery in 2025/26. Council has also received the final payment of Phase three (3) LRCI grant of \$840,000 during the quarter following a successful audit.

Council has spent \$3.9 million on capital works against a \$5.2 million budget, mainly due to timing of road projects being weighted to the second half of the year. Most capital works projects are projected to be completed by June 2026.

Discussion:

Council manages significant public funds and is responsible for ensuring these resources are administered responsibly, effectively, and transparently to support the delivery of services and community infrastructure. Quarterly financial reports are prepared and presented to Council as a core component of Council's planning and reporting framework, alongside quarterly reporting on delivery of the Council Plan.

The quarterly financial report summarises Council's financial position and performance against budget, identifies material variances and associated risks, and provides additional context on matters arising during the quarter.

The attached Financial Report includes the following components:

Dashboard (financial and non-financial indicators)

The dashboard presents key metrics in graphical format across a range of operational areas, including:

- Rates outstanding and rates arrears.
- Debtors and infringements outstanding.
- Local laws activity, including after-hours calls and callouts, animals processed through the pound, and fines issued.
- Capital works delivery update.
- Planning permit applications received and permits issued.
- Employee accrued leave balances.
- Customer service volumes, including telephone calls and in-person customers at each service centre.
- Caravan Park revenue and visitation across the four parks. While the visitation figures are comparatively lower to the previous financial year, it is noted that Council has transitioned to a new booking system and is working through how the data is presenting compared to what was generated by the previous system. Financial indicators suggest that the park is performance on par, or better than, the previous financial year.
- Rainbow Silo Art Visits

Executive Summary and ratio summary

The Executive Summary provides a high-level view of year-to-date actuals against budget. A traffic light rating is used to flag items requiring attention, supported by a summary of key financial ratios.

Income statement

As of 31 March 2026, Council's year-to-date surplus is \$909,587 against a budgeted surplus of \$3.5 million. The key driver of this variance is the timing of the Financial Assistance Grant, with 50% received earlier than assumed in the 2025/26 budget (which is based on quarterly instalments).

Balance sheet

The balance sheet outlines Council's current and non-current assets and liabilities, with commentary provided for key movements.

Cash flow statement

The cash flow statement reports actual cash receipts and payments for the period. It will differ from the income statement due to the timing of receipts and payments. It includes cash payments for capital works but excludes non-cash items such as depreciation.

As of 31 March 2026, Council held cash of \$12.5 million. This reflects the early receipt of the Financial Assistance Grant, the timing of capital project delivery, including projects carried

forward from 2024/25 into 2025/26, and most recently the final payment for Phase 3 of the LRCI grant.

Capital works statement

The capital works statement details expenditure on capital projects that create, renew, expand, upgrade, or improve Council assets. It is presented by category (for example, buildings, plant and equipment, and infrastructure) and by asset activity (new, renewal, expansion, and upgrade).

As of 31 March 2026, capital works expenditure totalled \$3.9 million against a budget of \$5.2 million. The variance primarily reflects the planned phasing of road projects and the delivery schedule for carried-forward projects.

Variances to budget lines

To strengthen transparency, Council's quarterly reporting includes commentary on significant actual or proposed variances at a budget-line level, including items that may not change the overall budget category but do represent a material change in the nature or timing of expenditure or income. For this quarter, key items relate to the increased costs of fuel and the resultant increases in some contracts/contracted works due to fuel price increases.

Link to Council Plan:

Theme Four: Good Governance and Financial Sustainability

4.1 We are a transparent and responsive organisation.

4.3 We manage our resources responsibly and strategically.

Financial Implications:

This information is provided for noting, therefore there are no financial implications for this decision. The attachment discusses Council's current financial position against the budget and explains any financial implications for key variances.

Risk Management Implications:

Strategic Risk Description	Risk Management Discussion
Financial Sustainability	Reporting quarterly on Council's financial position ensures the accountability and transparency of Council's financial performance and enables Council to have high-level oversight of the same. Regular reporting allows for early identification of any high-risk items and early intervention should remedial action be required.

Relevant Legislation:

Local Government Act 2020

Community Engagement:

Consultation with the community occurred during the development of the 2025/2026 Council Budget. Council has committed in the Council Plan 2025-2029 to published financial data in a manner that is accessible to the public. Following the tabling of this report, the Q3 data will be published in an accessible format.

Gender Equality Implications:

In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, a Gender Impact Assessment is not required as this decision does not have a direct and significant impact on the community.

Confidential Declaration:

Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest:

Under Section 130(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, officers providing advice to Council must disclose any conflict of interest, including the type of interest.

Officer Responsible – Petra Croot, Director Corporate and Community Services

In providing this advice as the Officer Responsible, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Author – Marivic Vix, Manager Financial Services

In providing this advice as the Author, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Communications Strategy:

Council will publish data from the Q3 Financial Report in a manner that is publicly accessible, aiming to provide transparent and clear information about Council's financial position to the community.

Next Steps:

As per communications strategy.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council notes the third quarter Financial Report to 31 March 2026.

MOVED: Cr J Barry/Cr T Clark

That Council notes the third quarter Financial Report to 31 March 2026.

CARRIED

10.4 COMMUNITY ACTIONS GRANTS 2025/2026 ROUND TWO

MOVED: Cr C Uoy/Cr T Clark

That, in accordance with S13 of the Governance Rules, Council elect Cr J Barry as Deputy Mayor for the duration of item 10.4 and 10.12 due to the absence of the Deputy Mayor and the Mayor's declared conflict of interest.

CARRIED

MOVED: Cr R Aitken/Cr T Clark

That given the inability to achieve a quorum for the recommended motion owing to declarations of conflict of interest, Council resolves in accordance with Section 67 of the Local Government Act 2020 to split the matter into two separate motions, the first determining the grant allocation for the Rainbow Archive and Historical Society, and the second determining all other allocations.

CARRIED

Responsible Officer: Director Corporate and Community Services

Attachments:

1. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED - Community Action Grant 25 26 Round Two Grading [10.4.1]

Executive Summary:

This report seeks a Council decision regarding the allocation of funding through round two of the 2025/2026 Community Action Grants Program. The purpose of the Community Action Grants program is to support the operation of invaluable volunteer and community groups in the Shire and enable them to deliver local projects.

Council allocated \$20,000 to the Community Action Grants Program in 2025/2026 with a total of \$8,855.12 remaining for round two. Grants are recommended to be allocated through round two to the following applicants in the listed categories:

Community Assistance

1. A grant of \$1,000.00 – Dimboola Arts Inc.
2. A grant of \$743.43 – Menzies Symposium
3. A grant of \$872.73 – Rainbow Archive and Historical Society.

Small Equipment

1. A grant of \$1,000.00 – Kenmare Community and Historical Committee
2. A grant of \$943.20 – Dimboola Golf Club

Event Sponsorship

1. A grant of \$350.00 – Netherby Community Inc.
2. A grant of \$500.00 – Nhill A&P Society Inc.

Discussion:

The Community Action Grants Program was established to support Hindmarsh's communities to provide services and events that assist with community development, social action, and connectedness, \$20,000 has been allocated to the program for the 2025/2026 financial year and is available through three (3) streams:

- Community Assistance
- Event Sponsorship
- Small Equipment

At the time of closing on 10 April 2026, nine (9) applications were received requesting funds totalling **\$7,281.74**. Applications are detailed below and are also provided as an attachment to this report.

Category	Number of Applications	Funding Available	Total Amount Requested
Community Assistance	Four (4)	Round 2 \$8,855.12	\$3,872.73
Small Equipment	Three (3)		\$2,409.01
Event Sponsorship	Two (2)		\$1,000.00
TOTAL	Nine (9)		\$7,281.74

Community Assistance:

Up to a \$1,000.00 to assist with eligible projects that do not fit under the two other categories of the Community Action Grants Program.

There were four (4) applications in this category for this round, requesting a total of **\$3,872.73**.

Applicants:

1. **Dimboola Arts Inc.** seeks funding of \$1,000.00 to assist with creating a garden at the entrance of the Riverside Holiday Park in Dimboola. The project aims to beautify the area by including plants mainly from Little Desert. Based on the application and the applicant's eligibility, the recommendation is to grant \$1,000.00 towards this project.

Assessment Score – 18/26

2. **Menzies Symposium** seeks funding of \$1,000.00 to assist with the revitalisation of the exiting garden beds surrounding the Menzies Spire in Jeparit. This aims to enhance one of the most significant landmarks in Jeparit. Based on the application and information provided, the recommendation is to grant \$743.43 (GST exclusive amount) towards this project.

Invoices were submitted on request after the application was received.

Assessment Score – 20/26

3. **Nhill A&P Society Inc.** seeks funding of \$1,000.00 to install 20 high-quality, metal-painted hanging signage for the Home Industries Pavillion which will replace ageing cardboard markers that the A&P Society currently have.

The Nhill A&P Society Inc. have submitted two applications which is against the criteria. Council staff have reached out to the A&P Society, and they have prioritised their 'events' application instead of their 'community assistance' application.

Based on the applicant's prioritisation of their submitted applications, the recommendation is to grant \$0.00 towards this project.

Assessment Score – 19/26

4. **Rainbow Archive and Historical Society** seek funding of \$872.73 to purchase three cabinets for storage to safeguard fragile documents from damage, environmental exposure, and deterioration. The recommendation is to grant \$872.73 (GST exclusive amount) towards this project.

Assessment Score – 19/26

Small Equipment:

Up to \$1000.00 towards the purchase of small equipment items.

There were three (3) applications received in this category, with total funding requested being **\$2,409.01**.

Applicants:

1. **Kenmare Community and Historical Committee** seek funding of \$1,000.00 to assist with replacing the garden fencing at the 120 years old Kenmare school and restore the garden. Replacing the fence and restoring the garden will provide a lovely area for social gathering for visitors and locals. The recommendation is to grant \$1,000.00 towards this project.

Assessment Score - 20/26

2. **Dimboola Boat and Water Ski Club Inc.** seek funding of \$409.01 to assist with purchasing 9 safety vests for the club for their two 'tinnies' so that they are always available to those using the boats for Ski Club activities.

The Community Action Grant criteria states that retrospective funding - projects that have commenced or have been completed will not be eligible and funded. According to the Tax Invoice that was provided with the application, the safety vests have been paid for. The recommendation is to grant \$0.00 towards this project due to the application not meeting the criteria.

Assessment Score – 16.5/26

3. **Dimboola Golf Club** seek funding of \$1,000 to purchase a laptop and printer for the club. Due to Golf Australia's recent changes to the 'Handicapping' system and an integrated program that all clubs must use, the club will now need a laptop – which they have never had before to look up necessary players Handicaps and enter in daily scores. Based on the application and the club's eligibility, the recommendation is to grant \$943.20 (GST exclusive amount) to go towards a laptop and a printer for the club.

Assessment Score - 21/26

Events:

Up to \$500.00 to assist with an event within Hindmarsh Shire which demonstrates social and economic benefits.

There were two (2) applications received in this category, with total funding requested being **\$1,000.00**.

Applications:

1. **Netherby Community Inc. on behalf of Netherby/Lorquon Football and Netball Club** seeks funding of \$500.00 to assist with holding their clubs 44th years reunion at the Netherby Hall on Saturday 29 August 2026. This event will bring people who have played football and netball for Netherby and Lorquon together and back to the area. The funding will go towards the hall hire and volunteer expenses This event will have approximately 150 participants in attendance.

The original application was submitted with a corporation that no longer exists; Netherby/Lorquon Football and Netball Club. Council staff have reached out to the

applicant and have recommended they find an auspice. The reunion is now being supported by the Netherby Community Inc. Due to the hall hire being provided by the Netherby Community Inc, the recommendation is to grant \$350.00 towards the event for the volunteer expenses only.

Assessment Score – 21/26

2. **Nhill A&P Society Inc.** seeks funding of \$500.00 towards the 140th Annual Nhill Show for face painting and hair braiding for children. They are booking Giggles & Grins, a local Horsham business. The total cost for this project will be \$1,200.00. Based on the application and an assessment of eligibility, the recommendation is to grant \$500.00 for this event.

Assessment Score – 23/26

Options:

Council can choose to support some or all, partly or in full, or none of the applications for Round Two of the Hindmarsh Shire Council Community Action Grants 2025/2026.

Based on the assessment scoring, Council could allocate the budgeted amount as follows:

Applicant	Amount Requested	Total Project Cost	Recommended Allocation (excluding GST)
Community Assistance - \$2,616.16			
Dimboola Arts Inc.	\$1,000.00	\$1,650.00	\$1,000.00
Menzies Symposium	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$743.43
Nhill A&P Society Inc.	\$1,000.00	\$2,470.00	\$0.00
Rainbow Archive and Historical Society	\$872.73	\$960.00	\$872.73
SUBTOTAL	\$3,872.73	\$6,080.00	\$2,616.16
Small Equipment - \$1,943.20			
Dimboola Golf Club	\$1,000.00	\$1,048.00	\$943.20
Dimboola Boat and Water Ski Club Inc.	\$409.01	\$449.91	\$0.00
Kenmare Community and Historical Committee	\$1,000.00	\$4,052.00	\$1,000.00
SUBTOTAL	\$2,409.01	\$5,549.91	\$1,943.20
Event Sponsorship - \$850.00			
Netherby Community Inc.	\$500.00	\$1500.00	\$350.00
Nhill A&P Society Inc.	\$500.00	\$1,200.00	\$500.00
SUBTOTAL	\$1,000.00	\$2,700.00	\$850.00
FULL TOTAL	\$7,281.74	\$14,329.91	\$5,409.36

Link to Council Plan:**Theme One: Our Community**

1.1 Our Community is active, healthy and connected.

1.2 Our towns are inclusive, welcoming and growing.

1.3 Our community can access services when and where they need them.

Financial Implications:

Council has allocated \$20,000.00 to the Community Action Grants Program for the 2025/2026 financial year. For Round Two of the 2025-2026 round, the total allocation available for this round is \$8,855.12. The amount recommended to be granted is within the total budgeted allocation.

Risk Management Implications:

Strategic Risk Description	Risk Management Discussion
Community Needs	The delivery of Community Action Grants ensures that Council provides timely and targeted support to groups working within the community to strengthen services, connections and opportunities. The funding enables self-determination and groups can identify their own projects and needs when requesting support.

Relevant Legislation:

Local Government Act 2020

Community Engagement:

Round Two of the 2025/2026 Community Action Grants Program was promoted through direct emails to community groups, media releases published on Council's website and local media, advertisements in local media and Council's social media pages.

Gender Equality Implications:

In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, a Gender Impact Assessment is not required as this decision does not have a direct and significant impact on the community.

Confidential Declaration:

Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest:

Under Section 130(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, officers providing advice to Council must disclose any conflict of interest, including the type of interest.

Officer Responsible – Petra Croot, Director Corporate and Community Services

In providing this advice as the Officer Responsible, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Author – Nan Da San Bleh Dah, Community Development and Youth Officer

In providing this advice as the Author, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Communications Strategy:

Following Council's decision regarding the allocation of funding, further media releases and promotion of outcomes will be undertaken.

Next Steps:

Inform applicants of the outcome of their application, advising successful applicants of reporting and acquittal requirements. Officers will distribute media and communications promoting successful applicants to the wider community.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council approves the following funding allocations through Round 2 of the Community Action Grants Program 2025/2026:

- 1. Community Assistance;***
 - a) A grant of \$1,000.00 – Dimboola Arts Inc.;***
 - b) A grant of \$743.43 – Menzies Symposium;***
 - c) A grant of \$872.73 – Rainbow Archive and Historical Society;***
- 2. Small Equipment;***
 - a) A grant of \$1,000.00 – Kenmare Community and Historical Committee;***
 - b) A grant of \$943.20 – Dimboola Golf Club; and***
- 3. Events;***
 - a) A grant of \$350.00 – Netherby Community Inc.;***
 - b) A grant of \$500.00 – Nhill A&P Society Inc.***

Total allocation: \$5,409.36

Cr Ron Ismay declared a material conflict of interest and left the room at 3:38pm.

MOVED: Cr R Aitken/Cr T Clark

That Council awards \$872.73 (GST exclusive) to the Rainbow Archive and Historical Society through Round 2 of the Community Action Grants Program.

CARRIED

Cr Ron Ismay returned to the room at 3:39pm.

Cr Chan Uoy and Ms Monica Revell both declared general conflict of interests and left the room at 3:40pm.

MOVED: Cr T Clark/Cr J Barry

That Council approves the following allocations through Round 2 of the Community Action Grants Program 2025/2026:

- 1. Community Assistance;**
 - a) a grant of \$1,000.00 - Dimboola Arts Inc.;***
 - b) a grant of 4743.43 - Menzies Symposium;***
- 2. Small Equipment;**
 - a) a grant of \$1,000.00 - Kenmare Community and Historical Committee;***
 - b) a grant of \$943.20 - Dimboola Golf Club; and***
- 3. Events;**
 - a) a grant of \$350.00 - Netherby Community Inc.;***
 - b) a grant of \$500.00 - Nhill A&P Society Inc.***

CARRIED

Cr Chan Uoy and Ms Monica Revell returned to the room at 3:42pm.

10.5 CAPITAL WORKS PROGRESS UPDATE 2025/2026

Responsible Officer: Director Infrastructure Services

Attachments:

Nil

Executive Summary:

This report presents Council with an update on the progress of 2025/2026 capital works program. This program includes projects carried forward from 2024/2025, plant purchases, road construction, building maintenance and major projects.

The program is progressing well, with the aim to complete most of the projects before the conclusion of the financial year.

Over the past nine (9) months, the crew has completed 549 customer action requests and graded over 250 kilometres of Council's gravel road network. A summary of progress against each project is included in the body of the report.

Discussion:

The capital works program has progressed well in 2025/2026 with all sealed shoulder resheets, most of the unsealed road resheets and the reseal program now complete. Most of the capital works projects are expected to be completed at the conclusion of the financial year.

Some of the major projects commenced in the 2024/2025 financial year, and carried through to 2025/2026, have now been completed. Four (4) projects funded under Safer Local Roads and Street Program are likely to be carried forward into the next financial year. These are multi-year projects and have a deadline of 30 June 2027.

The table below outlines the % complete to date and forecasted % complete at the end of financial year.

Over the past nine (9) months, the crew has completed 549 customer action requests and graded over 250 kilometres of Council's gravel road network.

Project/Road Name (2025/2026)	Budget Allocated	% Complete	Forecast (30 June 2026)	Description of Works	Status	Budget (Under / Within Slightly Over Over Budget)
Plant and Equipment						
Road Patching Truck – Carried Forward	\$400,225.48	90%	90%	Nhill Road Patching Truck. Carried forward from 2023/2024.	The item has been ordered. ETA August 2026. Delayed due to supplier issues.	
Mower	\$48,000	100%	100%	Dimboola Town Maintenance. Carried forward from 2024/2025.	Complete	Within budget
Emulsion tank	\$200,000	100%	100%	Supply, delivery and installation of Emulsion tank at Jeparit Depot. Carried forward from 2024/2025.	Complete	Within budget
Minor Plant	\$40,000	90%	100%	Purchase of Minor Plants.	Multiple items purchased.	
Grader	\$510,000	50%	50%	Replacement of Grader.	Ordered. Expected delivery July 2026. Delayed due to Shipping issues.	
Fuel Trailer	\$20,000	80%	100%	Replacement of two (2) fuel trailers.	Building in-house. Parts arrived at the workshop.	
Mechanics Ute	\$64,000	100%	100%	Replacement of fleet vehicle.	Complete	Within budget
Local Laws Ute	\$67,000	100%	100%	Replacement of fleet vehicle.	Complete	Within budget
Sealed Road Construction						
Netherby Lorquon and Lorquon	\$181,846	100%	100%	0.50 KM Pavement renewal over three segments and widening to 4 meters wide seal 2-	Complete	Slightly over budget

Project/Road Name (2025/2026)	Budget Allocated	% Complete	Forecast (30 June 2026)	Description of Works	Status	Budget (Under / Within Slightly Over Over Budget)
				meter shoulder each side.		
Dimboola Minyip, Dimboola	\$105,998	0%	100%	0.3 KM Pavement renewal and widening to 6.8 meters wide seal 2-meter shoulder each side.	To be completed in May.	
Federal Street, Rainbow	\$100,000	0%	100%	Reseal and line marking.	Expected to be completed in May.	
Nhill Rainbow/Lush Road SLRSP	\$194,164		0%	SLRSP Application for re-alignment of intersection.	Aborted due to unsuccessful in funding application.	Not applicable.
Nhill Rainbow/ Three Chains Road SLRSP	\$196,561		0%	SLRSP Application for re-alignment of intersection.	Aborted due to unsuccessful in funding application.	Not applicable.
Woorak-Ni Ni-Lorquon Glenlee SLRSP	\$297,388		0%	SLRSP Application for re-alignment of intersection.	Aborted due to unsuccessful in funding application.	Not applicable.
Broughton Kaniva Road SLRSP	\$250,000		0%	SLRSP Application for re-alignment of intersection.	Aborted due to unsuccessful in funding application.	Not applicable.
Nhill Rainbow/ Kruger Road SLRSP	\$370,294	0%	50%	Safety improvement at the intersection.	Design approved. To be carried forward	
Nhill Rainbow/ Solly Road SLRSP	\$241,244	0%	0%	Safety improvement at the intersection.	Design approved. Consultation pending. To be carried forward.	
Tarranyurk East Road - Carried Forward	\$197,081	100%	100%	Reconstruction of section washed during flood.	Complete	Within budget

Project/Road Name (2025/2026)	Budget Allocated	% Complete	Forecast (30 June 2026)	Description of Works	Status	Budget (Under / Within Slightly Over Over Budget)
Major Patch	\$415,000	40%	100%	Patch work at various locations.	Major patch completed in 3 roads.	
Shoulder Resheet						
Diapur Yanac Road	\$71,128	100%	100%	Construction of 2-meter-wide unsealed shoulders on both sides.	Complete	Within budget
Old Minyip Road, Dimboola	\$95,161	100%	100%	Construction of 2-meter-wide unsealed shoulders on both sides.	Complete	Within budget
Antwerp Woorak Road	\$63,588	100%	100%	Construction of 2-meter-wide unsealed shoulders on both sides.	Complete	Within budget
Gravel Road Construction						
Five Chain Road - Dimboola	\$81,000	100%	100%	Gravel resheet with 5-meter-wide pavement.	Complete	Within budget
Spotting Program	\$70,000	70%	100%	Gravel resheet with 5-meter-wide pavement.	5 Roads maintained under spotting program.	
Boyeo Tarranginnie - Nhill	\$128,204	100%	100%	Gravel resheet with 5-meter-wide pavement.	Complete	Under Budget
Yanac South - Nhill	\$108,619	100%	100%	Gravel resheet with 5-meter-wide pavement.	Complete	Under Budget
Peakes Three Chain - Nhill	\$126,721	100%	100%	Gravel resheet with 5-meter-wide pavement.	Complete	Under budget
Decom Albacutya Y Intersection	\$30,000	0%	100%	Removal of Y intersection and creation of T intersection near Albacutya Silo.	To be completed in Q4.	
Propodollah Extension - Nhill	\$105,385	100%	100%	Gravel resheet with 5-meter-wide pavement.	Complete	Under budget

Project/Road Name (2025/2026)	Budget Allocated	% Complete	Forecast (30 June 2026)	Description of Works	Status	Budget (Under / Within Slightly Over Over Budget)
Tarranyuk East Road	\$74,236	100%	100%	Gravel resheet with 5-meter-wide pavement.	Complete	Over budget
Propodollah-Netherby - Nhill	\$39,576	100%	100%	Gravel resheet with 5-meter-wide pavement.	Complete	Under Budget.
Katyil Wail Road, Dimboola	\$114,000	100%	100%	Gravel resheet with 5-meter-wide pavement.	Complete	Slightly over
Tarranyuk West Road	\$126,874	100%	100%	Gravel resheet with 5-meter-wide pavement.	Complete	Under Budget
Kerb and Channel						
Lloyd Street	\$213,297	10%	100%	Renewal of K&C and service relocation.	Purchased culvert. Work commenced last week of April.	
Brougham Street	\$15,000	100%	100%	Renewal of K&C and some associated pavement work.	Complete	Under Budget
Kerb & Channel Section Replacement	\$94,497	20%	100%	Replacement of failed sections of kerb and channel	Underway	
Minor Culvert						
Culvert Renewals	\$143,810	20%	100%	Renewal of various minor culverts within the road network.	Procurement completed and works underway.	
Reseals (Completed by Contractors)						
Broadway Street, Jeparit	\$26,000	0%	100%	Resurfacing to prevent water ingress into the pavement.	Not commenced. To be completed in May.	
Langford Street, Nhill	\$17,366	100%	100%	Resurfacing to prevent water ingress into the pavement.	Complete	Within budget

Project/Road Name (2025/2026)	Budget Allocated	% Complete	Forecast (30 June 2026)	Description of Works	Status	Budget (Under / Within Slightly Over Over Budget)
Leahy Street, Nhill	\$27,870	100%	100%	Resurfacing to prevent water ingress into the pavement.	Complete	Within budget
Aerodrome Road, Nhill	\$5,408	100%	100%	Resurfacing to prevent water ingress into the pavement.	Complete	Within budget
A Bones Road Nhill	\$37,041	100%	100%	Resurfacing to prevent water ingress into the pavement.	Complete	Within budget
Dimboola Minyip Road	\$79,559	100%	100%	Resurfacing to prevent water ingress into the pavement.	Complete	Within budget
Nhill Kinder	\$18,000	100%	100%	Resurfacing to prevent water ingress into the pavement.	Complete	Within budget
High Street, Dimboola	\$38,032	0%	100%	Resurfacing to prevent water ingress into the pavement.	Not commenced. To be completed in May.	
Lloyd Street, Dimboola	\$14,863	100%	100%	Resurfacing to prevent water ingress into the pavement.	Complete	Within budget
Lorquon East Road	\$61,898	100%	100%	Resurfacing to prevent water ingress into the pavement.	Complete	Within budget
Winifred Street, Rainbow	\$15,000	100%	100%	Resurfacing to prevent water ingress into the pavement.	Complete	Within budget
Netherby Baker Road	\$32,684	100%	100%	Resurfacing to prevent water ingress into the pavement.	Complete	Within budget

Project/Road Name (2025/2026)	Budget Allocated	% Complete	Forecast (30 June 2026)	Description of Works	Status	Budget (Under / Within Slightly Over Over Budget)
Old Minyip Road, Dimboola	\$29,048	100%	100%	Resurfacing to prevent water ingress into the pavement.	Complete	Within budget
Woorak Ni Ni/ Lorquon Road	\$39,794	0%	100%	Resurfacing to prevent water ingress into the pavement.	Not commenced. To be completed in May.	
Lorquon Netherby Road	\$49,369	0%	100%	Resurfacing to prevent water ingress into the pavement.	Not commenced. To be completed in May.	
Bridges						
Bridge Repairs, following level 3 condition audit	\$31,500	0%	100%	Bridge repairs.	Not commenced.	
Footpaths						
Whitehead - Nhill SLRSP	\$250,000	0%	50%	Footpath on the north side and raised pedestrian crossing across Davis Avenue.	To be commenced in Q4. To be carried forward.	
Park - Nhill SLRSP	\$100,000	0%	50%	Concrete and Sealed path.	To be commenced in Q4. To be carried forward.	
MacPherson - Nhill TAC	\$125,362	100%	100%	Raised pedestrian crossing and associated works.	Complete	Under Budget
Pathway Section Replacement	\$100,000	50%	100%	Replacement of sections of failed footpath.	Underway	
Lloyd Street, Dimboola	\$230,831	100%	100%	Funds collected from sale of Gerang Hall and Dimboola Senior Citizens Building.	Complete	Under Budget

Project/Road Name (2025/2026)	Budget Allocated	% Complete	Forecast (30 June 2026)	Description of Works	Status	Budget (Under / Within Slightly Over Over Budget)
Buildings						
Davis Park redevelopment – Carried Forward	\$522,747	100%	100%	Construction of new Grandstand incorporating change rooms, medical room, tiered seating etc. Seat purchase and installation.	Complete	Within Budget
Silo Art Development – Carried Forward	\$679,000	100%	100%	Construction of Tower with Viewing Platform with staircase & elevator Internal & External Art Activation of Silo.	Complete	Within Budget
Nhill Caravan Park Cabin Upgrades	\$423,016	80%	100%	Construction of 3 Studio cabins at Nhill Caravan Park.	Cabin works complete. Camp Kitchen works to progress soon.	
Dimboola Swimming Pool Upgrade	\$1,355,000	15%	40%	Construction of Wet Deck, Balancing tank, disable ramp and pool hydraulics upgrade.	Procurement in progress. To be carried forward.	
Nhill Kinder Fitouts	\$25,507	100%	100%	Carried forward amount from 2024/2025.	Complete	Within Budget
Dimboola Kinder Fitouts	\$25,508	100%	100%	Carried forward amount from 2024/2025.	Complete	Within Budget
Rainbow Caravan Park Entry	\$89,819	30%	100%	Tiny towns project to upgrade the entrance to Rainbow.	Procurement underway.	
Nhill Streetscape Plan Implementation	\$110,104	60%	100%	Concrete path, Fencing, gates at Centenary Park.	Additional works will be co-ordinated in	

Project/Road Name (2025/2026)	Budget Allocated	% Complete	Forecast (30 June 2026)	Description of Works	Status	Budget (Under / Within Slightly Over Over Budget)
					collaboration with Nhill's community groups.	
Essential Building Renewal	\$250,000	30%	100%	Repairs of various components of various buildings identified by building condition assessment.	Underway	
Swimming Pool Package	\$73,525	100%	100%	Carried forward amount from 2024/2025 swimming pool project.	Complete	Within Budget
Total	\$3,554,226	71.50%	94.00%			

Link to Council Plan:**Theme Two: Built and Natural Environment**

Well-maintained physical assets and infrastructure to meet community and organisational needs.

Financial Implications:

The capital works program is delivered based on allocated budget. Actioning customer action requests and the grading program is absorbed within the annual operational budget.

Risk Management Implications:

Strategic Risk Description	Risk Management Discussion
Asset Management	Planning, monitoring and reporting on Council's Capital Works program ensures that critical budgeted projects have clear oversight, issues around delays, completion times and over/underspend are identified early and the community receives clear information on how Council funding is being utilised on capital projects throughout the year.

Relevant Legislation:

Local Government Act 2020

Road Management Act 2004

Community Engagement:

Not applicable.

Gender Equality Implications:

In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, a Gender Impact Assessment is not required as this decision does not have a direct and significant impact on the community.

Confidential Declaration:

Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest:

Under Section 130(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, officers providing advice to Council must disclose any conflict of interest, including the type of interest.

Officer Responsible – Ram Upadhyaya, Director Infrastructure Services

In providing this advice as the Officer Responsible, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Author – Ram Upadhyaya, Director Infrastructure Services

In providing this advice as the Author, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Communications Strategy:

Update on completed works will be provided to community via newsletters and social media channels on an ongoing basis.

Next Steps:

Council officers to provide the next update to Council in July 2026.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council notes the Capital Works 2025/2026 third quarter update.

MOVED: Cr C Uoy/Cr T Clark

That Council notes the Capital Works 2025/2026 third quarter update.

CARRIED

10.6 GRANT PROGRAM REVIEW

Cr Chan Uoy declared a general conflict of interest and left the room at 3:47pm.

Responsible Officer: Director Corporate and Community Services

Attachments:

1. Connected Communities Grants Guidelines DRAFT [10.6.1]
2. Regional Events Sponsorship Framework DRAFT [10.6.2]
3. Business Boost Grants Guidelines DRAFT [10.6.3]

Executive Summary:

This report discusses proposed changes to Council's three current grants schemes, Regional Community Events, Community Action Grants, and Business Assistance Grants.

The three (3) distinct grant streams are designed to strengthen community wellbeing, support local economic activity, and encourage vibrant events across the municipality. These programs provide financial assistance to community organisations, event organisers, and local businesses to undertake projects that contribute to the social, cultural, environmental, and economic development of Hindmarsh.

Proposed changes to the grants stream include:

- For Business Assistance Grants, a name change to Business Boost Grants, increased allocation of \$5,000 to \$25,000, \$10,000 of which will be reserved to conduct free business training.
- For Community Action Grants, a name change to Connected Communities Grants, an increase to four streams – Active, Social, Creative and Resourced Communities, the introduction of tiered events funding and an emphasis on home businesses and agribusinesses being eligible.
- For Regional Community Events Grants, a name change to Regional Events Sponsorship Framework, reduction in funding to \$25,000 and a focus on major events only with one (1) early round and then rolling expressions of interest for funding.

Discussion:

The **Business Assistance Grants** program assists local businesses to innovate, upgrade infrastructure or digital capability, and undertake initiatives that enhance economic activity and business resilience across the Shire.

Through the period 2022/2023 to 2025/2026 financial years, Council has awarded \$67,447.49 to businesses through the Business Assistance Grants program. This has been through two (2) funding streams Business Development (12 applications, 33% of funds awarded) and Streetscape Development (21 applications, 67% of funds awarded).

The Business Assistance Grants program is proposed to be renamed Business Boost Grants, reflecting a refreshed focus on supporting local business development and town-centre

activation. The revised program structure includes two streams. The Façade Stream will prioritise improvements to shopfronts and building façades to enhance the presentation, safety and appeal of town centres. Eligible works include repainting and repairs, signage upgrades, accessibility improvements, reinstatement of heritage features, external lighting, and creative treatments such as murals or window activations for vacant premises.

The Start and Grow Stream will provide practical support for new and expanding businesses, with funding available for essential equipment, digital capability improvements, marketing and branding, professional advisory services, and establishment costs for businesses activating vacant town centre spaces. The updated guidelines will also explicitly recognise and support home-based enterprises, including agricultural, online and side-gig businesses.

The **Community Action Grants** program supports not-for-profit groups to deliver projects, programs, and minor facility improvements that strengthen community participation, inclusion, and local amenity. The program has largely been successful, but is often undersubscribed, applications weighted heavily to small equipment, and the categories and guidelines not reviewed in line with the Council Plan and other strategic or policy priorities.

The Community Action Grants program is proposed to be renamed Connected Communities Grants to better reflect its purpose of strengthening community participation, wellbeing and inclusion. The revised program introduces four targeted funding streams aligned with Council strategies and community priorities.

The Active Communities stream will support sporting clubs and active recreation groups to deliver programs that promote physical activity and healthy lifestyles. Eligible initiatives include participation building programs, come and try activities, inclusive or modified sport equipment, programs for priority groups, fair-access initiatives, and training for coaches, volunteers and officials.

The Social Communities stream will fund events and activities that foster social connection and reduce isolation. This includes community festivals, gatherings and celebrations; programs for seniors and new residents; cultural or seasonal events; community meals and markets; initiatives that build intergenerational or cross community relationships; and one-off events celebrating local achievements.

The Creative Communities stream will support arts and cultural projects that encourage creativity and community expression. Eligible activities include public art, exhibitions, creative installations, community led workshops, performance arts, projects celebrating local identity, and temporary or pop-up creative activations in public spaces.

The Resourced Communities stream will assist community groups to access the resources required to deliver meaningful activities. Funding may support the purchase of equipment or materials, venue or transport hire, volunteer support resources, seed funding for new programs, accessibility enhancing technology, and startup costs for initiatives addressing identified local needs.

The **Regional Community Events** grant program provides funding for community, cultural, sporting, and tourism-focused events that activate public spaces, build local pride, and generate social and economic benefits. The purpose of the Regional Community Events grants is to support major events that are regionally significant. In 2023/2024, 100% of the program budget was allocated, with 52% in 2024/2026 and 50% in 2025/2026.

To improve the effectiveness, fairness and transparency of Council’s grants processes, it is proposed that funding for local events be transitioned to the Community Grants Program, the Tier 2–3 categories within the Regional Community Events stream be discontinued, and a new Regional Events Sponsorship framework be established. This approach aligns with existing governance requirements, whereby funding requests up to \$2,000 may be approved by the CEO (where there is no material budget impact), and requests above \$2,000 require a resolution of Council.

For major regional events, shifting from an application-based grant model to a sponsorship framework will enable Council to invest more strategically in events that deliver strong community, tourism and economic outcomes. Sponsorship arrangements provide clearer expectations, defined benefits, and strengthened partnerships, while allowing smaller and emerging events to continue accessing support through the Community Grants Program.

The proposed program (equivalent to the former Tier 1 category) will apply to events that operate at a regional scale, attract significant attendance including visitors from outside the municipality, and demonstrate alignment with Council’s objectives in economic development, tourism, community wellbeing or place activation. Eligible events must also demonstrate measurable economic benefit, strong governance and financial management, and appropriate insurance and risk controls.

A single open round early in the year will provide a transparent process for event organisers to engage with Council, demonstrate strategic alignment and be considered for sponsorship ahead of the events season. Remaining funds may then be allocated throughout the year to support additional sponsorship requests or major event related grant opportunities, ensuring flexibility while maintaining consistency with Council’s Contributions, Donations and Sponsorships Policy.

All other events will continue to be supported through the Community Grants Program.

Summary Table – Current

Grant	Core Purpose	Value	Round Dates	Streams
Business Assistance Grants	To encourage business innovation, resilience, and investment that contributes to a thriving and sustainable local economy.	\$20,000	July/August January/Feb	Business Development (\$2,000, 1:2) Streetscapes (\$3,000, 1:2)
Community Action Grants	To empower community groups to deliver projects that strengthen social	\$20,000	July/August January/Feb	Community Assistance (\$1,000) Events Sponsorship (\$500) Small Equipment (\$1,000)

	connection, inclusion, and local wellbeing across Hindmarsh			
Regional Community Events Grants	Provides funding for community, cultural, sporting, and tourism-focused events that activate public spaces, build local pride, and generate social and economic benefits.	\$30,000	July/August January/Feb	Tier 1: \$2,000 for events expecting up to 500 attendees. Tier 2: \$4,000 for events expecting up to 1500 attendees. Tier 3: \$7,500 for events expecting over 1500 attendees.

Summary Table - New

Grant	Core Purpose	Value	Round Dates	Streams
Business Boost	To encourage business innovation, resilience, and investment that contributes to a thriving and sustainable local economy.	\$25,000	July/August January/Feb	\$15,000 Focus on Facade (\$3,000, 1:2) Start and Grow (\$2,000, 1:2) \$10,000 for free business training sessions.
Connected Communities	To empower community groups to deliver projects that strengthen social connection, inclusion, and local wellbeing across Hindmarsh	\$20,000	July/August January/Feb	Active Communities (\$1,500) Social Communities (\$500-\$2,000) Creative Communities (\$1,500) Resourced Communities (\$500)
Regional Events Sponsorship Program	To support large scale events (of regional interest) that celebrate local identity, activate public spaces, and enhance cultural and economic vibrancy within the Shire.	\$25,000	July/August and then rolling	Major Events only Round one by application and then rolling sponsorship requests. Council to determine allocation, standard limit of \$7,500, (1:1 in that the overall cost of event must be demonstrated to be at least double the total amount requested)

Other key factors to Guidelines:

- Where appropriate, Councils can approve a project *subject to* additional information being provided (e.g., quotes, permits).
- Workshops, support from staff and templates (risk management plans, budgets) will be provided to make it easier for people to apply.

Rolling/Quick Response Stream – Monthly Assessment

The guidelines now have a rolling/quick response option outside of the standard opening rounds. This option is designed to support time-sensitive, unforeseen, or emerging opportunities that cannot reasonably wait until the next scheduled round. To maintain fairness, transparency, and alignment with VAGO's expectations for consistent

decision-making, applicants must clearly and convincingly demonstrate why they were unable to apply during the standard grant opening period. Acceptable reasons may include unexpected project timing, urgent equipment replacement, late notification of external opportunities, or circumstances genuinely outside the applicant's control. This requirement ensures the rolling scheme remains a targeted, integrity-focused mechanism that complements - rather than replaces - the primary competitive grants process.

Link to Council Plan:

Theme One: Our Community

1.1 Our Community is active, healthy and connected.

Theme Three: Competitive and Innovative Economy

3.1 Our local businesses are supported to grow.

Financial Implications:

This reflects current budgeted funding for Council's grants program so does not require any budgeted change, aside from future commitments.

Risk Management Implications:

Strategic Risk Description	Risk Management Discussion
Community Needs	Reviewing Council's grants programs ensures funding continues to reflect the changing needs and priorities of the Hindmarsh community. It allows Council to identify gaps, remove barriers to participation, and ensure that smaller or emerging groups have fair access to support. The review also strengthens fairness and transparency by clarifying guidelines, simplifying categories, and improving communication with applicants. Aligning the programs with VAGO's expectations ensures stronger governance, clearer decision-making, and more consistent outcomes. Overall, the review helps Council direct resources toward initiatives that deliver the greatest community benefit and build a more connected and resilient Shire.

Relevant Legislation:

Local Government Act 2020

Community Engagement:

In accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy, community engagement is not required.

Gender Equality Implications:

In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, a Gender Impact Assessment is not required as this decision does not have a direct and significant impact on the community.

Confidential Declaration:

Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest:

Under Section 130(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, officers providing advice to Council must disclose any conflict of interest, including the type of interest.

Officer Responsible – Petra Croot, Director Corporate and Community Services

In providing this advice as the Officer Responsible, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Author – Petra Croot, Director Corporate and Community Services

In providing this advice as the Author, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Communications Strategy:

Not applicable.

Next Steps:

Grant guidelines to be published on Council's website and publicised on Council's social media and in Council's newsletters.

RECOMMENDATION:***That Council adopts:***

- 1. the Business Boost Grants Guidelines;***
- 2. the Community Connection Grants Guidelines; and***
- 3. the Regional Events Sponsorship Framework.***

MOVED: Cr R Aitken/Cr J Barry***That Council adopts:***

- 1. the Business Boost Grants Guidelines;***
- 2. the Community Connection Grants Guidelines; and***
- 3. the Regional Events Sponsorship Framework.***

CARRIED

Cr C Uoy returned to the room at 3:50pm.

10.7 HINDMARSH DOMESTIC ANIMAL DE-SEXING POLICY

Responsible Officer: Director Infrastructure Services

Attachments:

1. 2026 02 23 Hindmarsh Domestic Animal De-Sexing Policy [10.7.1]

Executive Summary:

The Hindmarsh Domestic Animal De-sexing Policy provides the operational framework for delivering the cat-desexing action identified in the Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) 2026–2029, supporting Council’s obligations under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* to promote responsible pet ownership and reduce animal nuisance. The policy strengthens Council’s ability to meet key priorities in the Council Plan 2025–2029, including healthy and safe communities, improved township amenity, biodiversity protection, and equitable access to services. The policy also helps mitigate strategic risks such as environmental impacts, reputational issues, legislative compliance gaps, and financial pressures arising from unmanaged cat populations.

This report seeks Council endorsement of Hindmarsh Domestic Animal De-sexing Policy for community consultation for the period of three (3) weeks from 7 May 2026 to 28 May 2026.

Discussion:

During the community consultation for the Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) 2026-2029, residents were invited to provide feedback on a range of proposed domestic animal management initiatives on Council’s Have Your Say Page. One of these initiatives was to explore and introduce mandatory desexing for cats. Feedback from community members, showed strong support for mandatory desexing, with many residents recognising the impact that roaming and unowned cats have on neighbourhood amenity, animal welfare, and native wildlife. Feedback highlighted concerns about increasing stray cat numbers, the burden placed on residents and volunteers managing unwanted litters, and the need for clearer responsibility around pet ownership. This feedback was formally captured and incorporated into the Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) 2026–2029, where the introduction of a targeted cat desexing program, supported by policy guidance, was included as a specific action item.

The Hindmarsh Domestic Animal De-Sexing Policy (Cats) provides the operational framework required to implement this DAMP action. The policy outlines Council’s structured approach to reducing unwanted and roaming cat populations through subsidised desexing, community education, and collaboration with veterinarians and animal welfare organisations. It supports Council’s statutory obligations under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* to encourage responsible pet ownership and manage animal nuisance. The policy also aligns with the Council Plan 2025–2029, contributing to strategic priorities such as improved township amenity, healthy and safe communities, biodiversity protection, and equitable access to services. By reducing the number of stray or semi-owned cats, the policy helps

minimise operational costs associated with complaints, trapping, and impoundment, while also mitigating strategic risks including environmental impacts, reputational concerns, legislative compliance gaps, and inequities faced by low-income households who may struggle to access veterinary services. Through this integrated approach, the Hindmarsh Domestic Animal De-sexing Policy delivers on clear community expectations and strengthens Council's long-term domestic animal management outcomes.

Importantly, the introduction of mandatory cat desexing is expected to have minimal impact on residents who already register their cats, as desexing rates within Hindmarsh Shire are already high. Of the 338 currently registered cats, 325 are desexed, demonstrating that many compliant cat owners are already meeting this requirement. This indicates that mandatory desexing largely formalises existing responsible ownership practices rather than introducing a significant new burden.

Mandatory desexing has been implemented by over seven (7) Councils within Victoria as a population control measure. Within our Shire Local Laws Officers have identified at least two-three properties within each township that are housing a large population of owned and semi-owned cats that are not registered and not desexed. The desexing Policy will provide a basis to intervene earlier and more effectively in these situations to address the root causes of overpopulation.

While uptake of recent subsidised desexing programs was modest, this is not considered an indicator of ineffectiveness; rather, it highlights the importance of continued outreach and partnerships. To mitigate concerns that mandatory desexing may discourage registration, the policy is supported by practical and enabling measures, including subsidised desexing opportunities and clear communication, ensuring compliance is achievable. Current registration data further supports this approach, with the majority of registered cats already desexed, indicating that mandatory desexing is unlikely to negatively impact registration compliance and instead provides a clearer framework for addressing the unregistered and semi-owned population that contributes most significantly to overpopulation and amenity impacts.

This position is reinforced by on-ground observations from Council staff, including Landcare Facilitator, who has observed the impact of unmanaged cat populations across the Shire. The Facilitator notes: "As an ecologist, and someone who works with local communities, I have witnessed first-hand the devastating impact that feral and semi-owned cats can have on the environment. Cats are extremely efficient hunters, and dumped kittens that survive quickly become hungry predators. Landholders regularly report the disappearance of birds such as Superb Fairy-wrens, as well as declines in lizards, geckos and small native mammals. These losses are particularly evident around sheds and settlements where cats are attracted by shelter and food sources. The disappearance of these indicator species tells the story." These observations underscore the need for a preventative, population-focused

approach, with desexing forming a critical component of Council's broader environmental protection and domestic animal management.

Link to Council Plan:

Theme One: Our Community

1.1 Our Community is active, healthy and connected.

1.3 Our community can access services when and where they need them.

Theme Two: Built and Natural Environment

2.1 We care for and connect with our natural environment.

Financial Implications:

The financial implications of the Hindmarsh Domestic Animal De-Sexing Policy (Cats) are primarily linked to Council's support for subsidised desexing programs, including a dedicated funding allocation for mobile clinic partnerships, as well as minor administrative and communication costs to deliver the program. While these initiatives require upfront investment, they are expected to reduce longer-term expenses associated with trapping, impoundment, and nuisance complaint management, making the approach more cost-effective and sustainable over time.

Risk Management Implications:

Strategic Risk Description	Risk Management Discussion
Community Needs Environmental Sustainability	The strategic risk reasoning shows that mandatory cat desexing is essential to meeting community needs, protecting the environment, and ensuring long-term sustainability. Without intervention, roaming and unowned cats undermine township amenity, increase nuisance complaints, and reduce community confidence in Council's service delivery; they also place significant pressure on native wildlife, conflicting with Council's biodiversity objectives. Relying on reactive measures such as trapping and impoundment is not financially or operationally sustainable for a small rural council. A proactive desexing policy therefore reduces nuisance at the source, supports environmental protection, aligns with community expectations identified through Have Your Say consultation, and provides a more efficient and humane long-term management approach.

Relevant Legislation:

Domestic Animals Act 1994 (Victoria)

Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986 (POCTA Act)

Local Government Act 2020

Environmental Protection Act 2017

Community Engagement:

Community engagement on mandatory cat desexing commenced in June 2025 through Council's Have Your Say platform, where residents were invited to comment on proposed changes to domestic animal management, including mandatory desexing and Council's emerging partnership with the Vet Project to improve access to veterinary services. Strong community support during this initial consultation informed the drafting of the Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) 2026–2029. Further consultation on the draft DAMP in November 2025 reaffirmed this support, with residents consistently advocating for proactive measures to address roaming and unowned cats. Consequently, the implementation of a structured cat desexing program was included as a direct action within the DAMP, and this policy has been developed to deliver that action in response to the community's clearly expressed priorities.

Community feedback on the policy will be sought via Council's Have Your Say page for the period of three (3) weeks from 7 May 2026 to 28 May 2026.

Gender Equality Implications:

In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, a Gender Impact Assessment is not required as this decision does not have a direct and significant impact on the community.

Confidential Declaration:

Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest:

Under Section 130(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, officers providing advice to Council must disclose any conflict of interest, including the type of interest.

Officer Responsible – Ram Upadhyaya, Director Infrastructure Services

In providing this advice as the Officer Responsible, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Author – Cherylee Shandley, Manager Planning and Environment

In providing this advice as the Author, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Communications Strategy:

Community feedback on the policy will be sought via Council's Have Your Say page for the period of three (3) weeks from 7 May 2026 to 28 May 2026.

Next Steps:

Community consultation will commence following Council endorsement for the period of three (3) weeks from 7 May 2026 to 28 May 2026. A report will be presented to the next available Council meeting for adoption of the policy after consideration of all feedback received.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council endorses the Hindmarsh Domestic Animal De-Sexing Policy (Cats) for community consultation for the period 7 May 2026 to 28 May 2026.

MOVED: Cr T Clark/Cr R Aitken

That Council endorses the Hindmarsh Domestic Animal De-Sexing Policy (Cats) for community consultation for the period 7 May 2026 to 28 May 2026.

CARRIED

10.8 SUMMARY OF PLANNING PERMITS APPROVED UNDER DELEGATION Q1 2026

Responsible Officer: Director Infrastructure Services

Attachments:

Nil

Executive Summary:

This report summarises the planning permit applications approved by the CEO under delegation from the period of 1 January 2026 to 31 March 2026 (Q1 2026). It includes planning permits approved under the VicSmart process. A total of 3 planning permits were approved during this period.

Discussion:

Planning permit applications are assessed under the Hindmarsh Planning Scheme. Under Council delegations, the Chief Executive Officer may approve planning permits following assessment and recommendation by town planners. More complex applications or applications receiving one or more objections are presented to Council for determination.

Some low impact and straightforward planning permit applications are eligible for the VicSmart process, which provides an expedited assessment pathway. VicSmart is designed to streamline simple proposals and includes a ten business day assessment timeframe, no public notice, no external referrals, and a decision by the Chief Executive Officer under delegation.

Regular planning permit applications have a statutory assessment timeframe of sixty days. VicSmart applications have a statutory assessment timeframe of ten days.

The following planning permit applications were approved by the Chief Executive Officer under delegation during the period 1 January 2026 to 31 March 2025. There were no VicSmart applications.

App No.	Address	Proposal	Date Rec'd	Planning Permit Trigger	Date Appr'd	Stat Days
PA1890-2025	231 Rogers Rd, TARRANGINNIE VIC 3418 (Crown Allotment 28 Parish of Tarranginnie)	Subdivide land into two lots	5 Aug 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clause 35.07-3 Subdivide land • Clause 42.01-2 Subdivide land 	26 Mar 2026	41

App No.	Address	Proposal	Date Rec'd	Planning Permit Trigger	Date Appr'd	Stat Days
PA1893-2025	Bushby Lane, DIMBOOLA VIC 3414 (Crown Allotment 80 Section B Parish of Dimboola)	Use and development of the land for a dwelling (including works for a septic tank), and vegetation removal associated with agroforestry	21 Oct 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clause 35.07-1: Use of the land for a dwelling • Clause 35.07-4: Buildings and works associated with a Section 2 Use • Clause 42.01-2: Works • Clause 44.03-2: Works • Clause 42.01-2: Vegetation removal 	23 Mar 2026	60
PA1896-2025	65 High Street, DIMBOOLA VIC 3414 (Land in Plan of Consolidation 383289V)	Use and development of a dwelling, alteration of access to TRZ2, earthworks and generation of wastewater	12 Dec 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clause 35.03-4: Buildings and Works RLZ • Clause 35.03-1: Section 2 Use RLZ • Clause 42.01-2 - Construct a building or construct or carry out works ESO • Clause 52.29-2 Create or alter access to a road in Transport Zone 2 	23 Feb 2026	46

Link to Council Plan:

Theme Four: Good Governance and Financial Sustainability

4.1 We are a transparent and responsive organisation.

4.2 We engage our community with respect and openness.

4.3 We manage our resources responsibly and strategically.

Financial Implications:

None.

Risk Management Implications:

Strategic Risk Description	Risk Management Discussion
Governance	Risk is managed appropriately by adhering to the assessment process during approval of all planning applications. Complicated planning permits with higher levels of risk are presented to Council for decision.

Relevant Legislation:

Planning and Environment Act 1987

Community Engagement:

Where there is the potential for an application to cause material detriment, the application is advertised to neighbouring properties and sometimes the wider community. This is not applicable for a VicSmart permit application.

Gender Equality Implications:

In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, a Gender Impact Assessment is not required as this decision does not have a direct and significant impact on the community.

Confidential Declaration:

Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest:

Under Section 130(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, officers providing advice to Council must disclose any conflict of interest, including the type of interest.

Officer Responsible – Ram Upadhyaya, Director Infrastructure Services

In providing this advice as the Officer Responsible, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Author – Mikayla Farmers, Planning Officer

In providing this advice as the Author, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Communications Strategy:

Not applicable.

Next Steps:

Next report to be provided at the end of Q2 2026.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council notes the planning applications approved by the CEO under delegation for the period 1 January 2026 to 31 March 2026 (Q1 2026).

MOVED: Cr J Barry/Cr T Clark

That Council notes the planning applications approved by the CEO under delegation for the period 1 January 2026 to 31 March 2026 (Q1 2026).

CARRIED

10.9 TARRANYURK QUARRY

Responsible Officer: Director Infrastructure Services

Attachments:

Nil

Executive Summary:

This report seeks Council approval to advertise its intention to dispose of the surplus land currently known as Tarranyurk Quarry, located at 289 Greig Road, Antwerp, Lot 1 TP218879. The property is 192.59 ha comprising of approximately 92 ha of farmland and approximately 100 ha of salt flats. Community feedback on the proposal will be sought via Council's Have Your Say page for the period of four (4) weeks from Thursday 7 May 2026 to Thursday 4 June 2026.

Discussion:

Council owns a number of assets that are surplus to Council needs and are reviewed for future use, lease, or sale. The land located at 289 Greig Road Antwerp was previously part of a number of quarries that Council maintained for road making materials. This land has since become unsuitable for this purpose, the quarry has been rehabilitated and become surplus to Council needs. Ongoing ownership of the site presents financial and operational risk exposure to Council. Sale of this property will support Council's long term financial sustainability by converting a surplus asset into capital. The proposed land for disposal is shown in the image below.



Tarranyurk Quarry, 289 Greig Road, Antwerp, Lot 1 TP218879

Council has been leasing the land since 1997, with the current lease expiring on 28 February 2026. Negotiations are currently underway for a short-term lease to 31 December 2026 to enable Council to determine the future of this land.

Under Section 114 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (Act) Restriction on power to sell or exchange land

- (2) *Before selling or exchanging the land, the Council must—*
- (a) *at least 4 weeks prior to selling or exchanging the land, publish notice of intention to do so—*
 - (i) *on the Council's Internet site; and*
 - (ii) *in any other manner prescribed by the regulations for the purposes of this subsection; and*
 - (b) *undertake a community engagement process in accordance with its community engagement policy; and*
 - (c) *obtain from a person who holds the qualifications or experience specified under section 13DA(2) of the Valuation of Land Act 1960 a valuation of the land which is made not more than 6 months prior to the sale or exchange*

Community feedback on the proposal will be sought via Council's Have Your Say page for the period of four weeks from Thursday 7 May 2026 to Thursday 4 June 2026.

Link to Council Plan:

Theme Four: Good Governance and Financial Sustainability

4.3 We manage our resources responsibly and strategically.

Financial Implications:

Council will incur fees for the sale of the land, however these fees will be recouped through the sale of the land.

Risk Management Implications:

Strategic Risk Description	Risk Management Discussion
Asset Management Financial Sustainability	The land has become excess to Council's needs. This land previously operated as a Limestone quarry. The land has been restored to farming land.

Relevant Legislation:

Local Government Act 2020

Community Engagement:

If Council resolves to advertise the intention to dispose of the Tarranyurk Quarry, located at 289 Greig Road, Antwerp, there will be a public notice as per Council's Engagement Policy and legislative requirements.

The community feedback on the proposal will be sought via council's Have Your Say page for the period of four weeks from Thursday 7 May 2026 to Thursday 4 June 2026.

Gender Equality Implications:

In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, a Gender Impact Assessment is not required as this decision does not have a direct and significant impact on the community.

Confidential Declaration:

Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest:

Under Section 130(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, officers providing advice to Council must disclose any conflict of interest, including the type of interest.

Officer Responsible – Ram Upadhyaya, Director Infrastructure Services

In providing this advice as the Officer Responsible, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Author – Mick Henderson, Manager Assets and Facilities

In providing this advice as the Author, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Communications Strategy:

Under the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council is required to resolve that an asset is surplus to requirements, enabling Council officers to commence sale processes. Council must advertise publicly its intention and, in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy, any asset sales will involve participatory engagement including public advertising and seeking submissions prior to resolving to approve disposal.

Next Steps:

Council officers will publicly advertise the intention to sell land to community and seek submissions which Council will then consider at a future meeting to determine whether to progress to sale.

RECOMMENDATION:**That Council:**

- 1. gives public notice by advertising for a minimum of 28 days Council's intention to sell the land located at 289 Greig Road, Antwerp under section 114(2) of the Local Government Act 2020;**
- 2. undertakes a community engagement process in accordance with its Community Engagement Policy in accordance with S114(2)(b) of the Local Government Act 2020;**
- 3. obtains a valuation of this land for sale, from a registered valuer in accordance with s114(2)(c) of the Local Government Act 2020; and**
- 4. receives a further report at the end of the notice period with consideration of submissions received.**

MOVED: Cr T Clark/Cr J Barry

That Council:

- 1. gives public notice by advertising for a minimum of 28 days Council's intention to sell the land located at 289 Greig Road, Antwerp under section 114(2) of the Local Government Act 2020;***
- 2. undertakes a community engagement process in accordance with its Community Engagement Policy in accordance with S114(2)(b) of the Local Government Act 2020;***
- 3. obtains a valuation of this land for sale, from a registered valuer in accordance with S114(2)(c) of the Local Government Act 2020; and***
- 4. receives a further report at the end of the notice period with consideration of submissions received.***

CARRIED

10.10 CONTRACT VARIATIONS DUE TO IMPACTS ON FUEL PRICING

Responsible Officer: Director Infrastructure Services

Attachments:

1. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED - Contract variation requests [10.10.1]

Executive Summary:

Council is experiencing increased cost pressures across multiple contracts due to fuel and bituminous product price escalation, driven by global oil supply disruptions. Several contractors have sought temporary contract variations to address these impacts, with the potential for further requests to be received. The proposed variations are evidence-based, limited in scope, and subject to twice monthly review to confirm ongoing necessity. Variations to current contracts need to be considered to comply with Road Transport Contractual Chain Order issued by Fair Work Commission on 20 April 2026 which requires full recovery of increased cost of fuel from the road transport industry.

To support timely decision-making and continuity of essential services during this period of market volatility, Council is requested to delegate authority to the CEO to negotiate and approve current and future temporary variations directly related to the fuel crisis.

Discussion:

Council has received several requests for contract variations arising from significant increases in the cost of fuel and bituminous products, including diesel and petrol for plant and fleet operations, and bitumen-based materials such as asphalt and spray seal used in road construction and maintenance works.

The current price volatility is driven by disruptions to global oil supply flows through the Strait of Hormuz, a critical international shipping route for petroleum products, combined with ongoing conflict in the Middle East. These disruptions have resulted in rapid and sustained increases in fuel prices across Australian markets. The scale, timing and duration of these impacts were not reasonably foreseeable at the time the affected contracts were tendered.

Legislative Context – Fair Work Act and RTCCO

On 20 April 2026, the Fair Work Commission made the Road Transport Contractual Chain Order – Fuel Cost Recovery – 2026 (RTCCO) under Part 3B(2) of the *Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)*. The RTCCO commenced on 21 April 2026 and specifically addresses fuel supply chain disruptions arising from reduced shipping through the Strait of Hormuz and conflict in the Middle East.

Key elements of the RTCCO relevant to Council include:

- The RTCCO mandates recovery of “increased fuel costs”, defined as the difference between the prevailing fuel price and the fuel price that applied on or before 6 March 2026, which is established as the base price reference date for fuel cost recovery.

- Adjustments to rates must occur within each fortnight or twice per calendar month, reflecting the time-sensitive nature of fuel price movements.
- Fuel recovery mechanisms are intended to be temporary and responsive, rather than permanent changes to contract pricing.
- The RTCCO will cease to operate if the weekly average national terminal gate diesel price falls below \$2.00 per litre, reinforcing its interim and exceptional nature.
- The RTCCO is legally binding while it is in force, and contravention attracts civil penalties of up to 60 penalty units (being \$19,800 for individuals and \$99,000 for small businesses) each.

While the RTCCO applies directly to participants in the road transport industry, it establishes a clear legislative benchmark that extraordinary and externally driven fuel price increases justify short-term contractual relief, subject to frequent review.

Impact on Council Contracts

The contracts potentially impacted by these market conditions span multiple service areas with a high reliance on fuel consumption and bituminous materials. Several variation requests have already been received, and further requests may be submitted as contractors continue to assess the effect of fuel price volatility on their cost structures. Details of known variation requests are provided in the confidential attachment to this report.

Each variation request has been assessed against the relevant contract provisions, Council's Procurement Policy, and applicable legislative principles, including the fuel cost recovery framework reflected in the RTCCO. In particular, assessments have ensured that any proposed variation:

- Is directly attributable to documented increases in fuel or bituminous product costs relative to pre-6 March 2026 pricing;
- Is restricted in scope, applying only to the affected contract components; and
- Is supported by objective evidence, such as supplier invoices, fuel price indices, or recognised market benchmarks.

Temporary Variations and Fortnightly Review

The fuel cost adjustment framework set out in the RTCCO recommends that any approved contract variations:

- Be temporary in nature, and not constitute permanent changes to contract pricing;
- Be reviewed on a fortnightly basis, aligning with the review and rate adjustment cycle contemplated by the RTCCO and ensuring variations remain linked to actual fuel price movements relative to the 6 March 2026 base price; and
- Be reduced or removed promptly where fuel or bituminous product prices stabilise or decline, in accordance with the relevant contract terms.

Delegation and Governance

Given the number of affected contracts, the likelihood of additional variation requests, and the requirement for fortnightly review and adjustment of fuel related cost impacts consistent with the RTCCO, it is recommended that authority be delegated to the CEO to negotiate and approve temporary contract variations directly attributable to fuel and bituminous product price increases.

This delegation will:

- Enable timely and consistent decision making aligned with the fortnightly review cycle contemplated by the RTCCO;
- Reduce administrative delays that may otherwise impact continuity of essential services; and
- Ensure adjustments remain directly linked to objectively verifiable fuel price movements relative to the 6 March 2026 base price.

Link to Council Plan:

Theme Four: Good Governance and Financial Sustainability

4.3 We manage our resources responsibly and strategically.

Financial Implications:

The proposed contract variations reduces the unknown cost component for all contracts, allowing Council the best opportunity to anticipate contract expenditure in current and future budgets.

Risk Management Implications:

Strategic Risk Description	Risk Management Discussion
Project Management and Strategic Execution	Temporary contract variations will result in greater certainty for contractors (including local) during this period of fuel cost uncertainty. Accepting variations, instead of retendering, will also result in less down-time in utilising contractors to perform services.

Relevant Legislation:

Local Government Act 2020

Road Management Act 2004

Fair Work Act 2009

Community Engagement:

Community consultation is not required as there will be no interruption to the existing service levels.

Gender Equality Implications:

In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, a Gender Impact Assessment is not required as this decision does not have a direct and significant impact on the community.

Confidential Declaration:

Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest:

Under Section 130(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, officers providing advice to Council must disclose any conflict of interest, including the type of interest.

Officer Responsible – Ram Upadhyaya, Director Infrastructure Services

In providing this advice as the Officer Responsible, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Author – Laura Sonnberger, Contracts and Procurement Officer

In providing this advice as the Author, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Communications Strategy:

Not applicable.

Next Steps:

Council officers will negotiate with contractors who submit a contract variation request due to the current fuel crisis.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council authorises the CEO to negotiate and approve current and future temporary contract variations directly attributable to the current fuel crisis to ensure compliance with the Road Transport Contractual Chain Order – Fuel Cost Recovery – 2026.

MOVED: Cr J Barry/Cr T Clark

That Council authorises the CEO to negotiate and approve current and future temporary contract variations directly attributable to the current fuel crisis to ensure compliance with the Road Transport Contractual Chain Order – Fuel Cost Recovery – 2026.

CARRIED

10.11 RE-ALLOCATION OF FUNDING TO THE 2025/2026 RESEAL PROGRAM

Responsible Officer: Director Infrastructure Services

Attachments:

Nil

Executive Summary:

This report recommends the re-allocation of \$300,000 of Council funds towards the 2025/2026 reseal program.

Council officers have identified the need to supplement the capital works program with contractors to complete the own source expenditure requirements of the Roads to Recovery program, this is due to the requirement to complete grant funded projects within the required timeframe within the grant agreement.

Four roads have been identified for investment into resealing, these include Lorquon Station Road, Lorquon East Road, Rainbow Nhill Road, and Dimboola Minyip Road. Undertaking reseals on these key strategic routes will enhance the useful life of the sealed road pavements.

Discussion:

Council officers have been closely following expenditure on roads infrastructure for the year to date, with consideration given to the R2R own source funding requirements. Each financial year Council is required to expend a certain amount of Council cash on road infrastructure in order to receive the R2R grant. Council is currently tracking behind expenditure requirements, mainly because of commitments to complete grant funded projects (e.g. MacPherson Street pedestrian crossing, and Tarranyurk East Road flood recovery).

Council officers have identified the need to supplement the program with contractors to meet own source expenditure requirements before end of financial year. Condition assessments have shown investment into reseals would be highly beneficial to enhance the useful life of sealed road pavements. Council is in contract with sealing contractor Inroads who could undertake an additional \$300,000 worth of works prior to the end of the financial year. Officers have been in contact with the sealing contractor, who have confirmed their availability, should these extra works be approved.

Budget can be found from three areas;

1. \$100,000 from additional revenue from the sale of redundant plant items;
2. \$100,000 from underspent materials from the plant operations budget;
3. \$100,000 from savings on predicted underspend on the 2025/2026 Local Roads and Bridges operational and capital budgets.

The roads recommended for resealing include:

1. Lorquon Station Road;
2. Lorquon East Road;
3. Rainbow Nhill Road;
4. Dimboola Minyip Road.

The total square metres would be confirmed closer to the date of sealing, due to fluctuating supply costs being passed on by Inroads because of the Middle East conflict. Noting that sealing conducted late in the financial year attracts a 5% discount due to off peak season rates.

Link to Council Plan:

Theme Two: Built and Natural Environment

2.2 Our infrastructure supports liveability and resilience.

Financial Implications:

If Council does not expend own source funding requirements in 2025/2026, we may miss out on \$1,902,211 of R2R funding in the 2026/2027 financial year and beyond, noting that Council did not meet own source funding in 2024/2025 and received an exemption, however is required to make up the difference over the life of the program (2024/2025 - 2028/2029).

Risk Management Implications:

Strategic Risk Description	Risk Management Discussion
Financial Sustainability	The R2R program funding is essential to Council's financial sustainability, providing \$9,511,057 of funding over the 5-year cycle of the program. If we do not meet the own source funding requirements our ability to conduct essential road works would be severely diminished.

Relevant Legislation:

Local Government Act 2020

Local Government Act 1989

Road Management Act 2004

Community Engagement:

No community engagement has been undertaken regarding this proposal. The 2025/2026 annual budget was thoroughly consulted on, and these changes to budget enable the funding to be utilised on approved alternative projects.

Gender Equality Implications:

In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, a Gender Impact Assessment is not required as this decision does not have a direct and significant impact on the community.

Confidential Declaration:

Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest:

Under Section 130(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, officers providing advice to Council must disclose any conflict of interest, including the type of interest.

Officer Responsible – Ram Upadhyaya, Director Infrastructure Services

In providing this advice as the Officer Responsible, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Author – Daniel Griffiths, Manager Works and Operations

In providing this advice as the Author, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Communications Strategy:

Inroads will be notified of the extra works with formalised scope and estimates, should the proposed changes be approved.

Next Steps:

Confirm scope of projects and engage the contractor to complete works prior to end of 2025/2026 financial year.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council re-allocates \$300,000 of Council funds towards the 2025/2026 reseal program to ensure the Roads to Recovery program own source fund requirements are met, to reseal the following strategic routes:

- a) Lorquon Station Road;***
- b) Lorquon East Road;***
- c) Rainbow Nhill Road; and***
- d) Dimboola Minyip Road;***

MOVED: Cr T Clark/Cr C Uoy

That Council re-allocates \$300,000 of Council funds towards the 2025/2026 reseal program to ensure the Roads to Recovery program own source fund requirements are met, to reseal the following strategic routes:

- a) Lorquon Station Road;***
- b) Lorquon East Road;***
- c) Rainbow Nhill Road; and***
- d) Dimboola Minyip Road;***

CARRIED

10.12 POLICY UPDATES

Cr Ron Ismay declared a material conflict of interest and left the room at 4:05pm.

Responsible Officer: Director Corporate and Community Services

Attachments:

1. Council Grants Administration Policy DRAFT [10.12.1]
2. C003 Councillor Expense Entitlements Policy [10.12.2]
3. C006 Fraud Prevention and Control Policy and Plan [10.12.3]
4. C016 Public Interest Disclosure Policy [10.12.4]
5. C022 Procurement Policy [10.12.5]
6. C005 Hardship and Financial Hardship Policy DRAFT [10.12.6]
7. C00X Native Vegetation on Rateable Land Policy DRAFT [10.12.7]

Executive Summary:

This report presents four (4) policies for adoption, and three (3) draft policies for consideration and endorsement for a period of public consultation.

Policies presented for adoption are as follows:

- The **Public Interest Disclosure Policy**, which outlines how Council will handle reports of wrongdoing.
- The **Fraud Prevention Policy and Plan**, which details how fraud will be prevented, detected and responded to within Hindmarsh Shire Council.
- The **Procurement Policy**, which outlines the measures which must be taken in procuring goods and services to ensure a fair and transparent process is undertaken.
- The **Councillor Expense Entitlements Policy**, which defines the parameters for reimbursement of necessary out of pocket expenses incurred in carrying out the duties of Councillor or Delegated Committee Member. This review specifically addresses the provision of a vehicle for the Mayor or Councillor use in carrying out official duties.

The policies, with the exception of the Councillor Expense Entitlements Policy, have been available for a period of community consultation through Council's Have Your Say webpage from Thursday 2 April – 5pm to Wednesday 22 April 2026. No feedback was received from the community; however, officers have made minor administrative changes and included the procurement of Councillor and employee specialised training and personal development as qualifying for a market engagement exemption.

The draft policies presented for endorsement to be made available for a period of public consultation are as follows:

- The **Grants Administration Policy**, a new policy that outlines how Council grants will be administered in terms of oversight, transparency, and community benefit.
- The **Hardship and Financial Hardship Policy**, which now addresses both financial hardship and hardship arising from other personal circumstances. It provides a

framework for managing payments, ensures options offered are proportionate, consistent and clearly communicated.

- The **Native Vegetation on Rateable Land Policy**, which outlines the rebates available to properties with existing arrangements with Council through Landcare Management Agreements or Conversation Covenants.

Discussion:

This report presents three (3) draft policies to Council for endorsement for a period of public consultation from 7 May – 28 May 2026. In reviewing these policies, Council officers have undertaken benchmarking activities against other like policies, reviewed legislation, and considered practical implementation and relevance to current economic environment, to ensure compliant and comprehensive policy development that supports consistent and effective organisational practice.

The **Council Grants Administration Policy** clarifies how grants programs administered by Council will be fair, transparent and based on community need. In May 2022, the Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO) released its assurance report *Fraud Control Over Local Government Grants*, examining whether Victorian councils had effective and consistently applied fraud controls across their grants programs. The audit reviewed six (6) councils over a five-year period and assessed the design and operation of fraud controls, decision-making processes, and oversight mechanisms. VAGO concluded that fraud controls within local government grant programs were often inconsistently applied or missing, exposing councils to elevated risks. Key issues identified included:

- inconsistent identification and management of conflicts of interest
- lack of consistent assessment criteria and transparent decision-making
- inadequate documentation of assessment and approval processes
- limited monitoring of how grant funds were used
- insufficient evaluation of grant program outcomes.

As a result of this, Officers have drafted a Grants Administration Policy that responds to these governance matters.

The **Hardship and Financial Hardship Policy** considers matters of both financial hardship and hardship experienced from other personal circumstances. In December 2025, the Minister for Local Government issued Ministerial Guidelines relating to the payment of rates and charges under section 181AA of the *Local Government Act 1989*. The Guidelines provide mandatory direction to councils and require existing hardship, financial hardship, and debt management policies to be reviewed and updated to ensure consistency with the principles and expectations set out in the Guidelines.

Key changes include -

1. Clear distinction between hardship and financial hardship;
2. Mandatory principles embedded in the policy;
3. Flexible payment and relief options;

4. Accessibility and early engagement;
5. Assessment, decision-making and review processes;
6. Family violence and economic abuse considerations.

The **Native Vegetation on Rateable Land Policy** outlines the arrangements for ratepayers with existing Landcare Management Agreements or conservation covenants. Currently, Hindmarsh Shire Council provides a 75% rebate on for properties with a total Conservation Covenant. Those with a Landcare Management Agreement receive a flat rebate of \$5.00 per hectare for the affected area, with a minimum rebate of \$50.00 and a maximum of \$250.00 providing the rebate does not exceed 75% of the rate payable. Council administers this program annually by reviewing the current active list and calculating and processing the rebate according to the new rates and charges after the new year rates calculations have been completed. At the Council meeting in May 2016, Council adopted the above policy, putting it in place for 10 years. As this expires in May 2026, Council is required to review the policy arrangements. It is proposed that the current policy is retained for existing arrangements only but with strengthened requirements for assessing eligibility, as per the attachment.

There are four (4) policies presented for adoption.

The **Councillor Expense Entitlements Policy** has been reviewed in line with advice regarding additional benefits to Councillors in addition to allowances set by the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal. As a result, the entitlement of a Mayoral vehicle for private use has been removed, with a retained entitlement to use the vehicle for official purposes. As the adjustment is minor and does not have a significant impact on the community, consultation is not recommended.

The **Public Interest Disclosure Policy** establishes a system for reporting disclosure of improper or corrupt conduct, or detrimental action. It applies to Councillors, special committee members, volunteers, contractors and employees of Hindmarsh Shire Council. Council first adopted the Public Interest Disclosure Policy in July 2013 following the introduction of the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012* and has been regularly reviewed.

In this instance the Public Interest Disclosure Policy has been reviewed against legislation and with organisation context to ensure ongoing relevance and reliability. Minor changes to wording have been made for clarity within the definition of Detrimental Action. Further detail in the definition of improper conduct has also been added for consistency with the *Public Interest Disclosure Act (2012)*. There have been no changes which significantly alter the intent of the existing policy. Following the period of consultation there have been no further changes to the draft policy.

The **Fraud Prevention Policy and Plan** demonstrates Council's commitment to the prevention, detection and investigation of any or all instances of fraudulent and corrupt activity. This policy centres on Council's commitment to transparent and impartial decision

making. Through a benchmarking process, it was determined that Council’s policy is a comprehensive and thorough document. This review sees the addition of a dedicated section outlining requirements for evidence of completion or enrolment in study in the Fraud Prevention Plan. Other minor administrative changes have been made to reflect role or title changes which do not change the intent or content of the policy. Following consultation there have been no further changes to the draft policy.

Procurement Policy

This policy establishes a transparent, ethical and accountable approach to procurement that promotes open and fair competition, ensures value for money, and supports efficient practices. A comprehensively revised Procurement Policy was adopted in 2025, and after reviewing risks relating to related party procurement and having implemented the Policy operationally for several months, some amendments are proposed. This includes an Appendix that considers additional market engagement and reporting for related party procurement, reintroduction of a minimum threshold for purchase orders, removing the blanket exception for purchase orders where there is a market engagement exemption, enabling procurement approvals under thresholds where there has been legitimate market engagement attempts and enabling practical or emergency purchases without a purchase order but with clear approval processes.

Following the period of public consultation Council officers have amended the exemption section to include an exemption relating to specialised training and have made minor formatting and grammatical corrections.

Link to Council Plan:

Theme Four: Good Governance and Financial Sustainability

4.1 We are a transparent and responsive organisation.

4.2 We engage our community with respect and openness.

Financial Implications:

Limiting use of the mayoral vehicle to official use only will result in a slight reduction in vehicle management costs. Financial implications relating to the Native Vegetation on Rateable Land Policy are included in the report (an impact of around \$7,500 annually on total rates collected). There are no other material financial implications involved with the endorsement and adoption of these policies

Risk Management Implications:

Strategic Risk Description	Risk Management Discussion
Governance	Ensuring Policies are reviewed and up to date means that Council’s practices can be appropriately aligned to legislation, regulations and best practice. Strong policy frameworks ensure consistent, transparent, fair and appropriate decision-making at all levels of the organisation

	and allows employees, Councillors and the community to have a shared understanding.
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Relevant Legislation:

Local Government Act 2020

Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012

Community Engagement:

It is recommended that the attached policies, Council Grants Administration Policy, Hardship and Financial Hardship Policy, and Native Vegetation on Rateable Land Policy, be made available for a period of Community engagement in line with Councils Community Engagement Policy from 7 May 2026 to 28 May 2026.

Gender Equality Implications:

In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, a Gender Impact Assessment is not required as this decision does not have a direct and significant impact on the community.

Confidential Declaration:

Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest:

Under Section 130(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, officers providing advice to Council must disclose any conflict of interest, including the type of interest.

Officer Responsible – Petra Croot, Director Corporate and Community Services

In providing this advice as the Officer Responsible, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Author – Janelle Reichelt, Manager People and Performance

In providing this advice as the Author, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Next Steps:

If adopted, the four (4) policies will be uploaded on Council's website, publications will be prepared, and staff training will be delivered.

If approved, the three (3) policies will be open for a period of community consultation through Council's Have Your Say page. Council officers will then review the policies based on any feedback received and provide a report to Council 24 June 2026, recommending the policies for adoption.

RECOMMENDATION:**That Council:**

1. **adopts the:**
 - a) **Public Interest Disclosure Policy;**
 - b) **Fraud Prevention Policy and Plan;**
 - c) **Procurement Policy;**
 - d) **Councillor Expense Entitlements Policy; and**
2. **endorses the following policies for a period of Community Engagement from 7 May 2026 to 28 May 2026:**
 - a) **the draft Council Grants Administration Policy;**
 - b) **the draft Hardship and Financial Hardship Policy; and**
 - c) **the draft Native Vegetation on Rateable Land Policy.**

MOVED: Cr C Uoy/Cr T Clark**That Council:**

1. **adopts the:**
 - a) **Public Interest Disclosure Policy;**
 - b) **Fraud Prevention Policy and Plan;**
 - c) **Procurement Policy;**
2. **endorses the following policies for a period of Community Engagement from 7 May 2026 to 28 May 2026:**
 - a) **the draft Council Grants Administration Policy;**
 - b) **the draft Hardship and Financial Hardship Policy;**
 - c) **the draft Native Vegetation on Rateable Land Policy; and**
3. **takes further time to review the Councillor Expense Entitlements Policy.**

CARRIED

Cr Ron Ismay returned to the room at 4:10pm.

11 COUNCIL COMMITTEES

11.1 ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer

Attachments:

1. Rainbow Town Committee Minutes - 16 February 2026 [11.1.1]
2. Rainbow Town Committee Minutes - 23 March 2026 [11.1.2]
3. Rainbow Town Committee Minutes - 20 April 2026 [11.1.3]
4. Nhill Town Committee Minutes - 7 April 2026 [11.1.4]
5. Jeparit Town Committee Minutes - 13 April 2026 [11.1.5]
6. Hindmarsh Pride Committee Minutes - 15 April 2026 [11.1.6]
7. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED - Jeparit Town Committee Financial Report - 31 March 2026 [11.1.7]
8. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED - Nhill Town Committee Financial Report - 31 March 2026 [11.1.8]
9. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED - Rainbow Town Committee Financial Report - 31 March 2026 [11.1.9]

Introduction:

The following Hindmarsh Advisory Committees held meetings on the following dates:

- **Rainbow Town Committee**
General meetings on 16 February 2026, 23 March 2026, 20 April 2026
- **Nhill Town Committee**
General meeting on 7 April 2026
- **Jeparit Town Committee**
General meeting on 13 April 2026
- **Hindmarsh Pride Committee**
General meeting on 15 April 2026

A copy of the minutes for each of the meetings held are included as attachments for the information of Council.

A copy of the financial statements for the month of March for the following committees has been included as confidential attachments for the information of Council:

- **Jeparit Township Advisory Committee**
- **Nhill Township Advisory Committee**
- **Rainbow Township Advisory Committee**

Next Steps:

Council officer to publish Advisory Committee minutes on Council's website.

RECOMMENDATION:**That Council:**

1. *notes the minutes of the following Advisory Committees:*
 - a) *Rainbow Township meetings held on 16 February 2026, 23 March 2026 and 20 April 2026;*
 - b) *Nhill Township meeting held on 7 April 2026;*
 - c) *Jeparit Township meeting held on 13 April 2026;*
 - d) *Hindmarsh Pride meeting held on 15 April 2026; and*
2. *the financial statements for the month of March 2026 for the following Advisory Committees:*
 - a) *Jeparit Township;*
 - b) *Nhill Township; and*
 - c) *Rainbow Township.*

MOVED: Cr T Clark/Cr J Barry**That Council:**

1. *notes the minutes of the following Advisory Committees:*
 - a) *Rainbow Township meetings held on 16 February 2026, 23 March 2026 and 20 April 2026;*
 - b) *Nhill Township meeting held on 7 April 2026;*
 - c) *Jeparit Township meeting held on 13 April 2026;*
 - d) *Hindmarsh Pride meeting held on 15 April 2026; and*
2. *the financial statements for the month of March 2026 for the following Advisory Committees:*
 - a) *Jeparit Township;*
 - b) *Nhill Township; and*
 - c) *Rainbow Township.*

CARRIED

11.2 COMMUNITY ASSET COMMITTEES

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer

Attachments:

1. Wimmera Mallee Pioneer Museum Minutes 17 March 2026 [**11.2.1**]

Introduction:

The following Hindmarsh Shire Community Asset Committee held a meeting on the following date:

- **Wimmera Mallee Pioneer Museum**
General meeting on 17 March 2026

A copy of the minutes for the above meeting has been included as an attachment for the information of Council.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council notes the minutes of the Wimmera Mallee Pioneer Museum Community Asset Committee meeting held on 17 March 2026.

MOVED: Cr R Aitken/Cr T Clark

That Council notes the minutes of the Wimmera Mallee Pioneer Museum Community Asset Committee meeting held on 17 March 2026.

CARRIED

12 LATE REPORTS

No late reports.

13 NOTICES OF MOTION

No notices of motion.

14 OTHER BUSINESS

No other business.

15 CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS

No confidential reports.

16 LATE CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS

No late confidential reports.

17 MEETING CLOSE

There being no further business, Cr Ron Ismay declared the meeting closed at 4:17pm.
