



30 July 2026

MINUTES

Ordinary Council Meeting

Date: Wednesday 29 July 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



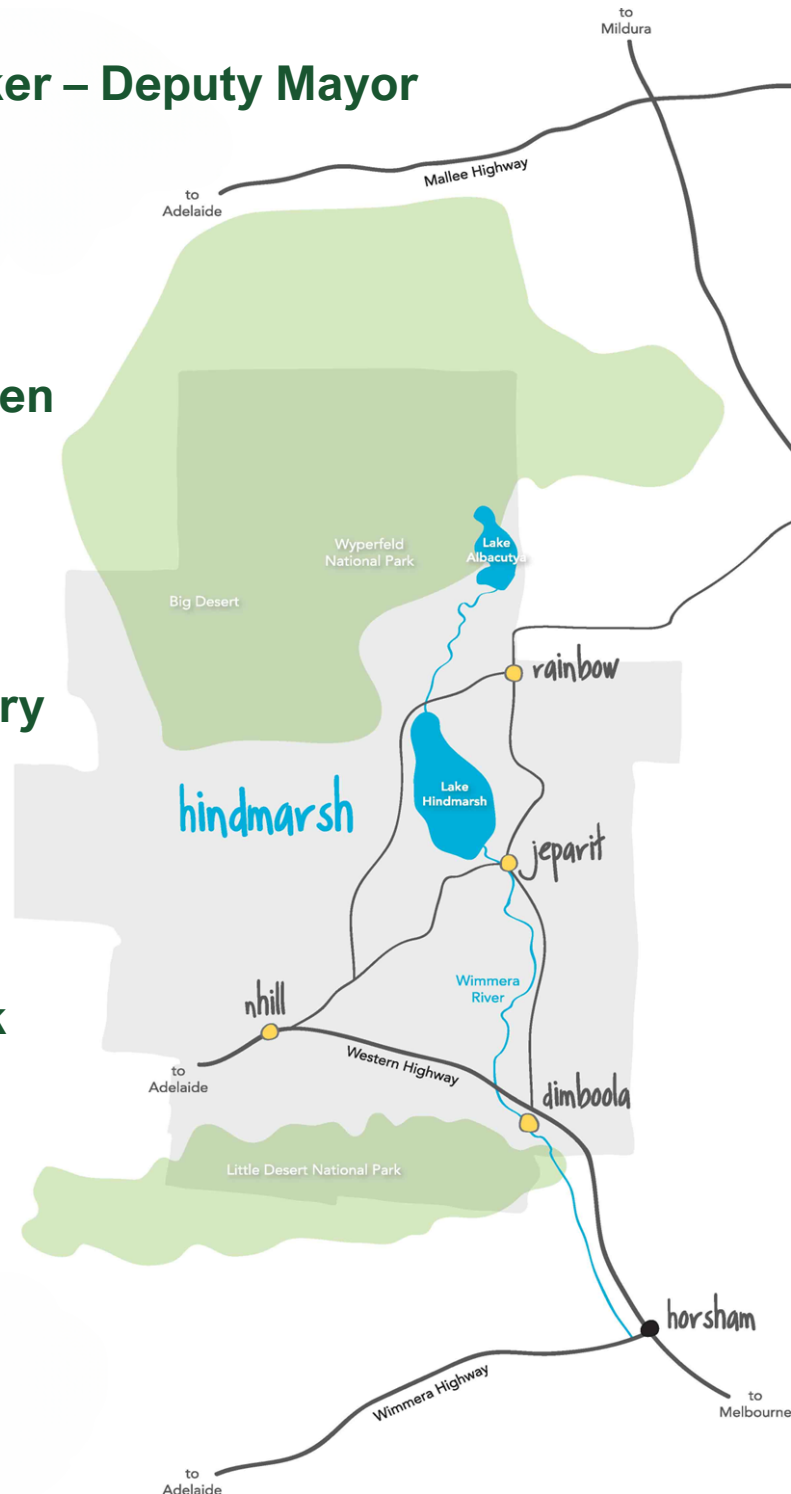
Cr James Barry
East Ward



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.

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In Attendance:**Councillors:**

Cr Ron Ismay (Mayor), Cr Rosie Barker (Deputy 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 3:03pm 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 James Barry read the Councillor Statement of Values.

2 APOLOGIES

No apologies.

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 Rosie Barker declared a material conflict of interest in item 10.11 as it relates to a financial contribution for her attendance at the upcoming interstate ALGWA conference.

4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES AND BUSINESS ARISING

4.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on Wednesday 24 June 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 R Aitken

That the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on Wednesday 24 June 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 06 24 Council Minutes [4.1.1]
2. 2026 06 24 Council Minutes - MEDIA [4.1.2]

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 suitable qualified consultant to prepare the Investment Attraction Prospectus and develop investor-ready materials.	Council is currently reviewing RFQs from suitable suppliers to deliver the Investment Attraction Prospectus.	In Progress
24 June 2026 Item 10.1	Council officers to notify community of the adoption of the 2026/2027 Annual Budget with public notices published in the following newspapers: • Dimboola Banner • Rainbow Jeparit Argus • Nhill Free Press • Weekly Advertiser 2026/2027 Annual Budget to be published on Council's website and hard copies to be made available in Hindmarsh's Customer Service Centres.	The Budget has been published on Council's website, a media release has been circulated to media contacts, an advert placed in local newspapers, a Facebook post published and content added into Council's newsletters.	Complete
24 June 2026 Item 10.2	Council officers to appoint a real estate agent to undertake the sale of Tarranyurk Quarry.	Council officers are currently organising for a valuation of the property to be undertaken prior to engaging a real estate agent.	In Progress
24 June 2026 Item 10.3	Council officers to publish the following adopted policies on Council's website: • Council Grants Administration Policy • Hardship and Financial Hardship Policy • Native Vegetation on Rateable Land Policy Council officers to prepare the Public Transparency	Adopted policies have been published on Council's website and 'Have Your Say Hindmarsh' page. Policy for community consultation has been added to Council's 'Have Your Say Hindmarsh' page. A media release has been circulated to media contacts. Posts have also been published on Council's	Complete

	Policy for community consultation on Council's 'Have Your Say Hindmarsh' page.	Facebook page and added into Council's newsletters.	
24 June 2026 Item 11.1	Council officers to publish Advisory Committee minutes (excluding Audit and Risk Committee) on Council's website and prepare a letter for Natalia Aguirre regarding her nomination to the Jeparit Township Advisory Committee.	Minutes for Advisory Committees (excluding Audit and Risk Committee) published on Council's website. Letter prepared and sent to Natalia Aguirre.	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.

Wendy Werner – Jeparit

Jeparit was omitted from the recently adopted Industrial Land Study this is in stark contrast to the Planning Scheme which states 'Jeparit has land suitable for residential and small scaled, low intensity industrial activity'. The Campground at Four Mile Beach has been downgraded to non-powered sites only, affecting retail sustainability and raising the question of transparency in Council communications. Can the Councillors representing North riding please comment on why they supported these decisions and how they are supporting the Economic Development and Sustainability of Jeparit in light of the above situations.

Cr Roger Aitken Response

I'd like to have the opportunity to catch up with Wendy Werner, Cr Tony Clark and myself in the near future. I will ring Wendy Werner after today's meeting and see if we can catch up and have a chat about her queries.

6 ACTIVITY REPORTS

COUNCILLOR ACTIVITIES: 16 June 2026 – 20 July 2026

6.1 CR RON ISMAY, MAYOR

Date	Meeting/Event	Location	Comments
16/06/2026	North West Nine Mayors and CEO's meeting with Anne Webster. Resource Ready Strategy	Warracknabeal	
23/06/2026	ALGA Conference	Canberra Convention Centre	
24/06/2026	ALGA Conference	Canberra Convention Centre	
25/06/2026	ALGA Conference	Canberra Convention Centre	
25/06/2026	ALGA Gala Dinner	War Memorial Canberra	
30/06/2026	Information session on WJJWJ land use activity agreement	Online	
07/07/2026	Nhill Town Committee Meeting	Council Chambers Nhill	
09/07/2026	Mayor's lunch prior to Wimmera Southern Mallee Council Alliance (WSMCA)	Horsham	
09/07/2026	WSMCA Mayor, CEO Meeting	Council Chambers Horsham	
12/07/2026	Rotary Club of Nhill Change over lunch	Union Hotel Nhill	
15/07/2026	Briefing Meeting	Dimboola	
17/07/2026	MAV Regional Meeting	Online	
17/07/2026	Brief catch up with CEO	Rainbow	
17/07/2026	Phone Call with Graeme Milne Mayor Buloke Shire Council		
20/07/2026	One Nation Presentation Re: Resource Ready Strategy	Council Chambers Warracknabeal	

6.2 CR ROSIE BARKER, DEPUTY MAYOR

Date	Meeting/Event	Location	Comments
17/06/2026	Portraits of Belonging	Gallery Central Nhill	A great community initiative with personal portraits on display that had been painted by our locals. It was great to see so many of our town there to celebrate our diversity and community in such a beautiful collective manner.
24/06/2026	Council Briefing	Nhill Council Chambers	Roads Grant opportunities discussion and Works Depot review.
24/06/2026	Council Meeting	Nhill Council Chambers	Annual Budget 2026-2027 Adoption and Rating & Revenue plan; Proposed sale of the Tarranyurk Quarry plus other Policy reviews and adoptions.
02/07/2026	MAV Health & Wellbeing Advisory Board	Online	Great discussion about future plans and strategies for MAV to advocate for Health and Wellbeing across Victoria into State and Federal Governments.
02/07/2026	Political Wellbeing Lab	Online	Leadership insight about selfcare whilst in the public eye and creating your own wellbeing plan.
02/07/2026	ALGWA Victoria	Online	Meeting to discuss future events and plans for supporting women in Local Government in Victoria.
10/07/2026	Monsters and Minions Movie	Nhill Memorial Community Centre	Fantastic initiative by HSC for the school holiday program that was very well attended. Great to see so many children and their parents having fun, enjoying the free movie, popcorn and water.
15/07/2026	Council Briefing	Dimboola	Various discussions for future planning which included a presentation by Dimboola Ski Club, Dimboola Memorial Secondary College and the Rail Freight Alliance.

6.3 CR ROGER AITKEN

Date	Meeting/Event	Location	Comments
24/06/2026	Council Briefing	Nhill	
24/06/2026	Council Meeting	Nhill	
24/06/2026	Rainbow Lions Club Dinner Handover	Rainbow	

6.4 CR JAMES BARRY

Date	Meeting/Event	Location	Comments
24/06/2026	Council Briefing	Nhill	
24/06/2026	Council Meeting	Nhill	
15/07/2026	Council Briefing	Dimboola	
20/07/2026	Community Meeting for Dimboola Pool	Dimboola	

6.5 CR TONY CLARK

Date	Meeting/Event	Location	Comments
16/06/2026	Rainbow Lake	Rainbow	Fish released for School Holidays.
17/06/2026	Rainbow CFA Group Biannual Meeting	Rainbow	
24/06/2026	Council Briefing	Nhill	
24/06/2026	Council Meeting	Nhill	
24/06/2026	Rainbow Lions Changeover Dinner	Rainbow	
30/06/2026	Yurunga Homestead Meeting	Rainbow	
13/07/2026	Jeparit Town Committee Meeting	Jeparit	
15/07/2026	Council Briefing	Dimboola	
15/07/2026	Rainbow Players Meeting	Rainbow	

6.6 CR CHAN UOY

Date	Meeting/Event	Location	Comments
16/06/2026	Wimmera Southern Mallee Scenario Planning Workshop	Longerenong	Six findings that now form the regional diagnosis: 1. Growth must be on terms - The region is not asking whether investment should happen. It is asking what growth must deliver, who carries the cost, and how the benefits stay local. 2. Growth must be converted - More output and more jobs do not automatically become settled population, local prosperity or stronger towns. 3. Social infrastructure is economic infrastructure - Housing, childcare, health and education determine whether people can move, stay and build a life here. Housing is pivotal. 4. Local value must be designed - Procurement, supplier readiness, career pathways, local ownership and reinvestment must be built into projects from the start, not assumed to follow. 5. The region needs one picture - Projects, workforce demand, housing, infrastructure pressure and commitments need to be visible in one shared evidence base, with someone trusted to keep track. 6. Trust is part of readiness - A clear regional story, respectful disagreement, trusted information and a credible regional voice are part of the region's capacity to shape growth at Yarraville.
17/06/2026	Refugee Week	Nhill	Karen portraits exhibition
17/06/2026	Pride Meeting	Online	
24/06/2026	Council Briefing & Meeting	Nhill	

27/06/2026	CWA Devonshire Tea	Dimboola	Celebrating Pride Month. The first time for the Dimboola CWA.
01/07/2026	Pride Meeting	Online	
15/07/2026	Council Briefing Only	Dimboola	
15/07/2026	Hindmarsh Pride Meeting	Online	
20/07/2026	Dimboola Pool Community Meeting	Dimboola	

6.7 MONICA REVELL, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Date	Meeting/Event	Location	Comments
16/06/2026 – 17/06/2026	Senior Management Team	Dimboola	Workshop with Leadership Team building trust and leadership capability.
17/06/2026	Portraits of Belonging	Nhill	A well-attended official opening of the Portraits of Belonging exhibition at Gallery Centre in Nhill.
18/06/2026	Meeting with Dattner Group	Dimboola	Discussion regarding Building Trust and Leadership Capability workshop.
18/06/2026	GWM Tourism Pre-Board Meeting Discussion	Online	Meeting with Wimmera Mallee CEOs to discuss GWM Tourism Board Meeting Agenda.
19/06/2026	GWM Tourism Board Meeting	Birchip	Presentation from Buloke Shire Council Mayor, Parks Victoria, and Birchip Cropping Group.
22/06/2026	Jeparit CEO Drop-In Session	Jeparit	Discussions with community members regarding operational matters. Following the recent rains roads were the most common issue raised.
22/06/2026	Rainbow CEO Drop-In Session	Rainbow	Discussions with community members regarding operational matters including master planning for the Rainbow Silo yard to position RTAC ready for potential grants as they arise.
23/06/2026	Meeting with Customer Service and Councillor Support Officer	Nhill	
23/06/2026	Leadership Team Meeting	Nhill	
23/06/2026	Meeting with Manager Economic Development and Tourism	Nhill	Monthly update on everything happening in the Economic Development and Tourism areas.
24/06/2026	Meeting with Community Member	Nhill	Joined by Cr Barker, a meeting with community member regarding a few issues.
24/06/2026	Meeting with Mayor and Deputy Mayor	Nhill	

24/06/2026	Council Briefing	Nhill	
24/06/2026	Council Meeting	Nhill	
25/06/2026	Staff Meeting	Nhill	All Staff meeting providing an update on 24 June Council meeting, including budget adoption.
25/06/2026	Meeting with Manager Works and Operations	Nhill	
25/06/2026	Manual Handling Training	Nhill	
27/06/2026	Devonshire Tea at RSL for Pride Month	Dimboola	A well attended morning tea hosted by the Dimboola CWA.
28/06/2026	Nhill Lions Club Changeover	Nhill	A well attended event, congratulations to all Nhill Lions Club members on the amazing volunteer work across the community.
30/06/2026	Meeting with Customer Service and Councillor Support Officer	Nhill	
30/06/2026	Meeting to discuss Rainbow Silo	Nhill	Meeting with relevant staff to discuss Silo operations.
01/07/2026	Wimmera Southern Mallee Council Alliance	Online	Ministerial adviser meeting discussing the Resource Ready Strategy and advocating for funding for identified next steps.
01/07/2026	Wimmera Mallee 9 Council Alliance	Online	Meeting with VicGrid following Ministerial adviser meeting to discuss the Resource Ready Strategy and concerns from community.
01/07/2026	RCV and Maddocks Webinar	Online	Presentation on the Local Government Legislation Amendment (Stronger Communities) Bill 2026 and the Fair Jobs Code.
02/07/2026	Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Partnership Mid Quarter Briefing	Online	
02/07/2026	Emerging Risk Meeting	Online	
03/07/2026	Resource Ready Strategy – PCG Meeting	Online	Discussion regarding next steps following Ministerial Adviser meeting.

03/07/2026	School Holiday Activity – Sports Jeparit Hall	Jeparit	
06/07/2026	ABC Radio – Glue-Traps	Online	
06/07/2026	Alki Guli Hub	Horsham	NAIDOC week Flag Raising Ceremony and Official Opening of the new Goolum Goolum offices.
07/07/2026	Nhill Depot Meeting	Nhill	Meet with Nhill Depot Staff.
07/07/2026	Meeting with Customer Service and Councillor Support Officer	Nhill	
07/07/2026	Meeting with Tourism and Economic Development Officer	Nhill	Monthly update on everything happening in the Economic Development and Tourism areas.
08/07/2026	Jeparit Depot Meeting	Jeparit	Meet with Jeparit Depot Staff.
08/07/2026	School Holiday Program – Cookie Decorating	Jeparit	
08/07/2026	Executive Leadership Team Meeting	Nhill	
08/07/2026	H5 Wildlife Meeting	Online	Update on the current situation with the H5 (Bird Flu) cases identified and coordination of response.
09/07/2026	WSMCA Mayor and CEO Meeting	Horsham	
13/07/2026	Meeting with Manager Works and Operations to discuss Outdoor Works	Nhill	Meet with staff member in relation to Outdoor Works scheduling.
13/07/2026	Meeting with Director Corporate and Community Services and Manager Community Strategy and Engagement	Nhill	Planning for upcoming Pop-ups across the Shire in line with 26/27 Council Plan Action.
13/07/2026	RSD Audit	Online	Introduction to the new internal audit partner.
13/07/2026	Youth Council Meeting	Dimboola	
14/07/2026	Meeting with Customer Service and Councillor Support Officer	Nhill	

14/07/2026	Information Session on WJJWJ People Land Use	Online	Information Session on the Land use Activity Agreement and implications for Council.
15/07/2026	Council Briefing	Dimboola	
16/07/2026	Meeting with Barengi Gadjin Land Council	Horsham	Discussion regarding Hindmarsh activities and BGLC update.
16/07/2026	Rural Councils Victoria	Online	Online session regarding RCV's election advocacy campaign.
16/07/2026	Long-Term Financial Plan Catch-up	Online	Meet with Mark Davies regarding finalising Council's Long Term Financial Plan and report.
16/07/2026	Meeting with Victorian Local Governance Association	Online	Combined discussion with Wimmera Southern Mallee Council Alliance CEOs and governance staff on upcoming Councillor Mandatory Training.
17/07/2026	Meeting with Rainbow Lake Committee	Rainbow	Discussion with Rainbow Lake Committee regarding insurance and future projects.
17/07/2026	MAV Regional Meeting – Wimmera Southern Mallee Central Highlands	Online	MAV update on activities undertaken.
17/07/2026	Catch up with Mayor	Rainbow	
20/07/2026	MAV Monday Connect	Online	MAV meeting with CEOs providing an update on activities.
20/07/2026	Meeting with Manager Economic Development and Tourism	Nhill	Monthly update on everything happening in the Economic Development and Tourism areas.
20/07/2026	Presentation to One Nation – Resource Ready Strategy	Warracknabeal	Meeting in Warracknabeal with the Northwest 9 Mayors and CEOs discussing with Rikki-Lee the Resource Ready Strategy.
20/07/2026	Dimboola Pool Community Meeting	Dimboola	Community meeting to provide an update to the Dimboola community on the Dimboola Pool project.

7 CORRESPONDENCE

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer

Introduction:

The following correspondence is attached for noting by Council.

Inwards:

- 2026/07/02 - Kristy McBain MP to Council re Proposed Australian Government Reforms to Disaster Management – (Attachment Number: 7.1.1)
- 2026/07/08 - Mayor (Moorabool Shire Council) to Council re PILOR State Election Policy Position – RCV Rural North West – (Attachment Number: 7.1.2)
- 2026/07/17 - Steven Kingshott (Department of Government Services) to Council re Meeting with Victorian Local Government Grants Commission Confirmation Letter – (Attachment Number: 7.1.3)

Outwards:

- 2026/06/25 - Council to Elisha Martion re Concerns Regarding Stakeholder Consultation and Representation in Wilkerr Discussions – (Attachment Number: 7.1.4)
- 2026/06/25 - Council to Michaela Settle MP re Tiny Towns Applications – (Attachment Number: 7.1.5)
- 2026/06/30 - Council to Natalia Aguirre re Appointment to Jeparit Town Committee – (Attachment Number: 7.1.6)
- 2026/07/02 - Council to Evelyn King re Royal Historical Society of Victoria Award of Merit 2026 – (Attachment Number: 7.1.7)
- 2026/07/16 - Council to Her Excellency the Honourable Ms Sam Mostyn AC re Invitation to Visit Hindmarsh Shire – (Attachment Number: 7.1.8)
- 2026/07/16 - Council to Mayor (Maribyrnong City Council) re Invitation to Visit Hindmarsh Shire – (Attachment Number: 7.1.9)
- 2026/07/17 - Council to Marcus Lacey (Australian International Pedal Prix Inc.) re Invitation to Visit Hindmarsh Shire – (Attachment Number: 7.1.10)

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council notes the attached correspondence.

MOVED: Cr R Aitken/Cr J Barry

That Council notes the attached correspondence.

CARRIED

8 ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLOR RECORDS

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer

Attachments:

1. 2026 06 24 Assembly of Councillors Record [8.1.1]
2. 2026 07 15 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 C Uoy/Cr T Clark

That Council notes the Assembly of Councillor Records as presented.

CARRIED

9 PLANNING PERMITS

No planning permits.

10 REPORTS REQUIRING A DECISION

10.1 FUNDING APPLICATION FOR DETAILED DESIGN AND PLANNING FOR JEPARIT WEIR

Responsible Officer: Director Infrastructure Services

Councillor Portfolio: Cr Aitken

Attachments:

Nil

Executive Summary:

This report provides Council with an update on the funding application submitted under the Australian Government's Disaster Ready Fund (DRF) Round Four for Detailed Design and Planning of the Jeparit Weir. The application sought \$820,000 from the DRF with Wimmera Catchment Management Authority (Wimmera CMA) pledging an additional \$50,000 as a cash contribution towards the project. Hindmarsh Shire Council will provide project management support as in-kind support towards the project.

The project seeks funding to complete detailed design, technical investigations, approvals, risk assessment, cost estimates, and implementation planning required to progress the future replacement of the Jeparit Weir. The application outlines that the project will improve flood management, reduce future flood damage risk, and support a shovel-ready pathway for future construction.

Discussion:

The Disaster Ready Fund is the Australian Government's primary disaster resilience and risk reduction initiative, providing Commonwealth funding for projects that increase understanding of disaster impacts, improve resilience and preparedness, and reduce exposure to natural hazard risk. Emergency Management Victoria is the lead agency responsible for coordinating Victorian applications to the Commonwealth.

Project Proposals for DRF Round Four opened on 29 May 2026 and closed on 1 July 2026. The proposal was submitted for Detailed Design and Planning of Jeparit Weir seeking \$820,000 from DRF. Wimmera CMA pledged \$50,000 cash and additional in-kind support of \$20,000 contribution towards the project. Hindmarsh Shire Council will provide project management support as in-kind support as a co-contribution towards the project.

The project will deliver the detailed design and planning needed to upgrade the Jeparit Weir. The upgraded weir will improve flood management, reduce the risk of damage from future flood events, and help protect the Jeparit community, local infrastructure, and surrounding land. It will also provide a shovel-ready design for future construction and support a safer and more resilient community.

The proposed project builds on the completed Jeparit Weir Feasibility Study, which found that repairing or refurbishing the existing structure is not viable and that full replacement is the most appropriate long-term solution. The detailed design project will develop an evidence-based design, support future approvals and funding, reduce uncertainty around costs and delivery risks, and prepare the project for future construction.

The application was strongly supported by Emergency Management Victoria, Wimmera CMA and the Wimmera Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee.

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

2.1 We care for and connect with our natural environment.

2.2 Our infrastructure supports liveability and resilience.

Financial Implications:

The application and its outcome will not have additional budget implications on Hindmarsh Shire Council. The in-kind co-contribution amount will be absorbed in Council's current operational budget. Total of \$820,000 is sought from DRF to fund the detailed design and planning of Jeparit Weir.

Risk Management Implications:

Strategic Risk Description	Risk Management Discussion
Community Needs	The project responds to an identified community and infrastructure risk at Jeparit. Failure to safely operate the weir during flood events may increase flood levels within the Jeparit township and increase risk to homes, infrastructure and community assets.
Project Management and Strategic Execution	The project is a detailed design and planning project rather than construction. This reduces delivery risk by progressing technical investigations, design development, approval pathways, cost estimates, risk assessments and implementation planning before construction funding is sought.
Environmental Sustainability	The project will consider environmental impacts, cultural heritage requirements and community values associated with the Wimmera River and weir pool as part of design development. Design options will be tested against hydraulic, environmental, cultural heritage, operational and community criteria before future construction proceeds.

Relevant Legislation:

Local Government Act 2020

Community Engagement:

Community engagement regarding the Jeparit Weir project has progressed significantly over the past 12 months following the commencement of the Jeparit Weir Feasibility Study. This has included meetings with local community members, regular briefings to the Jeparit Town Committee, and ongoing discussions with key stakeholders, including Emergency Management Victoria (EMV), Wimmera CMA, the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), and Barengi Gadjin Land Council (BGLC), to inform project planning and decision-making.

Gender Equality Implications:

Gender Impact Assessments are required by the *Gender Equality Act 2020* when the project, policy or plan subject to Council decision has a direct and significant impact on the community.

A Gender Impact Assessment is not required as this project 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:

The community will be informed of the funding application outcome once notification is received from the Disaster Ready Fund (DRF), with updates provided through Council's social media channels.

Next Steps:

Council Officers will monitor the status of the submitted application and continue engagement with relevant project stakeholders as required.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council notes the funding application under Disaster Ready Fund Round Four for Detailed Design and Planning of Jeparit Weir.

MOVED: Cr R Barker/Cr J Barry

That Council notes the funding application under Disaster Ready Fund Round Four for Detailed Design and Planning of Jeparit Weir.

CARRIED

10.2 FUNDING APPLICATION FOR NHILL BOWLING CLUB UPGRADES UNDER LOCAL SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE FUND

Responsible Officer: Director Infrastructure Services

Councillor Portfolio: Cr Aitken

Attachments:

Nil

Executive Summary:

This report provides Council with an update on the grant application being submitted to the Victorian Government's Local Sports Infrastructure Fund (LSIF) for upgrades to the Nhill Bowling Club facilities. The proposed project has an estimated total value of \$826,691, comprising a funding request of \$500,000 from LSIF and a cash contribution of \$326,691 from the Nhill Bowling Club. Council will support the project through the provision of in-kind project management and grant administration services, valued at \$62,001.

The proposed works include the upgrade of two bowling greens, construction of a new all-abilities access ramp to the greens, improvements to the irrigation system and associated services, and upgrades to the male and female amenities to provide all-abilities accessible facilities.

Discussion:

The Local Sports Infrastructure Fund (LSIF) is a statewide, competitive Victorian Government investment program. It provides funding to develop high-quality, accessible community sport and active recreation infrastructure. The program is administered by Sport and Recreation Victoria (SRV).

In 2025, the Nhill Bowling Club approached Council with a proposal to seek funding through the 2025-2026 LSIF for the upgrade of facilities at the Club's venue in Davis Ave, Nhill. The Club has been accruing funds for much needed upgrades over the past several years, with the project's objectives including:

- Upgrading two (2) bowling greens;
- Upgrading the irrigation system including service locator;
- Construction of new all-abilities ramp for access to bowling greens;
- Upgrading male and female bathrooms to make them all-abilities accessible.

The proposed upgrades fit within the scope of the Community Facilities stream of the funding program, where applicants can apply for funding of up to \$500,000. In both the 2025-2026 and current round, there is a requirement for a supporting co-contribution on a 3:1 basis (Government: Applicant). The Nhill Bowling Club has pledged to fund the required co-contribution.

Unfortunately, in early 2026 Council was advised that its application through the 2025-2026 LSIF was unsuccessful. Feedback advised that more supporting information, including a report detailing existing site/infrastructure conditions, be prepared, along with further design works.

Cost estimates for the external works have been developed by sporting design facility specialist consultants iDwala. Internal changes to accommodate the new all-abilities accessible Amenities development, along with entrance upgrades to provide improved building access, has been developed internally. The project is estimated to cost \$826,691. The project will be overseen by Council officers and handed over to the Club at its practical completion.

In consultation with the Nhill Bowling Club, Council has obtained the additional information recommended by SRV for inclusion in a funding application through the 2026-2027 LSIF program, with applications closing on Tuesday 28 July 2026. As the closing date is a day before the scheduled Council meeting, officers will proceed with the submission of the funding application and withdraw it should the application not be formally endorsed by Council.

Link to Council Plan:

Theme Two: Built and Natural Environment

2.2 Our infrastructure supports liveability and resilience.

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications for Council as the project will be funded jointly by Victorian Government (if the application is successful) and the Nhill Bowling Club. In-kind support for project management will be absorbed within the current operational budget.

Risk Management Implications:

Strategic Risk Description	Risk Management Discussion
Community Needs	This application helps mitigate Council's strategic risks relating to community needs and asset management by investing in the renewal and accessibility of a key community sporting asset. The proposed upgrades will improve the condition, functionality and longevity of the facility while ensuring it remains safe, inclusive and accessible for people of all ages and abilities. By enhancing recreational opportunities and supporting community participation, the project also responds to current and future community needs and contributes to the long-term sustainability of local sporting infrastructure.

Relevant Legislation:

Local Government Act 2020

Community Engagement:

Over the past nine (9) months Council officers have participated in regular discussions with the Nhill Bowling Club regarding the project, including design development, application documentation and the co-contribution requirement. Broader community consultation has not been undertaken.

Gender Equality Implications:

Gender Impact Assessments are required by the *Gender Equality Act 2020* when the project, policy or plan subject to Council decision has a direct and significant impact on the community.

A Gender Impact Assessment is not required as this project 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:

The Nhill Bowling Club will be notified of the outcome following Council's decision.

Next Steps:

Council officers will either take no action if the application is endorsed, given the application has already been submitted, or withdraw the application should Council not formalise its support.

RECOMMENDATION:***That Council:***

- 1. endorses the submission of a funding application under Local Sports Infrastructure Fund for upgrade of the Nhill Bowling Club facilities; and***
- 2. notes Nhill Bowling Club's cash contribution of \$326,691 towards this project.***

MOVED: Cr R Barker/Cr T Clark

That Council:

- 1. endorses the submission of a funding application under Local Sports Infrastructure Fund for upgrade of the Nhill Bowling Club facilities; and***
- 2. notes Nhill Bowling Club's cash contribution of \$326,691 towards this project.***

CARRIED

10.3 COUNCIL PLAN ACTIONS AND CAPITAL WORKS REVIEW 2025/2026

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer

Councillor Portfolio: All Councillors

Attachments:

1. Council Plan Actions and Capital Works Program Review 2025/2026 [10.3.1]

Executive Summary:

This report presents a review of the 2025/2026 Council Plan Actions and Capital Works Program.

For the 2025/2026 financial year, Council set 111 Actions and 30 Advocacy Priorities to deliver on top of business-as-usual services. The attachment to this report provides a comprehensive review of the progress of each Action and Advocacy Priority throughout the year, as well as identifying which have been completed and those that will be ongoing. Key achievements for 2025/2026 include:

- Completion and official opening of the Wimmera River Discovery Trail, as well as the Davis Park tiered seating and AFL compliant changerooms;
- Adoption of the Youth Strategy, Sport and Recreation Strategy, Asset Management Plan, and Procurement Policy;
- Three hugely successful school holidays programs with around 1,300 participants throughout the year;
- Review of Council's three grant programs for community, business and events;
- Completion of the Macpherson Street raised pedestrian crossing in Nhill;
- A month of events for the Seniors Festival, including the main concert and Men's Bus Tour;
- Commencement of the Sport and Recreation Master Plan project for Dimboola Recreation Reserve, Davis Park and the Jeparit Riverbank;
- Completed Jeparit Weir Replacement Feasibility Study;
- Participation in the Business-Friendly Councils program; and
- Delivery of three new units in a multi-unit cabin at the Nhill Holiday Park.

Council also continued to advocate across several areas including early years and childcare, better funding for rural and regional Council roads, speed limit reductions, funding for key facilities upgrades, as well as workforce and housing priorities.

This report also presents a review of the 2025/2026 Capital Works Program. This Program includes projects carried forward from 2024/2025, plant purchases, road construction, building maintenance, and major projects. Over the past twelve (12) months, Council has completed nearly 670 customer action requests and graded over 400 kilometres of Council's gravel road network.

A complete review of the 2025/2026 Council Plan Actions, Advocacy Priorities, and Capital Works Program is presented as an attachment to this report.

Discussion:Council Plan Actions

The Council Plan is a key strategic document required under the *Local Government Act 2020* and outlines Council's vision, objectives and priorities for the four-year Council term. The Council Plan Actions are developed annually to support the achievement of these objectives by identifying the specific projects, initiatives and activities that will be delivered during the financial year. Through this process, Council ensures that strategic priorities are translated into meaningful outcomes for the community and that progress can be monitored, measured and reported in a transparent manner.

During 2025/2026, Council progressed a diverse range of Actions across all strategic themes. These included initiatives to strengthen community wellbeing and inclusion, improve infrastructure and public spaces, support economic development and tourism, enhance environmental sustainability, and strengthen governance, customer service and organisational capability. Significant effort was also directed towards advocacy, partnership development, strategic planning, grant funding opportunities and continuous improvement activities that position Council to meet future community needs.

A complete review of the 2025/2026 Council Plan Actions and Advocacy Priorities is presented as an attachment to this report.

Capital Works Program

The Capital Works Program has progressed well in 2025/2026 with most projects now completed. Eleven (11) projects listed in the table attached to this report were not completed:

- One (1) project relates to plant procurement which is yet to be delivered.
- Six (6) projects are funded externally and are multiyear projects. Progress is in-line with the funding agreement.
- One (1) project has been delayed due to change in scope of the project.
- The Lloyd St Dimboola kerb and channel job has been delayed due to difficulty in attracting an external contractor and therefore eventually undertaking the job using internal resources.
- One project has been delayed due to the time taken to develop the scope after undertaking stakeholder engagement.
- One project was deferred due to insufficient funding to undertake the identified job.

The table in the attachment outlines the % complete at the end of 2025/2026 financial year.

Over the past twelve (12) months, Council has completed nearly 670 customer action requests and graded over 400 kilometres of Council's gravel road network.

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

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

Advocacy Priority

Health and Wellbeing Priority.

Financial Implications:

Actions within the annual Council Plan Actions and Capital Works Program were 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
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.
Community Needs	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

Road Management Act 2004

Community Engagement:

Not applicable.

Gender Equality Implications:

Gender Impact Assessments are required by the *Gender Equality Act 2020* when the project, policy or plan subject to Council decision has a direct and significant impact on the community.

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 – Ram Upadhyaya, Director Infrastructure Services

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

Communications Strategy:

Updates on completed Capital Works and Council Plan Actions will be provided to the community via newsletters and social media channels.

Next Steps:

Council officers will continue to review incomplete Actions and Capital Works and commence implementation of the 2026/2027 Council Plan Actions and Capital Works Program.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council notes the annual review of the Capital Works Program and Council Plan Actions for the 2025/2026 financial year.

MOVED: Cr R Barker/Cr J Barry

That Council notes the annual review of the Capital Works Program and Council Plan Actions for the 2025/2026 financial year.

CARRIED

10.4 MAV OCTOBER STATE COUNCIL MOTION

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer

Councillor Portfolio: Cr Barker

Attachments:

Nil

Executive Summary:

This report seeks Council endorsement to submit a motion to the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) State Council scheduled for Friday 23 October 2026. The motion is seeking MAV advocacy to the Victorian Government for the establishment of a Rural Mental Health and Wellbeing Local in the Hindmarsh Shire, or a neighbouring Council, supported by a network of satellite services and outreach programs across the Wimmera region.

The motion responds to significant disparities in access to mental health services experienced by rural communities throughout the Wimmera. The proposal seeks government investment in a comprehensive regionally coordinated model comprising a Local Mental Health & Wellbeing Service in Nhill (or neighbouring town), satellite service locations, a mobile clinical outreach team, an integrated Rural Outreach Program, a rural workforce hub and a future Step Up/Step Down subacute facility.

The motion aligns with Victorian Government mental health reform priorities and supports key objectives of the MAV Strategic Plan 2024-2027, including health and wellbeing, diversity and inclusion, resilience and recovery, intergenerational infrastructure, active local democracy and connected places.

Discussion:

Mental health service provision across the Wimmera remains significantly below that available in metropolitan and larger regional centres. The motion identifies several critical service gaps, including the absence of Local Mental Health & Wellbeing Services, acute and subacute mental health beds, youth mental health services, crisis response capability, after-hours support, psychiatrists and psychologists within local communities.

Rural communities across the Wimmera Southern Mallee region experience the highest mental-health inequity in Victoria with:

- Limited local mental health and wellbeing services;
- No acute or subacute beds;
- Limited youth mental-health services;
- No local crisis response or in person after-hours support;
- No psychologists or psychiatrists locally;
- Rising suicide rates and emergency-department presentations; and
- Significant travel distances for basic care.

The recently announced opening of the new Youth Prevention and Recovery Centre (YPARC) centre in Newington delivering mental health care closer to home in the Grampians does not resolve the disparities in access to mental health services, with a three-hour drive one way for a family from Nhill.

The proposed model aims to deliver a "care close to home" approach by establishing a primary Rural Mental Health & Wellbeing Local in Nhill (or neighbouring town), supported by satellite locations in Kaniva, Rainbow, Dimboola, Warracknabeal, Edenhope, Birchip, Donald, etc. Additional components include a mobile clinical outreach team servicing smaller communities, an integrated rural outreach program, and a workforce development hub to attract and retain mental health professionals in the region.

Evidence shows severe and persistent mental health inequities across Hindmarsh, West Wimmera, Yarriambiack, Buloke, Northern Grampians and parts of Horsham Rural City. The Wimmera Southern Mallee region suicide rates are 80-100% higher than the Victorian average (Victorian Suicide Register 2019-2024), there have been 20-40% increases in mental health emergency department presentations, up to 500 patient transfers from Grampians Health in the Wimmera to larger regional centres, workforce shortages, and the absence of local crisis and youth mental health services. These challenges place additional pressure on police, ambulance services, and emergency departments that often become the default responders to mental health crises.

The motion has been developed collaboratively through the Wimmera Southern Mallee Council Alliance and is supported by West Wimmera Shire Council, Yarriambiack Shire Council, Northern Grampians Shire Council, Buloke Shire Council and Horsham Rural City Council. The regional approach demonstrates a united advocacy position across the Wimmera and strengthens the case for MAV support and Victorian Government investment. The motion aligns directly with multiple MAV enabling priorities including:

- Priority 1: Active Local Democracy – by amplifying rural community voices and enabling Councils to shape service models that reflect local needs.
- Priority 2: Connected Places – by reducing distance barriers and ensuring access to care across dispersed rural towns.
- Priority 3: Health & Wellbeing – by advocating for equitable, place-based mental health services that meet diverse community needs.
- Priority 8: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion – by addressing service gaps affecting CALD, Aboriginal, LGBTQIA+, youth and older residents in rural communities.
- Priority 9: Resilience and Recovery – by strengthening crisis response capacity and reducing reliance on police and emergency departments.
- Priority 10: Intergenerational Infrastructure – through the proposed Step-Up / Step-Down facility and long-term workforce development hub.

The proposed model is intended to be scalable and replicable across rural Victoria, supporting broader mental health reform while addressing the unique challenges faced by

dispersed rural populations. Expected outcomes include improved access to services, reduced emergency department presentations, reduced involvement of emergency services in mental health crises, strengthened workforce capacity and improved community wellbeing.

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

4.1 We are a transparent and responsive organisation.

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications associated with this report and the costs associated with attendance at the MAV State Council are within budgeted allocations for 2026/2027.

Risk Management Implications:

Strategic Risk Description	Risk Management Discussion
Community Needs	Council representation to stakeholder organisations ensures that Hindmarsh's interests and needs are included in joint advocacy, projects and design of policies. The information received and intended outcomes included in this report respond to identified lack of mental health support in our region.

Relevant Legislation:

Local Government Act 2020

Community Engagement:

Not applicable.

Gender Equality Implications:

Gender Impact Assessments are required by the *Gender Equality Act 2020* when the project, policy or plan subject to Council decision has a direct and significant impact on the community.

A Gender Impact Assessment is not required as this project, 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 – Mary-Ann Speakman, Customer Service and Councillor Support Officer

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

Communications Strategy:

Not applicable.

Next Steps:

Council to submit a motion to the 2026 MAV State Council being held in October 2026.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

- 1. endorses the submission of the MAV State Council Motion titled “Advocacy for a Rural Mental Health and Wellbeing Local and Satellite Network in the Wimmera” to the MAV State Council Meeting scheduled for Friday 23 October 2026;***
- 2. notes the Deputy Mayor and Chief Executive Officer will continue regional advocacy in support of improved mental health service provision across the Hindmarsh Shire and broader Wimmera region.***

MOVED: Cr R Barker/Cr T Clark

That Council:

- 1. endorses the submission of the MAV State Council Motion titled “Advocacy for a Rural Mental Health and Wellbeing Local and Satellite Network in the Wimmera” to the MAV State Council Meeting scheduled for Friday 23 October 2026;***
- 2. notes the Deputy Mayor and Chief Executive Officer will continue regional advocacy in support of improved mental health service provision across the Hindmarsh Shire and broader Wimmera region.***

CARRIED

10.5 SUMMARY OF PLANNING PERMITS APPROVED UNDER DELEGATION Q2 2026

Responsible Officer: Director Infrastructure Services

Councillor Portfolio: Cr Barry

Attachments:

Nil

Executive Summary:

This report summarises the planning permit applications approved by the CEO under delegation from the period of 1 April 2026 to 30 June 2026 (Q2 2026). It includes planning permits approved under the VicSmart process. A total of eight planning permits were approved during this period.

Discussion:

Planning permit applications are assessed under the Hindmarsh Planning Scheme. Under Council delegation, the Chief Executive Officer may approve planning permits following assessment and recommendation by town planners. More complex applications 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, including VicSmart applications, were approved by the Chief Executive Officer under delegation during the period 1 April 2026 to 30 June 2026. VicSmart applications are identified by the letters VS in the application number.

App No.	Address	Proposal	Date Rec'd	Planning Permit Trigger	Date Appr'd	Stat Days
PA1864-2024	30 Nursery Road, DIMBOOLA VIC 3414	Two Subdivision Lot	29/08/2024	- Clause 35.03-3 - A permit is required to subdivide land. - Clause 42.01-2 - A permit is required to subdivide land. - Clause 44.03-3 - A permit is required to subdivide land.	17/04/2026	53

App No.	Address	Proposal	Date Rec'd	Planning Permit Trigger	Date Appr'd	Stat Days
				Clause 44.04-3 – A permit is required to subdivide land.		
PA1899-2026	675 Nhill-Harrow Road, NHILL VIC 3418	Two lot subdivision and alteration of access to TRZ2	9/02/2026	- Clause 35.07-3 - Subdivision - Clause 52.29 - Alteration of access to TRZ2	20/04/2026	49
PA1901-2026	8 Malvern Road, DIMBOOLA VIC 3414	Development of a second dwelling on a lot	27/02/2026	Clause 32.08-7 A permit is required to: Construct a dwelling if there is at least one dwelling existing on the lot.	20/04/2026	52
PA1897-2026	114 Macpherson Street, NHILL VIC 3418	Use and development of the land for 'landscape gardening supplies' including a small-scale sand and soil yard.	18/01/2026	- Clause 34.01-1 - Use of the land for landscape gardening supplies (where there is the chance of minor amenity impacts). - Clause 34.01-4 - Development of land for landscape gardening supplies	23/04/2026	51
PA1904-2026	675 Nhill-Harrow Road, NHILL VIC 3418	Removal of carriageway easement	22/04/2026	Clause 52.02 – Removal of an easement under S23 of the Subdivision Act 1988	20/05/2026	15
VS260010	109-111 Lloyd Street, DIMBOOLA VIC 3414	Buildings and works in a heritage overlay (mural)	20/05/2026	Clause 43.01-1 – A permit is required to externally paint an unpainted surface.	29/05/2026	6
PA1863-2024-A1	Dimboola-Rainbow Road, JEPARIT VIC 3423	Amend the original quarry permit to allow for a minor adjustment to the access location and associated removal of native vegetation	20/04/2026	52-17 Native vegetation removal 42.01-2 Vegetation removal	16/06/2026	32

App No.	Address	Proposal	Date Rec'd	Planning Permit Trigger	Date Appr'd	Stat Days
		to facilitate the change.				
PA1903-2026	7291 Western Highway, NHILL VIC 3418	Use and Development of land for a motel, buildings and works and alteration of access to a road in the TRZ2	27/03/2026	34.01-4 Construct a building or carry out works 34.01-1 Use of land for a motel 52.29-2 Create or alter access to a road in Transport Zone 2	29/06/2026	35

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:

There are no financial implications for noting this report.

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:

Gender Impact Assessments are required by the *Gender Equality Act 2020* when the project, policy or plan subject to Council decision has a direct and significant impact on the community.

This report is for information purposes only, therefore a Gender Impact Assessment is not required.

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 Q3 2026.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council notes the planning applications approved by the CEO under delegation for the period 1 April 2026 to 30 June 2026.

MOVED: Cr J Barry/Cr R Aitken

That Council notes the planning applications approved by the CEO under delegation for the period 1 April 2026 to 30 June 2026.

CARRIED

10.6 MUNICIPAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN 2026-2029

Responsible Officer: Director Infrastructure Services

Councillor Portfolio: All Councillors

Attachments:

1. Hindmarsh Shire Municipal Emergency Management Plan 2026-29 [10.6.1]

Executive Summary:

This report presents the Municipal Emergency Management Plan 2026-2029 for Council noting.

The Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) is a statutory requirement under the *Emergency Management Act 2013* and provides the overarching framework for the prevention of, preparedness for, response to, relief from and recovery after emergencies within Hindmarsh Shire. The Plan has been prepared by the Wimmera Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC) and aligns with the State Emergency Management Plan and the Grampians Regional Emergency Management Plan.

The MEMP adopts an “all communities, all emergencies” approach and reflects a coordinated, multi-agency model of emergency management, recognising the shared responsibilities of government agencies, emergency services, community organisations and residents. The MEMP identifies local hazards and risks, including bushfire, flood, storm, extreme heat, transport incidents, hazardous materials, biosecurity threats and pandemics, and outlines the arrangements and responsibilities required to manage these risks. Consideration is given to Hindmarsh Shire’s dispersed rural communities, ageing population, cultural diversity and extensive agricultural and environmental assets.

Discussion:

The Hindmarsh Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) addresses the prevention of, response to, and recovery from emergencies within the Hindmarsh municipality. It is the result of the co-operative efforts of the emergency management planning committee, which includes representatives from Victoria Police, CFA, Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), Ambulance Victoria, DEDJTR, SES, Department of Health, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH), Department of Transport and Planning, GWMWater, Red Cross, Wimmera CMA, Hindmarsh Shire Council and other agencies.

The MEMP identifies and assesses the hazards most likely to affect the municipality through the Community Emergency Risk Assessment (CERA) process. Key emergency risks include bushfire and grassfire, flood and storm events, extreme heat, transport incidents, hazardous materials incidents, biosecurity threats, essential service disruptions, and human disease outbreaks. It incorporates lessons learnt from recent emergency events, including the Little Desert Fire of January 2025, and recognises the increasing impacts of climate change on

emergency risk across the region. The MEMP outlines mitigation strategies, preparedness initiatives, and treatment plans aimed at reducing the likelihood and consequence of these risks.

A significant focus of the MEMP is ensuring clear governance arrangements, defined agency responsibilities, and effective coordination mechanisms during emergencies. The document details command, control and coordination arrangements, Council's role in emergency relief and recovery, operation of the Council Emergency Operations Centre, resource-sharing arrangements across the Wimmera region and the integration of local arrangements with regional and state emergency management systems. It also reinforces Council's commitment to continuous improvement through regular exercising, debriefing and review processes.

The MEMP was endorsed by the Wimmera MEMPC on 12 March 2026 and has undergone the required assurance process through the Grampians Regional Emergency Management Planning Committee.

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

4.3 We manage our resources responsibly and strategically.

Financial Implications:

There are no additional financial implications to funding emergency management based on the revised MEMP. The MEMP discusses financial responsibilities in relation to emergency management, as well as funding sources where Council can recoup certain costs.

Risk Management Implications:

Strategic Risk Description	Risk Management Discussion
Governance	The Municipal Emergency Management Plan mitigates Council's strategic governance risk by ensuring Council meets its statutory obligations under the <i>Emergency Management Act 2013</i> and maintains contemporary, compliant and clearly documented emergency management arrangements. The MEMP establishes defined governance structures, roles, responsibilities and decision-making processes that support effective coordination between Council, emergency services and partner agencies before, during and after emergency events.

Relevant Legislation:

Emergency Management Act 2013

Emergency Management Legislation Amendment Act 2018

Local Government Act 2020

Community Engagement:

The Municipal Emergency Management Plan has been developed through extensive collaboration with the Wimmera Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC), which includes Council, emergency services, government agencies and other key emergency management stakeholders. The MEMP will be made publicly available through Council's website to support community awareness and preparedness; however, emergency management planning, response, relief and recovery activities are primarily led by the responsible emergency management agencies in accordance with Victoria's emergency management framework, with Council undertaking a support and coordination role as required.

Gender Equality Implications:

Gender Impact Assessments are required by the *Gender Equality Act 2020* when the project, policy or plan subject to Council decision has a direct and significant impact on the community.

A Gender Impact Assessment is not required as this plan 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 – 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 adopted Municipal Emergency Management Plan has been published on Council's website and made available to the community and stakeholders for information and awareness purposes. Council will continue to work with the Wimmera Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee, emergency services and relevant agencies to promote community preparedness and resilience, while recognising that emergency management communication, response and recovery activities are led by the responsible control and support agencies under Victoria's emergency management framework.

Next Steps:

The Municipal Emergency Management Plan has been published on Council's website and will be implemented as the overarching framework for emergency management within Hindmarsh Shire. Council officers will continue to work with the Wimmera Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee and partner agencies to monitor, review and update the Plan as required, including following significant emergency events, exercises or legislative changes.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council notes the Municipal Emergency Management Plan 2026-2029.

MOVED: Cr T Clark/Cr C Uoy

That Council notes the Municipal Emergency Management Plan 2026-2029.

CARRIED

10.7 DESEXING POLICY FOR DOMESTIC ANIMALS (CATS)

Responsible Officer: Director Infrastructure Services

Councillor Portfolio: Cr Barker and Cr Uoy

Attachments:

1. Desexing Policy for Domestic Animals (Cats) [10.7.1]

Executive Summary:

This report seeks Council's adoption of the Desexing Policy for Domestic Animals (Cats) and provides a summary of the submissions received through Council's Have Your Say Hindmarsh consultation process. Community consultation on the draft policy was undertaken from 7 May 2026 to 28 May 2026 following Council's endorsement of the draft policy for public exhibition and feedback.

Community feedback demonstrated broad support for measures aimed at reducing unwanted litters, improving animal welfare outcomes and promoting responsible pet ownership. Key themes raised during consultation included concerns regarding roaming and feral cats, the need for increased owner accountability, and the importance of balancing regulatory requirements with access to affordable desexing services. Some respondents also expressed concerns about the potential financial impact on pet owners, enforcement challenges, and the risk of unintended consequences such as reduced registration compliance or animal abandonment.

The proposed Desexing Policy for Domestic Animals (Cats) has been developed in response to community feedback and aligns with the provisions of Section 10A of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, which enables Council to resolve that cats must be desexed as a condition of registration or registration renewal unless exempt under the Act. The Policy aims to address the underlying causes of animal overpopulation and uncontrolled breeding while supporting responsible pet ownership and improving long-term animal management outcomes across the Shire. Council endorsement of the Policy is now sought so that the statutory requirements of Section 10A, including publication of the resolution in the Victorian Government Gazette and a newspaper circulating within the municipality, can be implemented.

Discussion:

At the Ordinary Council Meeting held on Wednesday 6 May 2026, Council endorsed the Draft Desexing Policy for Domestic Animals (Cats) for public consultation for a period of three weeks from 7 May 2026 to 28 May 2026.

The Policy has been developed to support implementation of actions contained within the Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) 2026–2029 and establishes Council's approach to mandatory desexing of cats registered within Hindmarsh Shire. The policy seeks to:

- Promote responsible pet ownership.

- Reduce unwanted litters and cat overpopulation.
- Improve animal welfare outcomes.
- Reduce impacts on neighbourhood amenity.
- Protect native wildlife and biodiversity.
- Support Council's obligations under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*

At the end of consultation period, seven (7) written responses were received. The consultation page received a total of 26 visits. Responses received were mixed but generally supportive toward the introduction of Desexing Policy, particularly where it contributes to improved animal welfare outcomes and reduced unwanted litters.

The table below presents the responses received through the consultation process, structured by survey question to ensure transparency and clarity. The officer responses to each of the questions are included in the table.

This format enables direct alignment between community feedback and Council's consideration of key issues, demonstrating how specific comments have informed the policy approach and how identified concerns are addressed through the proposed implementation framework.

Respondent Comments	Council Response
"There are enough feral cats around town without having more. And people should have their cats locked up I'm so sick of all the cats in my yard at night."	The implementation of this policy is intended to reduce unintended breeding between owned and feral cats. Over time, this will contribute to a reduction in stray and feral cat populations, resulting in improved community amenity and more effective long-term animal management outcomes.
"As a responsible cat co-owner who has my cat desexed and fully enclosed, I feel it necessary to hold accountable the amount of selfish people who do not desex or abide by any regulations only to dump them when they move on."	Council supports the principle of responsible pet ownership and recognises community expectations that pet owners act responsibly. The implementation of this policy aligns with Council's objective to strengthen responsible pet ownership by requiring desexing as part of the registration process, thereby improving accountability and reducing behaviours such as abandonment, uncontrolled breeding, and non-compliance with regulations.
"my only concern would be that people will be even more irresponsible and not do either, and what will happen if they are found to have unregistered and intact cats? will there be fines etc?"	Council acknowledges the concern regarding compliance and potential enforcement. Current data indicates that of the 338 cats registered with Council, 325 are already desexed, demonstrating a high level of responsible pet ownership within the community.

	Under the <i>Domestic Animals Act 1994</i>, it is an offence to keep an unregistered cat over the age of 3 months. Section 10A of the Act enables councils to refuse to register or renew the registration of a cat that is not desexed (unless exempt). As a result, if a cat is not desexed and cannot be registered, the owner may be subject to enforcement action for keeping an unregistered animal. The implementation of this policy will operate within this existing legislative framework, supported by education and communication, and is intended to strengthen compliance while maintaining the Shire's strong record of responsible pet ownership.
"Timing might be tough. People with animals 10+ years old might be unwilling to get them desexed. Registered Breeders in the area?"	Council acknowledges that timing and animal welfare are important considerations. Under Section 10B of the <i>Domestic Animals Act 1994</i>, exemptions may be granted where a veterinary practitioner provides written advice that desexing would adversely affect an animal's health or pose an unacceptable risk. This ensures older animals, including those over 10 years of age, can be appropriately managed on a case-by-case basis. In relation to breeders, the Act recognises members of approved Applicable Organisations (Section 5A) as registered breeders, and exemptions must be granted under Section 10B where councils implement mandatory desexing under Section 10A. These provisions ensure legitimate breeding activities can continue while supporting the broader objective of responsible pet ownership and population control.
There are currently no VET's in Hindmarsh Shire or access to affordable cat desexing. I think Council should not be adopting a policy to enforce cat desexing and should spend the next few years focusing on getting consistent, affordable & accessible desexing clinics in Hindmarsh. This will have more of a positive impact. I think enforcing cat desexing is going to have the opposite effect of what	Council acknowledges concerns regarding the availability and affordability of desexing services. Council is actively addressing this by partnering with the Vet Project to deliver low-cost desexing clinics on an annual basis, with the mobile service rotating across all four major townships within the Shire. In addition, Council is currently exploring opportunities to establish a permanent base for the Vet Project in Dimboola, which would enable a regular desexing service to be delivered approximately every six weeks, significantly improving access and affordability for residents.

Council intends it to, and instead will deter people from registering their cats, and will increase illegal dumping of kittens because people will want to avoid being fined by Council (which will increase overpopulation of stray cats). Cat's are companions to people and can help people with their mental health. Penalising people who can't afford cat desexing instead of helping them by providing affordable desexing is the wrong approach in my opinion. I think after affordable cat desexing clinics have been offered to Hindmarsh residents for a few years, then Council should reevaluate whether a policy like this is required or not. Cat desexing isn't a legislated requirement.	Council also acknowledges concerns regarding fines, compliance, and potential unintended consequences such as reduced registrations or increased dumping. It is important to note that owning an unregistered cat is already an offence under the <i>Domestic Animals Act 1994</i>, and the Act provides councils with the authority to refuse registration of un-desexed cats (Section 10A), meaning enforcement provisions already exist. The policy does not introduce new offences but strengthens existing legislation and is supported by education and accessible services. Illegal dumping of kittens occurs for a range of reasons and is an existing issue within the community; this policy is designed to reduce unintended breeding and address the root cause of overpopulation rather than penalise responsible owners.
"Those people who choose not to register their animal are not going to bother desexing anyway. Tying it in with a cheap desexing scheme and free registration for a couple of years would have more benefit..."	Council acknowledges the suggestion to link desexing with incentives; however, animal registration is a legislated requirement under the <i>Domestic Animals Act 1994</i> and cannot be waived. Council is instead focused on improving compliance through accessible and affordable services, including low-cost desexing programs delivered in partnership with the Vet Project. While it is recognised that some individuals may choose not to register their animals, failure to register is already an offence under the Act. By strengthening the link between desexing and registration, and improving access to services, the policy aims to increase overall compliance and promote responsible pet ownership across the community.
Adding costs to a population with high number of people not in a financial position to do it will not solve the issue. I believe you will see less registrations and therefore less revenue coupled with extra	Council acknowledges concerns regarding affordability, community circumstances, and differing local experiences; however, available data from Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) and Agriculture Victoria indicates that animal management, particularly the

work to chase those who do not comply. Such policy makes no sense when we have recurrent mouse plagues. There are cats around my property, I have multiple traps outside the house and still have mice coming inside. THIS is a health and sanitary issue, not the cats. It will also impact people relying on a companion whether because of mental health, living alone, etc because these people often also have financial problems. These same people are very unlikely to give you feedback so I do not believe your "feedback from the community on our Domestic Animal Management Plan" reflect the entire population in the shire. And for what it's worth, after living in the shire for 14 years in Jeparit and Dimboola, I have never noticed any feral cats or any overpopulation of cats	management and disposal of stray and feral cats, represents a significant and ongoing component of Council's Local Laws responsibilities. These pressures arise from unmanaged breeding and roaming animals, even where they may not be visible to all residents. Census data also shows that Hindmarsh Shire has an older population profile, with a significant proportion of single-person and low-income households, reinforcing the importance of providing affordable services an issue Council is actively addressing through subsidised desexing programs and increased access to veterinary services. While cats may contribute to pest control in some settings, evidence consistently shows that unmanaged cat populations lead to increased nuisance complaints, animal welfare issues, and environmental impacts. This policy is designed to address the root cause of these issues, uncontrolled breeding, rather than relying on reactive management. It strengthens Council's position on responsible pet ownership under the <i>Domestic Animals Act 1994</i>, noting that registration is already mandatory and enforcement provisions already exist. By combining legislative authority with accessible, low-cost desexing services, the policy seeks to reduce long-term costs, improve compliance, and deliver sustainable animal management outcomes for the broader community.
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The consultation outcomes have provided insight into a range of community perspectives, including support for responsible pet ownership, concerns regarding affordability and implementation, and the need for education and practical support measures. The proposed Desexing Policy for Domestic Animals (Cats) has been developed with these considerations in mind and is supported by existing legislative provisions, accessible desexing initiatives, and a structured communications approach. Collectively, these measures aim to address the root cause of unmanaged cat populations, uncontrolled breeding, rather than relying solely on reactive compliance and enforcement activities. None of the feedback summarised in the table above triggers the amendment of policy.

The implementation of this policy represents a necessary step toward more sustainable animal management outcomes, improved community wellbeing, and a safer, more supportive working environment for Council officers.

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

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.

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:

All activities associated with the implementation of this Policy will be delivered within existing budget allocations. Existing resources, including current animal management operations and allocated funding for desexing initiatives, are considered sufficient to support the implementation and ongoing administration of the policy.

Risk Management Implications:

Strategic Risk Description	Risk Management Discussion
Environmental Sustainability Government Policy and Political Changes Community Wellbeing	Unmanaged cat populations present risks to environmental sustainability, community wellbeing, and Council's ability to respond to evolving legislative and policy requirements. Impacts include harm to native wildlife, increased nuisance complaints, reduced community amenity, and ongoing strain on Council resources and staff. The implementation of a structured desexing policy provides a proactive, consistent approach to domestic animal management, aligning with State legislation while addressing the root cause of overpopulation and reducing long-term environmental, social, and regulatory risks.

Relevant Legislation:

Domestic Animals Act 1994

Domestic Animals Regulations 2025

Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986

Local Government Act 2020

Environment Protection Act 2017

Community Engagement:

Community engagement was undertaken in accordance with Council's standard consultation practices through the 'Have Your Say Hindmarsh' online engagement platform between 7 May 2026 to 28 May 2026. The community was invited to provide feedback on the proposed

Desexing Policy for Domestic Animals (Cats) via a structured survey, allowing respondents to comment on proposed measures, suggest amendments, and raise concerns regarding implementation.

The consultation provided an opportunity for direct community input into policy development, with responses identifying key themes including support for responsible pet ownership, concerns regarding affordability and access to services, and considerations relating to implementation and enforcement.

Gender Equality Implications:

Gender Impact Assessments are required by the *Gender Equality Act 2020* when the project, policy or plan subject to Council decision has a direct and significant impact on the community.

A Gender Impact Assessment has been completed in relation to this project, policy or plan.

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:

Subject to Council resolving to adopt the Desexing Policy for Domestic Animals (Cats) under Section 10A of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, Council will inform the community of the decision, the commencement date of the Policy, registration requirements, applicable exemptions and the statutory obligations arising from the resolution. Communication will be delivered through Council's website, social media channels, local media and other appropriate communication platforms to ensure broad community awareness. In accordance with the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, Council will also undertake the required public notification of the resolution through publication in the Victorian Government Gazette and a newspaper circulating within the municipal district.

Council will provide feedback to community members who participated in the consultation process, including a summary of the consultation outcomes and Council's decision. This will

ensure transparency, demonstrate consideration of community feedback and support ongoing community engagement.

Next Steps

- If adopted, publish the resolution in the Victorian Government Gazette and a newspaper circulating within the municipal district in accordance with Section 10A of the Domestic Animals Act 1994.
- Communicate Council's decision, implementation timeframe, registration requirements and exemptions to the community.
- Update Council's registration, administration and compliance processes to give effect to the resolution.
- Notify consultation participants of the outcome of the consultation and Council's decision.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

- 1. notes the submissions received during the public consultation period for the draft Domestic Animal Desexing Policy (Cats) undertaken from 7 May 2026 to 28 May 2026 and thanks those who submitted their feedback;***
- 2. adopts the Desexing Policy for Domestic Animals (Cats) as attached to this report;***
- 3. resolves, pursuant to Section 10A of the Domestic Animals Act 1994, that from 1 January 2028 Council will not register or renew the registration of a cat unless the cat:***
 - a) is desexed; or***
 - b) is exempt from desexing under the Domestic Animals Act 1994; and***
- 4. authorises the Chief Executive Officer to undertake all actions necessary to give effect to the resolution, including publication of the resolution in the Victorian Government Gazette and a newspaper circulating within the municipal district in accordance with Section 10A (3) of the Domestic Animals Act 1994.***

MOVED: Cr R Barker/Cr J Barry

That Council:

- 1. notes the submissions received during the public consultation period for the draft Domestic Animal Desexing Policy (Cats) undertaken from 7 May 2026 to 28 May 2026 and thanks those who submitted their feedback;***
- 2. adopts the Desexing Policy for Domestic Animals (Cats) as attached to this report;***

- 3. resolves, pursuant to Section 10A of the Domestic Animals Act 1994, that from 1 January 2028 Council will not register or renew the registration of a cat unless the cat:**
 - a) is desexed; or**
 - b) is exempt from desexing under the Domestic Animals Act 1994; and**
- 4. authorises the Chief Executive Officer to undertake all actions necessary to give effect to the resolution, including publication of the resolution in the Victorian Government Gazette and a newspaper circulating within the municipal district in accordance with Section 10A (3) of the Domestic Animals Act 1994.**

CARRIED

10.8 PUBLIC TRANSPARENCY POLICY

Responsible Officer: Director Corporate and Community Services

Councillor Portfolio: Cr Barker and Cr Uoy

Attachments:

1. C019 Public Transparency Policy [10.8.1]

Executive Summary:

This report presents the Public Transparency Policy (Policy) for adoption. The draft Policy was made available for a period of public consultation from 25 June to 17 July 2026, with no feedback received.

The Policy has been reviewed in line with the review schedule and assessed against the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) for its appropriateness in reflecting how Council makes information available to the public, as well as the open and accountable conduct of Council.

The Policy reinforces Council's commitment to open, transparent and accountable decision-making. By ensuring information about Council activities, decisions and performance is made accessible to the community, the Policy strengthens accountability and enables meaningful community participation in local government.

Discussion:

The Local Government Inspectorate reviewed several Council policies required under the Act in 2022 and has since made available a sample of best-practice policy examples. Council's Public Transparency Policy has been reviewed against these guideline policies along with the requirements of the Act.

Additional information included in the policy is:

- the definition of Community has been expanded to include all individuals or groups who live, work, play, study, visit, invest in or pass through the municipality.
- the Policy statement has also been expanded to include a clear list of objectives
- the affirmation that where information is not confidential, and not already available to the public, Council will apply the principles of a public interest test with consideration also of the resources required do respond to the request, in considering if the information shall be made available.

Following a period of community consultation there were no submissions received. The Public Transparency Policy is presented, with no further amendments, for adoption.

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:

There are no financial implications involved with the endorsement and adoption of this policy.

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.

Relevant Legislation:

Local Government Act 2020

Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012

Community Engagement:

The Public Transparency Policy was made available for a period of Community engagement in line with Councils Community Engagement Policy from 25 June 2026 to 17 July 2026. No submissions were received.

Gender Equality Implications:

Gender Impact Assessments are required by the *Gender Equality Act 2020* when the project, policy or plan subject to Council decision has a direct and significant impact on the community.

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.

Communications Strategy:

If adopted, the policy will be uploaded on Council's website, publications will be prepared, and staff training will be delivered.

Next Steps:

As per Communications Strategy.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council adopts the Public Transparency Policy.

MOVED: Cr R Aitken/Cr T Clark

That Council adopts the Public Transparency Policy.

CARRIED

10.9 TAC LOCAL GOVERNMENT GRANT FUNDING AND FLEXIBLE LOCAL TRANSPORT SOLUTION PROGRAM (FLTSP) FUNDING APPLICATIONS

Responsible Officer: Director Infrastructure Services

Councillor Portfolio: Cr Barry

Attachments:

1. LEAHY STREET CONCEPT DESIGN - HSC [10.9.1]

Executive Summary:

This report seeks Council endorsement to submit funding applications in the current rounds of available grants. The proposed applications are as follows:

- **TAC Local Government Grant Program**, to construct a raised pedestrian crossing on Leahy Street, Nhill with a total cost of \$150,000 with 1:1 matched funding from the grant. The Council contribution of up to \$75,000 will be referred for inclusion in the Capital Works Program set out in draft 2027/2028 Annual Budget; and
- **Flexible Local Transport Solution Program (FLTSP)**, for construction of a missing footpath link on Church Street and James Street, Nhill, with total project cost of \$132,000 with \$105,600 from grant funding and Council contribution of up to \$26,400 comprising a 10% cash contribution and a 10% in-kind project management contribution; and
- **Flexible Local Transport Solution Program (FLTSP)**, for upgrade of missing, damaged and non-compliant pedestrian crossover ramps in Rainbow with a total project cost of \$110,000, with \$88,000 grant funding and a Council contribution of up to \$22,000 comprising a 10% cash contribution and a 10% in-kind project management contribution.

Discussion:

TAC Local Government Grant Program

The TAC Local Government Grant Program provides opportunities for Victorian Local Government Authorities (LGAs) to improve road safety in their local communities. To be eligible for funding, applicants must ensure applications are primarily focused on road safety issues relating to cyclists and/or pedestrians that are on local government managed roads, and match TAC funding on a 1:1 basis if successful (up to \$100,000 excluding GST).

The proposed project would see an upgrade of the current crossing infrastructure in Leahy Street, Nhill. This includes a new raised pedestrian crossing primarily used for access to the St. Patricks Primary School, and an upgrade of infrastructure immediately surrounding the crossing. This area has a high volume of pedestrians, students and parked vehicles.

A concept design with a budget estimate of \$150,000 (excluding GST) has been developed internally. Should the application be successful, the project must be delivered by June 2028,

allowing for the Council contribution to be budgeted in 2027/2028 financial year. The functional design for the proposed project is included as an attachment.

Flexible Local Transport Solution Program (FLTSP)

The Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) administers the Flexible Local Transport Solution Program (FLTSP) to support Local Governments in delivering active transport infrastructure that improves accessibility, connectivity, and community safety. The program funds projects that address gaps in the local transport network and meet the needs of all users, including those with mobility limitations.

The program focuses on projects that create meaningful active transport outcomes, improve pedestrian accessibility, and address non-compliant infrastructure. Co-contributions from Council, including in-kind project management, are considered favourably under the program guidelines. Council officers have assessed the guidelines and identified two projects that meet the eligibility criteria and align with the program's objectives.

Church Street, Nhill and James Street, Nhill Footpath

The first project involves the construction of approximately 445 metres of concrete footpath along Church Street and James Street, Nhill, closing a missing link in the pedestrian network north of the Western Highway. The new footpath will provide a continuous, separated walking route connecting St Patrick's School (Prep to Year 6) to Jaypex Park recreational facilities and the Nhill town centre.

The primary need for this project arises from the complete absence of footpath along this corridor, which currently forces students and pedestrians onto the roadway to navigate between the school, the town centre, and nearby facilities. St Patrick's School accommodates approximately 50 students who regularly travel by foot, bicycle, and private vehicle, with the route identified through the School Community Road Safety Assessment Framework (SCRAF).

Traffic data also reinforces the safety case for intervention. The corridor carries an average daily traffic (ADT) volume of 141 vehicles, and the straight road geometry actively promotes speeding, with traffic counts revealing that 57% of vehicles recorded were travelling above the posted speed limit. While no crashes have been recorded in the past five (5) years, the combination of high student and pedestrian activity, elevated traffic volumes, and a demonstrable speeding problem presents a clear and foreseeable risk that warrants proactive infrastructure investment.

This project supports Hindmarsh Shire Council's commitment to the safety of all road users at its schools and its broader objective of promoting active transport across the Shire. The total project cost is \$132,000, comprising \$105,600 in grant funding and Council contribution of up to \$26,400 (10% cash contribution and 10% in-house project management costs).

Upgrade of pedestrian crossover ramps at various locations in Rainbow

The second project involves the upgrade of missing, damaged, and non-compliant pedestrian crossover ramps at eight (8) locations across Rainbow township. The works will deliver compliant kerb ramps, tactile ground surface indicators (TGSIs), reinstatement of adjacent footpath surfaces, and dedicated ramp connections linking disabled parking bays to the footpath network at Federal Street. The upgrades directly address non-compliance with accessibility standards under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and will create a continuous, accessible pedestrian network connecting Rainbow's residential areas, hospital precinct, and main commercial street. Sites have been prioritised based on pedestrian demand, proximity to key services, and the severity of existing non-compliance. The total estimated project cost is \$110,000, comprising \$88,000 in grant funding and a Council contribution of up to \$22,000 (10% cash contribution and 10% in-house project management costs).

Link to Council Plan:

Theme Two: Built and Natural Environment

2.2 Our infrastructure supports liveability and resilience.

Financial Implications:

The TAC Local Government grant requires a 1:1 co-contribution. \$75,000 of Council funds will be required to complete the project in 2027/2028 financial year. This co-contribution will be referred to the 2027/2028 Annual Budget should the application be successful.

\$24,200 required as a cash contribution for FLTSP funding application can be allocated from Isolated Footpath Section Replacement program from the 2026/2027 capital works program.

Risk Management Implications:

Strategic Risk Description	Risk Management Discussion
Community Needs	The raised pedestrian crossing and missing footpath link project will increase safety for school children and general pedestrians accessing the school and surrounding neighbourhood, reducing the risk of accidents occurring. An awareness and education campaign will be undertaken through various channels, including social media. Council has also obtained a letter from key stakeholder St. Patricks Primary School stating their support for the project when we attempted sourcing funding through another program. The pedestrian ramps upgrade works will deliver compliant kerb ramps, tactile ground surface indicators (TGSIs), reinstatement of adjacent footpath surfaces, and dedicated ramp connections linking disabled parking bays to the footpath network at Federal Street. The upgrades directly address non-compliance with accessibility standards under the <i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992</i> and will create a continuous, accessible pedestrian network connecting

	Rainbow's residential areas, hospital precinct, and main commercial street.
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Relevant Legislation:

Local Government Act 2020

Local Government Act 1989

Road Management Act 2004

Community Engagement:

Council officers have previously consulted with St Patricks School, Nhill, in 2025 regarding this project. The school has provided a letter of support.

Further consultation with the community will be undertaken should the application be successful.

Gender Equality Implications:

Gender Impact Assessments are required by the *Gender Equality Act 2020* when the project, policy or plan subject to Council decision has a direct and significant impact on the community.

A Gender Impact Assessment is not required as these projects do 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 – Lakshdeep Chawla, Intern Engineer

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

Communications Strategy:

If successful, an awareness and education campaign will be undertaken through various channels, including social media.

Next Steps:

Should Council endorse the applications, Officers will proceed with funding application process.

RECOMMENDATION:***That Council:***

- 1. endorses the proposed funding application under TAC Local Government Grant Program for construction of raised pedestrian crossing in Leahy Street, Nhill;***
- 2. refers the Council contribution of up to \$75,000 toward the TAC Local Government Grant Program project to the 2027/2028 Annual Budget;***
- 3. endorses the proposed funding application under Flexible Local Transport Solution Program (FLTSP) for construction of missing footpath link on Church and James Street, Nhill;***
- 4. approves the use of \$13,200 (cash contribution) from Footpath Section Replacement Program in the 2026/2027 Capital Works Program to form part of the required co-contribution (totalling \$26,400 including an in-kind contribution of \$13,200) towards FLTSP Church and James Street, Nhill project;***
- 5. endorses the proposed funding application under Flexible Local Transport Solution Program (FLTSP) for the upgrade of missing, damaged and non-compliant pedestrian crossover ramps in Rainbow; and***
- 6. approves the use of \$11,000 (cash contribution) from Footpath Section Replacement Program in the 2026/2027 Capital Works Program to form part of the required co-contribution (totalling \$22,000 including an in-kind contribution of \$11,000) towards FLTSP crossover ramp upgrade, Rainbow project.***

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

- 1. endorses the proposed funding application under TAC Local Government Grant Program for construction of raised pedestrian crossing in Leahy Street, Nhill;***
- 2. refers the Council contribution of up to \$75,000 toward the TAC Local Government Grant Program project to the 2027/2028 Annual Budget;***
- 3. endorses the proposed funding application under Flexible Local Transport Solution Program (FLTSP) for construction of missing footpath link on Church and James Street, Nhill;***

- 4. approves the use of \$13,200 (cash contribution) from Footpath Section Replacement Program in the 2026/2027 Capital Works Program to form part of the required co-contribution (totalling \$26,400 including an in-kind contribution of \$13,200) towards FLTSP Church and James Street, Nhill project;***
- 5. endorses the proposed funding application under Flexible Local Transport Solution Program (FLTSP) for the upgrade of missing, damaged and non-compliant pedestrian crossover ramps in Rainbow; and***
- 6. approves the use of \$11,000 (cash contribution) from Footpath Section Replacement Program in the 2026/2027 Capital Works Program to form part of the required co-contribution (totalling \$22,000 including an in-kind contribution of \$11,000) towards FLTSP crossover ramp upgrade, Rainbow project.***

CARRIED

10.10 COUNCIL PLAN ANNUAL ACTIONS 2026/2027

Responsible Officer: Director Corporate and Community Services

Councillor Portfolio: All Councillors

Attachments:

1. Council Plan Annual Actions 2026/2027 [10.10.1]
2. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED - Detailed Submission Report - Have Your Say Hindmarsh - Council Plan Actions 2026/2027 [10.10.2]

Executive Summary:

This report presents the Council Plan Actions 2026/2027, recommended for adoption after the completion of the community engagement period (4 June 2026 to 2 July 2026) in which four (4) submissions were received.

The Council Plan Actions 2026/2027 (the Actions) provide a focused and practical roadmap for delivering on the Council Plan 2025-2029 and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan. Developed through a combination of strategic planning, community consultation, and review of existing priorities, the Actions are designed to drive tangible improvements in the quality of life for Hindmarsh Shire residents while ensuring Council remains responsive, efficient and forward-looking.

In addition to the specific actions outlined, four overarching priorities have been identified as guiding principles that underpin all areas of Council's work. These are:

- Closing the loop with the community
- Using plain English (reducing jargon)
- Making processes easier and more consistent
- Clearly demonstrating outcomes and value

These overarching actions respond directly to community feedback and represent a commitment to improving how Council communicates, engages and delivers services.

Discussion:

Council is required to prepare, adopt and maintain a Council Plan in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*. Under Section 90(1) of the Act, Council must develop and adopt a Council Plan for a period of at least four financial years following a general election and by 31 October in the election year, in accordance with its deliberative engagement practices.

The draft Council Plan Actions 2026/2027 form part of Council's ongoing planning cycle and are reviewed and adopted annually to support delivery of the four-year Council Plan. As noted in previous Council reporting, the Action Plan:

- Provides a detailed set of activities for the financial year
- Aligns directly to the themes, goals and priorities within the Council Plan
- Includes both new initiatives and ongoing service delivery commitments

- Supports regular monitoring through quarterly reporting to Council

Consistent with legislative requirements, the development of the Council Plan and its associated actions have been informed by community engagement, including consultation processes undertaken during the preparation of the four-year plan.

In 2025, Hindmarsh Shire Council established a deliberative community panel to support the development of the Council Plan 2025–2029. This process brought together a small group of community members to contribute to strategic priorities through a structured, facilitated workshop. The process was independently facilitated and aligned with Council's Community Engagement Policy. As part of Council's commitment to maintaining a deliberative approach to community input, participants were invited to return for a follow-up session in March 2026. This workshop represents the next step in our Council Plan process, providing an opportunity for community members to represent their community, review proposed actions for the 2026/2027 financial year and contribute to prioritisation.

The draft Council Plan Actions 2026/2027 reflect the priorities of the Deliberative Panel, as well as strategic actions identified in existing Council Strategies and Plans. They focus on realising the goals, aspiration and vision contained in the Council Plan 2025-2029.

The draft Council Plan Actions 2026/2027 were made available for a period of community engagement from 4 June 2026 to 2 July 2026, with feedback received that suggested or resulted in amendments to the Plan summarised below with Officer responses:

Planning and building requirements are 95% state legislation, so reducing red tape is not realistic here. I think revised wording should either point towards advocating to state government for reduced red tape or supporting applicants through the process.

This section 'reduce red tape and simplify planning and business approval processes through engagement with current and future applicants' is in the Council Plan 2025-2029. The actions set out how we will achieve the plan, so an additional action has been added in support of this goal to 'Provide quality support to planning and business applicants through implementation of the Business-Friendly Councils program.'

Volunteers play a critical role in delivering many of the outcomes identified in the Council Plan, including supporting community organisations, sporting clubs, town committees and the maintenance of community assets. The submitter expressed concern that interactions with Council can be overly complex, time-consuming and burdensome for volunteers, many of whom balance their volunteer commitments with full-time employment.

Council acknowledges the critical role volunteers play in supporting community facilities, sporting clubs, town committees and many of the activities that contribute to the liveability and vibrancy of the Hindmarsh Shire. Council recognises that volunteers generously contribute their time and expertise and that maintaining strong volunteer participation is essential to achieving many community outcomes.

Key issues raised included lengthy approval and agreement processes, perceived duplication of effort, communication challenges and a lack of early engagement on matters affecting volunteer-led organisations. The feedback emphasised the importance of strengthening volunteer engagement, reducing administrative barriers and fostering a more collaborative relationship between Council and community volunteers to support volunteer attraction, retention and sustainability across the Shire.

Council also acknowledges that managing a large and diverse asset base, including numerous recreation reserves and community facilities, can create challenges for both volunteers and Council officers. To help address these challenges, Council has included funding in the draft 2026/2027 Budget for an additional position (also responsible for Hindmarsh Outdoor Pools for the relevant season) to strengthen support for volunteer-managed recreation reserves and improve coordination between user groups and Council in relation to management and maintenance. This role is intended to provide a clearer point of contact, improve responsiveness and assist volunteers and user groups in navigating Council requirements.

The proposed Council Plan Actions 2026/2027 also includes actions focused on improving organisational processes, customer experience, communication and service delivery across Council. These actions are intended to reduce unnecessary administrative burden, improve the consistency and timeliness of responses, and strengthen engagement with community groups and volunteers. Council has proposed including the following additional action that will improve accountability and reporting on the Sport and Recreation Strategy (including many measures that support volunteers and the relationship between Council and clubs) - “Coordinator Sport, Recreation and Community Development to engage with sporting clubs in delivering the **Sport and Recreation Strategy**.”

Outside of these actions, Council’s Community Strategy and Engagement team has a renewed focus on community and volunteer engagement and will be working to understand the needs of volunteers and community groups across the Shire and determine when and where Council can provide support and assistance.

The natural environment actions need stronger safeguards and more precise

This submission also largely responds to items in the adopted Council Plan 2025-

wording, particularly around wildlife. Council should ensure its environmental work is evidence-based, legally compliant, and informed by people with genuine ecological, cultural and field-based expertise. The submission calls for a stronger focus on biodiversity protection and environmental decision-making within the Council Plan. Key concerns raised include the need to clearly distinguish between invasive weeds, declared pest species, domestic animals and protected native wildlife, ensuring that threatened or protected species are not treated as pest management issues. The submitter emphasised that management of native wildlife should be guided by legislation, Traditional Owner knowledge, cultural authority and scientific expertise. The feedback also highlighted the importance of involving a broader range of stakeholders in environmental planning and decision-making, including Traditional Owners, environmental researchers, ecologists, Landcare groups, wildlife carers, citizen scientists and conservation organisations, regardless of whether they reside within the Shire. The submission further advocated for a more comprehensive biodiversity action that extends beyond tree planting to include protection of remnant vegetation and roadside habitat, support for threatened species, ecological monitoring, post-fire recovery, responsible chemical use and measures to avoid harm to protected wildlife.

2029, specifically - 'Manage wild animals and invasive weeds on Council owned and managed land, to maintain ecological balance and protect local biodiversity.' Based on this submission, the following action has been added to Council's 2026/2027 actions - 'Collaborate with Landcare groups, Traditional Owners, environmental stakeholders and relevant government agencies to **identify and promote biodiversity conservation priorities**, including remnant vegetation protection, roadside habitat management, ecological restoration opportunities and community environmental education initiatives.'

Council acknowledges the importance of protecting biodiversity and recognises the value of evidence-based environmental management informed by legislative requirements, scientific expertise and Traditional Owner knowledge. Council notes that the management of protected native wildlife is governed by State legislation and that Council's role is distinct from the management of declared pest species and invasive weeds, with Council's role being in Landcare Facilitation and managed our own Plants, Pests and Weeds program which manages government-declared species only.

Many of the matters raised in the submission are addressed through Council's existing Climate Adaptation Strategy, which includes actions focused on building ecosystem resilience, responding to the impacts of climate change on natural environments, and protecting environmental assets that support community wellbeing and biodiversity. Council also continues to support environmental outcomes through its Landcare Facilitation Program, which provides practical support for activities such as revegetation, habitat enhancement, community education, environmental stewardship and partnerships with landholders and environmental groups.

Council notes the submission's comments regarding post-fire recovery and biodiversity management. Primary responsibility for the management and recovery of public land affected by fire, including national parks, state forests and other Crown land, rests with the relevant State Government land management authorities. Council will continue to advocate for and collaborate with these agencies where appropriate; however, detailed ecological recovery programs, threatened species management and environmental rehabilitation activities are generally outside Council's direct statutory responsibilities and resourcing capacity.

The Council Plan is intended to provide a strategic framework, with more detailed biodiversity, environmental management and climate adaptation actions being delivered through supporting strategies, plans and partnerships.

Council thanks community members for their submissions.

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

1.2 Our towns are inclusive, welcoming and growing.

Theme Four: Good Governance and Financial Sustainability

4.2 We engage our community with respect and openness.

4.3 We manage our resources responsibly and strategically.

Financial Implications:

Financial implications relating to each action have been considered and included in the draft 2026/2027 Annual Budget.

Risk Management Implications:

Strategic Risk Description	Risk Management Discussion
Community Needs	The annual adoption of Council Plan Actions helps manage the strategic risk of Community Needs because it creates a structured, recurring process for checking that Council's priorities still align with what the community expects and requires. By reviewing and adopting actions each year, Council can respond to emerging issues, adjust to changing demographics, and ensure resources are directed where

	they will have the greatest impact. This regular cycle also strengthens transparency and accountability, reducing the risk that community needs go unmet or unnoticed.
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Relevant Legislation:

Local Government Act 2020

Community Engagement:

Deliberative community engagement has been undertaken, with the draft set of Council Plan Actions 2026/2027 then made available for consultative feedback once endorsed. Engagement also included:

CEO Drop Ins

Nhill Library – 2:00pm on Wednesday 10 June 2026

Dimboola Library and Customer Service Centre – 10:00am on Thursday 11 June 2026

Jeparit Library and Customer Service Centre – 10:00am on Monday 22 June 2026

Rainbow Library and Customer Service Centre – 12:30pm on Monday 22 June 2026

Have Your Say Hindmarsh – www.haveyoursayhindmarsh.hindmarsh.vic.gov.au

Gender Equality Implications:

Gender Impact Assessments are required by the *Gender Equality Act 2020* when the project, policy or plan subject to Council decision has a direct and significant impact on the community.

A Gender Impact Assessment has been completed in relation to this plan.

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:

As per Next Steps.

Next Steps:

If adopted, the Council Plan Actions 2026/2027 will be published on Council's website, advertised via Council and local media and implemented by Council staff.

RECOMMENDATION:***That Council:***

- 1. adopts the Council Plan Actions 2026/2027; and***
- 2. thanks those who made submissions and attended community engagement sessions for their feedback.***

MOVED: Cr J Barry/Cr R Barker***That Council:***

- 1. adopts the Council Plan Actions 2026/2027; and***
- 2. thanks those who made submissions and attended community engagement sessions for their valuable feedback.***

CARRIED

**10.11 AUSTRALIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION 75
ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE SYDNEY**

Cr Rosie Barker declared a material conflict of interest and left the room at 4:39pm.

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer

Councillor Portfolio: All Councillors

Attachments:

Nil

Executive Summary:

This reports seeks Council approval for the Deputy Mayor, Cr Rosie Barker, to attend the 2026 Australian Local Government Women's Association (ALGWA) 75th Anniversary National Conference being held at the Manly Pacific Hotel in Manly, New South Wales Thursday 20 August 2026 to Saturday 22 August 2026.

In line with Council's Councillor Expense Entitlements Policy, interstate travel by Councillors is required to be approved by a Council resolution. It is anticipated costs including airfares, accommodation and incidentals, associated with Cr Barker attending the ALGWA conference will not exceed \$1,300.00.

Discussion:

The 2026 ALGWA National Conference will be held at the Manly Pacific Hotel in Manly, New South Wales from 5:00pm Thursday 20 August 2026 to 5:00pm Saturday 22 August 2026.

Cr Rosie Barker has recently been appointed as the Secretary of the Australian Local Government Women's Association Victoria and they have very generously offered to cover the cost of the 2026 ALGWA Conference ticket for Deputy Mayor, Cr Barker, to attend. Council will only incur costs for flights, accommodation and any incidentals (such as public transport fares and other fees).

Council's Councillor Expense Entitlements Policy requires any interstate travel by Councillors be approved by a resolution of Council.

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:

Council budgets annually for Councillor professional development, meeting attendance, mandatory training, and travel expenses. Council will incur costs associated with flights,

(approximately \$380.00) accommodation (approximately \$650.00), incidentals (\$150.00). There is no cost for the conference, as the cost will be covered by ALGWA.

Risk Management Implications:

No risk management implications.

Relevant Legislation:

Local Government 2020

Community Engagement:

Not required.

Gender Equality Implications:

Gender Impact Assessments are required by *Gender Equality Act 2020* when the project, policy or plan subject to Council decision has a direct and significant impact on the community.

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 – Mary-Ann Speakman, Customer Service and Councillor Support Officer

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

Communications Strategy:

Not required.

Next Steps:

Flights and accommodation to be booked. Interstate travel register to be updated after travel has occurred and published on Council's website.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council approves costs including airfares, accommodation, and incidentals, to a maximum of \$1,300.00 for the Deputy Mayor, Cr Rosie Barker, to attend the 2026 Australian Local Government Women's Association 75th Anniversary Conference being held at the Manly Pacific Hotel, Manly, New South Wales on Thursday 20 August 2026 to Saturday 22 August 2026.

MOVED: Cr J Barry/Cr T Clark

That Council approves costs including airfares, accommodation, and incidentals, to a maximum of \$1,300.00 for the Deputy Mayor, Cr Rosie Barker, to attend the 2026 Australian Local Government Women's Association 75th Anniversary Conference being held at the Manly Pacific Hotel, Manly, New South Wales on Thursday 20 August 2026 to Saturday 22 August 2026.

CARRIED

Cr Rosie Barker returned to the room at 4:46pm.

11 COUNCIL COMMITTEES

11.1 ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer

Councillor Portfolio: Cr Aitken

Attachments:

1. Rainbow Town Committee Minutes - 15 June 2026 [11.1.1]
2. Jeparit Town Committee Minutes - 20 June 2026 [11.1.2]
3. Hindmarsh Pride Committee Minutes - 1 July 2026 [11.1.3]
4. Hindmarsh Pride Committee Minutes - 15 July 2026 [11.1.4]
5. Nhill Town Committee Minutes - 7 July 2026 [11.1.5]
6. Jeparit Town Committee Financial Report - June 2026 [11.1.6]
7. Nhill Town Committee Financial Report - June 2026 [11.1.7]
8. Rainbow Town Committee Financial Report - June 2026 [11.1.8]

Introduction:

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

- **Rainbow Town Committee**
General Meeting on 15 June 2026
- **Jeparit Town Committee**
General Meeting on 20 June 2026
- **Hindmarsh Pride Committee**
General Meetings on 1 July 2026 and 15 July 2026
- **Nhill Town Committee**
General Meeting on 7 July 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 June for the following Advisory Committees have been included as attachments for the information of Council:

- **Jeparit Town Committee**
- **Nhill Town Committee**
- **Rainbow Town Committee**

Next Steps:

Advisory Committee minutes will be published on Council's website.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

1. ***notes the minutes of the following Advisory Committees:***
 - a) ***Rainbow Town meeting held on 15 June 2026;***

- b) Jeparit Town meeting held on 20 June 2026;*
 - c) Hindmarsh Pride meetings held on 01 July 2026 and 15 July 2026;*
 - d) Nhill Town meeting held on 7 July 2026; and*
- 2. notes the financial statements for the month of June 2026 for the following Advisory Committees:*
 - a) Jeparit Township;*
 - b) Nhill Township;*
 - c) Rainbow Township; and*
- 3. endorses the following office bearers for the Nhill Township Advisory Committee:*
 - a) Chairperson – Alison Dahlenburg; and*
 - b) Secretary – Natalie Farmers.*

MOVED: Cr T Clark/Cr R Aitken

That Council:

- 1. notes the minutes of the following Advisory Committees:*
 - a) Rainbow Town meeting held on 15 June 2026;*
 - b) Jeparit Town meeting held on 20 June 2026;*
 - c) Hindmarsh Pride meetings held on 01 July 2026 and 15 July 2026;*
 - d) Nhill Town meeting held on 7 July 2026; and*
- 2. notes the financial statements for the month of June 2026 for the following Advisory Committees:*
 - a) Jeparit Township;*
 - b) Nhill Township;*
 - c) Rainbow Township; and*
- 3. endorses the following office bearers for the Nhill Township Advisory Committee:*
 - a) Chairperson – Alison Dahlenburg; and*
 - b) Secretary – Natalie Farmers.*

CARRIED

11.2 COMMUNITY ASSET COMMITTEES

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer

Councillor Portfolio: Cr Aitken

Attachments:

1. Jeparit Memorial Hall Committee AGM Minutes - 11 March 2026 and Annual Report [11.2.1]
2. Wimmera Mallee Pioneer Museum Minutes - 19 May 2026 [11.2.2]
3. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED - 2026 06 24 Committee Membership Expression of Interest Form WMPM - Peter Robson [11.2.3]

Introduction:

The following Hindmarsh Community Asset Committees held meetings on the following dates:

- **Jeparit Memorial Hall Committee**
AGM Meeting on 11 March 2026
- **Wimmera Mallee Pioneer Museum Committee**
General meeting on 19 May 2026

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

The Annual Report for the Jeparit Memorial Hall Committee is also included for the information of Council.

An Expression of Interest form for the Wimmera Mallee Pioneer Museum Community Asset Committee was also received on Wednesday 24 June 2026 from Peter Robson. This has been included as a confidential attachment.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

1. ***notes the minutes of the following Community Asset Committees:***
 - a) ***Jeparit Memorial Hall held on 11 March 2026, including the Annual Report and Annual Financial Report;***
 - b) ***Wimmera Mallee Pioneer Museum meeting held on 19 May 2026;***
2. ***appoints Peter Robson to the Wimmera Mallee Pioneer Museum Community Asset Committee; and***
3. ***endorses the following office bearers for the Jeparit Memorial Hall Community Asset Committee:***
 - a) ***President – Amanda King; and***
 - b) ***Secretary/Treasurer – Debra Schumann.***

MOVED: Cr T Clark/Cr R Aitken

That Council:

- 1. notes the minutes of the following Community Asset Committees:***
 - a) Jeparit Memorial Hall held on 11 March 2026, including the Annual Report and Annual Financial Report;***
 - b) Wimmera Mallee Pioneer Museum meeting held on 19 May 2026;***
- 2. appoints Peter Robson to the Wimmera Mallee Pioneer Museum Community Asset Committee; and***
- 3. endorses the following office bearers for the Jeparit Memorial Hall Community Asset Committee:***
 - a) President – Amanda King; and***
 - b) Secretary/Treasurer – Debra Schumann.***

CARRIED

12 LATE REPORTS

No late reports.

13 NOTICES OF MOTION

No notices of motion.

14 OTHER BUSINESS

No other business.

15 CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS

In accordance with Section 66(2)(a) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council may close the meeting to the public to consider confidential information. Confidential information is defined by part IV of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*, and by Section 3 of the *Local Government Act 2020* as being:

- a) Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released;
- b) security information, being information that if released is likely to endanger the security of Council property or the safety of any person;
- c) land use planning information, being information that if prematurely released is likely to encourage speculation in land values;
- d) law enforcement information, being information which if released would be reasonably likely to prejudice the investigation into an alleged breach of the law or the fair trial or hearing of any person;
- e) legal privileged information, being information to which legal professional privilege or client legal privilege applies;
- f) personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs;
- g) private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that—
 - i. i. relates to trade secrets; or
 - ii. if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage;
- h) confidential meeting information, being the records of meetings closed to the public under Section 66(2)(a);
- i) internal arbitration information, being information specified in Section 145;
- j) Councillor Conduct Panel confidential information, being information specified in Section 169;
- k) information prescribed by the regulations to be confidential information for the purposes of this definition;
- l) information that was confidential information for the purposes of Section 77 of the *Local Government Act 1989*

RECOMMENDATION:

That the meeting be closed in accordance with Section 66(2)(a) of the Local Government Act 2020, to consider reports that contain confidential information as defined by Section 3 of the Local Government Act 2020, and/or Part IV of the Freedom of Information Act 1982, and following consideration of item 5.1 close the Council meeting:

15.1 DIMBOOLA WORKS DEPOT – this report contains “private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage”.

MOVED: Cr J Barry/Cr T Clark

That the meeting be closed in accordance with Section 66(2)(a) of the Local Government Act 2020, to consider reports that contain confidential information as defined by Section 3 of the Local Government Act 2020, and/or Part IV of the Freedom of Information Act 1982, and following consideration of item 5.1 close the Council meeting:

15.1 DIMBOOLA WORKS DEPOT – this report contains “private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage”.

CARRIED

16 LATE CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS

No late confidential reports.

17 MEETING CLOSE

There being no further business, Cr Ron Ismay declared the meeting closed at 4:58pm.
