



24 October 2025

AGENDA

Notice of Ordinary Council Meeting

Date: Wednesday 29 October 2025

Time: Commencing at 3:00pm

Venue: Nhill Council Chamber,
92 Nelson Street, Nhill

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

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 Chan Uoy – Deputy Mayor
East Ward



Cr Roger Aitken
North Ward



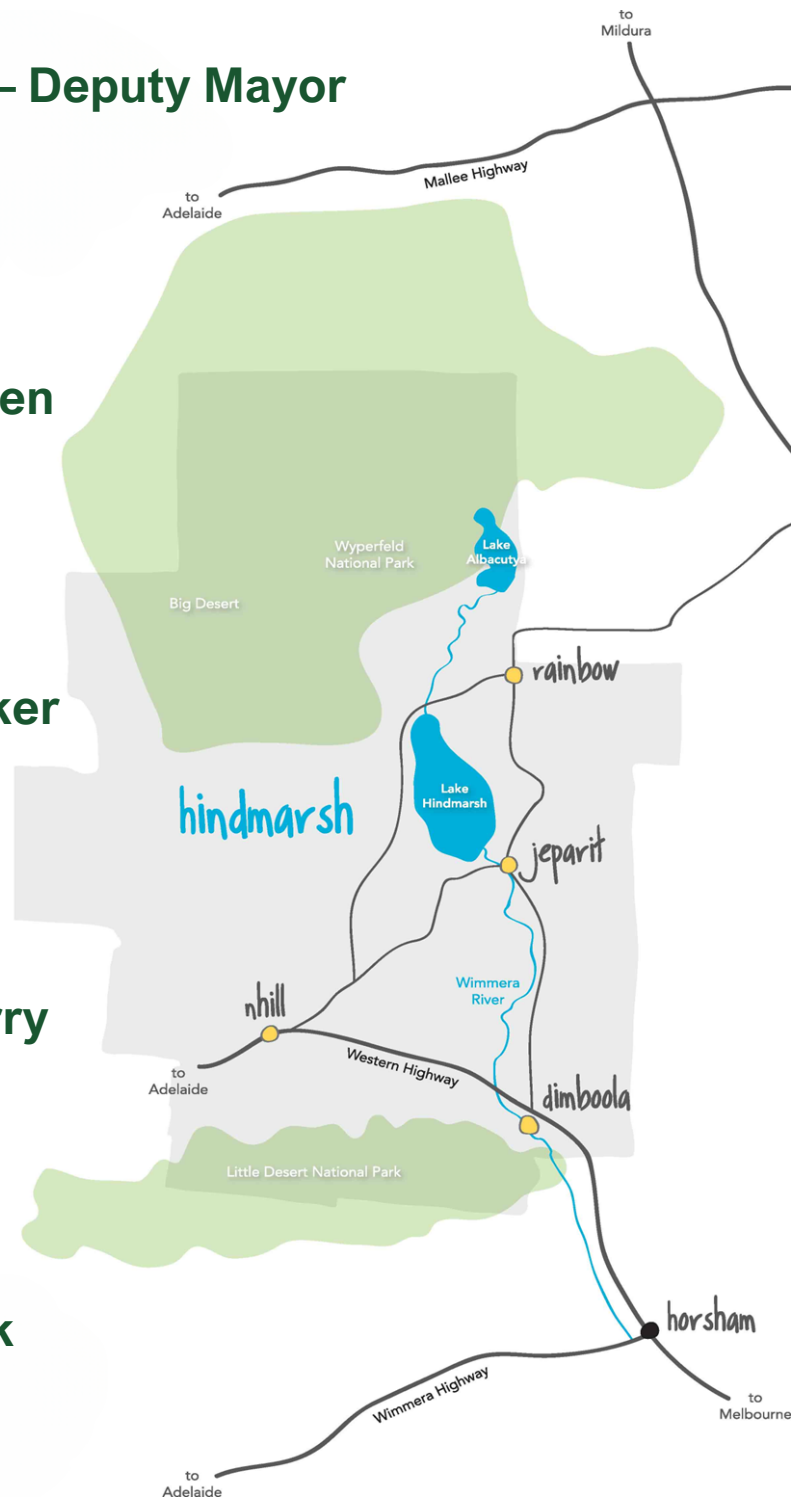
Cr Rosie Barker
West Ward



Cr James Barry
East Ward



Cr Tony Clark
North 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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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Acknowledgement of Country

Hindmarsh Shire Council acknowledges that this meeting is being held on the lands of the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagalk Nations and we acknowledge them as Traditional Owners of Country.

We recognise the important ongoing role that Indigenous people have in our community and pay our respects to their Elders, past and present.

1.2 LIVE STREAMING STATEMENT

Live Streaming Statement

This meeting is being broadcast on the internet and the recording of the meeting will be published on Council's YouTube Channel and linked to Council's website.

As a visitor in the public gallery, you may be filmed. By remaining in the public gallery, you consent to being filmed and for the recording of you to be made publicly available by Council.

A copy of Council's Live Streaming and Recording of Council Meetings Policy is available at the back of this room and on Council's website. Please speak with one of our staff members if you have any questions.

1.3 STATEMENT OF VALUES

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.

2 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.

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 September 2025 and the Special Council Meeting held on Wednesday 15 October 2025 at the Nhill Council Chamber, 92 Nelson Street, Nhill, as circulated to Councillors be taken as read and confirmed.

Attachments:

1. 2025 09 24 Council Meeting Minutes - MEDIA [4.1.1]
 2. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED - 2025 09 24 Council Meeting Minutes [4.1.2]
 3. 2025 10 15 Special Meeting Minutes - MEDIA [4.1.3]
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4.2 BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

Council Meeting	Recommendation Action	Action Taken	Complete / In Progress / Delayed
27 August 2025 Item 10.10	Submit application for Safer Local Road and Infrastructure Program to upgrade roads.	Application has been submitted.	Complete
24 September 2025 Item 10.1	Media release to be published on Council's website and posts to be scheduled on Council's Facebook page advising community of rate cap miscalculation.	Media release published on Council's website and Council's social media, advising of rate cap calculation.	Complete
24 September 2025 Item 10.2	Council Officers to notify Rainbow Progress Association of decision.	Council Officers have notified Rainbow Progress Association of decision.	Complete
24 September 2025 Item 10.6	Australia Day Awards Guidelines to be published on Council's website and Australia Day Awards for 2026 to be advertised.	Australia Day Awards Guidelines have been published on Council's website. Australia Day Awards for 2026 are currently open and will close at 5:00pm Friday 5 December 2025.	Complete
24 September 2025 Item 10.7	Council Officers to notify applicants of outcome for Regional Community Events Grants 2025/2026. Successful applicants and outcomes are to be promoted on Council's Facebook page, Council's newsletter and local newspapers.	Council officers have notified applicants of the outcome for Regional Community Events Grants 2025/2026. Successful applicants have been promoted on Council's Facebook page, Council's newsletter and in local newspapers.	Complete
24 September 2025 Item 10.8	Adopted policies to be published on Council's website. Draft Procurement Policy is to be published on Council's 'Have Your Say' page for community consultation.	Adopted policies have been published on Council's website. Draft Procurement Policy published on Council's 'Have Your Say' page for community consultation.	Complete
24 September 2025 Item 12.1	CEO to determine date for a Special Council meeting to consider the Annual Financial Report and Performance Statement.	The Special Council meeting date was confirmed by the CEO and held on Wednesday 15 October 2025.	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.

6 ACTIVITY REPORTS

COUNCILLOR AND CEO ACTIVITIES: 16 September 2025 – 20 October 2025

6.1 CR RON ISMAY, MAYOR

Date	Meeting/Event	Location	Comments
16-09-2025	Nhill Town Committee Meeting	Nhill	
17-09-2025	CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee Meeting	Nhill	
19-09-2025	Western Highway Action Group Meeting	Beaufort	
24-09-2025	Council Briefing and Council Meeting	Nhill, Council Chambers	
30-09-2025	WHAG Advocacy Submission Meeting	Nhill	
30-09-2025	Discussion with CEO	Nhill	
07-10-2025	Fire Readiness Information Session	Nhill	
09-10-2025	MAV Annual Conference	Melbourne	
09-10-2025	MAV Councillor Service Awards and Dinner	Melbourne	
10-10-2025	MAV State Council	Melbourne	
14-10-2025	Rainbow Show	Rainbow	
14-10-2025	Fire Readiness Information Session	Jeparit	
15-10-2025	Council Briefing and Special Council Meeting	Nhill, Council Chambers	
16-10-2025	Nhill Show	Nhill	
16-10-2025	Fire Readiness Information Session	Rainbow	
18-10-2025	Dimboola Show	Dimboola	

6.2 CR CHAN UOY, DEPUTY MAYOR

Date	Meeting/Event	Location	Comments
17-09-2025	CEO Employment & Remuneration Committee Meeting	Nhill, Council Chambers	
24-09-2025	Council Briefing and Council Meeting	Nhill, Council Chambers	
29-09-2025	Jeparit Community Presentation	Jeparit	Introduced the proposal for a Menzie's Symposium that would boost local pride and tourism.
01-10-2025	Hindmarsh Pride Committee Meeting	Online via Teams	First meeting and introductions.

6.3 CR ROGER AITKEN

Date	Meeting/Event	Location	Comments
16-09-2025	Wimmera Mallee Recreational Lakes Alliance	Birchip Community Leisure Centre	
17-09-2025	CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee Meeting	Nhill, Council Chambers	
24-09-2025	Council Briefing and Council Meeting	Nhill, Council Chambers	
25-09-2025	Yurunga Homestead Meeting	Rainbow	
07-10-2025	H5 Bird Flu, Pre-Readiness Online Seminar and Land Manager Information Session	Webinar (Online)	
08-10-2025	MAV Annual Conference	Melbourne	
08-10-2025	MAV Councillor Service Awards	Melbourne	
09-10-2025	MAV State Council	Melbourne	
15-10-2025	Rainbow Learning Group AGM	Rainbow	
15-10-2025	Council Briefing and Special Council Meeting	Nhill, Council Chambers	

15-10-2025	Rainbow and District Landcare AGM	Rainbow	
16-10-2025	WMPM, Future Events and Future Strategy	Online, via Teams	
16-10-2025	Fire Readiness Information Session	Rainbow	

6.4 CR ROSIE BARKER

Date	Meeting/Event	Location	Comments
16-09-2025	Calm Kids Research Grampians Health Deakin University	Online	Research on new model for mental health program implementation. Utilised involvement in relation to the MAV Wellness and Mental Health Advisory Role.
16-09-2025	Nhill Town Committee	Nhill, Council Chambers	Community focus groups building our future.
17-09-2025	Hindmarsh Shire Council Audit and Risk Committee Meeting	Nhill, Council Chambers	Met with Committee to review current audit and concerns raised by various members of committee and auditors.
17-09-2025	CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee Meeting	Nhill, Council Chambers	Meeting to review planned KPIs achievement and future planning to support CEO.
18-09-2025	Nhill Free Press	Hindmarsh Shire Council, Nhill Office	Discussions with Editor.
19-09-2025	VLGA Webinar Managing Conflicts of Interests	Online	Reviewing Local Government, Governance and Behaviours by Councillors in Victoria.
20-09-2025	Nhill Freemasons Masonic Lodge 140 Year Celebrations	Nhill Post Office	Wonderful gathering of Freemasons and community to celebrate a significant milestone.
20-09-2025	Nhill Freemason Masonic Lodge 140 Year Dinner Celebration	Nhill Farmers Arms	Gathering of community and Freemasons with reflections of the past 140 years of community involvement and participation. Spoke on behalf of Council to reflect and celebrate the involvement and collaboration across the decades.
21-09-2025	Nhill Lions Market	Jaypex Park, Nhill	Set up at the market and met with many members of the Nhill

			Community to hear their concerns or positive feedback.
29-09-2025	Karen Foster, Moyne Shire Mayor	Online	Mentoring meeting to reflect on processes occurring and my participation at Council.
07-10-2025	Nhill Fire Readiness Community Information Meeting	Nhill Memorial Community Centre	CFA, SES and Council staff attended, however no members of the Nhill community attended.
09-10-2025	MAV Annual Conference 'The Future is Local'	Melbourne	<p>My focus was on the Housing Innovation Summit. Separate Report submitted to Council.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Spotlight on how Council's are stepping up to support the development of new well-located homes, with Murrindindi Shire Mayor, Damian Gallagher, Moyne Shire Mayor, Karen Forster and Surf Coast Shire Mayor. 2. Advancing AI Innovation in Local Government. This session explored how AI can strengthen decision-making in statutory planning drawing on MAVLab's project. Address by Minister Harriet Shing, Minister for Housing and Building Victoria. 3. Exploring underutilized Public Land for Housing, discover approaches and policy insights to help Council's identify and activate overlooked public land for urgently needed housing solutions. 4. Expanding knowledge for Adaptive Reuse, learning how the transformation of underused Council buildings can deliver unique, place-responsive housing. 5. The Future is Local, a discussion about complexity and pressures on Local Government. Local Leadership must drive change. 6. Lasting Impact, Sally Capp and others reflected on leading bravely and speaking freely at Council.
09-10-2025	MAV Councillor Service Awards Dinner	Melbourne	Celebrated many Councillors who had worked for Local Government and Communities for many years.

10-10-2025	MAV State Council	Melbourne	Resolutions for MAV to work at State Government on behalf of Local Government.
15-10-2025	Council Briefing and Council Special Meeting	Nhill, Council Chambers	Attended Special Audit and Risk Committee meeting to recommend that Council approves in principle the audited Financial Report and Performance Statement. Endorsement from the Committee was delayed due to unresolved queries from the auditors and the Audit and Risk Committee. It must be appreciated the due diligence and thorough work that this committee does to ensure that the records and needs of our Shire are met.

6.5 CR JAMES BARRY

Date	Meeting/Event	Location	Comments
17-09-2025	Hindmarsh Shire Audit & Risk Committee Meeting	Nhill Council Chambers	
17-09-2025	CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee Meeting	Nhill Council Chambers	
23-09-2025	Special Audit & Risk Committee Meeting	Nhill Council Chambers	
01-10-2025	Heavy Transport & Freight Working Group Meeting	Nhill Council Chambers	Good to see Council working with farmers and business owners to open up local roads allowing heavier set ups and PBS truck set ups.
09-10-2025	Seniors Concert	Nhill Memorial Community Centre	Good event, put on by our Council and well supported by our seniors.
09-10-2025	Fire Readiness Community Information Evening	Dimboola Old Shire Hall	Lot's of information regarding up-and-coming fire season, lets all hope we never see a repeat of last fire season's events.
15-10-2025	Council Briefing and Council Special Meeting	Nhill, Council Chambers	Good to see Audit and Risk Committee happy with finalised report for the Special Council Meeting.

6.6 CR TONY CLARK

Date	Meeting/Event	Location	Comments
24-09-2025	Council Meeting	Online via Zoom	

6.7 MS MONICA REVELL, CEO

Date	Meeting/Event	Location	Comments
16-09-2025	Senior Management Team Meeting	Nhill	Meeting with Managers and Directors – Discussion regarding Council Plan 2025/2026 Actions.
16-09-2025	Nhill Town Committee Meeting	Online via Teams	
17-09-2025	Hindmarsh Shire Council Audit and Risk Committee Meeting	Online via Teams	
17-09-2025	CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee	Nhill	Interim review.
17-09-2025	Executive Leadership Meeting	Nhill	Meeting with Director Corporate & Community Services and Director Infrastructure Services.
18-09-2025	Internal Meetings	Nhill	Discussion regarding workforce plan, and pre-leave meeting with Director Corporate & Community Services (Acting CEO).
18-09-2025	Wimmera Southern Mallee Alliance Workshop	Online	Meeting with CEOs of Wimmera Southern Mallee Councils to discuss Terms of Reference and next steps for WSM Alliance.
19-09-2025 to 26-09-2025	Annual Leave		
29-09-2025	Internal Meetings	Nhill	Post leave meeting with Director Corporate & Community Services (Acting CEO).
29-09-2025	CEO Drop-In Session Jeparit	Jeparit	Discussion with 3 community members regarding various issues including uncontrolled dogs, trees, and old Jeparit Workshop to name a few items.
30-09-2025	Senior Management Team Meeting	Nhill	
30-09-2025	Meeting with Mayor	Nhill	

30-09-2025	Women's Health Grampians	Nhill	Meeting to meet new WHG CEO.
01-10-2025	Director Meeting	Nhill	Meeting with Director Infrastructure Services.
01-10-2025	Joint State / Local Government Monthly CEO Forum	Online	Monthly LGV / CEO Meeting.
01-10-2025	CEO Drop-In Session Nhill	Nhill	Discussion with 1 community member regarding appreciation of improved communication from Council.
01-10-2025	Hindmarsh Pride Committee Meeting	Online	First meeting of the new Hindmarsh Pride Committee.
02-10-2025	Internal Meetings	Nhill	Meetings in relation to Workforce Plan, Summer Uniform.
02-10-2025	Wimmera Southern Mallee Council Alliance CEOs Meeting	Online	Follow up meeting with CEOs to discuss WSM Alliance.
02-10-2025	School Holiday Movie	Nhill	Assisted welcoming attendees at School Holiday Movie. Over 130 people in attendance.
03-10-2025	CEO Drop-In Session Rainbow	Rainbow	Discussion with 1 community member regarding pothole issues in Railway Street Rainbow.
03-10-2025	CEO Drop-In Session Dimboola	Dimboola	
06-10-2025	Internal Meetings	Online	Director Meetings.
07-10-2025	Senior Management Team Meeting	Online	Meeting to discuss projects, issues and movements of SMT.
07-10-2025	Psychosocial Hazards Presentation	Online	Presentation by Maddocks on new Psychosocial legislation that comes into effect on 1 December 2025.
08-10-2025 to 12-10-2025	Melbourne Business School – Women in Senior Leadership Course	Melbourne	An absolutely inspiring 5 day course with senior women from across government and private sectors covering areas specific to women in senior leadership roles including – building teams; building trust; resilience and wellbeing; leadership presence; power and influence; strategic narrative; and mindful leadership.
14-10-2025	GWM Tourism Preboard Meeting	Online	Meeting with GWM Tourism CEO & WSM CEOs to discuss upcoming GWM Tourism Board Meeting reports.

14-10-2025	Senior Management Team Meeting	Online	Meeting with GWM Tourism CEO & WSM CEOs to discuss upcoming GWM Tourism Board Meeting reports.
14-10-2025	Director Meeting	Nhill	Meeting with Director Infrastructure Services
14-10-2025	DEECA Meeting	Online	Meeting with DEECA to discuss opportunities or issues in relation to managing public land.
14-10-2025	Fire Readiness Community Information Evening Session Jeparit	Jeparit	Collaboration with CFA to deliver fire readiness information in the lead up to the fire season.
15-10-2025	DTF Digital & AI Program – Council Information Session	Online	Meeting regarding DTF Digital and AI Stream of Business Acceleration Fund, and discussion regarding collaboration.
15-10-2025	Council Briefing & Special Council Meeting	Nhill, Council Chambers	
16-10-2025	DTP Meeting	Online	Meeting with DTP Regional Director Michael Bailey regarding current contract.
17-10-2025	Wimmera Southern Mallee Development Meeting	Online	Meeting with Chris Souness regarding Settlement Services in Hindmarsh Shire.
17-10-2025	GWM Tourism Board Meeting	Pomonal	
20-10-2025	MAV CEOs Meeting	Online	Meeting hosted by MAV to update CEOs on a range of topics.
20-10-2025	Internal Meeting	Nhill	Meeting with Director Infrastructure Services
20-10-2025	Wimmera Southern Mallee Council Alliance CEOs Meeting	Online	Meeting to discuss Wimmera Southern Mallee Council Alliance.

7 CORRESPONDENCE

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer

Introduction:

The following correspondence is attached for noting by Council.

Inwards:

- 2025/09/25 - Sharon and Jason Bone to Councillors re Seeking Support and Continued Advocacy Against ESVF – Attachment Number: 7.1.1
- 2025/10/07 - Moorabool Shire Council to Council re EPA Clean Up and Illegal Dumping Summit – Attachment Number: 7.1.2
- 2025/10/12 - Big Desert Dingo Research to Council re Letter to Minister for Agriculture – Attachment Number: 7.1.3

Outwards:

- 2025/10/03 - Council to Alison Bouchier re Seeking Support and Continued Advocacy Against ESVF – Attachment Number: 7.1.4
- 2025/10/03 - Council to Sharon and Jason Bone re Seeking Support and Continued Advocacy Against ESVF – Attachment Number: 7.1.5
- 2025/10/09 - Council to Cr Tony Clark re Request for Leave of Absence – Attachment Number: 7.1.6
- 2025/10/10 - Council to Dierdre Stringer re Wimmera Mallee Pioneer Museum Volunteer Membership – Attachment Number: 7.1.7
- 2025/10/10 - Council to Nicole Pert re Wimmera Mallee Pioneer Museum Volunteer Membership – Attachment Number: 7.1.8
- 2025/10/17 - Council to Graham Grinter re Wimmera Mallee Pioneer Museum Volunteer Membership – Attachment Number: 7.1.9

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council notes the attached correspondence.

8 ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLOR RECORDS

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer

Attachments:

1. 2025 09 24 Assembly of Councillors Record [8.1.1]
2. 2025 10 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.

9 PLANNING PERMITS

No planning permits.

10 REPORTS REQUIRING A DECISION

10.1 ANNUAL REPORT 2024/2025

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer

Attachments:

1. Annual Report 2024-2025 [10.1.1]

Executive Summary:

This report presents the Hindmarsh Shire Council Annual Report 2024/2025. The Annual Report is a requirement under the *Local Government Act 2020* and contains a report on Council's operations, the audited performance statement, and audited financial statements.

The Annual Report provides an opportunity to review the previous financial year, celebrate the achievements of Council and the community, and acknowledge some of the challenges collectively faced in 2024/2025. It details Council's performance against the commitments as set out in the Council Plan 2021–2025 and provides an analysis of financial performance against the 2024/2025 budget.

Some key achievements from 2024/2025 include:

- Improvements in community satisfaction across the areas of community consultation, advocacy, making community decisions, customer service and overall performance and direction.
- The completion of 713 Customer Action Requests, including work tickets relating to roads, footpaths, drains, and other infrastructure.
- 11,668 attendees at Hindmarsh Outdoor Pools
- Completion and near completion of key community infrastructure projects like Davis Park, the Rainbow Silo Development Project, Rainbow Rises Events Centre, and the Nhill and Dimboola Kindergartens on school sites.

The Annual Report 2024/2025 will be published on Council's website and made available in hardcopy format at our Libraries and Customer Service Centres.

Discussion:

Council has a statutory responsibility under the *Local Government Act 2020 (the Act)* to prepare an Annual Report in respect of each financial year, containing a report on its operations, audited performance statement, audited financial statements, and any other matter required by the Local Government Planning and Reporting Regulations.

Under section 100 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council must consider the annual report within 4 months of the end of the financial year. The Annual Report for the year ended 30 June 2025 has been prepared, providing a comprehensive overview of Council's activities for the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025. The report includes achievements in

respect of a range of projects, services, and assets managed and financial performance for the year ended 30 June 2025.

Some key achievements included in the Annual Report 2024/2025 include:

- The completion of 713 Customer Action Requests, including work tickets relating to roads, footpaths, drains and other infrastructure.
- 7,754 physical items borrowed from Hindmarsh Shire Libraries
- 11,668 attendees at Hindmarsh Outdoor Pools
- 14 residents became Australia Citizens
- 23 Planning Permits issued
- Completion and near completion of key community infrastructure projects like Davis Park, the Rainbow Silo Development Project, Rainbow Rises Events Centre and the Nhill and Dimboola Kindergartens on school sites.
- Notable increases in visitation to Dimboola, Jeparit and Rainbow Holiday Parks (no data from Nhill in 2023/2024 as Council did not directly operate), increasing Council's revenue and financial sustainability.
- Significant outputs from the Grampians Wimmera Mallee Tourism Visitor Economy Partnership.

The report is intended as a point of reference for Council, staff, residents, local businesses, community organisations and government departments.

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 relating to this decision.

Risk Management Implications:

Strategic Risk Description	Risk Management Discussion
Governance	The Annual Report summarises the governance and financial performance of Council over the preceding 12 months. This is a requirement under the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> , so doing so meets legislative obligations, but it also promotes transparency and ensures that key information about Council's operations is publicly available.

Relevant Legislation:

Local Government Act 2020

Community Engagement:

Community engagement is not required in preparation of the Annual Report, however the final document will be made publicly available and advertised via local media and Council platforms.

Gender Equality Implications:

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

Confidential Declaration:

Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest:

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

Officer Responsible – Monica Revell, Chief Executive Officer

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

Author – Petra Croot, Director Corporate and Community Services

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

Communications Strategy:

The Annual Report 2024/2025 will be publicised via local newspapers, Council's social media pages, publications and published on Council's website. Copies will also be made available at Council's Customer Service Centres and Libraries.

Next Steps:

Council Officers to publish the Annual Report 2024/2025 in line with the Communications Strategy.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council receives the Hindmarsh Shire Council Annual Report 2024/2025.

10.2 QUARTERLY COUNCIL PLAN ACTIONS UPDATE - Q1 2025/2026

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer

Attachments:

Nil

Executive Summary:

This report presents Council with an update on the progress of items identified in the Council Plan Action Plan for delivery in the 2025/2026 financial year. Annually, Council adopts an Action Plan that aids in the achievement of the objectives within the Council Plan 2025-2029. The actions correspond to the themes identified in the Council Plan:

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

Q1 covers 1 July to 30 September 2025, with actions against each item detailed with a progress indicator.

Key achievements in quarter one include:

- The completion and opening of the Wimmera River Discovery Trail
- Preparation of the draft Asset Management Plan
- 17 new suppliers added to the Panel of Preferred Suppliers following a tender process
- Adoption of a Sponsorship and Donation policy

Discussion:

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

Council Plan Actions 2025-2026		Q1 Update	Q1 % Progress
Theme 1 Our Community			
1.1 Our Community is active, healthy and connected			
Create and maintain shared spaces			
Complete the Centenary Park projects as part of the Nhill Streetscape Masterplan	The concrete path and fencing component have been completed. The project will now be managed by the Community Wellbeing team who will liaise with the community on any additional works.		90%
Assist the Rainbow Trailblazers with the establishment of a bike track	Council approval has been given to the managing group to commence project works		25%

Council Plan Actions 2025-2026	Q1 Update	Q1 % Progress
Complete and officially open the Wimmera River Discovery Trail	The Wimmera River Discovery Trail was officially opened in September, with final markers being installed during Oct 2025 following user feedback.	90%
Review the Youth Strategy, including a plan for sustainable regular out-of-school hours activities that promote use of public facilities and reserves	The Youth Strategy 2025-2029 has been drafted and will be presented to Council for endorsement and adoption in Q2.	80%
Provide accessible programs for all ages and abilities		
Continually diversify the resources, activities and services provided by libraries to be innovative, inclusive and meeting community need – focus year 1: Cultural Diversity	Library purchasing profiles are designed to accommodate a broad and inclusive selection for members and community. NAIDOC week was celebrated with displays of relevant materials available for loan. Hindmarsh Shire Libraries provides Mango Languages- a learning program for a variety of languages, available for free with a library membership.	25%
Adopt a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy	Initial research has commenced, with the draft projected to be presented to Council in Q2-Q3.	10%
Through the FFVLGP, work with local sporting clubs to improve participation rates for women and girls	FFV posters have been installed in local sporting clubs, with Council staff continuing to liaise with representatives to collaborate on future projects.	10%
Youth events and school holiday activities are inclusive and free for all to participate	Ongoing – September/October School holiday program delivered, with the next youth event being a movie night, followed by formal at the end of year.	Ongoing
Support local events that bring people together		15.00%
Collaborate with Luv-a-Duck on a regional festival	Ongoing conversations have been held between Hindmarsh and Luv-a-Duck regarding festival.	10%
Deliver bi-monthly movies at the Nhill Cinema that are targeted at adults	Downton Abbey The Grand Finale screened, and the documentary Seen is slated to be screened in Q2.	Ongoing
Audit commonly used Council-managed spaces and facilities to ensure that relevant amenities and services are maintained to provide accessibility for all	Buildings condition audit undertaken by external contractors provides detailed maintenance requirement in buildings. Currently addressing high priority maintenance tasks. The routine audit will be undertaken in Q3.	30%
Ongoing Regional Community Events Grants Program, Fee Waiver Policy	Fee Waiver and Reduction Policy adopted 24 September 2025. Regional Community Events Grants awarded.	Ongoing

Council Plan Actions 2025-2026	Q1 Update	Q1 % Progress
and reduced fees for Council Facilities Hire for community groups.		
1.2 Our towns are inclusive, welcoming and growing		
Attract new residents and encourage multicultural inclusion		
Commence drafting New Residents Guides for the Shire and specific localities	Not yet commenced.	0%
Participate in Careers Expos within the region that attract young workers to the Shire	Not yet commenced.	0%
Develop calendar of key events that activities that are important to our CALD community in, collaboration with residents	Not yet commenced.	0%
Deliver activities contained in the Cultural Inclusion Review	No additional activities this quarter. Many actions from the review have been implemented in previous periods.	0%
Invest in liveability and town planning		
Review Hindmarsh Council's Local Laws and consider amendments that encourage innovative living options	Review in progress, to be presented to Council in October 2025.	30%
Complete the Safer Local Roads Project in MacPherson Street, Nhill	The project has commenced with the path connection and outstand completed on northern side.	30%
Strengthen ties between towns through events and shared goals		
Review Council Grant Guidelines and amend to encourage cross-community collaboration	This has not commenced in Q1, but a list of proposed alterations has been prepared by Council Officers.	10%
Host an annual Town Committee/Progress Association Summit that brings together volunteers from across the Shire to collaborate and plan for the year	Not yet commenced.	0%
Offer transport options between towns for major Council-run events	Council will be hosting the Seniors Concert in October with transport available from Rainbow, Jeparit and Dimboola to Nhill. A men's bus tour is also being organised for October with transport from Nhill, Dimboola, Jeparit and Rainbow.	25%
Showcase new lifestyle and development possibilities		
Create a webpage on Council's website for developers to access information on Council's development opportunities and processes	Due diligence planning is underway, meeting held to discuss options and themes.	10%

Council Plan Actions 2025-2026	Q1 Update	Q1 % Progress
Draft policy and procedure for showcasing completed/approved subdivisions on Council's channels to establish Council as pro-development	Due diligence planning is underway, meeting held to discuss options and themes, this work will be completed in coordination with the webpage.	10%
Increase Council publications around service providers, including WWHS, aged care, early years and long-daycare centres	Council has shared Emerge Early Years employment opportunities and Open Days for Kinder and Long Day Care for 2026. We've also promoted WWHS Cancer Support Sessions.	50%
1.3 Our community can access services when and where they need them		
Collaborate with regional partners and networks to achieve greater impact through collective effort		
Develop a draft Political Engagement Plan, identifying key contacts and priorities for advocacy	Draft commenced in Q1.	10%
Develop a schedule of meetings between Councillors and regional partners and networks to ensure connection and collaboration	We have multiple invitations scheduled for upcoming briefing sessions until the end of 2025.	Ongoing
Engage and work with Barengi Gadjin Land Council on projects within our Shire	A meeting was held between Hindmarsh Shire CEO and BGLC Local Government Liaison Officer and RSA Implementation Manager. Hindmarsh Shire will be hosting the BGLC Local Government forum in Dimboola in October.	Ongoing
Explore flexible and innovative services		
Undertake a scoping plan for unstaffed access to Hindmarsh Outdoor Pools	Initial quotes for new gates with card access system have been sought for consideration in the 2026/2027 budget.	15%
Complete service reviews for Local Laws, Hindmarsh Outdoor Pools, Customer Service and Libraries, Planning and Building	The template for completion of reviews is currently being developed to ensure a consistent approach across the organisation for service reviews.	15%
Adopt a Generative AI Policy	An operational generative AI Policy has been endorsed by the Audit and Risk Committee and is undergoing staff engagement at the end of Q1. This is scheduled for CEO adoption at the start of Q2.	75%
Ensure community needs shape future service planning		
Develop a project management framework that best positions Council to succeed in applications for grants for community-identified projects	Research requirements undertaken. Collation of proposed documentation commenced for framework development. PMF Audit scheduled for October	20%

Council Plan Actions 2025-2026	Q1 Update	Q1 % Progress
Leverage RCCC to begin implementing a CRM, incorporating complaints management	Not yet commenced. Current RCCC project is the SOE and implementation of CRM is dependent on cluster program timing.	0%
Develop a Service Promotion Plan that sets out when key services will be promoted, explained and reviewed	Not yet commenced. Social Media plan has been developed that identified timing of key communications.	10%
Review Advocacy Strategy in preparation for the 2026 State Election	Advocacy projects included in Council Plan 2025-2029. Wimmera Southern Mallee Council Alliance will be working together to prepare a region-specific advocacy document for the 2026/2027 State Government budget and 2026 State Government Election.	25%
Theme 2 Built and Natural Environment		
2.1 We care for and connect with our natural environment		
Complete and promote walking and cycling trail networks		
Install signage for the Wimmera River Discovery Trail	Trail signage has been installed and continues to be improved through user feedback. Final signage, e.g. private property signs, to be installed in October 2025.	90%
Create a portfolio of media showcasing cycling and walking trails, to utilise on Council platforms	To be initiated Q2.	10%
Investigate viability of Council supporting Park Run establishment in Jeparit, Rainbow and Dimboola	Not yet commenced.	0%
Maintain and enhance recreational spaces		
Complete Masterplans for the Dimboola Recreation Reserve, Davis Park Precinct and Jeparit Riverbank Tennis Court / Caravan Park Precinct	RFQ is progress for consultant to deliver project.	20%
Complete the Davis Park Changeroom and Tiered Seating upgrades	The final works are occurring as of end of Q1. Seating is to be installed by mid-October. Project to be completed by end of October	90%
Commence Dimboola Swimming Pool accessibility upgrade and wet deck	Pool wall concrete testing completed and at lab for analysis. Site survey and Geotech report to be organised in Q2.	10%
Support environmental tourism and stewardship		
Update Council's website to link to existing information around birdwatching opportunities within the Shire	Initial works commenced on locations, Landcare facilitator working on information page on councils Landcare section of the Website	20%
Advocate for the re-opening of the Little Desert National Park and	Hindmarsh Shire CEO spoke with Parks Victoria in August in relation to Horseshoe Bend reopening in time for	Ongoing

Council Plan Actions 2025-2026	Q1 Update	Q1 % Progress
continued investment in its tourism opportunities	September / October school holidays. Council promoted Parks Victoria opportunity for community members to view the works being undertaken and impact from the January 2025 Bushfire. Council also shared Parks Victoria information on the reopening of sections of the Little Desert prior to the September/October school holidays.	
Advocate for appropriate management of trees on and in the Wimmera River	Ongoing.	Ongoing
Manage wild animals and invasive weeds on Council owned and managed land to maintain ecological balance and protect local diversity		
Engage with WWAG, Landcare and other pertinent community groups to attend briefings and talk to Councillors and Council about what they see is required in this area	WWAG attended a briefing session in August.	30%
Design the Roadside Pests and Weed Management Plan in collaboration Landcare groups	Engagement with all Landcare groups has been done and ongoing communications continue. All of Council's RWPP will be live for community to see on POZI.	50%
Publish education material to support property owners to 'do their bit' to manage pests and weeds	Ongoing	10%
2.2 Our infrastructure supports liveability and resilience		
Focus on maintenance that priorities function for our farming network		
Host sessions with stakeholders and farmers that identify and resolve issues and opportunities relating to local agricultural road networks	Heavy Transport and Freight Working Group scheduled on 1 October 2025 and to be held on a quarterly basis.	20%
Ongoing inspections and maintenance of road and footpath networks to meet the requirement set in Road Management Plan	Ongoing inspections undertaken as per Council's inspection regime.	75%
Adopt the Asset Management Plan	The Asset Plan is to go to the October Council meeting for adoption following community consultation during September 2025.	70%
Invest in essential infrastructure that supports our townships and agricultural industries		
Leverage the Road Management Plan to identify key footpaths used by our ageing community, and develop and communicate a maintenance plan	The footpath section replacement program is ongoing. These are the sections identified during RMP inspection.	30%
Maintain the condition of existing road infrastructure within the municipality by prioritising capital investment on renewal over new and upgrade projects (ongoing)	The capital works program has commenced. Shoulder resheet program is 95% completed. One resheet completed and gravel carted to future projects.	10%

Council Plan Actions 2025-2026	Q1 Update	Q1 % Progress
Complete the Jeparit Weir Feasibility Study	Feasibility Study is almost complete however scope of works is likely expanding to include design for new Weir.	75%
Plan for climate resilience and risk mitigation		
Work with key community, government and emergency management stakeholders to build community capacity and resilience to support response and recovery	Council is working with other agencies at MEMPC meeting to build emergency management capabilities. Working with WEMT to review MEMP and MFMP. Completed the review of Victorian Fire Risk Register - Bushfire on 29/09/2025. Provided assistance to single incident house fire.	30%
Deliver a communications campaign in the lead-up to summer to educate about emergency planning, vulnerable persons and keeping informed	Council has promoted its Free Green Waste month to encourage residents to tidy up their properties, along with CFA Fire Ready tips on how to prepare for the Fire season.	80%
Implement activities from the Climate Adaption Strategy	Communications planning commenced for Fire Danger Period and Fire Readiness workshops scheduled, in collaboration with CFA. An additional Fire Readiness Guide to be prepared for Nhill.	Ongoing
2.3 We support development that enhances needs-based growth		
Engage with developers, community stakeholders, and Traditional Owners to ensure inclusive, well-planned growth		
Meet with representatives from Traditional Owners Groups to improve understanding of Cultural Heritage Overlays and Cultural Heritage Management Planning	In the planning phase, gathering information and reviewing approach.	5%
Host information sessions regarding subdivision, shed construction and re-zoning	This will follow the website improvements that are currently underway.	0%
Enable housing that is more flexible, sustainable and affordable		
Promote and enable subdivision opportunities in central areas of townships	This will follow the website improvements that are currently underway..	0%
Seek funding to undertake Settlement Strategy within the municipality	Meetings held with Regional Planning Partnerships and Regional Planning Services to discuss processes and actions.	10%
Refine anomalies amendment for implementation into Planning Scheme	Meetings held with Regional Planning Partnerships, refinement of anomalies is partially complete, some more are proposed to be added to the list, information and justification is being sought for these new properties.	25%

Council Plan Actions 2025-2026	Q1 Update	Q1 % Progress
Invest in essential infrastructure upgrades that support new housing developments and population growth		
Investigate cost-effective ways to upgrade Council infrastructure to support housing developments	Research into Developer Infrastructure Bonds and Developer Contributions is being undertaken.	10%
Theme 3 Competitive and Innovative Economy		
3.1 Our local businesses are supported to grow		
Reduce red tape and simplify planning and business approval processes through engagement with current and future applicants		
Produce simple fact sheets on starting a hospitality business, the planning process, and other relevant topics	Environmental Health staff currently updating their public info for Website. Flyers will be created once information has been updated	20%
Develop business workshop plan for year 2 that covers budgeting, forecasting, finance and procurement	Not yet commenced. Council has had initial discussions with West Vic Business to see if there is a way to leverage the relationship.	0%
Support local procurement and small business networks		
Review the Procurement Policy and amend to strengthen local supply provisions	The Procurement Policy has been reviewed in Q1, with the draft endorsed by Council and the consultation period scheduled to end in Q2.	75%
Finalise the additional Goods and Services Panel of Suppliers supporting applications from local businesses	Panel complete, awaiting final signed documentation from 4 of 17 Suppliers	90%
Publish 'shop local' campaigns in the lead up to Christmas, to encourage people to purchase gifts locally	Not yet commenced.	0%
Encourage entrepreneurship and innovation		
Encourage and support community co-op entrepreneurship	Council is aware of a potential community project in Jeparit and is anticipating that advice and support may be requested at a later date as the project progresses.	5%
Develop a briefing document that considers use of the former Mechanics Workshop in Jeparit as a community co-op	Initial planning by Jeparit Community commenced. Discussions to continue as the project develops.	10%
3.2 We attract investment that aligns with community values		
Promote regional strengths and investment readiness		
Partner with GWMT to deliver LAAP for Hindmarsh	Council is working with GWMT to review actions and plan next steps.	10%
Explore joint ventures and development incentives		
Commence working on a briefing piece that considers Council's potential involvement in joint ventures	Not yet commenced.	0%
Support development that reflects local character		

Council Plan Actions 2025-2026	Q1 Update	Q1 % Progress
Welcoming developers with an interest in creating retirement villages or diverse home developments that fit within town planning and community needs for new residents	Discussion has been held with one developer about current and future housing needs.	10%
3.3 We advocate for and support diverse and innovative industries		
Be leaders in positive change that creates investment in the direction of our community		
Support activities and training with staff that encourages innovation and creative thinking for community benefit	Not yet commenced.	0%
Deliver actions within the Economic Development Strategy	Numerous items in the Economic Development Strategy commenced. The Industrial Land report is underway, estimated to be completed in Q2.	Ongoing
Explore community social enterprise opportunities and philanthropy		
Develop a briefing document that considers use of the former Mechanics Workshop in Jeparit as a community co-op	Initial planning by Jeparit Community commenced. Discussions to continue as the project develops.	10%
Plan an information session for community members on what social enterprise opportunities could be possible within the Shire	Not yet commenced.	0%
Consider amending the Fees and Charges section of Council's budget or review fee-based policies to support access to Council spaces for this purpose	This will commence during the budget preparation period in Q2-3. No Policies have been reviewed for this purpose in this period.	60%
Foster industry collaboration and innovation		
Identify networks of like businesses and industries, and explore options for collaboration, connection and innovation	Initial identification of sectors, professional services, tourism etc undertaken. Investigating cost of Business Directory add on to website.	40%
Expand farmer consultations to include industry collaboration opportunities relating to shared goals and issues	Not yet commenced.	0%
Showcase our history to create rich visitor experiences		
Develop action plan to implement the Wimmera Mallee Pioneer Museum Masterplan	Curator engaged for a small portion of the curation at the museum, likely Werrap Hall. Additional signage and story boards to be delivered during 2025/2026.	20%
Develop priority projects list for Yurunga and WMPM to be considered for project scoping	Priorities received from both groups. Council to consider and plan delivery of possible works within budget.	20%
Support community efforts to deliver Heritage events, such as the Nhill Heritage Weekend	Council Officers are working with Event Organisers to ensure events are managed and have the required permits.	15%

Council Plan Actions 2025-2026	Q1 Update	Q1 % Progress
Theme 4 Good Governance and Financial Sustainability		
4.1 We are a transparent and responsive organisation		
Provide regular updates on Council decisions and actions		
Continue with the regular newsletters and social media posts that are communicated in plain language	Council has circulated two quarterly newsletters to all properties in Hindmarsh, published 3 monthly newsletters, circulated 7 e-newsletters and published/shared 190 posts on Council's Facebook Page.	Ongoing
Promote our services, projects and activities throughout their lifecycle	We've provided regular updates on our projects throughout the process. This includes Rainbow Silo Art Tourism Development, Davis Park Grandstand and Change Rooms, Macpherson Street Crossing in Nhill, to name a few.	Ongoing
Mayor to record a short summary following a Council meeting to be published online	To commence in Q2.	0%
Improve follow-up systems and response times		
Commence implementation of CRM	Until CRM program selected and enabled through RCCC partnership, unable to begin implementation.	10%
Undertake Complaints Handling training with the Victorian Ombudsman	Will be undertaken in early Q3 due to availability.	10%
Review the Customer Service Charter	Review currently underway	20%
Increase use of autoreplies after contact is made across generic email addresses, linking to key information available for that service area	Autoreplies currently set up on info@hindmarsh and hr@hindmarsh email addresses.	20%
Share decision-making processes in plain language		
Ensure communication is transparent, even when the news is bad	Council has recently had a miscalculation with our rate cap calculations for 2025/26. Council has been transparent with the community throughout the whole process publishing 2 media releases (one as soon as the miscalculation was identified, and one following Council endorsement of rectification measures).	Ongoing
Improve Have Your Say Hindmarsh processes to ensure project information is updated and published after a decision is made	The outcome of each consultation is added to the Have Your Say website once a decision has been made by Council and Officers.	Ongoing
Update and adopt the Hindmarsh Shire Council Governance Rules	Officers are in initial stages of reviewing the Governance Rules, and are currently seeking an update on the planned release date for the Model Governance Rules to avoid duplication.	10%

Council Plan Actions 2025-2026	Q1 Update	Q1 % Progress
4.2 We engage our community with respect and openness		
Build capacity in staff and Councillors for engagement		
Undertake authentic engagement training as part of the annual Councillor Professional Development training	External provider booked for training delivery in Q2.	10%
Support staff in undertaking de-escalation and managing difficult conversations training	Not yet commenced.	0%
Review the Community Engagement Policy to ensure communication is clear around the outcomes that can and cannot be influenced by the engagement process	Not yet commenced.	0%
Deliver Free from Violence/Primary Prevention Training with staff and Councillors	Staff training completed. Councillor training scheduled for December 2025.	75%
Be present at community events and spaces		
Councillors to demonstrate availability and engagement in activity reports	Activity reports published as part of Council Agenda along with Councillor out and about Facebook posts.	Ongoing
Support Councillor and Executive staff attendance at community markets	Councillors and Executive staff have attended various markets throughout the Shire in both formal and informal capacity. Cr Barker hosts listening post at Nhill Market.	Ongoing
Create a calendar of community events and identify a Council representative who is best positioned to attend	Not yet commenced.	
Publish a Councillor Out and About post to complement Councillors in activity reports	A Councillor Out and About post has been published on Facebook and in newsletters in August and September.	Ongoing
Use varied channels to reach diverse groups		
Explore a partnership with local schools to enable Council content to be published in school newsletters	Council has recently promoted Lifeguard positions in School Newsletters and will continue to request relevant content be included.	Ongoing
Contact key businesses, organisations and community groups to ensure that they can subscribe to Council communications	Not yet commenced.	0%
4.3 We manage our resources responsibly and strategically		
Explore revenue streams beyond rates		
Complete the Industrial Land business case	In progress, expected to be completed in Q2 2025.	50%
Ensure processes enable effective use of developer contributions	Initial planning underway, not formally commenced.	5%
Develop a Sponsorships and Donations Policy that enables private investment in community events and initiatives	Completed - Adopted 24 September 2025.	100%

Council Plan Actions 2025-2026	Q1 Update	Q1 % Progress
Report annually on Hindmarsh Holiday Parks revenue and investment to grow patronage	Will undertake initial review of 2024/2025 year in Q2	0%
Prioritise spending aligned with community goals		
Improve internal systems for prioritising completion of existing projects within community expectations, and communicate transparently about delays	Project Management Framework Audit commencing mid to late October 2025. This will support improvement in this service area.	10%
Develop the Workforce Plan to account for the implementation of the Council Plan	In progress, due for completion in Q2.	50%
Review, amend and adopt the Hindmarsh Shire Council Procurement Policy	The Procurement Policy has been reviewed in Q1, with consultation scheduled to be completed in Q2.	80%
Report clearly on how much money is spent and what value it delivers		
Review the Revenue and Rating Plan in accordance with the Local Government Act and present to Council for adoption by 30 June 2026	Not yet commenced.	0%
Develop simple guides to financial reporting information that includes graphs and images to community budget and rating information to the community	Not yet commenced.	0%
Publish information that explains how Council projects are funded, including own-source and grant-funded projects	Whenever Council provides project updates, we include a spiel about how the project was funded and who by.	40%
Advocacy Priorities		
Sports and recreation reserves and facilities that meet community need		
Davis Park precinct project completion	The Grandstand and tiered seating at Davis Park is expected to be completed in October. The development of the Masterplan will determine priority projects, but Council continues to advocate for a new community facility.	
Lighting upgrades at high-use ovals	To be considered under the Country Football Netball Program following the completion of Masterplans for Davis Park and Dimboola Recreation Reserve.	
Masterplans for key sporting precincts	Council received funding to complete Master plans at Davis Park, Dimboola Recreation Reserve and Jeparit Tennis Club / Caravan Park precinct.	
Improved and protected rail network and crossings		
Improved access to the rail line for grain receipt and transport sites	Hindmarsh Shire CEO continues to meet with GrainCorp and Rail Freight Alliance to discuss improved rail access.	

Council Plan Actions 2025-2026	Q1 Update	Q1 % Progress
Improved level crossings, including upgrading High Street, Dimboola, to improve safety for pedestrians and vehicles and be all-abilities friendly	Hindmarsh Shire CEO advocated for High Street Dimboola, Roy Street Jeparit, Railway Street Rainbow, and Davis Avenue Nhill to be included in the Rail Freight Strategic Plan for upgrades to crossing.	
Recreational water protection		
Replacement of Jeparit Weir	Ongoing discussions with WCMA, DEECA and EMV for funding to replace Jeparit Weir.	
Commitment for water retention at Lake Hindmarsh and along the Wimmera River.	No update in Q1.	
Funding to enhance tourism opportunities at the Jeparit Weir Pool	Ongoing - speaking to RDV and other funding bodies about possible grant in pipeline.	
Sustainable Local Government funding model that supports key infrastructure renewal		
Fair allocation of Federal Assistance Grants and settling of the Rate Cap	Council continues to advocate through MAV, RCV and meetings with Ministers for increased Federal Assistance Grants and setting of Rate Cap that reflects actual cost escalations on Council.	
Fair State Government levies	Council continues to advocate through MAV, RCV and meetings with Ministers for fair state government levies - including the Emergency Services and Volunteer Fund being reviewed and collected by the State.	
Grant co-contributions that Council can afford	Council continues to advocate for consideration of the small rate revenue in Rural Councils and inability to meet the grant co-contribution requirements.	
Public amenities that support our diverse community		
Mecca all-abilities amenities	Council continues to advocate for all-abilities amenities at Rainbow MECCA through election requests.	
Changing Places facilities in key locations	No update in Q1.	
Safer local roads		
Reduced speed limits in central business districts and high pedestrian areas, like schools, that keep pedestrians safe	Dimboola speed reduction application submitted, and letter send to minister for Roads and Road Safety. Nhill speed reduction approved and to be completed in January 2026. Rainbow Speed reduction completed in 2025.	
Increased funding for road maintenance and upgrades	Council continues to advocate for increased funding for road maintenance and upgrades. Applications have been submitted for	

Council Plan Actions 2025-2026	Q1 Update	Q1 % Progress
	Dimboola Minyip Road and Lorquon Road.	
Affordable and appropriate services for children and parents		
Early years centre at the Rainbow P-12 site	Hindmarsh Shire CEO continue to advocate for a new Early Years facilities in Rainbow. In July Early Childhood Australia CEO, By-Five and Hindmarsh Shire CEO visited Rainbow P-12 and Jeparit Primary School to discuss opportunities for new funding models / trials to support establishing new Yearly Years facilities and childcare in both towns.	
Childcare in Rainbow and Jeparit	Same as above.	
Equitable access to education, paediatrics and other family services	Hindmarsh Shire CEO continues to meet regularly with By-Five.	
Health and aged care services that are comprehensive and accessible		
Providing local access to specialists and treatments that don't disadvantage the community through distance	No update in Q1. Mental health opportunities considered in draft Youth Strategy and Sport and Recreation Strategy.	
Greater access to aged care and at-home support services	No update in Q1.	
Communities that feel heard where State and Federal decisions impact them		
Meaningful engagement with communities around State levies and charges that are collected through Councils	Hindmarsh Shire CEO continues to hold CEO Drop-in sessions to speak with community members about operational matters and answer questions regarding State levies and Council charges. Information was included in the annual rates notice explaining all charges. Council also published a Facebook post providing information on the ESVF.	
Consultation with agricultural communities around the management of national parks that border farmland	Farmer consultation sessions to be planned for February 2026.	
A workforce that meets the needs of a growing region		
Advocate with stakeholders about attracting and retaining skilled professionals in priority sectors	Ongoing	
Contribute to the mapping of future workforce needs across industries	Ongoing	
Promote the region as a place to live and work	Ongoing	

Link to Council Plan:

Theme Four: Good Governance and Financial Sustainability

4.1 We are a transparent and responsive organisation.

Financial Implications:

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

Risk Management Implications:

Strategic Risk Description	Risk Management Discussion
Financial Sustainability Governance	<p>The preparation of the Council Plan, incorporating the Health and Wellbeing Plan and Community Vision, is a statutory requirement.</p> <p>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.</p>

Relevant Legislation:

Local Government Act 2020

Gender Equality Act 2020

Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008

Community Engagement:

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

Gender Equality Implications:

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

Confidential Declaration:

Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest:

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

Officer Responsible – Monica Revell, Chief Executive Officer

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

Author – Petra Croot, Director Corporate and Community Services

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

Communications Strategy:

The Council Plan Actions Q1 Update will be published via a media release to ensure that the information is available to the community.

Next Steps:

Council officers to continue implementation of the Council Plan Actions 2025/2026.

RECOMMENDATION:

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

10.3 QUARTERLY FINANCE REPORT - Q1 - SEPTEMBER 2025

Responsible Officer: Director Corporate and Community Services

Attachments:

1. Financial Report for the period ending 30 September 2025 [**10.3.1**]

Executive Summary:

The Financial Report for the first quarter of the 2025/2026 financial year has been prepared, including explanations of variances where applicable. The content of financial reporting to Council summarises Council's financial health and shows how financial performance is tracking against the budget, highlighting any risks faced and providing information on any other relevant issues from that quarter.

As at 30 September 2025, Council's surplus is \$5.729m against a budget of \$7.663m. The variance is due to early receipt of 50% the Financial Assistance Grant in 2024/2025, whereas the budget reflects the anticipated quarterly payments. Depreciation is higher than budgeted as Council undertook a revaluation and indexation of assets in June 2025, after the budget was finalised.

As at 30 September 2025 Council had \$13.927m cash. The high cash balance is due to the early receipt of the Financial Assistance Grant as well as several capital projects being carried forward from 2024/2025 for completion in 2025/2026.

Council's expenditure on capital works was \$1.428m against a budget of \$1.757m. The variance is largely due to the timing of budgeted road projects.

The complete report and further discussion around key variations are included in the attachment to this report.

Discussion:

Council manages significant finances on behalf of the community and must manage these finances responsibly, effectively, and transparently to ensure the delivery of important services and facilities. As well as reporting quarterly on the delivery of the Council plan, quarterly financial reports are also prepared and provided to Council, forming a key component of Council's planning and reporting framework.

The content of financial reporting to Council summarises Council's financial health and shows how financial performance is tracking against the budget, highlighting any risks faced and providing information on any other relevant issues from that quarter.

The Financial Report (Attached) includes:

Dashboard with both financial and non-financial indicators.

This information provides information in graph format for Council on a range of areas within Council including:

- rates outstanding and rates arrears.
- debtors and infringements outstanding.
- local laws information including after-hours calls, after-hours call outs, animals through pound and fines issued.
- a capital works update.
- planning permits applications and permits issued.
- staff accrued leave.
- Customer Service data including telephone calls and customers at each centre.
- Caravan Park revenue and visitors for each of the four parks.

Executive Summary & Ratio Summary

Along with the ratio summary, the Executive Summary section presents a high-level summary of YTD budget and actuals with a traffic light system to indicate any high-risk variances.

Income Statement

As at 30 September, Council's surplus is \$5.729m against a budget of \$7.663m. The surplus is predominately due to receipt of 50% of the Financial Assistance Grant for 2025/2026 that was budgeted to be received quarterly.

Balance Sheet

The information within the Balance Sheet includes current assets, non-current assets, current liabilities and non-current liabilities. Commentary is included for most items on the balance sheet.

Cash Flow Statement

The information within the cash flow statement reflects the actual cash received and payments made for items. The cash flow statement will vary from the income statement due to timing of receipts and payments. The cash flow statement also includes payments for capital works but does not include depreciation.

As at 30 September Council had \$13.927m cash. The high cash balance is due to several capital projects being carried forward from 2024/2025 for completion in 2025/2026 and the early payment of 50% of the Financial Assistance Grant in 2024/2025.

Capital Works Statement

The information within the capital works statement includes projects of a capital nature that improve an asset. The capital works statement is broken into categories including buildings, plant and equipment, infrastructure, which is represented by new assets, renewal of assets, expansion of assets, and upgrades to assets.

As at 30 September Council expenditure on capital works was \$1.428m against a budget of \$1.757m. The variance is largely due to phasing of budgeted road projects as well as work undertaken on carried forward projects.

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

4.1 We are a transparent and responsive organisation.

4.3 We manage our resources responsibly and strategically.

Financial Implications:

This information is provided for noting, therefore there are no financial implications for this decision.

Risk Management Implications:

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

Relevant Legislation:

Local Government Act 2020

Community Engagement:

Consultation with the community occurred during the development of the 2025/2026 Council Budget.

Gender Equality Implications:

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

Confidential Declaration:

Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest:

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

Officer Responsible – Petra Croot, Director Corporate and Community Services

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

Author – Heather Boyd, Manager Finance

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

Communications Strategy:

Not applicable.

Next Steps:

Not applicable.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council notes the Financial Report for the period ending 30 September 2025.

10.4 COMMUNITY ACTION GRANTS 2025/2026 - ROUND ONE

Responsible Officer: Director Corporate and Community Services

Attachments:

1. Community Action Grant 25 26 Round One Grading [**10.4.1**]
2. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED - Community Action Grant Applications 2025-2026 Round 1 [**10.4.2**]

Executive Summary:

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

Several compliant grant applications were received, with several also providing incomplete information that was not addressed prior to closing. It is recommended that, in recognition of the administrative challenges for community groups in submitting these applications, they be awarded the recommended amount subject to the provision of the listed documentation and/or clarifying information.

Council allocated \$20,000 to the Community Action Grants Program in 2025/2026. Grants are recommended to be allocated through round one to the following applicants in the listed categories:

Community Assistance

1. A grant of \$863.64 – Dimboola Croquet Club
2. A grant of \$1,000.00 – Nhill A&P Society Vintage Club Inc.
3. A grant of \$1,000.00 – Nhill Golf Club Inc.

Small Equipment

1. A grant of up to \$1,000.00 – Nhill and District Historical Society Inc.
2. A grant of \$828.64 – Dimboola Cemetery
3. A grant of \$908.18 – Nhill Bowling Club Inc.
4. A grant of up to \$1,000.00 – Dimboola Sporting Club
5. A grant of \$854.54 – Dimboola Tennis Club
6. A grant of \$814.55 – Rainbow Recreation Reserve
7. A grant of up to \$944.55 – Nhill Aviation Heritage Centre
8. A grant of \$930.78 – Dimboola RSL Sub-Branch

Event Sponsorship

No applications received.

Discussion:

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

- Community Assistance
- Event Sponsorship
- Small Equipment

At the time of closing on Thursday 4 September 2025, eleven (11) applications were received requesting funds totalling **\$10,476.82**. Applications are detailed below and are also provided as an attachment to this report.

Category	Number of Applications	Funding Available	Total Amount Requested
Community Assistance	Three (3)	Round 1 \$20,000.00	\$2,950.00
Event Sponsorship	Zero (0)		\$0.00
Small Equipment	Eight (8)		\$7,526.82
TOTAL	Eleven (11)		\$10,476.82

Community Assistance

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

There were three (3) applications in this category for this round, requesting a total of **\$2,950.00**.

Applicants:

1. **Dimboola Croquet Club** seeks funding of \$950.00 to assist with the construction of a shelter above the main entrance to their clubrooms to provide protection from the weather. The club has 23 active members who are primarily retirees who play croquet on weekdays. Ensuring that the infrastructure at their facility is maintained and weather damage is prevented supports the ongoing sustainability of the club through mitigating higher future remedial costs as the facility may become more weather damaged. Based on the application and the association's eligibility, the recommendation is to grant \$863.64 towards this project (GST exclusive amount).

Assessment Score – 20/26

2. **Nhill A&P Society Vintage Club Inc.** seeks funding of \$1,000.00 towards planning processes relating to the construction of a new storage shed to house donated collections of vintage tractors, machinery, and stationary engines. The shed will

provide a secure and organised space to preserve valuable historical artifacts, ensuring their longevity and accessibility for further generations. The Community Action Grant guidelines state that 'capital works or major facility maintenance' are ineligible. This application is for planning permit processes for capital works, and the guidelines do not make this clarification. As the planning process is not part of the capital works directly, officers consider the application eligible for funding. Based on an assessment of the application against the eligibility criteria, the recommendation is to grant \$1,000.00 towards this project.

Assessment Score – 25/26

3. **Nhill Golf Club Inc.** seeks funding of \$1,000.00 to assist with updating and replacing their club's kitchen facilities. The Club will also contribute \$5,300 of their own funds and received \$1,200 from Horsham Sports and Community Club for the project. By improving the kitchen facilities, their clubhouse will be well-equipped and readily available to hire for community and private functions as well as club use. Based on an assessment of the application against the eligibility criteria, the recommendation is to grant \$1,000.00 towards this project.

Assessment Score – 25/26

Small Equipment:

Up to \$1,000.00 towards the purchase of small equipment items.

There were eight (8) applications for this category with a total funding request of **\$7,526.82**.

Applicants:

1. **Nhill and District Historical Society** seeks funding of \$1,000.00 towards the purchase of computer, printer and electronic payment machine, with the group contributing \$3,820 of their own funds towards the purchases. This small equipment will allow the Society to improve their published and promotional material, improve visitation through improved marketing, and increase their ability to take payments through an effective 'tap and go' system. Based on the application and eligibility criteria, the recommendation is to grant \$1,000.00 to Nhill and District Historical Society. While the quotes do not confirm the GST component, the cumulative value of the quoted items, GST inclusive or exclusive, meets the minimum total project value to be eligible for a grant of \$1,000.

Officers note that while the quote in the application may list two printers, the remaining quoted items are eligible to be funded.

Assessment Score – 21/26

2. **Dimboola Cemetery Trust** seeks funding of \$828.64 towards a chainsaw to enable them to more easily undertake maintenance tasks, and native plants to replace older dead plants around the site. The Trust takes pride in honouring those in the community who has passed by providing a neat, maintained site for mourners to visit their relatives and loved ones.

Based on an assessment of the application against the eligibility criteria, the recommendation is to grant \$828.64 towards this project.

Assessment Score – 21/26

3. **Nhill Bowling Club Inc.** seeks funding of \$908.18 towards the purchase of a new cordless vacuum cleaner that would be used to maintain the clubrooms and create a clean environment for club members and the community. Based on an assessment of the application against the eligibility criteria, the recommendation is to grant \$908.18 (GST exclusive amount).

Assessment Score – 24/26

4. **Dimboola Sporting Club** seeks funding of \$1,000.00 for the purchase of a cabinet for a defibrillator. This will provide a space for a defibrillator to be installed at the recreation reserve and will allow 24/7 access if required. Based on an assessment of the application against the eligibility criteria, the recommendation is to grant up to \$1,000.00, subject to the provision of a quote that confirms the GST exclusive total amount.

Assessment Score – 23/26

The club originally applied for the total amount of \$3,195 to purchase a defibrillator with external alarms and a cabinet with warranty. Upon speaking to Hindmarsh Shire Council CEO, it was concluded that Dimboola Sporting Club will keep their application in to purchase a cabinet for the defibrillator and Council will relocate and provide a defibrillator for the community to use at the Dimboola Recreation Reserve.

5. **Dimboola Tennis Club** seeks funding of \$940.00 for the purchase of tennis balls for games and playing shirts for when competing in the league (Dimboola District Tennis Association). This will make tennis more accessible for players from across the farming and broader community. Based on an assessment of the application against the eligibility criteria, the recommendation is to grant \$854.54 (GST exclusive amount).

Assessment Score – 20/26

6. **Rainbow Recreation Reserve** seeks funding of \$850.00 for the purchase new two vacuums that are more functional and user-friendly machines. The vacuums will make sure the indoor areas is kept clean as there are various events held at the facility throughout the year. Based on an assessment of the application against the eligibility criteria, the recommendation is to grant \$814.55 (GST exclusive amount).

Assessment Score – 19/26

7. **Nhill Aviation Heritage Centre** seeks funding of \$1,000.00 for the purchase a computer, with \$439 of their own funds being contributed to the project. The computer will be utilised by volunteers when cataloguing museum items, as well as by visitors who wish to look up war service records. Based on an assessment of the application against the eligibility criteria, the recommendation is to grant \$944.55 (GST exclusive amount).

Assessment Score – 21/26

8. **Dimboola RSL Sub-Branch** seeks funding of \$1,000.00 for the purchase of new shelves and cupboards for the RSL Hall. This will allow the RSL, hirers and users critical storage space. Based on an assessment of the application against the eligibility criteria, the recommendation is to grant \$930.78 (GST exclusive amount).

Assessment Score – 23/26

Event Sponsorship:

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

No applications were received under this category.

Options:

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

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

Applicant	Amount Requested	Total Project Cost	Recommended Allocation (excluding GST)
Community Assistance - \$2863.64			
Dimboola Croquet Club	\$950.00	\$1,150.00	\$863.64
Nhill A&P Society Vintage Club Inc.	\$1,000.00	\$2,650.00	\$1,000.00
Nhill Golf Club Inc.	\$1,000.00	\$7,500.00	\$1,000.00
SUBTOTAL	\$2,950.00	\$11,300.00	\$2,863.64

Small Equipment - \$7,281.24			
Nhill and District Historical Society	\$1,000.00	\$4,820.00	\$1,000.00
Dimboola Cemetery	\$828.64	\$828.64	\$828.64
Nhill Bowling Club Inc.	\$908.18	\$999.00	\$908.18
Dimboola Sporting Club	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
Dimboola Tennis Club	\$940.00	\$940.00	\$854.54
Rainbow Recreation Reserve	\$850.00	\$896.00	\$814.55
Nhill Aviation Heritage Centre	\$1,000.00	\$1,439.00	\$944.55
Dimboola RSL Sub Branch	\$1,000.00	\$1,023.87	\$930.78
SUBTOTAL	7,526.82	\$11,946.51	\$7,281.24
FULL TOTAL	10,476.82	\$23,246.51	\$10,144.88

Link to Council Plan:

Theme One: Our Community

- 1.1 Our Community is active, healthy and connected.
- 1.2 Our towns are inclusive, welcoming and growing.
- 1.3 Our community can access services when and where they need them.

Financial Implications:

Council has allocated \$20,000.00 to the Community Action Grants Program for the 2025/2026 financial year. The recommended allocation through Round 2 is within the total budgeted amount.

Risk Management Implications:

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

Relevant Legislation:

Local Government Act 2020

Community Engagement:

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

Gender Equality Implications:

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

Confidential Declaration:

Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest:

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

Officer Responsible – Petra Croot, Director Corporate and Community Services

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

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

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

Communications Strategy:

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

Next Steps:

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

RECOMMENDATION:

The Council approves the following funding allocations through Round 1 of the Community Action Grants Program 2025/2026:

1. Community Assistance

- a) A grant of \$863.64 – Dimboola Croquet Club***
- b) A grant of \$1,000.00 – Nhill A&P Society Vintage Club Inc.***
- c) A grant of \$1,000.00 – Nhill Golf Club Inc.***

2. Small Equipment

- a) A grant of \$1,000.00 – Nhill and District Historical Society Inc.***
- b) A grant of \$828.64 – Dimboola Cemetery***
- c) A grant of \$908.18 – Nhill Bowling Club Inc.***

- d) A grant of \$1,000.00 – Dimboola Sporting Club**
- e) A grant of \$854.54 – Dimboola Tennis Club**
- f) A grant of \$814.55 – Rainbow Recreation Reserve**
- g) A grant of \$944.55 – Nhill Aviation Heritage Centre**
- h) A grant of \$930.78 – Dimboola RSL Sub Branch**

TOTAL FUNDING ALLOCATED: \$10,144.88

10.5 BUSINESS ASSISTANCE GRANTS 2025/2026 - ROUND ONE

Responsible Officer: Director Corporate and Community Services

Attachments:

1. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED - 2025/2026 R 1 Business Assistance Grants Applications [10.5.1]

Executive Summary:

This report seeks a Council decision regarding the allocation of funding through round one of the 2025/2026 Business Assistance Grants program. The Business Assistance Grants program was established in July 2016 to support local businesses to expand their operations and for new businesses, large and small, to establish themselves in the Shire. Business Assistance Grants help offset costs associated with expanding or establishing a business in Hindmarsh Shire to ensure the ongoing sustainability and viability of our local economy.

Grants are recommended to be awarded to the following applicants:

Business Development

1. A grant of \$1,918.62 – Desert Blooms Florist
2. A grant of \$2,000.00 – Dimboola Pottery

Streetscapes

1. A grant of \$1,500.00 – Bow Bakery
2. A grant of \$3,000.00 – Mark Launer Plumbing
3. A grant of up to \$2,760.00 – Cambrelle's
4. A grant of up to \$3,000.00 – Nhill Gutter Cleaning
5. A grant of \$1,173.00 – Rainbow Learning Group and Neighbourhood House
6. A grant of \$1,667.00 – Jasmine Garden Thai Restaurant

Discussion:

Council has allocated \$20,000 towards the 2025/2026 Business Assistance Grants program in the 2025/2026 Annual Budget. Applications for round one of the Business Assistance Grants Program closed at 5:00pm on Thursday 4 September 2025. Eight applications were received requesting a cumulative total of \$17,258.62.

Category	Number of Applications	Funding Available	Total Amount Requested
Business Development	Two (2)	Round 1 \$20,000	\$3,918.62
Streetscapes	Six (6)		\$13,100.00
TOTAL	Eight (8)		\$17,018.62

Based on officer's review of the applications and assessment against the criteria (attached), the following amounts are recommended to be awarded:

Business Development

1. A grant of \$1,918.62 - Desert Blooms Florist

Desert Blooms Florist has applied for funding to expand and improve an outdoor display space for stock.

The application includes an allocation of \$2,600 worth of own funds and \$1,600 of in-kind contributions.

2. A grant of \$2,000.00 – Dimboola Pottery

Dimboola Pottery has applied for funding to install heating in the pottery classroom to enable classes to run comfortably in colder seasons. The application includes \$1,969.81 worth of own-funds and in-kind contributions.

Streetscapes

1. A grant of \$1,500.00 – Bow Bakery

Bow Bakery has applied for funding to complete a mural showcasing local artist's work on their shopfront. The application includes an allocation of \$1,572.14 worth of own-funds and in-kind contributions.

2. A grant of \$2,760.00 - Cambrelle's

Cambrelle's have applied for funding to install artwork on their shopfront. The application includes an allocation of \$1,140 worth of own-funds and in-kind contributions. As they have not met the \$2:\$1 threshold, the allocated amount reflects two-thirds of the project cost and will require Cambrelle's to increase their cash contribution to cover the shortfall. This, alongside formal quotations, will be confirmed in writing prior to the payment of the grant.

3. A grant of \$3,000.00 - Mark Launer Plumbing

Mark Launer Plumbing have applied for funding to install signage on their shopfront and repaint the facade. The application includes \$2,532 of own funds contributions.

4. A grant of \$3,000.00 - Nhill Gutter Cleaning

Nhill Gutter Cleaning have applied for funding to install signage on their premises and repaint the facade. The application includes \$1,500 of own funds contributions.

5. A grant of \$1,173.00 - Rainbow Learning Group and Neighbourhood House

The Rainbow Learning Centre have applied for funding to install a ramp at their Community Shop in the Rainbow Main Street and repainting of the shop facade. The application includes \$627 of own funds and in-kind contributions. Rainbow Learning Group were originally (in their application) using an estimated in-kind figure (volunteer hours) as their co-contribution, the updated budget separate to the application lists the revised cash contribution component.

6. A grant of \$1,667.00 - Jasmine Garden Thai Restaurant

Nhill Thai Restaurant have applied for funding to install signage for their new business and repaint the facade. The application includes \$825.80 of own funds.

Cambrelles, Nhill Gutter Cleaning, and Nhill Thai Restaurant have reported difficulty providing quotes for elements of their budget that have estimated scopes. Given that 20% of the grant payment is withheld until a completion report is received with all receipts, the applications were assessed as if they were compliant, with the recommendation being that payment of their full funding allocation will be subject to providing all required quotes and clarifications.

Link to Council Plan:**Theme Three: Competitive and Innovative Economy**

3.1 Our local businesses are supported to grow.

3.3 We advocate for and support diverse and innovative industries.

Financial Implications:

Council has allocated \$20,000 in the Annual Budget 2025/2026 to deliver the Business Assistance Grants Program. The recommended amount to be allocated through Round 1 is within budget.

Risk Management Implications:

Strategic Risk Description	Risk Management Discussion
Financial Sustainability	Business Assistance Grants support the economic sustainability of our community through promoting development and growth in new and existing businesses. The grants program requires in-kind support which means that there are an investment and commitment from the business owner, supporting the sustainability of whatever progress is made. Economic development benefits the Shire through increased visitation, employment, supporting population growth, and ensuring the economic prosperity of the community.

Relevant Legislation:

Local Government Act 2020

Community Engagement:

The Business Assistance Grants 2025/2026 program has been widely publicised through media releases, social media and Council's website.

Gender Equality Implications:

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

Confidential Declaration:

Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest:

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

Officer Responsible – Petra Croot, Director Corporate and Community Services

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

Author – Jeff Woodward, Economic Development and Tourism Officer

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

Communications Strategy:

The Business Assistance Grants Program has been promoted through the following channels:

- Council's Facebook Page
- Council's website
- Media release distribution
- E-marketing to local businesses

Following Council's decision regarding the allocation of funding, publications will be produced notifying the community of successful applications.

Next Steps:

Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified of Council's decision by phone and via letter.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council awards the following Business Assistance Grants:

1. Business Development

- a) Desert Bloom Florist - \$1,918.62***
- b) Dimboola Pottery - \$2,000.00***

2. Streetscapes

- a) Bow Bakery - \$1,500.00***
- b) Cambrelle's - \$2,760.00***
- c) Mark Launer Plumbing - \$3,000.00***

- d) Nhill Gutter Cleaning - \$3,000.00**
- e) Rainbow Learning Group and Neighbourhood House - \$1,173.00**
- f) Jasmin Garden Thai Restaurant - \$1,667.00**

TOTAL FUNDING ALLOCATED: \$17,018.62

10.6 SUMMARY OF PLANNING PERMITS APPROVED UNDER DELEGATION Q3 2025

Responsible Officer: Director Infrastructure Services

Attachments:

Nil

Executive Summary:

This report summarises the planning permit applications approved by the CEO under delegation from the period of 1 July 2025 to 30 September 2025 (Q3 2025). It also includes planning permits approved under the VicSmart process. A total of six (6) planning permits of this nature were approved during this period, including one (1) VicSmart permit.

Of the five (5) Planning permits issued four (4) were issued within the required 60 statutory days and one (1) was delayed due to waiting on responses from a referral authority.

The one (1) VicSmart permit was issued within seven (7) days, well under the required timeframe of 10 statutory days.

Discussion:

Planning permit applications undergo a rigorous assessment process under the Hindmarsh Planning Scheme. Delegations set by Council allow the CEO to approve planning permits following an assessment and recommendation from qualified town planners. Complex planning permits are presented to Council for decision making.

When eligible, some low impact and straightforward planning permits are assessed through the VicSmart process for faster approval. Key features of VicSmart include a 10-business day permit process, no public notice or external referrals, and a decision by the CEO under delegation.

Regular planning permits have a time limit of 60 statutory days, while Vicsmart applications have a time limit of ten (10) statutory days.

The following planning permit applications and VicSmart applications were approved by the CEO between 1 July 2025 to 30 September 2025. VicSmart applications are identified by a 'VS' in the application number.

App No.	Address	Proposal	Date Rec'd	Planning Permit Requirement	Date Appr'd	Stat Days
PA1866-2024	100 Queen St, NHILL VIC 3418	Use and development of the land for a storage shed.	01/10/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Clause 33.01-1 - Use of land for a storeClause 33.01-4 - Buildings and works for a Section 2 use	16/06/2025	2

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clause 52.06-7 Reduce the number of car parking spaces required Clause 52.29-2 Create or alter access to a road in a Transport Zone 2 		
PA1877-2024	Lot 3 and 4 on TP534702 671 Nhill-Harrow Rd, NHILL VIC 3418	Subdivide land into two lots (re-subdivide four lots) and creation of an easement.	05/12/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clause 35.07-3 Subdivide land (FZ) Clause 52.02 Create an easement 	11/07/2025	34
PA1886-2025	Lot 11~C\LP528 5 8 Livingston St, JEPARIT VIC 3409	Use and development of a shed to store vintage trucks.	01/05/2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clause 32.05-11 Building and works for a section 2 use Clause 32.05-2 Use of the land for a store 	01/08/2025	17
PA1880-2025	120 Lawson Rd, DIMBOOLA VIC 3414	Use and development of land for a dwelling and associated works.	17/02/2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clause 42.01-2 Construct a building or construct or carry out works Clause 35.07-4 Building and works in FZ Clause 35.07-1 Section 2 use 	06/08/2025	101 - waiting for a referral authority
PA1883-2025	Lot 1 114 Ellerman St, DIMBOOLA VIC 3414	Development of an outbuilding (shed) associated with a dwelling in the Bushfire Management Overlay.	23/04/2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clause 44.06-2 Buildings and works BMO 	16/07/2025	35
VS250004	24 Tarranyurk East Road, Tarranyurk VIC 3414	Development of an Ahrens manufacturing shed.	28/08/2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clause 35.07-4 Buildings and works associated with a use in Section 2 of Clause 35.07-1 	25/09/2025	7

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:

Not applicable.

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 including VicSmart. Complicated planning permits with higher levels of risk are presented to Council for decision.

Relevant Legislation:

Planning and Environment Act 1987

Subdivision Act 1988

Community Engagement:

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

Gender Equality Implications:

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

Confidential Declaration:

Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest:

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

Officer Responsible – Ram Upadhyaya, Director Infrastructure Services

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

Author – Mikayla Farmers, Planning Officer

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

Communications Strategy:

Not applicable.

Next Steps:

Next report to be provided at the end of Quarter 4 2025.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council notes the Planning and VicSmart Applications approved by the CEO under delegation for the period 1 July 2025 to 30 September 2025.

10.7 DRAFT YOUTH STRATEGY 2025-2029

Responsible Officer: Director Corporate and Community Services

Attachments:

1. Draft Youth Strategy 2025 - 2029 [10.7.1]

Executive Summary:

This report presents the draft Hindmarsh Shire Council Youth Strategy 2025-2029 for Council endorsement for a period of community consultation from Thursday 30 October 2025 to 12pm on Friday 21 November 2025.

The objective of the Youth Strategy is to provide Council with a practical, achievable, and measurable plan to define our role in local and regional youth development, and to deliver youth programs and opportunities within Council's service areas. The Youth Strategy will enable Council to better understand current and future needs of young people, potential barriers to inclusion and participation, and provide direction and measurable outcomes for youth sustainability and liveability within Hindmarsh Shire.

The draft Youth Strategy has been developed in consultation with young people, parents, carers, schools and agencies and stakeholders that support the health and wellbeing of young people throughout Hindmarsh Shire.

Discussion:

The Hindmarsh Shire Council Youth Strategy 2025-2029 (Strategy) builds on the Youth Strategy 2021-2025 in providing direction, information, and identifying gaps in youth opportunities and programs for young people, their families, and Council.

The objective of the Strategy is to provide Council with a practical, achievable, and measurable plan to define our role in local and regional youth development. The Strategy will enable Council to better understand current and future needs of young people, potential barriers to inclusion and participation, and provide direction and measurable outcomes for youth sustainability and community liveability within Hindmarsh Shire.

The Youth Strategy's overarching objectives are to:

- Ensure that Hindmarsh Shire Council's processes and spaces welcome, involve and empower young people.
- Build partnerships with community groups and organisations to expand the potential of youth services.
- Create a community that is future-safe, ensuring young people have opportunities to live, learn, earn and contribute to their community.
- Understand and address the systemic and structural barriers to inclusion, participation and representation.

- Facilitate spaces and events that create opportunities for connection, expression and community.
- Advocate for young people to be able to access the health, wellbeing and support services that they need.

The Strategy has been developed by using the following methodology.

1. Data Collecting

Research and consultation, youth surveys, review of industry standards and relevant documents and procedures.

2. Analysis

Workshopping identified issues with young people, problem solving, continuing to receive feedback and ideas from social media surveys and Youth Council.

3. Development

Compiling information and data, identifying key actions and scope, development of document.

4. Review

Final document provided to the community for feedback before formal adoption.

Whilst Council has an integral part to play in the development and growth of young people, communities and other agencies all have an opportunity under the Strategy to support the needs and aspirations of young people living within Hindmarsh Shire.

The Hindmarsh Shire Youth Council will continue to meet to review progress and discuss further initiatives, whilst keeping Council updated. This ongoing partnership between Youth Council, Council and community stakeholders is vital to ensure the Strategy remains relevant over the next four years.

Some Achievements and Milestones from our Previous Strategy

Health and Wellbeing

- Council has delivered 'Teen Mental Health First Aid' and 'Youth Mental Health First Aid' as well as mental health information through Council's social media channels.
- Council has collaborated with Headspace to run a 'Create and Relate' session where young people can hang out and do crafts and socialise.

Activities and Events

- There have been at least one-two major events each term with mini activities/events scattered throughout the school terms. This includes discos, Games and Trivia Night, Movie Nights, Gaming events and Pool Parties.
- All events are free for young people, and they occur in all our four towns, with free transport provided for young people to reduce barriers to attend events.
- All activities are initiated, planned and delivered by our Youth Councillors during their monthly meetings with the support of Council staff.

Jobs and Opportunities

- All libraries now provide study spaces and free Wi-Fi.

The draft Hindmarsh Shire Youth Strategy 2025 – 2029 will be made available for public consultation for the period 30 October 2025 to 12pm on Friday 21 November 2025.

Link to Council Plan:

Theme One: Our Community

- 1.1 Our Community is active, healthy and connected.
- 1.2 Our towns are inclusive, welcoming and growing.
- 1.3 Our community can access services when and where they need them.

Financial Implications:

Not applicable.

Risk Management Implications:

Strategic Risk Description	Risk Management Discussion
Community Needs	The 2025-2029 Youth Strategy ensures that Council has clear direction and purpose in relation to youth services and is working towards outcomes that are identified and endorsed by both the broader community and the young people within it.

Relevant Legislation:

Local Government Act 2020

Community Engagement:

The draft Hindmarsh Shire Youth Strategy 2025 – 2029 will be made available for public consultation for the period 30 October 2025 to 12pm on Friday 21 November 2025. The current draft was informed through community engagement, including workshops and surveys.

Gender Equality Implications:

Gender Impact Assessment is underway and will be presented to Council when the Youth Strategy is presented for formal adoption.

Confidential Declaration:

Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest:

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

Officer Responsible – Petra Croot, Director Corporate and Community Services

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

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

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

Communications Strategy:

The consultation period will be advertised via social media, newsletters and advertisements in local newspapers.

Next Steps:

The draft Youth Strategy 2025-2029 will be made available for public consultation from Thursday 30 October to Friday 21 November 2025 (subject to Council endorsement). Once this period has completed, the Youth Strategy will be presented to Council for formal adoption.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council endorses the Hindmarsh Shire Council Youth Strategy 2025-2029 for community consultation for the period Thursday 30 October 2025 to 12pm on Friday 21 November 2025.

10.8 DRAFT SPORT AND RECREATION STRATEGY 2025-2035

Responsible Officer: Director Corporate and Community Services

Attachments:

1. Draft Sport and Recreation Strategy [10.8.1]

Executive Summary:

This report presents the draft Hindmarsh Shire Council Sport and Recreation Strategy 2025-2035 for Council endorsement for a period of community consultation in line with Council's Community Engagement Policy from 30 October 2025 to Friday 21 November 2025.

The Hindmarsh Shire Council Sport and Recreation Strategy 2025-2035 aims to provide a clear long-term plan to develop and promote sport and recreation within Hindmarsh Shire with the following priorities at the centre of proposed actions:

- Increase participation in sport and recreation;
- Support community wellbeing, including mental and physical health;
- Improve facilities and open spaces;
- Provide support for clubs and volunteers;
- Promote equity, diversity and inclusion; and
- Foster partnerships and collaboration.

The Sport and Recreation Strategy was developed by compiling community and stakeholder consultation feedback, including in-person sessions held at Sporting Clubs in 2024, and the Sport and Recreation Project Pipeline that has been informed by community action plans, masterplans, maintenance plans, and the Council Plan.

Discussion:

The Hindmarsh Shire Council Sport and Recreation Strategy 2025-2035 aims to provide a clear long-term plan to develop and promote sport and recreation within Hindmarsh Shire with the following priorities at the centre of proposed actions:

- Increase participation in Sport and Recreation
- Improve Facilities and Open Spaces
- Support for Clubs and Volunteers
- Promote equity, diversity and Inclusion
- Foster partnerships and collaboration

The Sport and Recreation Strategy was developed by compiling community and stakeholder consultation feedback, including in-person sessions held at Sporting Clubs in 2024, and the Sport and Recreation Project Pipeline that has been informed through identifying projects in community action plans, masterplans, maintenance plans, and the Council Plan. Key components of the feedback from the community and stakeholders are detailed below.

Community Feedback

- Infrastructure investment is needed, especially in lighting, change rooms, and accessibility.
- Inclusive participation strategies should be prioritised, particularly to increase female and junior engagement.
- Club capacity building (policy adoption, governance support, use of ASC Game Plan) will strengthen sustainability.
- Event attraction potential exists if facilities are upgraded to meet higher-level competition standards.
- Membership retention and growth should be supported through both infrastructure and community development initiatives.

Club and Stakeholder Feedback

- Clubs vary widely in size, from fewer than 10 to more than 200 members.
- Membership is male-dominated, with adult and junior males making up most participants. Female and non-binary participation was minimal across surveyed clubs.
- Some clubs identified membership growth and retention as key challenges.
- 60% of clubs have plans (master plans, feasibility studies) for facility improvements. Top priorities include:
 - New or upgraded clubrooms, change rooms, and toilets.
 - Irrigation and surface upgrades.
 - Lighting improvements.
 - Accessibility upgrades (all-abilities access, ramps, disabled toilets).
 - Canteen and electrical upgrades.
 - Membership growth initiatives.

The Strategy has the following sections;

1. **Vision and Goals** – this section considers the priorities listed above and identifies an overarching vision - To create a thriving local sport and recreation culture by growing participation, increasing opportunities, improving key facilities over time, and making smart, community-driven investments.
2. **Fair Access Principles** - the Fair Access Principles were developed by the Office for Women in Sport and Recreation, Sport and Recreation Victoria and VicHealth, in consultation with representatives from local government and the state sport and recreation sector. The action plan considers the six principles in promoting equitable inclusion - inclusivity, full participation, equal representation, encouraging and supporting user groups, and prioritising user groups committed to equality.
3. **Understanding Community and Stakeholder needs** – this section considers the role of Council and key stakeholders and summarises feedback provided both within and outside the consultation period and highlighting the priority needs of each group.
4. **Resourcing** – this section provides a realistic overview of how Council funds activities in the sports and recreation space, including through staffing allocations, budget allocations, grants and collaborations with clubs and other user groups.

5. **The Strategy** – this section details the specific actions and strategies that Council will undertake in the next ten years in support of the sports and recreation vision and priorities. It covers the different identified spheres of – priority precincts, small club support, major club support, informal sports and recreation, and advocacy.

The draft Sport and Recreation Strategy 2025-2035 will be made available for public consultation and submissions once it has been formally endorsed by Council.

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

1.1 Our Community is active, healthy and connected.

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

Theme Two: Built and Natural Environment

2.2 Our infrastructure supports liveability and resilience.

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.

Health and Wellbeing Priority

Financial Implications:

Not applicable.

Risk Management Implications:

Strategic Risk Description	Risk Management Discussion
Asset Management Community Needs	The Sport and Recreation Strategy sets a clear strategic vision, identifying priorities to promote physical activity, enhance infrastructure and improve community wellbeing. This ensures that any future investment and planning from Council and the community is based on collaboratively developed plans and is consistently working towards the set vision.

Relevant Legislation:

Local Government Act 2020

Community Engagement:

In July 2024, Hindmarsh Shire Council Officers, CEO and Councillors attended Nhill & District Sporting Club, Dimboola Sporting Club and Southern Mallee Thunder Football/Netball Clubs to discuss ideas for future strategic and facility planning initiatives. Club members filled out questionnaires with ideas and feedback that has informed the development of this Strategy.

Council also received feedback from 'Have your Say' surveys which were available to community members and stakeholders.

Gender Equality Implications:

Gender Impact Assessment is underway and will be finalised through the community engagement period.

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 – Jennie Hauselberger, Coordinator Sports Recreation and Community Development

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

Communications Strategy:

Promotion of the Sport and Recreation Strategy was via the following platforms:

- 'Have your Say Hindmarsh' Website
- Face to face consultations
- Council's Facebook Page
- Council Website
- Monthly Newsletter
- Fortnightly E-Newsletter
- Media Release

Next Steps:

Council Officers will undertake community engagement activities and review the draft Sport and Recreation Strategy based on the feedback provided. Once this has been actioned, the final Sport and Recreation Strategy will be presented to Council for formal adoption.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council endorses the draft Sport and Recreation Strategy for a period of community engagement from Thursday 30 October 2025 to 12pm on Friday 21 November 2025.

10.9 COUNCIL CONTRIBUTION TO INCORPORATED ENTITIES - DIMBOOLA PROGRESS ASSOCIATION REQUEST

Responsible Officer: Director Corporate and Community Services

Attachments:

1. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED - Dimboola Progress Association Application for Council Contribution [10.9.1]
2. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED - Dimboola Progress Association Bank Statement [10.9.2]
3. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED - Dimboola Progress Association Financial statement [10.9.3]
4. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED - Dimboola Progress Association Minutes [10.9.4]
5. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED - Dimboola Progress Association Quotes [10.9.5]

Executive Summary:

This recommends that Council allocate funding to the Dimboola Progress Association through the Council Contribution to Incorporated Entities – Expenditure Guidelines.

Council allocates funding in the annual budget for Town Advisory Committees and the Dimboola Progress Association (previously the Dimboola Town Advisory Committee). The funds are allocated to enable the Town Advisory Committees and Dimboola Progress Association to undertake projects and / or events that benefit our communities.

The Dimboola Progress Association is requesting funding to install lock up roller doors on the catering shelter at the Dimboola Recreation Reserve. The maximum total project cost is \$18,950 (GST inclusive).

Discussion:

The *Council Contribution to Incorporated Entities – Expenditure Guidelines (Guidelines)* provide information on how Hindmarsh Shire Council contributions, including the transfer of Advisory Committee funds, are to be managed by the Incorporated Entity receiving those funds. The Guidelines state that each year the Incorporated Entity will provide Council with a budget on planned activities within their area for use of Council funds as evidenced in the minutes of their meetings.

The Dimboola Progress Association installed a catering shelter at the Dimboola Soundshell in the Dimboola Recreation Reserve, and they are now requesting funding to install lock up roller doors to protect it from the weather and vandalism. After the initial request was received, additional information was sought from the Dimboola Progress Association that clearly evidenced the actual cost of the proposed project/s for 2025/2026, including clear quotations and financial statements. These have been attached for Council's information.

Dimboola Progress Association are requesting \$7,500.00 to complete this project and to carry forward the previous two years' allocations (\$15,000.00). Under the Guidelines,

approval is required for any funds to be carried forward from one financial year to the next with a list of what those funds will be committed to in the future financial year.

Based on the information provided, the total value quoted is a maximum of \$18,950 (GST inclusive), with the option to add additional costs relating to additional roller doors.

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

- 1.1 Our Community is active, healthy and connected.
- 1.2 Our towns are inclusive, welcoming and growing.
- 1.3 Our community can access services when and where they need them.

Theme Two: Built and Natural Environment

- 2.2 Our infrastructure supports liveability and resilience.

Theme Four: Good Governance and Financial Sustainability

- 4.2 We engage our community with respect and openness.

Financial Implications:

Even though payment of the contribution is dependent on approval from Council, there is a budget allocation available in the event that approval is granted.

Funding of \$7,500 was provided in 2023/2024 prior to incorporation. The 2024/2025 budget of \$7,500 was not provided due to no application for funding being received.

Risk Management Implications:

Strategic Risk Description	Risk Management Discussion
Community Needs	Providing funding to Incorporated Associations supports community-based organisations to deliver grassroots projects that are important to their community.

Relevant Legislation:

Local Government Act 2020

Community Engagement:

Not applicable.

Gender Equality Implications:

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

Confidential Declaration:

Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest:

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

Officer Responsible – Petra Croot, Director Corporate and Community Services

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

Author – Jennie Hauselberger, Coordinator Sports Recreation and Community Development

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

Communications Strategy:

Not applicable.

Next Steps:

Dimboola Progress Association to be advised of Council's decision, and any approved funds transferred by Council's finance team. Council officers to ensure, through reporting, that funding is spent in accordance with the guidelines.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council provides the 2025/2026 budget allocation to the Dimboola Progress Association of \$7,500 (excl GST) to assist with installing roller doors/shutters at the catering shelter in the Dimboola Recreation Reserve.

10.10 PROCUREMENT POLICY

Responsible Officer: Director Corporate and Community Services

Attachments:

1. Have Your Say Project Detailed Report Procurement Policy [**10.10.1**]
2. Draft Procurement Policy [**10.10.2**]

Executive Summary:

At the Council meeting held on Wednesday 24 September 2025, Council endorsed the reviewed Procurement Policy for a period of community consultation in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy. This period has now been completed, and the Procurement Policy is recommended for Council adoption.

While no feedback was received, minor amendments have been made to the Procurement Policy in this period, including amendments to the contract variation and local supply sections.

Councils must have a Procurement Policy in place that determines their approach to procuring goods and services and procurement thresholds. Expectations for this Policy are set out in the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Discussion:

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act), Councils are required to have their own procurement policy in place that determines their approach to procuring goods and services and sets procurement thresholds. Expectations for these policies are set out in the Act. This review of Hindmarsh Shire Council's Procurement Policy was conducted in line with the recently released shared template produced by the Municipal Association of Victoria in collaboration with legal and sector representatives. Whilst maintaining all critical information as required by the Act, Council wanted to ensure that the content, processes and thresholds are applicable and implementable within our systems and context.

Changes to the **Procurement Policy** recommended through this review include:

- *Minimum Market Competition Thresholds* – these have been reviewed in line with sector best practice, increasing costs and consideration of purchase types within thresholds. It has also considered the CEO delegation as adopted by Council in March 2025 that set the CEO purchasing delegation limit of \$250,000.
- *Cumulative Spend* – Council had previously reviewed this section (2024 review) as current systems do not allow for real-time cross-organisation reporting on cumulative spend. The wording considered as part of this policy ensures that cumulative/aggregate spend is considered to achieve value-for-money but is not committing Council to a specific process that cannot be reasonably implemented. The approach to cumulative spend should be proactive and strategic rather than reactive and based on complex system reporting.

- *Conflict of Interest* – this draft Policy has a dedicated section detailing Conflict of Interest expectations and management as this is a critical risk exposure in rural communities where businesses and providers are interconnected with staff and Councillors.
- *Purchase Order Requirements* – there are certain purchases where it is either unreasonable or impractical for a purchase order to be produced, this was not enabled under the previous policy.
- *Stipulating clear ‘follow up’ processes* – the new draft policy includes clear sections on unsuccessful tenders, variations and negotiations that were either not comprehensively detailed or were unclear in their interpretation.
- *Quadruple Bottom Line* is an aspirational approach but operationally caused some concern regarding the resourcing and efficiency of applying these to procurements at Council’s scale. This has been included as it is best practice, but the wording has been adjusted slightly to allow Council to consider whether it is reasonable and proportional to apply to specified procurement activities.
- *Contract Variations* – the draft Procurement Policy endorsed by Council on 24 September noted that variations to contracts needed to be approved by the authority who had approved the original expenditure and needed to take into consideration the whole-of-contract cost. The updated wording considers Council’s existing delegations and budget processes and now reads:

Where the variation to the contract falls within the approved contingency value or approved negotiation range or is deemed to have no material impact on the total project cost as allocated in the adopted budget, the variation may be approved by the relevant Director (within their financial delegation) or the CEO.

Variations outside the total approved project budget, or variations that result in the total contract value being above the threshold of public tender, must be approved by Council.

The Policy is recommended for adoption and implementation.

Link to Council Plan:

Theme Four: Good Governance and Financial Sustainability

4.3 We manage our resources responsibly and strategically.

Financial Implications:

There are significant implications to financial and procurement processes based on the review, but no direct costs related to the decision by Council to adopt the Policy. There are indirect cost savings relating to clarity and efficiencies within the Policy.

Risk Management Implications:

Strategic Risk Description	Risk Management Discussion
Governance	Reviewing policies to ensure that they are compliant and applicable ensures good governance, effective decision-making and consistent processes and procedures. These changes update gaps identified in the existing policy framework.

Relevant Legislation:

Local Government Act 2020

Community Engagement:

Community engagement was undertaken between 25 September 2025 to 17 October 2025. No feedback was received, and the engagement summary report is attached for Council information.

Gender Equality Implications:

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

Confidential Declaration:

Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest:

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

Officer Responsible – Petra Croot, Director Corporate and Community Services

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

Author – Petra Croot, Director Corporate and Community Services

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

Communications Strategy:

The community will be notified that the Procurement Policy has been adopted via Facebook and Council's newsletters. The Policy will be uploaded onto Council's website and made available on request at Council's Customer Service Centres and Libraries.

Next Steps:

The Policy will be uploaded on Council's website, publications will be prepared, and staff training will be delivered.

RECOMMENDATION:***That Council adopts the Procurement Policy.***

10.11 S6 INSTRUMENT OF DELEGATION

Responsible Officer: Director Corporate and Community Services

Attachments:

1. S6 - Instrument of Delegation from Council to Members of Council Staff - October 2025 [10.11.1]

Executive Summary:

The *Local Government Act 2020* allows Council to delegate their powers by resolution to ensure that the many decisions required to be made by Councils are done so in an efficient way. This allows Council meetings to remain focused on strategic matters and community leadership and facilitates the achievement of good governance by empowering appropriate members of staff to make decisions on behalf of the Council and the CEO.

This report presents an updated S6 delegation from Council to Council Staff and seeks appointment of Council Officers as Authorised Officers or Delegated Officers through the adoption of this Instrument of Delegation. The S6 delegates certain powers directly from Council to Council staff due to the legislation referred to containing specific powers of delegation.

Discussion:

The S6 Instrument of Delegation from Council to members of Council Staff relates to Council powers, duties and functions within various Acts and Regulations (or specific parts or those Acts or Regulations) that contain a specific power or delegation. This instrument was last reviewed in March 2024.

Changes made to the S6 Instrument of Delegation through this review include updated delegations to staff to reflect current roles and specifically title changes. In some instances, the Act or Regulation has been updated and the section containing specific powers of delegation have changed.

This delegation specifically relates to:

- *Cemeteries And Crematoria Act 2003*
- *Domestic Animals Act 1994*
- *Food Act 1984*
- *Heritage Act 2017*
- *Local Government Act 1989*
- *Planning And Environment Act 1987*
- *Residential Tenancies Act 1997*
- *Road Management Act 2004*
- *Cemeteries And Crematoria Regulations 2025*
- *Planning And Environment Regulations 2015*
- *Planning And Environment (Fees) Regulations 2016*

- *Residential Tenancies (Caravan Parks and Movable Dwellings Registration and Standards) Regulations 2024*
- *Road Management (General) Regulations 2016*
- *Road Management (Works and Infrastructure) Regulations 2015*

How well Council deals with its delegations is vital to its efficiency to minimise risk and maximise possibilities. From a practical management perspective, it is essential for Council to devolve decision-making in a downwards manner from a central source of authority. This enables decisions to be made on the front line, by employees or committees with the required specialised knowledge, and in a timely manner.

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

4.3 We manage our resources responsibly and strategically.

Financial Implications:

None.

Risk Management Implications:

Strategic Risk Description	Risk Management Discussion
Governance	Regular review and update of the Instruments of Delegation is necessary to ensure Council has compliant appointments, authorisations and delegations to meet the requirements contained in the Acts and Regulations relevant to Council authority. Failure to do so could result in decisions being invalidated or not being made in a timely manner.

Relevant Legislation:

Local Government Act 2020

Local Government Act 1989

Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2003

Domestic Animals Act 1994

Food Act 1984

Heritage Act 2017

Planning And Environment Act 1987

Residential Tenancies Act 1997

Road Management Act 2004

Cemeteries and Crematoria Regulations 2025

Planning and Environment Regulations 2015

Planning and Environment (Fees) Regulations 2016

Residential Tenancies (Caravan Parks and Movable Dwellings Registration and Standards) Regulations 2024

Road Management (General) Regulations 2016

Road Management (Works and Infrastructure) Regulations 2015

Community Engagement:

S6 Instrument of Delegation from Council to Council Staff is a legislative requirement and therefore not applicable for Community Engagement.

Gender Equality Implications:

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

Confidential Declaration:

Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest:

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

Officer Responsible – Petra Croot, Director Corporate and Community Services

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

Author – Janelle Reichelt, Manager People and Performance

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

Communications Strategy:

Relevant delegations are available for the public to access in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1989* and the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Next Steps:

The publicly available delegations register will be updated to reflect title changes included in this Instrument of Delegation.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council, in exercising the powers conferred by the legislation referred to in the attached S6 Instrument of Delegation from Council to Council Staff, resolves that:

- 1. there be delegated to the members of Council staff holding, acting in, or performing the duties of the office or position referred to in the attached Instrument of Delegation to Council staff, the duties, powers and functions set out in the instrument, subject to the conditions and limitations specified in that instrument; and***
- 2. the duties and functions set out in the instrument must be performed, and the powers set out in the instruments must be executed, in accordance with any guidelines or policies of Council that it may from time to time adopt.***

10.12 DOMESTIC ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN (DAMP) 2026–2029

Responsible Officer: Director Infrastructure Services

Attachments:

1. DRAFT Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029 [10.12.1]
2. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED - 2025 06 26 Detailed Have Your Say Report Domestic Animal Management Plan And Local Laws [10.12.2]
3. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED - 2025 06 26 Detailed Survey Responses Report Domestic Animal Management Plan And Local Laws [10.12.3]

Executive Summary:

This report presents the draft Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026–2029 for Council's consideration and seeks Council's endorsement for public consultation in accordance with Section 68A of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994 (the Act)*.

This plan will guide Council's approach to domestic animal management over the next five (5) years. It outlines priorities, services, objectives and strategies for domestic animal management aligned with the Act's goals.

This Plan will be available for public submission for the period of four (4) weeks between 30 October 2025 and 27 November 2025. Public submissions will be incorporated in the Plan (where practicable) and considered at the 17 December 2025 Council meeting.

Discussion:

All Victorian Councils are legislatively required under Section 68A of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* to prepare a Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) every four (4) years. The DAMP outlines strategies, programs, and policies for the effective management of dogs and cats within the municipality.

The mission of this plan is to create an environment that encourages responsible pet ownership, where people and pets integrate safely and harmoniously within Hindmarsh Shire Council.

The key directions for delivery of animal management services in this DAMP are:

- Training of authorised officers
- Promote and educate people about responsible pet ownership.
- Reduce euthanasia and over population
- Encourage Registration
- Minimise nuisance
- Reduce dog attacks
- Identify dangerous, menacing and restricted dogs.
- Regulation of Domestic Animal Businesses.

The Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) aims to work collectively to promote responsible pet ownership, enhance community safety, and ensure compliance with legislative requirements. Through targeted education, effective enforcement, registration programs, and collaboration with stakeholders, Council supports a balanced approach to animal management that reflects community values and priorities. These components are underpinned by strategic planning and risk management practices that ensure the DAMP plan remains responsive, transparent, and aligned with long-term community wellbeing.

The draft Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) 2026-2029 will be made available for public consultation and submissions, subject to it being formally endorsed by Council.

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

1.1 Our Community is active, healthy and connected.

1.2 Our towns are inclusive, welcoming and growing.

Theme Two: Built and Natural Environment

2.1 We care for and connect with our natural environment.

Theme Four: Good Governance and Financial Sustainability

4.2 We engage our community with respect and openness.

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications, proposed measures align with what is achievable within current budget constraints.

Risk Management Implications:

Strategic Risk Description		Risk Management Discussion
Community Governance	Needs	Council has minimised strategic risk in its Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) by aligning actions with community needs through consultation, ensuring compliance with legislative requirements, and implementing clear governance structures for enforcement and education. By proactively engaging stakeholders, monitoring performance, and fostering cross-agency collaboration, Council has strengthened public trust, improved service delivery, and built resilience against emerging risks such as public safety concerns and environmental impacts.

Relevant Legislation:

Domestic Animals Act 1994

Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986 (POCTA) and Regulations.

Animal Welfare Victoria Codes of Practice

RSPCA Recommended Welfare Standards

Community Engagement:

The 'Have Your Say' consultation which closed on 25 June 2025 for Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) 2026–2029 invited community members to provide feedback and input during the plan's development. This engagement ensured the plan reflects local values, concerns, and expectations around domestic animal management. Community insights helped shape strategies to promote responsible pet ownership, reduce nuisance and safety risks, and improve service delivery. The consultation supported inclusive decision-making and strengthened the alignment between Council's animal management priorities and the needs of residents, contributing to a more responsive and community-focused plan.

The draft Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029 will be made available for public submissions on Council's 'Have Your Say' page between 30 October 2025 to 27 November 2025, following the Council endorsement on Wednesday 29 October 2025.

Gender Equality Implications:

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

Confidential Declaration:

Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest:

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

Officer Responsible – Ram Upadhyaya, Director Infrastructure Services

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

Author – Cherylee Shandley, Manager Planning and Environment

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

Communications Strategy:

The draft Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029 will be made available for public submissions on Council's 'Have Your Say' page between 30 October 2025 to 27 November 2025, following the Council endorsement on Wednesday 29 October 2025.

Next Steps:

This Plan will be available for public submission for the period of 4 weeks between 30 October 2025 and 27 November 2025. Public submissions will be incorporated in the Plan (where practicable) and considered at the 17 December 2025 Council meeting.

RECOMMENDATION:***That Council:***

- 1. endorses the draft Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029 for public consultation; and***
 - 2. undertakes community consultation for the period between 30 October 2025 to 27 November 2025.***
-

10.13 LLOYD STREET, DIMBOOLA - CAPITAL WORKS PROJECT FUNDING

Responsible Officer: Director Infrastructure Services

Attachments:

Nil

Executive Summary:

This report seeks approval from Council to utilise the funding from the sale of Dimboola Senior Citizens building and the sale of Gerang Memorial Hall to extend the footpath in Lloyd Street, Dimboola. A total of \$230,381 (excl. GST) was collected from the sale of two (2) buildings and the proposal is to construct approximately 450 meters of footpath in Lloyd Street, Dimboola (west side) between Lochiel Street and Anderson Street.

When Council was consulting with the community regarding the decision to sell both the Dimboola Senior Citizens Building and Gerang Memorial Hall, it was noted by respondents that funding should be used to increase all-abilities access in Dimboola.

The current path between Lochiel Street and Anderson Street is not suitable for community members with walkers, wheelchairs, or mobility devices due to loose gravel and uneven surfaces. The highly utilised path is a major link between the town centre and the Dimboola Medical Centre and hospital, and constructing a concrete footpath would significantly improve safety for pedestrians accessing these facilities.

The need for a concrete footpath in Lloyd Street Dimboola has also been raised through Customer Action Requests and with the CEO during CEO Drop-In sessions, however these works are not something that can be completed within current budget constraints.

Discussion:

In the 2024/2025 Annual Budget, \$118,000 was allocated to Lloyd Street, Dimboola capital works. The project initially involved kerb and channel to rectify flooding issues on the eastern side of Lloyd Street, between the hospital and Normanby Street. Due to service location issues, a further \$100,000 was added to the 2025/2026 budget to allow for a contractor to safely conduct the service relocation, bringing the total budget to \$218,000. These works are still planned to be undertaken during 2025/2026, and this report does not discuss any changes to this component of the project.

Council has recently sold the Dimboola Senior Citizens building and Gerang Gerung Hall for a total of \$230,831 (excluding GST, after costs). When Council was consulting with the community regarding the decision to sell both the Dimboola Senior Citizens Building and Gerang Memorial Hall, it was noted by respondents that funding should be used to increase all-abilities access in Dimboola. It is therefore proposed that these funds be utilised to construct a 1.5-metre-wide concrete footpath from Lochiel Street to Anderson Street, improving access between the town centre and the Dimboola Medical Centre and hospital.

Any remaining funding from this project will be utilised to renew failed sections of footpath in Dimboola.

The current path is not suitable for community members with walkers, wheelchairs, or mobility devices due to loose gravel and uneven surfaces. Gopher drivers are seen travelling along the edge of the road into oncoming traffic, creating a safety hazard for both pedestrians and road users.



The proposed locations of the footpath upgrade are marked red in the image below. The proposed concrete path construction will be undertaken during the budgeted Lloyd Street Dimboola Kerb and Channel works to ensure efficient delivery of the project.



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

2.2 Our infrastructure supports liveability and resilience.

Financial Implications:

Sales funds from the Dimboola Senior Citizens & Gerang Gerung Hall (\$230,831 excl. GST) be allocated to the Lloyd Street capital works project in 2025/2026.

Risk Management Implications:

Strategic Risk Description		Risk Management Discussion
Community Needs		Access to the town centre of Dimboola is currently compromised on the western side of Lloyd St. A new concrete path will allow the community to safely access from Lochiel Street.
Project Management and Strategic Execution		The project will be planned and completed utilising Council's trained project management staff, with assistance from contractors on complex components of the project, to allow for smooth execution.

Relevant Legislation:

Local Government Act 2020

Local Government Act 1989

Road Management Act 2004

Community Engagement:

When Council was consulting with the community regarding the decision to sell both the Dimboola Senior Citizens Building and Gerang Memorial Hall, it was noted by respondents that funding should be used to increase all-abilities access in Dimboola.

Gender Equality Implications:

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

Confidential Declaration:

Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest:

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

Officer Responsible – Ram Upadhyaya, Director Infrastructure Services

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

Author – Daniel Griffiths, Manager Works and Operations

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

Communications Strategy:

Appropriate consultation including letter drops with affected businesses and landowners will be undertaken to ensure smooth construction and limited disruption.

Next Steps:

Schedule works for the project to commence in the 2025/2026 financial year.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council approves:

- 1. the use of \$230,831 (excl GST) from the sale of Gerang Memorial Hall and Dimboola Senior Citizens Building to extend approximately 450 meters of footpath in Lloyd Street, Dimboola (between Lochiel Street and Anderson Street on west side of the street); and***
- 2. the use of any remaining funds from this project for renewal of failed footpath segments within Dimboola.***

10.14 ASSET PLAN 2025-2035

Responsible Officer: Director Infrastructure Services

Attachments:

1. Hindmarsh Shire Council Asset Plan 2025-2035 [**10.14.1**]

Executive Summary:

This report presents the Asset Plan 2025-2035 for Council adoption.

The Asset Plan 2025-2035 (Plan) is a strategic document that covers the next ten-year period, outlining Council's approach to the management of community assets, and demonstrating Council's commitment to accountability, transparency, and financially responsible decision making. The Asset Plan ensures that infrastructure and facilities are maintained, renewed, and developed in a manner that aligns with community needs and expectations.

Council endorsed the draft Asset Plan 2025-2035 for community consultation at the Council meeting on Wednesday 27 August 2025. The Plan was made available for public submissions for a period of four (4) weeks between 28 August and 25 September 2025. In this period two (2) submissions were received, neither of which required alteration of the plan.

Discussion:

Section 92 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires that Council develop, adopt, and keep in force an Asset Plan. The Asset Plan is in place for a minimum period of ten (10) financial years and needs to be adopted by 31 October in a year following the general election of Council.

At the Council meeting held on Wednesday 27 August 2025, Council endorsed the draft Asset Plan 2025-2035 for public consultation for a period of four (4) weeks commencing 28 August 2025. Feedback on the plan was sought via Council's 'Have Your Say' page and publicised via various social media channels. Two (2) submissions were received on the draft Plan and did not result in Officers making any material changes to the Plan. There were 42 total visitations to the consultation page, 21 visitors viewed information in detail and two (2) of them provided feedback.

Community submissions and officer responses are detailed in the table below:

Feedback Summary	Officer Response
The feedback received was in relation to the maintenance of parks and Council buildings in Jeparit, requesting they are maintained to the same standard as Nhill or Dimboola. The feedback also requested Council fix the weir; move the tennis club to the bowling club and extend the caravan park; sell the old council workshop in Roy Street; utilise the	Council proactively inspects all municipal buildings on a periodic basis and undertakes maintenance as recommended by condition assessments. The approval of

old MCH building next to the Jeparit Hall into a refuge for women and children subject to family violence; and be proactive in the maintenance of “ALL” parks and garden beds on Council land in Jeparit. The submission also addressed non-asset plan related items including flying flags at Council buildings.	building maintenance also depends on the utilisation of the building. Council is actively seeking funding for most of the projects recommended in the feedback provided. Council's Town Maintenance team is always actively working to maintain garden beds and parks in Jeparit and all other townships.
The feedback was seeking additional bus stops for people in Hindmarsh to travel to Horsham, including a bus that links with the Horsham bus to travel further afield.	Bus stops are the responsibility of Public Transport Victoria. Council has been advocating for increased public transport within the Shire, but this is not something that can be addressed through the Asset Plan.

The development of this Asset Plan represents a critical step towards achieving sustainable, efficient, and financially responsible asset management. The Plan outlines how Council intends to manage its infrastructure over the next ten (10) years, with a focus on sustainability, financial responsibility, and community wellbeing. This ensures our assets support the services and amenities our community needs and expects, both now and in the future, providing sustainable benefits for all residents.

Assets owned and managed by Hindmarsh Shire Council are broken down into the four asset portfolios listed below.

\$418 Million	Gross Replacement Cost (GRC)	Fair Value (\$)	Asset Consumption Ratio (% Remaining life)
Transport Infrastructure	284 M	182 M	64%
Stormwater Drainage	16.6 M	10.2 M	61%
Recreation and Open Space	8.2 M	5 M	61%
Buildings and Facilities	109 M	82 M	75%

The data analysis of the entire asset portfolio of Council suggests that 3% of Council's asset stock is approaching end of life, this is at the same level as industry standard. The analysis also indicates that Council is meeting about 75% of the annual renewal demand. This suggests that the renewal of Council assets should take priority before any new or upgrade works of infrastructure are undertaken.

This Plan is an integral part of Council's broader strategic framework, working alongside the Council Plan, Community Vision and the long-term financial plan. Asset management is embedded within Council's overall strategic planning to ensure that investment in roads,

buildings, parks and community facilities actively contributes to creating a connected, inclusive and sustainable community

The Plan incorporates feedback provided by community members during the farmer consultation sessions, CEO drop-in sessions, and community survey conducted for the Council Plan development.

Council can now consider adopting the Draft Asset Plan 2025-2035.

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

2.2 Our infrastructure supports liveability and resilience.

Theme Four: Good Governance and Financial Sustainability

4.3 We manage our resources responsibly and strategically.

Financial Implications:

The Asset Plan projects the average expenditure to be \$4.6m annually over the ten (10) years, condition assessments and valuations of asset portfolios will guide the financial requirements of assets across the municipality.

Risk Management Implications:

Strategic Risk Description	Risk Management Discussion
Asset Management Financial Sustainability	The Plan provides a direct link to the long-term financial plan, reducing the risk to Council through early and consistent planning, and by aligning with the Council Plan. The Asset Plan also provides Council with the framework to manage our assets for the community.

Relevant Legislation:

Local Government Act 2020

Community Engagement:

The Asset Plan was developed by incorporating feedback from series of community engagement programs. The draft Asset Plan was made available for public submissions for period of four (4) weeks between 28 August 2025 and 25 September 2025.

Gender Equality Implications:

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

Confidential Declaration:

Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest:

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

Officer Responsible – Ram Upadhyaya, Director Infrastructure Services

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

Author – Mick Henderson, Manager Assets and Facilities

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

Communications Strategy:

The adoption of Asset Plan 2025-2035 will be communicated to the community via Council's Facebook page.

Next Steps:

The adopted Asset Plan 2025-2035 will be added to Council's website and made available to community on request at Council's Customer Service Centres and Libraries.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council adopts the Asset Plan 2025-2035.

10.15 HEAVY VEHICLE ROAD NETWORK WITHIN HINDMARSH SHIRE COUNCIL

Responsible Officer: Director Infrastructure Services

Attachments:

Nil

Executive Summary:

This report seeks approval from Council to expand the heavy vehicle network to allow access within Hindmarsh's municipal boundaries to all vehicle combinations in Performance Based Standard (PBS) level 2B and all vehicle configurations in PBS level 3A. It also recommends opening Hindmarsh Shire roads to Fire and Emergency response Electric Vehicles and Low or Zero Emissions Heavy Vehicles.

Discussion:

The National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) was established in 2013 as a statutory authority to administer Heavy Vehicle National Law. Road authorities and NHVR assess road networks for various vehicle categories and configurations and subsequently publish them through the NHVR National Network Map.

Hindmarsh Shire Council has opened some of its higher-class roads like Gerang Glenlee Road, Kiata North Road, Nhill Rainbow Road, and Rainbow Rises Road, unconditionally for B-Double and A-Double trucks up to 91 Tonnes and 36.5 meters. Other gravel roads are approved conditionally to use during “Dry Weather Only” and for “first and last mile access only”.

Figure 1 shows the road network that is open for Class 2 combination B Double trucks. The map is available to access via [National Network Map | NHVR](#)

Roads marked green mean that B-double trucks have unrestricted access on those roads. Yellow marked roads are conditionally approved where trucks are only allowed to access in dry weather and only if it is a first or last mile trip.

The same map applies for most of PBS Level 2B and some Level 3A vehicle combinations. B-Triple vehicles in PBS Level 3A are not currently approved on the Hindmarsh Shire road network. In the recent Heavy Transport and Freight Working Group meeting held on Wednesday 1 October 2025, the group strongly supported opening the road network for B-Triple vehicles to improve farm productivity. Use of B-Triple vehicles will reduce the number of trips to be made by smaller vehicles.

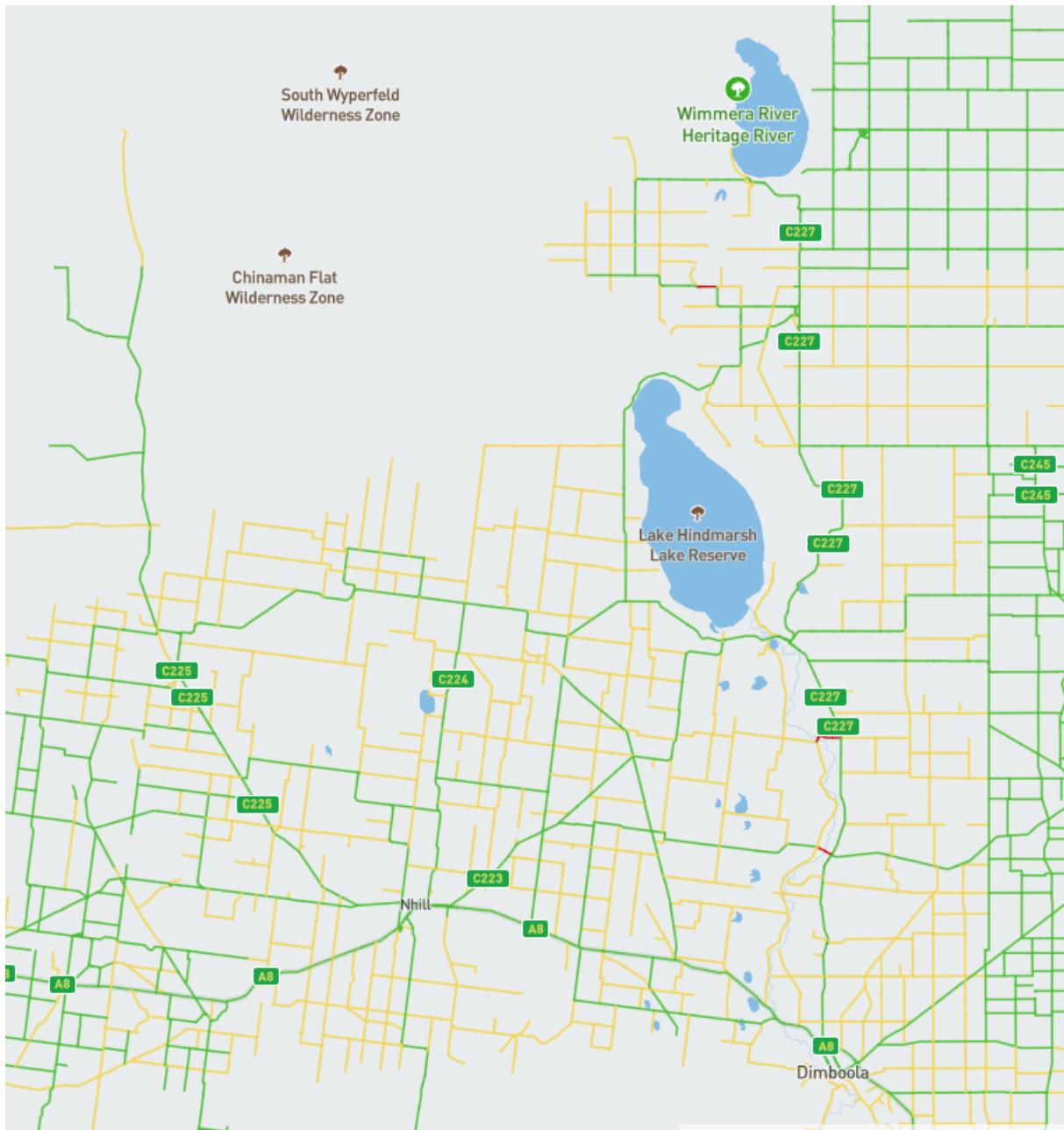


Figure 1: Victoria's Gazetted B-Double Network

Following the discussion at the Heavy Transport and Freight Working Group Meeting and subsequent discussion with the Department of Transport and Planning, it is recommended to replicate figure 1 (i.e. similar to current level of access for B Double trucks) for following additional vehicle configurations:

- Low or Zero Emission Heavy Vehicles – Volvo Semi Trailer (7.5T steer, 44T GCM)
- PBS Level 2B Cubic network - (B-Doubles and A-Doubles up to 30m length and up to 68.5 Tonnes. All other vehicles in PBS Level 2B already have access to roads in figure 1)
- PBS Level 3A 73.3 tonnes and 77.5 Tonnes General Freight Network – All reference vehicles
- PBS Level 3A 85.5 tonnes General Freight Network – All reference vehicles.
- PBS Level 3A 85.5 tonnes Volumetric Network – All reference vehicles.

- PBS Level 3A 91 tonnes General Freight Network – All reference vehicles (Reference vehicles 4,5,6 and 7 already have access to roads shown in figure 1).
- PBS Level 3A 91 tonnes Volumetric Network – All reference vehicles (Reference vehicles 4,5,6 and 7 already have access to roads shown in figure 1).
- Electric Fire Vehicles – Emergency network – Blanket approval to access all roads for emergency purposes.

Both the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) and the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) have discouraged the use of non-PBS vehicles and hence the network for non-PBS B-Triple vehicles has not been proposed for expansion.

Officers will also work with the industry groups, DTP, and NHVR to set up trials to open some of the network for AB-Triple vehicles (up to 36.5 meter long and up to 113.5 tonnes) under PBS Level 3A 113.5 tonnes General Freight Network. Depending on the level of maintenance demand created by such vehicles on Council's road network, further discussion on expanding the network will be presented to the Council.

Officers will also explore the options of implementing access conditions on various roads to protect the road condition and ensure the safety of all users.

Link to Council Plan:

Theme Two: Built and Natural Environment

2.2 Our infrastructure supports liveability and resilience.

Financial Implications:

The mapping and gazettal process will be undertaken by Council officers with assistance from Department of Transport and Planning staff. The recent trial of opening selected road network for B-triples did not show accelerated deterioration in the network and hence the expansion of heavy vehicle network is not likely to induce significant additional maintenance cost.

Risk Management Implications:

Strategic Risk Description	Risk Management Discussion
Community Needs	Opening the road network to meet the needs of the agricultural community will reduce the risk of non-compliance. It will boost productivity for the farming community and foster a partnership approach between the Council and the agricultural industry.

Relevant Legislation:

Local Government Act 2020

Road Management Act 2004

Heavy Vehicle National Law Application Act 2013

Community Engagement:

Consultation with the farming community was undertaken during various Farmer Consultation Sessions in the past as well as at the Heavy Transport and Freight Working Group meeting held on 1 October 2025.

Gender Equality Implications:

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

Confidential Declaration:

Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest:

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

Officer Responsible – Ram Upadhyaya, Director Infrastructure Services

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

Author – Ram Upadhyaya, Director Infrastructure Services

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

Communications Strategy:

The information will be provided to the community through Council's social media channels and newsletters

Next Steps:

Following the endorsement by Council, the roads will be gazetted appropriately in consultation with the Department of Transport and the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator.

Farmer consultation sessions will be held in February/March 2026 to discuss the impacts to the road network and benefits to our farming community.

RECOMMENDATION:***That Council:***

- 1. approves opening the road network for following vehicles on the roads open currently to B-Double trucks as shown in Figure 1 above;***
 - a) Low or Zero Emission Heavy Vehicles – Volvo Semi Trailer (7.5T steer, 44T GCM);***
 - b) PBS Level 2B Cubic network;***

- c) PBS Level 3A 73.3 tonnes and 77.5 Tonnes General Freight Network – All reference vehicles;*
 - d) PBS Level 3A 85.5 tonnes General Freight Network – All reference vehicles;*
 - e) PBS Level 3A 85.5 tonnes Volumetric Network – All reference vehicles;.*
 - f) PBS Level 3A 91 tonnes General Freight Network – All reference vehicles; and*
 - g) PBS Level 3A 91 tonnes Volumetric Network – All reference vehicles.*
- 2. approves providing the blanket approval to access the entire road network to Electric Fire Vehicles – Emergency network; and*
 - 3. authorises the CEO to approve the access conditions for various vehicle configurations in consultation with the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator and the Department of Transport and Planning.*

11 COUNCIL COMMITTEES

11.1 ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer

Attachments:

1. Nhill Township Advisory Committee Minutes - 16 September 2025 [11.1.1]
2. Rainbow Town Committee Minutes 16 September 2025 [11.1.2]
3. Jeparit Town Committee Minutes 13 October 2025 [11.1.3]
4. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED - Nhill Township Advisory Committee Membership Expression of Interest Form - Mark Shandley [11.1.4]

Introduction:

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

- **Nhill Township Advisory Committee**
General Meeting on 16 September 2025
- **Rainbow Township Advisory Committee**
General Meeting on 16 September 2025
- **Jeparit Township Advisory Committee**
General Meeting on 13 October 2025

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

An Expression of Interest form for the Nhill Township Advisory Committee was also received on Wednesday 22 October 2025 from Mark Shandley. This has been included as a confidential attachment.

Next Steps:

Advisory Committee minutes will be published on Council's website. Council Officers will notify Committees of the outcome of funding allocation requests. The Nhill Township Advisory Committee applicant will be advised of the outcome of their Expression of Interest.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

1. ***notes the minutes of the following Advisory Committees:***
 - a) ***Nhill Township meeting held on 16 September 2025;***
 - b) ***Rainbow Township meeting held on 16 September 2025;***
 - c) ***Jeparit Township meeting held on 13 October 2025;***
2. ***approves the requests for the following Advisory Committees:***

- a) Nhill Township to allocate \$5,000 (excl GST) towards Nhill Christmas Carols and Market on 13 December 2025;*
 - b) Jeparit Township to allocate \$2,000 (excl GST) towards public working bee for refurbishment of Infant Welfare Centre (subject to Hindmarsh Shire grant permission); and*
 - 3. appoints Mark Shandley to the Nhill Township Advisory Committee for the current term ending 30 June 2027.**
-

11.2 COMMUNITY ASSET COMMITTEES

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer

Attachments:

1. Rainbow Community Asset Committee AGM Minutes 03 September 2025 [11.2.1]
2. Rainbow Community Asset Committee Minutes 03 September 2025 [11.2.2]
3. Yurunga Homestead Minutes 25 September 2025 [11.2.3]
4. Yurunga Homestead Minutes 28 August 2025 [11.2.4]
5. Wimmera Mallee Pioneer Museum Minutes 16 September 2025 [11.2.5]

Introduction:

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

- **Rainbow Civic Centre Committee**
General Meeting on 3 September 2025
Annual Meeting on 3 September 2025
- **Yurunga Homestead Committee**
General Meeting on 28 August 2025
General Meeting on 25 September 2025
- **Wimmera Mallee Pioneer Museum Committee**
General Meeting on 16 September 2025

A copy of the minutes for each meeting is included as an attachment for the information of Council.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council notes the minutes of the following Asset Committees:

- 1. Rainbow Civic Centre meetings held on 3 September 2025;***
- 2. Yurunga Homestead meetings held on 28 August 2025 and 25 September 2025; and***
- 3. Wimmera Mallee Pioneer Museum meeting held on 16 September 2025.***

12 LATE REPORTS

No late reports.

13 NOTICES OF MOTION

No notices of motions.

14 OTHER BUSINESS

15 CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS

No confidential reports.

16 LATE CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS

No late confidential reports.

17 MEETING CLOSE
