



CORANGAMITE
SHIRE

Minutes

Council Meeting

Tuesday 28 April 2026

Held in the Killara Centre
At the Camperdown Community
Centre
Commenced at 3:00 pm



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Order of Business

Minutes of the meeting of the Corangamite Shire Council
held in the Killara Centre at the Camperdown Community Centre,
210-212 Manifold Street, Camperdown Victoria 3260
At 3:00 pm on Tuesday 28 April 2026

Present

Councillors

K. Makin (Chairperson), J. Beard, N. Cole, G. Conheady, R. Gstrein, L. Hickey, J. Vogels

Officers

David Rae, Chief Executive Officer
Justine Linley, Director Sustainable Development
Shaun Broadbent, Director Works and Services
Xavier Flanagan, Director Corporate and Community Services
Gabrielle Henry, Manager Governance and Civic Support
Jarrod Woff, Manager Facilities and Recreation
Katie Hearn, Manager Community Services

1 Prayer

We ask for guidance and blessing on this Council. May the true needs and wellbeing of our communities be our concern. Help us, who serve as leaders, to remember that all our decisions are made in the best interests of the people, culture and the environment of the Corangamite Shire.

Amen.

2 Acknowledgment of Country

Corangamite Shire Council acknowledges and pays our respects to the Eastern Maar and Wadawurrung peoples, as the Traditional Owners of the Lands that we work, live and play. We also acknowledge their Elders, past and present and recognise their ongoing cultural, spiritual and educational practices.

3 Apologies

Nil

4 Declarations of Conflict of Interest

In accordance with section 130 (1)(a) of the Local Government Act 2020 Councillors are required to disclose any “conflict of interest” in respect of a matter to be considered at a Council Meeting. Disclosure must occur immediately before the matter is considered or discussed.

5 Confirmation of Minutes

Recommendation

RECOMMENDATION

That the minutes of the Corangamite Shire Council meeting held on 24 March 2026 be confirmed as correct.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Laurie Hickey
Seconded: Cr Ruth Gstrein

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

6 Deputations and Presentations

The Mayor, Cr Kate Makin, invited members of the public who had requested to address Council to make their presentations.

No items were submitted.

7 Committee Reports

Nil

8 Planning Reports

Nil

9 Officer's Reports

9.1 Quarterly Council Plan Initiatives Progress 1 January - 31 March

Directorate: Governance and Civic Support

Author: Imogen Black, Governance Officer

Executive Summary

Council is required to report regularly on its performance against the Council Plan, including results in relation to the strategic indicators. This requirement is included in the Governance and Management Checklist, which forms part of Council's Annual Report of Operations.

The implementation of the Council Plan 2025-2029 initiatives has been phased over the four years, with regular milestones to track progress. Initiatives included are primarily for the first year of this four-year plan, with Annual Action Plans to be developed that identify future initiatives for years two, three and four of the Council plan implementation.

Recommendation

That Council receives the third Quarterly Council Plan Initiatives Progress Report for 2025-2026.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Ruth Gstrein

Seconded: Cr Nick Cole

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

Discussion/Key Matters/Issues

Council has five strategic objectives that we work towards. These objectives, and the strategies and initiatives to achieve them, guide council's work programs and services. The strategic objectives have been developed in response to community feedback.

The Initiatives within these objectives are broken down to four areas:

- Project,
- Policy, Plan or Strategy
- Service, and
- Advocacy.

The attached report outlines each action item in detail. Third quarter results for the 2025-2026 year are:

	Number of Initiatives	Current Status
Project	19	2 - Completed 16 - In Progress 1 - Not Started
Policy, Plan or Strategy	15	4 – Completed 10 – In Progress 1 – Not Started
Service	21	9 – Completed 10 – In Progress 2 – Not Started
Advocacy	13	1 – Completed 12 – In Progress
TOTALS	68	16 – Completed 48 – In Progress 4 – Not Started

This breakdown provides a clear overview of the status of the initiatives. In the third quarter it is favourable that 71% of initiatives are already in progress, this percentage is lower than at the end of the first and second quarters, but only due to seven projects moving on to being completed. During the third quarter, 24% of initiatives were reported as being complete, this is an improvement on the 13% that was reported at the end of the second quarter. While 5% of initiatives have not yet started at the end of this quarter, this is an improvement on the 7% that were not started in the last reporting period.

The Council Plan initiatives scheduled for completion in Year 1 are progressing as planned. Most Year 1 initiatives are either completed or well advanced, indicating that implementation is broadly on track. Of the 36 initiatives identified to be completed in year 1, 33 are on track to be completed by June 30. A breakdown for each area can be seen below with further information outlined in the attachment.

	Number of year 1 Initiatives	Current Status
Project	10	9 – On track for completion by June 30 1 – Deferred as currently not funded
Policy, Plan or Strategy	11	9 – On track for completion by June 30 1 – Awaiting funding outcome 1 – Awaiting model rules
Service	15	15 – On track for completion by June 30

Options for Council Consideration

Council can receive the Quarterly Council Plan Initiatives Report with or without amendment.

Alignment to Council Plan

This report is in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2025-2029 and reporting on those initiatives.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

Nil

Collaborative Procurement

Nil

Consultation and Engagement

The Leadership Team was consulted in the preparation of the report.

Financial Considerations

Preparation of the performance report is part of Council's annual reporting cycle and was completed within existing resources.

Diversity and Inclusion Considerations

N/A

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

Nil

Risk Consideration

Nil

Conflict of Interest

No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Attachments

1. Third Quarter Council Plan Initiatives Delivery Report 2025-2026 [9.1.1 - 11 pages]

9.2 Skipton Children's Service - Future Directions 2026

Directorate: Corporate and Community Services

Author: Eliza Ogden, Coordinator Education and Care

Executive Summary

This report presents a proposed approach to the planning and delivery of Skipton Early Years Services in response to the Victorian Government's Pre-Prep reform. It addresses infrastructure needs for Kindergarten and Long Day Care and is informed by community feedback.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Approves the staged expansion of the Skipton Early Years Facility to support implementation of the Victorian Government's Pre-Prep (Best Start, Best Life) reforms.
2. Endorses the Chief Executive Officer proceeding with an application to the Victorian School Building Authority for funding to deliver a modular kindergarten facility at the Skipton Early Years site to increase licensed kindergarten capacity and protect the continuity of long day care services.
3. Supports further planning and community engagement to inform families and stakeholders of the proposed expansion of early years service delivery at the Skipton Early Years Facility.
4. Notes that, subject to the successful acquisition of Victorian School Building Authority funding and required regulatory approvals, Council would be required to provide an ongoing operational subsidy of approximately \$18,000 per annum to support the delivery of an expanded Skipton Child Care program.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Nick Cole

Seconded: Cr Geraldine Conheady

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

Discussion/Key Matters/Issues

1. This report presents a proposed approach to inform Council in its planning and delivery of Skipton Early Years Services in response to the Victorian Government's Pre-Prep reform. It addresses infrastructure and service modelling for Kindergarten and Long Day Care. Skipton is located within a childcare desert, with 0.537 places per child.

1. (Victoria University, Mapping the childcare deserts: Childcare accessibility in Australia 2024)

The Early Years Plan 2025-2035 sets a strategy for Council's work in early years' education and care services for the next decade and guides Council in its response to the State Government's Best Start Best Life reforms as well as working towards meeting the needs of local families. The Skipton Early Years facility is identified within this report as a site which needs to redevelop to be able to accommodate the expanding needs of community and the increase of funded kindergarten hours.

Council launched its 10-year Early Years Plan in 2025. As a part of this process, staff, users of the facility and wider community were consulted on their needs in the Skipton area.

The current Skipton early years facility, located on Montgomery Street, hosts both childcare and kindergarten over the course of the week. Expansion will be required by 2029, when Corangamite will offer 25 hours of 4-year-old funded kindergarten to ensure that childcare is not disrupted.

An unintended consequence of the Best Start Best Life reform has resulted in reduced child care demand for children of eligible kindergarten age. The demand for childcare access for children under three years of age continues to be high in Corangamite. It is anticipated that this trend will continue for infants seeking childcare, with preschool aged children accessing the free funded kindergarten program.

Council has been managing the Skipton Early Years facility for many years, having transitioned responsibility from a Parent run Committee of Management to an Early Years Manager (EYM). The Montgomery Street site is owned by the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action. Renovations to the current facility were completed in 2021 in readiness for the rollout of 15 hours of three-year-old kindergarten. Best Start Best Life reform milestone deliverables will see Corangamite be required to offer 25 hours of funded kindergarten by 2029 and 30 hours from 2031.

The Early Years building is located adjacent to the Skipton Primary School and there are no planning overlays. The Skipton Progress Association and Foodbank neighbour the Early Years Facility in the Jubilee Centre.

Both childcare and kindergarten programs are highly regarded and there is strong community demand for increased access to childcare places with longer hours.

Council is eligible to apply to the Victorian School Building Authority (VSBA) to increase the amount of available licensed space for the funded kindergarten program to ensure that childcare is not disrupted. A connected modular building would create increased capacity for kindergarten and leave the existing play space for childcare. This is sufficient outdoor space to allow both programs to operate concurrently.

Physical expansion of the current facility presents an opportunity to increase the childcare program to better meet community need.

Any service changes would be contingent on approval from the Commonwealth Government (Child Care Community Fund). Business case modelling has considered multiple models of operation and combinations of childcare places. There is an emerging need for childcare for children under the eligible kindergarten age. Typically, this is children under three, which legislation requires a higher staff to child ratio, driving a higher program cost.

It is proposed that a 9 hour per day childcare program be introduced over 5 days, for 50 weeks of the year – this will create an additional 24 available sessions to families per week for an additional 4 weeks of the year. The expanded facility will offer an additional 33 licenced spaces. There is potential for these childcare places to be expanded if there is sufficient demand and staffing availability.

In addition to the matters discussed above the State Government in 2025 released housing targets for every Council across Victoria to support access to affordable housing. The current number of homes Corangamite has is 8,000. Current targets for Corangamite to achieve by 2051 are an additional 1400 homes. Access to Early Childhood Education & Care services becomes a vital enabler to growing our population and will be necessary to ensure Corangamite has the services and resources families most require.

Options for Council Consideration

The Early Years Plan 2025-2035 is a complex body of work that incorporates investment in upgrade and refurbishment of facilities, including Skipton. Expansion of the facility will involve working closely with State and Commonwealth agencies to ensure best outcomes for the Skipton community. The Skipton early years facility has co-located programs which are reliant on collaboration to ensure sustainable program delivery.

The implementation of suggested recommendations will require both capital and operational investment.

Alignment to Council Plan

This report is in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2025-2029:

A Community that enables healthy, active, and resilient living

- Deliver, support and enable services and programs for all life stages particularly youth and aged

- Deliver and advocate for childcare services and facilities

- Support population attraction and retention initiatives and ageing in place

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

The Victorian Government Best Start Best Life reforms include delivery of 15 hours of 3YO Kindergarten paired with 30 hours for 4YO Kindergarten. The Commonwealth is also investing heavily in childcare infrastructure and recognises equity of access as a key enabler. Advocacy for Corangamite Local Government Area is ongoing through the South West Alliance.

Early Years is a highly regulated environment with increasing workforce obligations necessary for a safe environment that requires fit for purpose infrastructure and an agile staff pool. It is critical that Council take a planned approach to early years' service provision and infrastructure planning to enable an organised approach.

Collaborative Procurement

Nil

Consultation and Engagement

Engagement has commenced and is ongoing with Council's Facilities and Community Services Teams, pending Council agreement to proceed with the proposed plan.

Feedback from families within the Skipton community using the service, which was gathered through the Early Years Plan, is in favour of access to additional childcare hours and days of operation. Pending Council's approval, consultation with staff and community about expansion of childcare hours will be undertaken.

Users of the Montgomery site have been informed that future directions for the site are being explored.

Council has committed to advocating for childcare both independently and through the South West Victoria Alliance. These issues are clear economic drivers and a major contributor to achieving gender equity. Advocacy for a state run child care centre has occurred on numerous occasions which to date has been unsuccessful.

If Council is successful in securing a grant from the Victorian School Building Authority further community engagement will be undertaken.

Financial Considerations

If this proposal proceeds, the ongoing cost to Council to subsidise the Child Care program would be \$18,000 annually. This outcome is dependent upon sufficient enrolments.

Item	Funding Body	Cost (\$)
Modular build to increase education and care places, including outdoor learning area.	Victorian School Board Authority	2,500,000
Site preparation	Victorian School Board Authority	18,000
Fit out equipment	Council	30,000
Project contingency	Council	20,000
Estimated cost to Council run child care per annum	Council	18,000

Diversity and Inclusion Considerations

Increased access to childcare and early years programs has a direct impact on female participation and productivity in the workforce, contributing to reducing the gender gap.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

Nil.

Risk Consideration

With the expansion of the program there may be initial set up costs to increase the amount of infant appropriate equipment with a likely expenditure of approximately \$30,000.

The creation of 12 additional educator shifts a week will bring additional costs and risks associated with ensuring staff coverage, staff support and supervision over the week. There is a considerable amount of anecdotal evidence supporting the demand for increase in child care access in Skipton. Previous Council experience with developing early years programs would suggest that there is a risk that the program may take some time to reach its full capacity. Based on the breakeven modelling, an attendance of 12 children daily is required. Ultimately if attendance is lower than this there is a danger of an annual deficit.

Council has invested heavily in early years workforce development. Whilst significant investment in our people has strengthened the team and its ability to be agile, recruitment to the Skipton area has historically been challenging. By providing a traineeship this ensures ongoing upskilling of local candidates.

Conflict of Interest

No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Attachments Nil

9.3 Corporate Purchase Card Policy

Directorate: Corporate and Community Services

Author: Xavier Flanagan, Director Corporate and Community Services

Executive Summary

The Corporate Purchase Card Policy has been reviewed to strengthen governance, improve clarity and ensure alignment with Council's Procurement and Contract Management Policy.

The revised policy introduces clearer guidance on the appropriate use of purchase cards, reinforces the Purchase Order (PO) system as Council's primary purchasing method and clarifies responsibilities for cardholders and approving officers.

The updated policy was presented to the Audit and Risk Committee on 12 March 2026 where it was reviewed and endorsed for submission to Council for adoption.

Council is requested to adopt the revised Corporate Purchase Card Policy.

Recommendation

That Council:

- 1. Revokes the Corporate Purchase Card Policy dated April 2022, and**
- 2. Adopts the Corporate Purchase Card Policy dated April 2026.**

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Laurie Hickey
Seconded: Cr Nick Cole

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

Discussion/Key Matters/Issues

The Corporate Purchase Card Policy provides the governance framework for the use of Council's corporate credit cards. The Policy is reviewed regularly to ensure it remains current, supports sound financial management and aligns with Council's Procurement Policy.

A comprehensive review has been undertaken, resulting in a revised Policy which further strengthens controls, provides clearer guidance and introduces enhanced monitoring and accountability.

Key changes include:

- Introducing a \$500 transaction threshold to help guide staff on the appropriate use of purchase cards.
- Reinforcing that the Purchase Order system remains Council's primary purchasing method.
- Providing clearer guidance on approved exemptions, including circumstances where credit card payments are the only practical option (e.g. accommodation, online subscriptions, travel and accommodation).
- Clarifying roles and responsibilities for cardholders, managers and directors.
- Improving the structure and readability of the policy, including reducing excessive bullet points and simplifying wording where appropriate.

These changes aim to strike an appropriate balance between operational efficiency and sound financial governance.

Options for Council Consideration

1. Maintain the existing policy – This would retain current practices but would not address clarity and governance improvements identified during the review.
2. Adopt the revised policy (Recommended) – This option provides clearer guidance on card usage, strengthens governance controls and improves alignment with Council's procurement framework.

Alignment to Council Plan

This report is in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2025-2029:

Strong Civic Leadership

Be financially responsible and sustainable

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

The Corporate Purchase Card Policy supports Council's obligations under the *Local Government Act 2020* relating to responsible financial management and internal controls.

The Policy aligns with Council's:

- Procurement and Contract Management Policy – Reinforces the PO system as the primary method of procurement.
- Employee Code of Conduct
- Fraud and Risk Management frameworks

Collaborative Procurement

Nil

Consultation and Engagement

Internal consultation was undertaken with cardholders, managers and Finance staff during the review process to ensure the policy remains practical and operationally workable.

The draft policy was presented to the Audit and Risk Committee on 12 March 2026 where the Committee reviewed the revised policy and endorsed it for Council adoption.

External consultation was not required as the policy relates to internal financial controls and administrative processes.

Financial Considerations

There are no direct financial implications associated with adoption of the revised Policy.

Diversity and Inclusion Considerations

Training and communication will be delivered in inclusive formats to support staff with varying levels of financial and policy knowledge.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

Nil identified.

Risk Consideration

The Corporate Purchase Card Policy is an important internal control that supports Council's financial governance framework.

The revised policy strengthens risk mitigation by:

- Reinforcing the Purchase Order system as Council's primary purchasing method
- Clarifying approval requirements and responsibilities
- Providing clearer guidance on appropriate card use
- Strengthening oversight and accountability

These measures help reduce the risk of non-compliant expenditure, procurement control weaknesses and potential audit findings.

Conflict of Interest

No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Attachments

1. Corporate Purchase Card Policy - April 2026 [9.3.1 - 8 pages]

9.4 Quarterly Finance Report March 2026

Directorate: Corporate and Community Services

Author: Albert Giorgini, Acting Manager, Finance

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to note Council's current financial result and financial position as at 31 March 2026 (Attachment 1) and seek approval for changes to the 2025-2026 Reviewed Budget identified during the mid year budget review process.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Receive the finance report for the period ending 31 March 2026.
2. Approve Changes to the 2025-2026 budget of \$90,937 favourable.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Ruth Gstrein
Seconded: Cr Laurie Hickey

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

Discussion/Key Matters/Issues

Council's year to date financial performance for 2025-2026 is currently \$4.75 million favourable to budget on an accounting basis, and \$5.58 million favourable to budget from a cash perspective.

Total income is \$2.97 million higher on a cash basis than budget driven by:

- Operating Grants are \$2.92 million higher than budget, mainly due to phasing, with more grant income received earlier than originally expected, \$2.16 million of which relating to Local Roads and Community Infrastructure (LRCI) Funding, and \$750k relating to unbudgeted grants, such as the January 2026 Skipton Fire event funding.
- Capital Grants being \$383k higher than budget, mainly due to phasing, with more grant income received earlier than originally expected, such as \$174k relating to Park Lane - Bowen Street to Caravan Park.
- Statutory Fees & Fines are \$553k lower than budget due to the timing of the March quarter EPA Levy payment for the Landfill Operations at Naroghid.
- User Fees are \$205k higher than budget, driven in the most part by higher income than budgeted at Naroghid Landfill Operations of \$239k.

- Other revenue being \$204k higher than budget, driven by favourable movements in interest rates.
- Off set by 'Proceeds from sale of assets', which is currently \$196,000 unfavourable to budget. This is mainly due to delays in selling both light and heavy fleet vehicles. These disposals are now expected to occur later in the financial year. The forecast still includes the planned \$1.5 million land sale proceeding this year however, if circumstances or timing shifts this item will carry forward into the 2026-2027 year. This is monitored by officers on a monthly basis.
- Contributions - monetary being \$93k lower than budget as Contributions expected in March (Unlocking Housing - Thomson Road, Terang \$121K) have not yet been received.

Total expenditure, including Capital spend, is \$2.61 million lower than budget mainly due to:

- Materials and Services expenditure being \$1.7m favourable year to date, is driven in part by phasing of operational project delivery. The variance is also driven by Landfill and Waste Projects of \$611k, and outdoor maintenance works of \$358k, such as Sealed roads, Footpaths, Roadside Vegetation and Urban Street Tree Management, which have all experienced delays due to adverse weather conditions. The remaining \$14.4 million is expected to be spent in part over the remaining months in the year, as projects progress to completion, however where necessary projects yet to be completed will carry forward. Current estimates of carry forwards on operational projects are estimated at \$3.50 million, however this will continue to be reviewed and updated on a monthly basis. It is important to note that an additional \$180k of fuel costs has been added to the Materials and Services forecast for the current year.
- Other Expenses being \$148K (2%) lower than budget driven mainly by budgeted Contribution by Council yet to be paid (\$113K).
- Capital Expenditure is \$837K (7%) higher than budget. There has been considerable spend on Landfill Cell 16A of \$611K and various Roads projects approx. \$244K in the quarter including Sisters Noorat Road, Burkes Road, Noogee Road widening, Curdies River Road, and Gnarpurt Road.

Council adopted the 2025-2026 Budget at the ordinary Council meeting in June 2025. Between January and March 2026, Managers reviewed their budgets and funding requirements to deliver approved programs, and identified some adjustments.

Project Name	Adopted Budget	Reviewed Budget	Fore cast Budget	(Favourable)/ Unfavourable Movement
Capital Project Budget Variations	3,035,000	3,207,878	3,110,179	(97,699)
Operating project Budget Variations	8,919,542	9,265,311	9,272,073	6,762
Total	11,954,542	12,473,190	12,382,253	(90,937)

A full list of all adjustments is attached to the report.

While this report seeks approval for the budget adjustments which will reduce Council's projected year end cash position by \$90,937, Officers will investigate opportunities to offset this variance during the fourth quarter.

Options for Council Consideration

Council can choose to note the interim finance report for the period ending 31 March 2026 and either:

- 1) approve changes of \$90,937 favourable to the Reviewed budget
- 2) not approve change of \$90,937 favourable to the Reviewed budget

Alignment to Council Plan

This report is in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2025-2029:

Strong Civic Leadership

Be financially responsible and sustainable

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

The report meets Council's requirements for reporting under the *Local Government Act 2020* and is in accordance with the commitments in the Council Plan 2025-2029:

Strong Civic Leadership

Collaborative Procurement

Nil

Consultation and Engagement

The report has been prepared in consultation with relevant department managers and has been reviewed by the Executive Leadership Team.

Financial Considerations

March 2026 Quarterly finance report forecasts a 2025-2026 year-end cash deficit of (\$11.78 million). When accounting for the accumulated cash surplus brought forward of \$33.26 million, the March 2026 Quarterly finance report forecasts an accumulated cash surplus as at June 30 2026 of \$21.47 million.

Diversity and Inclusion Considerations

While the finance report focuses on financial performance and financial position as at 31 March 2026, diversity and inclusion principles have been considered during this process and are applied equitably across all departments. There are no direct diversity or inclusion impacts arising from this report.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

Nil

Risk Consideration

Nil

Conflict of Interest

No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Attachments

1. Finance Report March 2026 [**9.4.1** - 12 pages]

9.5 Activate Corangamite - Investment Attraction Strategy

Directorate: Sustainable Development

Author: Katy McMahon, Manager Economy & Prosperity

Executive Summary

Activate Corangamite is an investment attraction program incorporating an investment attraction package, readiness support and marketing prospectus. The program is intended to:

- Define and promote investment ready opportunities and sites
- Source private and public sector investment for private sector projects/businesses
- Support and develop entrepreneurs
- Source business angels/angel investors
- Facilitate connections with government departments and agencies to support private sector investment in Corangamite.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. **Authorise the CEO to progress the development of the Activate Corangamite Investment Attraction Program; and**
2. **Seek expressions of interest from private sector land-holders and businesses to be part of the marketing prospectus and program.**

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Jamie Vogels
Seconded: Cr Geraldine Conheady

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

Discussion/Key Matters/Issues

Council continues to progress the implementation of the Grow and Prosper Corangamite Economic Framework, with a strong focus on positioning the municipality for sustained economic resilience, population stability and new private sector investment. Work undertaken to date has centred on establishing priority industry sectors, identifying development-ready and strategic opportunity sites, and strengthening partnerships with regional and State Government agencies to support future investment attraction efforts.

In recent years the focus has been on business support and project delivery. This has been necessary given the impacts of Covid and the requirement to deliver funded projects such as the Port Campbell Town Centre Revitalisation project. Now is the opportunity to readjust focus and concentrate on activating Corangamite through investment attraction.

As part of the next phase, Council is developing a dedicated Investment Attraction Program - Activate Corangamite. This program will formalise Council's approach to identifying, packaging and promoting key investment opportunities across the Shire, while ensuring alignment with the economic framework's goals of supporting local employment, enhancing township vitality and enabling industry diversification.

Activate Corangamite is intended to bring together innovative approaches to attract investors and entrepreneurs by leveraging technology, community and business engagement, highlighting unique regional attributes to create appealing investment Opportunities.

An initial first step is development of a prospectus for Corangamite that will include industry and town profiles. Activate Corangamite will build on this with development of targeted industry prospectuses; site specific opportunities; digital portal; and an active marketing program. It will include attendance at trade and investment shows, and investment deputations both domestically and internationally where appropriate.

As an investment attraction program it is intentionally externally focussed. While opportunities to support existing businesses in internal business expansion and/or diversification will not be ignored it is recognised that these opportunities are in part supported as part of Grow and Prosper Corangamite and the work of the Economic Development and Planning and Building Teams.

Activate Corangamite will enable the team to build stronger relationships with State and Commonwealth departments and agencies involved in investment attraction and facilitation including Invest Victoria, the Victorian Government Trade and Investment (VGTI) Commissioners, Austrade and the Industry Capability Network (ICN).

Options for Council Consideration

Council may wish to consider prioritising the sites or industries it wishes to include as part of the Investment Attraction Prospectus and the target areas for the marketing program.

Alignment to Council Plan

This report is in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2025-2029:

A growing and prosperous economy

Support and promote local businesses

Encourage sustainable agriculture

Enhance and promote tourism opportunities
Support and enable job creation
Seek to diversify our economy including retail and hospitality and support creative industries

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

Grow and Prosper Corangamite 2023

- Grow Corangamite: Securing our Agricultural Future 2024
- Great South Coast Economic Futures
- Corangamite Destination Action Plan:
 - Priority 1, Action 1 Support private sector investment in produce and experience development, support new and improved accommodation.
- Regional Economic Development Strategy – Great South Coast (RDV)
- VicGrid Central Highlands Renewable Energy Zone

Collaborative Procurement

Nil

Consultation and Engagement

Councillors and Council Officers have undertaken Economic Opportunities tours of potential investment locations and industries. Discussions have been held with individual businesses and landowners and with Regional Development Victoria and AgVic. Further consultation is planned with Invest Victoria, Austrade, ICN and VGTI Commissioners.

Financial Considerations

Council's current financial year budget includes an allocation of \$30,000 for prospectus development. In addition, a budget proposal has been developed to support the implementation of the Strategy for consideration as part of the 2026-2027 Budget.

Diversity and Inclusion Considerations

N/A

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

N/A

Risk Consideration

This report addresses Enterprise Risk 77 – Insufficient investment by Council in Economic Development. The development of an investment attraction program and support provided to facilitate private sector investment and development in strategic projects in the Shire is a mitigation measure to address this risk. The current risk rating is low and the residual risk rating is low.

Conflict of Interest

No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Attachments

Nil

9.6 Grow Corangamite Planning Scheme Amendment Update

Directorate: Sustainable Development

Author: Andrew Nield, Manager Regulatory Services

Executive Summary

This report provides Council with an update on the progress of the Grow Corangamite Planning Scheme Amendment (C67cora) and outlines key activities undertaken to date.

Amendment C67cora seeks to implement the *Grow Corangamite: Sustaining our Agricultural Future Strategy*, adopted by Council in August 2024. On 26 February 2026, the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) advised that Amendment C67cora would not be authorised under section 16G of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*. The refusal was primarily due to concerns that elements of the Amendment were not aligned with State planning policy, Planning Practice Notes, and established drafting conventions, particularly in relation to agricultural land classification terminology, the role of local policy relative to State policy, the regulation of timber production through the Farming Zone, and aspects of renewable energy policy.

In response, Council commissioned an independent review of Amendment C67cora by Plan2Place. The review confirmed that the Grow Corangamite Strategy is well considered and based on a strong body of evidence, but also identified that aspects of the Amendment C67cora should be reframed to address the matters raised by the DTP. Should Council resolve to pursue this approach, there will be a need to proactively advocate to DTP, and other relevant stakeholders, that the reframed Amendment C67cora is strategically sound, supported by a robust evidence base, and appropriately aligned with State planning objectives, in order to improve the likelihood of authorisation.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Note the findings of the independent review of Amendment C67cora.
2. Endorse a revised approach to implementing the *Grow Corangamite Strategy* that:
 - Replaces references to “state and regionally significant agricultural land” with “high and very high-quality productive agricultural land”;
 - Revises local planning policy to clearly complement, rather than replicate or extend, State planning policy;
 - Rewords renewable energy policy provisions to align with Clauses 19.01-2S and 19.01-2R of the Planning Policy Framework; and
 - Retains the proposed 40-hectare timber production permit trigger with strengthened strategic justification.
3. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer and the Director of Sustainable Development to engage with officers from the Department of Transport and Planning and the Department of Agriculture to progress the revised approach.
4. Undertake advocacy with State and Federal Government representatives, departments, and agencies to communicate the strategic importance of the *Grow Corangamite Planning Scheme Amendment*, including its role in protecting high-quality agricultural land, supporting food security, and managing competing rural land uses.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Jamie Vogels
Seconded: Cr Laurie Hickey

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

Discussion/Key Matters/Issues

Amendment C67cora - Authorisation Refusal

Amendment C67cora seeks to implement the *Grow Corangamite: Sustaining our Agricultural Future Strategy*, adopted by Council in August 2024. On 26 February 2026, the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) advised that Amendment C67cora would not be authorised under section 16G of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

The refusal letter issued by DTP identifies three primary reasons for not authorising Amendment C67cora. These relate to inconsistencies with the Planning Policy Framework, particularly Clause 14.01-1S (Protection of agricultural land), and with Planning Practice Note 42 and the *Practitioner's Guide to Victoria's Planning Schemes*, including concerns about the definition of productive agricultural land and local policy assuming the role of State policy. The letter also notes that the Amendment lacked adequate strategic justification to regulate timber production in a manner that could prejudice that use over other agricultural activities.

Despite strong representations from Council officers to resolve some of the technical concerns with the Amendment, it became clear that issues associated with the proposed regulation of timber production could not be addressed to the satisfaction of DTP. In particular, the Department was not prepared to support an approach that could be interpreted as prioritising dairy farming over timber production, or otherwise differentiating between agricultural industries within the Farming Zone. Timber production is recognised as a legitimate agricultural use, and the DTP considered that the proposed permit trigger risked effectively 'picking winners and losers' between agricultural land uses without sufficient strategic justification. These concerns ultimately remained unresolved and were a key factor in the decision not to authorise the Amendment.

Independent Review

Given the matters raised through the authorisation process, Council commissioned an independent review by Plan2Place to test the strategic soundness of the *Grow Corangamite Strategy* and to explore alternative approaches to implementing its objectives through the Planning Scheme. The review confirms that the Strategy is well considered and supported by a strong and credible evidence base. The Strategy was informed by detailed technical work and extensive consultation with industry stakeholders and the broader community, and it aligns with Council's wider economic development objectives. Earlier peer reviews also supported the Strategy's findings, particularly the identified need to strengthen planning policy settings for rural workers' accommodation, timber production, and renewable energy development in rural areas. Overall, the review is clear that the Strategy itself remains valid and sound.

The review finds that the primary issue for Council is not the intent of the Strategy, but the way that intent has been translated into planning scheme controls through Amendment C67cora. One of the key reasons the Amendment was not authorised relates to the description and mapping of agricultural land. The Amendment relies on the terminology “state and regionally significant agricultural land”, which is not clearly defined or supported within the Victorian Planning Provisions. DTP considers this approach problematic, as it risks local planning policy encroaching into the role of State policy. This concern is reinforced by recent State Government advice, including the Victorian Government response to Inquiry into securing the Victorian Food Supply, indicating a shift away from ranking agricultural land according to levels of “significance”, and towards recognising the importance of all productive agricultural land.

In this context, the review strongly recommends refocusing both the Strategy and the Amendment on the established concept of “high quality productive agricultural land”. This term is already defined within the Planning Scheme framework and is therefore less likely to attract State objection, while still allowing Council to give policy weight to the protection of its most productive agricultural areas.

The most contested element of the Amendment is the proposed requirement for a planning permit for timber production on land exceeding 40 hectares in the Farming Zone. DTP has expressed concern that this control could unduly restrict timber production, which is recognised as an agricultural use and is becoming increasingly important at the State level following the cessation of native forest harvesting in Victoria. As a result, the review identifies a key decision point for Council: either strengthen the strategic and technical justification for the permit trigger, or defer or remove it to allow the remainder of the Amendment to proceed. Given the high level of community and industry input to the development of the Strategy, it is recommended that Council retain the permit trigger for timber production on land exceeding 40 hectares in the Farming Zone and undertake further advocacy to outline the rationale behind the inclusion of this element in the Amendment.

Renewable energy policy is another area where the review recommends changes. Corangamite Shire contains two major Renewable Energy Zones, and State and regional policies strongly support the development of renewable energy infrastructure. The proposed local policy currently places a strong emphasis on avoiding renewable energy development on agricultural land, which conflicts with higher-level policy directions. The review recommends reframing this policy to support renewable energy projects where they are appropriately located and capable of co-existing with ongoing agricultural activities. This approach would better align with State policy while still enabling Council to manage potential land-use and amenity impacts.

Finally, the review highlights the importance of local planning policy clearly supporting, rather than repeating or exceeding, the role of State policy. It notes that some elements of the Amendment risk creating uncertainty by restating State policy or using language that extends beyond an appropriate local planning role. Clarifying the intent and scope of local policy by clearly linking it to locally mapped high-quality agricultural land would improve the overall clarity of the planning scheme and reduce the risk of further objections during the authorisation process.

Options for Council Consideration

Option 1 – Revise and Resubmit the Amendment (Recommended Option)

Council could proceed to revise the Grow Corangamite Strategy and Amendment C67cora in accordance with the recommendations of the independent review and submit a new request for authorisation to the Minister for Planning.

This option would involve updating terminology, mapping, and policy to reference high and very high-quality productive agricultural land; refining local policy wording to better complement State planning policy; revising the renewable energy policy approach; and clarifying Council's position on timber production controls, as follows:

- Replace references to “state and regionally significant agricultural land” with “high and very high-quality productive agricultural land”;
- Revise local planning policy to clearly complement, rather than replicate or extend, State planning policy;
- Reword renewable energy policy provisions to align with Clauses 19.01-2S and 19.01-2R of the Planning Policy Framework; and
- Retain the proposed 40-hectare timber production permit trigger with strengthened strategic justification.

Progressing this option would require strong and coordinated advocacy approach with the DTP and other relevant agencies. In particular, further engagement would be required to clearly articulate Council's strategic intent in relation to timber production, demonstrate that any revised controls do not seek to privilege one agricultural industry over another, and explain how the reframed Amendment supports the long-term coexistence of timber production and other agricultural uses. This advocacy would be critical to addressing the Department's concerns and to building confidence that the revised Amendment is strategically justified, evidence-based, and appropriately aligned with State policy settings.

Advantages

- Retains momentum in implementing the Grow Corangamite Strategy.
- Responds directly to issues raised by the Department of Transport and Planning.
- Improves the likelihood of authorisation and progression to exhibition
- Enables Council to continue shaping planning outcomes for rural land use.

Disadvantages

- Requires additional officer time and potentially further consultant support.
- Some elements of the original policy intent may need to be moderated to achieve authorisation.

Option 2 – Proceed Without Timber Production Controls At This Time

Council could revise the Amendment to prioritise implementation of the broader strategic and policy components of the Grow Corangamite Strategy, while removing the proposed Farming Zone schedule relating to timber production. Timber production controls could be reconsidered through a future amendment following additional strategic work.

While this option may improve short-term prospects of authorisation, it is not recommended as it would result in partial implementation of the Grow Corangamite Strategy and defer consideration of timber production controls at a time when the scale and location of timber production are creating land-use, infrastructure, economic and amenity impacts that require more immediate policy management.

Advantages

- Addresses the most contentious issue identified by the Department.
- Improves prospects of authorisation in the short term.
- Allows the majority of the Strategy to be implemented sooner.

Disadvantages

- Delays Council's ability to manage the location and scale of timber production through planning controls.
- Requires a future amendment to reintroduce timber production provisions.

Option 3 – Defer the Amendment and Undertake Further Strategic Work

Council could pause the Amendment process and undertake further strategic analysis, particularly in relation to timber production, dairy land viability, and broader land-use impacts. A revised amendment could then be prepared once this work and further State policy reforms are completed.

While this option would allow for further strategic work, it is not recommended at this time. The independent review confirms that the Grow Corangamite Strategy is strategically sound, supported by a strong evidence base, and aligned in principle with State planning objectives. Deferring the Amendment to undertake further strategic analysis would therefore address issues that relate primarily to the statutory expression of the Strategy, rather than to the Strategy itself, and would unnecessarily delay implementation of an agreed policy direction. In this context, a revised and reframed Amendment is considered a more proportionate and effective response to the matters raised through the authorisation process.

Advantages

- Strengthens the strategic justification for future controls
- Allows alignment with emerging changes to State agricultural land policy
- Reduces the risk of further refusal at authorisation

Disadvantages

- Delays implementation of the Grow Corangamite Strategy
- Risk of losing momentum with stakeholders and the community
- Ongoing policy uncertainty for rural land uses

Option 4 – Discontinue Amendment C67cora

Council could resolve not to proceed further with Amendment C67cora.

This option is not recommended, as it would effectively abandon an adopted and strategically sound policy framework, limiting Council's capacity to proactively manage agricultural land use, timber production, and rural development pressures through statutory planning controls.

Advantages

- No further resourcing required.
- Avoids further engagement with the authorisation process.

Disadvantages

- The Grow Corangamite Strategy would remain largely unimplemented.
- Missed opportunity to strengthen local planning policy for agriculture.
- Limited ability to manage competing rural land uses through the planning scheme.

Alignment to Council Plan

This report is in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2025-2029:

A growing and prosperous economy

Support and promote local businesses

Encourage sustainable agriculture

Protection and enhancement of our Environment

Support and promote renewable energy

Protect biodiversity and our natural assets

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

Under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, Council cannot progress Amendment C67cora without authorisation from the Minister for Planning. Authorisation has been refused for the current version of the Amendment, and it cannot lawfully proceed unless it is revised and resubmitted in a form that is consistent with the Victorian Planning Provisions and the Planning Policy Framework. Local planning policy must complement State policy and remain within Council's statutory role.

If Council elects to progress a revised amendment without adequately addressing the issues raised by the Department of Transport and Planning, there is a risk of further refusal, delay, or amendment of provisions through a Planning Panel process, as well as potential challenge at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal. Revising the Amendment to align with accepted planning terminology, mapping conventions, and State policy directions would reduce legal risk and improve the likelihood of successful authorisation.

Collaborative Procurement

Nil

Consultation and Engagement

Consultation on the *Grow Corangamite Strategy* (and the earlier Scoping Study) was undertaken throughout 2023 and 2024 through a series of structured engagement phases and activities, including an established Project Reference Group comprising industry representatives and key stakeholders.

Public exhibition of Amendment C67cora will form part of the formal planning scheme amendment process. Engagement with relevant State agencies, stakeholders, and the broader community will be undertaken during this phase in accordance with statutory requirements.

Financial Considerations

The Grow Corangamite implementation budget assumed that authorisation would be granted to prepare a planning scheme amendment in its current or a substantially similar form. It is anticipated that the refinements required under Option 1 would necessitate an additional budget allocation in the order of \$20,000 to \$30,000. This additional funding would support further strategic justification requested by the Department of Transport and Planning, updates to the Strategy and associated mapping, and revisions to the planning scheme amendment to reflect a reframed and State-aligned approach.

Diversity and Inclusion Considerations

Nil

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

Amendment C67cora is anticipated to deliver positive environmental outcomes for the community, including strengthened protection of high-quality agricultural land across the Shire. The Amendment supports sustainable land use and development by providing clearer planning policy guidance on managing and considering the environmental impacts associated with timber production.

Risk Consideration

As outlined under the Relevant Policy Implications, key risks include failing to adequately address the matters raised by the Department of Transport and Planning, which could result in further refusal or delay. Such outcomes would prolong uncertainty and may leave high-quality agricultural land within the Shire with reduced policy protection. There is also a risk that additional resources are invested in revising the Amendment to address DTP concerns, yet authorisation is still not granted.

Conflict of Interest

No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Attachments

1. Under Separate Cover - Refusal letter Department of Transport and Planning [9.6.1 - 1 page]
2. Under Separate Cover - Grow Corangamite Review Report [9.6.2 - 32 pages]
3. Under Separate Cover - Grow Corangamite Brochure [9.6.3 - 1 page]

9.7 Ready Now Grants: October 2025 - March 2026

Directorate: Sustainable Development

Author: Bec Reedman, Coordinator Community Engagement and Development

Executive Summary

This report provides an overview of Council's Ready Now Grant allocations October 2025 – March 2026 inclusive.

Recommendation

That Council notes the approved Ready Now Grants October 2025 to March 2026.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Nick Cole
Seconded: Cr Ruth Gstrein

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

Discussion/Key Matters/Issues

The Ready Now Grants program is a targeted program focused on community benefit, supporting community groups and activities where small grants can make a difference.

The program is designed to be flexible and responsive to community needs. Applications for Ready Now Grants are assessed as they are received, with approval of grant applications delegated to the CEO, enabling a quick turnaround.

The program provides small allocations of funds of up to \$500 for beneficial projects and activities supporting community inclusion and participation, and providing equipment, facilities and public spaces that are appropriate for community use. Grants are open to volunteer-based, incorporated community groups operating within Corangamite Shire. The table below details the Ready Now Grants approved between October 2025 and March 2026.

Organisation	Purpose	Amount	Date	Ward
Camperdown Theatre Company Inc.	Camperdown Community Carols	\$500.00	2/10/2025	Leura
Camperdown Memorial Swimming Pool	Sound System	\$500.00	13/10/2025	Leura
South Beach COM	Bench Seats	\$470.00	22/10/2025	Gnotuk
Carpenteit Hall and Recreation Reserve	Christmas community BBQ	\$350.00	1/12/2025	Tandarook
Port Campbell Community Events Inc	Christmas decorations for town	\$500.00	1/12/2025	Coorimungie
Progressing Cobden Inc	BBQ setup	\$500.00	12/12/2025	Tandarook
Port Campbell Surf Life Saving Club Inc	Replace existing glassware	\$500.00	16/12/2025	Coorimungie
South Western Model Engineers Inc	Purchase new microwave	\$500.00	12/01/2026	Lake Elingamite
SW Reconciliation	Port-a-loo hire	\$180.00	14/01/2026	Leura
Rotary Club of Camperdown	Purchase of bins/stickers	\$500.00	22/01/2026	Leura
Lions Club of Camperdown	Community dress display event	\$500.00	22/01/2026	Leura
Heytesbury Princetown Cricket Club Inc	3 x women's training kits	\$500.00	11/02/2026	Lake Elingamite
Camperdown Clocktower Quilters Inc.	Materials for community quilts	\$500.00	25/02/2026	Gnotuk
Zoe Wilkinson (Camperdown Community House)	International Womens Day event	\$500.00	4/03/2026	Gnotuk
Terang Men's Shed	Purchase new laptop	\$500.00	17/03/2026	Lake Keilambete
Port Campbell community events committee	Easter Hunt	\$500.00	30/03/2026	Coorimungie
Kidding Around Cobden auspiced by Rotary Club of Cobden	Kidding Around Cobden@ home	\$500.00	30/03/2026	Tandarook
TOTAL		\$8,000.00		

Table 1: Approved Ready Now Grant Applications: October 2025-March 2026

In addition to the grants outlined in the table above, one (1) additional application was received for an ineligible expense which was not approved.

Options for Council Consideration

That Council:

1. Notes the report detailing the Ready Now Grants (October 2025 to March 2026)
2. Requests additional information on the allocated Ready Now Grants.

Alignment to Council Plan

This report is in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2025-2029:

A Community that enables healthy, active, and resilient living

- Deliver, support and enable services and programs for all life stages particularly youth and aged

- Provide, maintain and promote recreational facilities and programs

- Support population attraction and retention initiatives and ageing in place

- Enable, advocate and where responsible deliver improved amenity and public safety

Quality infrastructure and community connections

- Maintain and upgrade our infrastructure

Strong Civic Leadership

- Engage community members in meaningful and accessible ways including our youth and young adults, and older members of the community

- Celebrate cultural diversity, promote cultural awareness and remove barriers to participation

- Support volunteers and community leaders

- Be financially responsible and sustainable

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

Council Grants and Funding Policy 2025

Collaborative Procurement

Nil

Consultation and Engagement

The Ready Now Grants program is widely promoted enabling community groups to readily access the grants. The Council Grants and Funding Policy was reviewed, updated and adopted in November 2025. These updates took into consideration community and staff feedback. This update absorbed the previous Ready Now Policy, streamlining the process for staff and community.

Financial Considerations

The Ready Now Grant program has an annual budget allocation of \$20,000. To end March 2026, \$14,900 has been awarded against this budget. The remaining \$5,100 is anticipated to be granted during the remaining quarter with additional promotion of the availability of the grant to be undertaken.

Diversity and Inclusion Considerations

Ready Now Grants are available to Community groups which are representative of the diversity in the Shire. All applications are considered equitably against the Policy which was developed and reviewed in keeping with a Gender Impact Assessment.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

Ready Now Grants support a range of initiatives including sustainability focused initiatives.

Risk Consideration

N/A

Conflict of Interest

No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Attachments

1. Under Separate Cover - Ready Now Grant Applications: October 2025 - March 2026 [9.7.1 - 1 page]

9.8 Business Assistance Scheme April 2026 Applications

Directorate: Sustainable Development

Author: Samantha Fox, Coordinator Economy and Tourism

Executive Summary

This report provides information on the assessment and recommended funding allocation for the April 2026 round of the Business Assistance Scheme (BAS). The BAS is part of Council's Grow and Prosper Corangamite initiative which consolidates economic and community development, including arts, culture, tourism and the circular economy. The BAS supports local businesses, community enterprises, creative industries and new businesses looking to establish in the municipality.

Recommendation

That Council approves the Business Assistance Scheme applications for funding, being:

- 1. D.C Gilbert & P.J Gilbert trading as Gilbo's Cafe & Takeaway, Terang for the amount of \$1,595 and fee waiver of \$226.50 excluding GST.**
- 2. Western Victorian Axemans Association, Camperdown for the amount of \$1,100 excluding GST.**

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Ruth Gstrein
Seconded: Cr Laurie Hickey

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

Discussion/Key Matters/Issues

The BAS provides business, building owners and community the opportunity to apply for support, including financial assistance. Applications are assessed on merit, considering the eligibility criteria and available funds.

The Scheme is ongoing across the year enabling businesses to submit when suitable for their proposed project and provides four streams 1) Business Facade Improvement; 2) Creative Industries and Placemaking; 3) Community Enterprise Projects; and 4) Fees and Enabling Infrastructure.

There is one application for Stream 1 Business Facade Improvement and one application for Stream 3 Community Enterprise Projects that have been assessed and are recommended for assistance to be considered by Council for determination:

- *D.C Gilbert & P.J Gilbert (Gilbo's Cafe & Takeaway) Terang*: New business identification signage. The funding assistance requested is \$1,595 excluding GST and planning permit fee waiver of \$226.50 excluding GST.
- *Western Victorian Axemans Association, Camperdown*: First Aid training and accreditation to increase capacity of club volunteers to run and support local events safely. The funding assistance requested is \$1,100 excluding GST.

The BAS scheme is an ongoing grant and business support scheme that is open for applications year-round. Council officers work with applicants to enable applications to be grant ready. Applications are assessed against the relevant stream criteria and evaluated by an assessment panel to ensure they meet assessment criteria and align with the objectives of the program and if so, are recommended for approval.

Options for Council Consideration

Officers have assessed the two applications and recommend them for assistance under the Business Assistance Scheme (BAS). The options are:

1. Allocate funds of \$2,695 (excluding GST) and planning permit fee waiver of \$226.50 to the two Business Assistance Scheme applicants.
2. Not allocate funding through the program.

Alignment to Council Plan

This report is in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2025-2029:

A Community that enables healthy, active, and resilient living

Deliver, support and enable services and programs for all life stages particularly youth and aged

A growing and prosperous economy

Support and promote local businesses

Enhance and promote tourism opportunities

Support and enable job creation

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

Business Assistance Scheme Policy October 2025.

Collaborative Procurement

Nil

Consultation and Engagement

Extensive external promotion and consultation about the BAS has occurred across the Shire including media releases, Council's social media channels, Corangamite News, Corangamite E-News and Corangamite Business E-News.

On receipt of applications internal consultation is undertaken with relevant teams (e.g. planning, building and environmental health) to ensure all aspects of proposals are considered and applicants are supported through the permit processes.

Financial Considerations

The current two applications are seeking a total funding commitment of \$2,695. Council's 2025-2026 adopted budget includes an allocation of \$50,000 for the BAS, with a remaining budget of \$16,724.

Diversity and Inclusion Considerations

The April BAS applications include applications from D.C Gilbert & P.J Gilbert (Gilbo's Cafe & Takeaway) Terang and Western Victorian Axemans Association, Camperdown. Stream 1 of the BAS program enables businesses to apply for funding for a variety of improvements, while Stream 3 enables community enterprise projects focused on upskilling for economic benefit.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

NA

Risk Consideration

This matter addresses Enterprise Risk 77 – Insufficient investment by Council in Economic Development. The allocation of funding to provide support for businesses is a mitigation measure for this risk. The current risk rating is low and the residual risk remains low.

Conflict of Interest

No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Attachments

1. Under Separate Cover - Business Assistance Scheme April 2026 Applications
[9.8.1 - 2 pages]

9.9 Hard Court Maintenance Policy April 2026

Directorate: Works and Services

Author: Jane Hinds, Sports and Recreation Coordinator

Executive Summary

This report recommends Council adopt the Hard Court Maintenance Policy, which provides direction to Council and community groups regarding the provision of funding for maintenance and upgrade responsibilities for both competition standard netball and tennis courts throughout the Shire.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. **Revokes the Hard Court Maintenance Policy dated April 2023.**
2. **Adopts the Hard Court Maintenance Policy dated April 2026.**

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Jo Beard

Seconded: Cr Laurie Hickey

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

Discussion/Key Matters/Issues

Council's Hard Court Maintenance Policy aims to establish maintenance and upgrade responsibilities for hard court facilities and related infrastructure located in the Corangamite Shire regardless of tenure.

A number of hard court surfaces in the Corangamite Shire have been renewed over the past ten years. An audit of hard court facilities was conducted in March 2017 to ensure investment in the facilities is warranted and funds can be directed to facilities based on condition and need.

The hard court audit provides a detailed report on the current standard of playing surface and outlines any maintenance requirements. Hard court assessment has been focused on the following parameters:

- Pavement type
- Surface texture
- Surface shape
- Cracking

- Evenness of surface
- Joints in surface and location
- Vegetation in pavement.

All courts have been ranked by priority ranking based on the technical assessments. This report and ranking guides hard court investment.

Over the last three years the hard court maintenance contribution which has been provided to volunteer reserve committees has been well received given the aging court infrastructure, the increasing cost of operating expenses and ongoing maintenance required at the reserves. Courts at Camperdown Lakes, Port Campbell and Timboon recreation reserves have all benefited from the allocation which will ensure that the hard courts across the shire are fit for purpose, maintained to an appropriate standard which allow for continued sporting participation for years to come.

The policy has been reviewed with only minor amendments recommended to reflect current strategies and policies.

It is proposed that Council continue to:

- Consider allocation of funding as a part of its annual budget development.
- Include hard court related infrastructure for consideration of resource allocation for maintenance and upgrades.

Options for Council Consideration

Council can adopt the Hard Court Maintenance Policy as presented, or choose to amend the Policy.

Alignment to Council Plan

The Hard Court Maintenance Policy is a Council Policy which provides an approach to the funding and management arrangements for hard court facilities and infrastructure throughout the Corangamite Shire.

This report is in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2025-2029:

A Community that enables healthy, active, and resilient living

Provide, maintain and promote recreational facilities and programs

Quality infrastructure and community connections

Maintain and upgrade our infrastructure

The policy is also consistent with Council's Recreation and Open Space Strategy 2016-2026 to:

- Improve the quality of existing sport and recreation facilities and spaces

- Increase participation in sport and recreation
- Provide high quality, optimally used, sustainable sport and recreation facilities.

This policy has been reviewed and developed in accordance with Council's Policy Development Framework.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

Nil

Collaborative Procurement

Nil

Consultation and Engagement

The Hard Court Maintenance Policy is a revision of an existing policy and has been reviewed internally by Council's Facilities and Recreation Department and Executive Leadership Team.

Financial Considerations

Council will consider in its 10-year capital works plan, dollar for dollar financial assistance for the maintenance or upgrade of hard court surfaces and related infrastructure located on Council owned or managed land, or on land identified by Council as a township reserve.

Hard court surfaces located on other Crown land or public reserves will be eligible to apply to Council's Facility Grant Program for funding assistance on a dollar for dollar basis.

In past budgets, Council has included an allocation of \$50,000 for hard court upgrades. This allocation has been forecast in Council's long term capital and operating projects.

Diversity and Inclusion Considerations

A review of the policy in consideration of fair access has been considered. The Gender Equality Act 2020 requires Council to undertake gender impact assessments when developing or reviewing any policy, program or service which has a direct and significant impact on the public.

A Gender Impact Assessment has been undertaken and it is considered that the policy meets the needs of people of different genders, addresses gender inequality, and promotes gender equality.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

Nil

Risk Consideration

Nil

Conflict of Interest

No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Attachments

1. Council Hard Court Maintenance Policy April 2026 [**9.9.1** - 3 pages]
2. Under Separate Cover - Council Hard Court Maintenance Policy April 2026 with tracked changes [**9.9.2** - 3 pages]

9.10 Memorial Policy Review April 2026

Directorate: Works and Services

Author: Jarrod Woff, Manager Facilities and Recreation

Executive Summary

This report recommends adoption of a revised Memorials Policy (Policy) as a guide to the application and installation of memorials within the Corangamite Shire.

This Policy has been reviewed with only minor amendments recommended.

Recommendation

That Council:

- 1. Revokes the Memorials Policy dated September 2022, and**
- 2. Adopts the Memorial Policy dated April 2026**

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Ruth Gstrein
Seconded: Cr Laurie Hickey

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

Discussion/Key Matters/Issues

Council, from time to time, receives requests from individuals or organisations for the installation of memorial plaques, park seating or planting of trees in recognition of the contribution of family members or residents to the Corangamite Shire area.

This Policy provides direction so that applications for memorials are managed on a consistent basis and in accordance with relevant legislation and guidelines.

The Memorials Policy applies to:

- Any applicant wishing to apply for the placement of a memorial on Council owned or managed land whether as a monument, plaque, tree or bench seat.
- All existing memorials within Corangamite Shire prior to the adoption of this Policy.

The Policy has been reviewed with only minor amendments noted as outlined below and is reviewed every four years.

Options for Council Consideration

Council can adopt the Memorials Policy as presented, or choose to amend the Memorials Policy.

Alignment to Council Plan

This report is in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2025-2029:

Strong Civic Leadership

- Engage community members in meaningful and accessible ways including our youth and young adults, and older members of the community
- Support volunteers and community leaders

This Policy has been reviewed and developed in accordance with Council's Policy Development Framework.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

Nil

Collaborative Procurement

Nil

Consultation and Engagement

The Memorials Policy is a revision of an existing policy and has been reviewed internally by Council's Facilities and Recreation Department and Executive Leadership Team.

Financial Considerations

Council's recurrent budget provides conservation of the existing monuments and memorials. Council has limited budget to accommodate installation of new requests for memorials across the Shire.

All proposals will be closely considered by Council with analysis on projected recurrent costs associated with the maintenance of memorials.

Diversity and Inclusion Considerations

A review of the Policy in consideration of fair access has been considered. The Gender Equality Act 2020 requires Council to undertake gender impact assessments when developing or reviewing any policy, program or service which has a direct and significant impact on the public. The Policy will not have a direct and significant public impact and a Gender Impact Assessment has not been undertaken.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

Nil

Risk Consideration

Nil

Conflict of Interest

No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Attachments

1. Council Memorials Policy April 2026 [**9.10.1** - 4 pages]
2. Under Separate Cover - Council Memorials Policy April 2026 with track changes [**9.10.2** - 4 pages]

9.11 Capital and Operating Quarterly Report Update - March 2026

Directorate: Works and Services

Author: Shaun Broadbent, Director Works and Services

Executive Summary

Council continues to deliver a broad range of capital and operational initiatives this financial year. In total 213 projects are planned across the organisation. The endorsed capital works program is valued at \$23.7 million and forms a major share of Council's annual expenditure. At the end of March year to date spending is in line with forecast expectations indicating the capital and operating program is progressing in line with the adopted budget and delivery timeframes. Of the 213 projects 46% are complete and 49% are in progress.

Recommendation

That Council notes the quarterly status project update report to 31 March 2026.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Geraldine Conheady

Seconded: Cr Nick Cole

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

Discussion/Key Matters/Issues

Council's 2025–2026 capital and operating program includes 213 projects across infrastructure renewal, asset upgrades, community facility improvements and strategic initiatives. The adopted capital budget of \$23.7 million highlights Council's ongoing focus on maintaining and improving community assets while supporting long term service delivery goals. In addition, Council has \$9.1m in non-recurrent operating projects.

The breakdown of projects across the organisation is as follows:

Corporate & Community Services	32
Sustainable Development	61
Works & Services	114
Governance & Civic Support	6

The status of projects as at the end of March 2026 is detailed below:

Directorate	Completed	In Progress	Not Started
Corporate & Community	10	22	-
Sustainable Development	11	45	5
Works & Services	74	39	1
Governance & Civic Support	3	3	-

Table 1: Project Status end March 2026

As part of ongoing monitoring of the capital and operating projects program, expenditure performance is tracked against the adopted budget. Year to date expenditure to 31 March 2026 was \$12.9m compared to a budgeted expenditure of \$13.5m. This represents a minor underspend of \$593k or approximately 4%.

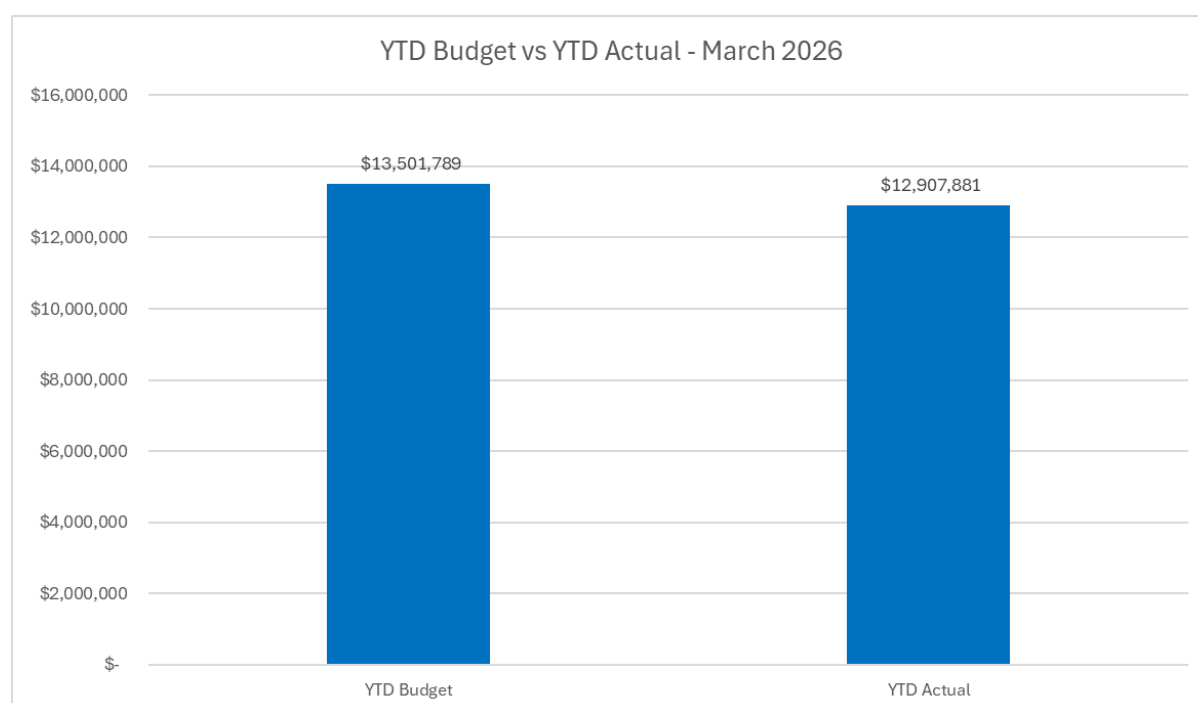


Chart 1: YTD Budget vs YTD Expenditure

The level of spending corresponds with the phased implementation of the capital works program, with the majority of the program progressing through procurement, design and the initial stages of construction during the first three quarters of the financial year.

Key project milestones are generally being achieved in line with scheduled timeframes. Any minor deviations encountered are primarily attributable to procurement timeframes, contractor resourcing or statutory approval requirements.

Monitoring of expenditure timelines and risks will continue through the remainder of the financial year to support delivery within approved budgets and in line with Council's strategic priorities.

Project Status

Projects are grouped by stage of completion. Council has defined five project status categories and reports against these to provide an overview of program performance. The table below summarises program status as at 31 March 2026.

Project Status	Number	Percentage
Completed	98	46%
In Progress	104	49%
Deferred	-	-
Not Started	6	3%
In Progress – Grant Funded/Multi-Year	5	2%

Table 2: Project Status March 2026

With 46% of the program complete and a further 49% in progress, Council is well positioned to deliver the majority of capital and operational projects within the current financial year.

While the majority of projects are on track for delivery this financial year, some projects are forecast to carry forward into 2026–27 due to their scope and delivery timelines. Some projects are also reliant on external funding and cannot be completed until funding is confirmed.

The current number of projects forecast to be carried forward into the 2026–27 financial year is 31, representing 15% of the capital and operating program. At this stage, the forecast carry forward is considered manageable within existing budget allocations and does not present a material financial risk to Council.

As shown in the chart below, the majority of projects forecast for carry forward are multi-year projects.

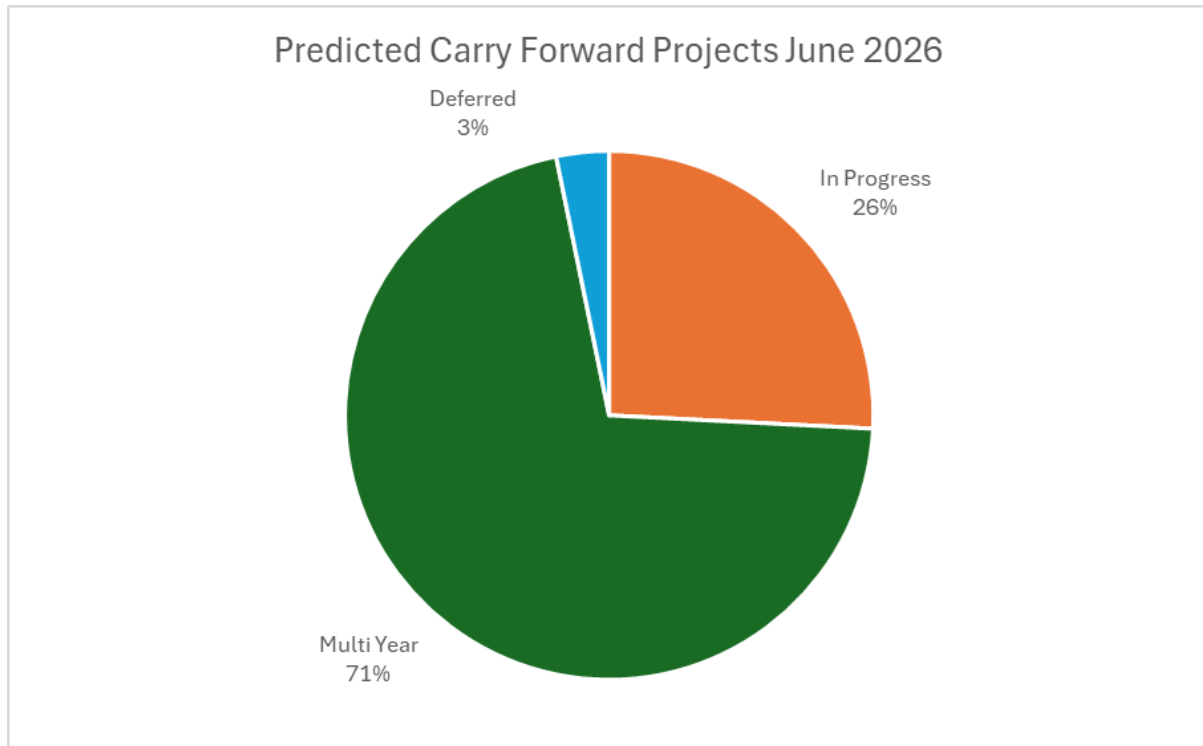


Chart 2: Predicted Carry Forward Projects as % June 2026

As at 31 March 2026, a number of key projects and programs have been delivered, including:

- Road rehabilitation program
- Safety barrier maintenance program
- Rail Bridge Replacement B14 and B15
- Tandarook Park Masterplan Implementation Stage 1
- Apex Park Camperdown All Access project Stage 1
- Hampden Tennis Association Clubrooms Renewal
- Terang Avenue sprinklers
- Timboon Stadium extended Gym hours
- Corangamite Libraries façade refresh and collection materials
- Camperdown Production Precinct Masterplan
- Domestic Wastewater Management plan
- Climate Risk Assessment Plan
- Camperdown and Terang structure plans
- Universal Access to Council buildings audit
- Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan

Options for Council Consideration

Council may choose to note the March 2026 quarterly project status report or request further information from officers.

Alignment to Council Plan

This report is in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2025-2029:

A growing and prosperous economy

- Support and promote local businesses
- Enhance and promote tourism opportunities
- Seek to diversify our economy including retail and hospitality and support creative industries

Quality infrastructure and community connections

- Maintain and upgrade our infrastructure
- Provide and promote walking and cycling infrastructure
- Improve traffic safety on roads and streets

Protection and enhancement of our Environment

- Deliver and support sustainable waste management
- Encourage sustainable practices and educate on sustainability
- Protect biodiversity and our natural assets

Strong Civic Leadership

- Support volunteers and community leaders
- Be financially responsible and sustainable

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

Council's capital and operational works program is delivered in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2020 (Vic), which sets out Council's obligations in relation to sound financial management, transparency, accountability and good governance in the use of public resources.

Where projects involve procurement activities, these are undertaken in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy and associated procedures, ensuring compliance with principles of value for money, fairness, transparency and probity.

Project delivery also considers relevant statutory obligations under applicable legislation including (where relevant) the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (Vic), the Building Act 1993 (Vic) and Building Regulations 2018 (Vic), and the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic) to ensure safe design, construction and delivery of infrastructure projects.

Where external grant funding forms part of project financing, delivery is undertaken in accordance with funding agreement conditions and reporting requirements, including acquittal obligations and milestone reporting to funding bodies.

Collaborative Procurement

Council has considered opportunities for collaborative procurement with other Councils and public bodies across the portfolio of programs and projects and will implement where appropriate.

Consultation and Engagement

This report has been developed in collaboration with departmental managers, officers and the Executive Leadership Team.

Financial Considerations

The Capital and Operational Project Program is delivered within existing Council budget allocations. As at 31 March 2026, year-to-date expenditure totals \$12.9 million compared to a budgeted amount of \$13.5 million, resulting in a minor underspend of \$593,000.

The year-to-date variance is primarily attributable to scheduling variations across the program, rather than underlying budget constraints. Financial performance and project progress will continue to be closely monitored through established reporting processes to support delivery of the full program within the approved annual budget.

Risk Consideration

The delivery of a capital and operating program of this scale carries inherent risks, including procurement delays, contractor availability, statutory approvals, grant funding compliance requirements and cost escalation pressures. These risks are managed through established project governance frameworks, regular financial monitoring, milestone reporting and executive oversight.

An emerging risk relates to volatility in global fuel prices, which may place upward pressure on construction, transport and materials costs. While this has not yet had a material impact on program delivery, it has the potential to influence contractor pricing and overall project costs if sustained. This risk will continue to be closely monitored, with mitigation measures to be considered where required to minimise any impact on the approved budget and delivery timeframes.

Conflict of Interest

No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Attachments

1. Under Separate Cover - Quarterly Project Status Report March 2026 [9.11.1 - 6 pages]

10 Other Business

There was no other business noted.

10.1 Notices of Motion

There were no notices of motion submitted.

11 Open Forum

The Mayor, Cr Kate Makin, invited members of the public to ask a question or make a statement.

The following item was submitted:

- Mr Les Mulholland offered the following suggestions to support farmers wellbeing.
 - Contact Governments about removal of tyres from farms
 - Assist with green waste removal
 - Suggestion to divert graders to help farmers with their driveways.
 - He observed that without support, farmers will continue to opt out and sell to blue gum forest companies.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Ruth Gstrein
Seconded: Cr Jamie Vogels

That standing orders be suspended to move into confidential items.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

Standing orders were suspended at 4.00pm

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Nick Cole
Seconded: Cr Jamie Vogels

That standing orders be resumed.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

Standing orders were resumed at 4.06pm

12 Confidential Items

RECOMMENDATION

That pursuant to the provisions of Section 66(2)(a) of the *Local Government Act 2020* the meeting be closed to the public to enable consideration of the following reports as they relate to Council business information and personal information.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Ruth Gstrein
Seconded: Cr Jamie Vogels

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

The meeting moved into confidential items at 4.06pm.

12.2 Hardship Application for Rates Waiver

Pursuant to sections 3(1) and 66(5) of the *Local Government Act 2020* the Chief Executive Officer has designated this report and its attachments as confidential on the grounds that it contains personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs. The report contains information regarding the applicant's personal financial circumstances, family violence matters, and related legal proceedings.

Move Out of Confidential Items

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Laurie Hickey
Seconded: Cr Nick Cole

That the meeting move out of confidential items.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

The meeting moved out of confidential items at 4.09pm.

13 Close Meeting

Mayor, Kate Makin declared the Council Meeting closed at 4.09pm.

I hereby certify that these minutes have been confirmed and are a true and correct record.

CONFIRMED: _____
Chairperson

DATE: _____