



**Pyrenees**  
Shire Council

# Minutes

## Ordinary Meeting of Council

6:00 pm Monday 8 December 2025

Council Chambers  
Beaufort Council Offices,  
5 Lawrence Street, Beaufort

*Wadawurrung Country*

Members of the public may view the meeting virtually via the recording

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## 1. WELCOME

Mayor Cr Damian Ferrari welcomed all to the meeting.

## PRESENT

**Mayor:** Cr Damian Ferrari

**Councillors:** Megan Phelan, Simon Tol, Rebecca Wardlaw, Tanya Kehoe

**Chief Executive Officer:** Jim Nolan

**Director Asset and Development Services:** Douglas Gowans

**Director of Corporate and Community Services:** Jacinta Erdody

**EA to CEO and Councillors:** Chantelle Sandlant (minutes)

**Senior Communications Officer:** Fiona Henderson

**Communications Officer:** Helen D'Costa

## 2. STREAMING PREAMBLE

Mayor Cr Damian Ferrari read the livestream preamble. Due to technical difficulties a recording of the meeting will be published on Council's website following the meeting.

## 3. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Mayor acknowledged the people past and present of the Wadawurrung, Dja Dja Wurrung, Eastern Maar, Wotjabaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk Nations, whose lands and waters the Pyrenees Shire operates on. We pay our respects to their Ancestors and Elders, and recognise and respect their customs, stewardship and continuing connection to Country.

## 4. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

## 5. NOTICE OF DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST BY COUNCILLORS AND OFFICERS

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

## 6. CONFIRMATION OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

**Cr Tanya Kehoe / Cr Simon Tol**

That the Minutes of the:

- Statutory Meeting of Council held on 10 November 2025.
- Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 17 November 2025; and
- Closed Meeting of Council held 17 November 2025,

as previously circulated to Councillors, be confirmed.

**CARRIED**

## 7. BUSINESS ARISING

There was no business arising (items taken on notice) from the meeting held 17 November 2025.

## 8. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

### Mr Trevor Davey of Beaufort

#### *Question one:*

My question is based around this detail, I was wondering there's a lot of slashing gets done on the Council, every year this time of course, but I was wondering if there was something that council could do about the current slashing contractor so far that I have seen which is 3 quarters of this shire so far, the only mow one little strip, they never mow the thicker parts past that one strip, they run over guideposts, plenty of them, they really do an ordinary job, they leave a lot of grass out on the road which is actually wrong, they shouldn't do it. These things are happening and it's definitely no reflection on any staff member in the Council, or Dennis the ranger because I think personally, he does a remarkable job in a very difficult role. If we don't report back to you guys, I don't think you're going to hear much of it.

Now the other thing that they're doing is cutting corners as well which is cutting the concrete and breaking the concrete on culverts and drains, so that's something, I was wondering so my question is, can the Council put a tighter grip around what they can expect from these large contractors, they're not the smaller guys, they're the really big guys, big green ones, and they even cut trees down, they just go straight through nearly grown trees which they shouldn't touch, particularly the protected ones under the environment law. So that was my question if the Council could look at some way to improve, I don't know, the agreements they have got or maybe some sort of transparency, they should come back with a report or something.

#### *Response:*

Mr Douglas Gowans thanked Mr Davey for the question and provided the following response:

I appreciate the observations that you have made, and they do reflect some of not just this years, but past history. I know that the contractors that we use do a number of contracts for other organisations as well and there are often time pressures at this time of year where a number of shires and road authorities are trying to get contractors to do the work in a timely manner. The timing of the grass cutting is often related to the curing of the grass and also the fire restriction period but that's no excuse for poor workmanship and you're absolutely right about holding contractors who are looking after public interests to ensure that they are held to account for the work that they do, I'm happy to take elements of that question on notice and undertake some investigation and a commitment to improving our outcomes for the community around grass slashing.

### Cr Kehoe

May I just comment on that, not to start a discussion but the CEO and I were also at a meeting at Stoneleigh in the wake of the accident that did happen at Stoneleigh and this was another issue that did come up and again it was the amount that was slashed in certain areas, more so the timing of the slashing and a farmer said, farming practices have to work around the climate but so do our practices around road safety and road slashing. Again the request, which has come up in the past and for a number of years, is can we get two slashings per season particularly when it's a season like this one, it is not every year that we need that or at least have an earlier slashing of intersections for the sake of safety and making sure that we're keeping our community safe, that we can do that earlier in the season say even October, of course once the grass has cured we understand it is important to do that second cut because in a season like this, which again isn't every season, it has got to the point where we are seeing that there are safety issues, so certainly backing up what Mr Davey said.

Also another contractual concern that did come up at that meeting was in regard to the spraying of roads and the issue where a resident had witnessed, where not all nozzles may have been working on the contractors equipment and so a lot of the area actually didn't get sprayed, another issue that's come up as well, sorry to give you this Mr Gowans, but rye grass it actually resistant now to a lot of the chemicals that they may be using so just another issue if we can look into that as well thank you.

Mr Douglas Gowans

Thank you, Cr Kehoe, for your observations and additional information in relation to improvement of the services that we're receiving relating to roadside slashing. I just wanted to reassure the public that we're not just reliant on the fire slashing when it comes to the safety of our intersections, it's our normal practice to undertake sight distance slashing at intersections whenever that grass gets to a point before it becomes a safety hazard so I understand that this year there had been some delays in that work so I take it on board but I just wanted to reassure the public that we are not just reliant on the single fire slashing component that forms the budget and I just wanted to make some reference to the roadside slashing budget, in that we do have limited funds, we don't actually have enough funds in our budget to enable two full slashes of our fire hazard roadside slashing each year, but we will do it on an as needs basis but it does have a budgetary implication, so I just wanted to make sure that the community and Councillors are aware that we try to do it to be efficient but that obviously gets impacted by the timing of contractor availability and the resources that we have available.

Cr Kehoe

Sorry one further follow up question and thank you Mr Gowans and I understand that when it comes to areas of need, because I understand that some residents are coming through now with some intersections that they feel haven't been addressed, is it best for public to be able to send that through to us through CARS so we can get onto immediately.

Mr Douglas Gowans

Thank you, Councillor Kehoe, that is absolutely correct, if people have a concern with a safety issue on a local road or in the case of whether a local road intersects with a VicRoads road, please contact us, but if it's a VicRoads road, please contact VicRoads in those circumstances.

Cr Tol

Is there any possibility that we could burn some roadsides like they do down south?

Mr Douglas Gowans

Thank you, Cr Tol, for your question, it is something that we prefer to do actually on roadsides because burning of roadsides can help manage invasive weeds and has some benefits for native vegetation. There are some considerations around the amount of burning you can do on roadsides and obviously the risks that it has on neighbouring properties. We work with the CFA and we put requests in each year but we are often dependent upon the resources that the CFA can provide because it has to be done under their program but our team are absolutely supportive of roadside burning, it just takes a lot of resource and we often need external support to be able to enable it.

**Ms Rhianna Milliken of Beaufort**

I apologise I didn't realise that we had to submit a question, it's been a difficult time for my family in past month with things going on within the family but I did come here at the last moment and it's in regards to we're in the final stages of applying for planning permit for our industrial lot at 18 Broadbent court and we employed a planner to do the work for us and it's been quite a lengthy process where I feel that a lot of the things could have been prevented and a lot of costs could have been prevented along the way. We had a meeting prior to the final meeting, which stated that they were worried about what development would be put there and also the sizes of the lots but also they didn't want the road to be put in from the back access which we discussed that and we got traffics group to come in and do what would be the most feasible option and it cost a lot of money to get that done. So we got that done and we amended all of the plans which was another cost and under our impression we had two engineers there and a planner at that meeting and we amended those plans to what they were asking and putting the correct car park sizes and stated that there is capacity for people to buy smaller lots and it brings more businesses to Beaufort, it cleans up the lot, it provides a lot more opportunities for people around Beaufort. We got a response saying that the main items were we want to see the amended plans to incorporate a development application, which we simply aren't in a position to be able to go to that stage because of family circumstances, my daughter became very unwell process so it has caused a lot of issues and then to include lot A as stage 2 which is the back block that we got the traffics group to get the road to come in from that access. Under my impression from that meeting we discussed all of those options and I actually brought the property off my father who is a house removalist and he has a lot of the houses stored on the block for his business but he has become unwell and not working anymore so we thought we would see if we could do what he was potentially wanting to do with the lot, cleaning it up and creating more lot sizes within the court. He also got knocked back with the plan when he was trying to apply for the subdivision.

**Mr Peter Milliken**

I have owned 18 Broadbent Court for probably 15 years. I put in a permit, put up a shed, this council didn't knock me back, they sent me out paperwork that I never received, I was in Apollo Bay, that's my residence now, they said it had been sent to Apollo Bay, I flew back to Apollo Bay to get the paperwork and there was not paperwork there. I came back to this shire two years later and they hand me the paperwork, all that it had to do was go through the waterboard, the catchment management authority, two years later, these houses have been sitting around at the block there at the moment. You do not have enough land in this area to build, I've probably built 13 or 14 houses in this area, and where you're sitting here today, I took the house away.

**Ms Rhianna Milliken**

Also, the objection that was put in, there was one objection, they gave photos over and no written form, it took a month for the shire to give us a written form statement from the resident but it's a picture of not our lot and also states that it's a mess, the industrial lot, but that is business, if he did run his business from that lot so they are houses that are not put back together but that is what goes with a house removing business. I was actually upset with seeing that because we have spoken to a number of residents, we've been in this community for a very long time, that are very happy with how the layout is and how many lots there are, and we will be bringing a business to Beaufort. Then to have a news article that went out to communities stating that we need to bring more business to Beaufort, it was sort of like a contradiction. I am actually concerned because if there is a bypass that is put through here, we need to get as much business as we can to Beaufort so it can become a thriving community but at the moment we have a number of businesses that have moved out of Beaufort that are around the court area, there is hardly any business in the court area, Racecourse road is limited to two businesses at the moment.

**Mr Peter Milliken**

If you have got smaller blocks and you can sell them off, you can get in auto electricians or maybe some other things like Bursons or somebody like them, which this town doesn't have anything like that, you have to travel, it has always been that way. We have been in this town for 50 odd years.

**Ms Rhianna Milliken**

We've spoke to Colliers Real Estate who were really impressed with the fact that there was all different lot sizes so it is not like we haven't done the research or all of that but I feel that even if we did submit another, like go through with what they wanted amended again, it costs \$5,000 just to get that meeting prior to the submission and it came back with the same stuff that we ha amended. Both myself and my partner have limited work now because my daughter is so unwell, we're in a catch 22.

**Mayor, Cr Damian Ferrari**

Thank you very much for you getting up there, it is not easy, and I understand your nervousness.

**Mr Peter Milliken**

The other thing is you wanted to know what businesses were going on these properties before they are even split.

**Mayor, Cr Damian Ferrari**

My understanding is that there are still some ongoing discussions, but you are quite right, as the Councillors we have discussed at length that we need to attract businesses and develop some areas for businesses in the town but there are processes we have to go through.

**Mr Douglas Gowans**

Thank you Ms Milliken, thank you for raising your concerns, I understand that the planning legislation that all councils have that is effectively there from state regulations, can be quite a fair bit to navigate and I know the team want to work with you to try and get a good outcome and ultimately council hasn't made a decision on this, on your permit application as yet.

**Ms Rhianna Milliken**

They actually say that it would be rejected.

**Mr Douglas Gowans**

If it went forward that would be their recommendation but I just wanted to make sure that you're aware that if council officers rejected the application, it still has to come to Council and Council have an opportunity to either accept the officer advice or can make their own decision on it. So what I am saying to you is I think there's still pathways for you to keep going through, ultimately I think from an officer perspective they've got to make sure that the legislation is met and I think Councillors have indicated that they want good planning outcomes and I think ultimately that would be in everyone's interest to get a good planning outcome.

Ultimately the team are committed to continuing the conversation and happy to work with you to progress an application, even if it is rejected by the officers, that automatically triggers it coming to Council.

Mr Trevor Davey

First of all, I hope everyone in this room has a great Christmas and a good New Year and a safe one.

I hope all of these members here have a break, it's been a very torrid year and in closing and I want to remind you of something that we have spoken about all year, climate change is real, now forget global warming, that's centrical, it comes round every 10,000 years but climate change could not be more real than now and Cr Kehoe brought up a very good point, if you think for one minute with this season, grasses and challenges, it is going to get a lot harder in the next 5 years, it is not going to slow down. Summer has gone until later in the year, but you are still going to get the change in your grass, in your weeds and your soil and that is happening now.

Have a great Christmas and a good new year and thanks for the help this year.

## 9. COUNCILLOR ACTIVITY REPORTS

### 9.1. COUNCILLOR ACTIVITY REPORTS - NOVEMBER 2025

<b>Cr Damian Ferrari – Beaufort Ward</b>		
1-2/11/2025	Lake Goldsmith Steam Rally	Lake Goldsmith
6/11/2025	CEO Performance Review Meeting	Beaufort
10/11/2025	Council Briefing	Lexton
10/11/2025	CEO Performance Review Meeting	Lexton
10/11/2025	Statutory Meeting of Council	Lexton
11/11/2025	Remembrance Day Service	Beaufort
14/11/2025	Beaufort Agricultural Society Art Show Opening	Beaufort
16/11/2025	Beaufort Show	Beaufort
16/11/2025	Cattle Pavilion Opening	Beaufort
17/11/2025	Mayor, Deputy Mayor & CEO Meeting	Beaufort
17/11/2025	Council Briefing	Beaufort
17/11/2025	Council Meeting	Beaufort
18/11/2025	Beaufort Community Financial Services AGM & Grants Event	Beaufort
25/11/2025	Meeting with Minister Staikos	Beaufort
25/11/2025	Inspection Stoneleigh Intersection with Ararat Rural City Council Mayor	Beaufort
30/11/2025	Beaufort Blue Light Motorcycle Club Event	Beaufort
<b>Cr Tanya Kehoe – Mount Emu Ward</b>		
1-2/11/2025	Lake Goldsmith Steam Rally	Lake Goldsmith
6/11/2025	GBAC Meeting with Minister Hutchins	Ballarat
6/11/2025	CEO Performance Review Meeting	Beaufort
10/11/2025	Council Briefing	Lexton
10/11/2025	CEO Performance Review Meeting	Lexton
10/11/2025	Statutory Meeting of Council	Lexton
11/11/2025	Remembrance Day Service	Beaufort
16/11/2025	Beaufort Show	Beaufort
17/11/2025	Council Briefing	Beaufort
17/11/2025	Council Meeting	Beaufort
26/11/2025	Audit & Risk Committee Meeting	Beaufort
26/11/2025	Stoneleigh Community Meeting	Stoneleigh
<b>Cr Simon Tol – Ercildoune Ward</b>		
1-2/11/2025	Lake Goldsmith Steam Rally	Lake Goldsmith
6/11/2025	CEO Performance Review Meeting	Beaufort
10/11/2025	Council Briefing	Lexton
10/11/2025	CEO Performance Review Meeting	Lexton
10/11/2025	Statutory Meeting of Council	Lexton
17/11/2025	Council Briefing	Beaufort
17/11/2025	Council Meeting	Beaufort
25/11/2025	Raglan Hall Committee AGM	Raglan

<b>Cr Megan Phelan – De Cameron Ward</b>		
2/11/2025	Hotdogs and Horsepower cancer fundraiser	Lexton
4/11/2025	Melbourne Cup Community Event and fundraiser	Navarre
6/11/2025	CEO Performance Review Meeting	Virtual
10/11/2025	Council Briefing	Lexton
10/11/2025	CEO Performance Review Meeting	Lexton
10/11/2025	Statutory Meeting of Council	Lexton
14/11/2025	Pyrenees Cellar Door Soft Launch	Ballarat
15/11/2025	Landsborough Hub	Landsborough
16/11/2025	Lexton Hall Luncheon Fundraiser	Lexton
17/11/2025	Council Briefing	Beaufort
17/11/2025	Council Meeting	Beaufort
29/11/2025	Bigibila Christmas Market	Moonambel

<b>Cr Rebecca Wardlaw – Avoca Ward</b>		
6/11/2025	CEO Performance Review Meeting	Beaufort
10/11/2025	Council Briefing	Lexton
10/11/2025	CEO Performance Review Meeting	Lexton
10/11/2025	Statutory Meeting of Council	Lexton
11/11/2025	Remembrance Day Service	Avoca
16/11/2025	Beaufort Show	Beaufort
16/11/2025	Cattle Pavilion Opening	Beaufort
17/11/2025	Mayor, Deputy Mayor & CEO Meeting	Beaufort
17/11/2025	Council Briefing	Beaufort
17/11/2025	Council Meeting	Beaufort
20/11/2025	MAV Masterclass – Understanding Local Government Finances	Melbourne
26/11/2025	Audit & Risk Committee Meeting	Beaufort
27/11/2025	MAV Masterclass – Speaking with Impact	Bendigo

**Cr Tanya Kehoe / Cr Rebecca Wardlaw**

That Council notes this report.

**CARRIED**

**10. ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS****10.1. ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS - NOVEMBER 2025**

<b>MEETING INFORMATION</b>			
Meeting Name	Council Briefing		
Meeting Date	10 November 2025 commenced at 4.00pm and closed at 5.30pm		
Meeting Location	Lexton Community Hub		
Items Discussed	1. Councillor Time 2. CEO Review – Committee Meeting 3. Update on matters and prepare the Statutory meeting		
<b>ATTENDEES</b>			
Councillors	Mayor Cr Tanya Kehoe Cr Damian Ferrari Cr Rebecca Wardlaw		Cr Simon Tol Cr Megan Phelan
Apologies	Nil.		
Staff	Jim Nolan (Chief Executive Officer)		
Visitors	Julie Reid (LGeX) item 2		
<b>CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES</b>			
Item No:	Councillor making disclosure	Particulars of disclosure	Councillor left meeting
Nil			

MEETING INFORMATION			
Meeting Name	Council Briefing		
Meeting Date	17 November 2025 commenced at 4.00pm and closed at 5.45pm		
Meeting Location	Council Chamber, Beaufort		
Items Discussed	1. Waubra Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Update 2. 2025-2026 Community Funding Program 3. Gunga Hub Rental 4. 2026 Australia Day Awards 5. Accident at Stoneleigh 6. Council Meeting Preparation		
ATTENDEES			
Councillors	Mayor Cr Damian Ferrari Cr Tanya Kehoe Cr Rebecca Wardlaw	Cr Simon Tol Cr Megan Phelan	
Apologies	Dougals Gowans (Director Assets and Development Services)		
Staff	Jim Nolan (Chief Executive Officer) Jacinta Erdody (Director Corporate and Community Services) Adam Boyle (Team Leader – Community Development) item 2		
Visitors	Erin Mulquiny (Acciona) item 1 Alex Nguyen (Acciona) item 1 Jacqueline Pertz (Acciona) item 1		
CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES			
Item No:	Councillor making disclosure	Particulars of disclosure	Councillor left meeting
Nil			

**Cr Simon Tol / Cr Rebecca Wardlaw**

That Council notes this report.

**CARRIED**

## 11. ITEMS FOR DECISION

### 11.1. ASSET AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

#### 11.1.1. PLANT LEASING COMPARISON - OWNERSHIP VERSUS LEASING OPTIONS

**Presenter:** Douglas Gowans - Director Asset and Development Services

**Declaration of Interest:** As presenter of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

**Report Author:** Douglas Gowans – Director Assets and Development

**Declaration of Interest:** As author of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

**File No:** 06/10/10

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a comparative assessment of owning plant outright versus leasing plant through hire arrangements over a five-year period, to inform future asset replacement and procurement strategies.

#### BACKGROUND

Pyrenees Shire Council currently owns and operates a range of heavy plant and equipment to support road construction and maintenance activities, including graders, loaders, rollers, trucks, backhoes and mowers.

Council's traditional approach has been to purchase plant outright and retain assets for extended periods — for example, loaders are typically held for an average of 15 years.

Given rising replacement costs and evolving asset management practices across the local government sector, it is appropriate to review the long-term financial and operational implications of leasing versus ownership.

#### ISSUE/DISCUSSION

The following provides an overview of the advantages and disadvantages associated with both ownership, leasing and hiring models for Council's plant fleet. In considering the model for plant usage, it is important to recognise that Council's operational requirements are heavily influenced by seasonal works programs, unpredictable weather conditions, and variable project workloads. The ability to align plant availability with these cycles is critical to delivering road maintenance and capital works efficiently.

The three methods of plant usage are:

- Ownership
- Leasing
- Hiring

#### Ownership

The tradition model for Councils to obtain plant, in particular heavy plant, is through direct ownership. As Councils do not have any financial benefits through taxation, the model of ownership is the best model from a financial perspective. The plant is retained for its full life cycle. Whilst financially viable, this is only relevant if the plant can be utilised for the appropriate level of hourly use. If this is not achieved, then the cost of Council owning may no longer be viable. As the plant is owned for its useful life, there can be the possibility of inefficiencies in the technology becoming outdated or the item of plant no longer being the best fit for purpose. Ownership provides greater certainty and control but limits Council's ability to respond dynamically to fluctuating workloads.

This model to obtain plant is best for those items of plant that are deemed essential for the operational needs of the organisation. Traditionally plant items such as those listed below are best obtained from Council ownership.

- Trucks
- Graders (provided that the usage hours are above the minimum hours)
- Light Vehicles (utes etc)

### **Leasing**

Leasing may provide the flexibility to upscale or downsize fleet capacity to meet short-term project demands without committing to long-term ownership. This is especially important in the situations where the purchase of the plant will significantly hamper the Council cashflow and the cost of leasing smooths out the cashflow impost of the term of the life of the plant item.

Services where the option of leasing is beneficial is in the delivery of waste services. This service requires a number of these vehicles at the same time with no ability to spread the purchase of the plant over a period of time. The cost of obtaining the number of plant required to deliver this service ensures the purchase of the plant to be cost prohibiting to the Council. Whilst this comes at a higher cost for the life of the plant, this cost can be directly recovered through the waste charge.

A negative to this is the possibility of the end of lease payment dependent on the condition of the plant item at the end of the life of the lease. Experience has shown in some instances this can be expensive, especially considered the types of services that plant is leased are in those areas where excessive wear of the plant item can be experienced.

Experience has also shown that the heavily reliance on leasing of plant can prove expensive in the long term. Following compulsory competitive tendering in the 1990's Councils heavily invested in leasing out the majority of their plant. Favourable terms were obtained in the first lease cycle, however once Councils had removed ownership of their plant items the next term of the lease proved financially detrimental to the Council as lease companies had realised Council did not have the cashflow to re purchase their plant leaving the Councils at the mercy of the lease companies. During this period Councils did reduce their reliance on leasing and became more strategic on those items of plant that were obtained through this option.

### **Hiring**

There are situations where a plant item maybe required for a specific job or time period thus the hiring of the equipment maybe financially the best method of obtaining the plant item. A situation where a Council may own three graders however the usage hours for graders may only require 2.3 graders. In this situation it is best to obtain two graders either through ownership or leasing, dependent of the Council financial situation, and hire plant to satisfy the remaining hours that need to be completed.

In situations where an item of plant is used for a finite period, the hiring of the plant item is the best option. The plant item can be utilised for the specific period and/or the appropriate type of machinery is obtained for the job in question. Hiring of plant is for a finite period but can sometimes not be an option where the plant item may not be able to be sourced in the seasonal period required. In some instances hiring maybe the identified best option however the Council has no option to purchase the item. In these

circumstances it may be possible for the Council to hire the equipment to other users to make it financially viable. In these instances, it is imperative that Council is aware of its obligations under the National Competition Policy.

## **Summary**

The management of plant assets represents a significant proportion of Council's annual capital and maintenance budgets. Decisions regarding ownership, leasing, or hiring therefore have material implications for Council's long-term financial sustainability, asset renewal planning, and workforce management. Consideration must also be given to factors such as operator familiarity, mechanical servicing capacity within Council depots, and supply chain reliability for leased and hire plant.

Factors to be considered in each option are:

- Financial
  - Full lifecycle cost
  - Cashflow implications
  - Cost recovery
- Usage
- Plant specifications
- Lease and hire of plant availability
- Leasing terms
- Hiring terms
- Operator availability

**Comparative Summary (5-Year  
Outlook)**

Ownership		Leasing		Hiring	
✓ Lower long-term cost	✗ Higher upfront cost	✓ Improved cash flow with predictable lease payments	✗ Higher total cost with multiple leasing cycles	✓ Improved cash flow with predictable lease payments	✗ Higher cost when compared to ownership dependant on hourly usage
✓ Operating costs increase with age	✗ Depreciation risk	✓ Stable operating costs or included in lease	✗ No residual or resale value	✓ Stable operating costs or included in hiring	✗ Plant may not be available when required
✓ Retains resale/trade-in value	✗ Limited upgrades until replacement	✓ Equipment upgrade at lease renewal	✗ Limits on usage, modification & hours	✓ Best plant for the job in question	✗ Reduced control over asset management & scheduling
✓ Full operational control	✗ Technology fixed to purchase date	✓ Shared or transferred risk to lessor	✗ Reduced control over asset management & scheduling	✓ Shared or transferred risk to hirer	✗ Reliance on supplier for maintenance & replacement
✓ Ability to customize use, modification and scheduling	✗ Increasing maintenance & repair costs over time		✗ Reliance on supplier for maintenance & replacement		✗ Reliance on supplier for maintenance & replacement
✓ Lower overall cost over 5 years	✗ Council bears all maintenance/downtime risk		✗ Higher overall cost over 5 years		
✓ Simpler management without lease conditions			✗ Possible financial insecurity due to variable interest rates, annual payment increases or repayment reviews		

**COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE**

Pillar 4 - Infrastructure

4a. Plan, build and maintain essential infrastructure.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Nil

**FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS**

While leasing can offer budget certainty and operational reliability, ownership generally remains more cost-effective over the full lifecycle if assets are retained beyond 10 years.

However, the financial advantage of ownership diminishes when accounting for downtime, increased maintenance, and lower efficiency in later years.

A hybrid approach — owning core long-life plant (e.g. graders, loaders) and leasing high-turnover or specialised equipment (e.g. trucks, rollers) — may provide the optimal balance between cost, flexibility, and service reliability.

**CONCLUSION**

Leasing offers advantages in flexibility, safety, and operational efficiency, particularly for equipment subject to rapid technological change.

For core plant with consistent use and long service lives, outright ownership continues to deliver value for money.

It is recommended that Council explore a mixed model to optimise both financial and operational outcomes.

**Cr Simon Tol / Cr Rebecca Wardlaw**

That Council:

1. Notes the comparison between plant ownership and leasing options; and
2. Endorses further investigation into a hybrid plan replacement model incorporating both ownership and leasing arrangements, with detailed financial modelling to be presented as part of the 2026/27 Plant Replacement Program.

**CARRIED**

### 11.1.2. CONSIDERATION OF COUNCIL POLICY - BUILDING FARM SHED EXEMPTION

**Presenter:** Douglas Gowans - Director Asset and Development Services

**Declaration of Interest:** As presenter of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

**Report Author:** Rachel Blackwell – Manager Planning and Development Services

**Declaration of Interest:** As author of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

**File No:** Building

#### PURPOSE

At the November 2025 meeting, Council resolved to seek a report on the potential introduction of a process to consider applications for exemption for permits for Class 10 buildings on farmland under Regulation 280 of the Building Regulations 2018.

#### BACKGROUND

Council recently requested a briefing on Class 10 buildings located on farmland to better understand Council's current position and to consider whether it would be appropriate to allow exemptions under this provision.

Under Regulation 280 of the Building Regulations 2018, Councils may exempt a Class 10 building that is to be constructed on farmland and used for farming purposes from all or part of the requirements of the Regulations. The circumstances in which this exemption may apply are limited. Examples include:

- A hay shed or storage shed used to store plant feed that is used exclusively for animals on the same farm (not for resale).
- An animal shelter or shed used for breeding animals solely for use on the farm. If a full exemption is granted, a building permit and certificate of final inspection are not required.

At present, Pyrenees Shire Council does not exercise this exemption and does not have a formal policy or process in place to assess such applications.

Following the recent briefing, the potential introduction of a process to consider exemptions was supported by the Council's Municipal Building Surveyor. As such, the building team has developed the necessary processes, assessment criteria, and application forms to support the consideration of Class 10 building exemptions on farmland.

#### ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The proposed Building – Farm Shed Exemption Policy (**Attachment 1**) outlines Pyrenees Shire Council's (PSC) framework for assessing applications for exemption from building permit requirements for Farm Sheds & Farm Buildings under Regulation 280 of the *Building Regulations 2018*. It aims to ensure clarity, compliance, and consistency in the assessment of Farm Sheds & Farm Buildings on Farmland

This Policy applies to all owners and occupiers of Farmland within PSC who propose to construct Farm Sheds or Farm Buildings who seek an exemption from the requirement to obtain a building permit.

By way of definition - **Farming** is defined by the **National Construction Code, Building Code of Australia** (the 'NCC') to mean:

- b) Cultivating, propagating, and harvesting plants or fungi or their products or parts, including seeds, spores, bulbs, or the like, but does not include forestry; or
- b) Maintaining animals in any physical environment for the purposes of –
  - iv) Breeding them; or
  - iv) Selling them; or
  - iv) Acquiring and selling their bodily produce such as milk, wool, eggs, or the like; or

- iv) A combination of (a), and (b). But it does not include forestry or maintaining animals for sport or recreational purposes.

iv)

**Farm vehicle** is defined by the NCC to mean:

- a) A vehicle used in connection with farming.

**Farmland** means any ratable land —

- c) That is not less than 2 hectares in area; and
- c) That is used primarily for grazing (including agistment), dairying, pig-farming, poultry farming, fish-farming, tree-farming, beekeeping, viticulture, horticulture, fruit-growing, or the growing of crops of any kind or for any combination of those activities; and
- c) that is used by a business—
  - iii) That has a significant and substantial commercial purpose or character; and
  - iii) That seeks to make a profit on a continuous or repetitive basis from its activities on the land; and
  - iii) That is making a profit from its activities on the land, or that it has a reasonable prospect of making a profit from its activities on the land if it continues to operate in the way that it is operating.

A building permit is required for the construction of Farm Sheds & Farm Buildings. Building work must not commence until a building permit is issued by a registered Building Surveyor.

Most Farm Sheds & Farm Buildings are classified under the NCC as:

- Class 7b – A building that is used for storage or display of goods or produce for sale by wholesale.
- Class 8 – A building in which the production, assembling, altering, repairing, packing, finishing, or cleaning of goods or produce for sale takes place.
- Class 10 – refer below

Class 7 & 8 buildings are not eligible for an exemption under Regulation 280 of the *Building Regulations 2018* and must obtain a building permit prior to commencement of building work.

### **Eligibility of the exemption**

Owners may apply to the Municipal Building Surveyor (the 'MBS') of PSC for an exemption from obtaining a building permit for Class 10 Farm Sheds & Farm Buildings pursuant to regulation 280 of the ***Building Regulations 2018***, if all the following criteria is met:

- Used for non-habitable purposes, such as tool sheds or small storage buildings.
- Single storey.
- Constructed on land primarily used for farming that is:
  - iii) Used in connection with farming; or
  - iii) Used primarily to store one or more farm vehicles; or
  - iii) A combination of (i) or (ii).
- Occupied neither frequently nor for extended periods by people.
- The total number of persons accommodated at any time does not exceed two.
- Total floor area of 200 square metres or less.

- Separated from any other building or allotment boundary by a distance of not less than 6 metres.
- Separated from any dwelling on the Farm property by a distance not less than 10 metres.
- Entirely freestanding, meaning not attached to, and not serving as an extension to, any existing building.

### **Application Process**

Applications must be submitted to Pyrenees Shire Council via the Greenlight Portal.

Exemptions are not granted automatically and are assessed on a case-by-case basis. The MBS of PSC will:

- Assess the application.
- Determine the appropriate NCC building classification.
- Issue a Determination on the application.
- Specify any conditions applicable to the exemption (if granted).

### **Approval and Compliance**

If an exemption application is approved, an exemption statement will be issued by the Council's Building department and will certify the relevant documentation.

The exempted building must still:

- Comply with the NCC.
- Meet all relevant siting controls and planning permit requirements.
- Be constructed in accordance with the plans and documentation submitted and approved for the exemption.
- Be constructed in accordance with the relevant engineering design and specifications.
- Building work must commence within 12 months of approval and be completed within 24 months of approval. After this time, the approval will lapse.
- Note that if the building's use changes after construction, regulation 229 of the Building Regulations 2018 applies, requiring the building to comply with the requirements of its new use.

### **COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE**

Pillar 1 - People

1b. Community safety and wellbeing.

Pillar 2 - Economy

2a. Support growth and diversification of new and existing businesses.

2b. Coordinated and facilitated planning fostering business and tourism growth.

Pillar 3 - Nature Environment

3b. Mitigate risks, build community resilience, and enhance responsiveness to natural disasters.

Pillar 4 - Infrastructure

4a. Plan, build and maintain essential infrastructure.

4c. Support and facilitate appropriate land use.

Pillar 5 - Community-Centric

5b. Work constructively and in partnership to solve issues early and deliver outcomes building trust.

5d. Deliver high quality services with continuous improvement focus.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Policy Building Farm sheds and farm buildings DRAFT V4 [**11.1.2.1** - 7 pages]

**FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS**

The introduction of the Farm Shed Exemption Policy is expected to have minimal financial impact on the Council. While there may be minor administrative costs associated with assessing applications and issuing exemption statements, these can be managed within the existing Building Department resources. Any additional compliance monitoring is expected to be limited.

Overall, the policy may provide indirect economic benefits by supporting local farmers and facilitating agricultural development.

**CONCLUSION**

The proposed Farm Shed Exemption Policy provides a clear and consistent process for assessing applications for Class 10 building exemptions on farmland.

It supports local farming operations while ensuring compliance with building standards, planning requirements, and safety regulations. The policy promotes transparency, fairness, and efficient decision-making, aligning with the Council's objectives to foster economic growth, responsible land use, and community trust.

**Cr Tanya Kehoe / Cr Rebecca Wardlaw**

That Council:

1. Adopts and implements the building – Farm Shed Exemption Policy as Pyrenees Shires framework for assessing applications for exemption from building permit requirements for Farm Sheds & Farm Buildings under Regulation 280 of the *Building Regulations 2018*.

**CARRIED**

### 11.1.3. UPDATE ON RENEWABLE ENERGY POSITION STATEMENT IMPLEMENTATION

**Presenter:** Douglas Gowans - Director Asset and Development Services

**Declaration of Interest:** As presenter of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

**Report Author:** Douglas Gowans – Director Assets and Development

**Declaration of Interest:** As author of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

**File No:** 30/04/04

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on the implementation of the Pyrenees Shire Council Position Statement on New Energy Development and to outline recent advocacy outcomes and next steps. This report also seeks Council's endorsement to reaffirm its commitment to the Position Statement for the remainder of the current Council term, with a formal review to occur within the first 12 months of the next elected Council.

#### BACKGROUND

At the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 16 June 2025, Council adopted the Pyrenees Shire Council Position Statement on New Energy Development to guide negotiations, advocacy, and engagement regarding renewable energy projects proposed within the municipality.

Following adoption, Council made a submission to the Victorian Government's Transmission Plan, which included advocacy for a reduction in the proposed Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) area within the Pyrenees Shire. This position was based on significant community feedback and Council's desire to ensure that renewable energy development remains appropriately scaled, responsibly located, and aligned with community expectations.

The Victorian Government has subsequently confirmed a reduction in the affected area, resulting in a lesser overall impact on the Pyrenees Shire and greater certainty for the community and region.

Additionally, in September 2025, Council submitted a written response to the Western Renewables Link Inquiry and Advisory Committee, outlining serious concerns regarding the proposed alignment of the Western Renewables Link and its potential impacts on our communities, economy, and environment. The Public Hearing is currently underway, with Council's submission scheduled to be heard on 11 December 2025. Hearings are scheduled to conclude on Thursday, 5 March 2026.

#### ISSUE / DISCUSSION

Council's recent submission to the Victorian Transmission Plan successfully advocated for a reduction in the proposed REZ area affecting the municipality. In recent high-level discussions, VicGrid has indicated verbally that renewable energy projects are unlikely to be approved outside designated Renewable Energy Zones.

The Minister for Energy and Resources has now released draft renewable energy zone orders and is inviting another round of feedback for consideration before formally declaring each zone. This gives communities, landholders, Traditional Owners and industry another chance to provide feedback to help shape development of renewable energy zones. For more information and to make a submission, visit the [Renewable energy zone orders page](#). It is not proposed that Council makes any further submission at this point. The Victorian Transmission Plan will be updated in 2027 and every 4 years after, or more often if required.

This outcome provides greater assurance for residents and landholders, reduces potential cumulative impacts, and strengthens Council's ability to negotiate positive outcomes for the community. Evidence of this can be seen in the funding provided for power upgrades in Waubra and Lexton, as well as for the NBN tower in Lexton and the playground in Waubra.

Council also collaborated with the Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance (CVGA) on a submission to the Victorian REZ Community Benefits Plan advocating for an appropriate level of benefit to be returned to impacted communities noting that most benefits of this generation and transmission infrastructure are urban consumers.

The Position Statement remains a key advocacy tool for ensuring community values, environmental stewardship, and economic benefits are prioritised as renewable energy proposals progress. Council officers recommend that the Position Statement continue to guide all current and future assessments, negotiations, and advocacy efforts throughout the remainder of the current Council term.

Given the pace of change in the renewable energy sector and the evolving policy landscape at both state and federal levels, it is appropriate that the Position Statement be reviewed within the first 12 months of a newly elected Council. This will allow the next Council to evaluate its effectiveness, respond to updated legislation or regional frameworks, and reaffirm expectations for benefit-sharing, community engagement, and environmental protection.

Consistent with Council's ongoing advocacy, values of community wellbeing, equitable benefit-sharing, and responsible development remain at the forefront of Council's considerations. Any renewable energy proposal must demonstrate a clear positive net benefit—social, environmental, and economic—before receiving Council's support.

## **COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE**

### Pillar 3 - Nature Environment

- 3a. Preserve and manage biodiversity and natural assets.
- 3b. Mitigate risks, build community resilience and enhance responsiveness to natural disasters.
- 3c. Support local industries and communities in adapting to climate change.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES**

The Position Statement continues to reflect the values and aspirations captured through extensive community engagement undertaken as part of the development of the Community Vision 2031. Ongoing feedback from residents, landholders, and community groups has informed Council's recent advocacy and reinforced the importance of ensuring genuine community benefits from all renewable energy proposals.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Pyrenees Shire Council Position Statement on New Energy Development June 2025 [11.1.3.1 - 11 pages]
2. 20240625 - Submission - Renewable Energy Zone Community Benefits Plan [11.1.3.2 - 4 pages]

## **FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS**

Maintaining a strong and clearly articulated advocacy position provides opportunities for improved energy outcomes, increased access to future benefit-sharing funds, and better mitigation of project-related social, environmental, and economic risks.

Failure to coordinate renewable energy development could result in community division, increased landscape impacts, and lost opportunities for long-term legacy benefits.

## **CONCLUSION**

The adopted Position Statement remains a critical tool for ensuring renewable energy development delivers positive outcomes for the community.

Council's approach will continue to prioritise community values, ensure benefit-sharing is equitable and meaningful, and require that all renewable energy proposals demonstrate a clear positive net benefit for the Pyrenees community.

**Cr Megan Phelan / Cr Rebecca Wardlaw**

That Council:

1. Recommit to the Position Statement on New Energy Development for the term of this current Council.
2. Authorise relevant Council officers to share the Position Statement on New Energy Development with prospective developers, and publish the Statement on Council's website.
3. Commit to reviewing the Position Statement on New Energy Development within the first 12-months of a newly elected Council.

**CARRIED**

## 11.2. CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

### 11.2.1. COUNCIL REPRESENTATION ON COMMITTEES

**Presenter:** Jacinta Erdody - Director Corporate and Community Services

**Declaration of Interest:** As presenter of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

**Report Author:** Kathy Bramwell – Acting Manager Governance and Performance

**Declaration of Interest:** As author of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

**File No:** 18/02/04

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is for Council to determine Councillor representation on committees.

#### BACKGROUND

Each year the Council determines the Councillor representation on committees. Below is a list of Committees showing Councillor representation as adopted by Council at its Ordinary Meeting of 19 November 2024.

Committee	Dept	Staff Member	Councillor
<b>EXTERNAL - FORMAL</b>			
Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)	CEO	CEO	Mayor
Victorian Local Government Association (VLGA)		N/A	Any Councillors
Greater Ballarat Alliance of Councils (GBAC)	CEO	CEO	Mayor
Rural Councils Victoria (RCV)	CEO	CEO	Mayor
Central Highlands LLEN	CEO	N/A	TBA
Timber Towns Victoria	A&DS	Director A&DS	TBA
National Timber Councils Association	A&DS	Director A&DS	TBA
Central Highlands Regional Partnership	CEO	CEO	N/A
Western Highway Action Committee (WHAC)	A&DS	Director A&DS	Cr Ferrari
Sunraysia Highway Action Committee	A&DS	Director A&DS	Cr Tol
Committee for Ballarat	CEO	CEO	Mayor
Central Victoria Greenhouse Alliance (CVGA)	CEO	Director A&DS	TBA
Central Highlands Children and Youth Area Partnership	C&CS	Manager CWP	Cr Wardlaw
Grampians Women's Health – CoRE Governance Group	C&CS	Director C&CS	N/A
Grampians Pyrenees Primary Care Partnership (GPPCP)	C&CS	CEO / Manager CWP	N/A
<b>EXTERNAL – REPRESENTATIVE ONLY</b>			
Library Advisory Council	C&CS	Manager CWP	N/A
Business for Beaufort	CEO	N/A	Cr Ferrari
Advance Avoca	CEO	N/A	Cr Wardlaw
Beaufort Secondary College Committee		N/A	Cr Kehoe
Langi Kal Kal Community Advisory Group	CEO	CEO	Cr Tol

Committee	Dept	Staff Member	Councillor
<b>INTERNAL</b>			
<b>Audit &amp; Risk Committee</b>	C&CS	Director C&CS	Mayor Cr Wardlaw
<b>Services &amp; Assets Management Steering Group</b>	A&DS	Director A&DS	TBA
<b>Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC)</b>	C&CS	MEMO	Cr Ferrari
<b>CEO Review</b>	CEO	CEO	All Councillors plus an independent professional advisor
<b>COMMITTEES OF MANAGEMENT</b>			
<b>Beaufort Community Bank Complex</b>	C&CS	Manager CW&P	Cr Ferrari
<b>Brewster Hall (not active)</b>	C&CS	Manager CW&P	
<b>Landsborough Community Precinct</b>	C&CS	Manager CW&P	Cr Phelan
<b>Snake Valley Hall</b>	C&CS	Manager CW&P	Cr Kehoe
<b>Waubra Recreation Reserve</b>	C&CS	Manager CW&P	Cr Tol
<b>Lexton Community Hub</b>	C&CS	Manager CW&P	Cr Tol

### ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The Council is requested to determine the allocation of Councillors to the various committees that Pyrenees Shire Council is associated with for the 2025/26 year.

A list of recommended representatives is included in the Officer Recommendation for Council consideration.

### COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Enabling Principles

- b. Provide transparency and accountability
- c. Use resources efficiently and effectively

### ATTACHMENTS

Nil

### FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial or risk implications associated with this report.

### CONCLUSION

Annually, the Council reviews its representation to the range of committees it participates in. This report provides an update on this representation and provides any recommendations for change.

**OFFICER RECOMMENDATION**

That Council appoints the following Councillors as representatives on committees as listed below for the 2025/26 year:

Committee	Dept	Staff Member	Councillor
<b>EXTERNAL - FORMAL</b>			
Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)	CEO	CEO	Mayor
Victorian Local Government Association (VLGA)		N/A	Any Councillors
Greater Ballarat Alliance of Councils (GBAC)	CEO	CEO	Mayor
Rural Councils Victoria Executive Committee	CEO	N/A	Cr Kehoe
Rural Councils Victoria (RCV)	CEO	CEO	Mayor
Central Highlands Regional Partnership	CEO	CEO	N/A
Western Highway Action Committee (WHAC)	A&DS	Director A&DS	Cr Ferrari
Sunraysia Highway Action Committee	A&DS	Manager Assets	Cr Tol
Committee for Ballarat	CEO	CEO	Mayor
Central Victoria Greenhouse Alliance (CVGA)	CEO	Director A&DS	
<b>EXTERNAL – REPRESENTATIVE ONLY</b>			
Library Advisory Council	C&CS	Manager CWP	N/A
Business for Beaufort	CEO	N/A	Cr Ferrari
Advance Avoca	CEO	N/A	Cr Wardlaw
Beaufort Secondary College Committee		N/A	Cr Kehoe
Youth Foundations Victoria Beaufort Initiative	C&CS	N/A	Cr Kehoe
Langi Kal Kal Community Advisory Group	CEO	CEO	Cr Tol
 <b>Committee</b>			
<b>INTERNAL</b>			
Audit & Risk Committee	C&CS	Director C&CS	Mayor Cr Wardlaw
Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC)	C&CS	MEMO	Cr Ferrari
CEO Review	CEO	CEO	All Councillors plus an independent professional advisor
<b>COMMUNITY ASSET COMMITTEES OF MANAGEMENT</b>			
Beaufort Community Bank Complex	C&CS	Manager CW&P	Cr Ferrari
Brewster Hall	C&CS	Manager CW&P	
Landsborough Community Precinct	C&CS	Manager CW&P	Cr Phelan
Snake Valley Hall	C&CS	Manager CW&P	Cr Kehoe
Waubra Recreation Reserve	C&CS	Manager CW&P	Cr Tol
Lexton Community Hub	C&CS	Manager CW&P	Cr Tol

**Cr Rebecca Wardlaw / Cr Tanya Kehoe**

That Council appoints the following Councillors as representatives on committees as listed below for the 2025/26 year:

Committee	Dept	Staff Member	Councillor
<b>EXTERNAL - FORMAL</b>			
Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)	CEO	CEO	Mayor
Victorian Local Government Association (VLGA)		N/A	Any Councillors
Greater Ballarat Alliance of Councils (GBAC)	CEO	CEO	Mayor
Rural Councils Victoria Executive Committee	CEO	N/A	Cr Kehoe
Rural Councils Victoria (RCV)	CEO	CEO	Mayor
Central Highlands Regional Partnership	CEO	CEO	N/A
Western Highway Action Committee (WHAC)	A&DS	Director A&DS	Cr Ferrari
Sunraysia Highway Action Committee	A&DS	Manager Assets	Cr Tol
Committee for Ballarat	CEO	CEO	Mayor
Central Victoria Greenhouse Alliance (CVGA)	CEO	Director A&DS	Cr Wardlaw
<b>EXTERNAL – REPRESENTATIVE ONLY</b>			
Library Advisory Council	C&CS	Manager CWP	N/A
Business for Beaufort	CEO	N/A	Cr Ferrari
Advance Avoca	CEO	N/A	Cr Wardlaw
Beaufort Secondary College Committee		N/A	Cr Kehoe
Youth Foundations Victoria Beaufort Initiative	C&CS	N/A	Cr Kehoe
Langi Kal Kal Community Advisory Group	CEO	CEO	Cr Tol
<b>INTERNAL</b>			
Audit & Risk Committee	C&CS	Director C&CS	Mayor Cr Wardlaw
Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC)	C&CS	MEMO	Cr Ferrari
CEO Review	CEO	CEO	All Councillors plus an independent professional advisor
<b>COMMUNITY ASSET COMMITTEES OF MANAGEMENT</b>			
Beaufort Community Bank Complex	C&CS	Manager CW&P	Cr Ferrari
Brewster Hall	C&CS	Manager CW&P	Cr Tol
Landsborough Community Precinct	C&CS	Manager CW&P	Cr Phelan
Snake Valley Hall	C&CS	Manager CW&P	Cr Kehoe
Waubra Recreation Reserve	C&CS	Manager CW&P	Cr Tol
Lexton Community Hub	C&CS	Manager CW&P	Cr Tol

**CARRIED**

### 11.2.2. DELEGATIONS

**Presenter:** Jacinta Erdody - Director Corporate and Community Services

**Declaration of Interest:** As presenter of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

**Report Author:** Kathy Bramwell – Acting Manager Governance and Performance

**Declaration of Interest:** As author of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

**File No:** 16/20/08

### PURPOSE

This report is provided for the Council to adopt revised Instruments of Appointment & Authorisation to Officers working on behalf of Council.

### BACKGROUND

Section 11 (1) of the Local Government Act 2020 provides the Council with the power to delegate to members of Council Staff and Officers, via Instrument of Delegation, any power, duty, or function of a council under the Act other than one prohibited by section 11 (2).

A range of other legislation also allows the Council to delegate powers, duties, and functions under those Acts or regulations.

It is the Council's practice to review its delegations regularly and specifically when officer changes occur.

### ISSUE / DISCUSSION

Council operates its Environmental Health operations through a contract arrangement with Kernow, which provides the organisation and its community with a consistent approach to mandatory environmental health services and public health protections without interruption. To maintain this service, new officers occasionally work for the Council requiring Instruments of Authorisation & Appointment to be updated to allow full operations.

Sandy Loring is now assigned to the Pyrenees Shire Council as Environmental Health Officer and requires the appropriate delegations and authorisations from the Council to operate fully in this role on behalf of the Council.

A relevant Instrument of Authorisation & Appointment is attached for the Council's consideration and adoption. Following adoption, the document will be sealed with the Council Seal.

### COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 1 - People

1a. Prepare for emergencies and ensure community safety.

Enabling Principles

b. Provide transparency and accountability  
c. Use resources efficiently and effectively

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

Management and review of Instruments of Delegation and/or Authorisation & Appointment is a matter of compliance and does not require community engagement.

### ATTACHMENTS

1. Instrument of Appointment Sandy Loring EHO December 2025 [11.2.2.1 - 3 pages]

**FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS**

It is a requirement under the Local Government Act 2020 and other legislation to accurately record any delegations of powers, duties, or functions to officers to allow for proper and lawful administration of Council's functions and operations, without which all functions and operations would require daily resolution of the Council.

**CONCLUSION**

Lawful operation of Council administration requires delegations of authority to be authorised by Council. The new assignment of the environmental health officer to the Council requires an update of authorisations to allow for full operation within that function. The Instrument of Appointment & Authorisation, once approved by the Council, will remain in force until further reviews are conducted in the future.

**Cr Tanya Kehoe / Cr Megan Phelan**

That Council:

1. In the exercise of the powers conferred by section 11 of the Local Government Act 2020 and other legislation referenced in the attached Instrument, resolves that the officer referenced in the S11 and S11A Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation attached, be appointed and authorised as set out in the Instrument, and
2. The Instruments come into force immediately the Common Seal of Council is affixed to the Instrument and remains in force until Council determines to vary or revoke it.

**CARRIED**

### 11.2.3. NP51 WALKER STREET AVOCAS

**Presenter:** Jacinta Erdody - Director Corporate and Community Services

**Declaration of Interest:** As presenter of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

**Report Author:** Emily Beaton – Revenue and Road Naming Officer

**Declaration of Interest:** As author of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

**File No:** 58/02/08

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is for Council to give notice of its intent to name a currently unnamed road in Avoca, between Davy Street and Camp Street.

#### BACKGROUND

Road names can recognise and reflect culture, heritage, and landscape. Appropriate naming is essential to identify locations for managing emergencies and delivering goods and services; therefore, it is important that unnamed roads are named accordingly.

The previous proposal of “Rose Mary Way” was disallowed by Geographic Names Victoria in accordance with Principle D of the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria.

#### ISSUE / DISCUSSION

In accordance with Pyrenees Shire Council Policy “Principles on Road Naming” Clause 4.1(a), it is proposed to name the unnamed road “Walker Street”.

This unsealed road runs in a South direction, offering additional access points to properties that have High Street and Napier Street as their main frontage/entry point.

To commence the naming of this road the following road name is suggested:

#### ***Walker Street***

The name, “Walker Street”, honours Nurse Rose Mary Walker, born 1889 in Avoca. Rose served for three years in the Australian Army Nursing Service (AANS) during World War 1, from 24 June 1915 through to 25 November 1918. In addition to the Convalescent Depot, Harefield Park, London, Rose was also posted in Lemnos and Egypt. Rose passed away in Berwick, Victoria in 1970. The road type “Street” refers to an open-ended public roadway in a town, city, or urban area.

The use of a female commemorative name is in accordance with the Victorian Government’s Gender Equality Strategy which legislates that 70% of new commemorative names be that of women (also as per Principle G *Naming Rules for Places in Victoria 2022*).

The name “Walker” was checked for duplication in the VicNames database and there were no duplicates found within a 15 km radius.

#### COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Pillar 1 - People

1a. Inclusivity and accessibility.

Pillar 4 - Infrastructure

4a. Plan, build and maintain essential infrastructure.

## ATTACHMENTS

1. NP 51 Walker Street - MAP [11.2.3.1 - 1 page]

## FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Costs for the naming of the road are able to be accommodated within the limits of Council's operating budget.

The naming of new roads and accurate addressing is important to ensure that residents are able to be located by emergency services and to receive mail. To mitigate the risk of errors, Council needs to comply with the "Naming Rules for Places in Victoria, 2022" and the Australian Standard for Rural and Urban Addressing (AS/NSZ 4819:2011).

## Cr Simon Tol / Cr Rebecca Wardlaw

That Council:

1. That Council commences the naming process to name this unnamed road to "Walker Street".
2. That Council give public notice of the proposed naming of Walker Street and asks for public submissions in accordance with Section 223 of the Local Government Act 1989.
3. That Council writes to relevant surrounding property owners advising of the road naming proposal and invitation for public submissions.

**CARRIED**

### 11.3. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

#### 11.3.1. 2026 COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE

**Presenter:** Jim Nolan - Chief Executive Officer

**Declaration of Interest:** As presenter of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

**Report Author:** Jim Nolan – Chief Executive Officer

**Declaration of Interest:** As author of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

**File No:** 16/17/02

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is for Council to decide on the meeting schedule for Council meetings and briefing sessions for 2026.

#### BACKGROUND

A 2026 schedule of meetings has been prepared in consultation with Councillors and is detailed in this report.

#### ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The schedule contains dates for Ordinary Council meetings held monthly as well as Assemblies of Councillors (Briefing Sessions) and the annual Statutory Meeting.

#### 2026 Council Meeting Calendar

January			
19th	Council Meeting (if required)	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Virtual
February			
2nd	Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
9th	Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
16th	Briefing	4.00pm - 6.00pm	Beaufort
16th	Council Meeting	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Beaufort
March			
2nd	Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
16th	Briefing	4.00pm - 6.00pm	Beaufort
16th	Council Meeting	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Beaufort
23rd	Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
April			
13th	Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
20th	Briefing	4.00pm - 6.00pm	Beaufort
20th	Council Meeting	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Beaufort
27th	Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
May			
4th	Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
11th	Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
18th	Briefing	4.00pm - 6.00pm	Beaufort
18th	Council Meeting	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Beaufort
June			
1st	Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
15th	Briefing	4.00pm - 6.00pm	Beaufort
15th	Council Meeting	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Beaufort
22nd	Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
July			
6th	Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
13th	Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
20th	Briefing	4.00pm - 6.00pm	Beaufort
20th	Council Meeting	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Beaufort

August			
3rd	Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
10th	Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
17th	Briefing	4.00pm - 6.00pm	Beaufort
17th	Council Meeting	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Beaufort
September			
7th	Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
14th	Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
21st	Briefing	4.00pm - 6.00pm	Beaufort
21st	Council Meeting	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Beaufort
October			
5th	Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
12th	Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
19th	Briefing	4.00pm - 6.00pm	Beaufort
19th	Council Meeting	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Beaufort
November			
2nd	Briefing (if required)	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
9th	Briefing	4.00pm - 6.00pm	Lexton
9th	Statutory Meeting	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Lexton
16th	Briefing	4.00pm - 6.00pm	Beaufort
16th	Council Meeting	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Beaufort
December			
7th	Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
14th	Briefing	4.00pm - 6.00pm	Beaufort
14th	Council Meeting	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Beaufort

Notice of meeting dates is available on Council's website and is published in Council's Noticeboard available in the Pyrenees Advocate and Maryborough Advertiser each week.

The Ordinary Council and Statutory meetings are livestreamed providing the community, who are unable to attend in person, the ability to view the meetings in real time, provide an awareness of how Council meetings are conducted and to reach a wider audience.

Should circumstances require a change to Council Meeting dates, or the need for additional Council Meetings, then this can be done by giving appropriate notice in accordance with the Governance Rules.

The meeting schedule provides for an optional virtual Council Meeting to be held in January if required should there be any urgent matters requiring decision. As an alternative, a Special Council Meeting can be called in accordance with the Governance Rules.

While Briefing dates are contained in the above and attached document, this is for Councillor scheduling purposes and there is no statutory requirement to give public notice of these briefing meetings.

#### **COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE**

Priority 1 - People

1c. Improve accessibility and inclusivity.

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. DRAFT - 2026 Council Meeting Dates [11.3.1.1 - 1 page]

#### **FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS**

Council has made provisions in its 2026-2027 budget to meet the costs associated with the meetings.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Subject to Council's agreement to the meeting schedule, it is proposed that public notice be given in accordance with Council Policy – Governance Rules 2023 of the Council Meetings.

#### **Cr Tanya Kehoe / Cr Rebecca Wardlaw**

That Council:

1. Adopts the Council Meeting schedule for 2026, as detailed in this report; and
2. Not hold an Ordinary Council Meeting in January 2026 unless an urgent need arises.
3. Gives public notice, in accordance with Council Policy – Governance Rules 2023, of the proposed Council Meeting dates.

#### **CARRIED**

### 11.3.2. RECONCILIATION UPDATE

**Presenter:** Jim Nolan - Chief Executive Officer

**Declaration of Interest:** As presenter of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

**Report Author:** Jim Nolan – Chief Executive Officer

**Declaration of Interest:** As author of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

**File No:** 16/19/04

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on Reconciliation activities and related legislative commitments relevant to Traditional Owner recognition, cultural heritage and treaty.

#### BACKGROUND

Pyrenees Shire Council endorsed the 2021-2024 Reconciliation Plan in February 2019, following adoption of the plan, a Reconciliation Advisory Committee was formed.

The purpose of the Reconciliation Advisory Committee is to support the successful implementation of Pyrenees Shire Council's Reconciliation Plan and in doing so, work towards realising Pyrenees Shire Council's Reconciliation Vision.

Council's Reconciliation Plan is available on Council's website:

<https://www.pyrenees.vic.gov.au/files/assets/public/v1/council-publications/strategic-plans/reconciliation-plan-2021-2024-without-officers.pdf>

The Plan states the following vision of reconciliation for the Council:

Council is committed to reconciliation and aspires to be a leader within the broader community to advance reconciliation locally with other stakeholders. Council's vision for reconciliation involves the following enduring commitments:

- A holistic, whole of organisation approach that engages all staff in reconciliation including increasing knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.
- Strong healthy relationships between Council and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents and Traditional Owners that support continual dialogue to inform decision making.
- Taking a leadership role, to drive the identification and implementation of reconciliation issues and actions across our municipality. To build engaged and inclusive communities that embrace diversity and ensure First Nations community members thrive.
- The implementation of relevant and quality actions based on evidence, involving the evaluation of effectiveness and accountability to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.
- Increasing the cultural inclusion and subsequent participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents in Council functions, programs, events and services.

Membership on the Reconciliation Advisory Committee is as follows:

- The CEO
- Manager Community Wellbeing and Partnerships
- Manager People and Culture
- Staff from units responsible for a significant number of actions or whose actions are complex and will benefit from cross directorate support.

- Representatives from the municipality's Traditional Owners.
- Aboriginal and / or Torres Strait Islander community members who are supportive of the Council's Reconciliation Plan and can provide advice on organisational reconciliation.
- Representatives from relevant organisations within the municipality that are supportive of the Council's Reconciliation Plan and can provide advice on organisational reconciliation
- Representatives of the community who have experience in being actively involved in this space, or looking to be more involved in positive community change.

Meetings of the RAC generally occur twice annually. While formal meetings have not occurred during 2026, there has been a range of engagements and initiatives undertaken to continue to build relationships and explore opportunities with Traditional Owner groups.

## ISSUE / DISCUSSION

### Reconciliation & Traditional Owner Matters

One of the initiatives in the new Council Plan is to review, develop and implement the Reconciliation Plan partnering with key stakeholders including Aboriginal parties. While the Reconciliation Plan is mostly focused at a local level, the following is provided for background.

The Pyrenees shire land comprises four Registered Aboriginal Parties (representing Traditional Owner groups), namely:

- Barengi Gadjin Land Council (BGLC)
- Dja Dja Wurrung
- Eastern Maar
- Wadawurrung

There are several pieces of legislation in place relevant to Traditional Owners including:

- Native Title Act 1993
- Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010
- Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 (AHA)
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

In respect of the Traditional Owners:

- Dja Dja Wurrung (Djaara) - a Recognition and Settlement Agreement (RSA) with the State of Victoria is in place along with a Land Use Activity Agreement both of which outline responsibilities and expectations of local government. Significant strategic plans that Djaara has in place include:
  - DDW Clans Country Plan (Dhelkunya Dja)
  - Working together to heal water (Djaara Gatjin Strategy)
  - Turning 'wrong way' climate, 'right way' (Climate Change Strategy)
  - Trading our Way (Wuktjarrang)

Engagement with Djaara on a range of matters has included visits to the Djaara Bendigo offices by Council staff to build the relationship and understanding / implementation of the above, including the Djaara showcase event in October from which several opportunities for partnership were initiated, including future partnership on housing, employment, waterway and fire management matters.

In November Officers met with a large delegation of Djaara and other TO representatives working towards a TO assessment on the SWNP Pipeline project for inclusion into the business case for this project.

- Wadawurung – A native title claim is with the Federal Court. Pyrenees Shire Council is one of the Respondents to the claim. While Orders have been issued, the matter will take some time to resolve. Council officers continue to engage on Wadawurrung cultural heritage management matters relating to several projects in Beaufort within cultural heritage sensitive areas.
- Barengi Gadjin Land Council (representing the Wotjobaluk TO) - a Recognition and Settlement Agreement (RSA) with the State of Victoria is in place which outlines expectations for local government. The CEO participated in a local government engagement forum in Horsham with BGLC focused on building the relationship, and implementation of the RSA.
- Eastern Maar – there is currently a boundary dispute with Wadawurung over an area in the southeast of the Pyrenees Shire, and native title claim exists on parts of crown land within Pyrenees. An RSA is currently in development.

The Victorian and Aboriginal Local Government Strategy sets out recommendations by the Victorian Government for Local government with the view to advancing Aboriginal self-determination.

[https://www.localgovernment.vic.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0029/183935/Victorian-Aboriginal-and-Local-Government-Strategy.pdf](https://www.localgovernment.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0029/183935/Victorian-Aboriginal-and-Local-Government-Strategy.pdf)

Action by the Victorian government in recent years to advance self-determination involves voice, truth and treaty:

Voice – The First People's Assembly has been established

Truth – The Yoorrook Justice Commission has been established to oversee hearings of truth, and a final report has recently been delivered.

Treaty – A Treaty Authority has been established to oversee treaty negotiations, and recently the Statewide Treaty Bill has been formally tabled and endorsed by the Upper House in Victorian Parliament on 30 October 2025.

Whilst Treaty legislation is now formalised in Victoria, it is still somewhat unclear about what this means at a local level. At a recent GBAC event, Cr Kehoe and the CEO participated in a forum with Minister Natalie Hutchins MP, Minister for Treaty and First Peoples, and Mr. Terry Garwood, senior Department officer over a range of matters relating to Treaty and First Peoples.

## **COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE**

Pillar 1 - People

1a. Inclusivity and accessibility.

As reported above, there are several pieces of legislation applicable including:

- Native Title Act 1993
- Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010
- Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 (AHA)
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

There are also significant obligations under legislation for Council. The AHA provides for controls and protections for cultural heritage requiring due diligence by councils and developers over areas of land which has cultural sensitivity leading to the requirement to have in place Cultural Heritage Management Plans (CHMPs). In areas where a LUAA applies (crown land areas), this also requires consent and negotiation over certain activities.

There are significant risks associated with this activity and work is ongoing to improve council's project management framework in response to the changing expectations and obligations. Increased costs and extended timeframes on projects and works are currently being experienced.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Nil

**FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS**

Council has a small allocation within the 2025/26 budget for activities associated with the implementation of the Reconciliation Plan.

**CONCLUSION**

Given Council's ongoing commitment to reconciliation following the endorsement of the Council Plan 2025-29, it is proposed to re-engage the Reconciliation Advisory Committee and continue to engage with First Peoples within the Pyrenees.

**Cr Megan Phelan / Cr Rebecca Wardlaw**

That Council:

1. Re-engages the Reconciliation Advisory Committee as part of the review of the Reconciliation Plan and
2. Continues engagement with First Peoples within the Pyrenees Shire in respect of other matters raised in this report.

**CARRIED**

## 12. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND GENERAL BUSINESS

### Cr Kehoe

It has been quite a busy month, it has continued to be an incredibly entertaining month, with things such as our Lake Goldsmith Steam Rally, an incredible event as it always is.

The Beaufort Show as well which was incredible, we've had some more sombre services such as Remembrance Day services, and we've also had a number of fantastic little events that I've just attended recently.

Last week I was at the Sovereign Hill open night that they had and attended the Midwest Tourism board gathering there, that was interesting.

The Beaufort Twilight Market was a beautiful success again on Friday and just a beautiful gathering of community members, not only shops being open later and the beautiful little stalls that were there but the band playing, local young people performing, a local business, The Flywheel was also open and entertainment went into the night, there was something for you and old and all tastes on Friday, it was a beautiful event to be part of.

I was at the beautiful little Snake Valley campus of the Woady Yallock Primary School for their final assembly and was honoured to present the grade 6 pen to a beautiful student Imogen. That little school bats above its average and to call out one of the students that was there, a young boy called Connor, he actually came second, nationally I believe, in a spelling bee, that is in the Prime Minister's spelling bee competition, to have a student do that from our little neck of the woods is absolutely commendable. That school does bat above its average, and I am very proud of that little school there in Snake Valley.

I will be singing at the Carols in the Valley on Saturday if anyone would like to join us, it's a beautiful little event, there is the carols and the beautiful picnic there in the beautiful Uniting Church gardens.

I will also be attending a few other school presentations at both the High School and the Primary School over the next couple of weeks.

Just to refer back to that Stoneleigh Community meeting that we had in wake of tragic incident that did happen a few weeks ago, I've already alluded to some of the other issues that came from that but I do want to commend the incredible community we have at Stoneleigh and how they come together, to celebrate good times but definitely come together in the hard times and again through that incident, working towards safer means for the community there and others visiting and moving through the region but also the way that they came together to come up with those solutions and support each other in the aftermath and I think that just shows the strength of our communities that we have across the Pyrenees Shire.

I do wish everyone a very safe and happy Christmas season and holiday season and New Years and please do be safe on those roads and connect with family and community and make the most of a beautiful time we have ahead.

### Cr Tol

It is the season for AGM's at the moment, I have been fortunate to go to Raglan, Trawalla and Waubra recently and you just recognise the hard work that all our volunteers do in keeping them going, they are struggling to find money to keep everything afloat and provide a service for their communities. Waubra put on a fantastic Christmas party on Friday night, it was attended by over 80% of the population which is not a bad thing. I think the free food and beer and drinks might have helped that, but it was a terrific night, and it is all good for mental health.

I felt like I worked in office works the other day I was giving Cr Phelan a chop out and presenting some pens at Lexton. We had the Pyrenees Cluster there which is made up of five schools, there were 12 kids graduating and it was interesting to hear all of their little stories, it was great, one of the kids only see's his father four times a year and the father 6 had flown down from Darwin to be there and I think there was about 120 people there on the night, it was really well supported and it was just a really good gathering of all of these little kids that are going from tiny little schools into the big world now, a lot more early mornings, bus rides and a lot more argy bargy for all of the parents, good luck there.

I delivered four wreaths to the corners of the Ercildoune Ward, to Raglan, Trawalla, Lexton and Waubra for Remembrance Day, just to recognise what has gone on in the past so that was a good thing to do.

#### Cr Phelan

I will start by thanking Cr Tol for standing in for me when I was unwell for the pen presentation to all of the kids finishing up year 6, particularly with the number of schools in DeCameron ward and I know when I first became Councillor, when the new Council came together it was one of the first events I went to last year and how much I loved hearing the stories about those kids so I was really disappointed that I missed it this year.

A couple of events that I want to mention that I went to and it is really relevant to some of the conversations we've been having about economic development and how can local communities support local businesses essentially and they were two Christmas markets, one of them at Bigibila winery and one at Elmhurst.

Bigibila put on its Christmas market again this year and just seeing the turnout at that market, I think it was over 470 people and again, most of them locals, but some of them from interstate and some from Melbourne. It was such an incredible turn out but also because of all of the stalls that were set up, we had potters and a lot of value-added products, so really local artisans got to show their wares, and I understand they did incredibly well. It was the same at the Elmhurst market, and it is a reminder that even though the Elmhurst market is held in the neighbouring shire, again we had a potter from Lexton with a stall, we had Mrs Bakers still house there selling her wares so there are opportunities just outside our Shire which is still really supporting businesses, our local businesses at those events. At those events I saw people from so many different communities across the Shire, particularly from the DeCameron ward. I really want to give a shout out to those who are organising these events because they are doing their bit to support local businesses and also of course bringing communities together at the same time. It was a lovely entry into a Christmas, and I did stock up on Christmas presents at those events.

#### Cr Wardlaw

It's been a busy time for myself as well, I've had a lot of little trainings that I have gone to, including one in Melbourne which was understanding local government finances. I was pleased to be in that setting and in an environment where I can say that I had actually been probably more well informed by my team and the people, the directors, we get given the information that we need and not all councils are like that so I just wanted to make note of that, that I appreciate the effort that everyone behind the scenes goes to make sure we are well informed along the way.

I went to a MAV Masterclass on speaking with impact in Bendigo, that was really good too and I've done some Mayoral training for my role as Deputy Mayor.

I also attended an Avoca Rec Reserve Committee meeting in regard to the future of the insurance cover for the assets moving forward and it's basically just a work in progress and hopefully we can make some progress with this in the New Year.

Christmas decorations are up around most of the community which is great to see. The tree that my family built three years ago, is in the Main Street of Avoca, it's great to see it come out every year and brighten up the street.

I also attended a fair bit of the newly rebuilt / reformed under 13's Cricket Club in Avoca which we haven't had any of that for a couple of years and it is so good to see these little ones out there and hopefully they can stick around and become the future for the cricket going forward. Also, the Avoca Girl Guides, we had a couple of things down on the River Flat, I went as granny, but it was really great just to be down there doing these things with them.

Lastly, I just want to thank the group of people that I work with, the officers, the Councillors and staff and I hope everyone has a safe and enjoyable Christmas and a wonderful New Year.

Cr Ferrari

I have been reasonably busy and it is sort of that time of year where you get around to lots of little events and everyone wants to catch up for Christmas so it is good to do that and sometimes we leave it a little bit late and catch up at Christmas time but we should probably catch up more through the year, that goes for family and everything not just not just Council related duties.

I went to the Remembrance Day service as well and laid a wreath, they do a fantastic job, the Beaufort RSL, the local one, I didn't get a chance to get to any others but they do a fantastic job and they continue to do that, not just on Remembrance Day but Anzac day as well, they do a fantastic job.

I went to the Beaufort Community Financial Services AGM and grants event which was really really good. It is just fantastic to see all of those organisations receive those grants and I'm sure they'll go a long way to helping them achieve what they need to achieve, and they are just so important for the community those grants. Many things would not simply get done if they weren't recipients of those very generous grants so that's fantastic to see.

The CEO and myself had a meeting with Minister Staikos who is the Local Government Minister. I would say he is very personable, he is quite easy to speak to, and he has an understanding of the council issues because he in fact was a Councillor himself. We spoke about a number of things which I highlighted in my column last week but one thing you can rest assured is myself and the group of councillors we have and the council officers, particularly the executive, will continue to be strong advocates where we need to be and we will make sure that our voice is heard and continues to be heard so that the Pyrenees is not forgotten. I'm not saying that's going to transpire immediately into what we want and what we are asking for but nonetheless we will make sure our voice is heard and we are not forgotten, we won't be silent so please rest assured of that.

I had an inspection of the intersection and I had that inspection with the Mayor from Ararat, Bob Sanders who I know very well and we had a number of discussions on that day and will work very closely together to try and make some things happen there and even broader we will work very closely together and sometimes you can get more done with that collaboration.

I attended the Blue Light Motorcycle club; it was just fantastic on the 30<sup>th</sup> of November. It was a really really terrible day, it was pouring rain but I think there was about 75 young riders registered out there and probably a couple of hundred people, mums and dads and grandparents I guess but nonetheless it was an absolute hive of activity and there was just nothing that was going to deter those kids from having a ride, not the mud, not the water, not the puddles or anything. I spoke to some people that came from Ocean Grove, Cavendish, they come from all over and travel wide and far to get there. It's a fantastic venue, it's a fantastic event and I congratulate the people who organise that, there is a lot of work that goes into it, particularly with the safety aspect so it's really really great. It's great to see kids, I feel, I am a bit old

fashioned this way but kids out doing something out in the outdoors rather than sitting inside watching a square screen and they are doing it under the watchful eye of those safety people so it's really really fantastic.

I went to Beaufort by Twilight, congratulations to the organisers, another fantastic event. It was such a lovely evening, the town was abuzz with people and stallholders and all different things, entertainment, everything and it was just fantastic, so congratulations to all of those organisers and the attendees that participated in that.

Just closing off, a couple of thank you's. I would like to thank Mr Davey and Mr Kirsanovs for their regular attendance at our meetings through the year, there is hardly a meeting where they're not in the gallery so I would just like to thank them for their attendance and their interest in coming along to these meetings and be present and have their say on very important issues.

This is our last meeting before Christmas so I would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a healthy, safe and prosperous New Year, thank you.

### **13. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

#### **CLOSURE OF MEETING TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

That, pursuant to the provisions of Section 4.1.1(c) of Council's Governance Rules, and Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2020, the meeting be closed to the public in order to consider confidential items.

**Cr Tanya Kehoe / Cr Simon Tol**

That the meeting be closed to members of the public in accordance with Section 4.1.1(c) of Council's Governance Rules, and Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2020, in order to discuss the confidential reports listed below:

15.1 - 2026 Australia Day Awards

**CARRIED**

***The recording of Ordinary Meeting of Council - 8 December 2025 stopped at 7.20pm to consider confidential items.***

***The recording re-commenced at 7.36pm and the Mayor chose to report on confidential items discussed in closed Council which are noted below.***

Councillors selected the 2026 Australia Day Award recipients.

### **14. CLOSE OF MEETING**

The Ordinary Meeting of Council - 8 December 2025 closed at 7.36pm.

Minutes of the Meeting confirmed \_\_\_\_\_

Mayor Cr Damian Ferrari