



Pyrenees
Shire Council

Minutes

Ordinary Meeting of Council

6:00 pm Monday 16 February 2026

Council Chambers

Beaufort Council Offices,
5 Lawrence Street, Beaufort

Wadawurrung Country

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

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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.

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

Cr Tol declared a conflict of interest in item 11.4.2 - Waubra Recreation Reserve Netball Facilities Planning.

6. CONFIRMATION OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

Cr Megan Phelan / Cr Simon Tol

That the Minutes of the:

- Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 8th December 2025; and
- Closed Meeting of Council held 8th December 2025,

as previously circulated to Councillors, be confirmed.

CARRIED

7. BUSINESS ARISING

There was no business arising (items taken on notice) from the previous meeting held 8th December 2025.

8. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no questions submitted for public participation question time.

9. COUNCILLOR ACTIVITY REPORTS

9.1. COUNCILLOR ACTIVITY REPORTS - DECEMBER 2025 & JANUARY 2026

Cr Damian Ferrari – Beaufort Ward		
1/12/2025	Council Briefing	Lexton
4/12/2025	MAV Mayors Mandatory Training & Oration	Melbourne
5/12/2025	MAV Mayors Mandatory Training & Oration	Melbourne
5/12/2025	Beaufort by Twilight	Beaufort
8/12/2025	Council Briefing	Beaufort
8/12/2025	Council Meeting	Beaufort
10/12/2025	Beaufort Primary School Concert	Beaufort
15/12/2025	GBAC Committee Meeting	Trentham
12/01/2026	Meeting with Minister D’Ambrosio	Beaufort
13/01/2026	Community Meeting – Streatham – Yalla-Y-Poora Fire	Beaufort
13/01/2026	Meeting with Minister Carroll	Beaufort
14/01/2026	MAV Fire Response & Recovery Priorities	Online
14/01/2026	Councillor Update – Yalla-Y-Poora Fire	Online
17/01/2026	Visit to fire affected areas in South of Shire with Cr Wardlaw and Cr Phelan	Skipton Streatham Carranballac
20/01/2026	ABC Interview	Skipton
21/01/2026	ABC Breakfast Interview	Online
22/01/2026	Streatham Fire Community Recovery Network Meeting	Stoneleigh
22/01/2026	Councillor Update – Yalla-Y-Poora Fire	Online
26/01/2026	Pyrenees Shire Australia Day Event	Beaufort
28/01/2026	MAV Delegates Induction Briefing	Online
Cr Tanya Kehoe – Mount Emu Ward		
1/12/2025	Council Briefing	Lexton
5/12/2025	Snake Valley Primary School Presentation	Snake Valley
5/12/2025	Beaufort By Twilight	Beaufort
8/12/2025	Council Briefing	Beaufort
8/12/2025	Council Meeting	Beaufort
13/12/2025	Carols in the Valley	Snake Valley
10/01/2026	Community Meeting – Streatham – Yalla-Y-Poora Fire	Skipton
11/01/2026	Community BBQ	Stoneleigh
13/01/2026	Community Meeting – Streatham – Yalla-Y-Poora Fire	Beaufort
13/01/2025	Community Meeting – Streatham – Yalla-Y-Poora Fire	Skipton
22/01/2026	RCV Committee Meeting	Online
22/01/2026	Councillor Update – Yalla-Y-Poora Fire	Online
26/01/2026	Pyrenees Shire Australia Day Event	Beaufort

Cr Simon Tol – Ercildoune Ward		
1/12/2025	Council Briefing	Lexton
1/12/2025	Pyrenees Cluster Primary School Presentation	Lexton
5/12/2025	Waubra Christmas Party	Waubra
8/12/2025	Council Briefing	Beaufort
8/12/2025	Council Meeting	Beaufort
16/12/2025	Waubra Primary School Presentation	Waubra
14/01/2026	Councillor Update – Yalla-Y-Poora Fire	Online
22/01/2026	Councillor Update – Yalla-Y-Poora Fire	Online
26/01/2026	Pyrenees Shire Australia Day Event	Beaufort
Cr Megan Phelan – De Cameron Ward		
1/12/2025	Council Briefing	Lexton
8/12/2025	Council Briefing	Beaufort
8/12/2025	Council Meeting	Beaufort
17/01/2026	Visit to fire affected areas in South of Shire with Mayor and Cr Wardlaw	Skipton Streatham Carranballac
22/01/2026	Councillor Update – Yalla-Y-Poora Fire	Online
26/01/2026	Pyrenees Shire Australia Day Event	Beaufort
31/01/2026	Landsborough Community Hub Meeting	Landsborough
Cr Rebecca Wardlaw – Avoca Ward		
1/12/2025	Council Briefing	Lexton
8/12/2025	MAV Deputy Mayor Mandatory Training	Online
8/12/2025	Council Briefing	Beaufort
8/12/2025	Council Meeting	Beaufort
9/12/2025	Eco Dev Strategy Community Meeting	Avoca
10/12/2025	Avoca Senior Citizens Christmas Lunch	Avoca
11/12/2025	Avoca Volunteer Driver Morning Tea	Avoca
11/12/2025	Avoca Primary School Presentation	Maryborough
14/01/2026	Councillor Update – Yalla-Y-Poora Fire	Online
17/01/2026	Visit to fire affected areas in South of Shire with Mayor and Cr Phelan	Skipton Streatham Carranballac
22/01/2026	Councillor Update – Yalla-Y-Poora Fire	Online
26/01/2026	Avoca Australia Day Ceremony breakfast	Avoca
26/01/2026	Pyrenees Shire Australia Day Event	Beaufort

Cr Tanya Kehoe / Cr Rebecca Wardlaw

That Council notes this report.

CARRIED

10. ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS

10.1. ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS - DECEMBER 2025

MEETING INFORMATION			
Meeting Name	Council Briefing		
Meeting Date	1 December 2025 commenced at 4.00pm and closed at 6.30pm		
Meeting Location	Lexton Community Centre		
Items Discussed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. PA25053 – 18 Broadbent Court – 5 Lot Industrial Subdivision 2. Class 10 Building Exemption Process 3. 2026 Council Meeting / Briefing Schedule 4. Councillor Portfolios & Representation on Committees 5. Australia Day Awards 6. Council Expenses Policy 7. Strategic Issues Raised by Councillors 		
ATTENDEES			
Councillors	Mayor Cr Damian Ferrari Cr Rebecca Wardlaw	Cr Simon Tol Cr Megan Phelan	
Apologies	Cr Tanya Kehoe		
Staff	Jim Nolan (Chief Executive Officer) Douglas Gowans (Director Assets and Development Services) Jacinta Erdody (Director Corporate and Community Services) Rachel Blackwell (Manager Planning and Development Services) - items 1 and 2		
Visitors	Nil		
CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES			
Item No:	Councillor making disclosure	Particulars of disclosure	Councillor left meeting
Nil.			

MEETING INFORMATION			
Meeting Name	Council Briefing		
Meeting Date	8 December 2025 commenced at 4.00pm and closed at 5.45pm		
Meeting Location	Council Chamber, Beaufort		
Items Discussed	1. Road Naming 2. Economic Development & Investment Attraction Strategy 3. Council Meeting Preparation		
ATTENDEES			
Councillors	Mayor Cr Damian Ferrari Cr Rebecca Wardlaw Cr Tanya Kehoe		Cr Simon Tol Cr Megan Phelan
Apologies	Nil.		
Staff	Jim Nolan (Chief Executive Officer) Douglas Gowans (Director Assets and Development Services) Jacinta Erdody (Director Corporate and Community Services) Emily Beaton (Revenue and Road Naming Officer) - item 1 Ray Davies (Manager Economic Development) – item 2		
Visitors	John Stevens (Dench McLean Carlson) – item 2		
CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES			
Item No:	Councillor making disclosure	Particulars of disclosure	Councillor left meeting
Nil.			

Cr Megan Phelan / Cr Rebecca Wardlaw

That Council notes this report.

CARRIED

11. ITEMS FOR DECISION

11.1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

11.1.1. BEAUFORT LINEAR MASTERPLAN GRANT APPLICATION

Presenter: Jim Nolan - Chief Executive Officer

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

Report Author: Ray Davies – Manager Economic Development and Tourism

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

File No: 30/22/16

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek council endorsement of a grant application to implement phase two of the Beaufort Linear Masterplan to enable Council to commence the first stages of construction and complete the necessary planning for future stages of development.

BACKGROUND

The intent of the Beaufort Linear project is to create a nature based recreational corridor along the Garibaldi Creek from the Beaufort Lake spillway to the point where the creek joins with Yam Holes Creek north of the railway line. Proposed walking and cycling paths will provide linkages between the Lake and the Beggs St playground area.

The Masterplan for Beaufort Linear was endorsed by Council in November 2024 and was accompanied by detailed hydrological analysis.

Council resolved as follows:

That Council:

- 1. Endorses the Beaufort Linear Masterplan and*
- 2. Actively seeks funding opportunities to deliver construction of the Beaufort Linear Park as external sources of funding become available over a proposed ten-year period.*

A funding opportunity has arisen through the Victorian Governments Integrated Water Management program, and this report seeks Councils endorsement of a funding submission.

Integrated Water Management is a Victorian Government framework for a collaborative approach to water planning and management that brings together organisations with an interest in all aspects of the water cycle.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The scope of work for this first phase of implementation will see the project partners (Council and Corangamite CMA) deliver the following elements:

Detailed Designs

Councils Assets Team in conjunction with a Landscape Architect will develop detailed designs which incorporate the Beaufort Linear Corridor from Beaufort Lake to the railway line. These designs will be reviewed by the CMA as an in-kind contribution.

Cultural Heritage

Council has already undertaken a cultural heritage due diligence report and will continue its collaboration with Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation to complete Cultural Heritage Management

Plans. Opportunities will also be explored during this time to incorporate designs for indigenous interpretive signage into the detailed designs.

Renaturing the Garibaldi at Beggs Street

These works will include:

- Undertaking site grading and installing rocks and mudstone flats to change the open drain into a creek line formation
- Undertake weed control and revegetation planting after site grading and reformation of the open drain
- Instal pedestrian pathways within the Beggs St playground area
- Prepare and instal garden beds with low maintenance woody meadow species and trees to maintain an area of grassy open space for informal lawn activities and events

The proposed income budget for the project consists of:

Funding source	Amount	Details
Victorian government	\$345,600-	IWM Program
Council Cash component	\$50,000-	
Council in kind	\$70,000-	Detailed designs and project management by staff
Corangamite CMA in kind	\$5,00-	Officer time

The objectives of the Beaufort Linear project include:

- Improving water quality and environmental outcomes for the Garibaldi Creek.
- Engaging with the local community and first nations peoples to seek their input to the project such as considerations for interpretive signage and/or extending the Koori Art trail from Beaufort Lake, installation of street furnishings and tree planting.
- Encouraging visitors to the Beggs St playground area to explore the town in more detail, thereby lengthening their visits and creating more opportunity for them to visit businesses in town.
- Formalising pedestrian linkages between the lake, school's precinct, RV park, swimming pool and Beggs St playground.
- To improve the amenity of the area for visitors camped at the adjacent RV free camp at Audas Lane
- Rejuvenate and landscape the area north of the railway line which is expected to become the town entry in the event of a highway bypass.

This is one of the first funding options to assist with the initial phase of construction of elements identified in the Masterplan.

As mentioned in the scope above the funding will also assist with completion of cultural heritage plans to enable the project to be shovel ready upon other sources of funding becoming available.

The proposal has been endorsed by the Central Highlands Integrated Water Management Forum with Corangamite Catchment Management Authority being a key partner identified in this project. A formal letter from the CMA is required to be submitted with the application for funding.

Should Council consider that it does not have the financial capacity to fund the co-contribution required under the program, Council may choose to:

- Submit the application and advocate for financial support for the co-contribution from other sources (if the co-contribution cannot be found from other sources, that Council does not take up and any future funding offer under the program that may be made)
- submit the application without a financial co-contribution (and likely be unsuccessful)
- not submit any application

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Pillar 2 - Economy

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

Pillar 3 - Nature Environment

3a. Preserve and manage biodiversity and natural assets.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

The project Control Group for the masterplan phase of the project has included representation by individuals from the following organisations:

- Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation
- Beaufort Friends of the Pool
- Beaufort Apex Club
- Beaufort Croquet Club
- Beaufort Primary School and Secondary College
- DEECA
- Glenelg Hopkins CMA
- Council staff

A broad range of community engagement activities were undertaken during the development of the Masterplan using co-design principles, i.e. the design of the Masterplan was informed by input from the community throughout 2023.

These activities included:

- A survey of the community between 24 August and 24 September 2023, which was made available on-line and via hard copy at council offices and the Beaufort Community Resource Centre.
- Community workshop held at the Beaufort Community Bank Complex on 5 September
- Site walk with Beaufort Walkability Group and a pop-up session at Beaufort skate park 6 September
- Street surveys at Beaufort IGA and individual businesses in the retail precinct 7 September
- Site walk with traditional custodians 18 September
- Meeting with Beaufort Rotary members 18 September
- Business for Beaufort presentation 3 October
- Visits by council officers to residents whose properties are directly adjacent to the water course on 4 October
- Classroom activity and site walk with Beaufort Secondary College year 10 students on 11 October. A meeting was held with the two school principals later that day.
- Meeting with Beaufort Apex club on 12 October
- Public meeting on the evening of Wednesday 1 November where the draft Masterplan was presented to Beaufort residents for feedback
- Two council briefings
- The draft Masterplan was placed on public exhibit from 15/11 to 30/11 2023 to allow residents a final opportunity to provide feedback. During this time emails were issued to service clubs and community groups represented on the PCG to invite feedback on the plan.

During the public exhibit phase in November 2023 there were 536 page views with 305 unique visitors to the Council “Engage” portal and six residents who provided feedback on the plan whose contributions were taken into consideration at that time.

The consultation activities that occurred throughout the project have been promoted by Council through:

- Paid newspaper advertisements and inclusion in Councils public notices
- Media releases
- Facebook posts
- Information on the Council website
- Direct contact by telephone and email to community groups, particularly those represented on the project control group where their facilities about the project area of interest
- Door to door visits to residents adjoining the Garibaldi Creek.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

The cash contribution by Council towards this \$465,600- project is limited to \$50,000- with a value of officer time amounting to \$70,000-.

A contingency allowance of 20% or \$77,600- has been included in the expenditure budget to allow for potential unknown costs and cost escalations.

The implementation of this project will create a management obligation on Council, and ongoing maintenance and renewal financial implication.

CONCLUSION

The Beaufort Linear Masterplan was developed through broad consultation of the Beaufort community and tested with extensive hydrological analysis.

A funding opportunity exists to commence the first stage of development including detailed designs, cultural heritage plans and initial physical works at Beggs Street Beaufort.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Endorses the application for funding
2. Commits to a cash contribution of \$50,000- and
3. Commits to in-kind contributions to the project to an estimated value of \$70,000
4. Notes that the above mentioned contributions outlined in points 2 and 3 will be required during the 2026-27 and 2027-28 financial years.

Cr Simon Tol / Cr Rebecca Wardlaw

That Council:

Sources alternate funding for the co-contribution and if Council is unable to source alternate funding, that Council do not proceed with the application.

CARRIED

11.2. CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

11.2.1. NAMING PROPOSAL – PROPOSAL TO NAME THREE NEW ROADS AS PART OF THE BURKE STREET DEVELOPMENT

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 select three names from the five listed options to allocate to three new roads created in the Burke Street Development, Beaufort.

BACKGROUND

Burke Street Development is a Council initiative resulting in the creation of 34 parcels of land following a two-stage construction and subdivision project.

Of the 34 parcels, ten new homes are being built-jointly funded by the Pyrenees Shire Council and the Victorian Government through the Regional Worker Accommodation Fund.

The development has created three new roads which require naming.

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 rectified accordingly.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

Stage 2 of the Burke Street Development has been lodged with SPEAR and requires road names urgently in order to allocate street addressing and finalise the certification process.

Following the recent local Bayindeen Fires which had significant impact on the local community, attention has been drawn to local Pyrenees flora and fauna for naming the roads in the Burke Street Development. Landcare has been contacted several times for suggestions, however aside from verbal encouragement of the use of the Mount Cole Grevillea, no formal response has been received.

The Bayindeen bushfire started on 22 February 2024 and burned through roughly 22,000 hectares of forest, farmland and bushland, including parts of Mount Cole, Mount Buangor State Park and surrounding landscapes. Vast areas of native forests and vegetation were scorched, including eucalypt forests and ecologically sensitive woodlands. Iconic native species present in the region include kangaroos, wallabies, possums, echidnas and many bird species, all of which were disrupted by the loss of habitat in and around Mount Buangor State Park.

NAMING OPTIONS – selected from the “Threatened fauna Pyrenees Shire” listed on State Wide Integrated Flora and Fauna Teams (SWIFFT)

https://www.swifft.net.au/cb_pages/threatened_fauna_pyrenees_shire.php

https://www.swifft.net.au/cb_pages/threatened_flora_pyrenees_shire.php

<p>1. Grevillea Drive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Mount Cole Grevillea - <i>Grevillea montis-cole subsp. montis-cole</i> b. CR – Critically Endangered c. Mount Cole Grevillea (<i>Grevillea montis-cole subsp. montis-cole</i>) is a shrub that grows up to 1 m high and is only found around Mount Cole in Western Victoria.. Mt Cole Grevillea is listed as Critically Endangered under Victoria’s Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 (FFG Act). d. The Baynindeen-Rocky-Road wildfire swept through Mount Cole and burnt all known populations. Monitoring immediately after the fire confirmed that all burnt plants were killed, leaving behind only the seed bank in the soil. e. Fortunately, by August 2024, thousands of seeds began to germinate in areas where adult plants were present before the fire. With the whole population now consisting of just seedlings, it is particularly vulnerable to threats. f. No duplicates within the required 15km radius. 	
<p>2. Phascogale Court</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Brush-tailed Phascogale – <i>Phascogale tapoatafa</i> b. VU – Vulnerable c. 1986 Brush-tailed Phascogale long term monitoring and recovery program d. The Brush-tailed Phascogale (<i>Phascogale tapoatafa tapoatafa</i>), also known as the Tuan, is a small, nocturnal, arboreal, carnivorous marsupial. It is a uniform deep grey on the head, back and flanks, light grey to pale cream underneath with large naked ears and a conspicuous, black 'brushy' tail. e. No duplicates within the required 15km radius. 	
<p>3. Falcon Terrace</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Black Falcon - <i>Falco subniger</i> b. CR – Critically Endangered c. The Black Falcon <i>Falco subniger</i> is only found in mainland Australia and is the largest of the six species of falcon’s genus <i>Falco</i> in Australia. It is a stunning large, dark coloured falcon which occurs from south-eastern Australia up to northern Australia. d. In Victoria, it is mostly associated with open grassland or in lightly wooded areas, it has also been observed close to urban areas. e. No duplicates within the required 15km radius. 	
<p>4. Honeyeater Close</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Regent Honeyeater - <i>Xanthomyza Phrygia</i> b. CR – Critically Endangered c. The Regent Honeyeater Listed under the <i>Victorian FFG Act 1988</i> as <i>Xanthomyza phrygia</i> but now referred as <i>Anthochaera phrygia</i> is a medium sized bird of extraordinary beauty that has been driven almost to the brink of extinction by indiscriminate land clearing. It has no close relatives and is the only member of its genus 	

<p>d. No duplicates within the required 15km radius</p>	
<p>5. Swift Court</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Swift Parrot - <i>Lathamus discolor</i> b. CR – Critically Endangered c. The Swift Parrot is the sole member of the genus <i>Lathamus</i> and is unusual in that it has some similar characteristics to both Lorikeets and Parrots (<i>Psephotus</i> and <i>Platycercus</i>). It has a specialised brush tongue for nectar and pollen feeding, long slender wings for rapid flight and a long slender stiff tail similar to Lorikeets but a smaller non-protruding bill and feather patterns more similar to those found on the broadtail parrots (Brown 1989). d. Kara Kara National Park – Northern Gramps and Pyrenees Shire e. No duplicates within the required 15km radius 	

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Pillar 4 - Infrastructure

4a. Plan, build and maintain essential infrastructure.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1. Excerpt from 2302078 Proposed Subdivision Stage 2 v 07 [**11.2.1.1** - 1 page]

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Costs for the naming of the roads 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 can 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).

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Reviews the naming options (5) and selects 3 to apply to the Burke Street development.
- 2. Submits the selected road names for lodgement via SPEAR.

Cr Rebecca Wardlaw / Cr Tanya Kehoe

That Council:

- 1. Apply the following three road names to the Burke Street development:
 - Falcon Terrace
 - Honeyeater Close
 - Swift Court
- 2. Submits the selected road names for lodgement via SPEAR.

CARRIED

11.2.2. NP52 - UNNAMED ROAD BEAUFORT

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 an unnamed road in Beaufort, off Hill Street and Callister Streets.

BACKGROUND

Road names can recognize 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 rectified accordingly.

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

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

This unsealed road runs in a South-Easterly direction adjacent to several properties and can enable secondary addressing for the properties along the roadway, some of which are accessing their land off the road already. At this point in time there is also an application for subdivision along the road, which will result in the currently unnamed road becoming the primary access point for the proposed property(s).

Consideration was given to the unnamed road being a continuation of Hill Street, however due to the location of the Hill Street road start point and existing street numbering, it would be highly disruptive to multiple residents to impose this option.

To commence the naming of this road the following road names are suggested:

Option 1: Mabel Court

The name, “Mabel Court”, commemorates Mabel Thomas (1870–1956), who was an Australian community leader and philanthropist born in Beaufort, Victoria. Educated at Queen’s College, Ballarat, she was the granddaughter of Dr. James McNab Johnston and became known for her extensive charitable work in Melbourne.

Thomas served as Senior Vice-President of the Austin Hospital and was a Life Governor of both the Austin and Williamstown Hospitals. During World War I she worked with the Red Cross in Williamstown and at the Pioneer Depot in Flinders Lane. She was also involved with the Australian Women’s National League and actively supported community causes, including free kindergartens in St. Kilda and Balaclava.

A devoted supporter of charitable movements, Thomas combined leadership roles with community engagement throughout her life. Her interests included music, needlework and bridge. She died in Glen Iris, Melbourne, in 1956, leaving a legacy of civic service and philanthropic commitment.

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 Mabel was checked for duplication in the VicNames database and there were no duplicates found within the required radius of 15km.

The Road Type “Court” refers to a short enclosed roadway.

Option 2: OConnell Court

The name, “OConnell Court”, honours Cecily Maude O’Connell (1884–1965) who was an influential Australian trade unionist, social worker and Catholic religious Sister. Born 30 June 1884, in Beaufort, Victoria, she became independent early in life and trained as a teacher. Concerned about women’s working conditions, she worked briefly in a tobacco factory and later represented tobacco workers on the Melbourne Trades Hall Council during World War I, while also supporting the Labor movement and Catholic social causes.

O’Connell was active in Catholic social welfare, serving as the first treasurer of the Catholic Women’s Social Guild and assisting women affected by strikes and unemployment. Trained as a nurse, she helped during the 1919 influenza epidemic.

In 1930 she founded the Company of Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament (the Grey Sisters), dedicated to supporting mothers and families, especially during the Great Depression. She died in 1965, leaving a lasting legacy in social justice and family care.

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 O’Connell was checked for duplication in the VicNames database and there were no duplicates found within the required radius of 15km.

The Road Type “Court” refers to a short enclosed roadway.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Pillar 1 - People

1b. Community safety and wellbeing.

Pillar 4 - Infrastructure

4a. Plan, build and maintain essential infrastructure.

This proposal complies with:

- Pyrenees Shire Council – Principles on Road Naming policy.
- Naming Rules for Places in Victoria – Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities 2022.
- Our Equal State – Victoria’s gender equality strategy and action plan 2023-2027.

ATTACHMENTS

1. NP52 Unnamed Road Beaufort Map [**11.2.2.1** - 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).

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council selects one of the following options to commence the naming process for the unnamed road in Beaufort:

Option 1:

1. That Council commences the naming process to name this unnamed road to “Mabel Court”.
2. That Council gives public notice of the proposed naming of Mabel Court 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.
4. That Council adds “OConnell Court” to Pyrenees Shire Council Name Bank for future use

OR

Option 2:

1. That Council commences the naming process to name this unnamed road to “OConnell Court”.
2. That Council gives public notice of the proposed naming of OConnell Court 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.
4. That Council adds “Mabel Court” to Pyrenees Shire Council Name Bank for future use

Cr Megan Phelan / Cr Tanya Kehoe

1. That Council commences the naming process to name this unnamed road to “Mabel Court”.
2. That Council gives public notice of the proposed naming of Mabel Court 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.
4. That Council adds “OConnell Court” to Pyrenees Shire Council Name Bank for future use.

CARRIED

11.2.3. POLICY - COUNCIL NAMING POLICY

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: 16/24/12

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider the updated Naming Policy for adoption and utilisation throughout Council where Council is utilising their powers as a naming authority under the *Local Government Act 1989*.

BACKGROUND

Policies require review on a regular basis to ensure that rules and guidance remain relevant, effective, and aligned with Council Plan, objectives and values.

Specifically, this updated Naming Policy reflects changes in laws, regulations, and organisational practices. It also addresses concepts that were not previously covered by policy, clarifying expectations and removing ambiguities.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The Naming Policy submitted for Council adoption replaces the former Policy – Operational – Principles on Road Naming which was last approved in 2016.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Pillar 4 - Infrastructure

4a. Plan, build and maintain essential infrastructure.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 03 12 2025 Policy Naming [**11.2.3.1** - 5 pages]
2. Policy Council Principles on Road Naming docx February 2016 [**11.2.3.2** - 3 pages]

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

There are no costs or risks associated with endorsing this Naming Policy.

CONCLUSION

The review, updated Policy will help Council to meet our requirements as a naming authority by providing clear and consistent approach to naming.

Cr Tanya Kehoe / Cr Rebecca Wardlaw

That Council:

1. Adopts the Naming Policy for use at Pyrenees Shire Council, replacing the previous Policy – Operational – Principles on Road Naming

CARRIED

11.2.4. YALLA-Y-POORA ROAD FIRE RECOVERY UPDATE

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: 28/14/50

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on Council activities relating to the Yalla-Y-Poora Road, Streatham scrub/grassfire that started on 9 January 2026 impacting Pyrenees Shire communities.

BACKGROUND

On Friday, 9 January 2026, a day of catastrophic fire danger rating, a grassfire was reported at around 1.30pm at the Yalla-Y-Poora and Eurambeen-Streatham Roads. The fire travelled in an easterly direction through Carranballac along the Glenelg Highway and impacted Streatham, Carranballac and the south end of the Skipton township.

The fire impacted across the borders of three municipalities – Pyrenees, Corangamite and Ararat – in the CFA control District 16. Ararat ICC took control of the incident around 2.05pm with emergency response functions activating their operations.

At 9.40am Sunday 11 January, the fire was contained east/southeast of Skipton, with a total burn area of just under 20,000 hectares. The final advice – safe to return message – was issued at 9.02am on 14 January.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

Council staff involved in crisis management are experienced in emergency response, relief and recovery activities; however, such emergencies are always different to each other requiring Council's response to be planned dependent upon the specific circumstances at the time.

As this event crossed borders of 3 municipalities, it provided opportunities for cross-collaboration between the councils creating a much greater resource source than if one council had to deal with the impacts alone; seen in communications, the operations of relief, recovery and information centres, and in the early stages of recovery.

Preparation, prior to the event

Two days prior to the 9 January event, a fire had started north of the Pyrenees shire, with evacuation warnings given to localities around Stuart Mill / St Arnaud but without any relief centre being opened, which caused some concern. This fire was quickly contained.

Prior to the event, it was known that the Friday was declared a day of catastrophic fire danger which triggered certain preparations to be put in place – for example:

- Non-essential work travel was suspended, including all outreach activities.
- Depot staff worked close to their home depots and did not work outdoors in accordance with Council's Heat Plan.
- Some of Council's services ceased, including maternal and child health services and anything else that required travel. Council's pools were also closed on Friday because contractors were unwilling to risk their staff travelling into an area declared as catastrophic fire danger. Council's Avoca Information Centre was closed as no local staff were available.

- The Beaufort Caravan Park was evacuated for Friday, in accordance with relevant legislative requirements and their specific Fire Management Plan.
- The Crisis Management Team was activated two days previously to facilitate planning for the high-risk day.
- Council's Municipal Emergency Management Officers provided information to Victoria Police on the ability to provide support equipment (graders, fire trucks and officers) and open a relief centre if required.

Friday 9 January - Activation

At around 1.30pm on Friday 9 January, it was reported via VicEmergency that a grassfire had started at Streatham. At 2.50pm, the CEO received a report that the fire remained uncontrolled and a request for Council to open a relief centre in Beaufort. Council's crisis management team was activated at 3.00pm and staff opened the relief centre at the Beaufort Community Bank Complex at 3.30pm. Council also received a request for equipment to assist with fire breaks and a grader, loader, fire truck and operators were provided from the Beaufort depot.

Council's communications team quickly created information on the website and posted updates on Facebook to maintain communications with our community.

Beaufort Relief Centre

The relief centre opened at 3.30pm with 5 staff members, including a ranger to manage animal welfare. Immediately upon opening, early arrivals were fast and in large numbers. Registrations took a few hours with around 50% remaining in their vehicles with their animals. 2 volunteers from Beaufort Rotary Club also assisted at the centre. 152 people attended the centre with 44 dogs, 11 cats, 2 sheep and 3 chickens. 6 caravans or other vans attended. Victoria Police attended the centre but no other agencies were present on the first day.

Although 4 of the staff had worked from 8.30 that morning, they remained until late evening until relief staff were available. 1 additional Pyrenees staff member attended from 5pm to midnight and 3 staff from neighbouring councils (Corangamite and Northern Grampians) arrived late in the evening to relieve Pyrenees staff for overnight. Early in the evening, 2 animal welfare staff from the City of Ballarat came to provide support in scanning and mapping the animals at the centre. We would like to sincerely thank all our staff and our neighbours for providing such quick and valued support.

Immediate refreshments were provided to evacuees, tea, coffee, water, biscuits, snacks, and ice creams. In the evening, food was prepared by the CWA and a kind visitor brought in pizza from Cafe 56. During the late evening, many visitors left to stay with relatives or relocate elsewhere – mostly to Ballarat. Most overnight visitors slept in their vehicles.

Breakfast was organised with the Flywheel and collected at 8am. Mid-morning, notification was received from the Incident Control Centre (ICC) that residents of Skipton town centre were able to return home to the township only, via Skipton Road. Issues occurred with that notification not being provided to the road closure management teams, but this was eventually resolved.

At midday Saturday, relief centre operations relocated to the Beaufort Resource Centre. No evacuees were present and no residents came to the centre for the rest of the day. The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) provided 2 representatives on Saturday.

DFFH and Red Cross staff attended the relief centre on Sunday 11 January together with Pyrenees staff. From midday on Sunday, the relief centre transitioned into a recovery centre. As from Monday, 12 January, as most impacted residents were attending Skipton, the recovery centre operations transitioned to merge with the Skipton recovery centre and Pyrenees staff operated from that location thereafter.

Fire progression and communications

During the time of the fire, 10 emergency warnings, 23 Watch & Act notices, and 11 Advice notices were issued by the Incident Control Centre. The final advice – safe to return message – was issued at 9.02am on Wednesday 14 January.

Community information meetings were held on Saturday 10 January at Skipton and Streatham, and on Tuesday 13 January at Skipton, Streatham, and Beaufort.

The communication teams from Pyrenees and Corangamite Shire Councils closely collaborated and shared responsibility for community communications, including the publication of weekly newsletters to keep all informed.

Teams from Pyrenees, Corangamite and Ararat continued to provide officers to service the recovery centre in Skipton, which has now transitioned into an information centre open on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Impacts and Transition to Recovery

Council officers received early access to initial impact assessment data, allowing contact to be quickly made with affected residents. The formal initial impact assessment report and transition to recovery was completed on Tuesday 13 January and included the following:

- 120 initial impact assessments were completed.
- The fire reached 19,300 hectares and impacted 18 houses and 40+ other structures, with the majority in the Carranballac area. 15 of the impacted houses are uninhabitable; and the Carranballac Recreation Reserve, Cricket Club pavilion and the Carranballac Hall were significantly impacted with all buildings destroyed.
- Around 21,000 animals were impacted with stock disposal estimated at around 700 (sheep/cattle). This number is considered likely to increase as landowner and Agriculture Victoria assessments remain ongoing.
- Land / farm degradation including crop losses, silted dams, and future risk of erosion that will need further assessment.
- Other critical infrastructure included 135 power poles, transformers and powerlines that affected power supply to the impacted area and surrounds. Roadside asset impacts included significant numbers of signs and guideposts that required replacement to ensure road safety.
- All roads were initially assessed and treated for tree hazards as part of initial impact assessments.

Recovery

Following the transition to recovery, Council commenced Secondary Impact Assessments of all impacted properties on Friday 16 January, expected to be completed by Tuesday 10 February. Assessment priorities initially focused on residential losses. All secondary impact data is being input into CrisisWorks emergency management database and recovery / support tasks assigned to relevant officers. All assessments are being done by a team, in person with impacted residents. A member of the Victorian Council of Churches, experienced in psychological trauma and counselling, accompanies the assessment team to provide support to community members.

When the secondary impact assessments are complete, a full report on the incident impacts will be provided when known but early indications show that 50 cases are being managed of which 18 primary residences were lost, 5 secondary accommodations, 5 rental properties, and 8 other dwellings generally used as worker accommodation. A large number of other buildings were lost including at least 72 sheds, 13 tanks and farm equipment. Some cases include multiple people or families.

A Streatham-Skipton Fire Community & Business Recovery Network has been established and has held three meetings at the writing of this report: 22 January (Stoneleigh), 29 January (Skipton), 5 February (Skipton). The Chair of the Network is Cr Kate Makin from Corangamite Shire Council, and Deputy Chair is Megan Read (community member) and includes representation from community members, all three councils impacted by the fire, and various support agencies. The focus of the Network is community-led recovery.

Assessments of road signage and guidepost damage, and roadside tree impacts, have been completed, and rectification works on road signage and guideposts undertaken. Roads impacted include:

- Carngham-Streatham Road*
- Mt William Road
- Vite Vite Road*
- Darlington-Carranballac Road*
- Beaufort Carranballac Road*
- Hintons Road*
- Waldrons Road*
- Listons Road*
- Millers Road*
- Normans Lane*
- Banongil Road*
- Mooramong Road*
- Partridges Road*
- Mcintyre Road*
- Wills Road*
- Waldrons Lane

*Roads marked with an asterisk have also required tree damage assessments to be completed. A contractor was appointed to undertake these assessments which have now been completed. The report will inform hazardous tree removal on the roadsides.

Recruitment of a six-month contract community recovery officer is underway, to coordinate recovery and claims processes. Until that appointment is finalised, 1 officer from Pyrenees and 1 officer from Ballarat are being seconded for 2 weeks to support the Municipal Recovery Managers (MRMs) in this work. It should be noted that Council's MRM and Deputy MRM have this role as an addition to their business-as-usual roles which impact normal Council business until the contract recovery officer is in place.

A Recovery Management Plan has been drafted and coordination of recovery activities is being actively supported by a member of Emergency Management Victoria, who has worked from the Pyrenees Council offices for two weeks since the emergency.

Agencies other than Council are responsible for some areas of support, to which Council officers will provide referrals or provide support in gaining access. Grampians Community Health have been appointed to manage needs for psychosocial or wellbeing issues.

The fire caused extensive damage to the Carranballac Recreation Reserve including destruction of the community hall, cricket clubrooms and more than 100 large old trees. Carranballac recreation reserve is located on crown land under DEECA control. DEECA has previously appointed a local community Committee of Management for the reserve. The SIA team undertook an assessment of the impact and met with community members on site.

A subsequent meeting of the users of the reserve, DEECA and community members met with the Mayor and Council officers with the aim of establishing a Project Working Group, to develop a Masterplan for the site and to develop an agreed action plan to restore and develop the important community facility.

Council has previously taken out insurance cover over key of the assets at the reserve (albeit limited), and an insurance claim was initiated early. The insurance assessor attended the site with a Council staff member and representatives from the local community the week after the fire was contained. As the site is DEECA owned and managed, the assessor had to consult with them as part of the insurance assessment. A report is now awaited.

A Post-Incident Review involving Council staff was conducted on 3 February, focusing on response and relief activities and lessons learned. A further review will be conducted around recovery activities later in the year.

Various funding announcements have been made since the event to support impacted individuals and to assist meeting Council costs associated with the event. Given recent past natural disaster events, it is important that Council, wherever possible contains recovery activity to that which can be funded through one of the funding programs which are limited by eligibility criteria. Further detail on these programs will be provided in a report to Council in March.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Pillar 1 - People

1b. Community safety and wellbeing.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

Throughout the event our communications team were regularly posting and sharing emergency service communications for the awareness of our community. A number of community information sessions were held with Council attendance at all sessions.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Funding for the event will be received and Council will need to ensure eligibility of expenses in accordance with documented agreements.

CONCLUSION

A scrub/grassfire started on 9 January 2026 and spread across 19,300 hectares in the Streatham, Carranballac, Skipton area; across three municipal boundaries of Pyrenees, Corangamite, and Ararat. The impacted councils have collaborated in all respects since the fire started, including staffing relief and recovery centres, communications / newsletters, and participating in early recovery coordination. Recovery works have now commenced and are continuing.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Receives and notes the information provided in this report.
2. Seeks a further update on recovery progress be provided in March 2026.
3. Continues to advocate for assistance from government to support the community recovery.

Cr Megan Phelan / Cr Tanya Kehoe

That Council:

1. Receives and notes the information provided in this report.
2. Seeks a further update on recovery progress be provided in March 2026.
3. Continues to advocate for assistance from government to support the community recovery including identifying any gaps in funding where current funding guidelines don't reflect the costs on the ground or the actual cost of recovery.

CARRIED

11.2.5. DECEMBER 2025 QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORT

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: Glenn Kallio – Manager Finance

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

File No: 32/08/18

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide the Council with an update on the financial performance for the period 1 July 2025 to 31 December 2025 and seek Council direction on rating levels for 2025-2026 financial year to assist with budgeting preparation.

BACKGROUND

The provision of regular reports of Council's financial performance ensures that Council's financial management and associated processes are accountable, transparent, and responsible.

The attached financial report for the period 1 July 2025 to 31 December 2025 is a component of ensuring the accountability of the Council's operations. In line with good governance, it forms part of the public accountability process and reporting and includes the following Financial Statements.

- Comprehensive Income Statement
- Balance Sheet
- Cash Flow Statement; and
- Statement of Capital Works
- Capital Works Program

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

1. Collection of rates.

The collection of rates profile has been recalculated taking into account the payment from the State Government for the 40% Primary Producer Payment. Based on the revised payment schedule, the collection of rates is currently \$918k behind budgeted levels.

The level of outstanding rates remains the major financial issue however, this may be rectified when full payment is due in February 2026. The concern is if this current trend exists at the end of February 2026 then Council will need to modify the budget to resolve the issue of not collecting income that was budgeted.

2. Comprehensive Income Statement

Whilst there a number of variations which are detailed below it is not considered that there are any significant financial issues to date relating to the operating budget of Council.

- i. User fees – currently significantly behind budget however this is related to the timing of the YTD (Year to Date) budgets rather than income underperforming. A review has shown income levels to be appropriate with no errors in the YTD budget.
- ii. Operating grants – deficit in income year to date relates to the receipt of funds for the certified flood projects. Year to date the level of expenditure has not matched expected levels thus the income is below expectations.

- iii. Contributions – higher levels of contributions relate to the Waubra Playground Development Project which had not been budgeted for and \$332k contribution has been received.
- iv. Net Gain on Disposals – Higher income levels relate to the sale of plant that had been replaced in 2024/25 but there was a delay in the sale of the replacement plant.
- v. Other income – two items of income result in the increase year to date
 - i. SRO payment – relates to the administration of the 40% primary producer payment and the introduction of the new levy. Neither of these had been budgeted for and have been directed to the new systems development.
 - ii. Improved interest from investments relating to additional funds held in trust.
- vi. Materials and services – significant underspend year to date. This underspent is attributed to two factors:
 - i. Incorrect profiling of budgeted expenditure
 - ii. Following projects behind expenditure
 - 1. 308235 - Safer Together Project
 - 2. 604010 - Waste Disposal Exp
 - 3. 108862 - Pyrenees Bushfire Resilience Project - Safer Together
 - 4. 309505 - Environmental Health Exp
 - 5. 705252 - Community Participation & Support; Old Beaufort Primary School Exp
 - 6. 703012 - Beaufort Mens Shed Exp

3. Capital Works Program

Based on the current rate of expenditure there is some questions on whether the capital works program can be delivered. See summary table below:

Project	Expenditure					
	YTD Budgets	YTD Actuals	YTD Var	Amended Budget	Forecast	Forecast Variance
General Works	43,400	72,642	(29,242)	111,000	111,000	0
General Operations	1,057,456	197,724	859,732	2,114,110	2,114,110	0
Footpaths	6,400	588	5,812	30,700	30,700	0
Kerb & Channel	20,000	0	20,000	27,500	27,500	0
Bridge Works	449,207	168,911	280,296	682,107	551,607	130,500
Drainage Works	80,000	25,394	54,606	161,500	161,500	0
Major Patch Program	50,000	0	50,000	103,000	103,000	0
Gravel Resheets	646,100	615,805	30,295	646,100	646,100	0
Reseals	740,300	731,134	9,166	740,300	740,300	0
Road Construction	50,000	21,303	28,697	100,000	95,000	5,000
Building Renewal Program	80,000	73,664	6,336	195,300	195,300	0
Roads to Recovery	1,227,534	575,570	651,964	2,455,068	2,962,900	(507,832)
TAC (SLRSP, Blackspot)	0	23,194	(23,194)	0	1,875,000	(1,875,000)
Flood Event	5,399,655	1,593,216	3,806,439	6,934,935	6,934,935	0
Recreation Projects	39,600	2,000	37,600	79,200	79,200	0
Major Projects	2,215,308	1,444,800	770,508	7,656,620	13,573,037	(5,916,417)
Total	12,104,960	5,545,946	6,559,014	22,037,440	30,201,189	(8,163,749)

If the program cannot be delivered then priority should be given to those projects that are linked to funding thus reducing the burden on Council funds. An internal capital works monitoring group reviews this program monthly, if there are any significant changes these will be reported to Council.

Rating levels 2026-27

Before 31 December each year, the Minister for Local Government sets the local council rate cap for the next financial year. This limits the maximum amount a council can increase general rates and municipal charges.

The rate cap for the 2025-2026 financial year has been set at 2.75%.

If the rate cap does not meet a council's needs, the council can submit a higher cap application for up to four years of higher caps at a time, following a process of deliberative engagement with its community.

A separate report is listed in this agenda for Council to decide if it wishes to seek a rate cap variation.

Though it is not recommended to seek a higher rate cap, the level set by the State Government will put additional pressure on Council in determining the 2026/27 budget. The inflation rate at the 31st December 2025, as reported by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, was 3.8%. This level of inflation compared to the rate cap set will only further enhance the financial pressures on Council.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Pillar 5 - Community-Centric

5c. Ensure timely, clear and consistent communication underpinned by transparency.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

This report forms part of the Council's mandatory quarterly financial performance reporting program to community.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Financial Report - Dec 2025 [**11.2.5.1** - 28 pages]

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

All financial implications are within this report and the attachment.

CONCLUSION

The review of financials for the period ending 31 December 2025, there is no requirement for Council to prepare a revised budget. The review has ascertained that the financials for the 2025/26 year are operating within the Council's 10-year financial plan.

The report advises the Council of the rate cap set for 2025-26 at 2.75% and recommends not to apply for a higher rate cap for the next financial year.

Cr Megan Phelan / Cr Rebecca Wardlaw

That Council:

1. Receives and notes the Financial Performance report for the period 1 July 2025 to 31 December 2025, and the projected forecasts for the year, and
2. Resolves that there is no requirement to prepare a revised budget as per the CEO declaration that pursuant to section 97(3) of the Local Government Act 2020, there is no requirement that the Pyrenees Shire Council prepare a revised budget.
3. Resolves a further report be presented to Council in March 2026 providing an update on rate collection results for the period ending February 2026.

CARRIED

11.2.6. HISTORICAL SOCIETY RATES WAIVER

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: Glenn Kallio – Manager Finance

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

File No: 52/04/02

PURPOSE

This report seeks Council to consider the issue of whether rates should continue to be waived for the four Historical Society properties located within the Pyrenees Shire: Snake Valley & District Historical Society Inc, Beaufort Historical Society, Avoca Historical Society and Landsborough.

BACKGROUND

Reports were presented to Council regarding rates on these properties in 2024. These properties had previously had their rates paid by Working Heritage, previously known as The Mint Inc, who managed all the unused courthouses in Victoria.

The Working Heritage Incorporated Committee of Management (Working Heritage) conserves and manages heritage properties on Crown land on behalf of the State of Victoria. Since its inception in 1998, Working Heritage (formerly known as The Mint Inc from 1998 to 2015) has been appointed to manage 16 sites across Victoria, undertaking expert conservation and adaptation works so the community can benefit from these revitalized historic buildings and sites.

A worthwhile endeavor, but the change in registration of old courthouses in 2022 has passed the management costs onto organisations, such as volunteer historical societies, who cannot afford it, leaving little choice but for Council to absorb and waive costs that would normally form part of its limited revenue base. This would appear to be another form of cost shifting implemented by the Victorian State Government.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

It is acknowledged that historical societies provide an invaluable resource to the shire and beyond as custodians and promoters of precious local history.

The importance of the Shire's historical societies was initially recognised by the Pyrenees community during the development of the Council Plan 2021-2025 Priority 1 which defined a strategic goal to "Support our community groups, including historical societies, preserve and understand our region's history". Our updated Council Plan 2025-2029 does not specifically focus on any one section of our community but more broadly focuses on our community at the centre of all decision-making.

Pursuant to the Local Government Act these properties cannot be deemed as non rateable. However, Council through a council resolution can deem to waive the rates associated with the properties each year.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Pillar 5 - Community-Centric

5a. Foster values driven inclusive culture, which is responsive, accountable and aligned to priority.

5c. Ensure timely, clear and consistent communication underpinned by transparency.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

Requests from community members of historical societies have requested rate waivers due to limited income opportunities.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil.

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

A minor financial implication is realised by Council if Council supports the waiver of rates and charges for the 2026/27 rates. The rate implication for the 2025/26 financial year equates to \$1,726.27.

CONCLUSION

Changes to property management in 2022 has caused rate charges, and all other running and minor maintenance costs, to be imposed directly on the historical societies within the shire, with little opportunity for those societies to receive the revenue needed to pay those charges due to management by volunteers and small membership bases.

Cr Tanya Kehoe / Cr Rebecca Wardlaw

That Council:

1. Resolve to waive the rates on the four Historical Society properties within the Pyrenees Municipality for the 2026/27 financial year.

CARRIED

11.2.7. RATE CAP 2026/2027

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: Jacinta Erdody – Director Corporate and Community Services

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

File No: 52/04/20

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with details on the Rate Cap that is applicable to the 2026/2027 financial year and seek Council determination as to whether an increase above the cap should be sought.

BACKGROUND

The Victorian Government introduced rate capping in the 2015/16 financial year under the Fair Go Rates system. Each year, the Minister for Local Government sets the rate cap that specifies the maximum council's can increase rates for the forthcoming year.

The Minister can set a cap that applies to all councils, a group of councils or a single council. The Minister makes the decision based on advice from the Essential Service Commission who consider the consumer price index and their recommendation to the Minister based on CPI forecasts, information from the Reserve Bank of Australia and taking into consideration affordability concerns. The Essential Services Commission recommended a uniform cap of 2.75% apply for all councils in the 2026/27 financial year.

If the rate cap does not meet a council's needs, the council can submit a higher cap application for up to four years of higher caps at a time. If Council is intending on applying for a higher cap, the CEO is requested to provide written notification to the Essential Services Commission by 31 January 2026, with the subsequent rate cap application required to be formally lodged by 31 March 2026.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

Pyrenees Shire Council has historically successfully applied for increases above the rate cap in the 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18 financial years resulting in rate increases 4.08% above the defined rate caps over these years. The rate cap set for 2026/27 means that own sourced revenue will once again increase at less than administrative expenses for both materials and employee costs.

Employee cost increases are not yet set with our existing Enterprise Bargaining Agreement expiring on 30 June 2026 and a suite of changed negotiation options from the traditional Single Enterprise Bargaining agreement through to Multi and Single Interest agreements which are providing further uncertainty to what we may be committed to.

The rate cap will continue to limit Council's capacity to raise own source revenue and reinforces its dependence on external grants to achieve an asset renewal rate of 80% of depreciation and a lack of capacity to increase staff numbers beyond maintaining existing levels.

Where Council's decide to apply for a higher cap, the application is required to set out:

- The proposed higher cap for each specified financial year;
- The reasons why the council is seeking the higher cap;
- How the views of ratepayers and the community have been considering proposing the higher cap;
- How the higher cap is an efficient use of council resources and represents value for money;
- Whether other funding options have been considered and why those options are not adequate;
- That the assumptions and proposals in the application are consistent with council's long term strategy and financial management policies.

An important consideration for Council in deciding whether to seek a higher rate cap in the past and currently, is the financial impact on the community and the ability of ratepayers to pay. In the context of the current economic climate, ongoing drought, the impact of natural disaster events and the ongoing concerns regarding the Emergency Services Volunteers Fund it would become a bigger impost on our community should a decision be made to apply for a rate cap above that defined.

While the assessment of Council's assets identifies an ongoing infrastructure gap, Council officers consider it highly unlikely that the community would support a rate cap increase above the designated 2.75% within the current financial environment. Officers recommendations will be to:

- further explore more in depth review of operations through the annual budget process in an effort to seek longer term savings; and
- increase advocacy efforts with the government to ensure other means of funding to address financial sustainability challenges that small regional councils experience.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Pillar 5 - Community-Centric

5c. Ensure timely, clear and consistent communication underpinned by transparency.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

It is proposed that the 2026/27 budget preparation engagement strategy challenges the status quo and drives conversations around Council's long-term sustainability, potential impact or change to future service delivery ensuring our service meets expectation, provides broader benefit and ensures compliance to our legislative requirements which defines some services of discretionary.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

The Council's long-term financial sustainability has been identified as a risk for the Pyrenees Shire Council and is demonstrated within the long-term financial plan. The 2026/27 financial year will see additional risks arising through the Enterprise Bargaining negotiations which have the risk of being partnered into multi bargaining agreements with Single Interest employers, particularly where the cap remains below inflation rates.

CONCLUSION

The annual rate cap for the 2026/27 financial year has been announced at 2.75% which remains below inflation levels and annual expenditure increase forecast for the financial year which will add to Council's long term financial sustainability risk. It is recommended that Council not apply for an increased rate cap for 2026/27 for the reasons discussed within this report.

Cr Megan Phelan / Cr Rebecca Wardlaw

That Council:

1. Notes the 2.75% rate cap declared for the 2026/27 financial year;
2. Having considered the Essential Services Commission requirements to apply for a rate cap, the economic climate and ongoing natural disaster impacts to our community, resolves to not make an application for a higher rate cap for the 2026/27 financial year;
3. Increase advocacy to the Minister highlighting the significant sustainability challenges outlined within this report;
4. Work with Executive Leadership and officers to explore operations through the budget preparations to consider services and alignment to community expectation, benefits and financial sustainability.

CARRIED

11.2.8. AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE - NOVEMBER 2025

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: Jacinta Erdody – Director Corporate and Community Services

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

File No: 32/04/04

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide the Council with an update of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting M018 held on 26 November 2025.

BACKGROUND

The *Local Government Act 2020* Section 54 requires Council to establish an Audit and Risk Committee. The existing committee has three independent members and the charter was most recently reviewed and adopted at the March 2025 meeting.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

A copy of the approved minutes from the November 2025 meeting is attached for Council information. An overview of the November 2025 meeting included:

- A report from the CEO in relation to the election of the 2025/26 Mayor and Deputy Mayor, CEO Performance Review, finalization of the 2024/25 Annual Report and Local Government Performance Reporting, progress on the Economic Development and Investment Attraction Strategy, an update on the Bourke Street Beaufort Housing project and what the 2025/26 Financial Assistance Grants provided for;
- Regular reports and updates were received from the internal and external auditors;
- Regular Governance, Risk and Compliance reporting;
- A report on progress towards delivering the Council Plan was provided;
- A report on Fraud Control plan progress; and
- An updated Audit and Risk Committee Workplan was presented.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Pillar 5 - Community-Centric

5c. Ensure timely, clear and consistent communication underpinned by transparency.

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

ATTACHMENTS

1. 2025.11.26 - M 018 - MINUTES - Audit Risk Committee Meeting - 26 November 2025 [**11.2.8.1** - 30 pages]

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

All financial and risk matters were addressed within reports and minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee.

CONCLUSION

Council continues to hold the Audit and Risk Committee meetings in accordance with our legislative obligations and approved Charter. This report provides an overview of the topics discussed at the November 2025 meeting. Any questions on the matters relating to the meeting may be directed to the designated Councillor representatives.

Cr Megan Phelan / Cr Rebecca Wardlaw

That Council:

1. Receives and notes the information contained within this report and its attachment.

CARRIED

11.2.9. COUNCIL EXPENSES AND SUPPORT POLICY

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: Jacinta Erdody – Director Corporate and Community Services

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

File No: 16/24/17

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider and adopt the reviewed Council Expense and Support Policy.

BACKGROUND

The *Local Government Act 2020* includes a specific requirement for Council to adopt and maintain an expenses policy in relation to the reimbursement of reasonable out of pocket expenses for Councillors and members of Delegated Committees.

The last formal review of this policy was in June 2022 and in accordance with good governance, the maximum period that a policy should remain in place without formal review is four years. The Policy through the review has resulted in significant benchmarking of other Council's Expense Policies including those that are provided by Local Government Inspectorate as good examples of Council Expense Policies.

This review along with engagement and feedback from our elected Councillors has resulted in some changes and refinements to the Policy to ensure that Council continue to manage reasonable out of pocket expenses in a transparent manner.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

Proposed changes to the Policy include:

- An inclusion of an allowance for elected Councillors for Council branded clothing once within their term of office in accordance with Council's Uniform Policy;
- Significant expansion of travel expenses to the existing Policy to ensure clarity and a change of per kilometre cost reimbursement to be aligned back to the Australian Taxation Office rate which for the current financial year is 0.88 cents per kilometre
- Inclusion of Remote Travel Allowance provisions which includes annual caps to maximum claims;
- Inclusion of Professional Development, Training and Conference attendance; and
- Recognition of Council's Employee Assistance Program to be accessible by Councillors.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Pillar 5 - Community-Centric

5c. Ensure timely, clear and consistent communication underpinned by transparency.

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

ATTACHMENTS

1. Council Expenses Policy [11.2.9.1 - 12 pages]

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial or risk implications associated with this report and reasonable out of pocket expenses in accordance with the Policy will be managed within allocated budgets. In adopting this Policy Council are meeting their legislative obligations under the *Local Government Act 2020*.

CONCLUSION

The review of the Council Expense and Support Policy has been undertaken in a consultative and collaborative manner with our elected representatives ensuring good governance and compliance with our legislative requirements.

Cr Tanya Kehoe / Cr Simon Tol

That Council:

1. Adopts version 4 of the Council Expense and Support Policy as attached to this report.

CARRIED

11.2.10. COUNCIL PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

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: 16/20/06

PURPOSE

This report provides a progress update on delivery of the Council Plan 2025-2029 and supporting Initiatives as of early February 2026.

BACKGROUND

In accordance with section 90 of the Local Government Act 2020, the Council adopted the Council Plan 2025-2029 at its Ordinary Meeting on 23 June 2025, and the initiatives identified to support delivery of the Council Plan on 15 September 2025.

The Council Plan 2025-2029 is framed around five pillars:

- Pillar 1: Support and grow Liveable Places, Connected Communities
- Pillar 2: Promote a Diversified, Thriving Economy
- Pillar 3: Preserve, promote and enjoy the natural environment
- Pillar 4: Planning and Building Infrastructure for current and future needs
- Pillar 5: Community-Centric Leadership and Proactive Service Delivery

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

Work continues to implement the multi-year initiatives designed to support the delivery of the Council Plan 2025-2029, ensuring that delivery of the Council Plan remains foremost in the minds of all officers and business units.

The attached report provides progress updates against the Council Plan as of early February 2026.

It is noted that, since the adoption of the Council Plan in June 2025, several factors impacting Council's ability to deliver the Council Plan have emerged. These include:

- The Stratham- Yalla-Y-Poora fire in January 2026 has had significant impact on the community and caused disruption to the organisation which has needed to prioritise response and recovery activity at the expense of ordinary business activity.
- Notification by the Local Government Minister of the rate cap for 2026/27 of 2.75% which is well below the December 2025 cpi of 3.8% thereby impacting Councils long term ability to fund services.
- Introduction of Ministerial Guidelines imposing obligations on Council in respect of 1. Payment of rates and charges and 2. Service rates and charges, both of which have financial implications for Council.

It is suggested that Council consider making any adjustments to the Council Plan once it better understands the impact of the above matters following the 2026/27 budget preparation process.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Pillar 5 - Community-Centric

5c. Ensure timely, clear and consistent communication underpinned by transparency.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

This report serves as part of Council's regular communications to the community on the implementation of the Council Plan 2025-2029.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Council Plan 2025 29 Progress Report Feb2025 [**11.2.10.1** - 16 pages]

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Any risk implications are discussed in the body of the attached report.

CONCLUSION

Council adopted the Council Plan 2025-2029 in June 2025 and the initiatives to support the delivery of the Plan in September 2025. This report provides a progress update against the Council Plan as of early February 2026.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Receives and notes the attached progress report against the Council Plan 2025-2029 and supporting delivery initiatives.
2. Acknowledges that several external factors beyond its direct control have emerged since the initial adoption of the Council Plan.
3. Reviews and adjust the Council Plan initiatives, if necessary, to ensure they remain aligned with the Council's financial capacity following the conclusion of the 2026/27 budget preparation process.
4. Prioritise the delivery and implementation of key actions based on updated funding availability and long-term financial sustainability.

Cr Megan Phelan / Cr Tanya Kehoe

That Council:

1. Receives and notes the attached progress report against the Council Plan 2025-2029 and supporting delivery initiatives.
2. Acknowledges that several external factors beyond its direct control have emerged since the initial adoption of the Council Plan.
3. Reviews and adjust the Council Plan initiatives, if necessary, to ensure they remain aligned with the Council's financial capacity following the conclusion of the 2026/27 budget preparation process.
4. Prioritise the delivery and implementation of key actions based on updated funding availability and long-term financial sustainability.
5. That officers document the external factors in point two to identify and quantify the impact, and a further report be presented to Council on the impacts and advocacy opportunities.

CARRIED

11.3. ASSET AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

11.3.1. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT QUARTERLY REPORT

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: 9.2.1

PURPOSE

This report was prepared to give the Council a summary of activities within the Planning and Development Department, for October– December 2025.

The Planning and Development team is responsible for administering a range of regulatory functions identified within the following Acts, Regulations, Codes and Standards:

- Local Government Act 2020
- Planning and Environment Act 1987
- Planning and Environment Regulations 2015
- Building Act 1993
- Building Regulations 2018
- National Construction Codes
- Environment Protection Act 2017
- Water Act 1989
- Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008
- Food Act 1984
- Tobacco Act 1987
- Domestic Animals Act 1994
- Domestic Animals Regulations 2015
- Country Fire Act 1958
- Impounding of Livestock Act 1994
- Road Safety Act 1986
- Protection of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986
- General Local Law 2019

PART A: PLANNING

Planning Permit Data	October	November	December	Financial year to date
Permit applications received	13	6	2	49
Permits granted	10	3	1	30
Permits refused	0	0	0	0
Time extensions granted	2	1	4	7
Secondary consents granted	1	3	1	5
Estimated cost of works				\$5 Million
Applications decided within 60 statutory days (%)	90%	100%	100%	93.5%

Planning Enquiries — October to December 2025

During the October to December 2025 quarter, the Planning Team received approximately 500 enquiries. Of these enquiries:

- Approximately 300 related to current planning permit applications or existing planning permit matters; and
- Approximately 200 were pre-purchase or pre-application enquiries.

The Planning Team received approximately 1,300 enquiries for the calendar year, reflecting ongoing strong demand for planning services.

Strategic Planning

The Western Renewables Link Inquiry and Advisory Committee commenced on Monday, 27 October 2025, and will continue until March 2026. Planning Officers have attended various sessions throughout the hearing schedule. The presentation of Pyrenees Shire Council's submission was on the 11 December 2025.

The Yalla Y Poora – Streatham Bushfire Event – Secondary Impact Assessment

The Planning and Development team has been actively involved in completing Secondary Impact Assessments for all properties affected by the Yalla Y Poora – Streatham bushfire event in January 2026. These assessments help Council understand how the emergency has impacted people's lives, homes, businesses, and the wider community, enabling us to provide the right support during recovery.

Secondary Impact Assessments are carried out once it is safe and look beyond immediate damage to consider longer-term effects, including impacts on:

- Homes, buildings, and local infrastructure
- Health, wellbeing, and community connections
- Local businesses, employment, and finances
- The natural environment and farming activities

Officers met with many property owners to gather information about how they have been affected. This information helps coordinate recovery services and supports advocacy for appropriate assistance and funding.

Council officers look forward to continuing to support impacted landowners throughout the recovery process in collaboration with the Recovery Team.

Staff Movements

A student planner from Melbourne University is completing a work placement with the Team in February 2026.

PART B – BUILDING

BUILDING ACTIVITY	October	November	December	Financial YTD
Private Building Permits	22	7	10	84
'Property Info Cert' issued	47	24	29	175
Building Notice/Order issued	4	3	2	22
Building Inspections	10	1	4	20
Pool Registers	1	1	1	5
Report and Consent	2	0	2	4

Building – Farm Shed Exemption Policy

At the December meeting, Council considered the adoption and implementation of the building – Farm Shed Exemption Policy as Pyrenees Shire’s framework for assessing applications for exemptions from building permit requirements for farm sheds and farm buildings under Regulation 280 of the Building Regulations 2018.

Officers are currently working to implement this policy and are preparing a new webpage and administrative process to support the assessment of such requests. Implementation has been delayed due to the team’s involvement in secondary impact assessments associated with the recent fires.

Swimming Pools

Compliant and properly maintained pool and spa barriers are vital for preventing accidents and saving lives. The Building Regulations 2018 requires the registration of all private swimming pools and spas in Victoria, along with compliant safety barriers.

All landowners are legally required to register any pool or spa on their property with the relevant local council and ensure a compliant safety barrier is in place, regardless of whether children live at the property. Owners must also have their safety barriers inspected and lodge a Certificate of Barrier Compliance with the council. If a safety barrier does not meet requirements, it is the owner’s responsibility to bring it into compliance.

Currently, Pyrenees Shire has pools and spas that are either unregistered or have non-compliant safety barriers. The building team is actively engaging with owners to achieve compliance and has already recorded several positive outcomes from this process with pools being registered and certificate of barrier compliance being submitted.

Municipal Building Control Plan

In December, Council completed and submitted its first Municipal Building Control Plan (MBCP). A municipal building control plan provides a framework for local councils to manage risk, safety, and compliance in construction. It guides municipal building surveyors in identifying unsafe structures, enforcing regulations under the Building Act 1993, and responding to hazards affecting public health and property, often using risk-based assessments to determine appropriate interventions.

The information submitted with the plan will support the statutory functions of the State Building Surveyor and enable analysis of high-level, de-identified trends and patterns across the broader Municipal Building Control sector. This analysis will provide opportunities to develop targeted education and training programs, create practical resources for councils, and inform advocacy for future legislative improvements.

PART C – ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Task	Actual			
	Oct	Nov	Dec	YTD
Officer Activity				
Food Surveillance				
Food premises mandatory assessments	4	2	1	77
Food premises critical or major outcomes	1	0	1	9
Total new food premises	1	0	2	15
Total closed food premises	2	0	2	10

Streatrader mandatory assessments	1	0	0	8
Streatrader new applications	1	5	2	33
Statement Of Trade (SOT) processed	22	20	9	220
Statutory food samples sent for analysis Class 1	0	0	0	1
Statutory food samples sent for analysis Class 2 & 3	0	0	0	15
Unsatisfactory food samples	0	0	0	0
Food complaints received	0	1	0	4
Food complaints justified	0	0	0	0
Food recalls actioned	6	12	5	66
Public Health Wellbeing Act Surveillance				
PHWA premises mandatory assessments	0	0	0	18
PHWA premises critical or major outcomes	0	0	0	0
Total new PHWA premises	1	0	0	1
Total transferred PHWA premises	0	0	0	1
Total closed PHWA premises	0	0	0	1
PHWA premises complaints received	0	0	0	
PHWA premises complaints justified	0	0	0	2
Unregistered rooming house complaints received	0	0	0	1
Outbreak investigation referrals	1	0	0	1
Single case incident referrals	0	0	0	0
Anaphylaxis investigation referrals	0	0	0	0
Pool water and chemical testing conducted	0	0	0	4
Unsatisfactory pool water samples	0	0	0	0
Nuisance Investigation & General Enquiries				
Noise complaints	0	0	0	5
Odour complaints	0	0	0	1
Smoke complaints	0	0	0	0
Bees/wasps complaints	0	0	0	0
Vermin/pests complaints	0	0	0	0
Asbestos complaints	0	0	0	0
Other nuisance complaints	0	0	0	2
Total enquiries/phone call backs received- all types	17	9	14	185
Caravan Park Surveillance				
Caravan Park mandatory assessments conducted	0	0	0	0

Tobacco Education & Surveillance				
Tobacco retailer visits conducted	0	0	7	17
Eating establishment visits conducted	0	1	0	7
Outdoor area visits conducted	1	0	0	7
Test purchase days conducted	0	0	0	2
Test purchase visits conducted	0	0	0	19
Test purchase sales made	0	0	0	0
Tobacco complaints	0	1	0	1
Domestic Wastewater Management				
Septic tank applications received	5	4	0	31
Waste water inspections conducted	8	2	2	48
Septic tank permits to install issued	1	5	3	31
Septic tank approvals to use issued	4	3	1	29
Septic tank requests for plans received	0	0	0	1
Waste water complaints	0	0	0	4
DWMP compliance checks conducted	13	14	7	150
DWMP compliance checks serious non-compliances	0	0	0	3
Planning Referrals and Health Planning				
Planning referrals commented on	5	5	6	40
Environmental health planning (hours)	20	20	20	146
Enforcement Action				
Food Act notices issued incl. S19, S19W	0	0	0	0
PHW notices issued incl. improvement and prohibition	0	0	0	0
Official warnings issued	0	0	0	0
Number of infringements issued	0	0	0	0
Total value of infringements issued (\$)	0	0	0	0
Other				
Emergency callouts	0	0	0	0
Councillor requests	0	0	0	0
Staff Training attended (hours)	0	0	0	6

Program Progress

The team made substantial progress during the year, completing all routine inspections and associated work.

In 2025, there was a slight increase in Onsite Wastewater Management System applications, along with a significant increase in nuisance complaints investigated.

Tobacco

The Shire's Tobacco Service Agreement for the next three financial years is expected to be received by the end of March. DHHS has indicated that funding for the Tobacco Test Purchasing Program will continue.

From 1 February 2026, it will be an offence to sell tobacco products without a license from Tobacco Licensing Victoria. In Pyrenees, several businesses have obtained licenses to sell tobacco products; three of the nine retailers have already indicated that they will no longer sell tobacco products.

Domestic Wastewater Management Plan Program

Over the next few months, the Environmental Health team will be visiting Landsborough to inspect septic systems as part of the Council's Onsite Wastewater Management Plan.

PART D – COMMUNITY SAFETY AND AMENITY

ACTIVITY - Animals

	October 2025	November 2025	December 2025	Total FYTD
Cats Registered	N/A	N/A	534	-
Dogs registered	N/A	N/A	2074	-
Cats impounded	4	2	2	21
Cats reclaimed	0	1	0	1
Cats Euthanised	3	1	2	18
Cats Adopted/Rehomed	1	0	0	2
Dogs impounded	2	2	1	11
Dogs Reclaimed	0	2	2	10
Dogs Surrendered	0	0	0	1
Dogs Euthanised	0	0	0	1
Dogs Adopted/Rehomed	0	0	0	1
Stock impounded	0	0	0	11

ACTIVITY - Infringements

Infringement Type	October 2025	November 2025	December 2025	Total FYTD
Domestic Animals Act	15	4	1	26
Local Laws	2	2	0	5
Road Safety Act	4	0	0	20
Environment Protection Act	0	0	0	1
Impounding of Livestock Act	0	0	0	2
CFA Act	0	0	8	8
Planning & Environment Act	0	0	0	0

Road Management Act	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0
Total Infringements Issued	21	6	9	62
Prosecutions	2	1	0	3

ACTIVITY – Customer Action Requests & Permits

Customer Action Requests (Excludes several RecFind Docs.)	57	86	114	417
Local Law Permits	39	14	1	89

Footpath Trading Permits

The footpath trading renewal program has been completed. Council waived the associated fees this year to assist small businesses affected by drought, resulting in a more streamlined and efficient renewal process than in previous years.

Fire Season

Consistent rainfall through late winter and throughout spring resulted in exceptional grass and weed growth across the shire.

The roadside slashing program commenced in November in the northern part of the shire and was completed by mid-January in the southern areas. Contractors faced challenging conditions early in the program due to wet ground and actively growing green grass. Toward the end of the program, progress was further impacted by early extreme heat and wind conditions.

The Fire Prevention team inspected thousands of properties across the shire, resulting in 627 properties being issued fire prevention notices. Of these, 567 properties complied, while 35 were issued infringement notices, representing a positive outcome overall. The remaining properties had negotiated outcomes to reach compliance.

This year, a commitment was made to email notices to property owners, whereas historically notices were sent by post only. While this approach created additional workload for the team and some initial concern within the community, the overall outcome was positive and contributed to the elevated level of compliance.

Body Worn Cameras

The Community Safety & Amenity team has been equipped with body-worn cameras for several months, with no reported issues or adverse treatment arising from their use. Community feedback has been positive, and the use of cameras has enhanced staff safety.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Pillar 1 - People

1b. Community safety and wellbeing.

1c. Population growth through strategic planning.

Pillar 2 - Economy

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

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

2c. Support community events and visitor economy.

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.

4d. Advocate for fair renewable energy development.

Pillar 5 - Community-Centric

5a. Foster values driven inclusive culture, which is responsive, accountable, and aligned to priority.

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

5c. Ensure timely, clear, and consistent communication underpinned by transparency.

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

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

Cr Tanya Kehoe / Cr Rebecca Wardlaw

That Council:

1. Notes the contents of this report.
2. Reviews the service levels for roadside slashing program as part of the development of the 2026/26 Budget.

CARRIED

11.4. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

11.4.1. TINY TOWNS FUND

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: 32/13/08

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on the Tiny Towns Fund.

BACKGROUND

Victoria's Tiny Towns Fund supports local communities to deliver quality tourism and community facility projects, such as splash parks and bike trails, playgrounds, community hall and library upgrades, public art and more.

Towns with populations of up to 5,0000 people in the 48 local government areas of regional Victoria are eligible to apply, as well as Alpine Resorts and towns in Melbourne's 10 interface outer metropolitan local government areas.

The Tiny Towns Fund backs community-driven projects that enhance our smallest towns, strengthen community connections and encourage more visitors to all corners of Victoria.

The Fund responds to the needs of local people and aims to increase livability, opportunity and prosperity in small towns in Victoria.

The Fund's objectives are to:

- support economic development within small towns as places where local businesses can thrive
- address gaps in community infrastructure and facilities in Victoria's smallest communities
- build community pride and enhance living, working, socialising and recreation in small towns
- strengthen social cohesion and support the increased participation in community life and community inclusion of all residents, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Victorians, people living with disability, LGBTQIA+ communities and people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds and isolated communities
- increase the capacity of community groups and local organisations to provide leadership and connect, service and engage residents in small towns.

Grants between \$5,000 and \$50,000 are available for each project.

All applicants are required to make financial contributions towards the proposed project in line with the requirements outlined in the guidelines (<https://www.rdv.vic.gov.au/grants/tiny-towns-fund/program-guidelines>).

The fund is open to applications from incorporated not-for-profit community organisations and Local Government Authorities that operate in Victoria.

Round 3 of the Victorian Government's Tiny Towns Fund has been extended until 4.00pm on Wednesday 4th March 2026 for all applicants. The extension will help support communities affected by January's bushfires and flash flooding disasters in regional Victoria by providing extra time to complete applications.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

Council's Community Wellbeing Team has been providing support to potential applicants by way of advice and Letters of Support where requested.

At the time of writing this report, the following applications to the Tiny Town Fund were known to officers:

Community / Town	Group / Applicant	Project	PSC LoS Provided
Avoca	Avoca Riverside Market Inc.	Indigenous Mural Project connecting the Avoca River Flats and the Avoca shopping and business district. Avoca Chinese Garden updates.	Yes
Moonambel	Moonambel Hall Committee	Upgrade to toilet facility within the hall into a fully accessible, unisex disabled amenity.	Yes
Snake Valley	Snake Valley & District Historical Society	Replacement of building roof	Yes
Beaufort	Cyril Callister Museum	Museum expansion and new displays	Yes
Snake Valley	Mag Dam Reserve Committee	BBQ Shelter and seating at Mag Dam Reserve	Yes
Evansford	Evansford Community Centre CoM	Critical repairs Community centre to address termite impacts	Yes
Amphitheatre	Amphitheatre Community Members	Playground equipment and shade at Bakery Park, Amphitheatre	
Lexton	Lexton Community Asset Committee	Playground	Yes

Potential Tiny Town Fund Applications – status unknown

Community / Town	Group / Applicant	Project	Comment
Carranballac	Carranballac Reserve Committee & Cricket Club	All abilities toilet	Application no longer going ahead due to fire.
Landsborough	Landsborough Bowls Club	Greens Upgrade	Status unknown.
Raglan	Raglan Recreation Reserve Committee	Playground and dog park.	Status unknown.
Avoca	Avoca Bowls Club	Shade Project	Status unknown.
Waubra	Waubra Recreation Reserve		Status unknown.
Natte Yallock	Natte Yallock Recreation Reserve	Netball and/or ground fencing	Status unknown.
Crowlands	Crowlands Hall Committee	Hall and tennis	Status unknown.
Carngham	Carngham Recreation Reserve	Unknown	Status unknown.
Landsborough	Recreation Reserve Committee	Repairs to Community Pavilion	Status unknown.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Pillar 1 - People

1a. Inclusivity and accessibility.

1d. Foster partnerships, support volunteers and build capacity.

Pillar 2 - Economy

2c. Support community events and visitor economy.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

Cr Megan Phelan / Cr Rebecca Wardlaw

That Council:

1. Acknowledges the range of submitted and potential funding applications to Round 3 of the Tiny Towns Fund and endorses the provision of letters of support provided at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer.

CARRIED

11.4.2. WAUBRA RECREATION RESERVE NETBALL FACILITIES PLANNING

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: -

Cr Simon Tol declared a conflict of interest in this report as a member of the committee and left the Meeting at 7:34 pm.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek Council endorsement of contributing additional funds to the Waubra Recreation Reserve Netball Facilities Planning project.

BACKGROUND

The Waubra Recreation Reserve Master Plan was developed through extensive community and stakeholder consultation and identified the need to modernise the Reserve's facilities to meet growing participation and accessibility demands, particularly for netball. To project the priority project, detailed design and documentation are required to ensure alignment with Netball Victoria Facility Design Standards and to prepare the project for future construction funding opportunities.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

As part of Council's 2025/26 Budget, Council approved an allocation of \$60,000 towards strategic planning and the Waubra Recreation Reserve Netball Facilities Planning. This allocation was provided under the New Initiatives Allowance, which supports the advancement of key community infrastructure projects.

The planning phase will deliver site investigations, schematic and architectural designs, technical assessments, and detailed cost estimates for the redevelopment of the netball courts, pavilion upgrade and extension, competition-standard sports lighting, and internal road and car parking improvements. The resulting documentation will form a comprehensive project readiness package, ensuring the Waubra Recreation Reserve Netball Facilities Project is shovel-ready for future investment.

In addition to the initial allocation of \$60,000, a further commitment from Council to contribute an additional \$30,000 from its 2026-27 Operational Budget if required, to support completion of the full planning and design scope is sought. This additional contribution ensures that the project can be delivered to the level of detail required to meet all Facility Planning stream requirements and progress to construction readiness.

A funding submission was made in December 2025 to the Local Sports Infrastructure Fund – Planning Stream for \$40,000 (maximum amount able to be sought) towards the detailed planning (estimated total value of \$130,000), and at the time of preparing this report, Council has not received any advice regarding the success of the application.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Pillar 1 - People

1b. Community safety and wellbeing.

Pillar 4 - Infrastructure

4a. Plan, build and maintain essential infrastructure.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Endorses the submission made to the Local Sports Infrastructure Fund – Planning Stream for detailed planning for the Waubra Netball facilities.
2. Allocates an additional \$30,000 from its 2026-27 Operational Budget if required, to the Waubra Recreation Reserve Netball Facilities Planning project to support completion of the full planning and design scope is sought.

Cr Rebecca Wardlaw / Cr Megan Phelan

That Council:

1. Endorses the submission made to the Local Sports Infrastructure Fund – Planning Stream for detailed planning for the Waubra Netball facilities.
2. Allocates an additional \$30,000 from its 2026-27 Operational Budget if required, to the Waubra Recreation Reserve Netball Facilities Planning project to support completion of the full planning and design scope is sought.
3. Seeks external funding from other sources for the additional \$30,000 if required, to the Waubra Recreation Reserve Netball Facilities Planning project to support completion of the full planning and design scope is sought.

CARRIED

Cr Simon Tol returned to the Meeting at 7:43pm.

12. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND GENERAL BUSINESS

Cr Kehoe

As we have already spoken about this evening, the biggest event in our area has been the fires at Streatham. It is an event that will remain in our memories as deeply impactful. On the Friday when it occurred, the response from the community to support one another and keep people safe was incredibly well executed — as well as it possibly could have been.

As Chris from the ICC mentioned, we always learn from these incidents. In this case, one of the key learnings was around how we communicate with the community — how we can improve our messaging, alleviate panic and stress, and ensure we are clear and timely so that people can return to their homes and properties as soon as possible.

There were a number of community meetings, which were very well attended. On the Saturday, I attended a meeting in Streatham with our CEO, Jim Nolan, and we also went to Skipton. As has already been mentioned, there was an incredible response from our council, along with Ararat and Corangamite, to support people and monitor the situation closely until it was brought under control and deemed safe. This enabled people, particularly in Skipton and Streatham, to return home.

Further meetings were held later that week to continue supporting the community as we transitioned into recovery mode. The relief centre provided significant support, and I thank all the officers involved. We will continue striving to be even more efficient when facing future disasters.

I attended a beautiful community barbecue at the Stoneleigh CFA on the Sunday following the fires. It was a true epitome of how amazing our community is. Everyone came together — primarily to check on people's emotional and mental wellbeing — and it made me incredibly proud to be part of that community. Those affected and those who simply wanted to support their neighbours all showed up. It was absolutely incredible. I sincerely thank everyone who stepped up immediately, as well as those from surrounding areas who donated food, fodder, and water when it was needed. Groups, businesses, and individuals all worked tirelessly, and I extend a huge thank you to everyone who has contributed and continues to support recovery efforts.

There have also been fantastic fundraisers. I attended the Beaufort Cricket fundraiser and assisted with preparing and serving meals with the Beaufort CWA to BlazeAid volunteers at the Skipton depot. Thank you to all the volunteers fencing and supporting our farmers, and to those supporting the volunteers — your efforts have been extraordinary.

I will also be speaking at an event at the Royal Hotel in Snake Valley on 27 February. This will be an enjoyable but poignant fundraiser raising money for the Carranballac Recreation Reserve. If you have not yet purchased a ticket, I encourage you to do so.

I attended a meeting regarding the Carranballac Reserve that Council organised with DEECA. Several issues were highlighted, particularly dangerous trees, demolition of the building, and the complexities surrounding land ownership and insurance responsibilities. I am very thankful to council staff who are working closely with DEECA and the dedicated community members who use the facility. We are looking toward a hopeful way forward to re-establish what is needed and continue supporting that community.

The resilience of the community has been incredible — through one-on-one meetings, group meetings, and phone calls, it has been clear how strong and united they are.

I have also attended several Rural Councils Victoria meetings as part of the executive, preparing for an advocacy forum taking place this week. We will have access to relevant politicians to highlight the immense

pressure facing rural councils like ours — pressures that must be addressed urgently. I look forward to strong advocacy outcomes from this forum.

I attended the Australia Day event, which once again showcased what an incredible community we have. From young to old, it was a wonderful celebration. It was an honour to be there to acknowledge award recipients and welcome new citizens to our area. That same day, I visited the Beaufort Pool with my family — I have never seen it so packed. It was fantastic to see people of all ages enjoying such an important community resource and coming together in celebration.

I also attended the Carngham Recreation Reserve AGM — they are doing amazing work and should be commended.

On a very positive note, despite challenges in the Carranballac area, the HarvFest team delivered an incredible event at an alternate venue this year. They raised significant funds that will go back into the community. Although they could have understandably cancelled the event, they instead chose to move forward and delivered something truly remarkable.

Thank you, everyone.

Cr ToI

I concur with Cr Kehoe regarding the terrific work undertaken by all the volunteers, communities, the shire and the various organisations involved in the recovery process.

I have attended several meetings in Streatham and Skipton. One point worth noting is that the fire started later in the day rather than early in the morning; otherwise, it may have reached Shelford and been far worse. We are by no means out of the fire season yet and must remain vigilant. Once again, this highlights the hard work of our CFA volunteers and communities, and why we continue advocating strongly for them regarding the ESVF.

The Waubra Recreation Reserve has had several projects underway recently. It has been somewhat time-consuming due to various issues, but the playground is looking superb. If anyone has had the opportunity to see it, there is a great deal of excitement within the community, with many people driving past and stopping to have a look.

I recently attended a meeting in Lexton with the Hub Committee. They are pursuing Central Highlands Water to gain access from the reservoir to supply water for the golf course and football oval. They are also looking to resurface the football oval.

I had the opportunity to meet with Bev McArthur and Joe McCracken, who introduced us to Jess Wilson at the Flywheel Café. It was an interesting meeting, with some fairly positive outcomes.

One concerning matter brought to my attention last week was that a company called South Energy has been placing notices on fences throughout the Ercildoune Ward, seeking to acquire land for solar farms. There appears to be a growing push in this area, so it will be important to watch this space. Finally, I would like to thank the Waterloo Community Group. John Coshan and his team have done a superb job for a committee that has only recently been established. They are doing excellent work.

I look forward to an exciting year ahead.

Thank you.

Cr Phelan

It has been a slightly quieter month in terms of community meetings, but two events in particular stood out for me — moving from the very sobering to the deeply inspiring.

Visiting the fire-affected areas with the Mayor and Cr Wardlaw was a very emotional and moving experience. Seeing tree stumps still smouldering and seeing the devastation at the Carranballac Reserve was very emotional and moving. I can only imagine how the community members are impacted seeing that day in and day out, and of course some of those who have lost their homes. In my Councillor column, I wrote about the very stark image of the sole remaining structure standing — a burnt brick chimney stack — which is a very powerful image and my heart goes out to all those affected.

In beautiful contrast was the very inspiring Australia Day event and seeing the amazing contributions of those who actually won the awards but also all of those who were nominated. We really could have chose any number of people to be the recipient of those awards, it is an inspiring reminder of the great work that so many community members and groups contribute to the shire.

Cr Wardlaw

As the others have said, the visit to the fire affected communities, it was very humbling, very surreal, I am really glad that we had the opportunity to go and then to go into the resource centre that was setup at Skipton and be amongst it, there wasn't a lot that us as individuals could do but we were there in spirit and available wherever we could be. My hat goes off to all of the volunteers and all of the people that have lost, even the livestock, it has been a really trying time. Moving forward there are fundraisers coming up as Cr Kehoe mentioned and hopefully people get behind those and support them as best as possible.

I also went to the Australia Day breakfast ran by the men's shed in Avoca which is always a good one, they do an amazing job, there is also way too much food but they get a really good turn out and it is good to see. The men that are running it, you can see that they are very passionate about it, they love to do it and I don't think you would have them anywhere else that morning of the year.

We then followed up by going to Beaufort in the afternoon for the Australia Day celebrations where there were three residents that became Australian citizens on the day. We had a speaker, Susan Fayad who is from Avoca and she did a great job of explaining the history of the goldfields that we live in, it is a really broad area and the bid for the world heritage that she has been working on so that was really inspiring. You could actually sit and listen to her for hours; she has just got a way of drawing you into her stories so that was lovely.

I also just want to mention the Avoca Cricket Club that are going fantastic. They have got there under 13's who have been getting some wins. It is great to see the little boys out there having a crack, it has really made my year watching them, admittedly two of them are my grandsons but it is just such a pleasure to go and the senior team I believe are top of the ladder.

I just wanted to bring up for anyone interested on the 28th of February at Amphitheatre, try and get along to the Tom Curtain show that they are running out there, it will be a wonderful evening, he does a great job, an all Australian with his dogs and his horses and he is a remarkable singer as well. For those who can, I think it is from about 5pm, it will be a beautiful evening, please try and get along to that and support the community where you can.

Cr Ferrari

It has been a little while since we have had to report on our activities, but I won't go through all of the activities but some I will highlight.

Earlier in the year I had a couple of meetings with some ministers and it's really good to meet with them because you get the opportunity to say what needs to be said and do that advocacy work. It is a pretty consistent message really and I met with Minister D'Ambrosio, and it was really good, she was really empathetic to our situation, and she seemed to listen and the things that the CEO and I are highlighting are consistent across many rural councils. What I highlighted to the Minister is that we've got something unique because we've had about five disasters pretty much continuously in a row, from floods to fires, back to fires and then we've also got that consistent drought on top of it. Pyrenees has had its more than fair share of disasters, that coupled with the dry, I think we are a little bit unique in that way, so I hope that message got through. We did certainly push that topic.

I have been to a few meetings, GBAC meetings, quite a few meetings with the Streatham Fire Community Recovery network which I continue to attend once a week at this stage, usually on a Thursday. You get a lot out of them and get a chance to network and particularly speak to the people in that community that is affected and you hear the real stories and what is going on so that is vitally important. When we did go for a drive with Cr Phelan and Cr Wardlaw through the affected area, certainly not to browse over people's misfortune but just to get an actual picture of the devastation and that is all you can call it. It is just complete devastation. In a very short time that fire did a lot of damage and our thoughts are continually with those people that were affected in a small or a big way or in any way at all and I think the important thing about that and it has come out through these network meetings is that people get affected as families or businesses or individuals that then flows onto the communities and certainly the Skipton community who's a fantastic little community down there, they are very caring, they've bonded together really well but it has certainly affected the residents in Skipton knowing that their friends and colleagues and loved ones have been directly affected by the fire so we are very conscious of that. To that point I urge any community members to reach out if they require assistance or advice or if they feel something isn't going as it should. You are entitled to assistance, you are entitled to advice and if you think it is not right or you are not happy, please reach out to us and if we cannot help you or we are not the agency, we will find someone who will. You are entitled to that, please don't be afraid to reach out if necessary.

I attended the Pyrenees Shire Australia Day event which was fantastic, it was hosted on behalf of the Waterloo Community and I know John Coshan and some of the community members there put in a lot of work to make it happen so thank you John and that community and hopefully we recognised Waterloo enough through the day. It was just fantastic to host that up there on behalf of Waterloo. It was really well attended, and the day went really really well so thank you to the staff at the Council who did the organisation, there is a lot of work that goes into that and making those days happen, thank you very much to the staff involved in organising that.

We are very conscious about the fires and the recovery ongoing, and we will be there as long as we need to be.

Cr Tol

We also had a meeting with Langi Kal Department of Corrections last week about the terrible incident that occurred with the escapees and it looks like we are getting the community engagement team back together and a bit more transparency and a bit more notification as to how the situations handled in the future because it has been quite upsetting for a lot of that community around there.

Cr Ferrari

I thought the Langi Kal meeting was a really productive meeting and I think a lot of good will come out of that and particularly for the community so that is fantastic.

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 Megan Phelan

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 - Burke Street Civil Works

15.2 - Willoby Street Sewer Augmentation

CARRIED

The live streaming of Ordinary Meeting of Council stopped at 8.04pm to consider confidential items.

The live stream re-commenced at 8.18pm and the Mayor chose to report on confidential items discussed in closed Council which are noted below.

15.1 – Burke Street Civil Works

Council awarded a contract to Begbies Civil Contracting Pty Ltd for the stage 2 subdivision works at Burke Street Beaufort for the sum of \$1,534,001 (ex GST).

15.2 – Willoby Street Sewer Augmentation

Council awarded a contract to WVP Civil Pty Ltd for the sewer augmentation works along Willoby Street, Beaufort for the sum of \$809,564.26 (ex GST).

14. CLOSE OF MEETING

The Ordinary Meeting of Council - 16 February 2026 closed at 8.19pm.

Minutes of the Meeting confirmed _____

Mayor Cr Damian Ferrari