



Pyrenees
Shire Council

Minutes

Ordinary Meeting of Council

6:00 pm Monday 18 May 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

Mr Jim Nolan declared of conflict of interest (direct) in relation to item 15.1 - Contract Employment Matter in the confidential section of the meeting.

6. CONFIRMATION OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

Cr Megan Phelan / Cr Tanya Kehoe

That the Minutes of the:

- Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 20 April 2026; and
 - Closed Meeting of Council held 20 April 2026,
- 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 20 April 2026.

8. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr Trevor Davey of Waterloo

Question one:

When Council complete training for employees, management, executives etc, I understand they require an RTO authorized training course and instructor who must also be qualified within Victorian Government compliance if so would this extend to outside trainers and training courses that may / could be delivered to Pyrenees community or businesses?

Response:

Mr Nolan thanked Mr Davey for the question and provided the following response: Certainly, the Council does have an obligation to provide a range of training to its employees. That training is quite a diverse range of training, not just to employees but to Councillors and Council executives. So, the answer to the first part of your question is that it depends. Not all of the training necessarily requires a qualified person with the Victorian government compliance network, it depends on what outcome is to be achieved. If there is a requirement to provide training for our outdoor staff, we provide traffic controller training on the job, they require a certificate to be able to undertake that work, then we would require an accredited trainer to be able to do that work.

Today the council engaged a person by the name of Bonnie Chew to provide Cultural Awareness training for the Councillors. Bonnie Chew was engaged as a proud Wadawurrung women to be able to provide those insights around cultural awareness that were necessary for the Councillors and it wasn't necessarily part of the Victorian certified scheme, she was there as a Wadawurrung women. It is not always the case however your substantive question is that would this extend to outside trainers and training courses that may or could be delivered to Pyrenees community or businesses, so in other words, could those trainers that we engage, be able to provide that training to other businesses and community members to participate in and the answer is, there are circumstances where that could occur, more often than not, the training is provided because of our obligations to our own staff, I can see situations where there may be opportunity for that to occur and I'd be open to have a conversation about where that might occur.

Question two:

Following on from my first question, I have a concern that if there is no RTO or registered cert 4 trainer giving a training course and an employee of the council does that course and in doing so later, has an error or accident, or problem and that trainer wasn't qualified, what happens to the litigation.

Response:

Mr Nolan thanked Mr Davey for the question and provided the following response: Thanks for the follow up Mr Davey and it helps provide some context to your earlier question. Again, it depends. It depends on the type of training that is being provided and whether in fact there is a statutory requirement for a certificate to be obtained and obviously, the nature of the risk is relevant here as well. It is not an exact answer to your question, it is something that we need to be mindful of, but it depends on the nature of the training.

Ms Jenny Hill of Beaufort

Question one:

I found myself this morning at 9am submitting this formal objection so if may read that to you to just give you an outline of what the reason for why I stand here before you today:

Re: Formal objection and notice of unreasonable access obstruction to our property 15 Willoby Street, Beaufort Victoria.

I am writing to formally object to the current execution of the major sewer works being conducted by your nominated Contractor on Willoby Street which is currently resulting in the total permanent obstruction of access to our property at the above address. When I say permanent, I mean permanent for whilst the works take place.

While we understand the necessity of the infrastructure project, the management of these works has created an untenable and unsafe situation for the occupants of our property.

I refer to the phone call we received of notice for the first time at 3.44pm Friday 15th May (what I refer to as the 11th hour you could say) from Tim Day informing us that our entry/exit entrance will be blocked permanently for a week due to a late change of plan from the contractor and that a stationery truck 6-7mtrs long housing a power plan will be parked there, and blocking our entrance in and out of our property. I believe this is an unreasonable placement of power plant that interferes with the access to our property.

I also spoke to Rob the contract supervisor who I question how long would our entrance be blocked. He indicated that works could go from 2 weeks to 3 weeks.

I note if a council or its contractors station power plant truck parks across your primary entrance, they are legally required to provide safe, usable, and practical alternative access to our home.

Blocking all entry unreasonably can be deemed unlawful interference.

Our objection is based on the following critical impacts:

1. The safety and emergency access:

The blocked access to our driveway prevents safe entry and exit in the event of a medical emergency, for ambulance or fire CFA service. These services would be unable to reach our property, presenting an immediate and unacceptable risk to life.

We strongly request that Council and the project contractors take immediate action to rectify this situation.

2. Disruption of Essential Services

Blocked access creates an unacceptable risk to our safety and daily essential needs.

I note Tony's, my partner, recent accident, just Wednesday gone on 13th May, he incurred a serious injury while operating a chainsaw in our front garden. He will require doctor and Specialists appointments with or without notice in these following weeks/months. One of these appointments is with the surgeon again in Geelong for Friday 22nd May. It is paramount that we have access to and from our property and for ambulance services should they be required.

I note he has already surgery, we had spent two nights in Geelong, arriving back here Friday, late Friday, only to be advised that we are going to have blocked access, and I also might point out, between Doug, Tim Day and myself today at 11am, a meeting we held, this access could even go above three weeks, not the one week blocked access and three weeks might even run into four for unforeseen events that may occur through the construction and implementation of this sewer.

3. The right to notice and consultation

We did not receive any written notice, and really we should have received either seven or fourteen days written notification.

We request an urgent review with the council and contract site supervisor to provide immediate, written 'Traffic Management Plan' showing how they will restore safe access to our property. We ask that you contact us immediately to discuss in person how this access restriction will be resolved.

Tony is absent due to the accident, and he is finding it very difficult.

I might say that in Victoria, if a council block access to your property for major sewer construction, you are entitled to proper legal notice, safe alternative access and compensation for financial loss, you may also challenge unreasonable placement of temporary power plants that unnecessarily interfere with your livelihood. Your exact rights depend on the specific legislation governing the works such as the Local Government Act or the Major Transport Project Facilitation Act but the following core rights and actions apply. Those rights are:

The right to notice and consultation with advance warning.

Reasonable interference – the right to alternative access if a council or its contractors station power plant truck is across your primary entrance, they are legally required to provide safe useable and practical alternative access to your home or business.

Blocking all entry unreasonably can be deemed unlawful interference.

The outcome of our meeting today is that Doug has offered, and I might point out clearly, a sweetener does not take away the fact that you've taken away our rights to access our property, so I am not onboard with this yet. The sweetener today was that Doug has offered, originally a fleet car. Perhaps we should go through all the options, your compound lock up yard for my car and I said an outright no. Then it was going to be the mobile bus shed, I said an outright no because I am not going to walk in different climate as we are going into winter and I am not going to cart what I need with groceries etc. from that point to my home which I rightfully should have access to. What we arrived at was possibly a fleet car but the fleet car then went to a hire car, I have spoken with Delphina from the Medical Centre and Delphina has accepted that we could park the fleet car in the medical centre however that presents its problems too because that is not a quick exit for me, I would be given a remote to exit but it is not going to be as sweet as that. It is not like driving up your driveway to the back door and when you have someone that is injured that you are now dressing, showering, cutting up food for, it doesn't fit and to be honest I find it most unacceptable and I won't accept it, I will continue. I have already said that if you do park that truck, then that will go to another stage and another stage because I won't give up for our rights.

I think I have probably made it very clear. I probably could go on and on, but I don't know what else to say. Perhaps have empathy and put yourself in the same position and actually I could say more. So with the power plant trucks, I say trucks plural, originally it was singular but there are going to be two trucks parked at the end of our driveway, one has power plant setup on it, the second one will have the slurry that comes out and that will be obviously taking away all of the rubbish. I don't know why those two trucks can't be moved further over so that we can have access in and out of our property, I don't know why you haven't utilised that vacant block which belongs to DEECA which is directly opposite us. I have spoken to Central Highlands Water but I need to resume that call because I was told that it was Central Highlands Water's equipment that is coming in, but I need to resume that call for further outcomes as well.

What else can I say, please consider that we need access to our property in and out so that I can drive to the back door as we have done for the last twelve years and as ratepayers and residents in this Shire, I urge you to consider very carefully what you are doing because four weeks, and I say four weeks because I believe it is going to take four. It has already taken three down here and we have a longer distance to go in our block and anything could present as an issue that may put things back as far as your end date.

Response:

Mayor Cr Ferrari:

Thank you, you presented that very well. Very well done, excellent job. Do you want to respond to that Doug or will you take that on notice?

Mr Gowans:

Mr Gowans thanked Ms Hill and provided the following response:

Only to say that we will continue to work with Ms Hill and her partner to find an as acceptable solution as we can and to minimise any access issues. We are working through those issues and we are really committed to getting the best outcomes we can but this work is essential, it is an essential service that is required and we have to facilitate this work with the least impacts possible but we understand that there are impacts and we will continue to work for an acceptable solution.

Cr Kehoe:

Just one clarification, I think there was a good statement made there, is there an option to utilise that vacant block? Especially if it is going to take that time.

Mr Gowans:

Thank you Councillor for your question. Council does not have access rights to that block, we can approach DEECA for access rights, however the issue is the alignment of the sewer. The alignment of the sewer is on the southern side of Willoby Street and the issue is if we do put the two trucks that we are talking about on that land, effectively that will create a block for the entire road at that point, we will still try to maintain access but there may be a blockage of Willoby Street at that point. I know that the project manager is looking at options where we can potentially have that power point as distant from 15 Willoby Street as possible, but we are a little bit constrained by where the designed pit is for this particular sewer work.

Ms Hill:

When Tim visited late this afternoon, we took a little walk out to the front to see where the pit is and so forth, I didn't realise that you were going to run two way traffic, it really surprised me because I thought we were talking about one lane. I said to Tim so why can't you move those trucks over, make it a one-way traffic in and out so we have access to our property rightfully so. So, I do really emphasise, I will not accept that we may minimise the interruptions to 15 Willoby, I will only accept that we have access to 15 Willoby street, rightfully as residents, as rate payers and to do the right thing. This management has gone skew whiff, I often wonder how it could arrive at this situation that we are in now.

Cr Wardlaw:

I just want to clarify so there is only one entrance to your property, and then in that case to me it is not acceptable either, there has got to be a way to get into your property.

Ms Hill:

Absolutely not because if in the event of fire, Doug did say today you have 70 meter long fire hoses, I am sorry that's not an option. That's not acceptable either. We need to have access to ambulance first of all, and that is a high likability, secondly to emergency services that need access to our property, we are side-by-side with a shop front, the tobacconist across the road, we are also on the back of an empty bakery property and there are other shops around so anything is likely.

Cr Tol:

I find it a bit appalling that we've notified you at 3.44pm on Friday afternoon, if this project has been properly planned and managed, I agree it is unacceptable, absolutely unacceptable. It is not as if we have just decided we are going to dig that bit of road up, I think we need to manage it and we need to fix the problem immediately. Sorry Mr Gowans but I think it needs to be sorted out.

Mr Gowans:

I just want to address a couple of things, notification of all residents has occurred well before last Friday, there was a particular change with this particular issue but in terms of access issues, there have been three notifications, well before this time, I just want to clarify that. There is actually access at all times to this property, I am not saying there is driveway access but there is access,

that is for emergency services and whole range of other requirements, the front of this property is not actually blocked from access. It is the driveway that is blocked, the road access.

Ms Hill:

So may I say, a CFA, an ambulance, any essential person, is going to stand there like any pedestrian walking past holding a hose, how are they going to bring in the ambulance, that is just absolutely ridiculous I'm sorry.

Mayor Cr Ferrari:

Thank you Ms Hill, you've presented really well and very thorough and is certainly something that we will have quite an in-depth discussion about to try and make the best resolution and the quickest to get you access that you need.

Ms Hill:

Sorry Damian, there is one more thing to add to this, this is all occurring Wednesday, we only have tomorrow to resolve this issue. The equipment moves in Wednesday, they start their work. We were notified Friday afternoon.

Mayor Cr Ferrari:

I am confident there will be some robust discussion later on.

Ms Hill:

So instead of spending my weekend and my focus on my dear Tony, I had to research and write up this submission, here I am tonight and I should be at home with my husband, here I am fighting for our rights to access to our property, there is something terribly wrong.

Mayor Cr Ferrari:

Thank you. You've done a great job and we have heard you loud and clear and we will have some in depth discussion later on this evening given that time is a factor.

9. ITEMS FOR NOTING

9.1. ASSET AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

9.1.1. PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT QUARTERLY REPORT MAY 2026

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: -

PURPOSE

This report was prepared to give the Council a summary of activities within the Planning and Development Department, for January – March 2026.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

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	January	February	March	Financial year to date
Permit applications received	6	9	6	75
Permits granted	4	3	1	40
Permits refused	0	0	0	0
Time extensions granted	2	0	2	4
Secondary consents granted	1	1	1	3
Estimated cost	\$2M	-	-	\$10M

of works				
Applications decided within 60 statutory days (%)	50%	100%	100%	90%

Planning Enquiries — January to March 2026

During the January to March 2026 quarter, the Planning Team received approximately 390 enquiries. Of these enquiries:

- Approximately 120 related to current planning permit applications or existing planning permit matters; and
- Approximately 270 were pre-purchase or pre-application enquiries.

Western Renewables Link

Between January and March, the Western Renewables Link Inquiry and Advisory Committee continued its process. Council Planning Officers provided input in collaboration with other councils affected by the project.

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

The Planning and Development team has continued to play an active role in completing Secondary Impact Assessments for properties affected by the Yalla Y Poora–Streatham bushfire in January 2026.

The team is also continuing to support impacted landowners throughout the recovery process, assisting with rebuilding requirements in collaboration with the Recovery Team.

Belmont

In response to the Bayindeen Fire in 2024, the Planning team has been working with the owners of Belmont at Main Lead through its Bushfire Planning Support Service. Belmont was successful in securing funding through the Disaster Recovery Heritage Grants Program.

A Disaster Risk Management Plan has recently been completed for the property. This plan will help the owners identify and assess risks, and outlines practical, site-specific strategies for mitigation, preparedness, and response to help safeguard the property's heritage values.

Beaufort Bypass

In March 2026, the Minister for Planning approved Amendment C50pyrn to the Pyrenees Planning Scheme. This amendment enables land acquisition and development associated with the Beaufort Bypass, following completion of the Environment Effects Statement (EES) process in late 2023.

The Council will continue to work with the Department of Transport and Planning in relation to the project.

Pyrenees Planning Scheme Amendment C52 –Pyrenees Flood Related Planning Controls

In March 2026, the Minister for Planning conditionally approved Amendment C52 to the Pyrenees Planning Scheme to proceed to public consultation. Council is preparing for the amendment, with consultation expected to begin in early June.

A Standing Advisory Committee process is anticipated for August–September 2026 (dates to be confirmed). The Committee will provide advice on flood studies and planning scheme amendments as part of a new state-led approach to flood risk management, aimed at reducing costs and administrative burden for councils.

PART B – BUILDING

BUILDING ACTIVITY	January	February	March	Financial YTD
Private Building Permits	9	15	10	118
'Property Info Cert' issued	17	20	35	247
Building Notice/Order issued	1	0	1	24
Building Inspections	22	8	15	65
Report & Consent	1	4	5	14
Pool Registers	5	3	3	16

The Yalla Y Poora – Streatham Bushfire Event – Building Notices & Orders

In April 2026, the Council's Building Team wrote to property owners affected by the January fire event regarding the demolition and clean-up of fire-affected structures. This is a crucial step and part of Council's duty to reduce safety risks after a bushfire.

To date most fire-affected structures have been removed, and extensive clean-up works are underway. Only a small number of notices or orders have been required.

PART C – ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Task	Actual			
	Jan	Feb	Mar	YTD
Officer Activity				
Food Surveillance				
Food premises mandatory assessments	8	1	5	14
Food premises critical or major outcomes	1	0	1	2
Total new food premises	0	1	1	2
Total closed food premises	1	1	0	2
Streatrader mandatory assessments	0	0	0	0
Streatrader new applications	5	1	0	6
SOT processed	19	19	32	70
Statutory food samples sent for analysis Class 1	0	0	0	0
Statutory food samples sent for analysis Class 2 & 3	0	0	0	0
Unsatisfactory food samples	0	0	0	0
Food complaints received	0	1	1	2
Food complaints justified	0	1	1	2
Food recalls actioned	6	4	6	16
PHW Surveillance				
PHWA premises mandatory assessments	1	0	0	1
PHWA premises critical or major outcomes	0	0	0	0
Total new PHWA premises	0	0	0	0
Total transferred PHWA premises	0	0	0	0
Total closed PHWA premises	0	0	0	0
PHWA premises complaints received	0	0	0	0
PHWA premises complaints justified	0	0	0	0
Unregistered rooming house complaints received	0	0	0	0
Outbreak investigation referrals	0	0	0	0
Single case incident referrals	0	0	0	0
Anaphylaxis investigation referrals	0	0	0	0
Pool water and chemical testing conducted	0	7	0	7
Unsatisfactory pool water samples	0	2	0	2

Nuisance investigation & general enquiries				
Noise complaints	0	0	0	0
Odour complaints	1	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	0
Total enquiries/phone call backs received-all types	9	16	11	36
Caravan Park Surveillance				
Caravan Park mandatory assessments conducted	0	0	0	0
Tobacco Education & Surveillance				
Tobacco retailer visits conducted	0	0	0	0
Eating establishment visits conducted	0	0	2	2
Outdoor area visits conducted	0	0	0	0
Test purchase days conducted	0	0	0	0
Test purchase visits conducted	0	0	0	0
Test purchase sales made	0	0	0	0
Tobacco complaints	0	0	0	0
Domestic Wastewater Management				
Septic tank applications received	6	4	1	11
Wastewater inspections conducted	4	6	10	20
Septic tank permits to install issued	0	6	3	9
Septic tank approvals to use issued	2	0	1	3
Septic tank requests for plans received	1	0	0	1
Waste water complaints	0	0	0	0
DWMP compliance checks conducted	22	0	0	22
DWMP compliance checks serious non-compliances	0	0	0	0
Planning Referrals and Health Planning				
Planning referrals commented on	6	3	3	12
Environmental health planning (hours)				0
Enforcement action taken				
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	1	0	1
Number of infringements issued	0	0	0	0
Total value of infringements issued (\$)	0	0	0	0
Other				
Emergency callouts	1	0	0	1
Councillor requests	0	0	0	0
Staff Training attended (hours)	0	2	2	4

Pool Water Health

During the summer period, the team responded to an unsatisfactory pool water sample. Guidance was provided to the pool operator on appropriate cleaning measures, including super chlorination.

Following extensive maintenance work, the pool achieved a compliant result in subsequent testing.

Caravan Parks

Registrations for the Beaufort and Landsborough Caravan Parks will expire at the end of 2026. Due to recent legislation changes, applications must now be submitted by 1 August 2026. This earlier date will provide additional time for assessment and to address any follow-up compliance requirements.

Domestic Wastewater Management Plan Program

In the coming months, Council's Environmental Health team will undertake inspections of septic systems in Landsborough, Redbank, and Amphitheatre as part of the Onsite Wastewater Management Plan, which helps ensure systems are operating safely and effectively.

Tobacco Test Purchasing

In April, the Council conducted its Tobacco Test Purchasing Program. This compliance initiative under the Tobacco Act 1987 involves trained minors attempting to purchase tobacco products or e-cigarettes to assess whether retailers are complying with laws prohibiting sales to people under 18. Council is pleased to report that all Pyrenees businesses tested complied with the requirements.

**PART D – COMMUNITY SAFETY AND AMENITY
ACTIVITY - Animals**

	January 2026	February 2026	March 2026	Total FYTD
Cats Registered	N/A	N/A	538	-
Dogs registered	N/A	N/A	2100	-
Cats impounded	1	3	11	36
Cats reclaimed	1	0	0	2
Cats Euthanised	0	3	9	30
Cats Adopted/Rehomed	0	0	2	4
Dogs impounded	4	2	2	19
Dogs Reclaimed	4	2	2	18
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	January 2026	February 2026	March 2026	Total FYTD
Domestic Animals Act	0	5	5	36
Local Laws	0	2	0	9
Road Safety Act	0	1	7	30
Environment Protection Act	1	0	1	3
Impounding of Livestock Act	0	0	0	3
CFA Act	31	0	3	42
Planning & Environment Act	0	0	0	0
Road Management Act	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0
Total Infringements Issued	32	8	16	123
Prosecutions	1	0	0	4

ACTIVITY – Customer Action Requests & Permits

Customer Action Requests (Excludes several RecFind Docs.)	98	63	55	633
Local Law Permits	5	7	3	104

Animal Registrations Renewals

Animal registration renewals were posted to residents in the first week of March 2026. A positive response has been received to date.

Officers will continue to follow up on outstanding registrations through social media posts, text messages, and other communication channels.

Fire Season

Burn-off restrictions were lifted in mid-April, and Council has resumed issuing local law permits for burning in built-up areas.

During March, farmers also commenced burning stubble paddocks, resulting in periods of elevated smoke levels that affected some areas more than others.

Domestic Animal Management Plan

Under the Domestic Animals Act 1994, councils are required to review and update their Domestic Animal Management Plan every four years.

Council is currently drafting a new plan and will soon undertake community consultation to seek feedback from residents.

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 Rebecca Wardlaw / Cr Tanya Kehoe

That Council:

1. Notes this report.

CARRIED

9.2. CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

9.2.1. AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MARCH 2026

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 M019 held on 17 March 2026.

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 minutes from March 2026 is attached for Council information. An overview of the March 2026 meeting included:

- In accordance with the Charter, the committee must elect a Chairperson on annual basis and therefore a new Chairperson has been elected for the next twelve months;
- A report from the CEO and covered topics relating to the Streatham Yalla-Y-Poora Fire, Enterprise Agreement, Victorian State Election Advocacy and Burke Street Workers Accommodation project;
- Regular reports and updates were received from Council's External and Internal Auditors;
- Financial, Compliance and Governance reports were provided, in addition to an update to outstanding audit actions;
- A biannual report was received from the Chairperson (previously presented to Council's April Ordinary Meeting of Council);
- A Workforce Plan was presented which describes the organisational structure and how this will support the delivery of Council's Plan; and
- An updated Workplan of reports to future meetings and progress towards previously identified reporting.

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. 2026.03.17 - M 019 - MINUTES - Audit Risk Committee Meeting - 17 March 2026 [9.2.1.1 - 12 pages]

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

All financial and risk matters were addressed within reports presented to 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 March 2026 meeting. Any queries relating to the meeting may be directed to the designated Councillor representatives.

Cr Megan Phelan / Cr Rebecca Wardlaw

That Council receives and notes the information contained within this report and its attachment.

CARRIED

10. COUNCILLOR ACTIVITY REPORTS**10.1. COUNCILLOR ACTIVITY REPORTS - APRIL 2026**

Cr Damian Ferrari – Beaufort Ward		
02/04/2026	Streatham-Skipton Fire Recovery – Council Collaboration	Virtual
11/04/2026	Pyrenees Unearthed Festival	Avoca
13/04/2026	Council Briefing	Beaufort
20/04/2026	Council Briefing	Beaufort
20/04/2026	Council Meeting	Beaufort
30/04/2026	Streatham-Skipton Fire Community & Business Recovery Network Meeting	Streatham
Cr Tanya Kehoe – Mount Emu Ward		
02/04/2026	Streatham-Skipton Fire Recovery – Council Collaboration	Virtual
13/04/2026	Council Briefing	Beaufort
20/04/2026	Council Briefing	Beaufort
20/04/2026	Council Meeting	Beaufort
23/04/2026	Meeting at Stoneleigh Intersection with Martha Haylett MP	Stoneleigh
25/04/2026	Anzac Day Service	Snake Valley
25/04/2026	Anzac Day Service	Beaufort
25/04/2026	Anzac Day Service	Stockyard Hill
25/04/2026	Church Memorial Service	Stockyard Hill
Cr Simon Tol – Ercildoune Ward		
10/04/2026	Meeting regarding Vic Offroad Championships	Beaufort
13/04/2026	Council Briefing	Beaufort
20/04/2026	Council Briefing	Beaufort
20/04/2026	Council Meeting	Beaufort
25/04/2026	Anzac Day Service	Lexton
Cr Megan Phelan – De Cameron Ward		
11/04/2026	Pyrenees Unearthed Festival	Avoca
13/04/2026	Council Briefing	Beaufort
13/04/2026	Redbank Hall CoM AGM	Redbank
20/04/2026	Council Briefing	Beaufort
20/04/2026	Council Meeting	Beaufort
25/04/2026	Anzac Day Service and Gunfire breakfast	Landsborough
25/04/2026	Anzac Dawn Service	Moonambel
27/04/2026	Constituent Meeting	Melbourne
Cr Rebecca Wardlaw – Avoca Ward		
11/04/2026	Pyrenees Unearthed Festival	Avoca
13/04/2026	Council Briefing	Beaufort
15/04/2026	Meeting with Central Highlands Water	Virtual
17/04/2026	Interview with university student	Virtual
20/04/2026	Council Briefing	Beaufort
20/04/2026	Council Meeting	Beaufort
23/04/2026	Meeting at Stoneleigh Intersection with Martha Haylett MP	Stoneleigh
25/04/2026	Anzac Day Service	Avoca

Cr Tanya Kehoe / Cr Simon Tol

That Council notes this report.

CARRIED

11. ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS

11.1. ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS - APRIL 2026

MEETING INFORMATION			
Meeting Name	Council Briefing		
Meeting Date	13 April 2026 commenced at 4.00pm and closed at 6.57pm		
Meeting Location	Council Chamber, Beaufort		
Items Discussed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mills Farms Holding 2. 2026/27 Budget Workshop Five 3. Fuel Impact 4. Beaufort RSL Presentation 5. Councillor Development Program 6. Council Meeting Procedure 7. Upcoming April Council Meeting 8. Strategic Issues Raised by Councillors 		
ATTENDEES			
Councillors	Mayor Cr Damian Ferrari Cr Tanya Kehoe (virtual) Cr Rebecca Wardlaw	Cr Simon Tol Cr Megan Phelan (virtual)	
Apologies	Nil.		
Staff	Jim Nolan (Chief Executive Officer) Douglas Gowans (Director Assets and Development Services) Jacinta Erdody (Director Corporate and Community Services) Glenn Kallio (Manager Finance) item 1 and 2		
Visitors	Don Carnes (Beaufort RSL) item 4 Judy Beaton (Beaufort RSL) item 4 Ken Crow (Beaufort RSL) item 4		
CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES			
Item No:	Councillor making disclosure	Particulars of disclosure	Councillor left meeting
Nil.			

MEETING INFORMATION			
Meeting Name	Council Briefing		
Meeting Date	20 April 2026 commenced at 4.00pm and closed at 5.40pm		
Meeting Location	Council Chamber, Beaufort		
Items Discussed	1. GWM Water 2. Landsborough Bowls Club 3. Council Meeting Preparation		
ATTENDEES			
Councillors	Mayor Cr Damian Ferrari Cr Tanya Kehoe Cr Rebecca Wardlaw	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) Ray Davies (Manager Economic Development & Tourism) item 1		
Visitors	Mark Williams (GWM Water) item 1 Caroline Welsh (GWM Water) item 1 Sally Marshall (GWM Water) item 1 Peter Browne (Landsborough Bowls Club) item 2 Gerry Parry (Landsborough Bowls Club) item 2		
CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES			
Item No:	Councillor / officer making disclosure	Particulars of disclosure	Councillor left meeting
11.3.4	Douglas Gowans	Emergency Management Roles - Personal appointment of duties	NA

Cr Simon Tol / Cr Tanya Kehoe

That Council notes this report.

CARRIED

12. ITEMS FOR DECISION

12.1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

12.1.1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INVESTMENT ATTRACTION STRATEGY

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: 22/02/02

PURPOSE

To seek council approval to place the draft 2026 Economic Development and Investment Attraction Strategy on public exhibition for a period of three weeks to seek community feedback.

BACKGROUND

The 2020 “Towards 10,000” Economic Development Strategy is due to be updated to take into account more recent data on the local economy and emerging trends.

The development of a new strategy commenced in October 2025 and has involved:

1. Desktop research and the development of a detailed background report on the Shires economy
2. A thorough level of consultation of industry, community, councilors and council officers. As a means of gaining valuable industry feedback Council also formed an Economic Task Force (ETF) comprising ten business leaders across the agriculture, wine, construction, hospitality and tourism sectors to help inform the process
3. The development of a draft strategy which has subsequently been refined to reflect feedback from ETF members

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The 2020 Economic Development Strategy was based on data that has now become outdated and does not reflect recent emerging economic trends including the growth of agriculture, the construction industry, renewable energy generation and the latest data on workforce, unemployment, visitor expenditure and a range of other information outlined in the consultants’ background report.

While the draft 2026 strategy has been developed from various sources of more recent data, it is intended to review the document in the second half of 2027 once data from the August 2026 Census becomes available and also take into account potential new developments like the Western Renewable Link, Highway Bypass of Beaufort and other large scale infrastructure projects which may arise.

The timelines within the strategy’s action plan will therefore be updated once the abovementioned review is completed.

The 2027 review will be a refinement of the 2026 strategy which can be performed in house.

The draft 2026 strategy includes five key themes and an action plan from which the economic development unit will develop annual business plans.

The five key themes of focus are outlined below and reflect how the Pyrenees Shire economy functions in practice:

- Agriculture is the primary economic driver
- Housing enables population and workforce growth
- Tourism converts local assets into external demand
- Local value-adding retains economic activity
- Workforce underpins all sectors

It is proposed to place the draft 2026 strategy on public exhibition for a period of three weeks to seek any final feedback from the Shires community.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

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.
- 2d. Advocate for transport infrastructure, job creation and workforce development.

Pillar 3 - Nature Environment

- 3c. Support local industries and communities in adapting to climate change.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

The consultation phase of the project has included

- Three meetings with the ETF
- 11 Community sessions at locations across the Pyrenees Shire
- Twenty, one on one conversations with owners/managers of businesses, schools and health organisations
- Consultation of traditional owners
- Discussion with State Government agencies
- A workshop with council staff
- Three councilor briefings

Placing the draft strategy on public exhibit provides the community a further opportunity to provide feedback.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Pyrenees EDIAS Final draft 11.05.2026 [12.1.1.1 - 56 pages]

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

The cost of developing the 2026 Economic Development Strategy has been \$56,500- (plus GST).

The costs associated with delivering actions outlined in the new strategy will be considered within annual budget allocations and available staff resources.

CONCLUSION

The 2020 Economic Development Strategy is now out of date.

The new strategy encompasses more recent economic data, responds to other emerging influences and will replace the 2020 strategy.

Placing the draft strategy on public exhibit provides the community with a further opportunity to provide feedback.

Cr Rebecca Wardlaw / Cr Tanya Kehoe

That Council:

1. Places the Draft 2026 Economic Development and Investment Attraction Strategy on public exhibition for a period of three weeks.
2. Incorporates changes necessary to the strategy in response to feedback from the public.
3. Presents the strategy for endorsement by Council once final changes have been made in response to community feedback.

CARRIED

12.1.2. CENTRAL HIGHLANDS RESILIENT AGRICULTURE PROJECT

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: 22/04/04

PURPOSE

To present Council with the findings and recommendations of the Central Highlands Resilient Agriculture Report.

BACKGROUND

The Central Highlands Region has been provided joint funding through the Commonwealth Governments Future Drought Fund and Agriculture Victoria to implement a series of actions in response to the objectives of the CH Regions Drought Resilience Plan.

Commerce Ballarat were appointed by the Victorian Government to deliver a series of actions in response to the development of the RDRP.

There were five project proposals which were endorsed by the RDRP Implementation Group of which Council is a member.

The “Resilient Agriculture Report”, was initiated by Pyrenees Shire Council and was one of the five projects being delivered in response to both:

- The objectives of the CHRDRP and
- A motion by Council in November 2024 that a detailed study be undertaken

The objectives of this project were to:

1. Undertake a detailed study on agricultural options for the region giving consideration to the natural and built assets and those issues affecting the agricultural sector including drought, climate change and options for value added agriculture.
2. Summarise the outcomes of prior studies and investigate any gaps and opportunities for diversification of agriculture, value add to regional produce and identify what steps are necessary to facilitate the investment required to capitalise on these opportunities.

The Centre for E- research and Digital Innovation (CERDI) at Federation University who have completed similar studies previously were engaged to deliver this report and Pyrenees Shire Council provided project management as the lead agency. Other project partners include representatives of Commerce Ballarat, Agriculture Victoria and each of the Local Government Areas from the Central Highlands Region.

There were three stages to the project:

1. Conduct a desktop review of recent Central Highlands strategies and reports on the impacts of climate change on agriculture and opportunities for value add
2. Consultation with agribusiness stakeholders from the Central Highlands Region
3. To develop an action plan for a regional approach in response to climate change and its impact on the Central Highlands agribusiness sector

Seven recommendations are proposed in the final report. These are informed by the findings from the desktop review and stakeholder consultations. The recommendations and action plans are offered as direction and further consideration by each of the participating councils in the Central Highlands, for review and prioritisation according to the significance of the agriculture sector to their local economy, their annual budget allocations and staffing resources.

The findings of the project are included in the attached “Resilient Agriculture” report which outlines the following actions for consideration by council.

Recommendation 1: The CHDRP is an essential resource, with priority actions aimed at supporting farmers across the region to respond to the impacts of climate change. Ongoing promotion of the Plan, and other key resources (including those resources identified in the desktop review) to farmers across the Central Highlands, must continue.

Recommendation 2: That councils take a coordinated and long-term leadership role in strengthening the region’s agricultural resilience. This includes encouraging large scale infrastructure projects for the region that support the agriculture industry, advocating for farmers at all levels of government, and ensuring that farmers have access to trusted, industry-led information and resources to further support them to adapt to climate change.

Recommendation 3: That councils identify and promote information about industry relevant grant and funding opportunities that enable farmers to strengthen and improve their agricultural practices and farming infrastructure in response to climate change.

Recommendation 4: That councils strengthen regional water security for agriculture by providing coordinated access to clear, trusted information on water governance,

availability and use (including surface water and groundwater) to support informed decision-making by farmers, and the wider community.

Recommendation 5: Business and financial security remains a core driver of change on farms. Future efforts to promote sustainability and practice change for the agriculture industry in response to the impacts of climate change must include strong and clear messaging about enhanced business practices and economic gains.

Recommendation 6: That information, support and advocacy about climate change continues to be promoted to farmers across the region, facilitating access to information about support services, including mental health services and financial hardship services.

Recommendation 7: That opportunities are prioritised to promote the liveability of the regions, their agriculture industries and agritourism. Building vibrant communities is essential in addressing population decline and the challenges to regional communities and economies posed by climate change.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

Agriculture remains a major contributor to the Pyrenees economy producing \$340 million in output (37.3% of the Shires total output) and 651 jobs (29.3%) upon which many of the Pyrenees residents and townships depend.

The seven recommendations within the report will however, need to be considered within the constraints of available council resources.

In most cases actions are already being taken by Council that respond to the reports' recommendations which also align with the objectives of the draft 2026 Economic Development and Investment Attraction Strategy.

The report and its recommendations also contain content of regional importance and the support of organisations such as Regional Partnerships, Grampians Regional Development Australia (RDA), and Greater Ballarat Alliance of Councils (GBAC) will likewise be dependent on available resources.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Pillar 2 - Economy

- 2a. Support growth and diversification of new and existing businesses.
- 2b. Coordinated and facilitated planning fostering business and tourism growth.

Pillar 3 - Nature Environment

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

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

Each of the Central Highlands Councils were represented on a project steering committee together with Commerce Ballarat and Agriculture Victoria.

The steering committee met with Federation University four times between July 2025 and February 2026.

The report notes that eleven regional primary production stakeholders were able to be consulted representing livestock, broad-acre cropping, vineyards and mixed farming.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Central Highlands Resilient Agriculture project Final report [12.1.2.1 - 83 pages]

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

The cost to council of developing this report has been limited to officer time without the need for any cash contributions.

The funds required to complete the project have been made available through joint contributions from the Commonwealth Governments Future Drought Fund and Agriculture Victoria.

Implementing the recommendations of the report will be managed in conjunction with Economic Development priorities according to availability of officer time and budget.

CONCLUSION

The Resilient Agriculture project has now been finalised, with research investigations summarized together with seven recommendations that respond to the attached reports' findings.

While the recommendations are to be considered by each LGA according to its resources and priority of agriculture for each council, the report and its recommendations do:

1. Align with objectives of the draft 2026 Economic Development and Investment Attraction Strategy and
2. Contain content of regional importance to organisations such as Regional Partnerships, RDA and GBAC.

Cr Tanya Kehoe / Cr Simon Tol

That Council:

1. Notes the report.
2. Endorses the recommendations in the above mentioned report in particular where these align to the objectives of the 2026 Economic Development Strategy.
3. Collaborates with regional organisations such as the Central Highlands Regional Partnership, Grampians RDA and GBAC to implement actions which respond to recommendations of regional importance.

CARRIED

12.2. ASSET AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

12.2.1. DRAFT PYRENEES DOMESTIC ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN 2026-2029

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: -

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek Council endorsement of the Draft Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) 2026–2029 for the purpose of public exhibition and community consultation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council is required to prepare and review a Domestic Animal Management Plan every four years in accordance with the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*.

The Draft DAMP 2026–2029 has been developed to meet this requirement and must be submitted to the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) by December 2026.

The review assessed all existing actions and identified those completed, ongoing, in progress, or not achievable within current resource constraints. The Draft DAMP retains relevant and achievable actions and removes those that are not feasible, with justification provided for transparency.

The Draft DAMP adopts a practical and resource-conscious approach, with a focus on:

- Responsible pet ownership
- Public safety and nuisance reduction
- Animal welfare outcomes
- Effective compliance and enforcement

It is recommended that the Draft DAMP Plan be released for public exhibition, with feedback sought through public consultation including a survey process.

BACKGROUND

Amendments to the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* require all Victorian Councils to prepare and review a Domestic Animal Management Plan every four years.

The DAMP provides a framework for Council to:

- Manage domestic animals, particularly dogs and cats;
- Promote responsible pet ownership;
- Support community safety; and
- Enhance animal welfare outcomes.

The current DAMP (2022–2025) is nearing completion. A Draft DAMP for 2026–2029 has been prepared and is attached to this report (**Attachment 1**).

ISSUES AND DISCUSSION

Review of Current Plan

All actions within the 2022–2025 DAMP have been reviewed.

The review identified:

- Completed actions;
- Ongoing actions;
- Actions in progress; and
- Actions not completed due to resource limitations.

Ongoing and Carried Forward Actions

Actions have been carried forward into the Draft DAMP where they:

- Remain relevant;
- Require ongoing delivery; or
- Are achievable within the next plan period.

Removed Actions

Actions deemed not achievable within current or anticipated resourcing have been removed.

These actions are documented in the Draft DAMP to ensure transparency and provide context to the community.

Key Challenges

Some of the key challenges identified in the plan include:

- Declining registration numbers
- Feral and semi-owned cat population
- Dog attacks on livestock and animals
- Nuisance complaints (barking dogs, roaming animals)

Key Actions/Strategic Priorities

Key actions and priorities to address these challenges include:

- Increase registration and identification compliance
- Reduce overpopulation (especially cats) by increasing desexing and microchipping initiatives
- Minimise dog attacks and nuisance behaviour with improved management of complaints and enhancement of dog attack prevention and investigation processes
- Improve education and responsible pet ownership campaigns
- Strengthen enforcement and compliance activities including a review and update local laws and Orders (off-leash areas, cat curfew)
- Strengthen training and capability of authorised officers

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Pillar 1 - People

1b. Community safety and wellbeing.

Pillar 3 - Nature Environment

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

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.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

Proposed Consultation

It is recommended that consultation for the Draft DAMP 2026–2029 be undertaken via public exhibition.

This approach is expected to generate meaningful feedback while recognising existing resource limitations.

The following consultation activities are proposed:

- Website page – Plan and Survey
- Media release
- Drop-in sessions – Pyrenees Resource Centers - Beaufort/Avoca - June/July 2026
- Community Opportunity – Pyrenees markets – Beaufort/Avoca – June/ July 2026
- Social media posts
- Public notices

ATTACHMENTS

1. 2026-2029- Pyrenees DAM P- May Draft [12.2.1.1 - 38 pages]
2. Community Feedback Question Guide (1) [12.2.1.2 - 2 pages]

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Delivery of actions within the Draft DAMP are subject to financial constraints that will be assessed and monitored throughout the period of the plan

CONCLUSION

The Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029 provides a practical framework to support responsible pet ownership, community safety, animal welfare and effective compliance within the available Council resources. It is recommended that Council endorse the Draft Plan for public exhibition and community consultation to seek community feedback prior to final adoption.

Cr Rebecca Wardlaw / Cr Megan Phelan

That Council endorses the Draft Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029 for public exhibition for the period 1 June 2026 to 31 July 2026.

CARRIED

12.2.2. 2026/27 BLACKSPOT FUNDING - EURAMBEEN-STREATHAM ROAD AND MT WILLIAM ROAD INTERSECTION, STONELEIGH

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: Daniel Potter – Manager Engineering

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

File No: 32/08/13

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's support for an increase in the Federal Black Spot funding for the intersection of Eurambeen-Streatham Road and Mt William Road. This will enable a 'roundabout' to be constructed instead of the recently announced 'offset T-intersection'. Additionally, this report seeks consideration of financial liability beyond the maximum \$3 million Blackspot funding cap.

BACKGROUND

The following is a timeline of the black spot application and events/works surrounding the intersection:

- Late 2024 – Transport Accident Commission (TAC) and DTP announced the Safer Local Roads & Streets Program (SLRSP) with \$2 million TAC funding to be provided to each local government in Victoria to improve traffic safety on local roads.
- Early to late 2025 – An additional internal staff resource was employed (funded from the TAC funding) to develop, investigate and deliver the SLRSP projects as well as other with the intersection of Eurambeen Streatham Rd and Mt William Rd identified in the road safety risk raking's as one of the highest risk intersections in Pyrenees Shire Council. The staggered T intersection scope was prepared but wasn't able to be included within the \$2 million SLRSP allowance with other grant funding opportunities investigated.
- 14th September 2025 - Proactive 2026/27 black spot grant application submitted including the 'Staggered T-Intersection' (\$856,000 total investment cost & BCR of 0.4).
- 14th September to 21st October 2025 – Questions/Answers from DTP on the application.
- 11th November 2025 - 3-person fatality Crash.
- 27th November 2025 – Variation requested submitted to DTP/Blackspot Program team for a 'Roundabout' (\$3,000,000 total investment cost & BCR of 5.5) after meetings with DTP,
- 1st December - 30th December 2025 – Temporary safety measures completed at the intersection including line marking, additional signage and 80km/hr speed limit.
- 23rd April 2026 – Funding announced for the 'Staggered T-Intersection'.
- 23rd & 24th April 2026 – Discussions with DTP representatives to confirm why the roundabout option wasn't approved. Initial reasoning included the timeframes of the approval processes of the black spot program and some concerns with the \$3 million maximum funding cap with no allowance for variations over \$3 million.
- 5th May 2026 – Letter sent to Black Spot Coordinators requesting for an increase in funding for a 'Roundabout' to be constructed.
- At the time of preparing this report, no formal announcement has been made in respect of the higher funding amount.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

A roundabout option is preferred due to the following main reasons:

- Higher safety with a crash reduction factor of 65% for a roundabout compared to 30% for the staggered T-intersection.
- Similar roundabout/treatment currently being constructed further south at the intersection of Eurambeen-Streatham Rd / Glenelg Hwy.
- Further consideration to the larger vehicles that use the intersection with 36.5m long trucks approved on these roads and slow turn-out issues with the staggered T intersection.

- Future considerations regarding the increasing risks with higher traffic volumes/truck volumes increasing over 2000 AADT at 35% Heavy Vehicles within the next 15-25 years.
- Consideration to inefficient use of funding on a staggered T intersection where a roundabout could ultimately still be required.
- Strategic value of Eurambeen-Streatham Rd being a major strategic truck route around Ballarat onto the Western Hwy with the diamond interchange at the north end of Eurambeen-Streatham Rd.
- General community feedback received after the recent fatal crash.

The engineers estimate for the roundabout is \$3 million based off the following:

- \$125,000 for project management, design and investigations
- \$120,000 contingency for land acquisition
- \$2,335,000 construction costs
- \$420,000 of contingency

The concept design of the roundabout is similar to the roundabout design at the intersection of Glenelg Highway and Eurambeen-Streatham Road but is slightly smaller and is estimated to be easier to construct due to the construction staging. The estimated construction cost of the Glenelg Highway and Eurambeen-Streatham Road roundabout was estimated to be roughly \$4 million provided by DTP in 2025 at the middle of construction.

Construction staging and management of traffic is one of the main cost implications to the overall cost of constructing a roundabout. The preliminary staging of the works at the intersection of Eurambeen-Streatham Road and Mt William Road includes the construction of the majority of the roundabout (roughly 45%) outside of the existing road on the south-west side, and then manage the traffic with strategic road closures for short periods in different sections of the intersection. This staging is predicted to greatly reduce the timeframe of construction and the overall cost.

There is some preliminary investigation work that needs to be completed which will be undertaken if the funding is approved. This includes environmental investigations, cultural heritage investigations, designs (pavement, electrical, drainage, etc), and other investigations like land acquisition (if required), etc. These have been initially included in the engineers estimate with typical costs and allowance within the project contingency.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Pillar 1 - People

1b. Community safety and wellbeing.

Pillar 2 - Economy

2d. Advocate for transport infrastructure, job creation and workforce development.

Pillar 4 - Infrastructure

4a. Plan, build and maintain essential infrastructure.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

Council received strong feedback from the community following the triple fatality of November 2025. The community wanted immediate improvements and structural changes to prevent incidents from reoccurring.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Concerns raised by the Federal Black Spot and DTP representatives on the estimated \$3 million cost are believed to be managed at this stage with internal resource management, careful program staging, and smart traffic management to reduce construction impacts and costs. It is unlikely that the project will cost more than \$3 million based on initial estimates, but allowance can be made within current council programs like the 'Roads to Recovery' Program to support any unforeseen overspend.

The intersection of Eurambeen-Streatham Road and Mt William Road is managed by Pyrenees Shire Council under a boundary road agreement with Ararat Rural City Council who owns 50% of the assets. Pyrenees Shire Council's Engineering Team has been working with Ararat Rural City Council's Project Team with initial support provided. A request for supporting funding has not been needed at this stage as the project will be fully funded by the Federal Black Spot Program.

CONCLUSION

Safety of road users is high priority for Council and the implementation of proposed improvements at the Eurambeen-Streatham Road and Mt William Road intersection will assist in preventing future serious incidents at this location.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Supports the improved safety outcome for a roundabout to be constructed/funded by the Federal 2026/27 Black Spot program for \$3 million instead of the 'Staggered T-Intersection' and,
2. Commits to funding any financial amount beyond the maximum \$3 million Federal Black Spot funding cap utilising the Federal Roads to Recovery Program while also seeking support from Ararat Rural City Council.

Cr Tanya Kehoe / Cr Simon Tol

That Council:

1. If required, supports the improved safety outcome for a roundabout to be constructed/funded by the Federal 2026/27 Black Spot program for \$3 million instead of the 'Staggered T-Intersection' and,
2. Commits to funding any financial amount beyond the maximum \$3 million Federal Black Spot funding cap utilising the Federal Roads to Recovery Program while also seeking support from Ararat Rural City Council.
3. Works with the community to ensure members are kept up to date with project information and progress.

CARRIED

13. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND GENERAL BUSINESS

Cr Kehoe

- Acknowledged the many meaningful Anzac Day services held across the region and commended local RSL's, communities, volunteers and organisers for their efforts.
- Privileged to attend the Snake Valley dawn service again this year, which was an incredibly moving and well-attended service.
- Attended the Beaufort morning service and laid a wreath there, it was beautiful to see all the people involved, young and old.
- Attended the Stockyard Hill afternoon service. Extended thanks to council staff for their work preparing and maintaining the memorial site, including mowing and grounds maintenance.
- Also attended the Stockyard Hill Church memorial service. The memorial commemorates the former church and community following the relocation required during the development of the wind farm. The site now features beautiful open-air chapel and memorial entrance, including handcrafted wrought iron entrance and wrought iron pews created by local resident Ben Lyons.
- Acknowledged the designer by local Alex Bain, whose vision helped create the memorial space, as well as the wider community effort involved in delivering such a meaningful event.
- Continued involvement in fire recovery efforts through attendance at council collaboration meetings and visit to affected sites and residents. Noted that while recovery is ongoing and many residents understandably require support, the level of community support and resilience continues to be inspiring.
- Attended the BlazeAid event at Bradvale which was a wonderful celebration and acknowledged the outstanding contribution of volunteers supporting fencing and recovery works.
- Extended particular recognition to BlazeAid coordinator Chris, who has dedicated countless hours supporting volunteers and affected landholders. Expressed gratitude to Chris and the wider BlazeAid team for their continued commitment and generosity.
- Noted upcoming meeting with Michaela Settle as part of the Rural Councils Victoria delegation in Melbourne, where advocacy will continue on key election priorities affecting the municipality. In particular, advocating for the water project for water sustainability in our shire.

Cr Tol

- Attended numerous meetings throughout April with the Victorian Offroad Motorbike Club. Pyrenees Shire Council and the planning department. Pleased that the Mount Misery competition was able to proceed again, with Rachel and the team doing an outstanding job.
- The event attracted approximately 1,400 attendees before unfortunately being cancelled on the second day due to the weather and emergency access concerns. While disappointing, it was positive to establish a clearer pathway forward for future events.

- On ANZAC Day, placed a number of wreaths throughout the Ercildoune Ward, including at local schools, and attended the morning service in Lexton.
- Joined fellow councillors at the Pyrenees Unearthed event, which was a terrific event, very well attended and provided a fantastic showcase of the region's wineries
- Welcomed recent rainfall, which has been beneficial for farming communities getting their crops in.
- Football and netball season is well underway, and it has been encouraging to see strong community attendance despite increasing fuel costs.
- Football and netball is well underway and it is good to see good crowds turning up despite the rising fuel costs and everything we are still getting good crowds at the local footy which keeps our communities going.
- Tonight, the ESVF fight starts again, Rob Armstrong is on Australian Story at 8 o'clock tonight. You will see Rob's story there, lets light the fire and put it under Jacinta again to get rid of this tax.

Cr Phelan

- Attended Anzac Day Services
- Pleased to begin the morning at the Landsborough service, followed by the gunfire breakfast. Acknowledged the huge volunteer effort involved in coordinating and delivering these important community events.
- Attended the dawn service at Moonambel, which was terrific as it coincided with the visit of the Vintage Car Touring Club, it was fabulous.
- Continued participation in Council meetings and briefings throughout the month.
- Also attended and greatly enjoyed the Pyrenees Unearthed event.

Cr Wardlaw

- In response to the questions from some members of the community, as Deputy Mayor, the value add to our shire has been well received and I have been working hard and spent much time out and about.
- Attended the Stoneleigh intersection with Member for Ripon Martha Haylett MP and fellow councillors to announce funding for important road safety improvements. While onsite, the volume of trucks and traffic using the intersection was extremely noticeable, reinforcing the importance of investing in improved safety outcomes for all road users.
- Attended two ANZAC Day ceremonies in Avoca, both of which were extremely well attended by the community. It was particularly special to have two grandchildren participate with their Brumby pony, complete with saddle and boots placed backwards in remembrance of fallen soldiers — a gesture that was warmly received, especially by local children attending the service.
- Following the ceremonies, attended community activities at the Avoca Hotel which was very fun.
- Attended the Lake Goldsmith Steam Rally alongside family members and was impressed by the dedication and knowledge of volunteers. Reflected on the importance of encouraging

younger generations to become involved in community committees and volunteer organisations to ensure these events continue into the future.

- In between engagements, had the opportunity to chair a couple of council briefings.
- Attended the Victoria Goldfields World Heritage Listing Bid Summit alongside fellow councillors to show support for the bid and the opportunities it presents for the region. Noted the importance of community understanding around the project, particularly the tourism, economic development, and regional growth opportunities.
- Travelled to Melbourne with the CEO and Mayor to advocate to Ministers on a range of issues important to the shire. Discussions focused on the challenges faced by small rural councils in securing sustainable income streams and funding opportunities to support growth and prosperity across the municipality. Including seeking the \$5 million for the water project.

Cr Ferrari

- Unable to attend local Anzac Day service in Beaufort due to being away;
- Attended Anzac Day morning service at Moama which was fantastic and well attended by all age groups.
- Attended Pyrenees Unearthed Festival with Councillors, fantastic day and really well done. One of our main events across the shire, it has so much potential for a whole range of things and showcases some of our fine foods and wines. Well organised and attended and a credit to all those who coordinated the event.
- Attended the BlazeAid event with Cr Kehoe. It was really well attended. The event recognised volunteers supporting fire-affected communities and thanked them for their service. The celebration acknowledged 100 days of their support to the community. There are 23 volunteers currently assisting affected residents. Acknowledged and thanked volunteers for their ongoing efforts. Recognised strong community and farmer attendance.
- Attended meetings with constituents.
- Attended meetings at Parliament House on Wednesday with the Deputy Mayor and CEO and we spoke to several politicians:
 - Met with Bev McArthur, Member for Western Victoria.
 - Met with Dr Sarah Mansfield, Senator with the Greens
 - Met with Emma Kealy, Tim McCurdy and Danny O'Brien from the Nationals.
 - Met with Vicki Ward who is the Minister for Emergency Services and her adviser.

We spoke about consistent things, financial sustainability of small rural councils, the importance of water projects and the pipeline project in the north. Highlighted that it is unbelievable in this day and age that towns like Moonambel and others have not got potable water. Discussed roads and road funding, bridges, infrastructure funding, road safety and emergency services. Highlighted emergency services as Pyrenees has had its fair share of disasters and emergencies.

14. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

CLOSURE OF MEETING TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

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

Cr Tanya Kehoe / Cr Simon Tol

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

15.1 - Contract Employment Matter

CARRIED

The live streaming of Ordinary Meeting of Council - 18 May 2026 stopped at 7.35pm to consider confidential items.

The live stream re-commenced at 8.12pm and the Mayor chose to report on confidential item discussed in closed Council which is noted below:

Mayor Cr Ferrari:

In confidential items tonight, we discussed a contract employment matter relating to CEO Jim Nolan.

Mr Nolan has tonight tendered his resignation due to his decision to retire, and this has been accepted by Council.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr Nolan for the 11 ½ years he has dedicated to Pyrenees Shire Council. He is a highly respected figure in the local government sector and his knowledge of both the shire, and the organisation will be greatly missed.

I speak for all the Councillors in saying we wish Mr Nolan well in his retirement and all future endeavours.

His last day will be Friday 10 July, with an interim CEO to be appointed while recruitment of a new CEO is undertaken.

15. CLOSE OF MEETING

The Ordinary Meeting of Council - 18 May 2026 closed at 8.13pm.

Minutes of the Meeting confirmed _____

Mayor Cr Damian Ferrari