



Council Meeting **Agenda**

Wednesday 17 June
2026

Commencing at 7:00pm

Wycheproof Supper Room
367 Broadway, Wycheproof

Daniel McLoughlan
Chief Executive Officer



ORDER OF BUSINESS

1	COUNCIL WELCOME AND STATEMENT OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	3
2	RECEIPT OF APOLOGIES	3
3	CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING	3
4	REQUESTS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE	3
5	DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST	3
6	QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC	4
7	PROCEDURAL ITEMS.....	5
	7.1 GOVERNANCE REPORT - JUNE 2026.....	5
8	GENERAL BUSINESS	25
	8.1 POLICY REPORTS	25
	8.2 MANAGEMENT REPORTS	25
	8.2.1 CONTRACT AWARD - CONTRACT C133 2025/26 - EXTERNAL PLANT HIRE – PANEL OF SUPPLIERS	25
	8.2.2 PLANNING PERMIT APPLICATION PA26005 - TWO-LOT SUBDIVISION OF LAND (RURAL DWELLING EXCISION) - 2196 NINDA-TURRIFF ROAD, NINDA.....	29
	8.2.3 BULOKE SHIRE COUNCIL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN: STATUS UPDATE FOR THE MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT.....	42
	8.2.4 COMMUNITY GRANTS AND SPONSORSHIPS	71
	8.3 FINANCIAL REPORTS.....	75
	8.3.1 ANNUAL BUDGET FY2026-2027.....	75
	8.4 ORGANISATIONAL REPORTS	143
	8.5 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS	143
9	OTHER BUSINESS	146
	9.1 NOTICES OF MOTION.....	146
	9.2 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS	146
	9.3 URGENT BUSINESS	146
	9.4 ANY OTHER BUSINESS	146
	9.5 MATTERS WHICH MAY EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC.....	146
	9.5.1 CONFIDENTIAL ATTACHMENT FOR ITEM 8.2.1 CONTRACT AWARD - CONTRACT C133 2025/26 - EXTERNAL PLANT HIRE - PANEL OF SUPPLIERS.....	146
10	MEETING CLOSE.....	146

1 COUNCIL WELCOME AND STATEMENT OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

WELCOME

The Mayor Cr Graeme Milne will welcome all in attendance.

STATEMENT OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Mayor Cr Graeme Milne will acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we are meeting and pay our respects to their Elders and to the Elders from other communities who may be here today.

2 RECEIPT OF APOLOGIES

3 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopt the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 20 May 2026.

4 REQUESTS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

5 DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

In accordance with Section 130 (2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* Councillors who have a conflict of interest in respect of a matter being considered at this meeting, must

- a) Disclose the conflict of interest in the manner required by the Council's Governance Rules 2022; and
- b) Exclude themselves from the decision-making process in relation to that matter, including any discussion or vote on the matter at any Council meeting or delegated committee, and any action in relation to the matter.

Disclosure must occur immediately before the matter is considered or discussed.

6 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

7 PROCEDURAL ITEMS

7.1 GOVERNANCE REPORT - JUNE 2026

Author's Title: Acting Manager Governance

Directorate: Corporate and Organisational Performance

File No: GO/05/04

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide a single reporting platform for a range of statutory compliance, transparency, and governance matters.

The Governance report is prepared as a monthly report to Council.

The Governance report includes:

- Record of Councillor Assemblies and Meetings held
- Record of Councillor Briefings, at Attachment 1 to this report.
- Chief Executive Officer Activity Report
- The Status of Actions Report for Council resolutions at Attachment 2 to this report.
- Contracts awarded in accordance with the increased Financial Delegation provided to the Chief Executive Officer.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Notes the Record of Councillor Assemblies and Meetings held.
2. Notes the Record of Councillor Briefings, at Attachment 1 to this report.
3. Notes the Chief Executive Officer Activity Report.
4. Notes the Status of Actions Report for Council resolutions at Attachment 2 to this report.
5. Notes there were no contracts entered into for this period, in accordance with the increased Financial Delegation provided to the Chief Executive Officer of \$1,500,000 (excluding GST).

KEY POINTS/ISSUES

The Governance Report is prepared as a monthly report to Council to provide a single reporting platform for a range of statutory compliance, transparency, and governance matters.

In accordance with best practice principles of good governance practice, and to ensure compliance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*, this report incorporates matters including records of meetings held, organised or hosted by Council, items relating to the delegation of Council powers and duties, and policy and strategy reporting.

Record of Councillor Assemblies and Meetings held from 7 May 2026 to 3 June 2026

Records of matters discussed at meetings organised or hosted by Buloke Shire Council that involve Councillors and Council officers are kept in accordance with the Governance Rules.

Meeting records must include attendees, including organisations represented by external presenters; the title of matters discussed; and any conflicts of interests disclosed and whether the declarant of a conflict of interest excused themselves from the meeting.

Record of Councillor Assemblies: 7 May - 3 June 2026

Date/Time/Venue	Councillor Attendees	Meeting Type
13 May 2026 2:00pm <i>Wycheproof Supper room</i>	Cr Milne, Cr Hogan, Cr Delaney (<i>online</i>)	Audit and Risk Committee Meeting
13 May 2026 5:00pm <i>Wycheproof Supper room</i>	Cr Milne, Cr Hogan, Cr Getley, Cr Barratt, Cr Stafford, Cr Delaney	Councillor Briefing: Planning and Related Matters
13 May 2026 6:30pm <i>Wycheproof Supper room</i>	Cr Milne, Cr Hogan, Cr Getley, Cr Barratt, Cr Stafford, Cr Delaney	Additional Councillor Briefing
14 May 2026 5:30pm <i>Online</i>	Cr Milne, Cr Hogan, Cr Getley, Cr Barratt, Cr Stafford, Cr Delaney	CEO and Councillor only time
20 May 2026 7:00pm <i>Wycheproof Supper Room</i>	Cr Milne, Cr Hogan, Cr Getley, Cr Barratt, Cr Stafford, Cr Delaney	Council Meeting
25 May 2026 1:30pm <i>Wycheproof Supper Room</i>	Cr Milne, Cr Hogan, Cr Getley, Cr Barratt, Cr Stafford, Cr Delaney	Public Submissions Hearing: Annual Budget FY27 and Financial Plan
3 June 2026 5:00pm <i>Culgoa Hall</i>	Cr Milne, Cr Hogan, Cr Getley, Cr Barratt, Cr Stafford, Cr Delaney	Councillor Briefing

Chief Executive Officer Activity Report from 7 May 2026 to 3 June 2026

Record of meetings attended by the Chief Executive Officer on behalf of the Buloke Shire Council. Activity record includes the date, activity and location.

Daniel McLoughlan – Chief Executive Officer		
<i>(7 May 2026 – 3 June 2026)</i>		
Date	Activity	Location
08/05/2026	Loddon Campaspe Group of Councils	Bendigo
11/05/2026	VNI West regroup discussion: workforce accommodation and permanent housing initiatives	Online
11/05/2026	MAV - Maddocks Fair Work Fuel Cost Recovery Webinar	Online
11/05/2026	Pre Alliance Meeting CEO Catch-up	Online
13/05/2026	NGSC Transmission Forum	Online
13/05/2026	Mayor and CEO Catch-up	Wycheproof
13/05/2026	Audit and Risk Committee Meeting: Buloke Shire Council	Wycheproof
13/05/2026	Councillor Briefing - Planning and Related Matters	Wycheproof

13/05/2026	Additional Councillor Briefing	Wycheproof
14/05/2026	Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Partnership Meeting	Horsham
14/05/2026	WSMCA CEO and Mayor Meeting	Horsham
14/05/2026	CEO and Councillor Only Time	Online
15/05/2026	Governance Training with Kate Oliver, Maddocks - Report Writing	Online
15/05/2026	DRFA Advocacy	Online
18/05/2026	EMT Offsite	Bendigo
20/05/2026	EMV and Buloke Meeting	Melbourne
20/05/2026	Wilkur Energy Park (WestWind) – Councillor Briefing Follow Up	Wycheproof
20/05/2026	Council Meeting	Wycheproof
21/05/2026	Loddon Campaspe Councils - CEOs (only) Meeting	Online
21/05/2026	Buloke Shire Council's Biggest Morning Tea	Wycheproof
22/05/2026	Unveiling of Birchip Cenotaph Refurbishment	Birchip
25/05/2026	Public Submissions Hearing: Annual Budget FY27 and Financial Plan	Wycheproof
27/05/2026	VicGrid Pre-briefing Prior to the official Renewable Energy Zone Declaration	Bendigo
27/05/2026	EMT Offsite	Bendigo
27/05/2026	SRV and Buloke Meeting	Bendigo
28/05/2026	Sector Leaders Welcome Reception (Pre-State Council)	Melbourne
29/05/2026	MAV - State Council	Melbourne
03/06/2026	Councillor Briefing	Culgoa

Status of Action of past Council Meeting Resolutions

To provide Council with a list of the Status of Action of Council resolutions outstanding for completion of action since the last Council Meeting.

Exercise of Delegated Authority

Council delegates powers, duties and functions to the Chief Executive Officer to support the efficient operation and delivery of Council services.

The Chief Executive Officer has been delegated authority by Council to award contracts up to \$300,000 (exclusive of GST) through an Instrument of Delegation made on 29 October 2025 (S5 Instrument of Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer).

There have been no contracts awarded.

- Attachments:**
1. Attachment 7.1.1 - Councillor Briefing Record - 3 June 2026
 2. Attachment 7.1.2 - Council Resolution SOA - tabled 17 June 2026



Councillor Briefing Record

Build a Better Buloke – a healthy, connected, inclusive and prosperous community

Date:	Wednesday, 3 June 2026	Time:	5:00pm
Location:	Culgoa Memorial Hall		
Acknowledgement of Country:	The Chair acknowledged the Traditional Owners of the land on which we are meeting and pay our respects to their Elders and to the Elders from other communities who may be here today.		

NO.	MATTER FOR DISCUSSION
1	Welcome / Councillor Only Time
1.1	Welcome: Cr Graeme Milne – Mayor, welcomed all in attendance.
1.2	Apologies: Nil
1.3	Guests: Christine Sewell – Culgoa Development Group Reid Mather – Rail Freight Alliance
1.4	Attendees: <u>Councillors:</u> Cr Graeme Milne – Mayor; Cr Bernadette Hogan – Deputy Mayor; Cr Alan Getley; Cr Bruce Stafford; Cr Stephen Barratt; Cr Charmaine Delaney <u>Officers:</u> Daniel McLoughlan – Chief Executive Officer; Jenna Allan – Director Corporate and Organisational Performance; Travis Fitzgibbon – Director Infrastructure and Delivery; Kellie Burmeister – Acting Director Community Development
1.5	Declaration of Pecuniary and Conflicts of Interest - Nil
2	Confirmation of Notes of Previous Meeting
2.1	Notes of the Council Briefing held on 6 and 13 May 2026 - Accepted, no notes were received.
3	Presentations
3.1	Culgoa Development Group – Christine Sewell - Report presented by Christine on behalf of the Culgoa Development Group.
	Dinner –
4	CEO Update – Daniel McLoughlan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VicGrid Renewable Energy Zone • MAV Council – Key Themes • DRFA Advocacy • Temporary Leadership Structure • Wimmera Southern Mallee Council Alliance Update • Community Grants Policy and Guidelines • Dangerous Dogs • CEO Performance Review – Change of date



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Satisfaction Survey
3.2	Rail Freight Alliance – <i>Reid Mather</i>
5	Briefing Reports
5.1	Status of the Municipal Monitor's Report and Implementation Plan – <i>Jenna Allan</i>
5.2	Draft Annual Budget 2026-27 - Changes made post public exhibition – <i>Jenna Allan</i>
5.3	Contract Award - Contract C133 2025/26 – External Plant Hire – Panel of Suppliers – <i>Travis Fitzgibbon</i>
6	Next Briefing
	<p>The next Councillor Briefing will be held in Charlton at the Charlton Council Chambers on Wednesday, 1 July 2026 at 5:00pm.</p> <p>In addition, a further Councillor Briefing will be held on Wednesday, 10 June 2026. Consisting of Planning and Related Matters, and external presenters who were not otherwise able to be accommodated into the scheduled monthly Councillor Briefing.</p>
7	Close Meeting
	Time: 7:50pm

Meeting Date	Item No.	Item	Department	Action Required	Latest Action Taken	Status
08-02-2024	8.2.1	110 Sutcliffe Street Subdivision Community Engagement Outcomes	Infrastructure and Delivery	That Council: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Notes following consultation process in accordance with its Community Engagement Policy, one submission was received to the proposed nine-lot subdivision sale of land at 110 Sutcliffe Street, Sea Lake; Sells nine-lot subdivision surplus land at 110 Sutcliffe St, Sea Lake by private treaty or auction in accord sec 114 of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> and Council's Sale of Land Policy; and Authorises the CEO to execute the Transfer of Land documents and any other documents required to affect the sale of the land. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Underway. Council to appoint conveyancer to progress release of titles prior to sale process commencing. Not started. 	In progress
18-12-2024	8.1.2	Draft Governance Rules and Council Election Period Policy	Corporate and Organisational Performance	<p>Please action as per resolution.</p> <p>MOTION</p> <p>That Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Having prepared the Revised Draft Governance Rules in accordance with section 60 of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>, approves and commences a 9-week process of community consultation in relation to the Revised Draft Governance Rules and Draft Election Period Policy, and makes the Revised Draft Governance Rules and Draft Election Period Policy available for Public Exhibition via Council's website; Allows persons to make submissions in writing in relation to any proposal contained within the Revised Draft Governance Rules and/or Draft Election Period Policy; and Allows presentations in support of written submissions to be heard at the Council Meeting on 19 March 2025 prior to the proposed adoption of the Draft Governance Rules and Draft Election Period Policy at this Meeting. <p>MOVED: Cr Graeme Milne</p> <p>SECONDED: Cr Stephen Barratt</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED. (R/24/123)</p>	<p>14/05/2026 Director Corporate and Organisational Performance</p> <p>Progress has been delayed due to impending Model Governance Rules being published for public exhibition.</p>	On hold
19-02-2025	9.5.1	Sale of Properties for Recovery of Rates and Charges	Financial Strategy	<p>Please action as per resolution.</p> <p>MOTION</p> <p>That Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Proceeds with the necessary next steps to sell the following properties for the recovery of unpaid rates and charges in accordance with section 181 of 	<p>Brought to Council.</p> <p>Sale process is underway.</p>	In progress

Meeting Date	Item No.	Item	Department	Action Required	Latest Action Taken	Status
				<p>the <i>Local Government Act 1989</i>:</p> <p>██████████</p> <p>██████████</p> <p>██████████</p> <p>██████████</p> <p>██████████</p> <p>2. Notes and declares this report as confidential on the grounds that it relates to (a) Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released (f) personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs as described in s 3(1) of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>.</p> <p>MOVED: Cr Stephen Barratt</p> <p>SECONDED: Cr Bernadette Hogan</p> <p>ABSTAINED: Cr Graeme Milne</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(R/25/010)</p>		
19-11-2025	8 2.3	Sport and Recreation Victoria – Local Sports Infrastructure Fund – Wycheproof Netball Court	Community Partnerships	<p>Please action as per resolution.</p> <p>MOTION</p> <p>That Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Commit \$200,000 over FY2026/27 Annual Budgets for the purposes of submitting an application to the Local Sports Infrastructure Fund for the construction of a compliant netball court and associated sports lighting; and 2. Delegate authority to the Chief Executive Officer to apply for the Local Sports Infrastructure Fund; and 3. Delegate authority to the Chief Executive Officer to underwrite a community contribution to the effect of \$200,000; and 4. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to sign the funding agreement on behalf of the Council should the application be successful. <p>MOVED: Cr Stephen Barratt</p> <p>SECONDED: Cr Alan Getley</p>	<p>09/06/2026 Senior Executive Assistant</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete 2. Complete 3. Complete 4. Outstanding 	In progress

Meeting Date	Item No.	Item	Department	Action Required	Latest Action Taken	Status
				CARRIED. (R/25/117)		
17-12-2025	9.5.1	Sale of Properties for Recovery of Rates and Charges	Financial Strategy	<p>Please action as per resolution.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>MOTION That Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Proceeds with the necessary next steps to sell [REDACTED] for the recovery of unpaid rates and charges in accordance with section 181 of the <i>Local Government Act 1989</i>; 2. Accepts the terms and conditions as outlined by and for the Australian Securities and Investment Commission to be named as a 'defendant' in legal proceedings as Attachment 1 to this report; 3. Notes and declares this report as confidential on the grounds that it relates to (a) Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released: (f) personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs as described in s 3(1) of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>. <p>MOVED: Cr Bernadette Hogan</p> <p>SECONDED: Cr Charmaine Delaney</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED. (R/25/143)</p> </div>	<p>09/06/2026 Senior Executive Assistant</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Progressing steps required 2. Complete 3. Complete 	In progress
17-12-2025	8.1.3	Community Grants and Sponsorships	Community Partnerships	<p>Please action as per resolution.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>MOTION That Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approves the officer recommendation to part fund the following projects under the Community Grants Program: \$1,000 – Birchip Neighbourhood House Inc Project: Together for Christmas \$500 - Lions Club of Charlton Inc Project: Charlton Community Xmas Fest 2. Notes that a report will be presented to Council at a future meeting on the future of the Community Grants Program. </div>	<p>09/06/2026 Senior Executive Assistant</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete 2. Commenced 	In progress

Meeting Date	Item No.	Item	Department	Action Required	Latest Action Taken	Status
				<p>MOVED: Cr Bernadette Hogan</p> <p>SECONDED: Cr Alan Getley</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(R/25/129)</p>		
15-04-2026	8 2.2	Planning Permit Application PA25031 – Use and Development of Land for Animal Production (400,000 Bird Free Range Broiler Farm) – Saits Road, Charlton	Community Safety and Development Services	<p>Please action as per resolution.</p> <p>That Council having caused notice of Planning Application No. PA25031 to be given under Section 52 of the <i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i> and having considered all the matters required under Section 60 of the <i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i> decides to issue a Notice of Decision to Grant a Permit under the provisions of 35.07-1, 35.07-4 and 44.04-2 of the Buloke Planning Scheme in respect of the land known and described as Saits Road, Charlton (Lot 1 PS932492), for the use and development of land for animal production (400,000 bird free range broiler farm), including eight (8) sheds, associated free range areas and ancillary buildings, and two (2) manager's dwellings in accordance with the endorsed plans, with the application dated 8 October 2025, subject to the provided conditions:</p>		Not yet started
15-04-2026	8 3.1	Draft 2026/27 Annual Budget	Corporate and Organisational Performance	<p>Please action as per resolution.</p> <p>MOTION</p> <p>That Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Endorse the draft 2026/27 Budget (incorporating the 4-year Budget) at Attachment 1 to this report for public exhibition. 2. Gives public notice of the draft 2026/27 Budget on Council's website and invites written submissions from Thursday 16 April until Thursday 7 May 2026. 3. Notes that in accordance with Section 93 and 96(1)(b) of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>, consultation will be undertaken in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy. 4. Notes that any person and/or organisation who makes a written submission in relation to the draft 2026/27 Budget may be heard by Council at the scheduled Public Submissions Hearing in Wycheproof, on Monday 25 May 2026. 5. Notes that the 2026/27 Budget (incorporating the 4-year Budget) will be considered for adoption at the Council Meeting to be held Wednesday, 17 June 2026 at 7.00pm. <p>MOVED: Cr Alan Getley</p> <p>SECONDED: Cr Bernadette Hogan</p>	<p>14/05/2026 Director Corporate and Organisational Performance</p> <p>Draft Annual Budget was released to public exhibition process as per resolution. All submitters were written to and invited to attend the public submissions hearing (8 May 2026).</p>	Completed

Meeting Date	Item No.	Item	Department	Action Required	Latest Action Taken	Status
				CARRIED. (R/26/19)		
20-05-2026	8 1.1	Financial Hardship for Rates and Charges Policy	Financial Strategy	<p>Please action as per resolution.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>MOTION</p> <p>That Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adopts the Rates and Charges Financial Hardship Policy 2026 and; 2. Places the Rates and Charges Financial Hardship Policy 2026 on Council's website for public access and transparency. <p>MOVED: Cr Charmaine Delaney</p> <p>SECONDED: Cr Bruce Stafford</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED. (R/26/23)</p> </div>	<p>27/05/2026 Manager Financial Strategy</p> <p>Adopted and published to Council's website for public access and transparency.</p>	Completed
20-05-2026	8 1.2	Debtor Management Policy 2026	Financial Strategy	<p>Please action as per resolution.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>MOTION</p> <p>That Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adopts the Debtor Management Policy 2026 and; 2. Places the Debtor Management Policy 2026 on Council's website for public access and transparency. <p>MOVED: Cr Bernadette Hogan</p> <p>SECONDED: Cr Stephen Barratt</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED. (R/26/24)</p> </div>	<p>27/05/2026 Manager Financial Strategy</p> <p>Adopted and published to Council's website for public access and transparency.</p>	Completed
20-05-2026	8 1.3	Investment Policy 2026	Financial Strategy	<p>Please action as per resolution.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>MOTION</p> </div>	<p>27/05/2026 Manager Financial Strategy</p> <p>Adopted and uploaded to Council's website for public access and transparency.</p>	Completed

Meeting Date	Item No.	Item	Department	Action Required	Latest Action Taken	Status
				<p>That Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Adopts the Investment Policy 2026 and Places the Investment Policy on Council's website for public access and transparency. <p>MOVED: Cr Alan Getley</p> <p>SECONDED: Cr Stephen Barratt</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED. (R/26/25)</p>		
20-05-2026	8 1.4	Corporate Card Policy 2026	Financial Strategy	<p>Please action as per resolution.</p> <p>MOTION</p> <p>That Council</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Adopts the Corporate Card Policy 2026 and; Places the Corporate Card Policy on Council's website for public access and transparency. <p>MOVED: Cr Charmaine Delaney</p> <p>SECONDED: Cr Bernadette Hogan</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED. (R/26/26)</p>	<p>27/05/2026 Manager Financial Strategy</p> <p>Adopted and published to Council's website for public access and transparency.</p>	Completed
20-05-2026	8 2.1	Wycheproof Recreation Reserve Community Asset Committee	Community Development	<p>Please action as per resolution.</p> <p>MOTION</p> <p>That Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Appoints the following community nominees to the Wycheproof Recreation Reserve Community Asset Committee for a twelve (12) month term, effective immediately: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kevin Thompson (Chairperson) Adrian Coatsworth Martin Duke Cathy Grant Peter Coles 	<p>10/06/2026 Manager Community Partnerships</p> <p>Committee were notified of the outcome and community nominees were appointed.</p>	Completed

Meeting Date	Item No.	Item	Department	Action Required	Latest Action Taken	Status
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tom Trewin • Joel Turner • Mark McLennan • Donald Denney • Paddy Eccles • Rebecca Botheras <p>2. Formally thanks the outgoing committee members for their voluntary service.</p> <p>MOVED: Cr Stephen Barratt</p> <p>SECONDED: Cr Alan Getley</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED. (R/26/27)</p>		
20-05-2026	8 2.2	2025/26 Swimming Pool Season	Community Partnerships	<p>Please action as per resolution.</p> <p>MOTION</p> <p>That Council:</p> <p>1. Note the 2025-26 Swimming Pool Season Report.</p> <p>MOVED: Cr Bernadette Hogan</p> <p>SECONDED: Cr Bruce Stafford</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED. (R/26/28)</p>	<p>10/06/2026 Manager Community Partnerships</p> <p>Noted.</p>	Completed
20-05-2026	8 2.3	Draft Buloke Aquatic Strategy	Community Partnerships	<p>Please action as per resolution.</p> <p>MOTION</p> <p>That Council:</p> <p>1. Endorse the Draft Buloke Aquatic Strategy (Attachment 1) for the purpose of public exhibition with the following changes:</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">a. Amend the attendance data for the 2024/25 pool season.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">b. Amend the average costs per visit for the 2024/25 pool season.</p> <p>2. Gives public notice of the Draft Buloke Aquatic Strategy on Council's website and invites written submissions from Monday, 25 May 2026 until Monday 6 July 2026.</p>	<p>10/06/2026 Manager Community Partnerships</p> <p>Public consultation is open and engagement has commenced with the community.</p>	In progress

Meeting Date	Item No.	Item	Department	Action Required	Latest Action Taken	Status
				<p>3. Notes that in accordance with Section 93 and 96(1)(b) of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>, consultation will be undertaken in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy.</p> <p>4. Notes that any person who makes a written submission in relation to the Draft Buloke Aquatic Strategy may be heard by Council on Monday 27 July 2026.</p> <p>5. Notes that the Buloke Aquatic Strategy will be considered for adoption at the Council Meeting to be held 19 August 2026.</p> <p>MOVED: Cr Stephen Barratt</p> <p>SECONDED: Cr Alan Getley</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(R/26/29)</p>		
20-05-2026	8 2.4	Road Renaming Request - Walklate Lane, Charlton	Infrastructure and Delivery	<p>Please action as per resolution.</p> <p>MOTION</p> <p>That Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledge the receipt of two (2) submissions lodged during the public submission period and thank the two (2) submitters for participating in the public submission period. Having given consideration of the submissions received, Council accepts the proposal to rename a section of Davies Street, between High Street and John Curtin Drive to Walklate Lane. Lodge a report to the Registrar of Geographic Names confirming Council's acceptance of a proposal to rename a section of Davies Street, between High Street and John Curtin Drive to Walklate Lane. Write to each of the submitters advising of Council's acceptance of the proposal to rename a section of Davies Street, between High Street and John Curtin Drive to Walklate Lane. Advise all submitters they have 30 days to lodge an appeal to the Registrar of Geographic Names. Notes and declares the attachments to this report as confidential on the grounds that it relates to as described in s 3(1) of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>. <p>MOVED: Cr Bruce Stafford</p> <p>SECONDED: Cr Charmaine Delaney</p>	<p>12/06/2026 Senior Executive Assistant</p> <p>Application being prepared for the Registrar of Geographic Names.</p>	In progress

Meeting Date	Item No.	Item	Department	Action Required	Latest Action Taken	Status
				CARRIED. (R/26/30)		
20-05-2026	8 2.5	Planning Permit Application PA25034 - The use and development of land to construct three (3) dwellings, subdivide land into four (4) lots and to create or alter access to a road in Transport Zone 2	Community Safety and Development Services	<p>Please action as per resolution.</p> <p>MOTION</p> <p>That Council:</p> <p>having caused notice of Planning Permit Application No. PA25034 to be given under Section 52 of the <i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i> and having considered all the matters required under Section 60 of the <i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i> grant a Notice of Decision to Grant a Permit under the provisions of 32.05-5, 32.05-8 and 52.29-2 of the Buloke Planning Scheme in respect of the land known and described as 40 McCracken Avenue, Donald (Lot 1 TP440022 and Lot 1 TP594262), for the use and development of land to construct three (3) dwellings, subdivide land into four (4) lots and create or alter access to a road in Transport Zone 2 in accordance with the endorsed plans, with the application dated 30 September 2025, subject to the following conditions:</p> <p>Endorsed Plans</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The use and development as shown on the endorsed plans must not be altered without the written consent of the responsible authority. <p>Amenity</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. The use and development must be managed so that the amenity of the area is not detrimentally affected, through the: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Transport of materials, goods or commodities to or from the land b. Appearance of any building, works or materials c. Emission of noise, artificial light, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke, vapour, steam, soot, ash, dust, waste water, waste products, grit or oil d. Presence of vermin <p>to the satisfaction of the responsible authority</p> 3. The use and development of the land must not interfere with surrounding existing uses, including residential. 4. External lighting must be designed, baffled and located so as to prevent any adverse effect on adjoining land to the satisfaction of the responsible authority. 	<p>09/06/2026 Acting Director Community Development</p> <p>The Notice of Decision to Grant a Permit for PA25034 was issued on 22 May 2026.</p>	Completed

Meeting Date	Item No.	Item	Department	Action Required	Latest Action Taken	Status
				<p>5. All activities associated with the construction of the development permitted by this permit must be carried out to the satisfaction of the responsible authority and all care must be taken to minimise the effect of such activities on the amenity of the locality.</p> <p>Access and Car Parking</p> <p>6. The owner/applicant must provide an owners corporation to manage all common property services.</p> <p>7. Access to and exit from the site must only be at the nominated crossings shown on the endorsed plans. Access to and exit from the site must only be from McCracken Avenue.</p> <p>8. Before the use or occupation of the development starts, the area(s) set aside for the parking of vehicles and access lanes as shown on the endorsed plans must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. constructed b. properly formed to such levels that they can be used in accordance with the plans c. surfaced with an all-weather-access material d. drained <p>to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.</p> <p>Car spaces, access lanes and driveways must be kept available for these purposes at all times.</p> <p>9. Before construction commences, photographic evidence of the condition of all Council infrastructure adjoining the subject land must be provided to the satisfaction of the responsible authority. This includes all footpaths, road, drainage, channel and curb and nature strip. Any damage to Council property during construction must be made good to the satisfaction of the responsible authority and at no cost to the responsible authority.</p> <p>Drainage</p> <p>10. Waste or soiled water must not be permitted to be discharged from the site to the stormwater drainage system during construction of the development or the ongoing use of the site, to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.</p> <p>11. Storm water drainage from the proposed buildings and impervious surfaces must be directed to the legal point of discharge to the satisfaction of the responsible authority. A legal point of discharge permit must be taken out prior to the construction of a stormwater drainage system.</p>		

Meeting Date	Item No.	Item	Department	Action Required	Latest Action Taken	Status
				<p>Landscaping</p> <p>12. Before the use or occupation of the development commences, a Landscape Plan must be submitted to and approved by the responsible authority. When approved, the Landscape Plan will be endorsed and will then form part of this permit.</p> <p>The Landscape Plan must be drawn to scale with dimensions and must show the location of all proposed vegetation. The plan must include, as a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Twelve (12) x Type A coverage trees; • Four (4) x Type B coverage trees; • Three (3) x Type C coverage trees; or • Any alternative combination of Type A, Type B and/or Type C coverage trees that collectively achieves the minimum 20 per cent site area landscaped requirement, to the satisfaction of the responsible authority. <p>13. The landscape area(s) shown on the endorsed plan(s) must be planted and thereafter maintained to the satisfaction of the responsible authority. Any dead, diseased or damaged plant must be removed and replaced. Once completed, the landscaped area(s) must be retained and must not be used for any other purpose unless otherwise agreed in writing by the responsible authority.</p> <p>Services</p> <p>14. All dwellings in the development must be connected to a reticulated electricity supply or have an alternative energy source to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.</p> <p>15. All dwellings in the development must be connected to reticulated sewerage, if available. If reticulated sewerage is not available, all wastewater from the dwelling must be treated and retained within the lot in accordance with the requirements of the Environment Protection Regulations under the Environment Protection Act 2017 for an on-site wastewater management system.</p> <p>16. All dwellings in the development must be connected to a reticulated potable water supply or have an alternative potable water supply with adequate storage for domestic use as well as for firefighting purposes to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.</p> <p>Subdivision</p> <p>17. All existing and proposed easements and sites for existing and required utility services and roads must be set aside in favour of the relevant</p>		

Meeting Date	Item No.	Item	Department	Action Required	Latest Action Taken	Status
				<p>authority for which the easement or site is to be created on the plan of subdivision submitted for certification under the Subdivision Act 1988.</p> <p>18. The owner of the land must enter into agreements with the relevant authorities for the provision of water supply, drainage, sewerage facilities and electricity services to each lot shown on the endorsed plan in accordance with the authority's requirements and relevant legislation at the time.</p> <p>19. The owner of the land must enter into an agreement with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. a telecommunications network or service provider for the provision of telecommunication services to each lot shown on the endorsed plan in accordance with the provider's requirements and relevant legislation at the time; and b. a suitably qualified person for the provision of fibre ready telecommunication facilities to each lot shown on the endorsed plan in accordance with any industry specifications or any standards set by the Australian Communications and Media Authority, unless the applicant can demonstrate that the land is in an area where the National Broadband Network (NBN) will not be provided by optical fibre. <p>Before the issue of a Statement of Compliance for any stage of the subdivision under the Subdivision Act 1988, the owner of the land must provide written confirmation from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. a telecommunications network or service provider that all lots are connected to or are ready for connection to telecommunications services in accordance with the provider's requirements and relevant legislation at the time; and b. a suitably qualified person that fibre ready telecommunications facilities have been provided in accordance with any industry specifications or any standards set by the Australian Communications and Media Authority, unless the applicant can demonstrate that the land is in an area where the National Broadband Network will not be provided by optical fibre. <p>20. The plan of subdivision submitted for certification under the Subdivision Act 1988 must be referred to the relevant authority in accordance with Section 8 of that Act.</p> <p>Referral Authority Conditions - GWMWater</p> <p>21. The owner/applicant must provide individually metered water services to each lot/dwelling in accordance with GWMWater's requirements.</p>		

Meeting Date	Item No.	Item	Department	Action Required	Latest Action Taken	Status
				<p>22. The owner/applicant is responsible for verifying the condition of any existing sewer connection point/s to determine their suitability for use.</p> <p>23. The owner/applicant must provide plans and estimates of all proposed water supply works prior to commencement, for GWMWater's approval.</p> <p>24. The owner/applicant must provide three metre wide easements in favour of GWMWater over all existing and proposed sewers located within private land.</p> <p>25. The owner/applicant must provide written notification of commencement of works to enable GWMWater to organise inspections and coordinate with its staff.</p> <p>26. The owner/applicant must provide an owners corporation to manage all common sewer property services.</p> <p>27. The owner/applicant must provide GWMWater with an updated drainage plan for each lot/dwelling submitted by a qualified plumber.</p> <p>28. The Owner/applicant must enter a Build Over Easement Agreement with GWMWater for structure which encroaches on a sewerage easement.</p> <p>Referral Authority Conditions - Powercor</p> <p>29. The applicant shall provide an electricity supply to all lots in the subdivision in accordance with the Distributor's requirements and standards.</p> <p>Notes: Extension, augmentation or rearrangement of the Distributor's electrical assets may be required to make such supplies available, with the cost of such works generally borne by the applicant.</p> <p>30. The applicant shall ensure that existing and proposed buildings and electrical installations on the subject land are compliant with the Victorian Service and Installation Rules (VSIR).</p> <p>Notes: Where electrical works are required to achieve VSIR compliance, a registered electrical contractor must be engaged to undertake such works.</p> <p>Referral Authority Conditions - Head, Transport for Victoria</p> <p>31. There must only be one (1) shared vehicle access for use by all proposed lots (subject land) to McCracken Avenue (principal road).</p> <p>32. Before the plan of subdivision is submitted to the Responsible Authority for certification under the Subdivision Act 1988, an updated concept plan must be submitted to and approved by the Head,</p>		

Meeting Date	Item No.	Item	Department	Action Required	Latest Action Taken	Status
				<p>Transport for Victoria. The concept plan must demonstrate that a passenger vehicle can enter and exit Lots 1 to 4 in a forward direction.</p> <p>33. Prior to the issue of a Statement of Compliance, the following must be completed to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority and at no cost to the Head, Transport for Victoria and the Responsible Authority. The access lands, driveway, crossover and associated works must be provided and available for use and be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Formed to such levels and drained so that they can be used in accordance with the endorsed plans. b. Treated with an all-weather seal or some other durable surface. <p>34. The crossovers and associated shared driveway for the subject land must be maintained in a fit and proper state so as not to compromise the ability of vehicles to enter and exit the site in a safe manner or compromise operational efficiency of the road or public safety to the satisfaction of the Head, Transport for Victoria and the Responsible Authority.</p> <p>Commencement</p> <p>35. This permit will operate from the issued date of this permit.</p> <p>Permit Expiry</p> <p>36. This permit as it relates to development (subdivision) will expire if one of the following circumstances applies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The plan of subdivision has not been certified under the <i>Subdivision Act 1988</i> within 2 years of the issued date of this permit. b. A statement of compliance is not issued within 5 years of the date of certification. <p>In accordance with Section 69 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, an application may be submitted to the responsible authority for an extension of the periods referred to in this condition.</p> <p>37. This permit will expire if one of the following circumstances applies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The development is not started within 2 years of the issued date of this permit. b. The development is not completed within 4 years of the issued date of this permit. c. The use does not start within 2 years of completion of the development. 		

Meeting Date	Item No.	Item	Department	Action Required	Latest Action Taken	Status
				<p>In accordance with Section 69 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, an application may be submitted to the Responsible Authority for an extension of the periods referred to in this condition.</p> <p>MOVED: Cr Alan Getley</p> <p>SECONDED: Cr Charmaine Delaney</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED. (R/26/31)</p>		
20-05-2026	8 3.1	Quarterly Financial Report for period ending 31 March 2026	Financial Strategy	<p>Please action as per resolution.</p> <p>MOTION</p> <p>That Council receives and notes the Quarterly Financial Statements for the period ended 31 March 2026.</p> <p>MOVED: Cr Charmaine Delaney</p> <p>SECONDED: Cr Stephen Barratt</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED. (R/26/32)</p>	<p>27/05/2026 Manager Financial Strategy</p> <p>No further action required.</p>	Completed
20-05-2026	8 4.1	Quarterly Organisational Performance Report – Quarter 3 FY2026/27	Corporate and Organisational Performance	<p>Please action as per resolution.</p> <p>MOTION</p> <p>That Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Receives and notes the Quarterly Organisational Performance Report for Quarter 3 FY2025/26 at Attachment 1. <p>MOVED: Cr Alan Getley</p> <p>SECONDED: Cr Charmaine Delaney</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED. (R/26/33)</p>	<p>12/06/2026 Director Corporate and Organisational Performance</p> <p>Report noted and filed in Council's document management system.</p>	Completed

8 GENERAL BUSINESS

8.1 POLICY REPORTS

Nil.

8.2 MANAGEMENT REPORTS

8.2.1 CONTRACT AWARD - CONTRACT C133 2025/26 - EXTERNAL PLANT HIRE – PANEL OF SUPPLIERS

Author's Title: Senior Manager Assets and Delivery

Directorate: Infrastructure and Delivery

File No: PS/04/18

Relevance to Council Plan 2025 - 2029

Strategic Objective: Built and natural environment

Advocate and plan for, and manage community buildings, roads and transport networks

PURPOSE

This report is presented to Council to consider the creation of a panel of contractors for the provision of road making materials as set out in Contract C133 2025/26 – External Plant Hire – Panel of Suppliers.

SUMMARY

The Buloke Shire Council invited Tenders from experienced contractors for the provision of truck, and plant and equipment wet hire for Council managed road projects. Truck and Plant and Equipment included within this Panel of Supplier Contract includes:

- *Backhoe*
- *Excavator*
- *Motor Grader*
- *Rollers (including Smooth Drum, Pad Foot, Pneumatic and Multi-Wheel)*
- *Tractor and Drawn Roller Combination*
- *Tractor and Slasher*
- *Skidsteer*
- *Water Trucks*
- *Road Maintenance Units / Trucks / Utilities*
- *Street Sweeping Trucks / Pit Clearing Truck/Unit / Drainage Clearing Truck/Unit*

This is a panel contract with the intent that successful tenderers would have a list of plant and equipment at defined prices available for Council staff to use for the maintenance of the Council's Road network as required.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Awards the panel contract of Contract C133 2025/26 – External Plant Hire – Panel of Suppliers to:
 - a. AP Earthmoving Pty Ltd
 - b. Berne Fleming Civil Pty Ltd
 - c. Bild Infrastructure Pty Ltd

- d. Gregs Digging Pty Ltd
- e. MF & JL Willmore Pty Ltd
- f. Pipe Doctor Pty Ltd
- g. Reeves Earthmoving Pty Ltd
- h. Whitfield Excavations

2. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to sign the contract documents on behalf of Council.
3. Delegate authority to the Chief Executive Officer to approve payments to the Contractor for undertaking the works associated with the Contract.
4. Delegate authority to the Chief Executive Officer to approve all variations under the Contract.
5. Notes and declares the attachments to this report as confidential on the grounds that it relates to (g) (ii) private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage as described in s 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

DISCUSSION

This contract is for the establishment of a panel of suppliers for the wet hire of trucks, plant and equipment which Council could engage when required in a cost-effective manner, at agreed rates.

The new contract is structured as a schedule of rates panel contract with a term of three years, with the ability for Council to refresh the panel of suppliers on a yearly basis to enable new suppliers to be included.

At the close of the submission period, ten (10) submissions were lodged via Council's electronic tender box and were provided for evaluation to the Tender Evaluation Panel.

The evaluation report (attached) details the submissions received in relation to this tender, the evaluation criteria used to evaluate, and the recommendation of the Evaluation Panel.

The evaluated conforming tender submissions received for Contract C133 2025/26 – External Plant Hire – Panel of Suppliers confirmed all conforming tenderers were suitably qualified and experienced to meet the requirements of the invitation and specifications.

It is recommended that Council appoint the recommended tenderers arising from the evaluation for the establishment of a panel. These tenderers would provide the best value to Council, provide the range of equipment required, and enable them to be engaged on a case-by-case basis.

RELEVANT LAW

The tender process was conducted in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* and the Council's Procurement Policy.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

There are no previous Council Decisions related to this matter.

OPTIONS

Option One – Recommended by Officers.

Award contractors to Contract C133 2025/26 – External Plant Hire – Panel of Suppliers.

Option Two – Not Recommended by Officers.

Not approve this proposal and abandon the procurement process for Contract C133 2025/26 – External Plant Hire – Panel of Suppliers.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no identified sustainability implications relating to this matter.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Not applicable to this report.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

There are no innovation and/or continuous improvement opportunities identified relating to this matter.

COLLABORATION

No opportunities for collaboration were available at the time this tender was released to market.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The awarding of the panel contract to incorporate multiply suppliers will not have any financial implications to Council as the Contract does not guarantee any works or provision of goods and materials. The panel contract provides options for Council to engage contractors for the wet hire of trucks, plant and equipment as required in an efficient and effective manner.

The wet hire of trucks, plant and equipment will be sourced from the panel of contractors as required where budgets have been pre-approved via the annual adopted budget.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not applicable to this report.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Building a Better Buloke 2040: Community Vision

Council Plan 2025-2029

Council's Procurement Policy

TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

The contents of the attachments to this report are confidential in order to protect the tender's commercial information.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have signed a Conflict-of-Interest declaration relating to the subject matter of this report. No General or Material Conflict of Interest was identified that impacted on the panel members completing the evaluation process.

Attachments:

1. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED - Attachment 8.2.1.1 - Tender Evaluation Report - C 133

8.2.2 PLANNING PERMIT APPLICATION PA26005 - TWO-LOT SUBDIVISION OF LAND (RURAL DWELLING EXCISION) - 2196 NINDA-TURRIFF ROAD, NINDA

Author's Title: Planning Officer

Directorate: Community Development

File No: LP/09/01

Relevance to Council Plan 2025 - 2029

Strategic Built and natural environment

Objective: Caring for our environment

Prosperous and growing economy

Promote Buloke as a great place to visit, live and invest

Council leadership and engagement

Responsible leadership and decision making

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider Planning Permit Application PA26005 and as the Responsible Authority, resolve to Grant a Permit or issue a Notice of Refusal.

SUMMARY

A planning permit application was received by Council on the 3 February 2026 for a two-lot subdivision of land to separate the existing dwelling from the surrounding farming land (rural dwelling excision).

The subject land is located at 2196 Ninda-Turriff Road, Ninda, formally known as Crown Allotment 7, Parish of Bourka.

A planning permit is required to subdivide land within the Farming Zone. Pursuant to Clause 35.07-3, each lot is required to have a minimum area of 100 hectares. However, a permit may be granted for a smaller lot where the subdivision is for the purpose of excising an existing dwelling, and the proposal comprises a two-lot subdivision.

Clause 14.01-1L-03 (Small Lot Subdivision) specifies that rural dwelling excisions should generally not exceed an area of 2 hectares, to avoid the unnecessary fragmentation of productive agricultural land. However, consideration may be given to excising a larger area where sufficient justification can be demonstrated.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council having caused notice of Planning Application No. PA26005 to be given under Section 52 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and or the planning scheme and having considered all the matters required under Section 60 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* decides to Grant a Permit under the provisions of Clause 35.07-3 of the Buloke Planning Scheme in respect of the land known and described as 2196 Ninda-Turriff Road, Ninda (CA 7 Parish of Bourka), for the two lot subdivision of land (rural dwelling excision) in accordance with the endorsed plans, with the application dated 3 February 2026, subject to the following conditions:

Endorsed Plans

1. The subdivision as shown on the endorsed plans must not be altered without the prior written consent of the Responsible Authority.

Subdivision

2. All existing and proposed easements and sites for existing and required utility services and roads must be set aside in favour of the relevant authority for which the easement or site is to be created on the plan of subdivision submitted for certification under the *Subdivision Act 1988*.
3. The owner of the land must enter into agreements with the relevant authorities for the provision of water supply, drainage, sewerage facilities and electricity services to each lot shown on the endorsed plan in accordance with the authority’s requirements and relevant legislation at the time.
4. The plan of subdivision submitted for certification under the *Subdivision Act 1988* must be referred to the relevant authority in accordance with Section 8 of that Act.

Access

5. Access to and exit from the land must only be via existing crossings.

Referral Authority Conditions - Powercor

6. The applicant shall ensure that existing and proposed buildings and electrical installations on the subject land are compliant with the Victorian Service and Installation Rules (VSIR).

Notes: Where electrical works are required to achieve VSIR compliance, a registered electrical contractor must be engaged to undertake such works.

7. The applicant shall establish easements on the subdivision, for all existing Distributor electric lines where easements have not been otherwise provided on the land and for any new powerlines to service the lots or adjust the positioning existing easements.

Notes:

- Existing easements may need to be amended to meet the Distributor’s requirements
- Easements required by the Distributor shall be specified on the subdivision and show the Purpose, Origin and the In Favour of party as follows:

Easement Reference	Purpose	Width (Metres)	Origin	Land Benefited / In Favour Of
	Power Line		Section 88 - Electricity Industry Act 2000	Powercor Australia Ltd

Commencement

8. This permit will operate from the issued date of this permit.

Permit Expiry

9. This permit as it relates to development (subdivision) will expire if one of the following circumstances applies:
 - a. The plan of subdivision has not been certified under the *Subdivision Act 1988* within 2 years of the issued date of this permit.

b. A statement of compliance is not issued within 5 years of the date of certification.

In accordance with Section 69 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, an application may be submitted to the responsible authority for an extension of the periods referred to in this condition.

DISCUSSION

Proposal

The application seeks approval for a two-lot subdivision of land to excise the existing dwelling from the surrounding farming land.

Proposed Lot 1 will have an area of approximately 14.80 hectares and will contain the existing dwelling, associated farm sheds, and a mix of native and planted vegetation. Proposed Lot 2 will comprise the remaining 177.79 hectares and will continue to be used for dryland farming purposes.

Access arrangements will remain unchanged. Lot 1 will continue to utilise the existing driveway connection to Ninda-Turriff Road. Lot 2 will be accessed via an established gateway onto Ninda South Road.

The subdivision will rely entirely on existing infrastructure and services, including electricity supply, road access, and established driveways. No additional buildings, works, or changes in land use are proposed as part of this application.

Subject site & locality

The site has a total area of 192.59 hectares and currently contains:

- Dwelling and farm sheds
- Scattered native trees
- Planted and native vegetation bordering proposed Lot 1
- Broadacre farmland

The main site/locality characteristics are:

- The surrounding area is largely characterised by large agricultural allotments with dispersed dwellings.
- The closest dwelling in separate ownership is located approximately 1.3km north of the subject land.
- The subject land is 10 kilometres northwest of the township of Sea Lake.

Permit/Site History

- No known planning permit history
- Building permits and pool registration

Assessment

The zoning of the land and any relevant overlay provisions

The land is zoned Farming Zone. The purpose of the farming zone is:

- To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.
- To provide for the use of land for agriculture.
- To encourage the retention of productive agricultural land.
- To ensure that non-agricultural uses, including dwellings, do not adversely affect the use of land for agriculture.
- To encourage the retention of employment and population to support rural communities.

- To encourage use and development of land based on comprehensive and sustainable land management practices and infrastructure provision.
- To provide for the use and development of land for the specific purposes identified in a schedule to this zone.

At Clause 35.07-3, a planning permit is required to subdivide land in the Farming Zone. Each lot must be at least 100 ha. A permit may be granted to create smaller lots if the subdivision is to create a lot for an existing dwelling. The subdivision must be a two-lot subdivision.

Decision Guideline	Comments
The Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.	<i>These have been considered, please refer to details below.</i>
The capability of the land to accommodate the proposed use or development, including the disposal of effluent.	<i>No change of land use is proposed. The allotments can accommodate the existing land uses and the subdivision will reflect the existing land uses.</i>
How the use or development relates to sustainable land management.	<i>The proposed subdivision is not expected to adversely impact sustainable land management outcomes, as it reflects the existing pattern of land use and management across the site. Current agricultural and land management practices have been established over a long period and have demonstrated their sustainability. The subdivision will not alter these practices, as the land will continue to be used for farming purposes in a manner consistent with existing operations.</i>
Whether the site is suitable for the use or development and whether the proposal is compatible with adjoining and nearby land uses.	<i>The proposed subdivision will not result in any change to the existing land use. However, it will enable the dwelling and the farmland to be held under separate ownership in the future. Despite this potential, it is considered that the subdivision has been designed to provide an appropriate buffer distance between the dwelling and agricultural land. This separation will ensure that the amenity of the dwelling is not adversely affected by ongoing agricultural operations, while also ensuring that normal farming activities can continue without constraint from the presence of a sensitive residential use.</i>
How the use and development makes use of existing infrastructure and services.	<i>The existing dwelling utilises existing infrastructure and has access to a sealed road for access.</i>
Whether the use or development will support and enhance agricultural production.	<i>There will be no change to agricultural production.</i>
Whether the use or development will adversely affect soil quality or permanently remove land from agricultural production.	<i>The proposed subdivision does not involve any change in land use that would adversely affect soil quality or result in the permanent removal of land from agricultural production. The land will continue to be utilised for</i>

	<i>farming purposes consistent with its existing use and capability.</i>
The potential for the use or development to limit the operation and expansion of adjoining and nearby agricultural uses.	<i>No land use change is proposed that will limit the operation and expansion of adjoining and nearby agricultural uses.</i>
The potential for the proposal to lead to a concentration or proliferation of dwellings in the area and the impact of this on the use of the land for agriculture.	<i>The proposed two lot subdivision will not lead to further concentration or proliferation of dwellings.</i>
The impact of the use or development on the flora and fauna on the site and its surrounds.	<i>The subdivision will not negatively affect the flora and fauna, no physical changes to the environment are proposed</i>
The location of on-site effluent disposal areas to minimise the impact of nutrient loads on waterways and native vegetation.	<i>The dwelling has an existing septic system.</i>

Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS)

The following Municipal Planning Strategies have been considered as part of this application:

02.03-1 Settlement and housing

Council's strategic directions for settlement and housing include:

- Responding and adapting to population decline.
- Directing subdivision development to locations on the established road network.

02.03-2 Environmental and landscape values

Council's strategic directions for built environment and heritage include:

- Protecting biodiversity, native vegetation, habitat and natural landscape values.

02.03-3 Environmental Risks and amenity

Council's strategic directions for environmental risks and amenity include:

- Minimising environmental risk including erosion, salinity, bushfire and floodplain management.

02.03-4 Natural resource management

Council's strategic directions for natural resource management include:

- Sustainably managing natural resources and agricultural land.
- Protecting valuable agricultural land from inappropriate development.

Planning Policy Framework (PPF)

The following Planning Policy Framework have been considered as part of this application:

13.02-1S Bushfire Planning

Objective

To strengthen the resilience of settlements and communities to bushfire through risk-based planning that prioritises the protection of human life.

13.07-1L-01 Amenity Protection – General

Objective

To encourage use and development without compromising residential amenity or agricultural land use.

Strategies include:

- Discouraging land use conflicts between agricultural uses and sensitive uses.

14.01-1S, 14.01-1L-01 Protection of agricultural land

Objective

To protect the state's agricultural base by preserving productive farmland.

Strategies include:

- When considering a proposal to subdivide agricultural land, consider the compatibility between the proposed or likely development and the existing use of the surrounding land.

14.01-1L-03 Small lot subdivision

This policy applies to applications for subdivision in the Farming Zone of less than 100 hectares where:

- Lots are created under the excisions provisions of the Farming Zone.

Strategies include:

- Discourage the excision of dwellings that have the potential to restrict agricultural production on adjacent land.
- Maintain an adequate distance within the excised lot around the dwelling to reasonably limit any likely impacts of adjacent agricultural activity.
- Discourage the excision of more than one house lot from a rural property.

Policy guidelines require Council to consider as relevant:

- Rural dwelling excisions to have a maximum size of 2 hectares.
- If a dwelling to be excised is in a habitable condition and able to comply with the Building Code of Australia.
- The need for planting of vegetation within the proposed excised lot to reduce potential impacts on surrounding land.

Relevant Particular Provisions

n/a

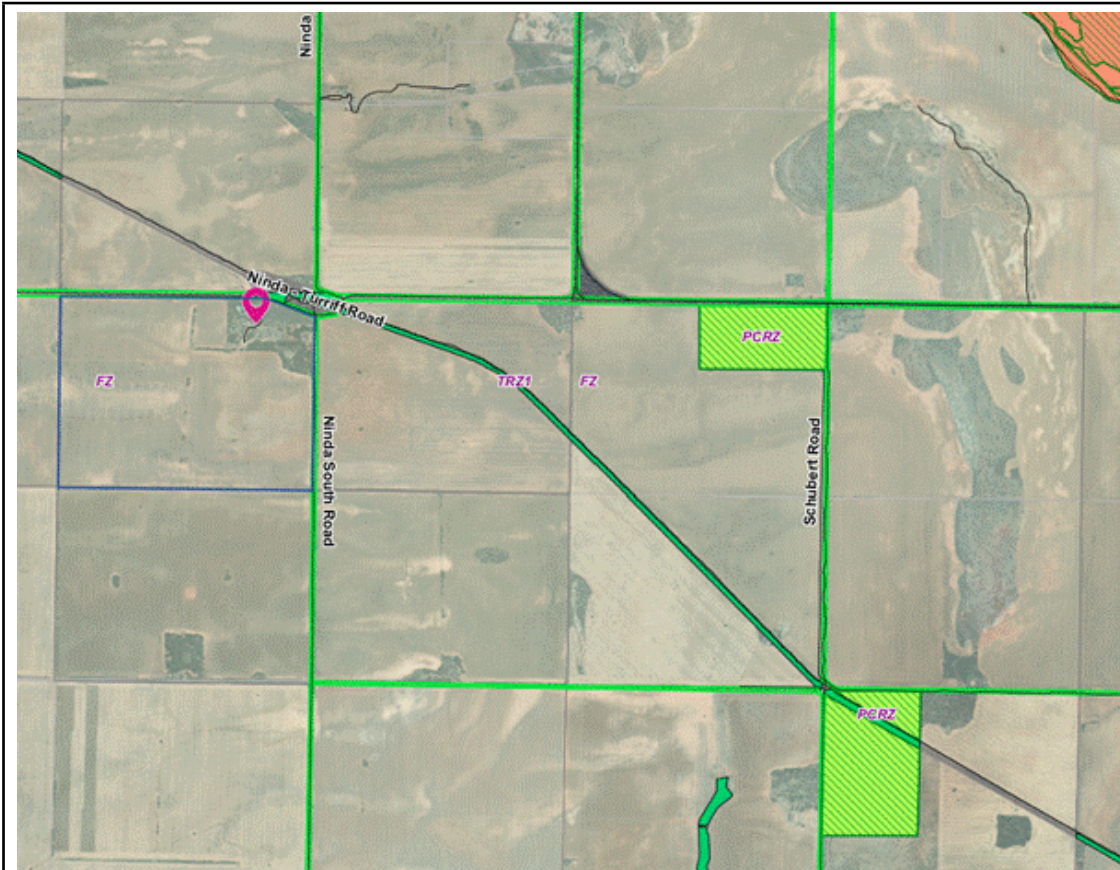
The decision guidelines of Clause 65

65.01 Approval of an application or plan

Before deciding on an application or approval of a plan, the responsible authority must consider, as appropriate:

Decision Guidelines	Comments
Any significant effects the environment, including the contamination of land, may have on the use or development.	<i>The subject land is not likely to be contaminated and is not highlighted on the EPA Register.</i>
The Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.	<i>The proposed two-lot subdivision is consistent with the relevant Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and Planning Policy Framework (PPF), as it utilises the existing road network, maintains established land use and management practices, and supports flexible land ownership without increasing rural fragmentation or environmental risk.</i>

	<p><i>The subdivision will not adversely affect biodiversity, native vegetation, landscape values, or soil quality, and it retains productive agricultural land in line with natural resource management and agricultural protection objectives.</i></p> <p><i>No intensification of use is proposed, and existing infrastructure will continue to be relied upon. The design provides adequate separation between the dwelling and farmland, ensuring residential amenity is protected while avoiding constraints on ongoing agricultural operations, thereby minimising land use conflict.</i></p>
The purpose of the zone, overlay or other provision.	<i>The proposed subdivision is consistent with the intent and purpose of the zone and is considered an appropriate planning outcome.</i>
Any matter required to be considered in the zone, overlay or other provision.	<i>These have been addressed earlier in the Report.</i>
The orderly planning of the area.	<i>The proposal is considered to represent orderly planning as the subdivision reflects the existing land uses.</i>
The effect on the environment, human health and amenity of the area.	<i>The proposed subdivision is not likely to have an impact on the environment, human health or amenity of the area.</i>
The proximity of the land to any public land.	<i>The subject land is located 2.4km west of Bourka Bushland Reserve, 3.4km northwest of Burupga Bushland Reserve and 5km southwest of Lake Tyrrell. The proposed subdivision will not impact any public land.</i>



Source: Spectrum Spatial Corporate GIS on 14/05/2026

<p>Factors likely to cause or contribute to land degradation, salinity or reduce water quality.</p>	<p><i>The proposed subdivision will not have an impact on land degradation or reduce water quality. No changes to land use are proposed.</i></p>
<p>Whether the proposed development is designed to maintain or improve the quality of stormwater within and exiting the site.</p>	<p><i>The proposed subdivision will not have an impact on existing stormwater discharge.</i></p>
<p>The extent and character of native vegetation and the likelihood of its destruction.</p>	<p><i>A new subdivision must take into account existing native vegetation that occurs within 4 metres of a shared property boundary to allow for any future construction of boundary fences. The plans show that no shared boundary is within 4 metres of any native vegetation, and this was confirmed by Planning Officers on inspection.</i></p>
<p>Whether native vegetation is to be or can be protected, planted or allowed to regenerate.</p>	<p><i>No native vegetation is proposed to be removed.</i></p>
<p>The degree of flood, erosion or fire hazard associated with the location of the land and the use, development or management of the land so as to minimise any such hazard.</p>	<p><i>The proposed subdivision will not increase any hazard. No new land uses are proposed.</i></p>

The adequacy of loading and unloading facilities and any associated amenity, traffic flow and road safety impacts.	<i>Both proposed allotments have adequate area for loading, unloading and the parking of vehicles.</i>
The impact the use or development will have on the current and future development and operation of the transport system.	<i>The proposed subdivision will have no impact on the operation of the transport system. No land use changes are proposed.</i>

65.02 Approval of and application to subdivide land

Before deciding on an application to subdivide land, the responsible authority must consider, as appropriate:

Decision Guidelines	Comments
The suitability of the land for subdivision.	<i>The subject land is suitable for this subdivision.</i>
The existing use and possible future development of the land and nearby land.	<i>The proposed subdivision of land will not have an impact on existing land uses. The proposal allows for the continued agricultural production of the balance of land.</i>
The availability of subdivided land in the locality, and the need for the creation of further lots.	<i>The land is zoned Farming Zone and there is no requirement for availability of land, and no need to create new lots. The subdivision reflects current land use.</i>
The effect of development on the use or development of other land which has a common means of drainage.	<i>Not applicable – there is no development as part of this proposal.</i>
The subdivision pattern having regard to the physical characteristics of the land including existing vegetation.	<i>The proposed subdivision of land takes into consideration the existing physical characteristics of the land. A vegetation buffer is included in the house lot.</i>
The area and dimensions of each lot in the subdivision.	<i>The area and dimensions of the proposed lots are suitable for the purposes of the land uses.</i>
The layout of roads having regard to their function and relationship to existing roads.	<i>The proposed subdivision will not have an impact on existing road conditions.</i>
The availability and provision of utility services, including water, sewerage, drainage, electricity and gas.	<i>The land is connected to existing power and water services. The area is not sewered.</i>
If the land is not sewered and no provision has been made for the land to be sewered, the capacity of the land to treat and retain all sewage and sullage within the boundaries of each lot.	<i>The residential lot has an existing on-site wastewater system for management of effluent.</i>

Whether, in relation to subdivision plans, native vegetation can be protected through subdivision and siting of open space areas.	<i>The proposed allotment boundary will be located in excess of 4 metres from any native vegetation.</i>
The impact the development will have on the current and future development and operation of the transport system.	<i>Not applicable to this application.</i>

Summary of Key Issues

A planning permit is required to subdivide land within the Farming Zone. Pursuant to Clause 35.07-3, each lot is required to have a minimum area of 100 hectares. However, a permit may be granted for a smaller lot where the subdivision is for the purpose of excising an existing dwelling and the proposal comprises a two-lot subdivision.

Clause 14.01-1L-03 (Small Lot Subdivision) states that rural dwelling excisions should generally have a maximum area of 2 hectares in order to avoid unnecessarily fragmenting productive agricultural land. The proposed excision lot (Lot 1), at 13.3 hectares, substantially exceeds this preferred maximum. However, the increased lot size is considered justified in this instance as it reflects the existing land use pattern and incorporates established vegetation that provides a significant buffer from adjoining agricultural activities. The larger allotment also ensures the dwelling, associated outbuildings, and their functional curtilage are contained within a single title, while avoiding adverse impacts on the ongoing agricultural productivity and viability of the balance lot.

The balance lot (Lot 2) will retain the productive agricultural land, ensuring the ongoing long-term viability of agricultural use on the property and supporting both State and Local Planning Policy objectives relating to the protection of productive farmland and sustainable agricultural practices.

The dwelling to be excised is in a habitable condition and would comply with the Building Code of Australia.

The proposal will not result in the removal of native vegetation and is located within a highly modified agricultural landscape. The subdivision will not increase bushfire, flood, or other environmental risks.

Existing access arrangements and services will continue to be utilised, with no requirement for new roads or additional utility infrastructure. Both proposed lots are capable of independent access via existing access points.

The subdivision does not facilitate any additional land use or development and is not expected to adversely affect surrounding land uses, agricultural operations, or the amenity of the locality. Public notice of the application was undertaken, and no objections were received.

RELEVANT LAW

The application has been assessed in accordance with the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

Not applicable

OPTIONS

Council, as the Responsible Authority, has the option to issue a Notice of Refusal.

Alternative motion:

That Council having caused notice of Planning Application No. PA26005 to be given under Section 52 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and or the planning scheme and having considered all the matters required under Section 60 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* decides to Issue a Notice of Refusal to Grant a Permit under the provisions of Clause 35.07-3 of the Buloke Planning Scheme in respect of the land known and described as 2196 Ninda-Turriff Road, Ninda (CA 7 Parish of Bourka), for the two lot subdivision of land (rural dwelling excision) in accordance with the endorsed plans, with the application dated 3 February 2026, for the following reasons:

[Council to supply grounds]

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The proposed subdivision is not expected to adversely impact sustainable land management outcomes.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Public Notification

The application has been advertised pursuant to Section 52 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, by:

- Sending two notices to the owners and occupiers of adjoining land.
- Placing a notice in the locally circulating newspapers

The notification has been carried out correctly.

Council has received no objections to date.

Consultation

Consultation/mediation was not required as there were no objections.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Not applicable.

COLLABORATION

Referrals

External Referrals/Notices Required by the Planning Scheme:

Referrals/Notice	Advice/Response/Conditions
Section 55 Referrals	n/a
Section 52 notices	GWMWater – no objection subject to one condition Powercor Ltd – no objection subject to four conditions

Internal Notices:

Internal Council Referrals	Advice/Response/Conditions
Assets and Infrastructure	No objection subject to two conditions

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The subject matter of this report does not have significant budgetary implications or considerations.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Relevant policies have been discussed in the discussion section of this report.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Council Plan 2025-2029

Building a Better Buloke 2040: Community Vision

TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

To promote transparency, the Council will consider this resolution in an open meeting.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No officer involved in the preparation of this report has declared a conflict of interest in the subject matter of this report.

Attachments:

1. Attachment 8.2.2.1 - Plan for endorsement



	Proposed Works:	Owner:	Builder:	Site Plan:
2196 Ninda - Turriff Road Ninda Vic 3553	Proposed Two Lot Rural Subdivision	Rohan Mott	N/A	Not to Scale to be verified by Survey

8.2.3 BULOKE SHIRE COUNCIL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN: STATUS UPDATE FOR THE MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Author's Title: Acting Manager Governance

Directorate: Corporate and Organisational Performance **File No:** GR/15/02

Relevance to Council Plan 2025 - 2029

Strategic Objective: Council leadership and engagement
Responsible leadership and decision making

PURPOSE

To provide the Council with the Buloke Shire Council Implementation Plan: Status Update for the Minister for Local Government ahead of its presentation to the Minister by the due date of 31 July 2026.

SUMMARY

On 31 January 2025, the Minister for Local Government, The Hon. Nick Staikos MP provided Council with the report from the Municipal Monitor (Attachment 1) accompanied by correspondence containing Governance Directions from the Minister in accordance with s175 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

The correspondence outlined a series of actions requiring attention from the Council in the coming months with information to be provided every six months (July and December) for a period of two years.

The report prepared by the Municipal Monitor to the Minister for Local Government (Attachment 1) provided a number of findings and conclusions.

Council must provide the Buloke Shire Council Implementation Plan: Status Update for the Minister for Local Government by the 31 July 2026.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council submits the Buloke Shire Council Implementation Plan: Status Update for the Minister for Local Government Attachment 2 to this report to the Minister for Local Government by 31 July 2026.

DISCUSSION

The Minister for Local Government, The Hon. Melissa Horne MP on the 6 May 2024 appointed Mr Peter Harriott as a Municipal Monitor to the Buloke Shire Council on the 9 May 2024 for a period up to the 31 December 2024.

The appointment was made under section 179 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act).

The appointment followed concerns in relation to Behaviour and Governance standards of the council.

On 31 January 2025, the Minister for Local Government, The Hon. Nick Staikos MP provided Council with the report from the Municipal Monitor (Attachment 1) accompanied by correspondence containing Governance Directions from the Minister in accordance with s175 of the Act.

The report prepared by the Municipal Monitor to the Minister for Local Government (Attachment 1) provided a number of findings and conclusions including, but not limited to:

- i) Ensures that adherence to organisational values is embedded in annual staff performance reviews.
- ii) Ensures that councillors and staff are aware of avenues to report poor councillor and staff behaviour and that there are adequate complaint handling processes in place to ensure the safety of parties to a complaint.
- iii) Provides ongoing training in relation to the benefits of good behaviour and the consequences of poor behaviour.
- iv) Adjusts its meeting times and locations to ensure a safe environment is provided for councillors and staff traveling to these meetings.
- v) Conducts annual culture surveys open to all staff, reports the results annually to the Council and staff and implements actions to address the results.
- vi) Develops a staff retention plan by 3 June 2025 which identifies issues such as flexible work arrangements, working from home, provision of housing for key staff, remuneration rates, working hours and working days (consideration of a 4-day working week) and other employment benefits that may attract and retain staff in a rural setting.
- vii) Conducts a review of its process for recording and responding to operational requests to ensure an efficient process which supports councillors to concentrate on strategic matters.
- viii) Considers consolidating indoor and outdoor staff locations to assist with communication, service and project delivery, and overall Council performance.
- ix) Adopts the financial guidance provided in the report titled "External review of Buloke Shire Council's current and future financial position, October 2024" and ensures that the Council's budgets and long-term financial plans incorporate the suggestions and guidance from this report.
- x) Adopts an improved Community Grants Policy in accordance with the previous VAGO recommendation and continues to work on other policy improvements including exhibition of new Governance Rules.
- xi) Ensures it has adequate processes in place to record and manage the completion of Internal Audit reports.
- xii) Finalises its review of its Asset Management Systems during 2025 and completes an assessment of the data for completeness and accuracy prior to the end of 2025.
- xiii) Implements improved governance and financial accounting practices for the Charlton Caravan Park.
- xiv) In relation to the Sea Lake Landfill site, ensures compliance with EPA directions, budgets appropriately for any required rehabilitation in accordance with EPA directions and moves to secure ownership of the site as soon as practicable.
- xv) Requests a review of the Natural Disaster funding process to make the process more efficient and ask the Federal and State Government for early confirmation that additional claims have a confirmed funding source.
- xvi) Write to the Federal Government requesting an increase to the Federal Assistance Grants for Rural Councils.

Attachment 2 provides further detail in relation to the implementation of the various recommendations made by the Municipal Monitor, Peter Harriott.

Council is required to submit the Buloke Shire Council Implementation Plan: Status Update for the Minister for Local Government to the Minister for Local Government by 31 July 2026.

At the Council Meeting held Wednesday, 17 December 2025, it was reported that of the sixteen recommendations made, six were complete; nine progressing, and one has not yet commenced.

For the period to 31 July 2026 the following actions have progressed:

- Seven recommendations have been completed,
- eight are progressing, and
- one has not yet commenced.

During this period, Council has experienced an emergency flood event which has significantly affected Council's resourcing levels to deliver business as usual operations and major projects.

RELEVANT LAW

In accordance with s175 of the Act, the Minister for Local Government, The Hon. Nick Staikos MP provided Governance Direction to Buloke Shire Council on the 31 January 2025.

In accordance with s176 of the Act, if Council fails to comply with a written direction made under section 175; the Minister may take that failure to comply with the direction into account for the purposes of recommending the suspension of all the Councillors of the Council under this Act.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

Not applicable.

OPTIONS

Council must provide the Buloke Shire Council Implementation Plan: Status Update for the Minister for Local Government by the 31 July 2026.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Not applicable.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Not applicable.

COLLABORATION

Not applicable.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

Not applicable.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

There are no Regional, State, or National Plans or Policies related to this report.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

There are no Council Plans or Policies related to this report.

TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

The presentation of the Buloke Shire Council Implementation Plan: Status Update for the Minister for Local Government Report to Council demonstrates Council continues to provide good governance through the performance of its role in accordance with the overarching governance principles and supporting principles of the Act.

Any decisions made in relation to this report will be made at an open Council Meeting to promote openness, accountability, and transparency.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

In preparing this report, no conflict of interest has been declared.

Attachments:

1. Attachment 8.2.3.1 - Buloke Final Municipal Monitor Report
2. Attachment 8.2.3.2 - Buloke Shire Council Implementation Plan Status Update for the Minister for Local Government



Municipal Monitor appointed to Buloke Shire Council

Report to the Minister for Local Government (Dated 18/12/24)

1. Background

1.1 Appointment

The Minister for Local Government appointed me, Mr Peter Harriott as a Municipal Monitor to the Buloke Shire Council on the 9th of May 2024 for a period up to the 31st of December 2024. The appointment was made under section 179 of the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act).

This followed concerns in relation to Behaviour and Governance standards of the council.

The Terms of Reference for the appointment are as follows.

- 1) To monitor with specific regard to.
 - (a) the Councillors understanding and performance of their statutory roles and responsibilities, including in relation to the separation of roles between councillors and the Chief Executive Officer;
 - (b) the Council's meeting procedures and decision-making processes, including councillor attendance at briefings and Council meetings, and the adequacy of the Governance rules;
 - (c) the relationships between councillors and between councillors and Council staff, including councillor behaviour with respect to the Councillor Code of Conduct and processes for resolving disputes between councillors;
 - (d) support for the Chief Executive Officer to effectively perform their responsibilities and functions, including in relation to establishing policies and practices that manage the interactions between Councillors and Council staff and contractors;
 - (e) the Council's processes and practices in relation to health and safety, including any matters that may be creating a serious risk to the health and safety of councillors, council staff or other persons;
 - (f) the Council's policies, processes and practices related to the management of conflict of interest;
 - (g) the Council's community engagement and financial and asset management practices, including its ability to meet current and future needs of the community;
 - (h) any support needed in the lead up to and following the elections in October 2024 to ensure good governance at the council; and

¹ Final Report from the Municipal Monitor appointed to Buloke Shire Council

- (i) any other matters that may be affecting the Council's ability to effectively perform, including behaviour that may be preventing the Council from performing its function.
- 2) Advise and assist in relation to items included in clause 1 above
- 3) Assist the development of action plans for progression of items included in clauses 1 and 2 above
- 4) Report to the Minister for Local Government with respect to the matters in clause 1 on;
 - (a) any steps or actions taken by the council to improve its governance and the effectiveness of those steps or actions; and
 - (b) any recommendation for the exercise of any ministerial power under the Act.

1.2 Context for the Buloke Shire

The total **area** of the Shire is approximately **8000 km²**. It is 140km from the southern boundary near Charlton to the northern boundary beyond Sea Lake, this is a vast area filled with very productive cropping and grazing land and sprinkled with small **townships** including Sea Lake, Wycheproof, Charlton, Donald and Birchip and smaller settlements of Berriwillock, Culgoa, Nandaly, Nullawil and Watchem. Recreation facilities and appearance of streetscapes are important facets of these communities. Buloke has a **population of 6000** and an asset valuation of approximately **\$300m** most of which is represented by **5300 km of roads** necessary to transport crops from the farmlands to grain silos and other uses. The Buloke Shire Council has its **main administrative centre in Wycheproof** but also runs offices at Birchip, Donald and Charlton. Buloke employs approximately **140 staff**.

Council elections have concluded and there are three returning councillors from the previous term and three new councillors. I refer to councillors from the previous term as pre 2024 election councillors and the new group as post 2024 election councillors.

Staff turnover is high, and some positions are very difficult to fill.

Finances undertook a significant review in 2012 when the council was in some difficulty. In 2024 the finances are in a much better position which I comment on later in the report.

Like most of Victoria, Buloke was hit hard by the **Oct 2022 floods** and **additional events in December 2023 and February 2024**. Currently Buloke Shire Council has a combined natural disaster relief claim of approximately **\$82m**. ***Council believes the administrative processes associated with this Natural Disaster Funding are cumbersome and leading to significant delays in completing works, so much so that the next storm or flood event is occurring before works from the previous event have been approved.***

The organisation has very good **Values**. The challenge now is to ensure that they are consistently upheld and actively lived every day. The values include:

- **"Commit to and consistently deliver on our priorities"** and, **"Are responsive and communicate honestly and clearly"**. **The number one issue for pre 2024 election Councillors was organisational adherence to these 2 values, particularly the timing of responses to matters (I expand on this in section 2 (a)).**
- **"Enable a culture which is courteous, based on mutual trust and consideration of others"** and, **"Do right by each other and treat everyone with courtesy and respect"**.

These are two values which are important in relation to councillor-to-councillor interaction but are also related to staff concerns regarding councillor to staff interactions. Respect is a word repeated in Codes of Conduct as well as these values.

- **"Have the courage to stand up for what is right and inspire others to value integrity and respect"**. This value is most important for the new council and organisation heading into a new term.

Adherence to the Values is the first step in ensuring not only very good performance but also that the Council is an attractive and safe place to work.

Councillors were asked to briefly state what they would like mentioned in the report.

Responses included:

- "one size does not fit all",
- "the truth",
- "make a clear statement about the difference between operational and strategic sufficient for the community to understand the difference also",
- "training to ensure the organisation does not walk past obvious maintenance works and that we all take pride in our work", and
- "for councillors to be treated like adults".

In relation to the request to clarify councillors strategic role, I note that this will form part of the councillors induction training. I also note that there are many publicly available resources (such as the candidate training prepared by DGS, the MAV's Citizen to Councillor Guide 2024 and the VLGA's Good Governance Guide) which include helpful information about the role of councillors.

The executive were asked a similar question and their responses included:

- "we are resource poor, we need greater federal assistance grants and it is not all doom and gloom, we have good people doing good work",
- "we have high overheads because of our location, high expectation to deliver business as usual whilst recovering from major flood and storm events",
- "we are proud of what we do and who we are",
- "behaviour issues are the major concern", and
- "the new council will be an opportunity for a reset".

1.3 Monitoring activities

1.3.1 Establishing action sheets relating to my terms of reference (TOR), and covering, Indoor Staff issues, Outdoor Staff issues, Councillor issues, Community issues and Behavioural issues. The behavioural issues range from bullying and harassment allegations to general human resource matters such as recruitment to examples of poor communication. There are approximately 200 individual actions associated with the 7 action sheets. As at 5/12/24, 80 are complete/closed or 39%. Some Councillors would debate that if more tasks were done on time, they wouldn't feel the need to be so operational.

1.3.2 Attending meetings, including Councillor meetings, Council Briefings, Executive meetings, Audit and Risk committee (ARC) meetings and other Community meetings. Generally, the behaviour at these meetings has been good. ***I have only***

had to call out poor Councillor behaviour at Councillor briefings twice. With regard to the Audit and Risk committee it is relevant to look at some comments found in the Chairs annual report: "It has been an ongoing concern to this Committee that there have been considerable delays in the finalisation of the internal audit reports."" Given the important value of internal audits to drive process improvement and the education and development of the organisation, the Committee strongly encourages a greater focus on completing the outstanding audits." ... Following these comments from the Chair of the Audit and Risk committee, it is fair to say that greater focus needs to be applied to ARC matters.

1.3.3 Councillor induction has started and I have presented the key findings of my report.

1.3.4 Requesting a review of the financial indicators in the 24/25 budget and trends for the future. This report is attached and summary comments provided in section 2(g) below.

1.3.5 Observing the CEO's annual review process. An independent consultant was engaged by Council to oversee the annual review and from what I observed very good governance was adhered to.

1.3.6 Contributing advice as part of initial policy reviews, including the Governance Rules, Councillor/Staff interaction policy and Community Grants Policy. Significant work has been done by the organisation to review and update its policies of recent times. Prior to the elections, Councillors had started discussing proposed Governance Rule changes during two productive sessions, however the adoption of any changes will be for the newly elected Council. The pre-2024 election Councillors were reluctant to move away from raising and discussing operational matters at Council meetings as well as changes relating to meeting times and locations. The changes to delegate decision making to staff for community grants in accordance with a VAGO recommendation was proposed in a report to a Council meeting however the report lapsed due to lack of a seconder to the motion. This is reflective of a sentiment amongst some Councillors that their role is being diminished, a view that "one size does not fit all" and a concern by some Councillors that staff may be equally as likely as a Councillor to have a conflict of interest in relation to a community grant.

1.3.7 Undertaking a staff, Stop/Keep/Start survey. Approximately 40% of staff participated in this voluntary survey. The average staff satisfaction rating was 50%.

Stop responses related to alleged poor recruitment practices and the delays with the Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA). Staff wanted poor behaviour including bullying and abuse to stop as well as poor communication to be addressed.

Keep responses related to local employment opportunities, flexible work arrangements and the friendly wonderful people that work at the Council. They want to keep listening to the community and spend more money on roads.

Start responses related to fair recruitment processes, the timing of the new EBA having annual reviews completed on time, improve communications, ensuring

the executive is more visible and the prevention of bullying and a higher pursuit of respect.

1.3.8 Reviewing other data sets.

- **2024 Community Satisfaction Survey** (2021 to 2024). Waste Management has remained constant at 68 to 66. Declines in satisfaction have occurred for Customer Service (69 to 57), Making Community Decisions (61 to 52), Community Consultation (60 to 50), Overall Performance (62 to 49), Value for Money (52 to 43), Overall Council direction (54 to 38), and Sealed Roads (48 to 37). Some arrest of the decline has been seen in the last 12 months and areas such as Recreational Facilities show an increase from the previous year, (68 to 72). These figures show a need for change as some of them are amongst the lowest in the State. Council's summary of these results says, "Council should look to strengthen confidence among residents in the effectiveness of its decision making, as perceptions of council decision making have the strongest influence on overall performance." This relates to several aspects of the Council however it would include the standard of debate around a decision, the behavioural standards surrounding the debate and the decision itself. Currently the Council's decision making processes (especially in relation to Councillor debate and conduct during Council meetings and the quality of Council decisions) are producing very low community satisfaction results. That should be enough incentive for change.
- **All Staff Meeting Survey.** Staff input into the results of the August all staff meeting survey was extensive. The results included similar comments to other staff surveys such as the need for improved communications, greater leadership, a need to improve staff response time, improvements to recruiting, requests for more staff, more flexible working arrangements, provision of housing for staff, better equipment, more training, an improved website and better promotion of the Council's achievements.
- **McArthur Culture Survey.** This survey has been conducted since 2018, collates quarterly results and appears to have a workforce participation rate of about 25%. The results mostly show an average decline from 2018 to 2024. I do not think that this survey has been promoted for some time, that the results have been made available or that the results and trends have been used as a management tool. The lowest category with consistent decline from 2018 through to 2024 is "Communications". This is consistent with the other data available and requires immediate and significant change.
- **Outdoor Staff Culture and OH&S review (2020).** This report which goes back 4 years and the issues raised are similar and consistent with the issues noted above.

2. Governance at the Council

This section includes observations and findings in relation to matters contained in the terms of reference and have been informed by the action sheets relevant to each section and the activities discussed above in section 1.3.

(a) The Councillors understanding and performance of their statutory roles and responsibilities, including in relation to the separation of roles between councillors and the Chief Executive Officer.

Whilst the councillors understand the difference between the role of a Councillor and the role of the CEO, some do not accept that they have a limited role in operational matters. Wanting to maintain, "Councillor Question time", as a standing agenda item at Council meetings to question and berate council staff in relation to road grading matters (as an example) shows a misunderstanding of their role. Section 28(3) of the Act says the role of Councillors does not include the performance of any responsibilities or functions of the CEO. The CEO is responsible for all staff and Councillors should not be attempting to use the Council meeting to performance manage staff. The new Councillor induction period will be an opportunity for further training and education for Councillors to ensure they understand and accept their statutory role and the important separation between the role of Councillor and the CEO. In my view the main tool for guiding councillors away from raising operational matters in Council meetings and briefings is to improve the way operational matters are recorded, responded to, and reported. Currently councillors are saying this is not working and that they are required to keep raising matters because they are unresolved.

(b) The Council's meeting procedures and decision-making processes, including councillor attendance at briefings and Council meetings, and the adequacy of the Governance Rules.

Generally, the meetings and briefings I have attended have been conducted well. I did miss a September briefing, and it has been reported to me that it got a little out of hand. This raises concerns about whether the Council will sustain improved practices and performance when a monitor is no longer present. The briefings tend to go a little too late and can finish at 9pm in a location that still requires a further 30 to 40 min drive in areas known for kangaroos and with several potholes. These are not safe conditions particularly in winter for staff or Councillors. This matter was attempted to be addressed in a report to the November Council meeting recommending 4pm starts to meetings. It was disappointing to see the new Council not support this recommendation and raises concerns about whether the new Council are willing to change in other areas also. A review of "pre 2024 election" Councillor's attendance and reasons for any absence from meetings has been undertaken. This included the review of previous independent work and several of the recommendations in this report are aimed at providing safe opportunities for people to attend meetings and for Councillors and staff to perform their respective roles. The Governance Rules have been reviewed by an external consultant. "Pre 2024 election" Councillors, prior to the election, have been briefed on the changes and have had an opportunity for input. Subject to final preparation of the document the new Council are to consider and resolve to place the document on public exhibition at the December 2024 Council meeting. This will see new Governance Rules in place early in 2025. The new Governance Rules are improved in many ways. However, some councillors see these changes as unnecessarily restricting the way they perform their role. There is strong reluctance for change amongst some councillors.

(c) The relationship between councillors and between councillors and council staff, including councillor behaviour with respect to

Councillor codes of Conduct and processes for resolving disputes between councillors.

Poor Councillor behaviour has been the primary issue affecting good governance and performance at the Council. In my view, poor Councillor behaviour directly relates to poor Community Satisfaction Survey Results. Satisfaction results for, “Overall Performance” have decreased from 62 to 49 and results for “Overall Council direction” have decreased from 54 to 38 (over a 4-year period). These results should be incentive enough for Councillors to refrain from poor behaviour.

More importantly poor behaviour over extended periods negatively impacts mental health. I have reviewed several behavioural matters within the Council and what I find is that if the codes of conduct and values of the organisation were followed, particularly in relation to treating everyone with respect, there would not be many issues. Like the experience of many other councils from the previous term, this poor behaviour is difficult to prevent and it is difficult to deal with when it occurs. Quite often, processes to address disputes rely on the different accounts of the parties to the interaction without the benefits of the accounts of other witnesses. Sometimes the behaviour of a Councillor may not constitute a serious matter, and this may go unaddressed. However, if continued over a longer term even minor behaviour problems can wear down and negatively affect the recipient and witnesses of the behaviour. I have received several examples of poor councillor behaviour negatively impacting on staff which has influenced their decision to leave the Council.

This is the main issue that the new Council need to understand from the past, poor Councillor behaviour can cause staff to leave and negatively impact the Councils performance results. The new mandatory Model Councillor Code of Conduct will assist with improved Councillor conduct. However, there is still no legislative basis for a CEO to make a complaint about minor but persistent inappropriate Councillor behaviour through the Councillor conduct framework. Consideration should be given to providing the CEO with the ability to report minor but persistent inappropriate Councillor behaviour directly to the Local Government Inspectorate (LGI). Municipal Monitors appointed to Councils across Victoria are identifying poor Councillor behaviour as a major issue affecting Council governance.

The new Council as part of their annual mandatory training should take a deeper dive into what constitutes poor behaviour, what the individual councillor’s role is in monitoring and reporting poor behaviour and what the impacts of this poor behaviour are, including impacts on mental and physical health, difficulty attracting and retaining highly skilled and specialist staff and poor Councillor performance results.

- (d) Support for the CEO to effectively perform their responsibilities and functions, including in relation to establishing policies and practices that manage the interactions between Councillors and Council staff and contractors.

Work in this space continues but I have focussed my efforts on attending meetings and providing advice in relation to Councillor behaviour, observing the CEO’s annual performance review process, drafting new governance rules, and assisting with the

adoption of a new Councillor/Staff interaction Policy. All policy review underway at the moment is attempting to adopt best practice and this will provide benefit to the new Council in this next term.

(e) **The Council's processes and practices in relation to health and safety, including any matters that may be creating a serious risk to the health and safety of councillors, Council staff or other persons.**

The main issues which have been reported to me are alleged instances of poor behaviour described in some instances as bullying and harassment. This includes Councillor to Councillor, Councillor to staff and staff to staff. Council has very good existing Codes of Conduct and dispute resolution is described in these codes. The new Mandatory Model Councillor Code of Conduct will be another step forward in guiding better behaviour. Some of these instances of alleged poor behaviour have been investigated and found to either be not supported or to have insufficient information to adjudicate. There is a reluctance to directly report for fear of retribution. I have suggested that Council address this matter which includes providing adequate support for complaint handling. The new Council with its new mix of councillors has an opportunity to reset and reinforce high standards of Councillor behaviour.

(f) **The Council's policies, processes and practices related to the management of conflicts of interest.**

Conflict of interest provisions are described in the new Mandatory Model Councillors Code of Conduct and the relevant sections of the Act are referenced.

The Council failed to adopt a new Community Grants policy at the August 2024 Council meeting. If adopted this would have resulted in staff determining community grants in accordance with the VAGO recommendation from a fraud and corruption investigation. VAGO recommended that councillors should not be involved in the decision-making process for community grants due to the risk of conflict of interest. There was no seconder for the motion and no debate, so the matter lapsed. The concerns expressed at briefings before the matter was considered at the Council meeting gives some insight into the lack of understanding of conflict of interest and good governance by the Councillors. They were concerned that removing their ability to determine community grants would diminish their role as a Councillor and some councillors considered that the staff may be equally as likely as a Councillor to have a conflict of interest in relation to community grants. The Executive are proposing to bring this policy back to the new council for its consideration. The new Council should take the opportunity to implement improvements to its Community Grants policy based on the findings and recommendations of VAGO.

(g) **The Council's community engagement and financial and asset management practices, including its ability to meet current and future needs of the community.**

Community engagements seem to work well considering the limited resources the Council has to devote to engagement.

The Councils' **financial practices** are well guided by the consultants engaged by the Council and the internal staff working in this space. The CEO has provided comment on the longer-term arrangements for the financial team to ensure ongoing coverage of this vital area including the soon to be appointed manager of Finance. There is a good understanding of the levers to pull to ensure financial stability. That said there are significant pressures on rural councils such as rate capping, natural disasters, staff turnover and reduced financial assistance from the Federal Government. An independent review of the financial indicators for the 24/25 budget and the longer term has been completed. The final report from the review, **"External review of the Buloke Shire Councils current and future financial position, October 2024" (the independent Financial Report) is enclosed with this report.** This independent report notes that *"The current financial position of the Buloke Shire is quite sound"....* however, it cautions that *"The forward financial outlook based on models prepared is not as positive for the Council."* In order for the Council to maintain a strong cash position and ensure longer term financial sustainability, the report suggests that the Council will need to:

- invest time and resources reviewing its modelling,
- consider the extent of capital works it can afford with possible reductions,
- reduce or remove some services,
- engage in asset rationalisation, and
- consult with the community in relation to the possibility of applying for a rate cap exemption.

The Independent Financial Report recommends an organisation wide review to consider these matters. My advice is to include an assessment of the efficiency of running 4 office sites and 5 depot sites as part of this review.

The Independent Financial Report also notes the risk associated with the current estimated National Disaster Relief claim of \$82m. Currently this figure is not accounted for and will obviously have a large impact on future budgets and the Council's resources required to deliver. My advice is that the Council should attempt to de risk this matter as much as possible including by writing to the Federal and State Governments to confirm the current claim. The Council has made submissions to recent Federal and State financial sustainability reviews and both conclude that rate capping is restricting income below increases in CPI over many years and that rural councils such as Buloke that have had significant impacts from natural disasters over the last decade or more just cannot keep up with the impact on roads without an increase in the Federal Assistance Grants.

The Independent Financial Report also notes that the cost of landfill rehabilitation will need to be budgeted for in future capital works programs. Included in this would be the Sea Lake Landfill rehabilitation which has initial estimates of several million dollars associated with rehabilitation. My advice is that the Council adopt this financial report and its findings in full and modify their future budgets and long-term financial plans accordingly.

Asset Management is suffering from an inability to fill vacant positions. The Council has a high turnover rate and on top of that some positions are just very difficult to fill. A review of the Asset Management Systems needs to be completed in conjunction with two other councils, Swan Hill and Gannawarra. Once that review is complete the asset data needs confirmation of its completeness and accuracy. Currently the Asset Renewal financial indicators suggest on average over the next 4 years that asset renewal will be fully funded at above 100%. This is a good sign however it relies on accurate data to be a sound indicator. The Independent Financial Report also includes comments on renewal expenditure. The report suggests that in attempting to maintain its current strong cash position *"this may lead to reductions in the Councils ability to undertake capital works and may in turn lead to increased challenges in terms of adequately renewing Councils assets."* This further reinforces the need to finalise the asset system review and then a check of data completeness and accuracy. A specific review of asset useful lives, replacement value and depreciation will assist in improving confidence around the amount of funds required to keep asset renewal at 100% even if the total capital works program needs to be reduced. Funding of asset renewal at 100% must be a fundamental financial and asset management principle otherwise the Councils assets cannot be maintained and will just deteriorate.

(h) Any support needed in the lead up to and following the elections in October 2024 to ensure good governance at the Council.

The Councils role in the election was well handled. Discussions with the VEC indicated that they had good support from Council to perform their role.

(i) Any other matters that may be affecting the Council's ability to effectively perform, including behaviour that may be preventing the Council from performing its functions.

The following two matters are relevant:

1. Council owns a **Caravan Park at Charlton** where a private operator runs the park under the guidance of a committee with a connection to the "Charlton Forum". It is unclear at this stage if Councils risk is sufficiently protected with the current arrangements in place for the management of the facility.
2. The **Sea Lake landfill** has an EPA notice on it to report annually due to its condition and location and the Council whilst responsible for the site do not own the land on which it is located. My advice is that the Council comply with any EPA notice, budget for appropriate works and secure the site through acquisition as soon as possible.

3. Recommendations

1. That the Council:

- i. Ensures that adherence to organisational values is embedded in annual staff performance reviews.
- ii. Ensures that councillors and staff are aware of avenues to report poor councillor and staff behaviour and that there are adequate complaint handling processes in place to ensure the safety of parties to a complaint.
- iii. Provides ongoing training in relation to the benefits of good behaviour and the consequences of poor behaviour.
- iv. Adjusts its meeting times and locations to ensure a safe environment is provided for councillors and staff traveling to these meetings.
- v. Conducts annual culture surveys open to all staff, reports the results annually to the Council and staff and implements actions to address the results.
- vi. Develops a staff retention plan by 3 June 2025 which identifies issues such as flexible work arrangements, working from home, provision of housing for key staff, remuneration rates, working hours and working days (consideration of a 4-day working week) and other employment benefits that may attract and retain staff in a rural setting.
- vii. Conducts a review of its process for recording and responding to operational requests to ensure an efficient process which supports councillors to concentrate on strategic matters.
- viii. Considers consolidating indoor and outdoor staff locations to assist with communication, service and project delivery, and overall Council performance.
- ix. Adopts the financial guidance provided in the report titled "External review of Buloke Shire Council's current and future financial position, October 2024" and ensures that the Council's budgets and long-term financial plans incorporate the suggestions and guidance from this report.
- x. Adopts an improved Community Grants Policy in accordance with the previous VAGO recommendation and continues to work on other policy improvements including exhibition of new Governance Rules.
- xi. Ensures it has adequate processes in place to record and manage the completion of Internal Audit reports.
- xii. Finalises its review of its Asset Management Systems during 2025 and completes an assessment of the data for completeness and accuracy prior to the end of 2025.
- xiii. Implements improved governance and financial accounting practices for the Charlton Caravan Park
- xiv. In relation to the Sea Lake Landfill site, ensures compliance with EPA directions, budgets appropriately for any required rehabilitation in accordance with EPA directions and moves to secure ownership of the site as soon as practicable.
- xv. Requests a review of the Natural Disaster funding process to make the process more efficient and ask the Federal and State Government for early confirmation that additional claims have a confirmed funding source.
- xvi. Write to the Federal Government requesting an increase to the Federal Assistance Grants for Rural Councils.

2. That the Minister request a report from the Council every six months for a period of two years on its progress to address the matters noted above, including whether the Council considers that a municipal monitor is needed to support the Council.
3. That the Minister consider expanding the powers of the Chief Municipal Inspector to bring applications alleging misconduct by councillors based on complaints from council Chief Executive Officers.



Peter Harriott
Municipal Monitor



**Municipal Monitor Final Report Recommendations
 Implementation Plan and Status Report
 29 January 2025**

Recommendations Status Report as at 31 July 2026			
No.	Recommendations	Status	Commentary
i.	Ensures that adherence to organisational values is embedded in annual staff performance reviews.	Completed 28 May 2026	<p>Council’s employee performance appraisal period commenced in September 2025 with a review of the previous manual (paper based) process, following the recruitment of a new Manager of People and Culture. The review has included the development of a new automated process using Council’s existing HR and Payroll platform, (Employment Hero) which provides improved access and transparency for employees and people leaders alike. Incorporated into the appraisal process is an opportunity for officers and Team leaders to reflect on achievements, discuss professional development requirements and review individual adherence to the Council values. Each of Council’s values is embedded within this process and can be accessed within the employee’s portal through Employment Hero at any time.</p> <p>In accordance with the key performance indicators of senior leadership, Council has reviewed and further refined the annual performance review process to ensure complete alignment with the overall organisational values. The process has been made completely transparent and accessible all year round through the employment hero application. The new process will ensure completion in quarter 1 of the new financial year in accordance with Council’s enterprise bargaining agreement.</p>

ii.	Ensures that councillors and staff are aware of avenues to report poor councillor and staff behaviour and that there are adequate complaint handling processes in place to ensure the safety of parties to a complaint.	<p>Completed</p> <p>31 December 2024</p>	<p>Completion of the Councillor Induction Program</p> <p>11 November 2024 Kate Oliver Maddocks General induction to the role and responsibilities of a Councillors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting procedure & proposed new Governance Rules • Model Code of Conduct • Biannual Interest Returns <p>13 November 2024 Natalie Walker Head of Sector Services MAV Establishing effective working relationships with officers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role of the CEO and council staff (repeat of Kate Oliver but the practicality of this) • The difference between the role of CEO and councillor (repeat of Kate Oliver but the practicality of this) • Legislative prohibition on directing council staff (repeat of Kate Oliver but the practicality of this) • Managing councillor and staff interactions • Skills on a building an effective working relationship with officers <p>12 & 13 December 2025 MAV Mayoral Training Program (Melbourne) Mayor and Deputy Mayor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Government Act, associated regulations
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviours • Dealing with Conflict • Chairing Meetings • Leadership • Establishing a Peer Support Network <p>Staff and Councillor Interaction Policy Adopted – September 2024 Councillor Internal Resolution Procedure Adopted – August 2025</p>
iii.	Provides ongoing training in relation to the benefits of good behaviour and the consequences of poor behaviour	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>28 May 2026</p>	Included in the Councillor Professional Development Training for 2026.
iv.	Adjusts its meeting times and locations to ensure a safe environment is provided for councillors and staff traveling to these meetings.	<p>Completed</p> <p>20 November 2024</p>	<p>Councillor Briefings are now held monthly on rotation in each of the ten different towns within the Shire, on the first Wednesday of the month at 5:00pm. Where a 2nd briefing was previously scheduled, Council now in 2025, has replaced this additional briefing with dedicated/topical workshops during business hours, for the development of Council's key strategic planning documents. This structure has worked well for staff providing input into these processes.</p> <p>Briefings held during the day were given due consideration, however the hearing of matters relative to key Council decisions which impact the community must be heard in accordance with the Community Engagement Policy. It is also important for Council to engage with community organisations and key stakeholders within the 10 different towns across the municipality. The 5.00pm commencement time for Briefings was retained as a result of travel time to enable this consultation. Tyranny of distance across the municipality continues to be a factor with assemblies of staff and Councillors alike.</p>

			<p>Council Meetings are open to the Public and are held on the third Wednesday of each month commencing at 7.00pm. For the above reasons described for Briefings, Council has retained the 7.00pm start time for Council Meetings to allow for travel times.</p> <p>In May 2026, a new Planning and Related Matters briefing was introduced to afford Council an opportunity to hear complex planning matters during the day, at a central location, with reliable technology connection and staff access. Additionally, a quarterly strategic briefing will be trialled in August 2026 during the day, to capture the more organisational-centric and strategic planning matters. These initiatives will help ensure the regular briefings do not exceed an appropriate duration when considering travel.</p>
v.	<p>Conducts annual culture surveys open to all staff, reports the results annually to the Council and staff and implements actions to address the results.</p>	<p>Progressing 30 June 2026</p>	<p>All staff gender equality surveying was undertaken in May 2025, results were delivered in September 2025. Officers are focusing attention on gender equality reporting and review/updating of Council's GEAP ahead of the due date for compliance in May 2026.</p> <p>A Staff feedback survey has been undertaken at 2 All Staff meetings held in 2024 and again in June 2025. Another survey will be offered to staff in December 2025 at the end of year staff gathering.</p> <p>A 2026 Staff Satisfaction Survey is currently being undertaken across the organisation, due for completion in June 2026.</p>
vi.	<p>Develops a staff retention plan by 3 June 2025 which identifies issues such as flexible work arrangements, working from home, provision of housing for key staff, remuneration rates,</p>	<p>Not yet commenced</p>	<p>Council's new Enterprise Bargaining Agreement was endorsed by the Fair Work Commission in January 2025. Following this, Council have undertaken internal consultation and review processes to update and develop a new People and Culture Policy Manual. This will form the basis of any future retention plans in conjunction with Council's workforce plan (due for review under new CEO) and the reviewed and updated GEAP (due for completion by May 2026).</p>

	working hours and working days (consideration of a 4-day working week) and other employment benefits that may attract and retain staff in a rural setting.		Council's nominal expiry date of 30 June 2026 for the current EBA (No.8) in conjunction with the FairWork legislation changes has required Council to focus on a proactive approach to staff consultation during this time ahead of the potential for Council to be 'roped in' to a multi enterprise agreement.
vii.	Conducts a review of its process for recording and responding to operational requests to ensure an efficient process which supports councillors to concentrate on strategic matters.	Progressing 31 March 2026	<p>Management is currently reviewing the Customer Requests process to support Councillors. The process review includes the processing, follow up and reporting on Customer Requests raised via the Mayor and Councillors.</p> <p>A new Councillor information portal was developed in November 2024 and provides improved access to information and updates for Councillors. The function of a newly introduced 'query' form in the portal allows Councillors to submit any questions/concerns in the 1 space to ensure a smoother process for information gathering and sharing in a transparent manner with all Councillors.</p> <p>Council's new document management system is continuing to provide further efficiencies as an 'actions' register for all resolutions of Council. Its functionality will soon be expanded to internal management meetings which allow further efficiencies through the tracking of actions and workflows. This system has the functionality to improve the way in which Councillors are able to read and review strategic information from current and past meetings and briefings.</p>
viii.	Considers consolidating indoor and outdoor staff locations to assist with communication, service and project delivery, and overall Council performance.	Progressing	Council is considering ways in which improved and consolidated working environments for officers can be achieved, given the challenges of distance across the municipality. Technology has played a role initially, with televisions installed in offices and depots with internally broadcasted information to all locations to improve communications between indoor and outdoor staff.

ix.	Adopts the financial guidance provided in the report titled “External review of Buloke Shire Council’s current and future financial position, October 2024” and ensures that the Council’s budgets and long-term financial plans incorporate the suggestions and guidance from this report.	<p>Completed</p> <p>5 November 2025</p>	<p>Since the October 2024 General Election and the subsequent Councillor Induction Program, Councillors have been on a journey and contributed to Councils overall strategic planning requirements.</p> <p>Council’s strategic plans are developed in accordance with an integrated approach to planning and reporting driven by the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>.</p> <p>The Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework outlines Councils commitment to building a strategic planning and reporting system that is connected, inter-dependent, and outcomes focused.</p> <p>The framework is designed to give the Council and the community a clear picture of the Vision, what will deliver to get there, and the resources needed to deliver. This will then be reported to the community via the Annual Report.</p> <p>The work undertaken by Council, and the adoption by Council is as follows:</p> <p>Building a better Buloke 2040 - Community Vision File No: CM/13/09 5 November 2025</p> <p>Council Plan 2025 – 2029 File No: CM/13/09 18 June 2025</p> <p>Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025 – 2035 File No: PH/14/08 29 October 2025</p> <p>Financial Plan 2025 - 2035 File No: FM/15/01 29 October 2025</p> <p>Asset Plan 2025 - 2035 File No: GO/05/02</p>
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			<p>29 October 2025</p> <p>Budget 2025/26 File No: FM/05/02 18 June 2025</p> <p>Revenue and Rating Plan File No: CM/14/20 18 June 2025</p> <p>In developing both the Budget 2025/26 and Financial Plan 2025 – 2035, Council looked to strengthen its financial sustainability in accordance with Section 101 Financial Management Principles of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> by commencing to incorporate the recommendation of the External Review of Buloke Shire Council’s Current and Future Financial Position Report as prepared by MIK2 Consulting Services.</p>
x.	Adopts an improved Community Grants Policy in accordance with the previous VAGO recommendation and continues to work on other policy improvements including exhibition of new Governance Rules.	Progressing May 2026	<p>Council reviewed the Draft Governance Rules at its meeting held 18 December 2024. Council undertook a nine-week community consultation process.</p> <p>Council has been waiting for the release of the Model Governance Rules to finalise this matter.</p> <p>Council is currently reviewing the Community Support Policy and the associated Community Grant Guidelines.</p>
xi.	Ensures it has adequate processes in place to record and manage the completion of Internal Audit reports.	Completed May 2025	<p>Council appointed AFS & Associates Pty Ltd as its Internal Audit Services provider commencing January 2025.</p> <p>In engaging AFS & Associates Pty Ltd, Council was looking for an effective internal audit function. The internal audit function needs to be able to focus on managements intention and progress in implementing the agreed recommendations.</p>

			<p>AFS & Associates meet with individuals that have a responsibility for implementing past recommendations to assess the progress. This is completed annually, or more often as agreed. Progress is reported to the Audit & Risk Committee. In addition, AFS & Associates also hold close-out meetings with key stakeholders to discuss the key findings and management comments. This ensures everyone agrees and actions the recommendations.</p> <p>Internal Audit status reporting will be provided to the Audit & Risk Committee on a quarterly basis. Timeframes are also set for the provision of a draft report and the production of a final report.</p>
xii.	Finalises its review of its Asset Management Systems during 2025 and completes an assessment of the data for completeness and accuracy prior to the end of 2025.	Progressing 30 June 2026	<p>The Rural Council's Transformation Program Group (Swan Hill Rural City Council, Gannawarra Shire Council and Buloke Shire Council) have completed the joint procurement of a new Asset Management System (AMS). Asset Vision was appointed as the successful tenderer to supply and implement the integrated system.</p> <p>Implementation of the AMS is progressing through the delivery phase. Core system configuration has been completed. Configuration and setup of the transport asset register is approximately 90% complete, with finalisation expected by the end of the current financial year following review and development of road segmentation rules.</p> <p>A data review is currently underway for building, open space and land assets in preparation for system import by 15 May 2026. The Finance asset register for buildings and land has been used as the baseline dataset, with additional registers being incorporated to improve completeness and accuracy. Asset valuation data is scheduled to be loaded in the next phase of the project.</p>

			<p>In addition, an extra resource has been appointed through the RCTP project to review system configuration and data and ensure alignment across the three Councils. This role provides independent oversight of configuration decisions, data structures, asset registers, and reporting frameworks to reduce inconsistency and duplication. The focus is on establishing common standards and approaches where appropriate, improving data quality and reliability, and ensuring that system setup supports effective governance and reporting outcomes. This alignment is also intended to strengthen business continuity, enable knowledge sharing between Councils, and support the longer-term potential for shared services and operational efficiencies arising from the shared AMS platform.</p> <p>Due to the emergency event in March 2026, works on this project have been slightly delayed.</p>
xiii.	Implements improved governance and financial accounting practices for the Charlton Caravan Park.	<p>Progressing 30 June 2026</p>	<p>Consultation is ongoing with the stakeholders involved to formalize this arrangement.</p> <p>Council is working directly with the Caravan Park Management to support improved governance and oversight where possible.</p> <p>The overseeing of the management of the Charlton Caravan Park was transferred from the Travellers Rest Committee to the Charlton Forum Inc. in 2025.</p> <p>Council officers are currently working with the Charlton Forum Inc to finalise a draft agreement to formalise this arrangement.</p>
xiv.	In relation to the Sea Lake Landfill site, ensures compliance with EPA	<p>Progressing 30 June 2026</p>	<p>At this stage no further action undertaken. In developing the Financial Plan 2025 – 2035, Council looked to strengthen its financial sustainability in accordance with Section 101 Financial Management Principals of the Local</p>

	directions, budgets appropriately for any required rehabilitation in accordance with EPA directions and moves to secure ownership of the site as soon as practicable.		<p>Government Act 2020 by commencing to incorporate the recommendation of the External Review of Buloke Shire Council's Current and Future Financial Position Report as prepared by MIK2 Consulting Services. Council will review its asset holdings to identify surplus assets not essential to service delivery. It is unlikely that Council will be seeking to add additional land holdings to its asset base when the External Review of Buloke Shire Council's Current and Future Financial Position Report advised Council of asset rationalisation.</p> <p>It is noted that the level of assets owned by Buloke Shire Council is above average. This represents an opportunity for Council in the future to review its asset holdings and determine if any assets are surplus to its needs to deliver services to the community.</p> <p>Asset rationalisation may then occur to improve Councils overall financial sustainability position.</p>
xv.	Requests a review of the Natural Disaster funding process to make the process more efficient and ask the Federal and State Government for early confirmation that additional claims have a confirmed funding source.	<p>Completed</p> <p>7 November 2025</p>	<p>Council has written to the following in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the ongoing and unacceptable delays in receiving adequate flood recovery funding from the Victorian State Government following the 2022 and 2023 flood events. The concerns over the deteriorating condition of the local roads, which pose serious safety risks to residents, school buses, contractors, and emergency services. requesting the immediate release of the full funding required to complete all outstanding flood recovery works. <p>Addressees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> State Government Minister for Roads and Road Safety The Hon. Melissa Horne MP

			<ul style="list-style-type: none">• State Shadow Minister for Roads and Road Safety and Shadow Minister for Emergency Services, Mr Danny O'Brien MP • State Member for Mildura, Jade Benham MP • Federal Member for Mallee, Dr Anne Webster MP • Municipal Association of Victoria • Australian Local Government Association • Rural Councils Victoria • Gannawarra Shire Council • Loddon Shire Council • Mildura Rural City Council • Northern Grampians Shire Council • Swan Hill Rural City Council
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yarriambiack Shire Council
xvi.	Write to the Federal Government requesting an increase to the Federal Assistance Grants for Rural Councils.	Completed 31 October 2025	<p>Correspondence sent to The Federal Treasurer, The Hon Dr Jim Chalmers MP In relation to having a Financial Assistance Grants Indexation Review.</p> <p>Council requests that the Federal Government review the indexation methodology of the Financial Assistance Grants to assist small rural councils to continue supporting their communities in financially challenging times.</p> <p>Council also calls on the Federal Government for the immediate restoration of the Financial Assistance Grants back to one (1) per cent of Commonwealth tax revenue. This increase to rural councils across Australia, those mostly impacted by limited revenue opportunities, to continue to deliver essential services and maintain infrastructure without continued financial constraints to our communities.</p>
2.	That the Minister request a report from the Council every six months for a period of two years on its progress to address the matters noted above, including whether the Council considers that a municipal monitor is needed to support the Council.	Progressing 31 July 2025 31 December 2025 31 July 2026 31 December 2026	<p>Council to report to the Minister every six months for a period of two years in July and December of each year.</p> <p>Report sent to the Minister 7 November 2025.</p> <p>Report sent to the Minister 9 January 2026.</p> <p>Next report to be submitted by 31 July 2026.</p>
3.	That the Minister consider expanding the powers of the Chief Municipal Inspector to bring applications alleging	No further action required	No further action required from Buloke Shire Council.

	misconduct by councillors based on complaints from council Chief Executive Officers.		
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8.2.4 COMMUNITY GRANTS AND SPONSORSHIPS

Author's Title: Senior Executive Assistant

Directorate: Office of the CEO

File No: GS/09/42

Relevance to Council Plan 2025 - 2029

Strategic Vibrant and connected communities

Objective: Empower and support organisations to make a difference in their communities

PURPOSE

To present to Council the applications recommended for funding under the Community Grants Program.

SUMMARY

Council allocates funds in its Annual Budget to support community initiatives that align with Council priorities and the Community Vision as outlined in the Council Plan.

The purpose of the grant programs is:

- **Community Grants** – to support the strengthening of the capacity and capability of local organisations, assist with the organisation and management of events, or help with the purchase of small capital items.
- **Sustainability Grants** – to assist projects that contribute to reducing the community's carbon footprint, improving the environment, or effectively conserving resource usage.
- **Sponsorship Grants** – to help promote a strong and involved Buloke community by helping deliver successful local events, projects, services and other activities.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council endorses the officer recommendation to fund the following projects under the 2025/26 Sustainability Grants Program:

\$9,823.00 – Birchip Leisure Centre – Project: Cool the View – Birchip Leisure Centre

\$2,000.00 – Culgoa Development Group Inc – Project: Heating and Cooling for the Hub

\$5,000.00 – Charlton Campdraft Club Inc – Project: Sustainable Tree Establishment and Water Efficiency Upgrade – Campdraft Grounds

DISCUSSION

Three 2025/26 Sustainability Grant Program applications have been assessed since the Council Meeting in November 2025.

In accordance with the Community Grant Program Guidelines, each application was reviewed by an Assessment Panel consisting of three Council officers from across the Community Development Directorate and Office of the CEO. Based on their assessment against the selection criteria, the Panel recommends the following three applications for Council's consideration and approval.

Name of Organisation	Birchip Leisure Centre Inc
Project Title	Cool the View – Birchip Leisure Centre
Grant Type	Sustainability Support Grant - Up to \$10,000
Total Amount Requested	\$9,823
Funding Amount Recommended	\$9,823
Full project cost	\$19,646
Project Description	The Birchip Leisure Centre is seeking funding for the cost of window tinting and purchase of blinds at the Birchip Leisure Centre.
What will the project/ event achieve	The project includes tinting windows on the north side of the Leisure Centre building and the purchase of window coverings to be installed inside the building. Better temperature regulation within the function centre will greatly improve the energy efficiency of the heating and cooling appliances used within the leisure centre.
Assessment Panel Scoring:	23 + 20 + 24 =67
Average Score:	22 out of 25

Name of Organisation	Culgoa Development Group Inc.
Project Title	Heating and Cooling for The Hub
Grant Type	Quick Action Sustainability Grant - Up to \$2,000
Total Amount Requested	\$2,000
Funding Amount Recommended	\$2,000
Full project cost	\$3,850
Brief Project Description	This project is for the purchase and installation of a heating and cooling appliance at the Culgoa Fundraising Hub.
What will the project/ event achieve	The Culgoa Fundraising Hub provides a meeting place for community members and a venue for the display of the history of the Culgoa township. The building currently does not have any heating or cooling. This project will improve the amenities of the building and create a welcoming environment for volunteers, community and visitors. The installation of heating and cooling within this valuable community space will increase visitation and usability.
Assessment Panel Scoring:	20 + 21 + 24 = 65
Average Score:	22 out of 25

Name of Organisation	Charlton Campdraft Club Inc
Project Title	Sustainable Tree Establishment and Water Efficiency Upgrade – Campdraft Grounds

Grant Type	Sustainability Support Grant - Up to \$10,000
Total Amount Requested	\$5,000
Funding Amount Recommended	\$5,000
Full project cost	\$8,000
Brief Project Description	This project will improve the campdraft grounds by establishing new tree plantings and installing an upgraded water system to enhance environmental sustainability, water efficiency, and overall community amenity.
What will the project/ event achieve	This project will deliver improved environmental and operational outcomes at the campdraft grounds by establishing new tree plantings and upgrading the existing water infrastructure. It will increase vegetation cover to provide shade, reduce wind and soil erosion, and enhance the overall amenity of the site for users and visitors. The installation of a more efficient poly pipe system will reduce water loss and improve water management, supporting more sustainable use of resources. Together, these works will create a more functional, and welcoming community facility for ongoing use.
Assessment Panel Scoring:	21 + 25 + 18 = 65
Average Score:	21 out of 25

The applications have been assessed in relation to the conditions of the grant guidelines, including receiving landowners consent and relevant approvals for works planned to be undertaken on land in which Council are not the land manager or owner.

RELEVANT LAW

Not applicable to this report.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

Not applicable to this report.

OPTIONS

Council has the option to not endorse the awarding of funds as recommended by the Assessment Panel, however, such amendments to the proposed funding recommendations may undermine the integrity and fairness of the assessment process.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The three projects listed above will all deliver tangible sustainability benefits by improving the energy efficiency and environmental performance of key community facilities. Together, they will enhance comfort and usability while reducing energy and water consumption, minimising resource loss, and lowering greenhouse gas emissions. The campdraft grounds project further strengthens these outcomes by increasing vegetation cover on the site. Collectively, these initiatives align with Council's commitment to supporting community-led projects that enhance environmental sustainability, strengthen community assets, and reduce the overall carbon footprint of both Council and the wider community.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Applicants were contacted by a Council officer if their application required additional information or clarification. The Community Grants Program is regularly promoted through Council's website and social media channels, local radio and printed media.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The Community Grants Program is consistently assessed to identify any opportunities for continuous improvement and to ensure it reflects the needs of the community.

COLLABORATION

Not applicable to this report.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The allocation of funds for the applications recommended for funding will come under the Sustainability Grants Program budget (\$50,000) in Council's Annual Budget 2025-26. There is currently \$29,830 of funds available in the adopted Community Grants Program budget for the 2025-26 financial year.

Previous Sustainability Grants awarded for the 2025-26 financial year include:

Grant Amount	Community Group and Project Name
\$8,001.07	Donald Lawn Tennis Club Project: Returning Service
\$10,000	Calder United Football Netball Hockey Club Project: Make King of the Mountain Sustainable
\$2,169.33	Donald Men's Shed Project: Beating the Blues

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not applicable to this report.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Buloke Shire Council Plan 2025-2029
Buloke Climate Change and Mitigation Strategy
Community Grant Guidelines
Community Engagement Policy
Community Support Policy

TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

This report recommends that Council endorses the recommended allocation of funding under the Community Grants Program.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No officer involved in the preparation of this report has declared a conflict of interest.

Attachments: Nil

8.3 FINANCIAL REPORTS

8.3.1 ANNUAL BUDGET FY2026-2027

Author's Title: Manager Financial Strategy

Directorate: Corporate and Organisational Performance **File No:** FM/02/09

Relevance to Council Plan 2025 - 2029

Strategic Objective: Council leadership and engagement
Responsible leadership and decision making

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present to Council the Annual Budget 2026-2027 for adoption in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, the *Local Government Act 1989*, and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014*.

SUMMARY

The Annual Budget 2026-2027 is presented for adoption, reflecting Council's priorities from the Long-Term Community Vision and 2025–2029 Council Plan.

The Annual Budget seeks to maintain Council services and planned capital works within the State Government's 2.75% rate cap.

The budget projects an operating surplus of \$33.6 million. However, Council's financial sustainability remains significantly dependent on external funding sources. While this funding will enable Council to maintain current service levels in the short term, the underlying deficit highlights the considerable monetary impact that would result if such funding were no longer available. For the current financial year, Council is forecasting an underlying deficit of \$8.4 million.

Council's external funding for 2026–27 includes \$41.77 million of which \$39.77 million is from non-recurrent grant revenue. This significant level of funding is primarily attributable to Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) provided through State and Federal Government funding assistance. Council has also budgeted for \$200,000 in contributions towards capital projects.

Community consultation on the draft budget was undertaken in accordance with the process outlined in the accompanying report.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Adopts the Annual Budget 2026-2027 as the final Adopted Annual Budget of Council for the 2026-2027 financial year (as attached and circulated) with adjustments identified since the release of the Draft Annual Budget, including consequential adjustments to the Income Statement, Balance Sheet, and all relevant sections of the document, as detailed in this Report;
2. Endorses the Annual Budget 2026-2027 to be placed on Council's website to be viewed and accessed by public;

3. Notes the changes from the Draft Annual Budget 2026-2027 as a result of submissions considered by Council and as outlined within this Report;
4. Authorises the Director of Corporate and Organisational Performance to respond in writing to community budget submissions in accordance with this Report;
5. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to effect minor administrative (wording) changes to the Annual Budget 2026-2027 which may be required;
6. Adopts and declares the fees and charges listed under Appendix A within the Annual Budget 2026-2027 for the financial year 2026-2027;
7. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to levy and recover the general rates and annual service charges in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1989*;
8. Declares an amount of \$16.3 million which Council intends to raise by General Rates and Annual Service Charges for the period 1 July 2026 – 30 June 2027 calculated as follows:

General Rates (including estimated supplementary rates) \$13.68 million.

Municipal Charges \$850,000; and

Annual Service Charges (Waste Management) \$1.74 million

9. Declares a Municipal Charge of \$191 for each rateable assessment in respect of which a Municipal Charge may be levied in the financial year 2026-2027;
10. Declares an Annual Service Charge of \$496 for kerbside garbage and recycling collection for the period 1 July 2026 to 30 June 2027;
11. Declares the rate in the dollar for each type of rate to be levied for the period as follows -

Type of property	Cents in \$ on CIV
Residential	0.504632
Commercial and Industrial	0.583496
Farming	0.232131

12. Adopts to levy the general rates and service charges referred to in this resolution by the service notice on each person liable to pay such rate or charge in accordance with section 158 of the *Local Government Act 1989* and;
13. In accordance with section 167 of the *Local Government Act 1989*, adopts the rates and charges declared by the Council for the financial year 2026-2027 and declare that they must be paid as follows:

By four instalments made on or before the following dates:

Instalment 1 – 30 September 2026;

Instalment 2 – 30 November 2026;

Instalment 3 – 28 February 2027;

Instalment 4 – 31 May 2027

OR

By a lumpsum payment made on or before 15 February 2027.

DISCUSSION

Council is required to prepare and adopt a Budget for each financial year, together with the subsequent three financial years, by 30 June of the preceding year.

Council's Draft Annual Budget 2026-2027 was out for public exhibition in accordance with Council's Community Engagement policy. This provides the community with an opportunity to give feedback as well as to provide submissions for consideration in the adopted final budget by Council. Hence, there may be changes between the Draft Annual Budget and the Adopted Annual Budget for the year.

The following changes have been made to the Draft Annual Budget as a result of successful public submissions (if any) and post-public exhibition review by management –

PART i) Changes having Financial Implications

Comprehensive Income Statement

Operating Result - Exhibited Draft Annual Budget		\$31,813,000
Income/(Expenditure)	Detail	
Capital Grants	Safer Local Grants*	\$2,000,000
Capital Grants	Wyche Netball Court and Lighting*	(\$200,000)
Contributions	Increase in administration income towards Essential Services Volunteers Fund (ESVF)	\$14,000
Amortisation of vehicles	Re-allocated to materials and services	\$34,000
Material and Services	Council software upgrade	(\$34,000)
Material and Services	Increase in debt collection	(\$14,000)
Revised Operating Result in Budget for Adoption		\$33,613,000

**These are not new submissions/projects, they have not been reflected in the comprehensive statement due to an error in an excel formula*

Balance Sheet - Cash - Exhibited Draft Annual Budget	\$	16,174,000
Adjustments made to material and services	\$	8,111
Adjustments made to capital grants	\$	1,800,000
Balance Sheet - Cash - Adopted budget	\$	17,982,111

There are no changes made to the Statement of Capital Works.

PART ii) Changes having Non-Financial Implications

Rates and Charges

While the total amount of Rate and Charges have not changed, 'Rate in the Dollar' has been updated to reflect the Stage 4 Valuations.

Rate in Dollar	Exhibited Draft Annual Budget	Adopted Annual Budget
Residential	0.504972426	0.504632477
Commercial and Industrial	0.583889516	0.58349644
Farming	0.232287316	0.232130939

Further adjustments may occur in October 2026 when the September quarterly report is reviewed, following completion of the 2025-2026 year-end audit. These will majorly include - carryover of unfinished 2025-2026 capital projects.

Once adopted, the revised October budget becomes the official budget for reporting for the remainder of the financial year.

RELEVANT LAW

The Annual Budget has been prepared in accordance with relevant statutory requirements, including the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) and *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014* (the Regulations).

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

Council had adopted the Draft Annual Budget 2026-2027 for public exhibition at the council meeting on 15 April 2026.

OPTIONS

It is the officer's recommendation to adopt the Annual Budget 2026-2027.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct sustainability implications associated with this report; however, the Annual Budget does include planned resource allocations toward sustainability, social and environmental services, and projects.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Council's Draft Annual Budget 2026-2027 was out for public exhibition from 16 April 2026 to 07 May 2026 in accordance with Council's Community Engagement policy.

The following submissions were received by Council as part of the public exhibition process –

No	Submission Group	Description of Project/Submission	Outcome
1	Advance Sea Lake – Visitor Information Centre	Re-opening of the Sea Lake Visitor Information Centre including appointment of a tourism officer/s to support tourism across the Shire.	Partially accepted, no changes to the 26/27 Annual Budget
2	Birchip Community Forum	Amphitheatre at Memorial Park – feasibility study and design.	No changes to the 26/27 Annual Budget
3	Birchip Community Forum	Upgrade to Birchip skatepark – pump track and complementary features to create a broader range of use.	No changes to the 26/27 Annual Budget
4	Buloke Tourism Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual contribution allocation to be increased in lines with rate cap. - Sea Lake Tourism Information Centre to be kept operational. 	No changes to the 26/27 Annual Budget
5	Donald Learning Group	Replacement of carpet and laminate flooring in the kitchen area.	No changes to the 26/27 Annual Budget

6	Individual Community Member	Extension of walking tracks in Charlton.	No changes to the 26/27 Annual Budget
7	Wyche Alive	Multiple projects as follows - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Footpath Lighting - Disable parking around O'Connor Street and V/Line Bus on service road - Mount Street Declassification - Microgrid at Saleyards - Footpath Works - Caravan Park Lighting 	No changes to the 26/27 Annual Budget

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The Annual Budget 2026-2027 identifies how Council proposes to resource strategic objectives related to continued service improvement for efficient and flexible services.

COLLABORATION

Council have undertaken 3 detailed workshops in developing the Annual Budget 2026-2027 with Council Staff.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The Annual Budget is for the financial year 1 July 2026 to 30 June 2027 and contains financial statements including:

- Comprehensive Income Statement,
- Balance Sheet,
- Statement of Changes in Equity,
- Statement of Cash flows,
- Statement of Capital Works, and
- Statement of Human Resources.

The Annual Budget also includes information about the rates and charges to be levied, the capital works program to be undertaken, the human resources required, and other information.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Consideration has been given to other regional, state, and national plans and policies as required throughout the preparation of this budget.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

The Annual Budget provides resourcing to enable continued implementation of Council's current plans and strategies.

TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

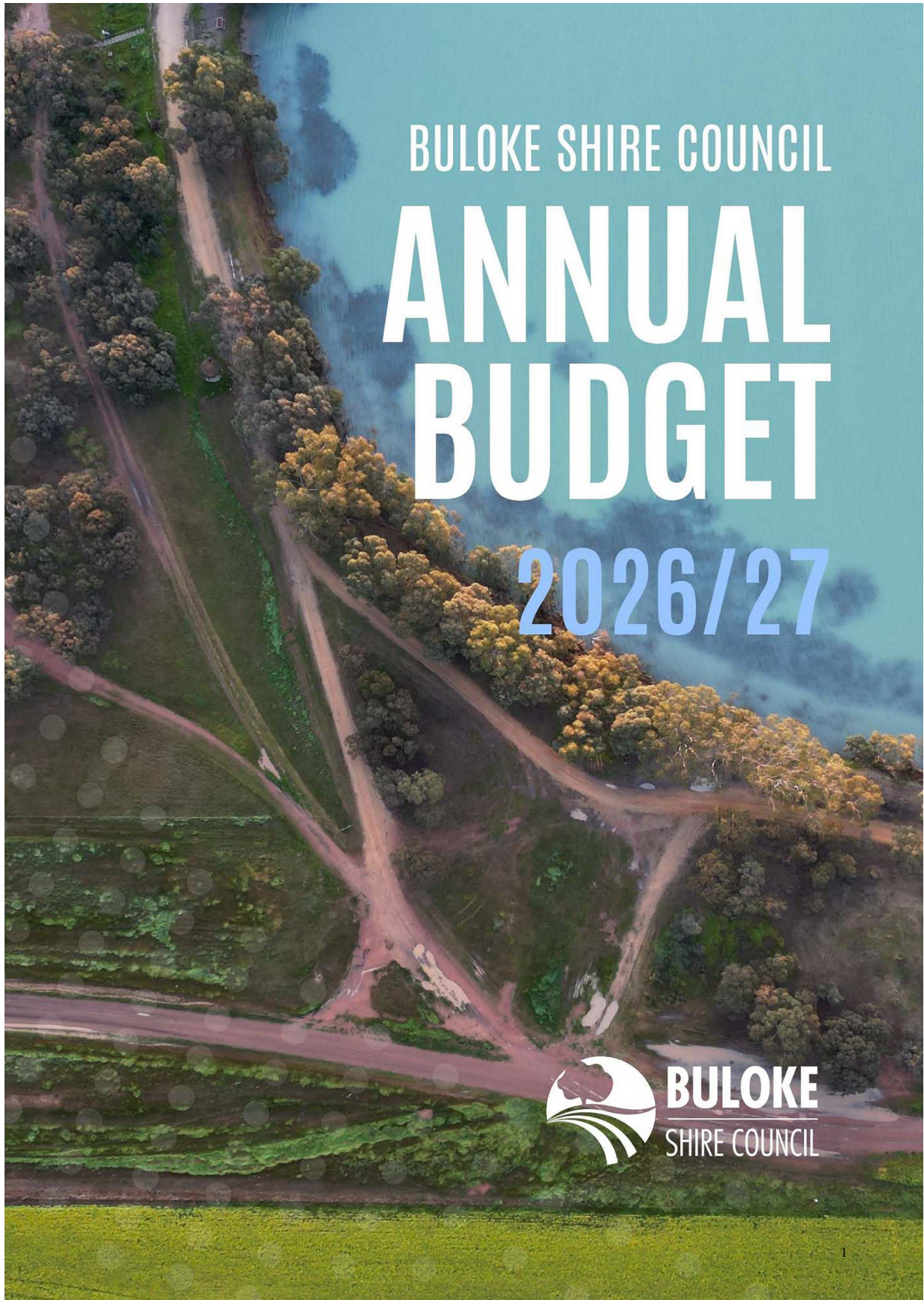
Council's engagement approach has provided for the receipt and consideration of submissions following the advertisement of the Draft Budget. Council Officers will respond to each person or group in relation to the matters raised in their submission.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No officer involved in the preparation of this report had a conflict of interest.

Attachments:

1. Attachment 8.3.1.1 - ANNUAL BUDGET 2026-27



BULOKE SHIRE COUNCIL
**ANNUAL
BUDGET**
2026/27



Contents	Page
Acknowledgement of Country	3
Mayors and CEO's Introduction	4
Budget Influences	6
Budget Reports	
1. Link to the Council Plan	10
2. Services and service performance indicators	12
3. Financial statements	19
4. Notes to the financial statements	28
5. Financial performance indicators	48
Appendices	
A. Fees and charges schedule	53

Disclaimer

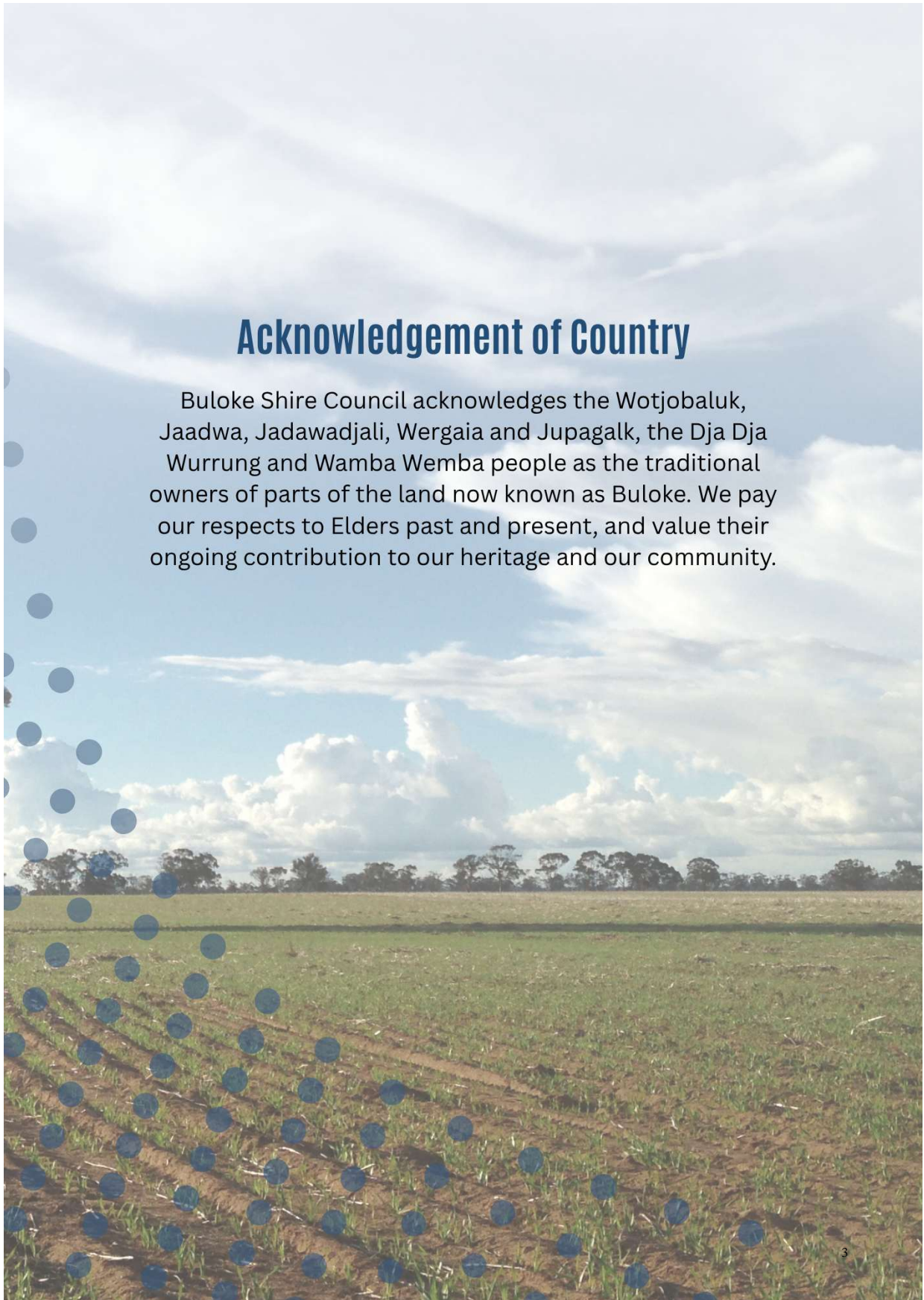
The information contained in this document is for general guidance only. It is not professional advice and should not be used, relied upon or treated as a substitute for specific professional advice. Given the changing nature of laws, rules and regulations, and the inherent hazards of electronic communication, there may be delays, omissions or inaccuracies in information contained in this document

The model budget, including financial statements, has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2020 and the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020. While every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in this document has been accurate and complies with relevant Victorian legislation, each Council remains responsible to ensure that the budget they prepare is compliant with all statutory requirements.

Cover photo taken by Blake Lee of Birchip.

Acknowledgement of Country

Buloke Shire Council acknowledges the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagalk, the Dja Dja Wurrung and Wamba Wemba people as the traditional owners of parts of the land now known as Buloke. We pay our respects to Elders past and present, and value their ongoing contribution to our heritage and our community.



Mayor & CEO Introduction

We are pleased to present the 2026/27 Annual Budget, developed with considerable care and diligence during an exceptionally challenging and uncertain period for local government.

Escalating global pressures, rising operational costs, and an increasing frequency of emergency and natural disaster events continue to strain the delivery of Local Government services across Victoria, particularly in rural and remote municipalities such as Buloke Shire.

At the same time, our community is experiencing significant cost-of-living pressures, while expectations and demand for essential local services remain high.

Council remains heavily reliant on external funding to meet its service and infrastructure obligations. Ongoing cost shifting between levels of government, together with changes to legislation and regulatory requirements, continue to impact Council's capacity to sustain service levels. Workforce planning remains a key financial consideration, particularly in the context of potential changes to Council's Enterprise Agreement and the broader challenges of attracting and retaining skilled staff in rural communities.

Finalising funding arrangements with State and Federal governments for flood and storm damage incurred during the 2022, 2023 and 2024 events remains a significant and ongoing challenge. Despite the time elapsed since these events, substantial effort continues to be required to advocate for, resource, and complete eligible works. The deterioration of our road network has been compounded by this delay, alongside further recent flood events in the north of the Shire and widespread disasters across the state, placing additional pressure on an already fiscally constrained State Government.

Council remains steadfast in reminding other levels of government that our roads are not merely local assets. They underpin freight and agricultural productivity, emergency access, school transport, and our community's fundamental right to safely connect across an extensive and vital network.

The 2026/27 Budget forecasts a surplus of \$33.6 million and an underlying deficit of \$8.4 million. This position reflects the significant non-recurring funding required for the reconstruction of Council's road network. As this funding is not ongoing, it will inevitably result in an underlying deficit. Council is currently unable to renew its assets within existing recurring income, and without much-needed reform to Federal Assistance Grants, reliance on reactive or one-off external funding for asset renewal will persist.

Continued over page

Mayor & CEO Introduction

There remains heightened community concern regarding State-level decision-making associated with major transmission infrastructure, renewable energy developments, and mineral sands mining investigations. These matters place increasing responsibility on Council's advocacy role and have, understandably, generated tension and mistrust where communities feel their voices are not being heard. In this environment, Council remains firmly committed to transparent decision-making and to strong, consistent advocacy in the interests of our entire community at both State and Federal levels.

Without meaningful engagement and collaboration from other levels of government, there is a real risk that Council will inherit significant long-term financial burdens through accelerated asset degradation and increased demand on services already constrained by limited resources.

This Budget has been developed in line with the key recommendations of the Municipal Monitor's Report and reflects a disciplined and responsible approach to financial management, one that considers not only current needs but also the long-term sustainability of Buloke Shire for future generations. It is structured to achieve a cash-neutral position while maintaining essential services and strengthening financial resilience.

We acknowledge that this Budget reflects both what has been included and, equally, what has not. A number of worthy initiatives could not be funded during this financial year despite their recognised value in supporting service delivery. Council is also mindful that unforeseen events, such as machinery breakdowns or critical equipment failures, may require difficult decisions throughout the year to ensure that priority programs, particularly those related to road and footpath safety, remain our primary focus.

We wish to reassure our community that Council remains receptive, transparent, and confident in its financial decision-making. At the same time, we remain vigilant in standing up for Buloke, ensuring the voices of those who live, work, and contribute here are heard by decision-makers at every level of government.

This Budget reflects our shared commitment to responsible stewardship and to sustaining a strong, viable future for the Buloke Shire community.

Mayor Graeme Milne & CEO Daniel McLoughlan

Budget Influences

Snapshot of Buloke Shire Council

The Buloke Shire is situated in north-western Victoria and encompasses a total land area of approximately 8,000 square kilometres. Its primary townships include Birchip, Charlton, Donald, Sea Lake, and Wycheproof, along with smaller communities such as Berriwillock, Culgoa, Nandaly, Nullawil, and Watchem.

Budget principles

Council has developed the 2026/27 Budget in alignment with its Financial Plan and the broader Community and Council Planning process. In accordance with Section 101 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council must adhere to overarching principles that guide its operations. These include:

- Managing finances in line with financial policies and strategic plans
- Monitoring and mitigating financial risks responsibly
- Ensuring stability and predictability in financial decision-making
- Maintaining accurate records to clearly explain financial activities and position

Council remains committed to a transparent and rigorous financial planning process for the Buloke community. As part of this commitment, Council continues to plan for sustainable long-term service delivery and infrastructure investment, consistent with the values outlined in the Council Plan 2025–2029.

The 2026/27 Budget has been prepared on a cash-neutral basis as directed by the Minister, following the release of the Municipal Monitor's report and recommendations released in January 2025. The development of the budget has included a deliberate initiative to finding operational efficiencies without compromising service delivery.

Priority for any discretionary funding has then been directed toward Council's asset renewal gap with consideration to the asset classifications outlined within the Buloke Asset Plan.

The Capital Works Statement reflects the allocation of discretionary Council funding in conjunction with external capital grant funding. Whilst developed in a period of significant challenging external financial pressures, the development of the 2026/27 Annual Budget has been undertaken with a responsible, conservative approach, with Council ultimately forecasting a surplus at year end.

Key things we are funding

- a. Ongoing delivery of services to the Buloke Shire Community funded by a combined operating and capital expenditure of \$76.9 million (excluding depreciation). These services are summarised throughout the budget.
- b. Continued investment in our assets (total program \$49.8 million):
 - i. Roads and Bridges \$44,547,000
 - ii. Land and Buildings \$412,000
 - iii. Plant and Equipment \$2,317,000
 - iv. Recreation, leisure and community facilities \$1,123,000
 - v. Parks, open space and streetscapes \$690,000
 - vi. Other infrastructure (drainage, footpaths and other) \$667,000

The capital program includes projects worth \$37,910,000 that are externally funding dependent, and these projects will not proceed unless the funding is secured.

The Rate Rise

- a. The average general rates will rise by 2.75% for 2026/27 in line with the Fair Go Rates System (FGRS). The rate cap is determined by the Minister for Local Government in December each year. Rates contribute to the delivery of works and community services to the Buloke Shire. Council implements the Revenue and Rating Plan to provide equity in the rating properties across the Shire.
- b. Key Drivers:
 - i. To fund ongoing service delivery
 - ii. To allow Council to remain financially sustainable
 - iii. To cope with cost shifting from the State Government
- c. General Valuations dated 27 March 2026 are used in the calculation of rates charges.
- d. The waste service charge incorporating kerbside collection and recycling remains at full cost recovery in 2026/27.

Land valuations for farming, commercial/industrial, and residential properties although varied, have stayed within the principles of the Council's Rate and Revenue Strategy 2025-2029 and hence no changes have been made to the farming differential, they stay at current levels of 46%.

The Fees and Charges schedule is included in this document. Increases in costs reflect both the rising expenses associated with delivering services and increases in fees mandated by Federal or State legislation.

External Influences

- The Buloke Shire Council has faced a series of natural disasters over recent years, that have placed considerable strain on resources and disrupted service delivery. Following the flood events of October 2022 and December 2023, Council undertook preliminary modelling and allocated a combined \$26 million across the 2025/26 and 2026/27 financial years to deliver required capital works. However, subsequent events, including the December 2025 Charlton Fire and the March 2026 Floods, have significantly compounded the pressures on Council's business as usual service delivery efforts.

Many key infrastructure projects originally designed in response to the October 2022 and December 2023 floods have now been re-impacted by the March 2026 Floods, resulting in works being placed on hold pending a detailed reassessment of damage and scope required by the State Government prior to funding being made available. As a result, Council has revised its forward estimates and determined that an annual provision of approximately \$13 million in each of the next two financial years (in addition to the carry forward works from FY2025/26), is required to address the cumulative impacts.

When Emergency events occur within a financial year and are officially declared, Council becomes eligible for assistance through the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA). Council will apply for the receipt of funds in advance to help cash flow.

In the instance that the funding be assessed and not approved by the State Government, Council will not be in a position to proceed with these works. Notably, DRFA funding does not fully reimburse all expenses, therefore it is critical that Council continue to carefully manage the ongoing financial risk of the assessment and negotiation processes of the DRFA. Council will continue reporting the net costs through quarterly financial updates to both the Council and the community. Whilst this process has been ongoing over multiple financial years, in the interests of restoring essential infrastructure to the safe standards required to meet the needs of our community, Council's commitment to this process is essential, as without the external funding, the works simply cannot be funded.

The Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA) continues to influence Council's operating expenditure, with employee costs forming a significant component of the annual budget. Council is preparing to begin the process of negotiating a new EBA, and while the 2026/27 budget has been prepared based on reasonable and informed assumptions, the outcome remains subject to negotiation. It is noted that any successful application for Council to enter into a multi-employer agreement, particularly with councils of a different scale or operating context, may result in material financial impacts that are not fully reflected in the current budget estimates.

- Continuation of the 'Fair Go Rates System' (rate capping) has placed pressure on long term financial planning for Council. Council's Financial Plan sets out further information on how Council plans to manage its expenditure in line with gazetted rate caps.

- Cost shifting continues to impact local government as funding from the Federal and State Governments either reduces or remains the same. The 'gap' between the true cost of providing Council services and the level of subsidy continues to grow.
- Setting Statutory Fees such as Town Planning Fees by the Victorian State Government is at levels which do not cover the cost of providing these services, which Council is legislatively required to provide.
- The Essential Services and Volunteers Fund levy will continue to be collected by Council on behalf of the State Government in accordance with the *Essential Services and Volunteers Fund Act 2012*.
- Surplus funds are invested in line with Council's Investment Policy. Interest income is based on predicted cashflows, cash balance, and investment returns.
- The minimum superannuation guarantee is legislated to stay the same at the current rate of 12% on 1 July 2026.

Internal Influences

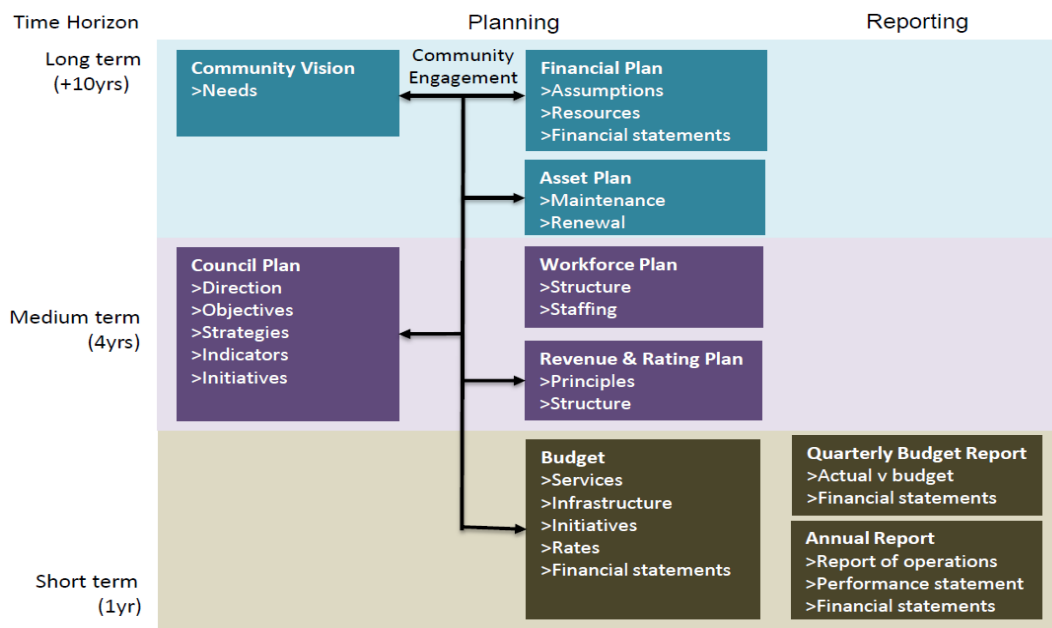
- Council is currently progressing implementation of the targeted hard rubbish collection program, with rollout underway during the current financial year. The program will continue to be delivered into the next financial year.
- Council has been consistently reviewing all services to identify efficiencies and reduce costs. The outcomes of these reviews will continue to inform and shape Council's Financial Plan.

1. Link to the Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework

This section describes how the Budget links to the achievement of the Community Vision and Council Plan within an overall integrated strategic planning and reporting framework. This framework guides the Council in identifying community needs and aspirations over the long term (Community Vision, Financial Plan and Asset Plan), medium term (Council Plan, Workforce Plan, and Revenue and Rating Plan) and short term (Budget) and then holding itself accountable (Annual Report).

1.1 Legislative planning and accountability framework

The Budget is a rolling four-year plan that outlines the financial and non-financial resources that Council requires to achieve the strategic objectives described in the Council Plan. The diagram below depicts the integrated strategic planning and reporting framework that applies to local government in Victoria. At each stage of the integrated strategic planning and reporting framework there are opportunities for community and stakeholder input. This is important to ensure transparency and accountability to both residents and ratepayers.



Source: Mark Davies (Financial Professional Solutions)

The timing of each component of the integrated strategic planning and reporting framework is critical to the successful achievement of the planned outcomes.

1.1.2 Key planning considerations

Service level planning

Although councils have a legal obligation to provide some services—such as animal management, local roads, food safety and statutory planning—most council services are not legally mandated, including some services closely associated with councils, such as libraries, building permits and sporting facilities. Further, over time, the needs and expectations of communities can change. Therefore councils need to have robust processes for service planning and review to ensure all services continue to provide value for money and are in line with community expectations. In doing so, councils should engage with communities to determine how to prioritise resources and balance service provision against other responsibilities such as asset maintenance and capital works.

Community consultation needs to be in line with a council's adopted Community Engagement Policy and Public Transparency Policy.

1.2 Our purpose

Our Vision

Building a Better Buloke - A healthy, connected, inclusive and prosperous community

Our values

Council addresses its key values through:

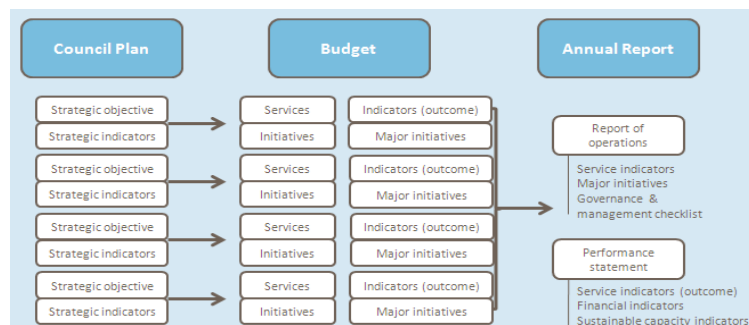
• Engagement • Transparent • Accountable • Collaboration • Responsible • Responsive

1.3 Strategic objectives

Strategic Objective	Description
1. Services Supporting our Communities to Thrive	1.1 Active advocacy and participation in service networks 1.2 Accessible and responsible health and community services
2. Vibrant and Connected Communities	2.1 Strengthen community activity and connections 2.2 Empower and support organisations to make a difference in their communities
3. Built and Natural Environment	3.1 Advocate and plan for, and manage community buildings, roads and transport networks 3.2 Welcoming and accessible parks and open space 3.3 Caring for our environment
4. Prosperous and Growing Economy	4.1 Attract innovative, creative and sustainable businesses 4.2 Invest in our young people 4.3 Promote Buloke as a great place to visit, live and invest
5. Council Leadership and Engagement	5.1 Responsible leadership and decision making 5.2 Advocacy and partnering to deliver on priorities 5.3 Consulting with and informing our community

2. Services and service performance indicators

This section provides a description of the services and initiatives to be funded in the Budget for the 2026/27 year and how these will contribute to achieving the strategic objectives outlined in the Council Plan. It also describes several initiatives and service performance outcome indicators for key areas of Council's operations. Council is required by legislation to identify major initiatives, initiatives and service performance outcome indicators in the Budget and report against them in their Annual Report to support transparency and accountability. The relationship between these accountability requirements in the Council Plan, the Budget and the Annual Report is shown below.



Source: Department of Government Services

1. Services Supporting our Communities to Thrive

To create an environment where all members of our community enjoy good physical and mental wellbeing, and have fairer access to services and programs.

Service area	Description of services provided	2024/25 Actual \$'000	2025/26 Forecast \$'000	2026/27 Budget \$'000
Library Services	<i>Inc</i>	131	131	131
	<i>Exp</i>	274	268	345
	<i>Surplus/ (deficit)</i>	(144)	(137)	(214)

This service works in partnership with local community organisations and education providers to support, manage and deliver library services across Buloke Shire, including the provision of a mobile library service to smaller townships.

Public Health and Wellbeing	<i>Inc</i>	48	40	40
	<i>Exp</i>	220	179	229
	<i>Surplus/ (deficit)</i>	(172)	(139)	(190)

This service works in partnership with relevant authorities and the local community and businesses to oversee the delivery, maintenance and monitoring of public health and safety compliance and immunisation programs and services.

Service Performance Outcome Indicators

Service	Indicator	2024/25 Actual	2025/26 Forecast	2026/27 Budget	
Libraries	Cost	Direct cost of library service	\$ 49.02	\$ 49.50	\$ 46.23

Major Initiatives

- 1) In Library membership growth - increasing walk in library users through enhanced programs and promotions of library services
- 2) Digital Library membership growth - increasing online e-book and audio book membership and use through enhanced promotion and support for older patrons

2. Vibrant and Connected Communities

For communities to celebrate their unique identities, and for community members to have opportunities locally to participate in, and connect with, others in their community.

Service area	Description of services provided	2024/25 Actual \$'000	2025/26 Forecast \$'000	2026/27 Budget \$'000
Early Years	<i>Inc</i>	497	459	427
	<i>Exp</i>	578	651	747
	<i>Surplus/ (deficit)</i>	(80)	(193)	(320)

This service oversees the planning and development of early years services and programs in partnership with the local community and service providers to ensure the delivery of an integrated and coordinated range of programs including maternal and child health.

Community Support	<i>Inc</i>	170	31	11
	<i>Exp</i>	975	1,080	745
	<i>Surplus/ (deficit)</i>	(804)	(1,049)	(734)

This service works in partnership with local community groups, organisations and service providers to identify, support and encourage opportunities to develop and deliver programs and services to enhance community health and wellbeing and connection.

Major Initiatives

- 1) Provision of a seasonal and engaging playgroup program for children and families across Buloke to enhance social connection, inclusion and early learning development.
- 2) Provision and implementation of the FY2026/27 Community Grants program to support community groups and volunteer driven projects and events across the Shire.

Service Performance Outcome Indicators

Service	Indicator	2024/25 Actual	2025/26 Forecast	2026/27 Budget	
Maternal and Child Health	Participation	Participation in the MCH service.	86.67%	91.06%	90.38%

3. Our Built and Natural Environment

To achieve a balance between the infrastructure needs of our communities and protecting and nurturing the natural environment.

Service area	Description of services provided	2024/25 Actual \$'000	2025/26 Forecast \$'000	2026/27 Budget \$'000
Property Maintenance	<i>Inc</i>	121	98	95
	<i>Exp</i>	1,195	1,226	1,246
	<i>Surplus / (deficit)</i>	(1,074)	(1,128)	(1,151)

This service is to provide property maintenance services to a range of Councils building-based assets, focusing on the upkeep and renewal of buildings. This area maintains in excess of 250 buildings across the Shire and aims to keep them maintained in a fit for purpose state.

Road Services	<i>Inc</i>	6,549	2,078	3,762
	<i>Exp</i>	11,606	6,151	6,137
	<i>Surplus / (deficit)</i>	(5,057)	(4,073)	(2,375)

This service provides road maintenance for the 1100km of Sealed, 650km of Gravel and 3,800km of Earth roads across the Shire. Income in this area relates to Local Roads Funding received from the Commonwealth as Financial Assistance Grants, in a manner recommended by the Victorian Local Government Grants Commission.

Swimming Pools	<i>Inc</i>	27	-	-
	<i>Exp</i>	873	827	870
	<i>Surplus / (deficit)</i>	(846)	(827)	(870)

This service oversees the management, maintenance and operation of our seven outdoor seasonal swimming pools.

Assets and Project Management	<i>Inc</i>	362	16	11
	<i>Exp</i>	1,941	3,342	3,374
	<i>Surplus / (deficit)</i>	(1,580)	(3,326)	(3,363)

Provide long term sustainable management of Council's assets to provide community buildings that support services and programs, ensure the local road network is safe and well maintained, make sure the unique character of our towns and communities is valued, and natural areas, lakes, parks and open space, tracks and trails are actively managed and accessible.

Strategic and tactical management of the following Council assets

Local Roads, Shared and foot paths, Urban and rural drainage, Buildings Active recreational reserves, Passive reserves, Urban streetscapes

Maintain Council Facilities including Programmed Maintenance, Scheduled Maintenance and Reactive Maintenance

3. Our Built and Natural Environment (Contd)

Service area	Description of services provided	2024/25 Actual \$'000	2025/26 Forecast \$'000	2026/27 Budget \$'000
Parks & Urban	<i>Inc</i>	83	9	-
	<i>Exp</i>	2,014	2,204	2,724
	<i>Surplus / (deficit)</i>	(1,931)	(2,195)	(2,724)
This service area manages and coordinates Council's Parks and Gardens and Urban Infrastructure providing routine, preventative and on-going maintenance and improvements.				
Environmental Planning	<i>Inc</i>	100	100	100
	<i>Exp</i>	274	218	231
	<i>Surplus / (deficit)</i>	(174)	(118)	(130)
This service works in partnership with relevant authorities and the local community to oversee the delivery, maintenance and monitoring of environmental compliance and sustainability programs and services.				
Waste and Environment	<i>Inc</i>	301	285	270
	<i>Exp</i>	1,850	1,815	1,965
	<i>Surplus / (deficit)</i>	(1,549)	(1,530)	(1,695)
Responsible for the maintenance and improvement of Council's landfills and transfer stations as well as providing a Residential Kerbside Garbage and Recycling service in all towns within the Shire.				
Municipal Emergency Management		61	60	60
		164	190	191
	<i>Surplus / (deficit)</i>	(103)	(130)	(131)
This service ensures Council meets its statutory obligations under the Emergency Management Act 2013 and the State Emergency Management Plan. It supports the development, maintenance, and implementation of municipal emergency management planning, relief, and recovery activities. The service also aims to build and enhance Council's and the community's capability and capacity to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies				

Major Initiatives

- 1) Buloke Shire-wide light detection and ranging (LIDAR) and flood studies.
- 2) Develop operational plans and continue to build staff capability through training and exercises.
- 3) Complete the review and further development of Municipal Emergency Management sub-plans for flood/storm, fire and heat health.

Other Initiatives

- 3) Continue coordinating recovery activities and programs for the Victorian North West and North East storm event, and the Charlton-Jeffcott Fire event.

Service Performance Outcome Indicators

Service	Indicator		2024/25 Actual	2025/26 Forecast	2026/27 Budget
Road Services	Condition	Sealed local roads below the intervention level.	99.3%	98.0%	98.0%
Road Services	Cost	Cost of sealed local roads resealing \$	6.32 \$	6.40 \$	6.00
Waste management	Waste diversion	Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill.	1.27	1.27	1.20
Swimming Pools	Cost	Direct cost of aquatic services \$	33.15 \$	42.30 \$	30.13

* refer to table in section 5 for information on the calculation of Service Performance Outcome Indicators

4. Prosperous and Growing Economy

To achieve our objective of diversifying and enhancing our local economy, we will continue to actively seek economic opportunities. The services, initiatives, major initiatives and service performance indicators for each business area are described below.

Services

Service area	Description of services provided	2024/25 Actual \$'000	2025/26 Forecast \$'000	2026/27 Budget \$'000
Development Services	<i>Inc</i>	324	234	226
	<i>Exp</i>	1,165	923	1,058
	<i>Surplus/ (deficit)</i>	(841)	(688)	(832)

This service works in partnership with relevant authorities and the local community to provide advice, support and services to meet the requirements of State and municipal legislation and compliance in strategic and statutory planning, building and local laws.

Economic Development and Tourism	<i>Inc</i>	(54)	26	12
	<i>Exp</i>	216,898	291	252
	<i>Surplus/ (deficit)</i>	(216,951)	(265)	(240)

This service works in partnership with local and regional groups and organisations to facilitate the support and development of local economic and tourism initiatives that aim to increase and promote economic growth and visitation for Buloke Shire.

Saleyards	<i>Inc</i>	23	50	30
	<i>Exp</i>	38	40	38
	<i>Surplus/ (deficit)</i>	(15)	10	(8)

This service area provides for the management and administration of the Council's Saleyards Precinct at Wycheproof for external Livestock Agents to sell Livestock.

Service Performance Outcome Indicators

Service	Indicator	2024/25 Actual	2025/26 Forecast	2026/27 Budget
Development Services	Statutory Planning Planning applications decided within required timeframes	67%	70%	100%

Major Initiatives

- 1) Targeted focus on Tourism through enhancement of Council website, including collaboration with existing partnerships and business support mechanisms
- 2) Implementation and promotion of the Buloke Events guide to increase and support the provision of compliant events held within Buloke
- 3) Partnering with RSPCA and Victoria Police to deliver a targeted dangerous dog prevention program

5. Council Leadership and Engagement

To achieve our objective of supporting Councillors, staff, volunteers and the community to make informed and transparent decisions we will develop engagement frameworks and continuously review the way in which we communicate. To achieve our objective of delivering our service in a financially viable way, we will continue to review our services to provide high quality, cost effective, and responsive services. The services, initiatives, major initiatives and service performance indicators for each business area are described below.

Services

Service area	Description of services provided	2024/25 Actual \$'000	2025/26 Forecast \$'000	2026/27 Budget \$'000
CEO's Office	<i>Inc</i>	11	5	-
	<i>Exp</i>	1,790	1,528	1,549
	<i>Surplus/ (deficit)</i>	(1,779)	(1,523)	(1,549)

The Office of the CEO provides strategic leadership to the organisation, implementation of Council decisions including the Council Plan and other key strategic directions. It provides representation and advocacy on key issues of importance to Buloke and the region. It also provides supports for Councillors and the executive management team.

Information Management	<i>Inc</i>	-	-	-
	<i>Exp</i>	1,150	1,093	1,061
	<i>Surplus/ (deficit)</i>	(1,150)	(1,093)	(1,061)

Provides the organisation with business transformation and information technology services.

Customer Services	<i>Inc</i>	-	-	-
	<i>Exp</i>	208	250	374
	<i>Surplus/ (deficit)</i>	(208)	(250)	(374)

This service oversees Council's internal and external customer service requests, enquiries and payments to provide support and connections between council services and the community.

Human Resources	<i>Inc</i>	-	-	-
	<i>Exp</i>	1,054	942	1,044
	<i>Surplus/ (deficit)</i>	(1,054)	(942)	(1,044)

Provides the organisation with employee management services, recruitment, training, organisational development and occupational health and safety.

Media and Communications	<i>Inc</i>	-	-	-
	<i>Exp</i>	225	296	303
	<i>Surplus/ (deficit)</i>	(225)	(296)	(303)

This service oversees external communications via the Council's website and social media as well as providing regular advertisements, media releases and Community Updates in local newspapers to keep the local community informed and engaged.

Finance	<i>Inc</i>	9,367	3,920	6,537
	<i>Exp</i>	954	1,007	1,121
	<i>Surplus/ (deficit)</i>	8,412	2,913	5,416

The Financial Strategy unit is responsible for finance operations, payroll, fleet, contracts, procurement and rates. The unit provides long-term financial planning to support the ongoing financial sustainability of Council's operations. This includes delivery of the annual budget, financial plan, financial statements, performance statements and a range of other Local Government regulatory reporting.

Corporate Services	<i>Inc</i>	2	0	-
	<i>Exp</i>	956	889	1,162
	<i>Surplus/ (deficit)</i>	(954)	(889)	(1,162)

Provides organisational policy, systems and support in the areas of records management, continuous improvement, corporate planning, risk management, governance, insurance, performance measurement and reporting. Expenses include general corporate expenses such as postage and stationery, staff amenities and pool cars.

Major Initiatives

- 1) Review of customer service charter in conjunction with improvements and website upgrades (incl. online facilities booking system and online works request system)
- 2) Implementation of new Gender Equality Action Plan
- 3) Review and update of Council's Business Transformation Strategy in alignment with records transformation project completion.

Service Performance Outcome Indicators

Service	Indicator	2024/25 Actual	2025/26 Forecast	2026/27 Budget	
Governance	Community engagement	Satisfaction with community consultation and engagement.	43.00	45.00	46.00

* refer to table in section 5 for information on the calculation of Service Performance Outcome Indicators

Service Performance Outcome Indicators

Domain	Indicator	Performance Measure	Computation
Governance	Community engagement	Satisfaction with the opportunities offered by Council to be consulted on or engaged in Council decisions (community satisfaction rating out of 100 with the consultation and engagement efforts of Council)	Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how Council has performed on community consultation and engagement
	Financial decisions	Total unpaid rates and charges (total unpaid rates and charges and unpaid interest on rates and charges for all financial years as a percentage of all rates and charges for the financial year)	[Sum of unpaid rates and charges and unpaid interest on rates and charges for all financial years / Sum of all rates and charges for the financial year] x100
Community	Library services	Library membership (Percentage of the population that are registered library members)	[Number of registered library members / Population] x100
	Maternal and child health services	Participation in the MCH service (Percentage of children enrolled who participate in the MCH service)	[Number of children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the financial year) / Number of children enrolled in the MCH service] x100
Participation in the MCH service by Aboriginal children (Percentage of Aboriginal children enrolled who participate in the MCH service)		[Number of Aboriginal children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the financial year) / Number of Aboriginal children enrolled in the MCH service] x100	
Environment	Roads	Sealed local roads below the intervention level (percentage of sealed local roads that are below the renewal intervention level set by Council and not requiring renewal)	[Number of kilometres of sealed local roads below the renewal intervention level set by Council / Kilometres of sealed local roads] x100
	Waste management	Kerbside collection waste to landfill per serviced property (amount of waste collected from kerbside waste collection services that is sent to landfill per serviced property)	Amount of waste in tonnes (t) collected from kerbside waste collection services that is sent to landfill / Number of serviced properties
Responsiveness	Food safety	Critical and major non-compliance outcome notifications. (Percentage of critical and major non-compliance outcome notifications that are followed up by Council)	[Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance outcome notifications about a food premises followed up / Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance outcome notifications about food premises] x100
	Statutory planning	Planning applications decided within the relevant required time (percentage of regular and VicSmart planning application decisions made within the relevant required time)	[Number of planning application decisions made within 60 days for regular permits and 10 days for VicSmart permits / Number of planning application decisions made] x100
Cost	Library services	Cost of library services (direct cost of library services per head of population)	Direct cost of library services / Population
	Waste management	Cost of kerbside waste collection services (direct cost of kerbside waste collection services per serviced property)	Direct cost of kerbside waste collection services / Number of serviced properties

2.5 Reconciliation with budgeted operating result

	Surplus/ (Deficit)	Expenditure	Income / Revenue
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
1. Services Supporting our Communities to Thrive	(404)	574	170
2. Vibrant and Connected Communities	(1,053)	1,492	438
3. Our Built and Natural Environment	(12,439)	16,738	4,299
4. Prosperous and Growing Economy	(1,080)	1,348	268
5. Council Leadership and Engagement	(77)	6,614	6,537
Total	(15,053)	26,766	11,713
Expenses added in:			
Depreciation	9,099		
Amortization of right of use assets	572		
Finance costs	54		
Others	-		
Surplus/(Deficit) before funding sources	(24,778)		
Funding sources added in:			
Rates and charges revenue	14,680		
Waste charge revenue	1,739		
Capital grants and contribution	41,972		
Total funding sources	58,391		
Operating surplus/(deficit) for the year	33,613		

3. Financial Statements

This section presents information in regard to the Financial Statements and Statement of Human Resources. The budget information for the year 2026/27 has been supplemented with projections to 2029/30

This section includes the following financial statements prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.

- Comprehensive Income Statement
- Balance Sheet
- Statement of Changes in Equity
- Statement of Cash Flows
- Statement of Capital Works
- Statement of Human Resources

Comprehensive Income Statement

For the four years ending 30 June 2030

	NOTES	Forecast	Budget	Projections		
		Actual 2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000	2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000
Income / Revenue						
Rates and charges	4.1.1	15,946	16,499	16,931	17,376	17,890
Statutory fees and fines	4.1.2	151	124	128	131	135
User fees	4.1.3	464	447	460	474	488
Grants - operating	4.1.4	5,513	9,856	9,511	9,764	10,047
Grants - capital	4.1.4	12,963	41,772	16,179	3,179	3,179
Contributions - monetary	4.1.5	145	259	259	259	259
Contributions - non-monetary	4.1.5	-	-	-	-	-
Net gain (or loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment		-	-	-	-	-
Fair value adjustments for investment property		-	-	-	-	-
Share of net profits (or loss) of associates and joint ventures		(213)	-	-	-	-
Other income	4.1.6	1,259	1,160	1,163	1,166	1,169
Total income / revenue		36,227	70,118	44,630	32,350	33,168
Expenses						
Employee costs	4.1.7	12,915	14,950	15,228	15,838	16,313
Materials and services	4.1.8	11,589	10,973	11,047	11,644	11,834
Allowance for impairment losses		60	60	60	60	60
Depreciation	4.1.9	9,576	9,099	9,099	9,099	9,099
Amortization - right of use assets	4.1.10	458	572	572	572	572
Finance costs - leases		53	54	55	57	59
Other expenses	4.1.11	845	796	821	845	870
Total expenses		35,496	36,505	36,883	38,115	38,807
Surplus/(deficit) for the year		731	33,613	7,748	(5,765)	(5,639)
Other comprehensive income						
Items that will not be reclassified to surplus or deficit in future periods						
Net asset revaluation gain /(loss)		-	-	-	-	-
Share of other comprehensive income of associates and joint ventures		-	-	-	-	-
Items that may be reclassified to surplus or deficit in future periods						
(detail as appropriate)		-	-	-	-	-
Total other comprehensive income		-	-	-	-	-
Total comprehensive result		731	33,613	7,748	(5,765)	(5,639)

Balance Sheet

For the four years ending 30 June 2030

NOTES	Forecast	Budget	Projections			
	Actual 2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000	2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	
Assets						
Current assets						
	Cash and cash equivalents	25,350	17,982	17,810	17,737	17,585
	Trade and other receivables	3,932	4,068	4,175	4,285	4,411
	Inventories	159	150	151	160	162
	Prepayments	400	465	481	498	515
	Other assets	8	8	8	8	8
4.2.1	Total current assets	<u>29,849</u>	<u>22,674</u>	<u>22,625</u>	<u>22,687</u>	<u>22,682</u>
Non-current assets						
	Property, infrastructure, plant & equipment	310,571	351,227	359,034	353,329	347,750
4.2.3	Right-of-use assets	650	650	650	650	650
4.2.1	Total non-current assets	<u>311,221</u>	<u>351,877</u>	<u>359,684</u>	<u>353,979</u>	<u>348,400</u>
	Total assets	<u>341,069</u>	<u>374,550</u>	<u>382,309</u>	<u>376,667</u>	<u>371,082</u>
Liabilities						
Current liabilities						
	Trade and other payables	2,223	2,104	2,119	2,233	2,269
	Trust funds and deposits	17	17	17	17	17
	Contract and other liabilities	915	824	741	667	601
	Provisions	825	827	828	830	832
	Interest-bearing liabilities	-	-	-	-	-
4.2.3	Lease liabilities	326	326	326	326	326
4.2.2	Total current liabilities	<u>4,307</u>	<u>4,099</u>	<u>4,032</u>	<u>4,074</u>	<u>4,045</u>
Non-current liabilities						
	Provisions	3,625	3,701	3,779	3,860	3,943
	Interest-bearing liabilities	-	-	-	-	-
4.2.3	Lease liabilities	384	384	384	384	384
4.2.2	Total non-current liabilities	<u>4,009</u>	<u>4,085</u>	<u>4,163</u>	<u>4,244</u>	<u>4,327</u>
	Total liabilities	<u>8,316</u>	<u>8,184</u>	<u>8,195</u>	<u>8,317</u>	<u>8,372</u>
	Net assets	<u>332,753</u>	<u>366,367</u>	<u>374,114</u>	<u>368,349</u>	<u>362,710</u>
Equity						
	Accumulated surplus	131,796	164,709	172,057	165,892	159,853
	Reserves	200,958	201,658	202,058	202,458	202,858
	Total equity	<u>332,753</u>	<u>366,367</u>	<u>374,114</u>	<u>368,349</u>	<u>362,710</u>

Statement of Changes in Equity

For the four years ending 30 June 2030

	NOTES	Total \$'000	Accumulated Surplus \$'000	Revaluation Reserve \$'000	Other Reserves \$'000
2026 Forecast Actual					
Balance at beginning of the financial year		332,022	131,465	197,276	3,281
Surplus/(deficit) for the year		731	731	-	-
Net asset revaluation gain/(loss)		-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves		(400)	(400)	-	-
Transfers from other reserves		400	-	-	400
Balance at end of the financial year		332,753	131,796	197,276	3,681
2027 Budget					
Balance at beginning of the financial year		332,754	131,796	197,276	3,681
Surplus/(deficit) for the year		33,613	33,613	-	-
Net asset revaluation gain/(loss)		-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves	4.3.1	(700)	(700)	-	-
Transfers from other reserves	4.3.1	700	-	-	700
Balance at end of the financial year	4.3.1	366,367	164,709	197,276	4,381
2028					
Balance at beginning of the financial year		366,366	164,709	197,276	4,381
Surplus/(deficit) for the year		7,748	7,748	-	-
Net asset revaluation gain/(loss)		-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves		(400)	(400)	-	-
Transfers from other reserves		400	-	-	400
Balance at end of the financial year		374,114	172,057	197,276	4,781
2029					
Balance at beginning of the financial year		374,114	172,057	197,276	4,781
Surplus/(deficit) for the year		(5,765)	(5,765)	-	-
Net asset revaluation gain/(loss)		-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves		(400)	(400)	-	-
Transfers from other reserves		400	-	-	400
Balance at end of the financial year		368,349	165,892	197,276	5,181
2030					
Balance at beginning of the financial year		368,349	165,892	197,276	5,181
Surplus/(deficit) for the year		(5,639)	(5,639)	-	-
Net asset revaluation gain/(loss)		-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves		(400)	(400)	-	-
Transfers from other reserves		400	-	-	400
Balance at end of the financial year		362,710	159,853	197,276	5,581

Statement of Cash Flows

For the four years ending 30 June 2030

Notes	Forecast	Budget	Projections		
	Actual				
	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
	Inflows	Inflows	Inflows	Inflows	Inflows
	(Outflows)	(Outflows)	(Outflows)	(Outflows)	(Outflows)
Cash flows from operating activities					
Rates and charges	15,766	16,303	16,764	17,206	17,703
Statutory fees and fines	151	124	128	131	135
User fees	464	447	460	474	488
Grants - operating	5,513	9,857	9,511	9,764	10,047
Grants - capital	10,729	41,681	16,096	3,105	3,112
Contributions - monetary	145	259	259	259	259
Interest received	-	-	-	-	-
Trust funds and deposits taken	(410)	-	-	-	-
Other receipts	1,196	1,169	1,162	1,158	1,166
Net GST refund / payment	-	-	-	-	-
Employee costs	(12,786)	(14,873)	(15,149)	(15,755)	(16,228)
Materials and services	(11,681)	(11,156)	(11,049)	(11,546)	(11,815)
Other payments	(845)	(797)	(821)	(845)	(870)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	4.4.1	8,241	43,014	17,362	3,951
Cash flows from investing activities					
Payments for property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	-	-	-	-	-
Proceeds from sale of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	(13,498)	(49,755)	(16,906)	(3,394)	(3,520)
Payments for investments	-	-	-	-	-
Proceeds from sale of investments	-	-	-	-	-
Loans and advances made	-	-	-	-	-
Payments of loans and advances	-	-	-	-	-
Net cash provided by/ (used in) investing activities	4.4.2	(13,498)	(49,755)	(3,394)	(3,520)
Cash flows from financing activities					
Finance costs	-	-	-	-	-
Proceeds from borrowings	-	-	-	-	-
Repayment of borrowings	-	-	-	-	-
Interest paid - lease liability	(53)	(54)	(55)	(57)	(59)
Repayment of lease liabilities	(468)	(572)	(572)	(572)	(572)
Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities	4.4.3	(522)	(626)	(630)	(631)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash & cash equivalents		(5,779)	(7,368)	(172)	(73)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year		31,128	25,350	17,982	17,810
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year		25,350	17,982	17,810	17,737

Statement of Capital Works

For the four years ending 30 June 2030

	NOTES	Forecast	Budget	Projections		
		Actual		2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
		2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
		\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Property						
Land improvements		12	-	-	-	-
Total land		12	-	-	-	-
Buildings		-	118	-	-	-
Building improvements		168	294	124	37	58
Total building improvements		168	412	124	37	58
Total property		180	412	124	37	58
Plant and equipment						
Plant, machinery and equipment		92	2,147	87	26	41
Fixtures, fittings and furniture		89	40	11	3	5
Computers and telecommunications		170	130	11	3	5
Total plant and equipment		351	2,317	109	32	51
Infrastructure						
Roads		8,465	44,547	16,499	3,273	3,329
Bridges		13	-	10	3	5
Footpaths and cycleways		-	208	7	2	5
Drainage		22	380	36	11	17
Recreational, leisure and community facilities		479	1,123	51	15	24
Kerb and Channel		-	-	12	3	5
Parks, open space and streetscapes		2,753	690	51	15	24
Aerodromes		52	-	7	2	3
Other infrastructure		-	78	-	-	-
Total infrastructure		11,784	47,026	50,265	3,325	3,412
Total capital works expenditure	4.5.1	12,315	49,755	50,498	3,394	3,521
Represented by:						
New asset expenditure		3,380	180	-	-	-
Asset renewal expenditure		8,783	49,304	16,906	3,394	3,521
Asset expansion expenditure		152	-	-	-	-
Asset upgrade expenditure		-	270	-	-	-
Total capital works expenditure	4.5.1	12,315	49,755	16,906	3,394	3,521
Funding sources represented by:						
Grants		8,275	41,772	16,179	3,179	3,179
Contributions		-	200	-	-	-
Council cash		4,040	7,783	728	215	342
Borrowings		-	-	-	-	-
Total capital works expenditure	4.5.1	12,315	49,755	16,906	3,394	3,521

Statement of Human Resources

For the four years ending 30 June 2030

	Forecast	Budget	Projections		
	Actual				
	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Staff expenditure					
Employee costs - operating	12,915	14,950	15,228	15,838	16,313
Employee costs - capital	-	-	-	-	-
Total staff expenditure	12,915	14,950	15,228	15,838	16,313
	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE
Staff numbers					
Employees	101.8	119.0	119.0	119.0	119.0
Total staff numbers	101.8	119.0	119.0	119.0	119.0

A summary of human resources expenditure categorised according to the organisational structure of Council is included below:

Department	Budget 2026/27 \$'000	Comprises			
		Permanent		Casual \$'000	Temporary \$'000
		Full Time \$'000	Part time \$'000		
Community Development	3,840	1,856	1,260	724	-
Corporate and Organisational Performance	2,379	1,969	375	35	-
Infrastructure & Delivery	7,392	6,449	664	279	-
Office of the CEO	1,226	1,156	70	-	-
Total permanent staff expenditure	14,837	11,430	2,369	1,038	-
Other employee related expenditure	113				
Capitalised labour costs	-				
Total expenditure	14,950				

A summary of the number of full time equivalent (FTE) Council staff in relation to the above expenditure is included below:

Department	Budget 2026/27	Comprises			
		Permanent		Casual	Temporary
		Full Time	Part time		
Community Development	25	14	11	-	-
Corporate and Organisational Performance	20	16	4	-	-
Infrastructure & Delivery	68	62	6	-	-
Office of the CEO	6	5	1	-	-
Total staff	119	97	22	-	-

**Summary of Planned Human Resources Expenditure
For the four years ending 30 June 2030**

	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000	2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000
Community Development				
Permanent - Full time	1,856	2,034	2,116	2,179
Women	901	1,041	1,083	1,115
Men	955	993	1,033	1,064
Persons of self-described gender	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part time	1,260	1,310	1,363	1,404
Women	1,010	1,050	1,092	1,125
Men	250	260	270	279
Persons of self-described gender	0	0	0	0
Total Community Development	3,116	3,345	3,478	3,583
Corporate and Organisational Performance				
Permanent - Full time	1,970	2,257	2,347	2,417
Women	1,325	1,586	1,649	1,699
Men	489	509	529	545
Persons of self-described gender	156	162	169	174
Permanent - Part time	375	390	406	418
Women	323	336	349	360
Men	52	54	56	58
Persons of self-described gender	0	0	0	0
Total Corporate and Organisational Performance	2,345	2,647	2,753	2,835
Infrastructure & Delivery				
Permanent - Full time	6,448	7,272	7,563	7,789
Women	798	830	863	889
Men	5,650	6,442	6,699	6,900
Persons of self-described gender	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part time	664	691	718	740
Women	292	304	316	325
Men	372	387	402	414
Persons of self-described gender	0	0	0	0
Total Infrastructure & Delivery	7,112	7,962	8,281	8,529
Office of the CEO				
Permanent - Full time	1,156	1,202	1,250	1,288
Women	617	642	667	687
Men	539	561	583	600
Persons of self-described gender	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part time	70	73	76	78
Women	70	73	76	78
Men	0	0	0	0
Persons of self-described gender	0	0	0	0
Total Office of the CEO	1,226	1,275	1,326	1,366
Casuals, temporary and other expenditure	1,151	0	0	0
Capitalised labour costs	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total staff expenditure	14,950	15,229	15,838	16,313

	2026/27 FTE	2027/28 FTE	2028/29 FTE	2029/30 FTE
Community Development				
Permanent - Full time	14	14	14	14
Women	7	7	7	7
Men	7	7	7	7
Persons of self-described gender	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part time	11	11	11	11
Women	9	9	9	9
Men	2	2	2	2
Persons of self-described gender	0	0	0	0
Total Community Development	25	25	25	25
Corporate and Organisational Performance				
Permanent - Full time	16	16	16	16
Women	11	11	11	11
Men	4	4	4	4
Persons of self-described gender	1	1	1	1
Permanent - Part time	4	4	4	4
Women	3	3	3	3
Men	1	1	1	1
Persons of self-described gender	0	0	0	0
Total Corporate and Organisational Performance	20	20	20	20
Infrastructure & Delivery				
Permanent - Full time	62	62	62	62
Women	8	8	8	8
Men	54	54	54	54
Persons of self-described gender	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part time	6	6	6	6
Women	3	3	3	3
Men	4	4	4	4
Persons of self-described gender	0	0	0	0
Total Infrastructure & Delivery	68	68	68	68
Office of the CEO				
Permanent - Full time	5	5	5	5
Women	3	3	3	3
Men	2	2	2	2
Persons of self-described gender	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part time	1	1	1	1
Women	1	1	1	1
Men	0	0	0	0
Persons of self-described gender	0	0	0	0
Total Office of the CEO	6	6	6	6
Casuals and temporary staff	0	0	0	0
Capitalised labour	0	0	0	0
Total staff numbers	119	119	119	119

4. Notes to the financial statements

This section presents detailed information on material components of the financial statements.

4.1 Comprehensive Income Statement

4.1.1 Rates and charges

Rates and charges are required by the Act and the Regulations to be disclosed in Council's budget.

As per the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council is required to have a Revenue and Rating Plan which is a four year plan for how Council will generate income to deliver the Council Plan, program and services and capital works commitments over a four-year period.

In developing the Budget, rates and charges were identified as an important source of revenue. Planning for future rate increases has therefore been an important component of the financial planning process. The Fair Go Rates System (FGRS) sets out the maximum amount councils may increase rates in a year. For 2026/27 the FGRS cap has been set at 2.75%. The cap applies to both general rates and municipal charges and is calculated on the basis of council's average rates and charges.

The level of required rates and charges has been considered in this context, with reference to Council's other sources of income and the planned expenditure on services and works to be undertaken for the community.

To achieve these objectives while maintaining service levels and a strong capital expenditure program, the average general rate and the municipal charge will increase by 2.75% in line with the rate cap.

Waste service charges have been increased to \$496 to reflect rising processing costs associated with green waste and hard waste collections, as well as adjustments in line with CPI.

This will raise total rates and charges for 2026/27 to \$16,499,284.

4.1.1(a) The reconciliation of the total rates and charges to the Comprehensive Income Statement is as follows:

	2025/26		2026/27		Change	%
	Forecast	Actual	Budget			
	\$'000		\$'000			
General rates*	13,311		13,684		372	2.80%
Municipal charge*	831		850		19	2.27%
Waste Management charge	1,578		1,739		162	10.25%
Interest on rates and charges	80		80		-	0.00%
Revenue in lieu of rates	146		146		-	0.00%
Total rates and charges	15,946		16,499		553	0

*These items are subject to the rate cap established under the FGRS

4.1.1(b) The rate in the dollar to be levied as general rates under section 158 of the Act for each type or class of land compared with the previous financial year

Type or class of land	2025/26 cents/\$CIV*	2026/27 cents/\$CIV*	Change
General rate for rateable residential properties	0.486016	0.504632	3.83%
General rate for rateable commercial and industrial properties	0.561970	0.583496	3.83%
General rate for rateable farming properties	0.223567	0.232131	3.83%

4.1.1(c) The estimated total amount to be raised by general rates in relation to each type or class of land, and the estimated total amount to be raised by general rates, compared with the previous financial year

Type or class of land	2025/26	2026/27	Change	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	%
Residential	2,955	3,138	183	6.21%
Commercial and Industrial	568	617	49	8.56%
Farming	9,750	9,929	179	1.84%
Total amount to be raised by general rates	13,273	13,684	411	3.10%

4.1.1(d) The number of assessments in relation to each type or class of land, and the total number of assessments, compared with the previous financial year

Type or class of land	2025/26	2026/27	Change	
	Number	Number	Number	%
Residential	2,985	2,995	10	0.34%
Commercial and Industrial	449	452	3	0.67%
Farming	2,981	2,996	15	0.50%
Total number of assessments	6,415	6,443	28	0.44%

4.1.1(e) The basis of valuation to be used is the Capital Improved Value (CIV)

4.1.1(f) The estimated total value of each type or class of land, and the estimated total value of land, compared with the previous financial year

Type or class of land	2025/26	2026/27	Change	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	%
Residential	607,914	621,847	13,933	2.29%
Commercial and Industrial	101,065	105,669	4,604	4.56%
Farming	4,361,105	4,277,351	(83,754)	-1.92%
Total value of land	5,070,084	5,004,867	(65,217)	-1.29%

4.1.1(g) The municipal charge under Section 159 of the Act compared with the previous financial year

Type of Charge	Per Rateable Property 2025/26	Per Rateable Property 2026/27	Change	
	\$	\$	\$	%
Municipal	186	191	5	2.69%

4.1.1(h) The estimated total amount to be raised by municipal charges compared with the previous financial year

Type of Charge	2025/26	2026/27	Change	
	\$	\$	\$	%
Municipal	830,490	850,141	19,651	2.37%

4.1.1(i) The rate or unit amount to be levied for each type of service rate or charge under Section 162 of the Act compared with the previous financial year and detailed disclosure of the actual service/s rendered for the amount levied

Type of Charge	Per Rateable Property 2025/26	Per Rateable Property 2026/27	Change	
	\$	\$	\$	%
Waste Management Service Charge	\$ 450.00	\$ 496.00	\$ 46.00	10.22%
Total	\$ 450.00	\$ 496.00	\$ 46.00	10.22%

4.1.1(j) The estimated total amount to be raised by each type of service rate or charge, and the estimated total amount to be raised by service rates and charges, compared with the previous financial year

Type of Charge	2025/26	2026/27	Change	
	\$	\$	\$	%
Waste Management Service Charge	1,575,900	1,739,472	163,572	10.38%
Total	1,575,900	1,739,472	163,572	10.38%

4.1.1(k) The estimated total amount to be raised by all rates and charges compared with the previous financial year

	2025/26	2026/27	Change	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	%
General rates	13,273	13,684	411	3.09%
Municipal charge	831	850	19	2.27%
Waste Management Service Charge	1,576	1,739	164	10.38%
Electricity generation charge in lieu of rates	146	146	-	0.00%
Total Rates and charges	15,826	16,419	593	3.75%

4.1.1(l) Fair Go Rates System Compliance

Buloke Shire Council is required to comply with the State Government's Fair Go Rates System (FGRS). The table below details the budget assumptions consistent with the requirements of the Fair Go Rates System.

	2025/26	2026/27
Total Rates	\$ 13,692,241	\$ 14,144,829
Number of rateable properties	6,415	6,443.00
Base Average Rate	\$ 2,134	\$ 2,195
Maximum Rate Increase (set by the State Government)	3.00%	2.75%
Capped Average Rate	\$ 2,198.44	\$ 2,255.75
Maximum General Rates and Municipal Charges Revenue	\$ 14,103,008	\$ 14,533,812
Budgeted General Rates and Municipal Charges Revenue	\$ 14,103,008	\$ 14,533,812
Budgeted Supplementary Rates	\$ -	\$ -
Budgeted Total Rates and Municipal Charges Revenue	\$ 14,103,008	\$ 14,533,812

4.1.1(m) Any significant changes that may affect the estimated amounts to be raised by rates and charges

There are no known significant changes which may affect the estimated amounts to be raised by rates and charges. However, the total amount to be raised by rates and charges may be affected by:

- The making of supplementary valuations
- The variation of returned levels of value (e.g. valuation appeals)
- Changes of use of land such that rateable land becomes non-rateable land and vice versa
- Changes of use of land such that residential land becomes business land and vice versa.

4.1.1(n) Differential rates

Rates to be levied:

The rate and amount of rates payable in relation to land in each category of differential are:

- A general rate of 0.005046325% (0.504632 cents in the dollar of CIV) for all rateable residential properties; and
- A general rate of **0.005834964%** (0.583496 cents in the dollar of CIV) for all rateable commercial and industrial properties.
- A general rate of 0.002321309% (0.232131 cents in the dollar of CIV) for all rateable farming properties.

Each differential rate will be determined by multiplying the Capital Improved Value (CIV) of each rateable land (categorised by the characteristics described below) by the relevant percentages indicated above.

Commercial and Industrial land:

Commercial and Industrial land is any land, which is:

- Occupied for the principal purpose of carrying out the manufacture or production of, or trade in, goods or services; or
- Unoccupied but zoned commercial or industrial under the Buloke Shire Council Planning Scheme.

The objective of this differential rate is to ensure that all rateable land makes an equitable financial contribution to the cost of carrying out the functions of Council, including (but not limited to) the:

- Construction and maintenance of infrastructure assets;
- Development and provision of health and community services; and
- Provision of general support services.

The types and classes of rateable land within this differential rate are those having the relevant characteristics described above.

The money raised by the differential rate will be applied to the items of expenditure described in the Budget by Council. The level of the rate for land in this category is considered to provide for an appropriate contribution to Council's budgeted expenditure, having regard to the characteristics of the land.

The geographic location of the land within this differential rate is wherever located within the municipal district, without reference to ward boundaries.

The use of the land within this differential rate, in the case of improved land, is any use of land.

The differential rate for this type or class of land is 115.6% of the general/residential rate.

The characteristics of planning scheme zoning are applicable to the determination of vacant land which will be subject to the rate applicable to commercial and industrial land. The vacant land affected by this rate is that which is zoned commercial and/or industrial under the Buloke Shire Council Planning Scheme. The classification of land which is improved will be determined by the occupation of that land and have reference to the planning scheme zoning.

The types of buildings on the land within this differential rate are all buildings which are now constructed on the land or which are constructed prior to the expiry of the 2026/27 financial year.

Residential land:

Residential land is any land which is:

- Occupied for the principal purpose of physically accommodating persons; or
- Unoccupied but zoned residential under the Buloke Shire Planning Scheme and which is not commercial land.

The objective of this differential rate is to ensure that all rateable land makes an equitable financial contribution to the cost of carrying out the functions of Council, including (but not limited to) the:

- Construction and maintenance of infrastructure assets;
- Development and provision of health and community services; and
- Provision of general support services.

The types and classes of rateable land within this differential rate are those having the relevant characteristics described above.

The money raised by the differential rate will be applied to the items of expenditure described in the Budget by Council. The level of the rate for land in this category is considered to provide for an appropriate contribution to Council's budgeted expenditure, having regard to the characteristics of the land.

The geographic location of the land within this differential rate is wherever located within the municipal district, without reference to ward boundaries.

The use of the land within this differential rate, in the case of improved land, is any use of land.

The differential rate for this type or class of land is 100% of the general/residential rate.

The characteristics of planning scheme zoning are applicable to the determination of vacant land which will be subject to the rate applicable to residential land. The vacant land affected by this rate is that which is zoned residential under the Buloke Shire Council Planning Scheme. The classification of land which is improved will be determined by the occupation of that land and have reference to the planning scheme zoning.

The types of buildings on the land within this differential rate are all buildings which are now constructed on the land or which are constructed prior to the expiry of the 2026/27 financial year.

Farm Land:

Farm land is any rateable land:

- That is not less than 2 hectares in area;
- That is used primarily for grazing (including agistment), dairying, pig-farming, poultry farming, fish farming, tree farming, bee keeping, viticulture, horticulture, fruit growing or the growing of crops of any kind or any combination of those activities; and that is used by a business;
- That has significant and substantial commercial purpose or character;
- That seeks to make a profit on a continuous or repetitive basis from its activities on the land;

The types and classes of rateable land within this differential rate are those having the relevant characteristics described above.

The objective of this differential rate is to ensure that all rateable land makes an equitable financial contribution to the cost of carrying out the functions of Council, including (but not limited to) the:

- Construction and maintenance of infrastructure assets;
- Development and provision of health and community services;
- Provision of general support services;
- To maintain agriculture as a major industry in the municipal district; and,
- To ensure that the concessional rate in the dollar declared for defined Farm Land properties is fair and equitable, having regard to the cost of provision of Council services, and the level of benefits derived from expenditures made by Council on behalf of the farm sector.

The money raised by the differential rate will be applied to the items of expenditure described in the Budget by Council. The level of the rate for land in this category is considered to provide for an appropriate contribution to Council's budgeted expenditure, having regard to the characteristics of the land.

The geographic location of the land within this differential rate is where it is located within the municipal district, without reference to ward boundaries.

The use of the land within this differential rate, in the case of improved land, is any use of land.

The differential rate for this type or class of land is 46% of the general/residential rate.

4.1.2 Statutory fees and fines

	Forecast Actual	Budget	Change	
	2025/26	2026/27	\$'000	%
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	%
Town planning fees	90	50	(40)	-44.44%
Revenue collection	8	8	(0)	-3.70%
Compliance	17	30	13	80.72%
Asset Management	6	6		0.00%
<i>Building</i>	30	30	0	0.00%
Total statutory fees and fines	151	124	(27)	-17.85%

Statutory fees relate mainly to fees and fines levied in accordance with legislation and include town planning, compliance and building fees. Increases in statutory fees are made in accordance with legislative requirements. Overall Statutory fees are projected to decrease due to reduced levels of services by the municipal building surveyor (e.g. permits) issued and infringements

4.1.3 User fees

	Forecast Actual	Budget	Change	
	2025/26	2026/27	\$'000	%
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	%
Compliance	73	83	10	13.70%
Public Health and Wellbeing	32	32	-	0.00%
Building Regulations and Inspections	7	17	10	142.86%
Halls	10	10	-	0.00%
Electric Vehicle Charge	12	12	-	0.00%
Recycling, Landfill and Transfer Stations	280	263	(17)	-6.07%
<i>Saleyards Truck Wash</i>	50	30	(20)	-40.00%
Total user fees	464	447	(17)	-3.66%

User fees, charges and fines relate to the recovery of costs to deliver services through the charging of fees to users of Council's services. These includes the use of waste management services, community facilities, and the provision of human services such as childcare. A detailed listing of user fees, charges and fines is included in Appendix A - Fees and Charges Schedule.

4.1.4 Grants

Grants are required by the Act and the Regulations to be disclosed in Council's budget.

	Forecast Actual		Budget		Change	
	2025/26	2026/27	2026/27			
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	%	
Grants were received in respect of the following:						
Summary of grants						
Commonwealth funded grants	8,928	12,958	4,030	45.14%		
State funded grants	9,547	38,671	29,123	305.05%		
Total grants received	18,475	51,628	33,153	179.45%		
(a) Operating Grants						
Recurrent - Commonwealth Government						
Financial Assistance Grants	4,376	8,958	4,582	104.70%		
Recurrent - State Government						
School crossing supervisors	16	16	0	0.63%		
Supported Playgroups	67	67	-	0.00%		
Libraries	131	131	-	0.00%		
Maternal and child health	360	360	-	0.00%		
Other	92	93	1	1.09%		
Total recurrent grants	5,042	9,624	4,583	90.90%		
Non-recurrent - State Government						
Emergency Management	60	60	-	0.00%		
February Storm Event	100	169	69	69.00%		
Flood Studies	240	-	(240)	-100.00%		
Economic Development	14	-	(14)	-100.00%		
Youth Development	31	-	(31)	-100.00%		
Others	26	3	(23)	-88.46%		
Total non-recurrent grants	471	232	(239)	-50.74%		
Total operating grants	5,513	9,856	4,344	78.80%		
(b) Capital Grants						
Recurrent - Commonwealth Government						
Roads to recovery	2,389	2,000	(389)	-16.28%		
Total recurrent grants	2,389	2,000	(389)	-16.28%		
Non-recurrent - Commonwealth Government						
Roads	563	2,000	1,437	255.24%		
Parks, Open Spaces and Streetscapes	1,600	-	(1,600)	-100.00%		
Non-recurrent - State Government						
Roads	5,444	37,210	31,766	583.50%		
Recreational, Leisure & Community Facilities	-	562	562	-		
Parks, Open Spaces and Streetscapes	2,064	-	(2,064)	-100.00%		
Others	903	-	(903)	-100.00%		
Total non-recurrent grants	10,574	39,772	29,198	276.14%		
Total capital grants	12,963	41,772	28,809	222.25%		
Total Grants	18,475	51,628	33,153	179.45%		

While Financial Assistance Grants for FY2026 were received in advance, the FY2027 allocation is expected to align with the standard budget cycle. Furthermore, the inclusion of non-recurrent grants forecasted for FY2026 has resulted in a favorable increase in total operational grant funding.

Deferred revenue recognition from the prior period under roads, combined with additional grant funding budgeted towards the newly activated event AGRN 1270 has caused a favourable increase in capital grant funding.

4.1.5 Contributions

	Forecast Actual	Budget	Change	
	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	\$'000	%
Monetary	145	259	114	79%
Non-monetary	-	-	0	
Total contributions	145	259	114	79%

Monetary contributions for FY2026-27 reflect income received for administering the Fire Services Levy (now termed Essential Services and Volunteers Fund Levy) on behalf of the State Revenue Office as well as potential community contribution towards Wycheproof Netball Court and Lighting.

4.1.6 Other income

	Forecast Actual	Budget	Change	
	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	\$'000	%
Interest	1,000	920	(80)	-8.00%
Reimbursements and Other Income	259	240	(19)	-7.34%
Total other income	1,259	1,160	(99)	-7.86%

Other Income includes reimbursements, rent on council properties and fuel tax credits. The adoption of a conservative approach has resulted in a decrease in interest earned on investments.

4.1.7 Employee costs

	Forecast Actual	Budget	Change	
	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	\$'000	%
Wages and salaries	11,378.00	13,171	1,793	15.76%
WorkCover	367.00	425	58	15.84%
Superannuation	1,170.00	1,354	184	15.70%
Total employee costs	12,915.00	14,950	2,035	15.76%

Employee costs include all labour-related expenditure such as wages, allowances and salaries and on-costs such as leave entitlements, WorkCover and employer superannuation.

Council is currently undertaking negotiations and financial modelling for a new Enterprise Agreement (EA). Pending the finalisation of these negotiations, the year-on-year variance is attributable to the following key assumptions:

- Salary increases have been incorporated based on anticipated outcomes of the proposed Enterprise Agreement.
- The legislated Superannuation Guarantee rate at 12 per cent, effective 1 July 2026
- Employee band movements and position reclassifications, aligned with expected provisions of the new Enterprise Agreement.

A summary of human resources expenditure categorised according to the organisational structure of Council can be found in the Statement of Human Resources in section 3.

4.1.8 Materials and services

	Forecast Actual	Budget	Change	
	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	\$'000	%
Materials, services and contracts	9,722	8,763	(958.09)	-9.86%
Utilities	721	731	10.20	1.42%
Plant costs	1,147	1,479	332.50	29.00%
Total materials and services	11,589	10,973	(615.39)	-5.31%

Materials and services comprise expenditure on consumables, contractor services, and utility costs. These costs are projected to decrease favourably by 5% compared to the 2025/26 forecast. This variance is primarily driven by higher-than-anticipated expenditures in the forecast period relating to consultants and contractors, alongside operational efficiencies identified by management in the budget year to offset increased employee costs associated with pending Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA) negotiations.

4.1.9 Depreciation

	Forecast Actual	Budget	Change	
	2025/26	2026/27	\$'000	%
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	%
Property	1,461	1,388	(72.8)	-4.98%
Plant & equipment	1,241	1,179	(61.8)	-4.98%
Infrastructure	6,874	6,532	(342.4)	-4.98%
Total depreciation	9,576	9,099	(477.0)	0

Depreciation is an accounting measure and is a non-cash item which attempts to allocate the value of an asset over its useful life for Council's property, plant and equipment and infrastructure assets such as roads and drainage. Budgeted depreciation for the 2026/27 financial year is expected to decrease when compared to the forecast mainly due to carry forward projects in FY2025/26.

4.1.10 Amortisation -Right of Use Assets

	Forecast Actual	Budget	Change	
	2025/26	2026/27	\$'000	%
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	%
Right Of Use Assets	458	572	114	25.00%
Total amortisation - intangible assets	458	572	114	25.00%

4.1.11 Other expenses

Add additional tables for each material component of the Comprehensive Income Statement

	Forecast Actual	Budget	Change	
	2025/26	2026/27	\$'000	%
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	%
Auditors remuneration	99	93	(6.0)	-6.06%
Bank fees	12	12	-	0.00%
Mayoral and Councillor allowances	221	229	8.0	3.62%
Election expenses	2	-	(2.0)	-100.00%
Council meeting expenses	21	21	-	0.00%
Contributions and donations	490	441	(49.0)	-10.00%
Total other expenses	845	796	(49.0)	-5.80%

Other expenses relate to a range of unclassified items including contributions to the community, councillor allowances, audit fees and other miscellaneous expenditure items.

4.2 Balance Sheet

4.2.1 Assets

Current assets total \$22.7M and non-current assets total \$351.9M

Key points relating to Council's balance sheet asset disclosures include:

- Cash and cash equivalents include cash and investments such as cash held in the bank and investments held in deposits or other highly liquid investments with short term maturities of three months or less. Council is budgeting a cash and investment position at 30 June 2027 of approximately \$18M. Council is not anticipating any restricted funds at 30 June 2027 however some funds have been allocated for specific future purposes by Council. These are disclosed in Council's annual financial report.
- Trade and other receivables are monies owed to Council by ratepayers and other debtors.
- Other assets include items such as accrued income etc.
- Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment make up the largest component of Council's assets and represents the value of all the land, buildings, roads, vehicles, equipment, etc. which has been built up by Council over many years.

4.2.2 Liabilities

Current liabilities total \$4M and non-current liabilities total \$4M

Key points relating to Council's balance sheet liability disclosures include:

- Trade and other payables are those to whom Council owes money as at June 30.
- Provisions include accrued long service leave, annual leave days owing to employees. An increase for Enterprise Agreement outcomes has been factored into these employee entitlements. Provisions also include a provision for landfill rehabilitation. Overall provision balances are expected to remain steady.
- Council is not forecasting borrowings in the financial year 2026/2027

4.2.3 Leases by category

As a result of the introduction of AASB 16 Leases, right-of-use assets and lease liabilities have been recognised as outlined in the table below.

	Forecast Actual 2025/26	Budget 2026/27
	\$	\$
Right-of-use assets		
Vehicles	650	650
Total right-of-use assets	650	650
Lease liabilities		
Current lease Liabilities		
Vehicles	326	326
Total current lease liabilities	326	326
Non-current lease liabilities		
Vehicles	384	384
Total non-current lease liabilities	384	384
Total lease liabilities	710	710

4.3 Statement of changes in Equity

4.3.1 Equity

Equity totals \$366.3M, including reserves \$201.6M

Total equity always equals net assets and is made up of the following components:

- Asset revaluation reserve represents the difference between the previously recorded value of assets and their current valuations.
- Accumulated surplus is the value of all net assets less reserves that have accumulated over time.
- Other reserves that are funds that Council wishes to separately identify as being set aside to meet a specific purpose in the future and to which there is no existing liability. These amounts are transferred from the accumulated surplus of Council and are to be separately disclosed.

4.4 Statement of Cash Flows

4.4.1 Net cash flows provided by/used in operating activities

Operating Activities (\$43M inflow)

Operating activities refers to the cash generated or used in the normal service delivery functions of Council. Cash remaining after paying for the provision of services to the community may be available for investment in capital works. The net cash flows from operating activities does not equal the surplus (deficit) for the year as the expected revenues and expenses of the Council include non-cash items, which have been excluded from the Cash Flow Statement.

4.4.2 Net cash flows provided by/used in investing activities

Investing Activities (\$49.8M outflow)

Investing activities refers to cash generated or used in the enhancement or creation of infrastructure and other assets. These activities also include the acquisition and sale of other assets such as vehicles, property and equipment. The cash outflow from investing activities is tied to the expenditure in the capital program

4.4.3 Net cash flows provided by/used in financing activities

Investing Activities (\$0.6M outflow)

Financing activities refers to cash generated or used in the financing of Council's functions. Due to a change in accounting standards, financing activities also includes lease payments and associated interest financing activities also includes lease payments and associated interest.

4.5 Capital works program

This section presents a listing of the capital works projects that will be undertaken for the 2026/27 year, classified by expenditure type and funding source. Works are also disclosed as current budget or carried forward from prior year.

4.5.1 Summary

	Forecast Actual	Budget	Change	%
	2025/26	2026/27		
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	
Property	299	412	113	37.71%
Plant and equipment	237	2,317	2,080	877.28%
Infrastructure	22,778	47,026	24,248	106.45%
Total	23,314	49,755	26,441	113.41%

	Project Cost	Asset expenditure types				Summary of Funding Sources			
	\$'000	New	Renewal	Upgrade	Expansion	Grants	Contributions	Council cash	Borrowings
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Property	412	-	412	-	-	-	-	412	-
Plant and equipment	2,317	-	2,317	-	-	-	-	2,317	-
Infrastructure	47,026	180	46,575	270	-	41,772	200	5,054	-
Total	49,755	180	49,304	270	-	41,772	200	7,783	-

The variation in the capital program is primarily driven by the outcomes of the heavy machinery and light fleet strategy, resulting in the deferral of associated expenditure to the following financial year. In addition, works under the Disaster Recovery Flood Arrangements have been postponed, as roads have been re-impacted by a subsequent event, requiring Council to undertake further investigation and redesign prior to delivery.

Council has also allocated \$300,000 toward the Charlton Hall, with these funds set aside in a discretionary reserve. This approach enables Council to undertake community engagement, to better understand the scope and extent of the required works ensuring that any future investment delivers maximum benefit to the community before committing the expenditure within the budget.

4.5.2 Current Budget

Capital Works Area	Project Cost \$'000	Asset expenditure types				Summary of Funding Sources			
		New \$'000	Renewal \$'000	Upgrade \$'000	Expansion \$'000	Grants \$'000	Contributions \$'000	Council cash \$'000	Borrowings \$'000
PROPERTY									
Buildings									
Aquatic Facilities Renewal Annual Allocation FY27	60	-	60	-	-	-	-	60	-
Donald Pony Club	58	-	58	-	-	-	-	58	-
Building Improvements									
Building improvements	70	-	70	-	-	-	-	70	-
TOTAL PROPERTY	188	-	188	-	-	-	-	188	-
PLANT AND EQUIPMENT									
Plant, Machinery and Equipment									
2 X Motor Grader	150	-	150	-	-	-	-	150	-
Fixtures, Fittings and Furniture									
Fixtures, Fittings & Furniture Annual Allocation FY27	40	-	40	-	-	-	-	40	-
Computers and Telecommunications									
Computers and Information Technology equipment Annual allocation FY27	130	-	130	-	-	-	-	130	-
TOTAL PLANT AND EQUIPMENT	320	-	320	-	-	-	-	320	-

Capital Works Area	Project Cost \$'000	Asset expenditure types				Summary of Funding Sources			
		New \$'000	Renewal \$'000	Upgrade \$'000	Expansion \$'000	Grants \$'000	Contributions \$'000	Council cash \$'000	Borrowings \$'000
INFRASTRUCTURE									
Roads									
<i>Annual Renewal Allocation - Kerb and Channel</i>	200	-	200	-	-	200	-	-	-
<i>Annual Renewal Program Allocation - Roads</i>	1,800	-	1,800	-	-	1,800	-	-	-
<i>Flood Rehabilitation*</i>	13,000	-	13,000	-	-	13,000	-	-	-
Footpaths and Cycleways									
<i>Donald Footpath Non Slip Treatment</i>	75	-	75	-	-	-	-	75	-
Drainage									
<i>Annual Renewal Program Allocation - Drainage</i>	50	-	50	-	-	-	-	50	-
Recreational, Leisure & Community Facilities									
<i>Recreational, Leisure and Community Facilities Annual Allocation FY27</i>	11	-	11	-	-	-	-	11	-
<i>Wycheproof Netball Court & Lighting*</i>	901	180	451	270	-	500	200	201	-
<i>Birchip Netball Court 1 Resurfacing</i>	40	-	40	-	-	-	-	40	-
Parks, Open Space and Streetscapes									
<i>Parks, Open Space and Streetscape Annual Allocation FY27</i>	17	-	17	-	-	-	-	17	-
<i>Open Spaces Asset Protection Programme Tree Replacement/Planting Activity</i>	21	-	21	-	-	-	-	21	-
Other Infrastructure									
<i>Installation of a RV Dump Point at the Wooroonook Camping Grounds</i>	78	-	78	-	-	-	-	78	-
TOTAL INFRASTRUCTURE	16,193	180	15,742	270	-	15,500	200	493	-
TOTAL NEW CAPITAL WORKS	16,701	180	16,250	270	-	15,500	200	1,001	-

4.5.3 Works carried forward from the 2025/26 year

Capital Works Area	Project Cost \$'000	Asset expenditure types				Summary of Funding Sources			
		New \$'000	Renewal \$'000	Upgrade \$'000	Expansion \$'000	Grants \$'000	Contributions \$'000	Council cash \$'000	Borrowings \$'000
PROPERTY									
Buildings improvements									
<i>Building Improvements</i>	64	-	64	-	-	-	-	64	-
<i>Replacement of existing public toilet facility at Watchem Park</i>	160	-	160	-	-	-	-	160	-
TOTAL PROPERTY	224	-	224	-	-	-	-	224	-
PLANT AND EQUIPMENT									
Plant, Machinery and Equipment									
<i>Plant, Machinery and Equipment</i>	1,997	-	1,997	-	-	-	-	1,997	-
TOTAL PLANT AND EQUIPMENT	1,997	-	1,997	-	-	-	-	1,997	-

Capital Works Area	Project Cost \$'000	Asset expenditure types				Summary of Funding Sources			
		New \$'000	Renewal \$'000	Upgrade \$'000	Expansion \$'000	Grants \$'000	Contributions \$'000	Council cash \$'000	Borrowings \$'000
INFRASTRUCTURE									
Roads									
<i>Safer Local Roads</i>	2,000	-	2,000	-	-	2,000	-	-	-
<i>Rehabilitation and flood works*</i>	27,547	-	27,547	-	-	24,210	-	3,337	-
Footpaths and Cycleways									
<i>Footpaths and Cycleways</i>	133	-	133	-	-	-	-	133	-
Drainage									
<i>Drainage works</i>	28	-	28	-	-	-	-	28	-
<i>Nullawil - West/East drainage (Calder Highway Pipeworks)</i>	152	-	152	-	-	-	-	152	-
<i>Kerb and Channel</i>	150	-	150	-	-	-	-	150	-
Recreational, Leisure & Community Facilities									
<i>Aquatic facilities renewal works</i>	50	-	50	-	-	-	-	50	-
<i>Electric vehicle charger Birchip or Charlton</i>	55	-	55	-	-	-	-	55	-
<i>Birchip netball court remediation</i>	4	-	4	-	-	-	-	4	-
<i>Tiny Towns</i>	62	-	62	-	-	62	-	-	-
Parks, Open Space and Streetscapes									
<i>Birchip streetscape lighting</i>	195	-	195	-	-	-	-	195	-
<i>Sea Lake streetscape lighting</i>	67	-	67	-	-	-	-	67	-
<i>Donald Streetscape</i>	390	-	390	-	-	-	-	390	-
TOTAL INFRASTRUCTURE	30,833	-	30,833	-	-	26,272	-	4,561	-
TOTAL CARRIED FORWARD CAPITAL WORKS 2025/26	33,054	-	33,054	-	-	26,272	-	6,782	-

*projects to go ahead only if funded

**Summary of Planned Capital Works Expenditure
For the years ending 30 June 2028, 2029 & 2030**

2027/28	Asset Expenditure Types					Funding Sources				
	Total \$'000	New \$'000	Renewal \$'000	Expansion \$'000	Upgrade \$'000	Total \$'000	Grants \$'000	Contributions \$'000	Council Cash \$'000	Borrowings \$'000
Property										
Building improvements	124	0	124	0	0	124	0	0	124	0
Total Building improvements	124	0	124	0	0	124	0	0	124	0
Total Property	124	0	124	0	0	124	0	0	124	0
Plant and Equipment										
Plant, machinery and equipment	87	0	87	0	0	87	0	0	87	0
Fixtures, fittings and furniture	11	0	11	0	0	11	0	0	11	0
Computers and telecommunications	11	0	11	0	0	11	0	0	11	0
Total Plant and Equipment	109	0	109	0	0	0	0	0	109	0
Infrastructure										
Roads	16,499	0	16,499	0	0	16,499	16,179	0	320	0
Bridges	10	0	10	0	0	10	0	0	10	0
Footpaths and cycleways	7	0	7	0	0	7	0	0	7	0
Drainage	36	0	36	0	0	36	0	0	36	0
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	51	0	51	0	0	51	0	0	51	0
Kerb and Channel	12	0	12	0	0	12	0	0	12	0
Parks, open space and streetscapes	51	0	51	0	0	51	0	0	51	0
Aerodromes	7	0	7	0	0	7	0	0	7	0
Total Infrastructure	16,674	0	16,674	0	0	16,674	16,179	0	495	0
Total Capital Works Expenditure	16,906	0	16,906	0	0	16,906	16,179	0	728	0

2028/29	Asset Expenditure Types					Funding Sources				
	Total \$'000	New \$'000	Renewal \$'000	Expansion \$'000	Upgrade \$'000	Total \$'000	Grants \$'000	Contributions \$'000	Council Cash \$'000	Borrowings \$'000
Property										
Building improvements	37	0	37	0	0	37	0	0	37	0
Total Building improvements	37	0	37	0	0	37	0	0	37	0
Total Property	37	0	37	0	0	37	0	0	37	0
Plant and Equipment										
Plant, machinery and equipment	26	0	26	0	0	26	0	0	26	0
Fixtures, fittings and furniture	3	0	3	0	0	3	0	0	3	0
Computers and telecommunications	3	0	3	0	0	3	0	0	3	0
Total Plant and Equipment	32	0	32	0	0	0	0	0	32	0
Infrastructure										
Roads	3,273	0	3,273	0	0	3,273	3,179	0	95	0
Bridges	3	0	3	0	0	3	0	0	3	0
Footpaths and cycleways	2	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	2	0
Drainage	11	0	11	0	0	11	0	0	11	0
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	15	0	15	0	0	15	0	0	15	0
Kerb and Channel	3	0	3	0	0	3	0	0	3	0
Parks, open space and streetscapes	15	0	15	0	0	15	0	0	15	0
Aerodromes	2	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	2	0
Total Infrastructure	3,325	0	3,325	0	0	3,325	3,179	0	146	0
Total Capital Works Expenditure	3,394	0	3,394	0	0	3,394	3,179	0	215	0

2029/30	Asset Expenditure Types					Funding Sources				
	Total \$'000	New \$'000	Renewal \$'000	Expansion \$'000	Upgrade \$'000	Total \$'000	Grants \$'000	Contributions \$'000	Council Cash \$'000	Borrowings \$'000
Property										
Building improvements	58	0	58	0	0	58	0	0	58	0
Total Buildings	58	0	58	0	0	58	0	0	58	0
Total Property	58	0	58	0	0	58	0	0	58	0
Plant and Equipment										
Plant, machinery and equipment	41	0	41	0	0	41	0	0	41	0
Fixtures, fittings and furniture	5	0	5	0	0	5	0	0	5	0
Computers and telecommunications	5	0	5	0	0	5	0	0	5	0
Total Plant and Equipment	51	0	51	0	0	0	0	0	51	0
Infrastructure										
Roads	3,329	0	3,329	0	0	3,329	3,179	0	150	0
Bridges	5	0	5	0	0	5	0	0	5	0
Footpaths and cycleways	5	0	5	0	0	5	0	0	5	0
Drainage	17	0	17	0	0	17	0	0	17	0
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	24	0	24	0	0	24	0	0	24	0
Kerb and Channel	5	0	5	0	0	5	0	0	5	0
Parks, open space and streetscapes	24	0	24	0	0	24	0	0	24	0
Aerodromes	3	0	3	0	0	3	0	0	3	0
Total Infrastructure	3,412	0	3,412	0	0	3,412	3,179	0	233	0
Total Capital Works Expenditure	3,521	0	3,521	0	0	3,521	3,179	0	342	0

4.7 Proposals to Lease Council Land

This section presents a summary of Council's proposals to lease council land to external parties in the 2026-27 financial year.

Disclosure is required for any proposal to lease land in the 2026-27 financial year where the rent (for any period of the lease) is greater than \$100,000, or the market value of the land is greater than \$100,000, or the lease term is greater than 10 years.

Lessee	Location	Term
None		

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5. Targeted performance indicators (Council selected)

The following table highlights Council's current and projected performance across eight targeted performance indicators selected by Council from the range of prescribed performance measures contained in the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020. These indicators provide a useful analysis of Council's intentions and performance and should be interpreted in the context of the organisation's objectives. Results against these indicators and targets will be reported in Council's Performance Statement included in the Annual Report.

Domain / Indicator	Measure	Notes	Actual		Forecast		Target Projections			Trend
			2024-25	2025-26	Actual	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	
Cost	Cost of library service									
Library services	Direct cost of library services/Population	1	\$ 49	\$ 50	\$ 46	\$ 46	\$ 46	\$ 46	\$ 46	+
Cost	Cost of aquatic facilities									
Aquatic facilities	Direct cost of aquatic facilities less income received/Number of visits to aquatic facilities	2	\$ 33	\$ 42	\$ 30	\$ 30	\$ 30	\$ 30	\$ 30	+
Financial management	Average rate per property assessment									
Expenditure and revenue level	Sum of all general rates and municipal charges/Number of property assessments	3	\$ 2,140	\$ 2,195	\$ 2,256	\$ 2,318	\$ 2,382	\$ 2,453		o
Governance	Council resolutions made at meetings closed to the public									
Transparency	Number of Council resolutions made at meetings of Council, or at meetings of a delegated committee consisting only of Councillors, closed to the public/Number of Council resolutions made at meetings of Council or at meetings of a delegated committee consisting only of Councillors		6%	6%	6%	6%	6%	6%	6%	+
Governance	Staff Turnover									
Strategic planning	Permanent staff resignations and terminations for the financial year/Average number of permanent staff for the financial year		24%	26%	25%	25%	25%	25%	25%	o
Community	Participation in the MCH service by Aboriginal children									
MCH services	Number of Aboriginal children who attend the MCH/Number of Aboriginal children enrolled in the MCH service		87%	91%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	o
Cost	Cost of sealed local road resealing									
Roads	Direct cost of sealed local road resealing/Square metres of sealed local roads resealed		\$ 6	\$ 6	\$ 6	\$ 6	\$ 6	\$ 6	\$ 6	+
Governance	Capital works planning									
Financial decisions	Sum of actual capital works expenditure for the financial year/Sum of budgeted capital works expenditure for the financial year	4	26%	50%	50%	58%	69%	83%		o

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5a. Targeted performance indicators (Mandatory)

The following tables highlight Council's current and projected performance across a selection of targeted service and financial performance indicators. These indicators provide a useful analysis of Council's intentions and performance and should be interpreted in the context of the organisation's objectives. The targeted performance indicators below are the prescribed financial performance indicators contained in Schedule 4 of the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020. Results against these indicators and targets will be reported in Council's Performance Statement included in the Annual Report.

Targeted service performance indicators - Mandatory

Domain / Indicator	Measure	Notes	Actual 2024-25	Forecast Actual 2025-26	Target 2026-27	Target Projections			Trend
						2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	+ / o / -
Governance									
Community engagement (Council decisions made and implemented with community input)	Satisfaction with the opportunities offered by Council to be consulted or engaged in Council decisions Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with the consultation and engagement efforts of Council	5	43	45	46	46.46	46.92	47.39	0
Environment									
Roads (Sealed local roads are maintained and renewed to ensure a safe network)	Sealed local roads below the intervention level Number of kms of sealed local roads below the renewal intervention level set by Council / Kms of sealed local roads		99%	98%	98%	98%	99%	99%	0
Responsiveness									
Statutory planning (Councils decide on planning applications and fulfill their legislative duties in a timely manner)	Planning applications decided within the relevant required time Number of planning application decisions made within the relevant required time / Number of planning application decisions made	6	67%	70%	100%	100%	100%	100%	0
Environment									
Waste management (Waste is minimised and sustainability promoted)	Kerbside collection waste to landfill Waste in tonnage collected from kerbside waste collection services sent to landfill / Number of serviced properties	7	1.27	1.27	1.20	1.22	1.25	1.28	0

Key to Target Trend:
+ increase in Council's overall targets
o maintaining Council's overall targets
- decrease in Council's overall targets

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Targeted financial indicators - Mandatory

Domain / Indicator	Measure	Notes	Actual	Forecast	Target	Target Projections			Trend
			2024-25	Actual 2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	+/-
Financial management									
Liquidity (Sufficient working capital and cash is available to cover expenses)	Current assets compared to current liabilities Current assets / current liabilities	8	440%	866%	553%	561%	557%	561%	o
Financial forecasting									
Asset renewal and upgrade (Renewal and upgrade of assets is planned and delivered)	Asset renewal compared to depreciation Asset renewal and upgrade expense / Asset depreciation	9	84%	92%	545%	186%	37%	39%	+
Financial management									
Rates concentration (Revenue is generated from a range of sources)	Rates compared to adjusted underlying revenue Rate revenue / adjusted underlying revenue		44%	61%	59%	54%	54%	54%	o
Financial management									
Expenditure and revenue level (Resources are used efficiently in the delivery of services)	Expenses per property assessment Total expenses / no. of property assessments		\$5,547	\$10,125	\$5,664	\$5,862	\$6,067	\$6,279	+

Key to Target Trend:

- + increase in Council's overall targets
- o maintaining Council's overall targets
- decrease in Council's overall targets

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5b. Financial performance indicators

The following table highlights Council's current and projected performance across a range of key financial performance indicators. These indicators provide a useful analysis of Council's financial position and performance and should be interpreted in the context of the organisation's objectives.

The financial performance indicators below are the prescribed financial performance indicators contained in Part 3 of Schedule 3 of the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*. Results against these indicators will be reported in Council's Performance Statement included in the Annual Report.

Indicator	Measure	Notes	Actual	Forecast	Budget	Projections			Trend
			2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	+/-
Financial forecasting									
Indebtedness (level of long term liabilities is appropriate to the size and nature of a Council's activities)	Non-current liabilities compared to own-source revenue Non-current liabilities / own source revenue		17%	28%	25%	22%	22%	22%	-
Loans and borrowings (level of interest bearing loans and borrowings is appropriate to the size and nature of Council's activities)	Loans and borrowings compared to own-source revenue Interest bearing loans and borrowings / own-source revenue	10	%	%	%	%	%	%	+
	Loans and borrowings repayments compared to own-source revenue Interest and principal repayments on interest bearing loans and borrowings / own-source revenue	10	%	%	%	%	%	%	+
Population (population is a key driver of a Council's ability to fund the delivery of services to the community)	Expenses per head of population Total expenses / Population		\$5,957	\$5,960	\$6,129	\$6,193	\$6,399	\$6,516	+
	Infrastructure per head of population Value of infrastructure / Population		\$46,323	\$47,070	\$58,970	\$60,281	\$59,323	\$58,387	o
Revenue and grants (revenue is generated from a range of sources in order to fund the delivery of services to the community)	Own-source revenue per head of population Own source revenue / Population		\$2,999	\$2,981	\$2,735	\$3,180	\$3,258	\$3,348	o
	Recurrent grants per head of population Recurrent grants / Population		\$2,439	\$3,131	\$1,555	\$1,596	\$1,639	\$1,686	+
Financial management									
Liquidity (sufficient working capital and cash is available to cover expenses)	Cash compared to current liabilities Cash / current liabilities		440%	589%	439%	442%	435%	435%	o
Operating position (an adjusted underlying surplus is generated in the ordinary course of business)	Adjusted underlying surplus (or deficit) Adjusted underlying surplus (deficit) / Adjusted underlying revenue		-2%	-53%	-30%	-17%	-18%	-17%	+
Rates effort (rating level is set based on the community's capacity to pay)	Rates compared to property values Rate revenue / CIV of rateable properties in the municipal district		0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	o
Expenditure and revenue level (resources are used efficiently in the delivery of services)	Average rate per property assessment General rates and municipal charges / no. of property assessments		\$5,229	\$2,195	\$2,256	\$2,318	\$2,318	\$2,323	+
Sustainability Capacity									

Key to Forecast Trend:

- + Forecasts improvement in Council's financial performance/financial position indicator
- o Forecasts that Council's financial performance/financial position indicator will be steady
- Forecasts deterioration in Council's financial performance/financial position indicator

OFFICIAL

Notes to indicators

5

1 Cost of library service

Expected to be steady across the 4 year budget period as population is assumed to stay constant.

2 Cost of aquatic facilities

Expected to be steady across the 4 year budget period as no of aquatic visits is assumed to stay constant.

3 Average rate per property assessment

Projected to increase steadily over the 4year budget period, as the number of assessments is assumed to remain constant while total rate revenue grows in line with the rate cap.

4 Capital works planning

Projected to increase as planned works are delivered within the budget period, resulting in a reduction in carry forward balances.

5a

5 Satisfaction with the opportunities offered by Council to be consulted on or engaged in Council decisions

Council strives to achieve a better outcome year on year

6 Planning applications decided within the relevant required time

Council strives to achieve a better outcome year on year

7 Kerbside collection waste to landfill

This is the first occasion Council is reporting kerbside performance per serviced property; previous indicators measured only the total quantity diverted to landfills.

8 Current assets compared to current liabilities

As Council maintains a cash neutral budget, receipt of any external funding will be reflected with a higher ratio outcome.

9 Asset renewal compared to depreciation

The higher increase in percentage is attributable to external Disaster Recovery funding being budgeted through to FY2028; beyond this period, Council returns to maintaining its baseline renewal levels.

5b

10 Loans and borrowings compared to own-source revenue

Council does not have any planned borrowings.

10 Loans and borrowings repayments compared to own-source revenue

Council does not have any planned borrowings.

OFFICIAL

ANNUAL BUDGET - APPENDIX A

BULOKE SHIRE COUNCIL

Fees and Charges 2026-27



Discretionary Fees and Charges

(Fees and Charges are set by Council)





Table of Contents

ADMINISTRATION	3
HALL HIRE	3
WYCHEPROOF SALEYARDS	3
STANDPIPE	3
ANIMAL CONTROL	4
IMPOUNDED GOODS	4
IMPOUNDED LIVESTOCK	4
LOCAL LAWS	5
CAT TRAP HIRE	5
DOMESTIC ANIMAL BUSINESS	5
MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS	5
FIRE PREVENTION WORKS	5
BUILDING FEES & CHARGES	5
Domestic Sheds / Carports / Garages (minimum of 2 inspection)	5
Dwellings & Multi Unit Developments (including alterations and additions) (minimum of 3 inspections)	5
Commercial Building Works	6
Swimming Pools & Spas	6
Enforcement	6
Miscellaneous Items.....	6
Report & Consent	6
PLANNING FEES	7
PUBLIC HEALTH	7
Public Health – Septic Tank	7
Public Health & Wellbeing	7
Street Stall & Food Vendors	8
Immunisations	8
POOL HIRE	8
Full Facility Hire per hour - closed to public	8
LANDFILL	8
Tyres.....	9
Animal Carcasses	9
Recycling	9



This document presents the fees and charges which will be charged in respect to various goods and services during the financial year 2026/27.

Note that this schedule only includes fees set by Council. There are other fees that are set by statute and charged by Council in addition to this listing. These are statutory fees and are made in accordance with legislative requirements. These fees are updated as of 1 July 2026 and a link to the Department of Transport and Planning will be reflected on Council's website.

Description of Fees & Charges	Basis of Fee	2026/27 Fee Inc GST (\$)
ADMINISTRATION		
Reprint of Rates Notice - previous years	Non-Statutory	10.00
HALL HIRE		
Main Hall (max. 6 hours)	Non-Statutory	273.00
Supper Room (max. 6 hours)	Non-Statutory	77.00
Cost p/h (over max. hours)	Non-Statutory	59.00
All Day Kitchen	Non-Statutory	50.00
All Day 24 hours, full use of venue	Non-Statutory	472.00
Hall Hire - Bond	Non-Statutory	590.00
Exceptional cleaning charges	Non-Statutory	411.00
Senior Citizens (Max 6 Hours)	Non-Statutory	124.00
Senior Citizens Hourly rate over max 6 hours	Non-Statutory	34.00
Regular Hire - Private or Commercial	Non-Statutory	50.00
WYCHEPROOF SALEYARDS		
Yard Fees 0.90% of gross sales turnover	Non-Statutory	Varies
Agent's Fees 13% of yard fees	Non-Statutory	Varies
Public Holiday Penalty Rate	Non-Statutory	1,165.00
Unsold stock fee (per head)	Non-Statutory	2.00
Destruction and disposal of dead stock fee (per head)	Non-Statutory	23.00
Truck Wash - Key Deposit (Avdata) Refunded on return of keys	Non-Statutory	31.00
Water Usage (per minute)	Non-Statutory	2.00
STANDPIPE		
Minimum charge for under 1,000 litres	Non-Statutory	12.00
Per 1000 litres	Non-Statutory	12.00



ANIMAL CONTROL

Dog or Cat Full Registration (Not micro chipped or desexed - only relevant to animals registered prior to May 2007)	Non-Statutory	143.00
Reduced Registration - Dog or Cat - Micro chipped plus one or more of the following - desexed, not desexed, working or farm dog, over 10 years old or VCA member	Non-Statutory	47.00
Pensioner Concession-Full Dog/Cat Registration (half price for all dog & cat registration categories)	Non-Statutory	71.00
Pensioner Concession - Reduced Dog/Cat Registration (half price for all dog & cat registration categories)	Non-Statutory	24.00
Dog or Cat Full Registration (Not micro chipped or desexed - only relevant to animals registered prior to May 2007) - after 10th October	Non-Statutory	72.00
Reduced Registration - Dog or Cat - Micro chipped plus one or more of the following - desexed, not desexed, working or farm dog, over 10 years old or VCA member - after 10th October	Non-Statutory	24.00
Pensioner Concession-Full Dog/Cat Registration (half price for all dog & cat registration categories) - after 10th October	Non-Statutory	36.00
Pensioner Concession - Reduced Dog/Cat Registration (half price for all dog & cat registration categories) - after 10th October	Non-Statutory	12.00
Exempt Dogs - Guide dogs, Police dogs & Racing dogs (Greyhounds)	Non-Statutory	Free
Replacement lifetime tags	Non-Statutory	7.00
Registered animals moving to Buloke (from within VIC only) - No Charge	Non-Statutory	Free

IMPOUNDED GOODS

Release fee (Plus other associated costs)	Non-Statutory	220.00
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IMPOUNDED LIVESTOCK

Sheep up to 5 head	Non-Statutory	121.00
Release fee (Plus other associated costs) per vehicle	Non-Statutory	341.00
Per Sheep > 5per head	Non-Statutory	16.00
Goats & Pigs up to 2 head	Non-Statutory	121.00
Per Goat & Pig > 2per head	Non-Statutory	25.00
Cattle up to 3 head	Non-Statutory	301.00
Per head >3per head	Non-Statutory	121.00
Per Horse	Non-Statutory	301.00
Transport of livestock - Total cost of transport to be recouped	Non-Statutory	Varies
Sustenance - Sheep (Per day per head)	Non-Statutory	13.00
Sustenance - Goats & Pigs - Per day per head	Non-Statutory	32.00
Sustenance - Cattle & Horses - Per day per head	Non-Statutory	32.00
Dog/Cat - 1st Impoundment	Non-Statutory	96.00
Dog/Cat - 2nd impoundment within 12-month period	Non-Statutory	191.00
Dog/Cat >2 impoundments within 12 months	Non-Statutory	379.00



Dog/Cat in excess 4 days (Per day fee)	Non-Statutory	25.00
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LOCAL LAWS

Application Fee	Non-Statutory	71.00
Annual Fee	Non-Statutory	71.00
Excess animal permit (Valid 3yrs)	Non-Statutory	93.00
Camping & Beekeeping Permit.	Non-Statutory	71.00
Court Costs - Full costs recouped	Non-Statutory	Varies
Street Furniture Permit	Non-Statutory	71.00
Notice to Comply Issue Fee	Non-Statutory	71.00

CAT TRAP HIRE

Refundable Deposits - Cat Traps	Non-Statutory	54.00
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DOMESTIC ANIMAL BUSINESS

Registration Renewal	Non-Statutory	228.00
Annual Audit Inspection Fee	Non-Statutory	114.00
New Registration Fee	Non-Statutory	284.00

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

Emergency Fencing Panels - Engaged contractors/staff to undertake erection & removal of emergency fencing panels - Contractor cost plus 50%		Varies
Emergency Fencing Panels - Hire cost per fence panel		Varies

FIRE PREVENTION WORKS

Engaged contractors to undertake compulsory fire clearances - Contractor cost plus 50%	Non-Statutory	Varies
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BUILDING FEES & CHARGES

Domestic Sheds / Carports / Garages (minimum of 2 inspection)

Up to \$10,000	Non-Statutory	771.00
\$10,001 - \$50,000	Non-Statutory	1,028.00
\$50,001 - \$100,000	Non-Statutory	1,285.00
Building Works >\$100,000	Non-Statutory	1,542.00

Dwellings & Multi Unit Developments (including alterations and additions) (minimum of 3 inspections)

Up to \$100,000	Non-Statutory	2,055.00
\$100,000-\$250,000	Non-Statutory	2,569.00
\$250,000-\$500,000	Non-Statutory	3,083.00
> \$500,001	Non-Statutory	COST/100



Commercial Building Works

Up to \$50,000	Non-Statutory	1,542.00
\$50,001 - \$100,000	Non-Statutory	2,055.00
\$100,000-\$250,000	Non-Statutory	2,569.00
\$250,001-\$500,000	Non-Statutory	3,597.00
> \$500,001	Non-Statutory	COST/100

Swimming Pools & Spas

Swimming Pool and Fence - Above ground pool	Non-Statutory	1,572.00
Swimming Pool and Fence - Inground Pool	Non-Statutory	1,964.00
Fence Only	Non-Statutory	1,310.00
Swimming Pool Safety Audit Inspection Fee	Non-Statutory	463.00
Any Additional Inspection	Non-Statutory	348.00

Enforcement

Building Notices/Orders (To allow buildings to remain as constructed without a Building Permit) Building Permit Fee plus 40%	Non-Statutory	Varies
Minor Works Compliance (Including swimming pools, spas & other minor works) Building Permit Fee plus 30%	Non-Statutory	Varies

Miscellaneous Items

Fence	Non-Statutory	267.00
Demolitions or removals less than \$10,000	Non-Statutory	1,028.00
Demolitions or removals \$10,001+	Non-Statutory	2,055.00
Extension of Time Request (First request)	Non-Statutory	257.00
Extension of Time Request (Second & subsequent requests)	Non-Statutory	309.00
Plan Amendments	Non-Statutory	309.00
Search Request of building permits	Non-Statutory	103.00
Emergency Fencing Panels - Engaged contractors/staff to undertake erection & removal of emergency fencing panels - Contractor cost plus 50%		Varies
Emergency Fencing Panels - Hire cost per fence panel, per week	Non-Statutory	16.00
Installation and demobilisation costs for emergency fencing panels	Non-Statutory	93.00
Portable stage per event (commercial)	Non-Statutory	2,569.00
BOND for Portable stage per event (community/not for profit)	Non-Statutory	257.00
Portable stage per event (community/not for profit)	Non-Statutory	206.00
Portable toilet trailer per event (commercial)	Non-Statutory	2,569.00
BOND - Portable toilet trailer per event (community/not for profit)	Non-Statutory	257.00
Portable toilet trailer per event (community/not for profit)	Non-Statutory	206.00
Projector, portable screens and speakers - small 3mtrs (per event)	Non-Statutory	103.00

Report & Consent

Additional Inspection	Non-Statutory	206.00
Other/General Inspection per hour fee (Includes report)	Non-Statutory	309.00
Red Line Application Fee	Non-Statutory	1,129.00
POPE (Includes 1 inspection)	Non-Statutory	1,091.00



POPE (Includes 1 inspection) late - application submitted less than 2 weeks prior to event	Non-Statutory	1,419.00
Siting Approval for Marque (includes 1 inspection)	Non-Statutory	658.00
Title Search	Non-Statutory	54.00
Community Groups (Not for profit)	Non-Statutory	Free

PLANNING FEES

Application for Extension of Time to a Planning Permit – First request	Non-Statutory	238.00
Application for Extension of Time to a Planning Permit – Second request	Non-Statutory	351.00
Application for Extension of Time to a Planning Permit – Third request	Non-Statutory	464.00
Giving Notice of Application for a Planning Permit (advertising)	Non-Statutory	115.00
Secondary Consent	Non-Statutory	238.00
Endorse Minor Amendment	Non-Statutory	119.00
Fee Refund - 100% prior to lodgement of application	Non-Statutory	Varies
Fee Refund - 50% prior to the giving of notice	Non-Statutory	Varies
Fee Refund - 75% prior to request for information	Non-Statutory	Varies

PUBLIC HEALTH

Additional non-mandatory/requested inspection fee (per hour)	Non-Statutory	50.00
Food Act Class 1 Food Premises Application	Non-Statutory	368.00
Food Act Class 2 Food Premises	Non-Statutory	363.00
Food Premises Class 3 Application	Non-Statutory	250.00
Non-Profit Organisations & Community Group -Food is prepared predominately for consumption by members or for fundraising activities Service Clubs, mostly Sporting Clubs	Non-Statutory	Free

Public Health – Septic Tank

Septic Tank New	Non-Statutory	368.00
Septic Tank Alteration to Existing	Non-Statutory	233.00

Public Health & Wellbeing

Hairdresser (One off registration fee)	Non-Statutory	199.00
Beauty Therapy Registration	Non-Statutory	199.00
Skin Penetration	Non-Statutory	199.00
More than 1 health activity	Non-Statutory	250.00
Prescribed Accommodation (Providing accommodation for 5 or more persons including hotels, motels & camps.	Non-Statutory	250.00
Late payment - 50% of registration (more than 1 month late)	Non-Statutory	Varies
Additional Inspections after first follow up	Non-Statutory	221.00
Registration of Caravan Park - Total sites not exceeding 25	Non-Statutory	286.00
Registration of Caravan Park - Total sites between 25 - 50	Non-Statutory	571.00



Registration of Caravan Park - Total sites exceeding 50	Non-Statutory	1,142.00
Street Stall & Food Vendors		
Non-Profit & Community Groups - Single Event Permit Private individuals & businesses	Non-Statutory	Free
Non-Profit & Community Groups - Yearly permit (up to 12 Events per year)	Non-Statutory	Free
Non-Profit & Community Groups - Transfer Inspection Fee	Non-Statutory	Free
Single Event Permit Private individuals & businesses	Non-Statutory	69.00
Yearly permit (up to 12 Events per year)	Non-Statutory	102.00
Late payment - 50% of registration (more than 1 month late)	Non-Statutory	Varies
Additional Inspections after first follow up	Non-Statutory	221.00
Immunisations		
Immunisations (Cost to Council - materials & labour)	Non-Statutory	Varies
POOL HIRE		
Full Facility Hire per hour - closed to public		
Schools and Local Community inc. Not for profit (fees & lifeguard charges)	Non-Statutory	Free
Commercial (hire charges) per hour/per lane	Non-Statutory	12.00
Commercial (lifeguard charges) per hour	Non-Statutory	55.00
LANDFILL		
Green Waste	Non-Statutory	16.00
Green Waste (only for the month of October)	Non-Statutory	Free to local residents only
Car boot per load	Non-Statutory	21.00
Standard 6x4 Trailer (up to 1 cubic metre)		31.00
Tandem Trailer up to 2 cubic metres	Non-Statutory	59.00
Wheelie bin 120L	Non-Statutory	14.00
Wheelie bin 240L	Non-Statutory	17.00
General Waste to Landfill (per cubic metre)	Non-Statutory	32.00
Commercial Waste (per cubic metre)	Non-Statutory	36.00
Industrial waste/Building Rubble (per cubic metre)	Non-Statutory	48.00
Concrete uncontaminated (per cubic metre)	Non-Statutory	48.00
Bricks uncontaminated (per cubic metre)	Non-Statutory	48.00
White Goods (doors must be removed from refrigerators, ovens & dishwashers) Free to local residents only	Non-Statutory	Free to local residents only
Car Bodies - Free to local residents only	Non-Statutory	Free to local residents only
Vehicle Batteries		Free
E-Waste small goods (cables and battery-operated goods) per item	Non-Statutory	3.00



E-Waste large goods (TVs Screens and Monitors) - per item	Non-Statutory	15.00
Mattresses	Non-Statutory	52.00
Tyres		
Light car tyre	Non-Statutory	13.00
Car tyre on rim	Non-Statutory	32.00
4WD and Light Truck tyre	Non-Statutory	20.00
Truck tyre	Non-Statutory	42.00
Truck tyre on rim	Non-Statutory	72.00
Small Tractor Tyres	Non-Statutory	144.00
Large tractor tyres	Non-Statutory	237.00
Animal Carcasses		
Poultry (including turkeys) per bird	Non-Statutory	10.00
Cats and Dogs	Non-Statutory	13.00
Sheep, Pigs, Goats and kangaroos	Non-Statutory	24.00
Horses and Cattle	Non-Statutory	48.00
Recycling		
Additional recycle bin		93.00
Comingled 6 x 4 Trailer Load/Ute Load up to 1 cubic metre	Non-Statutory	10.00
Comingled Tandem Trailer up to 2 cubic metres	Non-Statutory	17.00
Glass	Non-Statutory	Free
Paper & Cardboard	Non-Statutory	8.00
Plastics	Non-Statutory	8.00
Tandem Trailer - Glass only	Non-Statutory	Free
Tandem Trailer - Paper & Cardboard	Non-Statutory	13.00
Tandem Trailer - Plastics	Non-Statutory	13.00



8.4 ORGANISATIONAL REPORTS

Nil.

8.5 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS

Lower Avoca Ward

Name: Cr Stephen Barratt

Date: 7 May 2026 – 3 June 2026

Meetings Attended:

Date	Meeting / Event
08/05/2026	Loddon Campaspe Group of Councils – <i>Bendigo GovHub</i>
13/05/2026	NGSC Transmission Forum – <i>Online</i>
13/05/2026	Councillor Briefing: Planning and Related Matters – <i>Wycheproof Supper Room</i>
13/05/2026	Additional Councillor Briefing – <i>Wycheproof Supper Room</i>
14/05/2026	CEO and Councillor Only Time – <i>Online</i>
20/05/2026	Council Meeting – <i>Wycheproof Supper Room</i>
22/05/2026	Unveiling of Birchip Cenotaph Refurbishment
25/05/2026	Public Submissions Hearing: Annual Budget FY27 and Financial Plan – <i>Wycheproof Supper Room</i>
25/05/2026	Buloke Tourism Board – <i>Wycheproof</i>
27/05/2026	Wycheproof Recreation Reserve Meeting
28/05/2026	Charlton Hall Discussion – <i>Online</i>
28/05/2026	Charlton Hall Meeting with Community – <i>Charlton</i>
03/06/2026	Councillor Briefing – <i>Culgoa</i>

Name: Cr Bruce Stafford

Date: 7 May 2026 – 3 June 2026

Meetings Attended:

Date	Meeting / Event
13/05/2026	Councillor Briefing: Planning and Related Matters – <i>Wycheproof Supper Room</i>
13/05/2026	Additional Councillor Briefing – <i>Wycheproof Supper Room</i>
14/05/2026	CEO and Councillor Only Time – <i>Online</i>
19/05/2026	Charlton Community Forum
20/05/2026	Council Meeting – <i>Wycheproof Supper Room</i>
21/05/2026	CVGA Board Meeting – <i>Online</i>
25/05/2026	Public Submissions Hearing: Annual Budget FY27 and Financial Plan – <i>Wycheproof Supper Room</i>
28/05/2026	Charlton Hall Discussion – <i>Online</i>
28/05/2026	Charlton Hall Meeting with Community – <i>Charlton</i>
03/06/2026	Councillor Briefing – <i>Culgoa</i>

Mallee Ward

Name: Cr Alan Getley

Date: 7 May 2026 – 3 June 2026

Meetings Attended:

Date	Meeting / Event
08/05/2026	Loddon Campaspe Group of Councils – <i>Bendigo GovHub</i>
13/05/2026	NGSC Transmission Forum – <i>Online</i>
13/05/2026	Councillor Briefing: Planning and Related Matters – <i>Wycheproof Supper Room</i>
13/05/2026	Additional Councillor Briefing – <i>Wycheproof Supper Room</i>
14/05/2026	CEO and Councillor Only Time – <i>Online</i>
20/05/2026	Council Meeting – <i>Wycheproof Supper Room</i>
21/05/2026	Waterway Forum – <i>Online</i>
22/05/2026	Unveiling of Birchip Cenotaph Refurbishment
25/05/2026	Neighbourhood House Coffee with a Councillor
25/05/2026	Public Submissions Hearing: Annual Budget FY27 and Financial Plan – <i>Wycheproof Supper Room</i>
01/06/2026	Culgoa Development Association Meeting
03/06/2026	Councillor Briefing – <i>Culgoa</i>

Name: Cr Bernadette Hogan

Date: 7 May 2026 – 3 June 2026

Meetings Attended:

Date	Meeting / Event
08/05/2026	Loddon Campaspe Group of Councils – <i>Bendigo GovHub</i>
13/05/2026	Audit and Risk Committee Meeting: Buloke Shire Council – <i>Wycheproof Supper Room</i>
13/05/2026	Councillor Briefing: Planning and Related Matters – <i>Wycheproof Supper Room</i>
13/05/2026	Additional Councillor Briefing – <i>Wycheproof Supper Room</i>
14/05/2026	CEO and Councillors Only Time – <i>Online</i>
18/05/2026	Neighbourhood House Biggest Morning Tea – <i>Birchip</i>
18/05/2026	Birchip Forum Meeting
20/05/2026	Council Meeting – <i>Wycheproof Supper Room</i>
22/05/2026	Unveiling of Birchip Cenotaph Refurbishment
25/05/2026	Public Submissions Hearing: Annual Budget FY27 and Financial Plan – <i>Wycheproof Supper Room</i>
27/05/2026	NCLLEN AGM – <i>Online</i>
01/06/2026	Advance Sea Lake Meeting
02/06/2026	ICN Victoria Business Event – <i>Horsham</i>
03/06/2026	Councillor Briefing – <i>Culgoa</i>

Mount Jeffcott Ward**Name:** Cr Charmaine Delaney**Date:** 7 May 2026 – 3 June 2026**Meetings Attended:**

Date	Meeting / Event
12/05/2026	Watchem Progress Association
13/05/2026	NGSC Transmission Forum – <i>Online</i>
13/05/2026	Audit and Risk Committee Meeting: Buloke Shire Council – <i>Online</i>
13/05/2026	Councillor Briefing: Planning and Related Matters – <i>Wycheproof Supper Room</i>
13/05/2026	Additional Councillor Briefing – <i>Wycheproof Supper Room</i>
14/05/2026	CEO and Councillor Only Time – <i>Online</i>
20/05/2026	Council Meeting – <i>Wycheproof Supper Room</i>
25/05/2026	Public Submissions Hearing: Annual Budget FY27 and Financial Plan – <i>Wycheproof Supper Room</i>
03/06/2026	Councillor Briefing – <i>Culgoa</i>

Name: Cr Graeme Milne**Date:** 7 May 2026 – 3 June 2026**Meetings Attended:**

Date	Meeting / Event
07/05/2026	MAV Delegates Pre State Council Briefing – <i>Online</i>
08/05/2026	Loddon Campaspe Group of Councils – <i>Bendigo GovHub</i>
12/05/2026	Watchem Progress Association
13/05/2026	NGSC Transmission Forum – <i>Online</i>
13/05/2026	Mayor and CEO Catch-up – <i>Wycheproof</i>
13/05/2026	Audit and Risk Committee Meeting: Buloke Shire Council – <i>Wycheproof Supper Room</i>
13/05/2026	Councillor Briefing: Planning and Related Matters – <i>Wycheproof Supper Room</i>
13/05/2026	Additional Councillor Briefing – <i>Wycheproof Supper Room</i>
14/05/2026	Mayor Lunch prior to WSMCA CEO and Mayor Meeting – <i>Horsham</i>
14/05/2026	WSMCA CEO and Mayor Meeting – <i>Horsham</i>
14/05/2026	CEO and Councillor Only Time – <i>Online</i>
18/05/2026	Birchip Community Forum
20/05/2026	Wilkur Energy Park (WestWind) - Council Meeting Follow Up – <i>Wycheproof</i>
22/05/2026	Unveiling of Birchip Cenotaph Refurbishment
25/05/2026	Public Submissions Hearing: Annual Budget FY27 and Financial Plan – <i>Wycheproof Supper Room</i>
28/05/2026	Charlton Hall Discussion – <i>Online</i>

28/05/2026	Charlton Hall Meeting with Community – <i>Charlton</i>
28/05/2026	MAV – Pre State Council – <i>Melbourne</i>
29/05/2026	MAV State Council – <i>Melbourne</i>
02/06/2026	Rail Freight Alliance (RFA) Finance Meeting – <i>Online</i>
03/06/2026	Councillor Briefing – <i>Culgoa</i>

9 OTHER BUSINESS**9.1 NOTICES OF MOTION**

Nil.

9.2 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**9.3 URGENT BUSINESS****9.4 ANY OTHER BUSINESS****9.5 MATTERS WHICH MAY EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC**

The Meeting may be closed to members of the public to consider confidential matters.

RECOMMENDATION

That pursuant to section 66(1) and (2)(a) of the *Local Government Act 2020* the meeting be closed to the public to consider the following reports that are considered to contain confidential information on the grounds provided in section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* as indicated below:

No.	Title	Confidential Reason
9.5.1	Confidential Attachment for Item 8.2.1 Contract Award - Contract C133 2025/26 - External Plant Hire - Panel of Suppliers	Notes and declares this report as confidential on the grounds that it relates to (g) (ii) private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

10 MEETING CLOSE