



Council Meeting **Minutes**

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	4
5	DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST	4
6	QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC	4
7	PROCEDURAL ITEMS	5
	7.1 GOVERNANCE REPORT - JUNE 2026	5
8	GENERAL BUSINESS	8
	8.1 POLICY REPORTS	8
	8.2 MANAGEMENT REPORTS	9
	8.2.1 CONTRACT AWARD - CONTRACT C133 2025/26 - EXTERNAL PLANT HIRE – PANEL OF SUPPLIERS	9
	8.2.2 PLANNING PERMIT APPLICATION PA26005 - TWO-LOT SUBDIVISION OF LAND (RURAL DWELLING EXCISION) - 2196 NINDA-TURRIFF ROAD, NINDA	13
	8.2.3 BULOKE SHIRE COUNCIL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN: STATUS UPDATE FOR THE MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT	25
	8.2.4 COMMUNITY GRANTS AND SPONSORSHIPS	29
	8.3 FINANCIAL REPORTS	33
	8.3.1 ANNUAL BUDGET FY2026-2027	33
	8.4 ORGANISATIONAL REPORTS	39
	8.5 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS	40
9	OTHER BUSINESS	44
	9.1 NOTICES OF MOTION	44
	9.1.1 REOPENING OF THE MARYBOROUGH-MILDURA PASSENGER RAIL RAILWAY LINE	44
	9.2 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS	45
	9.3 URGENT BUSINESS	45
	9.4 ANY OTHER BUSINESS	45
	9.5 MATTERS WHICH MAY EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC	45
	9.5.1 CONFIDENTIAL ATTACHMENT FOR ITEM 8.2.1 CONTRACT AWARD - CONTRACT C133 2025/26 - EXTERNAL PLANT HIRE - PANEL OF SUPPLIERS	45
10	MEETING CLOSE	45

Minutes of the Meeting held on 17/06/2026.**CHAIRPERSON:**

Cr Graeme Milne (Mayor) Mount Jeffcott Ward

COUNCILLORS:

Cr Bernadette Hogan (Deputy Mayor) Mallee Ward
Cr Alan Getley Mallee Ward
Cr Stephen Barratt Lower Avoca Ward
Cr Bruce Stafford Lower Avoca Ward
Cr Charmaine Delaney Mount Jeffcott Ward

OFFICERS:

Daniel McLoughlan Chief Executive Officer
Travis Fitzgibbon Director Infrastructure and Delivery
Jenna Allan Director Corporate and Organisational Performance
Kellie Burmeister Acting Director Community Development
Anthony Smith Acting Manager Governance
Georgia Brown Senior Executive Assistant
Salomme Menezes Manager Financial Strategy

1 COUNCIL WELCOME AND STATEMENT OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**WELCOME**

The Mayor Cr Graeme Milne welcomed all in attendance.

STATEMENT OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Mayor Cr Graeme Milne 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.

2 RECEIPT OF APOLOGIES

Nil.

3 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**MOTION**

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

MOVED: Cr Stephen Barratt

SECONDED: Cr Charmaine Delaney

CARRIED.

(R/26/34)

4 REQUESTS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Nil.

5 DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

6 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Person: Mr Matt McLoughlan of Charlton

Question:

Is the Buloke Shire Council aware of any data centres that are either proposed or planned within the Buloke Shire?

Council response:

Council are not aware of any data centres that are planned or proposed for Buloke Shire. Additionally, no information has been provided from VicGrid in relation to this matter.

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.

MOTION

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).

MOVED: Cr Bernadette Hogan

SECONDED: Cr Alan Getley

CARRIED.

(R/26/35)

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 Wycheproof Supper room	Cr Milne, Cr Hogan, Cr Delaney (<i>online</i>)	Audit and Risk Committee Meeting
13 May 2026 5:00pm Wycheproof Supper room	Cr Milne, Cr Hogan, Cr Getley, Cr Barratt, Cr Stafford, Cr Delaney	Councillor Briefing: Planning and Related Matters
13 May 2026 6:30pm Wycheproof Supper room	Cr Milne, Cr Hogan, Cr Getley, Cr Barratt, Cr Stafford, Cr Delaney	Additional Councillor Briefing
14 May 2026 5:30pm Online	Cr Milne, Cr Hogan, Cr Getley, Cr Barratt, Cr Stafford, Cr Delaney	CEO and Councillor only time
20 May 2026 7:00pm Wycheproof Supper Room	Cr Milne, Cr Hogan, Cr Getley, Cr Barratt, Cr Stafford, Cr Delaney	Council Meeting
25 May 2026 1:30pm Wycheproof Supper Room	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 Culgoa Hall	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 (7 May 2026 – 3 June 2026)		
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

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 Built and natural environment

Objective: 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.

MOTION

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*.

MOVED: Cr Bruce Stafford

SECONDED: Cr Charmaine Delaney

CARRIED.

(R/26/36)

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 Objective: Built and natural environment

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.

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 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:
- The plan of subdivision has not been certified under the *Subdivision Act 1988* within 2 years of the issued date of this permit.
 - 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.

MOVED: Cr Alan Getley

SECONDED: Cr Bernadette Hogan

CARRIED.

(R/26/37)

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 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

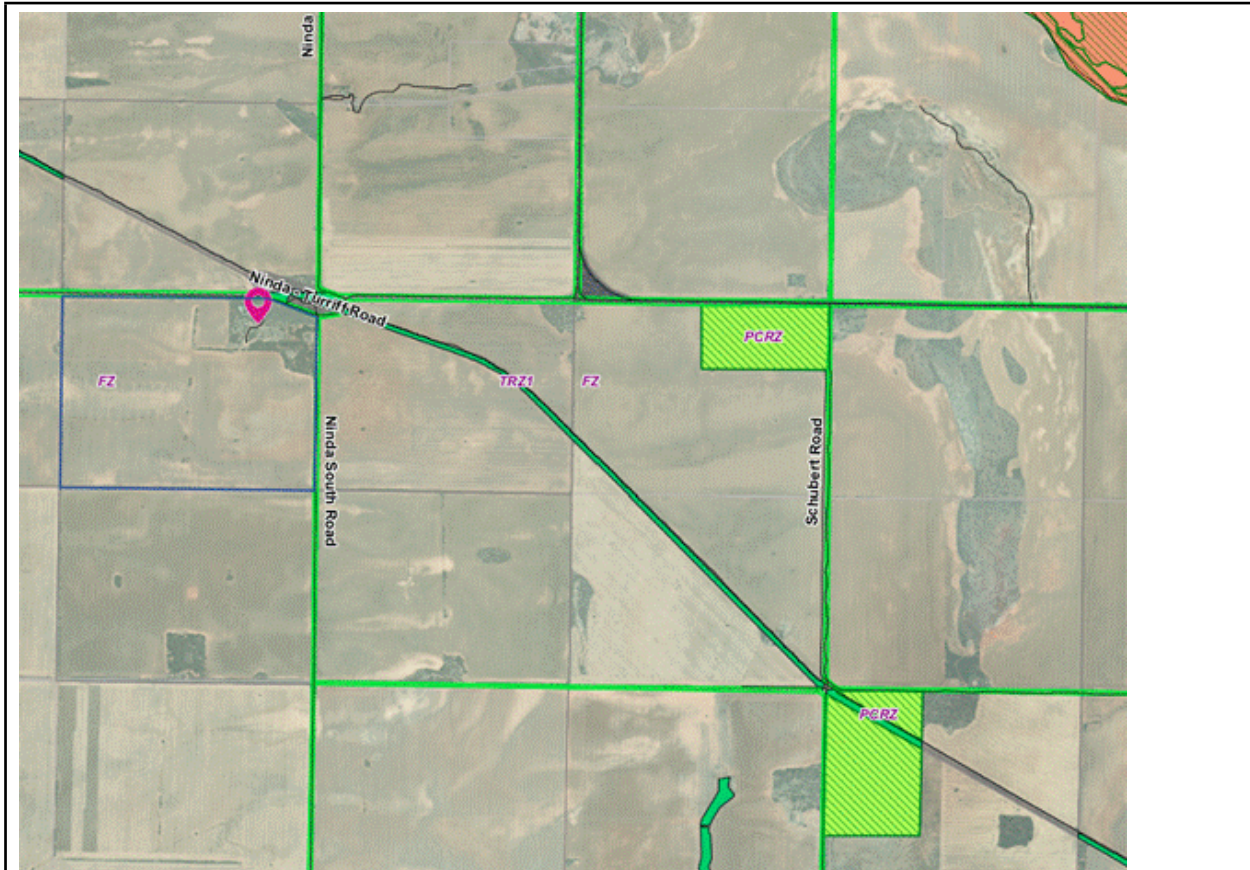
The decision guidelines of Clause 65

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>

<p>The Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.</p>	<p><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> <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>
<p>The purpose of the zone, overlay or other provision.</p>	<p><i>The proposed subdivision is consistent with the intent and purpose of the zone and is considered an appropriate planning outcome.</i></p>
<p>Any matter required to be considered in the zone, overlay or other provision.</p>	<p><i>These have been addressed earlier in the Report.</i></p>
<p>The orderly planning of the area.</p>	<p><i>The proposal is considered to represent orderly planning as the subdivision reflects the existing land uses.</i></p>
<p>The effect on the environment, human health and amenity of the area.</p>	<p><i>The proposed subdivision is not likely to have an impact on the environment, human health or amenity of the area.</i></p>
<p>The proximity of the land to any public land.</p>	<p><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></p>



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>
<p>The adequacy of loading and unloading facilities and any associated amenity, traffic flow and road safety impacts.</p>	<p><i>Both proposed allotments have adequate area for loading, unloading and the parking of vehicles.</i></p>

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>
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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 seweraged.</i>
If the land is not seweraged and no provision has been made for the land to be seweraged, 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

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

Objective: 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.

MOTION

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.

MOVED: Cr Stephen Barratt

SECONDED: Cr Alan Getley

CARRIED.

(R/26/38)

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

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.

MOTION

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

MOVED: Cr Charmaine Delaney

SECONDED: Cr Bernadette Hogan

CARRIED.

(R/26/39)

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 Council leadership and engagement

Objective: 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.

MOTION

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.

MOVED: Cr Bernadette Hogan

SECONDED: Cr Stephen Barratt

CARRIED.

(R/26/40)

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	- Annual contribution allocation to be increased in lines with rate cap.	No changes to the 26/27 Annual Budget

		- Sea Lake Tourism Information Centre to be kept operational.	
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

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

9.1.1 REOPENING OF THE MARYBOROUGH-MILDURA PASSENGER RAIL RAILWAY LINE

Author's Title: Director Corporate and Organisational Performance

Directorate: Corporate and Organisational Performance **File No:** GR/17/01

Relevance to Council Plan 2025 - 2029

Strategic Objective: Council leadership and engagement
Advocacy and partnering to deliver priorities

PURPOSE

The following Notice of Motion has been put forth by Councillor Graeme Milne and is for the purpose of the action of Council to write to the Premier, Leader of the Opposition and the relevant Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council, in support of the petition for the V/Line passenger services to Mildura and the Mallee.

The petition of residents in Victoria draws to the attention of the Legislative Assembly that the regional city of Mildura and the Mallee corridor have been without a public passenger train service to Melbourne for 32 years.

Council's Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025 - 2035 identifies Accessible Transportation as a known social determinant of health, an inequality that is unfair and avoidable. The plan has a goal of "Improving the availability of and access to key services such as public transport.."

Additionally, the Buloke Shire Council Plan 2025 – 2029 recognises "Improving the availability of and access to key services such as public transport" as a key strategy.

Cr Graeme Milne vacated the Chair to move Item 9.1.1 - Reopening of the Maryborough-Mildura Passenger Rail, and Cr Bernadette Hogan assumed the Chair at 7:53pm.

MOTION

That Council formally writes to the Premier Jacinta Allan, Leader of the Opposition Jess Wilson, and all relevant members of the Victorian Legislative Assembly and the Victorian Legislative Council, in support of the petition to commit to reinstating a public passenger train service to Melbourne in the form of a weekly passenger train shuttle service between Mildura and Maryborough, using the existing tracks, to connect with the current passenger train service between Maryborough and Melbourne.

MOVED: Cr Graeme Milne

SECONDED: Cr Stephen Barratt

CARRIED.

(R/26/41)

Cr Graeme Milne resumed the Chair at 7:59pm.

9.2 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

Nil.

9.3 URGENT BUSINESS

Nil.

9.4 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Nil.

9.5 MATTERS WHICH MAY EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC

9.5.1 CONFIDENTIAL ATTACHMENT FOR ITEM 8.2.1 CONTRACT AWARD - CONTRACT C133 2025/26 - EXTERNAL PLANT HIRE - PANEL OF SUPPLIERS

Cr Graeme Milne advised there are no Matters which may Exclude the Public for Council to consider. The confidential attachment appearing in the agenda is in relation to Item 8.2.1 Contract Award – Contract C133 2025/26 - External Plant Hire – Panel of Suppliers which has been consider by Council.

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

Meeting closed at 8:01 pm.

NEXT MEETING

The next Council Meeting will be held in Wycheproof Hall Supper Room on 15 July 2026 at 7:00pm.