



Council Meeting **Minutes**

Wednesday 20 May
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	4
2	RECEIPT OF APOLOGIES	4
3	CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING	4
4	REQUESTS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE	4
5	DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST	5
6	QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC	5
7	PROCEDURAL ITEMS	6
	7.1 GOVERNANCE REPORT - MAY 2026	6
8	GENERAL BUSINESS	9
	8.1 POLICY REPORTS	9
	8.1.1 FINANCIAL HARDSHIP FOR RATES AND CHARGES POLICY	9
	8.1.2 DEBTOR MANAGEMENT POLICY 2026	13
	8.1.3 INVESTMENT POLICY 2026	15
	8.1.4 CREDIT CARD POLICY 2026	18
	8.2 MANAGEMENT REPORTS	20
	8.2.1 WYCHEPROOF RECREATION RESERVE COMMUNITY ASSET COMMITTEE	20
	8.2.2 2025/26 SWIMMING POOL SEASON	24
	8.2.3 DRAFT BULOKE AQUATIC STRATEGY	27
	8.2.4 ROAD RENAMING REQUEST - WALKLATE LANE, CHARLTON	31
	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	35
	8.3 FINANCIAL REPORTS	55
	8.3.1 QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORT FOR PERIOD ENDING 31 MARCH 2026	55
	8.4 ORGANISATIONAL REPORTS	64
	8.4.1 QUARTERLY ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE REPORT – QUARTER 3 FY2026/27	64
	8.5 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS	67
9	OTHER BUSINESS	70
	9.1 NOTICES OF MOTION	70
	9.2 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS	70
	9.3 URGENT BUSINESS	70

9.4 ANY OTHER BUSINESS	70
9.5 MATTERS WHICH MAY EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC	70
10 MEETING CLOSE	70

Minutes of the Meeting held on 20/05/2026.**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
Gaynor Atkin Director Community Development
Anthony Smith Acting Manager Governance
Georgia Brown Senior Executive Assistant

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 15 April 2026.

MOVED: Cr Stephen Barratt

SECONDED: Cr Alan Getley

CARRIED.

(R/26/21)

4 REQUESTS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Nil.

5 DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Jenna Allan declared a general conflict of interest in relation to Item 8.2.1 – Wycheproof Recreation Reserve Community Asset Committee - due to being an executive member of the Wycheproof Race Club.

6 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

No questions were received from the public for this Council Meeting.

7 PROCEDURAL ITEMS

7.1 GOVERNANCE REPORT - MAY 2026

Author's Title: Director Corporate and Organisational Performance

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 Alan Getley

SECONDED: Cr Stephen Barratt

CARRIED.
(R/26/22)

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 2 April 2026 to 6 May 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:

Date/Time/Venue	Councillor Attendees	Meeting Type
8 April 2026 5:00pm <i>Online</i>	Cr Milne, Cr Getley, Cr Delaney, Cr Barratt	Additional Councillor Briefing
9 April 2026 5:30pm <i>Online</i>	Cr Milne, Cr Hogan, Cr Getley, Cr Delaney, Cr Barratt, Cr Stafford	CEO and Councillor Only Time
15 April 2026 5:30pm <i>Wycheproof Senior Citizens</i>	Cr Milne, Cr Hogan, Cr Getley, Cr Delaney, Cr Barratt, Cr Stafford	Citizenship Ceremony
15 April 2026 7:00pm <i>Wycheproof Supper Room</i>	Cr Milne, Cr Hogan, Cr Getley, Cr Delaney, Cr Barratt, Cr Stafford	Council Meeting
6 May 2026 5:00pm <i>Berriwillock Community Centre</i>	Cr Milne, Cr Hogan, Cr Getley, Cr Barratt, Cr Stafford	Councillor Briefing

Chief Executive Officer Activity Report from 2 April 2026 to 6 May 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>(2 April 2026 – 6 May 2026)</i>		
Date	Activity	Location
08/04/2026	CEO and Mayor	Wycheproof
08/04/2026	NGSC Transmission Forum	Online
08/04/2026	Youth Advisory Group and EMT Lunch	Wycheproof
08/04/2026	Additional Councillor Briefing	Online
09/04/2026	VNI West – Social Value Strategy	Online
09/04/2026	Direl – Follow Up Meeting	Online
09/04/2026	VNI Update – Social Values and Workers Accommodation	Online
09/04/2026	CEO and Councillor Only Time	Online
10/04/2026	Governance Training - Legislation, Regulation and Policy Development	Online
10/04/2026	Murray Darling Basin Plan Review 2026 - Briefing session	Online
13/04/2026	Gold FM Radio	Radio

15/04/2026	Australian Citizenship Ceremony	Wycheproof
15/04/2026	Council Meeting	Wycheproof
16/04/2026	Buloke & Yarriambiack CEO's	Horsham
16/04/2026	WSMCA CEO Meeting	Horsham
16/04/2026	Dr Anne Webster - Energy and Mining Impact and Readiness Strategy & Prime Ag Bill	Online
20/04/2026	Gold FM Radio	Radio
20/04/2026	MAV Monday Connect	Online
21/04/2026	Meeting - Resources Ready Report (DEECA/DJSIR/DTP & WSMCA)	Melbourne
22/04/2026	Buloke Shire Council / DEECA Loddon Mallee Catch Up (monthly)	Online
22/04/2026	Buloke Shire Council & V/Line Meeting	Online
23/04/2026	Mayor and CEO	Online
24/04/2026	Governance Training with Clare Batrouney, Maddocks 'Managing Council Land' Module	Online
24/04/2026	MAV Special CEO Briefing x Maddocks Fuel Advice	Online
27/04/2026	Gold FM Radio	Radio
28/04/2026	Meeting with Rikkie-Lee Tyrrell MP	Wycheproof
29/04/2026	North Central News / Loddon Herald Meeting	Wycheproof
30/04/2026	MAV Special CEO Briefing - Fuel Update	Online
30/04/2026	Buloke Shire Council All Staff Meeting	Wycheproof
04/05/2026	Gold FM Radio	Radio
06/05/2026	Councillor Briefing	Berriwillock

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 - 6 May 2026
 2. Attachment 7.1.2 - Council Resolution SOA - tabled 20 May 2026

8 GENERAL BUSINESS

8.1 POLICY REPORTS

8.1.1 FINANCIAL HARDSHIP FOR RATES AND CHARGES POLICY

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 Council the revised Rates and Charges Financial Hardship Policy 2026 (the Policy) for adoption.

SUMMARY

Council's Rates and Charges Financial Hardship Policy provides a structured framework for assessing hardship and determining appropriate assistance for ratepayers unable to meet their payment obligations.

The Policy balances support for vulnerable community members with prudent financial management, ensuring decisions are transparent, consistent, and compliant with legislative requirements.

MOTION

That Council:

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.

MOVED: Cr Charmaine Delaney

SECONDED: Cr Bruce Stafford

CARRIED.

(R/26/23)

DISCUSSION

New 'Ministerial guidelines (the Guidelines) relating to payment of rates and charges under s 181AA of the Local Government Act 1989 were published in the Victoria Government Gazette on 24 December 2025. The guidelines provide direction to Council to review and update the existing hardship and debt management policies for the payment of rates and charges in a timely manner.

KEY AMENDMENTS INTRODUCED BY MINISTERIAL GUIDELINES

1. Council is required to review the mentioned policy and ensure consideration of the mandatory principles and strongly encourage to consider the recommended principles as listed below –

Recommended principles	Mandatory principles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce costs associated with debt collection • Continuous improvement • Place-based approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible, place-based approach • Clear and accessible communication • Fair, equitable and compassionate treatment • Protect privacy and confidentiality.

2. The Guidelines define both “*Hardship*” and “*Financial Hardship*”, which are distinct terms under the 1989 Act.

Hardship	Financial Hardship
Can be caused due to loss of employment or income, health issues, substance use, bereavement, family or domestic violence, elder abuse, gambling, scams or fraud, incarceration, natural disasters etc.	Can be caused due to loss of employment or income, health issues, substance use, bereavement, family or domestic violence, elder abuse, gambling, scams or fraud, incarceration, natural disasters etc.
Refers to inability of the ratepayer to pay that a given point in time due to situations mentioned above.	Refers to inability of the ratepayer to afford basic necessities of life such as medical care and supplies, utility services (such as water, energy, and internet), and basic living requirements like food, housing, clothing, childcare and education, transport, and insurance, when faced by situations mentioned as above.
Possible Action – Deferment of rates and charges (in partial or full)	Possible Action – Deferment or Waiver of rates and charges (in partial or full)
No interest to be charged during period of deferment. Once the deferment period ends, interest can be charged.	Interest component can also be considered for waiver.
Demonstration of ‘financial hardship’ is not mandatory	Demonstration of ‘financial hardship’ is mandatory.

3. The Guidelines focus on proactively supporting ratepayers experiencing hardship or financial hardship with debt collection as its last resort leading to reduced additional organisational costs associated with debt recovery. Hence,
- a. payment plans must be available for unpaid rates and charges, regardless of a ratepayer experiencing hardship.
 - b. Guidelines require clear application forms, allow requests for more information, set response timeframes, and outline payment terms, duration, and reminders.
 - c. Emphasise working with ratepayers to create affordable plans and ensure they are informed of support options if a plan is cancelled.

In addition, these Guidelines will affect Councils' existing policies by providing mandatory direction regarding Councils hardship and debt management policies. In supporting the review of the policy, Council has additionally laid out its 'Guidelines for applications and consideration to assess applications' as an Appendix to the policy.

RELEVANT LAW

The Policy is prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1989* and the *Local Government Act 2020*.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

The Rates and Charges Financial Hardship Policy was last adopted at the Council meeting held on 10 February 2021.

OPTIONS

Council may seek not to adopt the Policy.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Council has not actively engaged the Community as this is an operational policy.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Not applicable.

COLLABORATION

This Policy has been prepared by the Financial Strategy Department in collaboration with relevant officers, where applicable.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

Updating the Rates and Charges Financial Hardship Policy strengthens financial viability by ensuring hardship support is delivered consistently and only to genuinely eligible ratepayers. Improved assessment and documentation processes help protect Council's revenue base while maintaining transparent and equitable decision-making.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

The Policy has been reviewed in accordance with the Ministerial Guidelines 'Payment of Rates and Charges' published in the Victoria Government Gazette on 24 December 2025.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

This policy has been reviewed in accordance with the Council Plan 2025-2029.

TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

Transparency in decision-making is supported through clearly defined hardship criteria, documented assessment requirements, and consistent application of the policy. These measures ensure that all hardship determinations are fair, evidence-based, and aligned with Council's financial and legislative responsibilities.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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

Attachments:

1. Attachment 8.1.1.1 - Buloke Rates and Charges Financial Hardship Policy 2026

8.1.2 DEBTOR MANAGEMENT POLICY 2026

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

Objective: Responsible leadership and decision making

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present Council the revised Debtor Management Policy 2026 (the Policy) for adoption.

SUMMARY

The Debtor Management Policy, one of Council's key Financial Policies, is due for review and revision to ensure it remains aligned with current organisational practices and supports effective, timely recovery of outstanding debts.

MOTION

That Council:

1. Adopts the Debtor Management Policy 2026 and;
2. Places the Debtor Management Policy 2026 on Council's website for public access and transparency.

MOVED: Cr Bernadette Hogan

SECONDED: Cr Stephen Barratt

CARRIED.

(R/26/24)

DISCUSSION

Revision of the Debtor Management Policy is to ensure it reflects current organisational practices. Updating the policy strengthens Council's ability to recover outstanding debts in a fair and consistent manner. These improvements support financial sustainability by enhancing cashflow and reducing financial risk. Clear processes and transparent decision-making reinforce accountable and responsible management practices of public funds.

Apart from updating current position titles and aligning the Policy with current business practises, there are no material changes made to the Policy.

RELEVANT LAW

The Policy is prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act).

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

The Debtor Management Policy was last adopted at the Council meeting held on 29 June 2022.

OPTIONS

Council may seek to not adopt the Policy.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement has not been undertaken due to the operational nature of this Policy.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Not applicable.

COLLABORATION

This Policy has been prepared by the Financial Strategy Department in collaboration with relevant officers, where applicable.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

Revising the Debtor Management Policy supports financial viability by ensuring Council maintains effective, timely, and consistent processes for recovering outstanding debts. Strengthening these practices improves cash flow, reduces financial risk, and supports long-term organisational sustainability.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not applicable.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

This policy has been prepared in accordance with the Council Plan 2025-2029.

TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

Transparency in debtor related decisions ensures the community can clearly understand how Council manages, monitors, and recovers outstanding debts, reinforcing confidence in the fair use of public funds. Clear processes, open reporting, and consistent application of the policy demonstrate accountable and responsible financial governance.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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

Attachments:

1. Attachment 8.1.2.1 - Buloke Debtor Management Policy 2026

8.1.3 INVESTMENT POLICY 2026

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

Objective: Responsible leadership and decision making

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present to Council the revised Investment Policy 2026 (the Policy) for adoption.

SUMMARY

The Investment Policy, one of Council's key Financial Policies, is due for review and revision to ensure it remains aligned with current market conditions, regulatory requirements, and Council's contemporary financial practices.

MOTION

That Council:

1. Adopts the Investment Policy 2026 and
2. Places the Investment Policy on Council's website for public access and transparency.

MOVED: Cr Alan Getley

SECONDED: Cr Stephen Barratt

CARRIED.

(R/26/25)

DISCUSSION

Council's Investment Policy is a formal governance document that outlines how Council will invest public funds. It sets the objectives, risk limits, authorised investments, reporting requirements, and decision-making responsibilities for managing Council money.

The Investment Policy requires revision to ensure it remains compliant with current legislation, reflects contemporary financial market conditions (credit ratings), and strengthens governance over the management of public funds. Updating the policy allows Council to incorporate improved risk controls, clarify delegations and reporting requirements, and align investment practices with Council's long-term financial strategy. Regular review ensures the policy remains fit-for-purpose and continues to safeguard Council's financial sustainability.

Amendments to the Investment policy are recommended as follows -

1. Maximum holding for 'A category' long term credit ratings is proposed to increase from 80% to 100% as Council does trade with A category banks;

2. Council will not invest in with an Institution with an S&P's credit rating lower than BBB from the current B rated institutions;
3. Maximum holding per institution is proposed to increase from 40% to 45%. This is not due to any intentional non-compliance with the current policy; rather, it reflects normal cash flow patterns. In the first half of the financial year, particularly up to Q2, Council often redeems investments to meet working capital requirements, as majority of the rate revenue is received in February (i.e. Q3). These redemptions can temporarily alter the weighted average of the investment portfolio, resulting in technical non-compliance with the existing limit. Accordingly, it is recommended that the threshold be increased to 45% to more accurately reflect Council's underlying compliance position.

Apart from these major changes, the Policy has been updated to reflect current position titles and operational day-to-day activities.

RELEVANT LAW

The Policy is prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act).

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

Nil.

OPTIONS

Council may seek not to adopt the revised Policy.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Council has not actively engaged the Community due to the operational nature of the Policy.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Not applicable.

COLLABORATION

This Policy has been prepared by the Financial Strategy Department in consultation with the Executive Management Team.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

Revising the Investment Policy supports financial viability by ensuring Council's investments continue to deliver secure, compliant, and sustainable returns in changing market conditions. Keeping the policy current strengthens risk management and protects public funds, supporting long-term financial sustainability.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not applicable.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

This policy has been prepared in accordance with the Council Plan 2025-2029.

TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

Transparency in investment decisions ensures the community can clearly see how Council selects, manages, and evaluates its investments, strengthening trust in the management and use of public funds. Clear criteria, open reporting, and consistent oversight demonstrate accountable and responsible financial governance.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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

Attachments:

1. Attachment 8.1.3.1 - DRAFT Investment Policy 2026

8.1.4 CREDIT CARD POLICY 2026

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

Objective: Responsible leadership and decision making

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present to Council the revised Corporate Card Policy 2026 (the Policy) for adoption.

SUMMARY

The Corporate Card Policy, one of Council's Financial Policies is due for review and revision to ensure the organisation remains aligned with best practice for financial management.

MOTION

That Council

1. Adopts the Corporate Card Policy 2026 and;
2. Places the Corporate Card Policy on Council's website for public access and transparency.

MOVED: Cr Charmaine Delaney

SECONDED: Cr Bernadette Hogan

CARRIED.

(R/26/26)

DISCUSSION

A Corporate Card Policy establishes the governance for how approved roles within the organisation may use Council issued corporate cards. It defines permitted and prohibited spending, documentation requirements, approval processes, and responsibilities for cardholders and managers. Its role is to ensure consistent, compliant, and accountable use of Council funds, reduce financial and operational risk, and support strong governance and audit readiness across the organisation.

As organisations grow and work patterns change, outdated rules can create compliance gaps, inefficiencies, and confusion for employees. Periodic reviews keep the policy clear, relevant, and effective, strengthening financial governance and reducing organisational risk.

Apart from updating current position titles and aligning it to current business practises, there are no material changes to this Policy.

RELEVANT LAW

The Policy is prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act).

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

Nil.

OPTIONS

Council may seek not to adopt the Policy.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Council has not actively engaged the Community due to the operational nature of the Policy.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Not applicable.

COLLABORATION

This Policy has been prepared by the Financial Strategy Department in collaboration with relevant officers, where applicable.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

Periodic revision of the corporate card policy supports financial viability by ensuring strong controls that minimise misuse, fraud, and unnecessary expenditure. Keeping the policy current also improves purchasing efficiency, reducing administrative costs and safeguarding public funds.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not applicable.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

This Policy has been prepared in accordance with the Council Plan 2025-2029.

TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

Transparency in council decisions ensures that the community can see how corporate card use is governed, monitored, and justified, reinforcing public trust. Clear rules, open reporting, and consistent oversight demonstrate responsible management of council funds and strengthen accountability.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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

Attachments:

1. Attachment 8.1.4.1 - Buloke Corporate Card Policy 2026

8.2 MANAGEMENT REPORTS

8.2.1 WYCHEPROOF RECREATION RESERVE COMMUNITY ASSET COMMITTEE

Author's Title: Director Community Development

Directorate: Community Development

File No: GS/09/42

Relevance to Council Plan 2025 - 2029

Strategic Objective: Vibrant and connected communities

Strengthen community activity and connections

Empower and support organisations to make a difference in their communities

Built and natural environment

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

Prosperous and growing economy

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

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider the appointment of the nominated members to the Wycheproof Recreation Reserve Community Asset Committee.

SUMMARY

The Wycheproof Recreation Reserve Community Asset Committee was appointed at the March 2022 Ordinary Meeting of Council, in accordance with s65 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

On 25 March 2026 members of the local Wycheproof community, sporting clubs and associations held a meeting to re-establish the Committee with eleven (11) members nominated for the new committee.

Jenna Allan declared a general conflict of interest in relation to Item 8.2.1 – Wycheproof Recreation Reserve Community Asset Committee - due to being an executive member of the Wycheproof Race Club.

Jenna Allan left the meeting at 7:17pm.

MOTION

That Council:

1. Appoints the following community nominees to the Wycheproof Recreation Reserve Community Asset Committee for a twelve (12) month term, effective immediately:
 - Kevin Thompson (Chairperson)
 - Adrian Coatsworth

- Martin Duke
- Cathy Grant
- Peter Coles
- Tom Trewin
- Joel Turner
- Mark McLennan
- Donald Denney
- Paddy Eccles
- Rebecca Botheras

2. Formally thanks the outgoing committee members for their voluntary service.

MOVED: Cr Stephen Barratt

SECONDED: Cr Alan Getley

CARRIED.

(R/26/27)

Jenna Allan returned to the meeting at 7:20pm.

DISCUSSION

The Wycheproof Recreation Reserve Community Asset Committee was established at the August 2020 Ordinary Meeting of Council.

This was in response to *Local Government Act 2020* replacing the *Local Government Act 1989* (effective May 1, 2020), that introduced the replacement of Section 86 Committees with Community Asset Committees under Section 65.

This change in the Act required all existing Section 86 committees to be transitioned to the new Community Asset Committee structure by 1 September 2020, to ensure compliance with the new Act. These new committees were designed to specifically manage council-owned assets using streamlined and less bureaucratic guidelines and operate under updated C7 Instruments of Delegation to ensure compliance with modern governance requirements.

On 25 October 2021, a new C7 Instrument of Delegation was issued to reflect the appointment of Council's new Chief Executive Officer.

In November 2021, the Committee held an Annual General Meeting at which new members were put forward to be appointed to the committee and, at the 9 March 2022 Ordinary Meeting of Council, these members were formally appointed by Council.

Following recent discussions by council officers with members of the local Wycheproof community, sporting clubs and associations, a meeting was held in March 2026 to nominate new members to the Wycheproof Recreation Reserve Community Asset Committee.

The following nominations were received:

- Kevin Thompson – Chairperson (Mt Wycheproof and District Race Club)
- Adrian Coatsworth (Wycheproof Lawn Tennis Club)
- Martin Duke (Wycheproof Croquet Club)
- Cathy Grant (Wycheproof P-12 College / Stadium)
- Peter Coles (Wycheproof Bowls Club)
- Tom Trewin (Calder United Lions Cricket Club)
- Joel Turner (Calder United Lions Football Club)
- Mark McLennan (Mt Wycheproof & District Field & Game)

- Donald Denney (Wycheproof Golf Club)
- Paddy Eccles (Calder United Lions Hockey Club)
- Rebecca Botheras (Calder United Lions Netball Club)

As delegated at the 19 November 2025 Statutory Meeting, Councillor Stephen Barratt is the appointed Councillor to the Wycheproof Recreation Reserve Community Asset Committee.

RELEVANT LAW

Local Government Act 2020.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

At its September 2020 Ordinary Meeting the Committee was established in accordance with *s65 of the Local Government Act 2020.*

OPTIONS

Council has the option to not:

1. Appoint the community nominees to the Wycheproof Recreation Reserve Community Asset Committee for a twelve (12) month term, effective immediately.
2. Formally thank the outgoing committee members for their voluntary service.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The nominations for the Wycheproof Recreation Reserve Committee Community Asset Committee follows extensive community engagement with members of the local Wycheproof community, sporting clubs and associations.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The nominated members have identified an opportunity to review the current governance structure of the committee and has expressed an interest in exploring a transition from its existing status as a Community Asset Committee to an incorporated association registered with Consumer Affairs Victoria.

At this stage, the members are seeking to flag this potential future direction with Council for information only.

Any proposal to dissolve the Wycheproof Recreation Reserve Community Asset Committee and establish an incorporated entity would be subject to Council approval with consideration of legal, financial, and operational implications, as well as transitional arrangements.

COLLABORATION

Not applicable.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The Wycheproof Recreation Reserve Community Asset Committee is allocated a financial contribution each year through Council Annual Budget process.

Under the C7 Instrument of Delegation, the Wycheproof Recreation Reserve Community Asset Committee has certain obligations and limitations imposed for financial management responsibilities, to ensure transparency in the use of financial resources for community benefit.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not applicable.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Building a Better Buloke 2024: Community Vision

Council Plan 2025-2029

Buloke Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2035

Asset Plan 2025-2035

TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

The recommendation to appoint the community nominees to the Wycheproof Recreation Reserve Community Asset Committee is being presented for consideration at the May 2026 Council Meeting.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No council officers involved in the development of this report have declared a conflict of interest.

Attachments: Nil

8.2.2 2025/26 SWIMMING POOL SEASON

Author's Title: Coordinator Recreation Places and Spaces

Directorate: Community Development

File No: CP/19/01

Relevance to Council Plan 2025 - 2029

Strategic Objective: Vibrant and connected communities

Strengthen community activity and connections

Built and natural environment

Welcoming and accessible parks and open spaces

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present the 2025-26 Swimming Pool Season Report to Councillors.

SUMMARY

The 2025–26 Swimming Pool Season Report provides a summary of the 2025–26 Swimming Pool Season, including attendance, financial performance, operational challenges, and key learnings.

The report also outlines opportunities to improve the sustainability, efficiency, and delivery of Council's aquatic services to inform future planning and decision making.

MOTION

That Council:

1. Note the 2025-26 Swimming Pool Season Report.

MOVED: Cr Bernadette Hogan

SECONDED: Cr Bruce Stafford

CARRIED.

(R/26/28)

DISCUSSION

The 2025–26 Swimming Pool Season Report provides a summary of the 2025–26 Swimming Pool Season, including attendance, financial performance, operational challenges, and key learnings.

It outlines opportunities to improve the sustainability, efficiency, and delivery of Council's aquatic services to inform future planning and decision making.

The report also demonstrates the continued importance of Council's aquatic facilities to the local community and the delivery of strong participation outcomes across all seven pool sites.

Attendance levels remained stable this season with 23,143 visitors, despite a higher number of pool closures. These closures were largely attributable to localised weather-based operating thresholds and

periods of workforce unavailability, particularly from February through to the end of the swimming pool season as lifeguards returned to school and tertiary study.

There were 20 unique user groups that regularly made pool bookings, reinforcing the importance of structured activities to overall usage levels. A total of 193 no-charge bookings were made during the season and accounted for approximately 40 per cent of all attendance. While playing a critical role in sustaining participation and community access, these bookings generated no direct revenue, placing additional pressure on annual operational budgets.

Staffing was the most significant operational risk identified for the 2025-26 Swimming Pool Season. While improvements were achieved through changes to recruitment timelines and the introduction of a new Aquatic Team Leader role, staff shortages (i.e. lifeguards) contributed to pool closures, particularly in Sea Lake.

Manual compliance and water quality monitoring processes also continued to be resource intensive, however presents opportunities for improvement.

Overall, the outcomes of the 2025-26 Swimming Pool Season reinforce the need to consider transition toward a more sustainable, demand responsive, and operationally resilient aquatic service model, consistent with the principles outlined in the Draft Aquatic Strategy.

RELEVANT LAW

Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 & Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004

Safer Public Pools – Code of Practice (Life Saving Victoria)

Guidelines for Safe Pool Operations

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

Buloke Shire Council received and noted the dates for the 2025/26 Swimming Pool Season at the 15 October 2025 Council Meeting.

OPTIONS

Council may decide to not receive or endorse the 2025-26 Swimming Pool Report.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Not applicable.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The 2025–26 Swimming Pool Season has identified key opportunities to improve the sustainability, efficiency, and resilience of Council’s aquatic services. These opportunities include:

- strengthening workforce recruitment and retention,
- transitioning to digital compliance and water-quality systems,
- optimising operating practices to better align with demand and safety requirements,
- expanding program-led activation to support participation, and
- improving cost recovery through Council’s fees and charges framework.

Many of these improvements are addressed in the Draft Aquatic Strategy.

COLLABORATION

There has been no direct collaboration with external parties to develop this report however extensive collaboration with other council areas, such as the Finance Team and the Assets and Infrastructure Team was undertaken.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

While overall pool attendance remained consistent across the season, rising costs for staffing, utilities, compliance, and day-to-day operations are placing increasing pressure on the financial sustainability of Council's aquatic services. The total operational cost for the 2025–26 swimming pool season was approximately \$1.12 million, equating to an average Council subsidy of \$48.51 per visit. An increase on the previous season.

Analysis by individual pool highlights significant differences in the level of subsidy required across the network. Subsidies range from around \$26 per visit at Donald Swimming Pool, reflecting higher usage and more efficient operation, to more than \$200 per visit at smaller local pools in Berriwillock and Watchem. These variations are driven by factors such as population size, pool size, number of operating days, and local demand.

Understanding these differences helps provide a clearer picture of the true cost of operating each facility.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not applicable.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Building a Better Buloke 2040: Community Vision

Council Plan 2025-2029

Buloke Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2035

TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

The 2025-26 Swimming Pool Season Report is being presented at a Council Meeting for noting.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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

Attachments: Nil

8.2.3 DRAFT BULOKE AQUATIC STRATEGY

Author's Title: Manager Community Partnerships

Directorate: Community Development

File No: CP/10/06

Relevance to Council Plan 2025 - 2029

Strategic Services supporting our communities to thrive

Objective: Vibrant and connected communities

Built and natural environment

Prosperous and growing economy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present the Draft Aquatic Strategy to Councillors for endorsement for public exhibition.

SUMMARY

The Draft Buloke Aquatic Strategy has been developed to provide a long-term strategic framework for the seven outdoor swimming pools in Buloke Shire with a vision to *'provide sustainable, safe and accessible swimming pools that activate Buloke residents and connects communities.'*

The Strategy aims to achieve this by introducing four key objectives: Activate, Diversify, Well Managed and Sustainable.

Its approach has taken into consideration the current condition of the assets, patronage, population catchment and cost of service to provide a sustainable aquatic service in Buloke for the next ten years.

MOTION

That Council:

1. Endorse the Draft Buloke Aquatic Strategy (Attachment 1) for the purpose of public exhibition with the following changes:
 - a. Amend the attendance data for the 2024/25 pool season.
 - b. Amend the average costs per visit for the 2024/25 pool season.
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.
3. Notes that in accordance with Section 93 and 96(1)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, consultation will be undertaken in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy.
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.
5. Notes that the Buloke Aquatic Strategy will be considered for adoption at the Council Meeting to be held 19 August 2026.

MOVED: Cr Stephen Barratt

SECONDED: Cr Alan Getley

**CARRIED.
(R/26/29)**

DISCUSSION

The Draft Buloke Aquatic Strategy has been developed to provide a sustainable aquatic service across Buloke Shire for the next ten years. It prioritises increased utilisation of existing aquatic facilities through targeted programming and activation initiatives.

Under this approach, it is recommended that an operational budget is allocated to support activities and programs designed to enhance community engagement and participation. This approach does not include provision for major capital upgrades or projects exceeding \$100,000, but rather focuses on maximising the value, performance, and community benefit of existing aquatic assets.

The financial sustainability of Council's aquatic services has been a key consideration in the development of the Draft Buloke Aquatic Strategy and associated budget. Under the current operational model, which includes operating seven outdoor swimming pools, seven days per week across an 18-week season, Council would require an average additional investment of \$56,489 per annum over the next ten years to maintain the existing level of service.

Without this additional funding, the current service delivery model is not financially sustainable within existing budget parameters.

To align aquatic operations with the current budget, the Strategy proposes that a future reduction of 30 per cent in service delivery is implemented. This reduction would be achieved through three key operational changes:

- Reducing the standard pool season from 18 weeks to 14 weeks (1 December to the Labour Day long weekend);
- Increasing the temperature trigger for opening pools from 23°C to 25°C; and
- Introducing a shorter operating season at our local Pools (Berriwillock and Watchem pools), aligned with the peak summer school holiday period (approximately the second week of December to the last week of January).

These changes would bring Buloke Shire Council's operational model into closer alignment with neighbouring shires, while continuing to provide equitable access to aquatic services across the municipality and ensuring the service remains financially manageable within Council's existing budget framework.

A more consistent and planned programming model would also support improved promotion and communication of aquatic activities. With greater certainty around program delivery, staff would be better positioned to build community awareness and encourage participation across a broad range of age groups and abilities. Over time, this is expected to lead to increased facility utilisation, stronger community engagement, and an improved return on operational investment.

RELEVANT LAW

Local Government Act 2020.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

Not applicable.

OPTIONS

Councillors have the option to not endorse the Draft Buloke Aquatic Strategy for public exhibition.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The Draft Buloke Aquatic Strategy promotes social sustainability by maintaining access to aquatic facilities and encouraging increased participation through improved programming and engagement initiatives. This supports community health, wellbeing, and social connection across the municipality.

Environmental sustainability is supported through more efficient use of existing assets, reducing unnecessary resource consumption associated with extended operating periods, and enabling more targeted and efficient pool operations.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community consultation to inform the Draft Buloke Aquatic Strategy was undertaken over a one-month period in March 2025 and involved a comprehensive mix of drop-in sessions, online surveys, and storyboard feedback to capture broad community input.

Engagement targeted residents, schools and community groups across Buloke Shire to understand current experiences with council-owned aquatic facilities and future service needs.

The consultation revealed strong community appreciation for local pools as valued community hubs that support health, social connection and inclusion, particularly due to their cleanliness, free access and friendly staff.

Key issues identified included increased programming and staffing capacity, improved maintenance and amenities, enhanced accessibility and inclusion, and the need for sustainable funding models. Overall, the feedback highlighted both the high value placed on local aquatic facilities and clear opportunities to improve access, quality and long-term sustainability across the Shire.

During the public exhibition period of the Strategy, Council's Aquatics Team will undertake a structured program of community engagement activities to introduce the directions proposed in the Strategy. This will include targeted engagement sessions with key community partners and stakeholders, such as user groups, schools, and community organisations, to gather detailed feedback on the proposed service model and operational changes to ensure the Strategy reflects local needs and expectations.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The Draft Buloke Aquatic Strategy promotes innovation and continuous improvement through the introduction of a more structured and proactive approach to programming, activation, and service delivery. By shifting focus toward increased utilisation of existing facilities, the Strategy encourages new and diverse aquatic programs that respond to community needs and participation trends.

Ongoing monitoring, evaluation, and community feedback will inform continuous refinement of services, ensuring they remain relevant, accessible, and responsive. This adaptive approach supports the identification of opportunities to improve operational efficiency, enhance user experience, and strengthen community outcomes over time.

COLLABORATION

The Draft Buloke Aquatic Strategy was developed in collaboration with key stakeholders, including local communities, user groups, schools, and community organisations, to support effective and responsive service delivery.

Ongoing collaboration will support the development and delivery of aquatic programs, strengthen partnerships, and increase community ownership of facilities. This approach aims to enhance participation, improve service outcomes, and ensure aquatic facilities remain accessible and relevant to the diverse Buloke community.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The Draft Buloke Aquatic Strategy outlines a sustainable and considered approach to the long-term provision of Council's aquatic facilities, recognising both the significant community value these assets deliver, and the financial pressures associated with operating them.

The Strategy aims to provide a balance of maintaining access to high-quality aquatic services with ensuring Council can continue to deliver services within its existing financial capacity.

Currently, operating seven pools across the Shire, seven days a week over an 18-week season presents a substantial cost to Council. To maintain this level of service under the existing model would require an additional \$56,489 in operational funding per annum. This is further compounded by Council's aquatic facilities operating without direct revenue generation, with free public entry and complimentary access provided to key user groups such as schools and neighbourhood houses. While this approach has delivered strong community access and participation outcomes, it places increasing pressure on Council's broader budget.

The Strategy acknowledges these challenges and identifies a range of opportunities to improve financial sustainability while continuing to prioritise community benefit. This includes exploring more efficient service delivery models, reviewing operational hours and usage patterns, and considering alternative pricing or contribution structures that maintain accessibility while introducing modest cost recovery where appropriate.

The Strategy does not seek to diminish the role of aquatic facilities within the community, but rather to ensure they remain viable and accessible into the future.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Active Victoria Strategy 2022–2026

Fair Access Policy Roadmap 2022–2030

Sport and Recreation Victoria Strategic Directions

Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019–2023

Local Government Act 2020

Climate Change Act 2017

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Council Plan 2025-29

Building a Better Buloke 2040 – Community Vision

Buloke Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2035

Asset Plan 2025-2035

TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

This report recommends that the Draft Aquatic Strategy goes on public exhibition from Thursday 21 May to Thursday 2 July 2026 to enable the public to make submissions and provide feedback.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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

- Attachments:**
1. Attachment 8.2.3.1 - Buloke Aquatic Strategy - Summary Report Final (1)

8.2.4 ROAD RENAMING REQUEST - WALKLATE LANE, CHARLTON

Author's Title: Senior Manager Assets and Delivery

Directorate: Infrastructure and Delivery

File No: RO/12/01

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

To seek approval of the proposal to rename a section of Davies Street, between High Street and John Curtin Drive to Walklate Lane in the township of Charlton.

SUMMARY

Council received a request from the Charlton Forum to rename the west end of Davies Street to Walklate Lane to honour the late Dr Walklate whom served as a beloved Doctor to the Charlton area for many years.

The section of Davies Street that has been identified for renaming is from High Street to John Curtin Drive, which is a laneway running along the Avoca riverbank.

Following receipt of the request from the Charlton Forum, the following process steps have been undertaken in line with Council's *Naming of Roads, Features and Localities Policy* (Policy);

- Officers reviewed the proposed road name to ensure it aligned with 'Principle C – Linking the name to place' as per the naming principles in Section 2 of the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria 2022.
- Advertised Council's intention to rename a section of Davies Street and called for submissions from the community as per the requirements of Council's Policy.
- Sent letters to the adjoining landowners to the proposed section of Davies Street to be renamed.
- At the close of the public submission period Council had received two (2) submissions.

As the request to rename the section of Davies Street to Walklate Lane was received from the Charlton Forum, further consultation was not undertaken with the Forum during the public notice period.

As submissions to the proposed road renaming have been received the following steps are to be follows as per Council's Policy, Section 11 – extract provided as follows;

11. Objections and Submissions

Following notification, any objection or submission received during the public consultation period must be considered by Council including deciding the weight to be given to competing submissions having regard to the Naming Rules. All submissions must be included in an assessment report which includes an assessment and response to the submission.

If Council accepts a proposal and lodges it with the Registrar of Geographic Names, it must provide details of what the objections/submissions were and how they will be or have been dealt with.

Council must advise submitters of its decision in writing in accordance with Section 8 of the Naming Rules. Objectors have 30 days within which to lodge an appeal to the Registrar of Geographic Names.

Council must write a report on its decision of a proposal which includes information about how the proposal conforms to the relevant principles and guidelines of the Naming Rules and discussion on and responses to any objection/submission received during the public consultation period.

MOTION

That Council:

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. Advise all submitters they have 30 days to lodge an appeal to the Registrar of Geographic Names.
6. 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 *Local Government Act 2020*.

MOVED: Cr Bruce Stafford

SECONDED: Cr Charmaine Delaney

CARRIED.

(R/26/30)

DISCUSSION

Dr Brian Walklate was a popular and well-regarded doctor in Charlton and this proposal will provide recognition of his input to the Charlton community over his lifetime. The building that acted as his surgery is located on the western end of Davies St, providing a linkage to the rename proposal. This aligns with *Principle C – Linking the name to place* as per the Naming principles in Section 2 of the Naming rules for places in Victoria 2022.

The submissions received during the public submission period included a submission in support of the proposal and one submission opposed to the proposal. The submission summary and officer comments (assessment report) are provided in the below table.

Submitter	Submitter Position	Submission Summary	Officer Comments
1	Support	Supports the change, however, would prefer the name Brian Walklate Lane instead	The naming rules prefer only the last name of a person is used.
2	Oppose	To include the section of road identified as an extension of John Curtin Drive.	The proposed name has a link to that locality in that the surgery he operated is located at the western of the road.

RELEVANT LAW

Local Government Act 2020

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

This matter has not been presented to a Council meeting, however Councillors have been briefed with the relevant information at a previous Councillor briefing.

OPTIONS

The following options are available in regard to this proposal;

Option One – Recommended by Officers.

To approve this proposal and rename the section of Davies Street, between High Street and John Curtin Drive to Walklate Lane.

Option Two – Not Recommended by Officers.

Not approve this proposal and retain the current road name as Davies Street.

Option Three – Not Recommended by Officers.

Not approve this proposal and identify another location that could be used to honour Dr Walklate.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

No sustainability implications have been identified by this proposal.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Letters outlining the renaming proposal were sent to those property owners on High Street that have rear access from Davies Street. No objections to the proposal were received from the adjoining landowners.

Public notices were placed in local newspapers requesting feedback within 30 days.

- Buloke Times Friday - 5 September 2025
- North Central News – 10 September 2025
- Sea Lake & Wycheproof Times Ensign – 11 September 2025

At the close of the submission period, two (2) submissions had been received.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

This proposal will provide an improved relationship with the Charlton community by providing recognition of a former community member who provided a lifetime of service to the community.

COLLABORATION

Letters outlining the proposal were sent to the following agencies requesting feedback on the proposed change;

- State Emergency Service – Swan Hill
- Victoria Police – Swan Hill
- Victorian Electoral Commission
- Rural Ambulance Victoria
- Country Fire Authority
- Australia Post

No objections to the proposed change were received.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

If approved, the installation of road signage is required within 30 days of Geographic Names Victoria providing approval of the road name.

The costs associated with the road name change is minimal and can be funded from existing operational budgets.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

The proposal meets all the criteria identified in the Official Naming Rules for Places in Victoria 2022 document issued by Geographic Names Victoria

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

This proposal meets the criteria within Councils Naming of Roads, Features and Localities Policy.

TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

The decision will be made in an open Council Meeting to promote openness and accountability.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No Council Officer identified a conflict of interest when considering this matter.

Attachments:

1. Attachment 8.2.4.1 - Attachment 1 - BSC Walklate Lane Public Notice
2. Attachment 8.2.4.2 - Attachment 2 - Road Naming Request - Charlton (Walklate Lane)
3. Attachment 8.2.4.3 - Attachment 3 - Submission 1 - Renaming Request of Walklate Lane Redacted
4. Attachment 8.2.4.4 - Attachment 4 - Submission 2 - Walklate Lane Redacted

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

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: Prosperous and Growing Economy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider Planning Permit Application PA25034 and as the Responsible Authority, resolve to issue a Notice of Decision to Grant a Permit or issue a Notice of Refusal.

SUMMARY

A planning permit application was received by Council on 30 September 2025. In its current form, the application is for 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.

The subject land is located at 40 McCracken Avenue, Donald, formally known as Lot 1 TP440022 and Lot 1 TP594262.

The application has come to Council as the Responsible Authority for a decision as there are unresolved objections to the application.

MOTION

That Council:

having caused notice of Planning Permit Application No. PA25034 to be given under Section 52 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and having considered all the matters required under Section 60 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* 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:

Endorsed Plans

1. The use and development as shown on the endorsed plans must not be altered without the written consent of the responsible authority.

Amenity

2. The use and development must be managed so that the amenity of the area is not detrimentally affected, through the:
 - 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 verminto the satisfaction of the responsible authority
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.
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.

Access and Car Parking

6. The owner/applicant must provide an owners corporation to manage all common property services.
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.
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:
 - 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. drainedto the satisfaction of the responsible authority.
Car spaces, access lanes and driveways must be kept available for these purposes at all times.
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.

Drainage

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.
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.

Landscaping

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.

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:

- 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.
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.

Services

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.
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.
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.

Subdivision

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 authority for which the easement or site is to be created on the plan of subdivision submitted for certification under the Subdivision Act 1988.
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.

19. The owner of the land must enter into an agreement with:
- 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.

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:

- 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.
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.

Referral Authority Conditions - GWMWater

21. The owner/applicant must provide individually metered water services to each lot/dwelling in accordance with GWMWater's requirements.
22. The owner/applicant is responsible for verifying the condition of any existing sewer connection point/s to determine their suitability for use.
23. The owner/applicant must provide plans and estimates of all proposed water supply works prior to commencement, for GWMWater's approval.
24. The owner/applicant must provide three metre wide easements in favour of GWMWater over all existing and proposed sewers located within private land.
25. The owner/applicant must provide written notification of commencement of works to enable GWMWater to organise inspections and coordinate with its staff.
26. The owner/applicant must provide an owners corporation to manage all common sewer property services.
27. The owner/applicant must provide GWMWater with an updated drainage plan for each lot/dwelling submitted by a qualified plumber.
28. The Owner/applicant must enter a Build Over Easement Agreement with GWMWater for structure which encroaches on a sewerage easement.

Referral Authority Conditions - Powercor

29. The applicant shall provide an electricity supply to all lots in the subdivision in accordance with the Distributor's requirements and standards.

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.

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).

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

Referral Authority Conditions - Head, Transport for Victoria

31. There must only be one (1) shared vehicle access for use by all proposed lots (subject land) to McCracken Avenue (principal road).

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, Transport for Victoria. The concept plan must demonstrate that a passenger vehicle can enter and exit Lots 1 to 4 in a forward direction.

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:

- 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.

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.

Commencement

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

Permit Expiry

36. 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.

37. This permit will expire if one of the following circumstances applies:
- 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.

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 Charmaine Delaney

CARRIED.

(R/26/31)

DISCUSSION

Proposal

A planning permit application was received by Council on 30 September 2025 for the use and development of land to construct three (3) dwellings, subdivide land into five (5) lots and to create or alter access to a road in Transport Zone 2 at 40 McCracken Avenue, Donald, (Lot 1 TP440022 and Lot 1 TP594262). The original application included a fifth allotment for the future construction of a fourth dwelling.

The application was amended in response to objections received and in its current form, the application is for 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.

The purpose of the project is to provide suitable accommodation for workers to reside within the township.

The subdivision will result in four (4) lots with the following areas:

- Lot 1 - 827.20m²
- Lot 2 - 839.64m²
- Lot 3 - 1005.21m²
- Lot 4 – 747.71m² containing common property for the purpose of access and services to all three allotments.

Lots 1 and 2 will comprise three-bedroom dwellings, with a four-bedroom dwelling proposed on Lot 3. A separate double carport will be provided for each dwelling.

Subject site & locality

An inspection of the site and the surrounding area has been undertaken.

The site has a total area of 3415.61 square metres and currently contains:

- Two existing allotments containing vacant land (Lot 1 TP440022 and Lot 1 TP594262)

The main site/locality characteristics are:

- The subject site is within a residential area with farming zoned land to the northwest.
- The subject site adjoins McCracken Avenue to the southeast with a street frontage of 20 metres. McCracken Avenue is a through highway running southwest to northeast. The access road is a quite broad and has a service lane on the eastern side.
- There is an adjoining dwelling located on a separate allotment within the same ownership as the subject site (Lot 1 TP520539).
- Surrounding lot sizes range from 801m² to 11,798m², with 70% of allotments on McCracken Avenue ranging from 800-2000m².

Permit/Site History

The history of the site includes:

- An application was made 6 March 2025 to use the existing dwelling for an office. The application received 14 objections, and the application was subsequently withdrawn.

Assessment

The zoning of the land and any relevant overlay provisions

32.05 Township Zone

The purpose of the township zone is to:

- To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.
- To provide for residential development and a range of commercial, industrial and other uses in small towns.
- To encourage development that is responsive to the neighbourhood character of the area.
- To allow educational, recreational, religious, community and a limited range of other non-residential uses to serve local community needs in appropriate locations.

Permit trigger – A planning permit is required to construct more than one dwelling on an allotment. A planning permit is also required to subdivide land.

32.05-15 Decision guidelines

Before deciding on an application to use land or construct a building or construct or carry out works, in addition to the decision guidelines in clause 65, the responsible authority must consider, as appropriate:

Decision Guideline – Township Zone	Comments
General	
The objectives set out in a schedule to this zone.	<i>There are no objectives set out in a schedule to this zone.</i>
The protection and enhancement of the character of the town and	<i>The proposed development comprises a long, narrow subdivision containing three dwellings that do not directly front the street. While this configuration is not</i>

<p>surrounding area including the retention of vegetation.</p>	<p><i>typical of detached dwellings within the immediate area, similar layouts are commonly associated with multi-unit developments, several of which exist within the township. As such, the proposed layout is not considered out of character with development patterns in the broader area.</i></p> <p><i>The proposed allotment sizes are generally consistent with those of surrounding properties. Although some larger allotments are present nearby, these are not representative of the prevailing standard lot size within the locality.</i></p> <p><i>The surrounding area contains a mix of weatherboard and brick veneer dwellings. The proposed development consists of modern, well-articulated dwellings featuring weatherboard cladding and pitched Colorbond roofs. The architectural presentation is considered clean and contemporary and is compatible with the existing character of the area.</i></p> <p><i>The subject site contains minimal vegetation of significance. The proposal includes a comprehensive landscaping proposal, incorporating a minimum of 19 trees to meet the requirements of Clause 55.02-7 (Tree Canopy Cover). The proposed trees are to be selected from flowering native species, contributing positively to the streetscape and broader landscape character.</i></p>
<p>The availability and provision of utility services, including sewerage, water, drainage, electricity and telecommunications.</p>	<p><i>The subject site can be connected to all services.</i></p>
<p>The design, height, setback and appearance of the proposed buildings and works including provision for solar access.</p>	<p><i>The proposed design is contemporary in nature and responds appropriately to the size and configuration of the subject land. All dwellings are single-storey, ensuring consistency with the prevailing neighbourhood character. The dwellings are designed with appropriate setbacks, including a minimum setback of 2.5 metres from the adjoining property to the north-east, while Dwelling 1 is setback 8.5 metres from the street boundary, contributing to a reasonable streetscape presence and compatibility with surrounding development.</i></p>
<p>Provision of car and bicycle parking and loading bay facilities and landscaping.</p>	<p><i>Clause 52.06 (Car Parking) requires a new dwelling to have a minimum of 1.2 car parking spaces per dwelling. A double carport has been provided to each dwelling, meeting this requirement.</i></p>
<p>The effect that existing uses on adjoining or nearby land may have on the proposed use.</p>	<p><i>The use and development of adjoining and nearby land will not adversely impact the proposed residential use. Surrounding land is predominantly residential in nature, which is compatible with the proposed development. While some farming activity may occur to the north-west</i></p>

	<i>of the subject land, this land directly interfaces with an established residential area and agricultural activities in this context are expected to generate minimal amenity impacts on future residents.</i>
The scale and intensity of the use and development.	<i>The proposed development of three dwellings represents a marginally higher density than is typically observed within the township. However, it is noted that each resulting allotment exceeds 800 m², which is consistent with the prevailing lot sizes in the area that generally range between 800 m² and 2,000 m². Furthermore, within the Township Zone, the construction of a dwelling on land exceeding 300 m² does not require a planning permit, indicating that the proposed allotment sizes are well within acceptable development parameters.</i>
The safety, efficiency and amenity effects of traffic to be generated by the proposal.	<i>The level of traffic generated by the proposed development is consistent with that typically associated with low-density residential areas. Any minor increase in vehicle movements is not expected to adversely impact traffic safety, efficiency, or the amenity of the surrounding area.</i>
The impact of overshadowing on existing rooftop solar energy systems on dwellings on adjoining lots in a Township Zone.	<i>No overshadowing on existing rooftop solar on dwellings on adjoining lots will occur.</i>
Any other decision guidelines specified in a schedule to this zone.	<i>The objectives and standards of Clause 55 have been considered. See attached report.</i>
Subdivision	
The pattern of subdivision and its effect on the spacing of buildings.	<i>The proposed subdivision layout is appropriate and responds well to the site context, providing suitable lot configuration and adequate spacing between buildings to ensure a functional and well-integrated development outcome.</i>
For subdivision of land for residential development, the objectives and standards of clause 56.	<i>The objectives and standards of Clause 56 have been considered. See attached report.</i>
Construction of two or more dwellings on a lot	
For two or more dwellings on a lot, the objectives, standards and decision guidelines of clause 55.	<i>The objectives and standards of Clause 55 have been considered. See attached report.</i>

Residential - An analysis of the application against the requirements of Clause 55 and 56 of the planning scheme are attached to this report.

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:

- Encouraging residential and economic development in the main townships that have reticulated infrastructure including Birchip, Charlton, Donald, Sea Lake and Wycheproof.
- Maintaining urban character, amenity and services.
- Directing subdivision development to locations on the established road network.

02.03-2 Environmental and landscape values

Council's strategic directions for environmental and landscape values include:

- Protecting biodiversity, native vegetation, habitat and natural landscape values.
- Improving stormwater quality and enhancing natural waterways.
- Discouraging the expansion of development into areas of environmental sensitivity.

02.03-5 Built environment and heritage

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

- Preserving the heritage values of the municipality to enhance the built environment.
- Supporting development in heritage places that complements the significance of the heritage place.
- Encouraging development that preserves and enhances the character and amenity of townships.

02.03-6 Economic development

Council's strategic directions for economic development include:

- Encouraging economic development and activity that increases opportunities for the community.

Planning Policy Framework (PPF)

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

11.01-1S Settlement

Objective

To facilitate the sustainable growth and development of Victoria and deliver choice and opportunity for all Victorians through a network of settlements.

Strategies include:

- Develop sustainable communities through a settlement framework that:
 - o Offers a range of housing choices.
 - o Provides convenient access to jobs, services, infrastructure and community facilities.
 - o Takes into account regional and municipal contexts and frameworks.
- Provide for growth in population and development of facilities and services across a regional or sub-regional network in accordance with housing targets.
- Plan for development and investment opportunities that make best use of existing and planned transport infrastructure.

11.03-6S Regional and local places

Objective

To facilitate integrated place-based planning.

Strategies include:

- Integrate relevant planning considerations to provide specific direction for the planning of sites, places, neighbourhoods and towns.
- Consider the distinctive characteristics and needs of regional and local places in planning for future land use and development.

12.06-1S Urban forests

Objective

To protect and enhance tree canopy in urban areas.

Strategies include:

- Contribute to achieving an overall 30 per cent tree canopy target for urban areas by:
 - Encouraging the retention of existing canopy trees.
 - Promoting the planting of new canopy trees within the public realm and open space and on private land.
- Ensuring that canopy tree species are appropriate for the locality, available space, growing conditions and future climate conditions.

15.01-1S Urban design

Objective

To create urban environments that are safe, healthy, functional and enjoyable and that contribute to a sense of place and cultural identity.

Strategies include:

- Require development to respond to its context in terms of character, cultural identity and heritage, natural features, surrounding landscape and climate.
- Ensure the interface between the private and public realm protects and enhances personal safety.
- Ensure development supports public realm amenity and safe access to walking and cycling environments and public transport.
- Ensure that development provides landscaping that supports the amenity, attractiveness and safety of the public realm.

15.01-2S and 15.01-2L-01 Building design

Objective

To achieve building design and siting outcomes that contribute positively to the local context, enhance the public realm and support environmentally sustainable development.

Strategies include:

- Design buildings and works to be in keeping with the prevailing scale, bulk, streetscape character and built form of the area.

15.01-3S Subdivision design

Objective

To ensure the design of subdivisions achieves attractive, safe, accessible, diverse and sustainable neighbourhoods.

Strategies include:

- Providing a range of lot sizes to suit a variety of dwelling and household types to meet the needs and aspirations of different groups of people.

15.01-5S Neighbourhood character**Objective**

To recognise, support and protect neighbourhood character, cultural identity, and sense of place.

Strategies include:

- Support development that respects the existing neighbourhood character or contributes to a preferred neighbourhood character.
- Ensure development responds to its context and reinforces a sense of place and the valued features and characteristics of the local environment and place by respecting the:
 - Pattern of local urban structure and subdivision.
 - Underlying natural landscape character and significant vegetation.
 - Neighbourhood character values and built form that reflect community identity.

15.01-6S Design for rural areas**Objective**

To ensure development respects valued areas of rural character.

Strategies include:

- Ensure that the siting, scale and appearance of development protects and enhances rural character.
- Protect the visual amenity of valued rural landscapes and character areas along township approaches and sensitive tourist routes by ensuring new development is sympathetically located.

16.01-1S Housing supply**Objective**

To facilitate well-located, integrated and diverse housing that meets community needs.

Strategies include:

- Encourage higher density housing development on sites that are well located in relation to jobs, services and public transport.
- Support opportunities for a range of income groups to choose housing in well-serviced locations.

16.01-1L Housing diversity in Buloke

Strategies include:

- Facilitate new and diverse housing opportunities within existing township boundaries.
- Encourage residential development that offers housing forms best suited to the household structures and age-groups in the municipality.
- Increase the mix of housing types and densities to reflect the needs of older people in the community.

Relevant Particular Provisions**52.06 Car parking**

The purpose of Clause 52.06 includes:

- To ensure the provision of an appropriate number of car parking spaces having regard to the demand likely to be generated, the activities on the land and the nature of the locality.
- To ensure that car parking does not adversely affect the amenity of the locality.
- To ensure that the design and location of car parking is of a high standard, creates a safe environment for users and enables easy and efficient use.

In accordance with Clause 52.06-5 (Car parking requirement calculation) each dwelling must be provided with 1.2 car parking spaces. Each proposed dwelling is provided with 2 car parking spaces.

52.29-2 Land adjacent to the principal road network

The purpose of Clause 52.29 is:

- To ensure appropriate access to the Principal Road Network or land planned to form part of the Principal Road Network.
- To ensure appropriate subdivision of land adjacent to Principal Road Network or land planned to form part of the Principal Road Network.

Permit trigger – A planning permit is required to create or alter an access to a road in a Transport Zone 2. A planning permit is also required to subdivide land adjacent to a road in a Transport Zone 2.

52.29-6 Decision guidelines

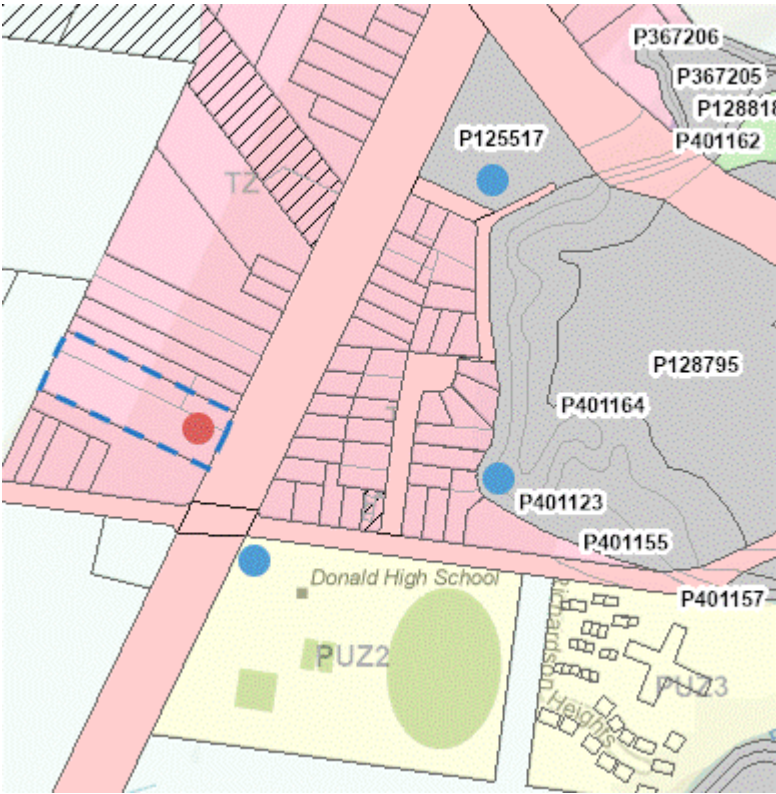
Before deciding on an application, in addition to the decision guidelines in clause 65, the responsible authority must consider:

Decision Guidelines	Comments
The views of the relevant road authority.	<i>The application was referred to the Head, Transport for Victoria (TfV) under Section 55 of the P&E Act. TfV did not raise any objection subject to conditions on the permit.</i>
The effect of the proposal on the operation of the road and on public safety.	<i>The proposal is likely to result in an increase in traffic within the locality. However, it is considered that the anticipated traffic volumes will be low and will not result in any detrimental amenity or traffic impacts.</i>

The decision guidelines of Clause 65

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 proposal is consistent with the objectives and strategies of the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Strategy.</i>
The purpose of the zone, overlay or other provision.	<i>The proposal meets the purpose of the zone and the relevant particular provision.</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 represents orderly planning and is an appropriate use and development outcome for the site.</i>

<p>The effect on the environment, human health and amenity of the area.</p>	<p><i>The proposed development 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 site is situated approximately 75 metres north-west of the Donald High School, 245 metres west of the Richardson River and 290 metres south-west of the Donald Hospital. The development will not impact public land.</i></p>
 <p><i>Image sourced from VicPlan interactive mapping showing public land 22/04/2026</i></p>	
<p>Factors likely to cause or contribute to land degradation, salinity or reduce water quality.</p>	<p><i>The proposed development will not have an impact on land degradation or reduce water quality.</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>Stormwater from the proposed development will be directed to a legal point of discharge.</i></p>
<p>The extent and character of native vegetation and the likelihood of its destruction.</p>	<p><i>Not applicable – no vegetation is to be removed.</i></p>
<p>Whether native vegetation is to be or can be protected, planted or allowed to regenerate.</p>	<p><i>Not applicable – no vegetation is 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</p>	<p><i>The proposed development will not increase any hazard.</i></p>

management of the land so as to minimise any such hazard.	
The adequacy of loading and unloading facilities and any associated amenity, traffic flow and road safety impacts.	<i>Not applicable</i>
The impact the use or development will have on the current and future development and operation of the transport system.	<i>Not applicable</i>

65.02 Approval of an 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 a residential subdivision.</i>
The existing use and possible future development of the land and nearby land.	<i>The proposed residential development is compatible with the surrounding established land uses.</i>
The availability of subdivided land in the locality, and the need for the creation of further lots.	<i>Donald currently has a limited supply of subdivided land, and the creation of additional lots is needed to meet local demand.</i>
The effect of development on the use or development of other land which has a common means of drainage.	<i>There is no common means of drainage for the land. Each new dwelling within the development will be provided with its own individual legal point of discharge.</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.</i>
The density of the proposed development.	<i>While there are some larger allotments in the area, the proposed development is of a similar density to the majority of surrounding development.</i>
The area and dimensions of each lot in the subdivision.	<i>Lot 1 will be 827.2m² with a street frontage of 20.12m, depth of 62.1m and a rear width of 13.15m. Lot 2 will be 839.64m² with a depth of 63.6m and width of 13.15m. Lot 3 will be 1005.21m² with a length of 52.8m and width of 18.9m. Lot 4 (containing the common property) will be 747.17m² with a street frontage of 6.25m, depth of 125.7m and rear width of 5.78m.</i>
The layout of roads having regard to their function and relationship to existing roads.	<i>The proposed subdivision is not expected to have a significant impact on existing road conditions. Any additional traffic movements</i>

	<i>generated by the development are considered acceptable within the context of a residential area. The proposed lots will utilise a shared access via the existing crossover.</i>
The movement of pedestrians and vehicles throughout the subdivision and the ease of access to all lots.	<i>Not applicable</i>
The provision and location of reserves for public open space and other community facilities.	<i>The subject site has access to a range of community facilities and recreation reserves within a 2-kilometre radius.</i>
The staging of the subdivision.	<i>Not applicable</i>
The design and siting of buildings having regard to safety and the risk of spread of fire.	<i>The building layout has been designed with due consideration to safety and fire risk. The development complies with relevant standards and is not anticipated to result in any increased safety or fire risk to occupants or adjoining properties.</i>
The provision of off-street parking.	<i>All proposed lots can accommodate off-street parking. Two undercover car parks are proposed for each dwelling/allotment.</i>
The provision and location of common property.	<i>The proposed subdivision incorporates common property for the provision of shared services and a shared driveway, ensuring efficient access and servicing for all lots.</i>
The functions of any body corporate.	<i>The body corporate will manage the common property.</i>
The availability and provision of utility services, including water, sewerage, drainage, electricity and gas.	<i>Utility services, including sewerage, water, drainage, electricity and telecommunications are available to the land.</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 sillage within the boundaries of each lot.	<i>The land is sewered.</i>
Whether, in relation to subdivision plans, native vegetation can be protected through subdivision and siting of open space areas.	<i>Not applicable</i>
The impact the development will have on the current and future development and operation of the transport system.	<i>The development is expected to have minimal impact on the existing and future development and operation of the transport system.</i>

Summary of Key Issues

Planning Context

A planning permit is required for the use and development of land for more than one dwelling on a lot,

for the subdivision of land, and to create or alter access to a road in Transport Zone 2 in accordance with the planning scheme.

The application has been assessed against the relevant State and Local Planning Policy Framework, zone and overlay provisions, particular provisions, and decision guidelines.

A total of 13 valid objections were received to the application. The objections raise concerns primarily relating to:

- Neighbourhood character and lot size,
- Traffic and parking impacts,
- Drainage and stormwater management, and
- The density of development relative to the existing area.

These matters have been considered in detail as part of this assessment and are addressed in the relevant sections of this report and summarised below.

Housing Need and Strategic Context

The township of Donald has an identified need for additional housing, particularly accommodation suitable for workers, to support the ongoing agricultural industry and broader economic development of the area. The provision of higher-density housing and a greater diversity of dwelling types will expand housing choice and availability, assisting in meeting both current and future housing demand within the community.

The proposal is therefore consistent with the strategic objectives of encouraging appropriately located residential development that supports local employment and population retention.

Lot Size and Neighbourhood Character

The proposed allotments are of a similar area to surrounding allotments and respond appropriately to the existing subdivision pattern in the locality.

- Surrounding allotment sizes range from roughly 800 m² to 11,800 m².
- However, approximately 70% of allotments on McCracken Avenue range between 800 m² and 2,000 m².
- Additionally, seven of the thirteen objectors' allotments are approximately 800–1,100 m², which is comparable to the size of the proposed lots.

Accordingly, the proposal is not inconsistent with the prevailing lot sizes in the immediate area and will not result in an unreasonable departure from established neighbourhood character.

Traffic and Access

The development is expected to generate approximately 25–30 vehicle movements per day. This level of traffic generation is typical for low-density residential development and is not considered to result in any detrimental impact on the local road network, traffic conditions, or safety.

The development will be required to provide appropriate access for service and emergency vehicles and to comply with all applicable road and car-parking rules.

Car Parking Provision

Under the planning scheme, a new dwelling is required to provide 1.2 car parking spaces per dwelling. The development meets this requirement, providing two (2) car parking spaces per dwelling, ensuring adequate on-site parking and minimising the likelihood of on-street parking impacts.

Drainage and Stormwater Management

The application was referred to Council's Engineering Department, and no drainage issues were raised.

- All stormwater will be directed to a legal point of discharge or potentially retained on site via rainwater tanks.
- The addition of three dwellings is not expected to overload Council's drainage network.
- The proposal exceeds the required permeability standards, which will assist in managing stormwater runoff.

External Referrals

The application was referred to the Head, Transport for Victoria, and no concerns or objections were raised.

RELEVANT LAW

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. PA25034 to be given under Section 52 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* 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 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, with the application dated 30 September 2025.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no significant sustainability implications.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Public Notice

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

- Sending notices to three (3) owners and occupiers of adjoining land.
- Notice in locally circulating newspapers

The notification has been carried out correctly.

Council has received 14 objections to date, with 13 of these objections received on a proforma that was signed by nearby residents. The key issues that were raised in the objections are:

- Inconsistent scale, density and building form.
- Traffic, congestion and school safety risks.
- Pedestrian and child safety.
- Inadequate parking provision and spill-over impacts
- Noise and residential amenity impacts.
- Main road and heavy vehicle safety concerns.
- Infrastructure and drainage capacity.
- Lack of community consultation.
- Precedent for further inappropriate development.

The other objection received related to an assumption that the development is to accommodate workers of the VNI West Project. Whilst this is not a valid planning reason, as there are other outstanding objections, it should be noted.

Consultation

Consultation was undertaken and included:

- The objections were sent to the applicant, and the applicant was given a right of reply
- The applicant provided a response addressing the concerns of the 13 proforma objections.
- Additionally, the original proposal was amended from five lots and three dwellings, with the future development of the fourth residential lot, to the current proposal of four lots and three dwellings, removing the option of future development of a fourth lot.
- The applicant's response and amended plans were provided to the 13 objectors for consideration and were given the option to withdraw their objection or let their objection stand.
- No objectors took up the option to withdraw their objection
- Council officers determined that mediation would not be beneficial in the circumstances.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Not applicable.

COLLABORATION

Referrals

External Referrals/Notices Required by the Planning Scheme:

Referrals/Notice	Advice/Response/Conditions
Section 55 Referrals	GWMWater – no objection subject to conditions Head, Transport for Victoria – no objection subject to conditions Powercor – no objection subject to conditions
Section 52 notices	Not applicable

Internal Council Referrals	Advice/Response/Conditions
Assets and Infrastructure	No objection - subject to conditions
Municipal Building Surveyor	No objection – building permits required

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

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

There may be costs associated with a VCAT appeal if that process occurs.

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

In order to promote transparency, 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 8.2.5.1 - PA25034 Clause 55 Assessment
2. Attachment 8.2.5.2 - PA25034 Clause 56 Assessment
3. Attachment 8.2.5.3 - 22301 T P 22-0 e Site Plan - Proposed Building Envelopes
4. Attachment 8.2.5.4 - 22301 T P 22-1 d Site Plan - Development Design Response
5. Attachment 8.2.5.5 - 22301 T P 22-2 c Site Plan - New Title Boundaries
6. Attachment 8.2.5.6 - 22301 T P 22-3 c Site Plan - Permeability
7. Attachment 8.2.5.7 - 22301 T P 22-4 b Floor Plans - sheet 1
8. Attachment 8.2.5.8 - 22301 T P 22-5 b Floor Plan - sheet 2
9. Attachment 8.2.5.9 - 22301 T P 22-6 b Elevations - sheet 1
10. Attachment 8.2.5.10 - 22301 T P 22-7 b Elevations - sheet 2
11. Attachment 8.2.5.11 - Submission proforma
12. Attachment 8.2.5.12 - Copy of submission

8.3 FINANCIAL REPORTS

8.3.1 QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORT FOR PERIOD ENDING 31 MARCH 2026

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 Council with the quarterly financial reports for the period ended 31 March 2026 in accordance with the requirements of Section 97 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

SUMMARY

Council adopted its FY2026 Annual Budget at the Council meeting on 18 June 2025. The attached reports include a comparison of the operating and capital works budgets with actuals for the period ended 31 March 2026 as well as Cash Flow Statement and Balance Sheet.

It also includes a revised forecasted operating result for period ending June 2026.

MOTION

That Council receives and notes the Quarterly Financial Statements for the period ended 31 March 2026.

MOVED: Cr Charmaine Delaney

SECONDED: Cr Stephen Barratt

CARRIED.

(R/26/32)

DISCUSSION

Under Section 97 of the *Local Government Act 2020* a quarterly budget report must be presented to Council. The attached reports include a comparison of the operating and capital works budgets with actuals for the 9 months ended March 2026 and forecasts for full year ended June 2026, as well as cash flow statement and balance sheet.

The financial reports for FY2025-26 quarter 3, comprise the following:

Comprehensive Income Statement compares year-to-date actual results against the year-to-date budget and includes the remaining budget for the financial year. In addition to year-to-date performance, the statement also presents Council's forecast result as of June 2026, prepared in consultation with relevant budget managers. Council has reported a year-to-date surplus of \$2.243 million, with a forecasted full-year surplus of \$732K.

Balance Sheet and Statement of Cash Flow as of 31 March 2026 as well as the **Statement of Capital Works**, which reflects total expenditure of \$7.3 million and is forecasted to be \$12.314 million.

The forecasted result presented to the Committee reflected an operating surplus result of \$8.364 million. However, the following major changes have impacted the surplus to now be forecasted at \$731,656.

Major changes to the forecasted financials presented at Q2 –

Comprehensive Income Statement	\$	Comment
Forecasted operating surplus	\$8,364,314	
Less - Share of profit/loss from associate	\$213,000	Investment in Wimmera Southern Mallee post withdrawal, being recognised as an expense
Less – Capital Grant	\$7,419,658	AGRN 1270 (March rain event) has caused works under AGRN 1037 (October 2022) and 1096 (December 2023) to be re-assessed resulting in works being paused. Hence, income from October 2022 and December 2023 floods are forecasted to be unearned.
Revised forecasted surplus	\$731,656	

- Capital works have been forecasted to be at \$12.314 million, a drop of \$11 million from December reported figures because of AGRN 1270 (March rain event)
- Cash and cash equivalents at year end stands revised to forecast a balance exceeding \$25 million.

The above-mentioned statements are detailed further to inform Council of financial outcomes to date, highlight variances, and support oversight of budget delivery.

COMPREHENSIVE INCOME STATEMENT

Council's **year-to-date (YTD) Comprehensive Income Statement** reflects a surplus of \$2.243 million. When compared to the YTD budget, this represents an unfavourable variance of \$7.409 million. Council's **forecast result** indicates a surplus of \$731,656, which is an unfavourable variance of \$28.101 million against the approved full-year budget.

The below table details the YTD and forecasts variances:

Detail	YTD Variance Comments	Forecasted Variance Comments
Income		
Rates and charges	Against YTD budget has a favorable variance of \$44K.	Favorable variance forecasted due to supplementary valuations.
Statutory fees and fines	Favorable variance primarily due to planning fees earned from subdivision of land of 2 properties.	Favorable variance forecasted due to a one-off planning fees earned from subdivision of land, remaining items travelling close to budget.
User fees	Favorable variance of approx. \$16K primarily due to receipt of early animal registrations approx. \$23K, income received from sheep sale approx. \$39K off-set by lower-than-expected services such as public health, building and compliance, electric car and swimming pools cumulating to a total of approx. \$46K.	Unfavorable variance forecasted due to lower-than-anticipated level of operations in the building and compliance service areas.
Grants – operating	Unfavorable variance of \$3.034 million YTD due to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timing difference of the Financial Assistance Grants receipt (approx.\$2 million, first 50% received in FY24/25). Non-recognition of Council Flood Support Fund of \$164K received in advance. Income will be recognised when acquittals are approved on a quarterly basis. 	Unfavourable variance forecasted of \$3.9 million is primarily due to Financial Assistance Grants for financial year 2025/26 received in advance during financial year 2024/25. Council is not forecasting to receive an advance for FY2026-27 in FY2025-26.
Grants - capital	Unfavorable variance due to	Total Grants Capital Income was budgeted at \$35.304 million, including \$26.880 million relating to funding under the Disaster

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delays in project delivery majorly due to flood work - Unearned income majorly from roads to recovery, works scheduled for Q3 - Income earned from advances received towards playspaces, Asset management system and LIADR. 	<p>Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA). The balance of income was budgeted to include other external grants linked to floodworks, in addition to other capital works income sources. An unfavorable forecasted variance of \$22.340 million is primarily due to unearned income from flood recovery works funded by DRFA for flood recovery.</p> <p>The current forecasted income of \$12 million, includes income of capital projects such as Roads to Recovery (\$2.388 million), Cabins (\$1.605 million), LRCI phase 4 (\$2.162 million), Balance of Tiny towns, Wetlands, Playspaces and Birchip Cenotaph (\$1.182 million) and floods works forecasted (\$5.444 million).</p>
Contributions	An unfavorable variance of \$414K is reported mainly due to the Birchip Netball Courts' unsuccessful insurance claim. Additional income received for administration support under the Essential Services and Volunteers Fund and final portion of the October 2022 flood event insurance outcome received has reduced the overall unfavorable result.	Unfavorable variance forecasted primarily due to the Birchip Netball Courts' unsuccessful insurance claim of approx. \$500,000.
Other income	Unfavorable variance of \$52K is mainly attributed to interest income on investments not received as investments being redeemed for working capital. This has been partially offset by fuel tax credits; funding received from the Department of Transport and Planning for the sale of emulsion, reimbursements from community groups leasing Council properties for utility expenses and unbudgeted income from electoral commission.	Unfavorable variance forecasted due to lower-than-anticipated interest income on investments not received, as investments being redeemed primarily to fund flood works until Council receives the grant funding.
Share of net profits from investment in associates	NA	Council has its membership in Wimmera Southern Mallee Development. Hence, its share of profits that were recognised as investments have been forecasted as an expense.

Expenditure		
Employee costs	Favorable variance to date of \$508K due to internal staff associated with flood recovery works being capitalised (i.e. transferred to works-in-progress during the year) along with minor vacancies within the organisation and vacant positions not filled.	Favorable variance forecasted due to vacancies.
Materials and services	Favorable variance of approximately \$600K is mainly due to lower-than expected expenditure in operational contracts and services approx. \$1.57 million. This has been reduced by excess of YTD budgeted expenditure under consultancy approx. \$700K, software approx. \$114K and utilities approx. \$124K	Unfavorable variance forecasted mainly due to unbudgeted external consultants costing approx. \$693,000 and membership fee savings towards Wimmera Southern Mallee Development costing approx. \$65,000.
Depreciation and Amortization	Depreciation for the period is over budget due to the capitalisation of assets at year end.	Unfavorable variance forecasted due to depreciation charge on assets capitalised at year end.
Right of use assets	Staff vacancies have led to fewer vehicles being required resulting in a favorable variance.	Favorable variance forecasted as staff vacancies have led to fewer vehicles being hired.
Finance costs	Interest on light vehicles leased is close to YTD budget	Favorable variance in lines with right of use assets.
Other expenses	Favorable variance of approximately \$116K due to timing difference in council contributions being paid out.	Unfavorable variance due to increase in council contributions towards Wimmera Southern Mallee Council Alliance Group, Safer Together grant obligations, Birchip Community Group specifically for Ray Neville Silo Art as part of Tourism Business Innovation grant obligations.

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2026

Detail	Commentary
Assets	
Trade and other receivables	These have decreased and are now nearing the opening balance amount following the receipt of rates income in February 2026.
Cash and cash equivalents*	Cash and cash equivalents stand at \$7.150 million, which when compared to year ended 30 June 2025 increased by \$4.021 million.
Other financial assets*	Reduced due to investments being redeemed for working capital requirements.
Other assets	Forecasted to change due to prepayments at year end.
Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	Adjusted for depreciation, and capital expenditure to date is included as work in progress. Forecasted to increase to include year-end capitalisation.
Liabilities	
Trade and other payables	These have decreased by approximately \$1.572 million as credit and payroll accruals recorded at year end as well as creditors due post year end have been paid.
Trust funds and deposits	Includes the fire services levy raised that will be payable to the State Government.
Contract and other liabilities	Decreased due to external grants received as at 30 June 2025 and during FY2026 now being recognised as income.
Provisions	A decrease due to payout of Long Service Leave (approximately \$71.6K) netted off by YTD accruals.
Lease liabilities	No change.
Equity	
Accumulated surplus	Adjusted for last year's surplus and year-to-date earnings.
Reserves	No change.

**Cash and Cash equivalents together with Other Financial assets are forecasted to be approx. \$25 million by June 2026.*

STATEMENT OF CAPITAL WORKS

Detail	Commentary
Land and land improvements	Minor unfavorable variance due to no budget allocated for FY2026.
Building improvements	Favorable variance as items under building improvements are being progressed as per timeline. However, work towards the replacement of public toilet facility at Watchem Park are being flagged as a potential risk.
Plant and equipment	Favorable variance as the procurement has been kept on hold until the outcome of the heavy plant and fleet strategy is received.
Infrastructure	
Roads	Favorable variance majorly due to works including – <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Flood works being affected by AGRN 1270 that are considered to have an impact on existing flood packages. Re-investigation is currently being done on impacted works with majority of it being considered as a carry forward into FY2027. now being under procurement phase and to commence construction soon. 2. Roads to Recovery progressing as per timeline with major works schedules for Q4. 3. Works towards safer local roads have not yet started, funding agreement received for 6 roads.
Footpaths and cycleways	Favorable variance due to program being developed.
Drainage	Favorable variance due to program still under development.
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	Favorable variance due to the delay in the delivery of major projects such as: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Aquatic Renewals, where priority projects at Donald, Sea Lake and Birchip have been identified. 2. Tiny Towns, being in progress in Berriwillock, Nandaly, Nullawil and Watchem. 3. Birchip Netball Court Remediation, not going ahead due to unsuccessful insurance outcome.

Parks, open space and streetscapes	<p>Favorable variance caused due to -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Delay in delivery of projects such as Septic Replacements at Wooroonook, Birchip Streetscape Lighting and Donald Streetscapes. 2. Regional Workers Accommodation (Cabins) is progressing as per the timelines while other projects are in the procurement or final completion stages.
Aerodromes	Favorable variance due to projects still in the development phase.
<p>Capital Works are forecasted to be approx. \$12.314 million with a potential carry forward of \$33 million into FY2026-27 of which approx. \$27 million is flood works.</p>	

RELEVANT LAW

The reports are consistent with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

Council adopted its Annual Budget 2024/25 on 18 June 2025.

OPTIONS

Not applicable.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Not applicable.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Not applicable.

COLLABORATION

The attached reports and comments have been prepared in collaboration with various Council officers.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The reports provide a snapshot of Council's financial performance for the period ended 31 March 2026 and reforecasts for the year, noting the impact on the adopted budget.

The financial position of Council will continue to be monitored and managed.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not applicable.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

The report is an opportunity for Council to compare its financial performance against its annual budget and is in accordance with its Council Plan 2025-2029 commitment to manage its budgets responsibly to achieve long-term financial sustainability.

TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

Quarterly financial reporting ensures Council and the Buloke community are aware of financial implications of decisions and actions. Reporting Council's financial position allows Council to monitor and respond to financial risk.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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

Attachments:

1. Attachment 8.3.1.1 - Quarterly Financial Statements March 2026

8.4 ORGANISATIONAL REPORTS

8.4.1 QUARTERLY ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE REPORT – QUARTER 3 FY2026/27

Author's Title: Director Corporate and Organisational Performance

Directorate: Corporate and Organisational Performance **File No:** FM/02/08

Relevance to Council Plan 2025 - 2029

Strategic Council leadership and engagement

Objective: Consulting with and informing our community

PURPOSE

To present to Council the draft Quarterly Organisational Performance report for Quarter 3 FY2025/26 (at Attachment 1) for noting.

SUMMARY

The quarterly organisational performance report is an integrated progress report that updates Council and community on the delivery of the strategic objectives of the Council Plan 2025-29, including performance reporting, financial performance and delivery of the capital works program for the period of July 2025 up to and including the end of March 2026 (Quarter 3).

The report focusses on the activities undertaken in Quarter 3, noting that many activities and projects are ongoing and a progressive update from the Quarters 1 & 2 performance reports, presented to Council in February 2026.

As at the end of March 2026, the Council Plan overall performance demonstrates a positive position of progress. At this point in the first year of the new Council Plan, which was adopted by Council in June 2025, the completion of more key initiatives from the previous Council Plan is promising progress, equally as promising, the organisation is tracking well for service delivery targets despite further interruptions due to the emergency flood event to the north of the Shire in February/March 2026.

Council continues to work towards a more strategic approach in communication of key priorities and overall Council Direction that ensures that our community are well informed and able to track our progress.

MOTION

That Council:

1. Receives and notes the Quarterly Organisational Performance Report for Quarter 3 FY2025/26 at Attachment 1.

MOVED: Cr Alan Getley

SECONDED: Cr Charmaine Delaney

CARRIED.

(R/26/33)

DISCUSSION

The Council Plan 2025/26 was adopted by Council on 18 June 2025 in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* (The Act).

Within the Council Plan, a detailed 'Key things we will do' list of actions is provided against each of the strategies associated to the five (5) over-arching strategic objectives.

The key initiatives and projects undertaken by Council are recorded through internal processes, and documented within each service area Business Unit Plan, developed in alignment with the Annual Budget process, which sets out the financial year, + the three years thereafter. Importantly, the Council Plan is also a 4-year document which must be complimented by Council's other key strategic documents and plans in accordance with the integrated strategic planning and reporting framework.

In accordance to the recommendations of the Municipal Monitor's Report published in January 2025 for the Buloke Shire Council, a commitment has been made to maintaining financial sustainability and establishing an Annual Budget on a cash basis going forward.

Like all Local Government Authorities, the Buloke Shire experiences financial constraints that are not new or surprising. Rate capping, cost shifting for various services across sectors and generally rising costs for materials and services (particularly for rural and remote areas) continues to be a challenge in managing the 4-year Annual Budget, which must also inform the long-term financial position outlined within the Financial Plan (10 years).

Resourcing continues to be a major issue in the current environment, increased turnover rates and associated changes in attitudes and culture for employment in the public sector has remained difficult to manage since the COVID pandemic. This is more problematic for Council's typically more traditional, steady tenured roles.

Council's ability to establish a long-term financially sustainable position without having to rely on non-recurrent grant funding remains unlikely. Due to this fact, the challenge remains for Council to deliver the long-term aspirations of the community in a strategically aligned way that enables the delivery of core Council services in the short term.

RELEVANT LAW

Local Government Act 2020

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

The Council Plan 2025-29 was adopted by Council in June 2025.

OPTIONS

Council may seek further clarification on matters raised within the report where appropriate.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement is undertaken in a meaningful and deliberative way to prepare the 4-year Council Plan. The introduction of this report as a measure of progress on a quarterly basis across the entire 4-year term aims to provide the community with a transparent method of ensuring accountability for delivery of the objectives of the Plan to be met in line with the community engagement which informed them.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Council will continue to consider improvements and innovative ways to improve this new report in the interest of informing progress against the Council Plan.

COLLABORATION

The preparation of this report requires internal collaboration to present an organisational-wide update of overall performance.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

Nil to report at this point in relation to the preparation of this report – noting that this report’s purpose is to provide a progress update. Individual service areas and key initiatives noted within the report should be considered in relation to their individual resourcing and financial implications as separate to this report and its purpose in presentation.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not applicable.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

This report aligns with Council’s obligations to track its progress against the strategic objectives of the Council Plan 2025-29.

This report forms an important part of Council’s integrated strategic planning and reporting framework, including the associated Policy.

TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

This report provides a quarterly performance update of Council’s progress against the Council Plan and associated Council decisions. The report encourages a transparent means of reporting progress against all strategic objectives and deliverables within the Council Plan.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interest were declared in the preparation of this report.

Attachments:

1. Attachment 8.4.1.1 - Organisational Performance Report Q 3 2025 26

8.5 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS

Lower Avoca Ward

Name: Cr Stephen Barratt

Date: 2 April - 6 May 2026

Meetings Attended:

Date	Meeting / Event
08/04/2026	Wycheproof Resource Centre - Cuppa and a Chat with a Councillor
08/04/2026	NGSC Transmission Forum – <i>Online</i>
08/04/2026	Additional Councillor Briefing – <i>Online</i>
15/04/2026	Australian Citizenship Ceremony - <i>Wycheproof Senior Citizens</i>
15/04/2026	Council Meeting – <i>Wycheproof Supper Room</i>
25/04/2026	ANZAC Day Service – <i>Coonooer Bridge</i>
25/04/2026	ANZAC Day Service – <i>Wycheproof</i>
25/04/2026	Rededication of Kurrajong trees at Mt Wycheproof
27/04/2026	Charlton Neighbourhood House Coffee with a Councillor
05/05/2026	Friends of Mt Wycheproof Meeting – <i>Wycheproof Senior Citizens</i>
06/05/2026	Councillor Briefing - <i>Berriwillock</i>

Name: Cr Bruce Stafford

Date: 2 April - 6 May 2026

Meetings Attended:

Date	Meeting / Event
09/04/2026	CEO and Councillor Only Time – <i>Online</i>
15/04/2026	Australian Citizenship Ceremony – <i>Wycheproof Senior Citizens</i>
15/04/2026	Council Meeting – <i>Wycheproof Supper Room</i>
25/04/2026	ANZAC Day Service – <i>Charlton</i>
27/04/2026	Charlton Neighbourhood House Coffee with a Councillor
03/05/2026	Wycheproof Library Grand Opening
04/05/2026	Charlton Park Committee Meeting
06/05/2026	Councillor Briefing – <i>Berriwillock</i>

Mallee Ward

Name: Cr Alan Getley

Date: 2 April - 6 May 2026

Meetings Attended:

Date	Meeting / Event
08/04/2026	NGSC Transmission Forum – <i>Online</i>

08/04/2026	Additional Councillor Briefing – <i>Online</i>
09/04/2026	CEO and Councillor Only Time – <i>Online</i>
13/04/2026	Culgoa Development Meeting
14/04/2026	Nullawil Progress Association Meeting
15/04/2026	Australian Citizenship Ceremony – <i>Wycheproof Senior Citizens</i>
15/04/2026	Council Meeting – <i>Wycheproof Supper Room</i>
21/04/2026	VNI West CRG meeting – <i>Donald</i>
24/04/2026	WSM RTG Meeting
25/04/2026	ANZAC Day Service – <i>Nullawil</i>
25/04/2026	ANZAC Day Service – <i>Culgoa</i>
25/04/2026	ANZAC Day Service – <i>Wycheproof</i>
27/04/2026	Charlton Neighbourhood House Coffee with a Councillor
27/04/2026	Buloke Tourism Board Meeting - <i>Birchip</i>
28/04/2026	Meeting with Rikkie-Lee Tyrrell MP – <i>Wycheproof</i>
06/05/2026	Councillor Briefing - Berriwillock

Name: Cr Bernadette Hogan

Date: 2 April - 6 May 2026

Meetings Attended:

Date	Meeting / Event
08/04/2026	Birchip Historical Society Meeting
09/04/2026	CEO and Councillor Only Time - <i>Online</i>
14/04/2026	Nullawil Progress Association Meeting
15/04/2026	NCLLEN Finance & Risk Committee – <i>Online</i>
15/04/2026	Australian Citizenship Ceremony – <i>Wycheproof Senior Citizens</i>
15/04/2026	Council Meeting – <i>Wycheproof Supper Room</i>
20/04/2026	Birchip Forum Meeting
21/04/2026	NCLLEN Board Meeting - <i>Online</i>
25/04/2026	ANZAC Day Dawn Service – <i>Sea Lake</i>
25/04/2026	ANZAC Day Service – <i>Curyo</i>
25/04/2026	ANZAC Day Service – <i>Birchip</i>
27/04/2026	Buloke Tourism Board Meeting - <i>Birchip</i>
03/05/2026	Wycheproof Library Grand Opening
06/05/2026	Councillor Briefing - Berriwillock

Mount Jeffcott Ward

Name: Cr Charmaine Delaney

Date: 2 April - 6 May 2026

Meetings Attended:

Date	Meeting / Event
08/04/2026	Additional Councillor Briefing – <i>Online</i>
09/04/2026	CEO and Councillor Only Time - <i>Online</i>
14/04/2026	Watchem Progress Association Meeting
15/04/2026	Australian Citizenship Ceremony - <i>Wycheproof Senior Citizens</i>
15/04/2026	Council Meeting – <i>Wycheproof Supper Room</i>
22/04/2026	Donald Community Precinct Meeting
22/04/2026	Donald 2000 Meeting

Name: Cr Graeme Milne

Date: 2 April - 6 May 2026

Meetings Attended:

Date	Meeting / Event
07/04/2026	Rail Freight Alliance Finance Meeting
08/04/2026	CEO & Mayor Catch-up
08/04/2026	NGSC Transmission Forum – <i>Online</i>
08/04/2026	Additional Councillor Briefing – <i>Online</i>
09/04/2026	CEO and Councillor Only Time - <i>Online</i>
13/04/2026	Donald History Meeting
14/04/2026	Watchem Progress Association Meeting
15/04/2026	Australian Citizenship Ceremony – <i>Wycheproof Senior Citizens</i>
15/04/2026	Council Meeting – <i>Wycheproof Supper Room</i>
20/04/2026	Birchip Community Forum
22/04/2026	Watchem Progress Association – Tiny Towns Discussion
22/04/2026	Buloke Shire Council & V/Line CEO Meeting – <i>Online</i>
22/04/2026	Donald Community Precinct Meeting
22/04/2026	Donald 2000 Meeting
23/04/2026	CEO & Mayor Catch-up
27/04/2026	Buloke Tourism Board Meeting - <i>Birchip</i>
28/04/2026	Meeting with Rikkie-Lee Tyrrell MP – <i>Wycheproof</i>
29/04/2026	Buloke Shire Council & North Central News/Loddon Herald – <i>Wycheproof</i>
29/04/2026	Wycheproof Library Walk Through
05/05/2026	Rail Freight Alliance Finance Meeting
06/05/2026	Councillor Briefing – <i>Berriwillock</i>

9 OTHER BUSINESS

9.1 NOTICES OF MOTION

Nil.

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

Nil.

10 MEETING CLOSE

Meeting closed at 7:54 pm.

NEXT MEETING

The next Council Meeting will be held in Wycheproof Hall Supper Room on Wednesday, 17 June 2026 at 7:00pm.