

Strathbogie Shire Council

Council Meeting Agenda

21 April 2026

Agenda

Council Meeting

21 April 2026 at 4:00 pm

**A meeting to be held at the Euroa Community Conference Centre and
livestreamed on Council's website**

<https://www.strathbogie.vic.gov.au/council/our-council/council-meetings-and-minutes/>

Councillors

Mayor Cr Scott Jeffery
Deputy Mayor Cr Claire Ewart-Kennedy
Cr Laura Binks
Cr Greg Carlson
Cr Vicki Halsall
Cr Clark Holloway
Cr Fiona Stevens

Officers

Rachelle Quattrocchi	Chief Executive Officer
Amanda Tingay	Director People and Governance
Gary Van Driel	Interim Director Sustainable Infrastructure
Rachael Frampton	Director Community and Planning
Sharon Rainsbury	Executive Manager Communications, Advocacy and Customer Service
Kerry Lynch	Governance Officer

Order of Business

- 1 Welcome5
- 2 Acknowledgement of Country5
- 3 Privacy Notice5
- 4 Governance Principles5
- 5 Apologies/Leave of Absence6
- 6 Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest6
- 7 Confirmation of Minutes/Decisions of Previous Meetings7
- 8 Petitions7
- 9 Mayor and Councillor Reports7
 - 9.1 Mayor's Report7
 - 9.2 Councillor Reports7
- 10 Public Question Time7
- 11 Officer Reports8
 - 11.1 Strategic and Statutory Planning8
 - 11.1.1 Quarterly Report - Statutory Planning8
 - 11.2 Community18
 - 11.2.1 Community Funding Model 2026-2718
 - 11.2.2 Fire Recovery Relief - Building, Planning and Environmental Health28
 - 11.2.3 Variations and Grants Approved Under CEO Delegation March 202639
 - 11.3 Infrastructure43
 - 11.3.1 Quarterly Report - Capital Works43
 - 11.4 Corporate54
 - 11.4.1 Fraud and Corruption Policy and Control System Procedures54
 - 11.4.2 Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy81
 - 11.4.3 Generative Artificial Intelligence Policy100
 - 11.4.4 Video Surveillance Policy113
 - 11.4.5 S11A and S11B Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation123
 - 11.4.6 S18 Instrument of Sub-Delegation under the Environment Protection Act 2017
.....131
 - 11.4.7 Record of Informal Meeting of Councillors March 2026140
 - 11.5 Communications, Advocacy and Customer Service146
 - 11.5.1 Quarterly Report - Customer Service146
- 12 Notice of Motion154
- 13 Notice of Rescission155
- 14 Confidential Business156

15 Urgent Business157
16 Next Meeting157
17 Closure of Meeting157

Meeting Procedure

1 Welcome

Councillors Vision

We will be a Councillor group that delivers valuable outcomes for our community through teamwork characterised by:

- respectful debate
- collaboration, and
- the commitment to being inclusive and transparent.

Councillor Values

- Respect
- Integrity
- Accountability
- Transparency
- Responsiveness

2 Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the places we live, work and play. We recognise and respect the enduring relationship they have with their lands and waters, and we pay respects to the Elders past, present and emerging.

Today we are meeting on the lands of the Taungurung peoples of the Eastern Kulin nation.

3 Privacy Notice

This public meeting is being streamed live via our website ([Council Meetings and Minutes | Strathbogie Shire](#)) and made available for public access on our website along with the official Minutes/Decisions of this meeting.

All care is taken to maintain your privacy; however, as a visitor in the public gallery, it is assumed that your consent is given if your image is broadcast to the public. It is also assumed that your consent is given to the use and disclosure of any information that you share at the meeting (including personal or sensitive information) to any person who accesses those recordings or Minutes/Decisions.

4 Governance Principles

Council considers that the recommendations contained in this Agenda give effect to the overarching governance principles stated in Section 9(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020*. These principles are as follows:

1. Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law
2. priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations
3. the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted
4. the municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making
5. innovation and continuous improvement are to be pursued

6. collaboration with other Councils and Governments and statutory bodies is to be sought
7. the ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured
8. regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision making
9. the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

5 Apologies/Leave of Absence

6 Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

7 Confirmation of Minutes/Decisions of Previous Meetings

The minutes have been circulated to Councillors and posted on Council website [Council Meetings and Minutes | Strathbogie Shire](#) pending confirmation at this meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 17 March 2026 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

8 Petitions

Nil

9 Mayor and Councillor Reports

9.1 Mayor's Report

9.2 Councillor Reports

10 Public Question Time

Public Question Time

Questions for the Ordinary Council Meeting can be submitted to be read, and responded to, by the Chair, or a member of Council staff nominated by the Chair, during the Public Question Time. Questions must be submitted 30 hours prior to the Council meeting, by emailing info@strathbogie.vic.gov.au.

Public Question Time will be conducted as per Rule 35 of Strathbogie Shire Council's Governance Rules. The required [form](#) for completion and lodgement, and associated [Procedural Guidelines](#), can be found on Council's website at www.strathbogie.vic.gov.au.

As the questions are a permanent public record and to meet the requirements of the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*, only the initials of the person asking the question will be used in the Minutes of the meeting, together with a Council reference number.

11 Officer Reports

11.1 Strategic and Statutory Planning

11.1.1 Quarterly Report - Statutory Planning

AUTHOR Manager Planning and Investment

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Director Community and Planning

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides listings of all Planning Applications Received (Attachment 1) and Planning Applications Determined (Attachment 2) for the period 1 January 2026 to 31 March 2026 (Quarter 1). The latest available Planning Permit Activity Performance (PPARS) figures for this period are also attached (Attachment 3) to this report.

The contents of this report are provided for information purposes only; the listing of current planning applications on public display can be found on the Council's website.

It is noted that there were thirty seven (37) new planning applications received, and twenty seven (27) planning applications decided during the reporting period.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Receive the report**
- 2. Note that there were thirty seven (37) planning applications received, and twenty seven (27) applications decide during the period 1 January 2026 to 31 March 2026.**

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

To report to Council on the current planning application activity and matters considered under delegation.

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

The Council is a Responsible Authority under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (the Act). In this role, Council administers the Strathbogie Planning Scheme (Planning Scheme) and, among other things, determines planning permit applications made for the use and development of the land in the municipality. Under delegated authority of the Council, Council officers determine some matters.

Many types of use and development do not require a planning permit and may take place without being recorded as part of the planning approvals data. The statistics presented do not represent all development activities in the municipality. In addition, some planning permits are not acted on, or there may be a delay between when the approval is granted and when works take place.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Individual applications consider these requirements through assessment phase of each application as per the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the provisions of the Strathbogie Planning Scheme.

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

This report has identified the following risk(s):

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Failure to notify Council of a planning permit application of significant public interest or that is controversial in nature.	Possible	Moderate	Low	Regular reporting on planning permit applications received and decided.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

No Council officers and/or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a general or material conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

TRANSPARENCY

This report continues to demonstrate that the Council is being transparent in its position in relation to all applications received and determined by the Council.

CONCLUSION

This report is provided to Council to note the current planning permit application activity for the period 1 March 2026 to 31 March 2026.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Planning Applications Received

Attachment 2: Planning Applications Determined

Attachment 3: Planning Permit Activity Performance Figures

Planning Department Applications Received Q1 2026

Application No	Description	Property	Cost of Development
P2026-001	Three (3) Lot Subdivision	24 Prentice Street, Nagambie VIC 3608	\$0.00
P2023-023-1	Use and Development of Land for a Dwelling	824 Longwood-Mansfield Road Creightons Creek VIC 3666	\$450,000.00
P2026-002	Extension to a Dwelling, Construction of a Pool, Removal of Trees	32 Delatite County Road, Gooram VIC 3666	\$250,000.00
P2026-003	Use and development of land for a dwelling and outbuilding	50 Spencer Road, Avenel VIC 3664	\$420,000.00
P2026-006	Use and development of land for a dwelling	50 Spencer Road, Avenel VIC 3664	\$420,000.00
P2026-007	Use and development of land for a dwelling	50 Spencer Road Avenel VIC 3664	\$420,000.00
P2026-008	Use and development of land for a dwelling and outbuilding	50 Spencer Road Avenel VIC 3664	\$420,000.00
P2026-005	Use and development of land for a dwelling and a two (2) lot subdivision	50 Spencer Road Avenel VIC 3664	\$420,000.00
P2026-009	Development of land for alterations and additions to a dwelling	152 Quailles Lane, Kelvin View VIC 3666	\$150,000.00
P2026-010	Use and development of land for a pistol range club	305 Cherry Tree Road, Bailieston VIC 3608	\$85,000.00
P2026-011	Use and development of land for refuse disposal (Clean fill)	52 Tabilk-Monea Road, Tabilk VIC 3607	\$85,000.00
REF20260019	Development of land for a store (Self Storage Facility)	25 Industrial Crescent, Nagambie VIC 3608	\$250,000.00
P2026-012	Use and development of land for a dwelling and outbuilding	121 Wattlevale Road, Bailieston VIC 3608	\$320,000.00
P2023-097-1	Two Lot Subdivision; removal of permit conditions 4 and 5 (drainage requirements)	187 Goulburn Weir Road, Goulburn Weir VIC 3608	\$0.00
P2026-013	Development of land for an amenities block	1B Clifton Street, Euroa VIC 3666	\$18,000.00
P2026-015	Development of land for the construction of a shed	68 Babbler Lane, Tabilk VIC 3607	\$45,000.00
P2026-018	Use and development of land for a dwelling, outbuilding; Development of land for a two (2) lot subdivision	50 Spencer Road, Avenel VIC 3664	\$320,000.00

P2026-019	Development of land for the construction of a replacement dwelling	110 Sinclairs Lane, Ruffy VIC 3666	\$500,000.00
P2026-020	Buildings and works (utility stairs)	242 Goulburn Weir Road Goulburn Weir VIC 3608	\$90,000.00
V2026-004	Development of land for the construction of a pergola	403 Forlonge Memorial Road, Euroa 3666	\$9,200.00
V2026-003	Development of land for additions and alterations to a dwelling	23 Tracey Court, Miepoll VIC 3666	\$260,000.00
V2026-008	Development of land for the installation of a swimming pool	96 Jackas Lane, Creek Junction VIC 3669	\$76,558.00
V2026-007	Development of land for the construction of a farm shed	21 Tames Road, Strathbogie VIC 3666	\$79,572.00
V2026-005	Development of land for the construction of a replacement outbuilding	77 Wheelers Lane, Creightons Creek VIC 3666	\$38,970.00
V2026-006	Development of land for the construction of an outbuilding	254 Bartons Lane, Creightons Creek VIC 3666	\$38,072.00
V2026-012	Two (2) Lot Subdivision	24 Prentice Street, Nagambie VIC 3608	\$650,000.00
V2026-009	Development of land for the construction of an outbuilding	166 Dorset Hill Road, Earlston VIC 3669	\$16,000.00
V2026-010	Development of land for alterations and additions to a dwelling	152 Quailles Lane Kelvin View 3666	\$150,000.00
V2026-013	Development of land for construction of a farm shed	3896 Murchison - Violet Town Road, Violet Town VIC 3669	\$120,000.00
V2026-011	Development of land for construction of a shed (stables)	194 Buntings Hill Road, Ruffy 3666	\$90,000.00
REFVS20260016	Development of land for the construction of a replacement farm shed	129 McLeans Lane, Ruffy VIC 3666	\$124,856.00
P2026-020	Buildings and works (utility stairs)	242 Goulburn Weir Road, Goulburn Weir VIC 3608	\$90,000.00
V2026-015	Development of land for the construction of a replacement farm shed	129 Mcleans Lane, Ruffy VIC 3666	\$124,856.00
P2026-022	Extension to existing dwelling	12 Noble Street, Euroa VIC 3666	\$75,000.00
P2026-023	Development of land for the construction of a replacement farm shed	1756 Creightons Creek Road, Creightons Creek VIC 3666	\$90,688.00
V2026-014	Development of land for the construction of 2 replacement outbuildings	134 Weibye Track, Ruffy VIC 3666	\$126,150.00
V2026-017	Development of land for the construction of two replacement sheds	197 Longwood-Ruffy Road, Longwood East VIC 3666	\$138,194.00

Planning Applications Determined Q1 2026

Date of Decision	Application No	Description	Property	Decision	Cost of Development
05-01-2026	P2024-117	Use and development of land for a dwelling and group accommodation	1591 Euroa-Strathbogie Road Kelvin View VIC 3666	Refusal issued	\$800,000.00
02-03-2026	P2024-126	Development of the land for a dwelling	8 Spring Court, Strathbogie VIC 3666	Permit issued	\$200,000.00
25-02-2026	P2025-012	Development of land for an extension to a dwelling and construction of an outbuilding	1796 Northwood Road Tabilk VIC 3607	Permit issued	\$320,000.00
02-03-2026	P2025-015	Development of land for the construction of a bridge; Removal of native vegetation	115 Grenada Road Mangalore VIC 3663; 297 Mitchellstown Road Tabilk VIC 3607	Permit issued	\$250,000.00
16-02-2026	P2025-035	Development of land for the construction of a second dwelling	10 Orchid Street Violet Town Vic 3669	Permit issued	\$0.00
12-02-2026	P2025-076	Development of land for a two (2) lot subdivision and development of land for a warehouse	28 Industrial Crescent Nagambie VIC 3608	Permit issued	\$0.00
23-02-2026	P2025-081	Development of land for a replacement dwelling and small second dwelling	2209b Creightons Creek Road, Creightons Creek VIC 3666	Permit issued	\$400,000.00
06-02-2026	P2025-087	Two (2) lot subdivision; Development of two dwellings and associated outbuildings	43 Main Street Strathbogie VIC 3666	Permit issued	\$500,000.00
05-02-2026	P2025-090	Use and development of land for a dwelling and shed	Arcadia Two Chain Road Miepoll VIC 3666	Permit issued	\$600,000.00
24-03-2026	P2025-095	Development of land for the construction of a dwelling	235 Moores Road Strathbogie VIC 3666	Permit issued	\$600,000.00
20-03-2026	P2025-091	Three (3) Lot Subdivision	246 High Street Nagambie VIC 3608	Permit issued	\$0.00

26-02-2026	P2025-094	Additions and alterations to an existing freeway service centre including replacement advertising signage	167 Tarcombe Street Euroa VIC 3666	Permit issued	\$500,000.00
10-03-2026	P2023-023-1	Use and Development of Land for a Dwelling	824 Longwood-Mansfield Road Creightons Creek VIC 3666	Permit issued	\$450,000.00
17-02-2026	P2026-002	Extension to a Dwelling, Construction of a Pool, Removal of Trees	32 Delatite County Road Gooram VIC 3666	Permit issued	\$250,000.00
24-03-2026	P2023-097-1	Two Lot Subdivision; removal of permit conditions 4 and 5 (drainage requirements)	187 Goulburn Weir Road, Goulburn Weir VIC 3608	Permit issued	\$0.00
23-01-2026	V2026-002	Development of land for the construction of a domestic shed	19 Backwater Court Kirwans Bridge VIC 3608	Permit issued	\$230,000.00
28-01-2026	V2026-001	Development of land for the construction of two farm sheds	204 Goulburn Weir-Murchison Road Goulburn Weir VIC 3608	Permit issued	\$350,000.00
13-03-2026	V2026-004	Development of land for the construction of a pergola	403 Forlonge Memorial Road, Euroa 3666	Permit issued	\$9,200.00
11-02-2026	V2026-003	Development of land for additions and alterations to a dwelling	23 Tracey Court Miepoll VIC 3666	Permit issued	\$260,000.00
13-03-2026	V2026-008	Development of land for the installation of a swimming pool	96 Jackas Lane Creek Junction VIC 3669	Permit issued	\$76,558.00
05-03-2026	V2026-005	Development of land for the construction of a replacement outbuilding	77 Wheelers Lane Creightons Creek VIC 3666	Permit issued	\$38,970.00
05-03-2026	V2026-006	Development of land for the construction of an outbuilding	254 Bartons Lane Creightons Creek VIC 3666	Permit issued	\$38,072.00
25-03-2026	V2026-012	Two (2) Lot Subdivision	24 Prentice Street Nagambie VIC 3608	Permit issued	\$650,000.00
13-03-2026	V2026-009	Development of land for the construction of an outbuilding	166 Dorset Hill Road Earlston VIC 3669	Permit issued	\$16,000.00
23-03-2026	V2026-010	Alteration and Addition to Existing Farm Dwelling	152 Quailles Lane Kelvin View 3666	Permit issued	\$150,000.00
20-03-2026	V2026-011	Development of land for construction of a shed (stables)	194 Buntings Hill Road, Ruffy 3666	Permit issued	\$90,000.00

25-03-2026	V2026-012	Two (2) Lot Subdivision	24 Prentice Street Nagambie VIC 3608	Permit issued	\$650,000.00
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Applications received

The number of applications received. This gives an indication of the pipeline of Planning applications and workload for responsible authorities (RA) along with supporting a comparison to the number determined or approved. This has been broken down into application type to demonstrate the proportion of new applications compared to amendments.

37

Final outcome

The number of applications completed which includes outcomes from either the RA or through appeal where relevant, final outcomes are either 'Permit issued' or 'No permit issued'. Tracking the number of permits issued helps predict industry activity and potential impact to the economy. Other key stats below including 'Estimated cost of works', 'New dwellings' and 'New lots' all display statistics where the final outcome is permit issued

26

Responsible authority (RA) outcome

The number of applications with an outcome from the responsible authority, this includes any outcome which removes it from RA processing. This supports insight into the workload and delivery from RAs. This has been broken down into application type to demonstrate the proportion of new applications compared to amendments.

27

Final Outcome	Amount
Permit issued	26

Permit issued	Amount
New application	24
Amended permit application	2

Processing timeframes

Within timeframe (All applications)

70.37%

19 of 27 applications have been processed within timeframe

Within timeframe (Standard applications)

68.75%

11 of 16 applications have been processed within timeframe

Within timeframe (VicSmart applications)

72.73%

8 of 11 applications have been processed within timeframe

Processing days to responsible authority (RA) outcome

All applications

Average: 107.0 days
Median: 56.0 days

Standard Application

Average: 169.2 days
Median: 88.0 days

VicSmart Application

Average: 16.5 days
Median: 10.0 days

Processing days to final outcome

All applications

Average: 96.12 days
Median: 47.5 days

Standard Application

Average: 154.5 days
Median: 95.00 days

VicSmart Application

Average: 16.5 days
Median: 10.00 days

Cost estimates for works

Estimated cost of works for permits issued

Indicates the total estimated value of development indicated by approved planning permits issued. This supports insight into the potential economic benefit from approved applications.

\$6M

Avg. estimated cost of works for permits

Avg. estimated cost of works for permits issued shows the average estimated cost of works for permits issued.

\$230K

Estimated dwellings and subdivisions

Dwellings

The total dwellings where application category is 'Multi-dwelling' or 'Single dwelling' and with Final Outcome of 'Permit issued'.

3

Subdivisions

Application Category is 'Subdivision of land' or 'Consolidation' with Final Outcome of 'Permit issued'

1

11.2 Community

11.2.1 Community Funding Model 2026-27

AUTHOR Director Community and Planning

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Director Community and Planning

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council recognises the value and importance community groups and organisations play in building vibrant, inclusive, and resilient communities. Their contribution is vital to the Shire's prosperity and the visitor economy.

Community funding programs are one way that Council can partner with community organisations and groups through the provision of funds, to deliver activities, projects and initiatives that deliver mutual community benefit.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. **Adopt the Community Funding Model 2026-2027**
2. **Authorise Officers to implement the model through the promotion and release of grant guidelines and information on Council's Website, local media, publications and broadly through a range of networks, with:**
 - **the Community Strengthening and Sustainability Grants program for 2026-2027 opening on 22 April 2026 and closing on 31 May 2026**
 - **the Event Grants and Quick Response Grants programs for 2026-2027 opening on 1 June 2026 and closing on 31 May 2027 or when funds are expended.**

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is for Council to endorse the Community Funding Model 2026-2027 and authorise the opening of key grant opportunities for the community.

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

Council's Community Funding Model provides funding for groups to undertake projects that complement the Community Vision 2035 and strategic focus areas identified in the Council Plan 2025-2029. Council has a long history of providing community funding to groups in the Municipality to support the delivery of important community led projects and events.

When councils support and resource community groups in seeking funds and achieving outcomes, the relationship between local government and the community is strengthened.

As of the 1 April 2026 Council has delivered \$278,061 in community funding. These funds have supported 31 community groups to deliver 25 projects and 15 events, and 17 Action Groups and Committees of Management of Council owned facilities with insurance reimbursement and seven Action Groups with community planning administration funding.

Community Strengthening			
Applicant		Project Grant Funding	Applicant Contribution (in-kind or cash, and other grants)
Tablelands Community Centre	Tiling bench seat with community tiles and storage shed to clear disabled toilet being used for storage.	\$5,843	\$2,160
Avenel Active	Avenel Community Plan – 1. Purchase Automatic Pool Cleaner for Avenel Pool 2. Deliver up to three Introduction to Person-Centred Emergency Preparedness (P-CEP) sessions 3. Continue household delivery in Avenel of Go Nagambie Community Voice newspaper.	\$9,967	\$6,362
Euroa Historical and Genealogical Soc	Extension of accessible pathway at Euroa Museum	\$10,000	\$330
Strathbogie Tennis Club	Shade Sail sun shelter at Strathbogie tennis courts	\$6,000	\$800
Strathbogie Recreation Reserve CoM under auspice Strathbogie Memorial Hall	Outdoor power points for new electric BBQ and to power food vans at events	\$10,000	\$339
Euroa Arboretum	Master Plan for Euroa Arboretum	\$10,000	\$3,000
Rotary Club of Euroa	Accessible electric BBQ – Euroa	\$10,000	\$10,548
Euroa Croquet Club Inc	Specialist mower to support tournament grade pitch maintenance	\$10,000	\$5,177
Nagambie Football Netball Club Inc	Spectator seating at netball courts to improve spectator attendance	\$10,000	\$14,191
Euroa Agricultural Society Inc	'Kit out' community conference room kitchen	\$10,000	\$3,968
Avenel Memorial Hall Committee of Management	Avenel Music and Arts Project – equipment and workshops	\$10,000	\$42,401
		\$101,810	\$89,276
Sustainability Grants			
Applicant		Project Grant Funding	Applicant Contribution
Shadforth Reserve CoM under auspice VTAG	Solar panels and battery installation	\$19,930	\$1,000
Euroa Historical and Genealogical Society	Solar panels and battery installation at Euroa Museum	\$19,984	\$300

Wash Against Waste Sustainability Initiative under auspice Euroa Environment Group	Mobile commercial dishwasher trailer with crockery and cutlery for markets and events to reduce waste going to landfill	\$20,000	\$4,710
		\$59,914	\$6,010
Quick Response			
Applicant	Project	Grant Funding	Applicant Contribution
Euroa Basketball Association	Purchase of equipment after growth in past two years - have more than 200 local athletes and families participating	\$1,000	N/A
Euroa Agricultural Society Inc	Purchase of equipment to upgrade two existing accessible toilets at Euroa Showgrounds converting them into dual-purpose family rooms	\$1,000	\$174
Avenel Market Committee under auspice Avenel Jubilee Park Association Committee	Support live, local music for the Avenel Annual Twilight Christmas Market	\$1,000	Not required
Avenel Jubilee Park Association Inc	Create a Community Christmas Tree structure in Avenel Jubilee Park	\$1,000	Not required
Avenel Tennis Club	Purchase of equipment to support establishment Avenel Pickleball	\$973	Not required
Tablelands Community Centre	Purchase of tables and chairs to support delivery of programs and events	\$987	Not required
Euroa Junior Football Netball Club	Purchase of shipping container for storage	\$1,000	\$4,000 Inland Rail grant
Longwood East Landcare Group	Support Old Longwood toll gate restoration	\$984	Not required
Euroa District Pickleball Group under auspice Pickleball Victoria Inc	Purchase of equipment to support establishment Pickleball in Euroa and Longwood	\$992	Not required
Nagambie RSL sub-branch under auspice Nagambie Senior Citizens Centre	Purchase wall mounted first aid kit and AED consumables	\$473	Not required
Avenel Memorial Hall	Support for Small Halls event delivery	\$550	\$2,200
		\$9,959	\$6,374
Event Grants			
Applicant	Event	Grant Funding	Applicant Contribution

Renewable Avenel Energy	Home Energy Expo with Dr Karl Kruszelnicki	\$4,871	\$24,090 Ausnet grant \$5,860 in-kind
Euroa AgriWellness Network under auspice Rotary Club of Euroa	Supporting Primary Producers event - provide support and practical information to help manage the challenges of current drought and mental health issues	\$5,000	\$2,070
Tablelands Community Centre	"Annual Community Christmas Party" in Ruffy	\$2,331	\$3,060
Violet Town Halloween Parade under auspice Violet Town Football Netball Club	Halloween Parade	\$2,000	\$5,781
Strathbogie "Cup Festival" Committee under auspice Strathbogie Action Group	Melbourne Cup Weekend Festival	\$5,000	\$5,745
Rotary Club of Euroa	RAGE Recycled Art Exhibition	\$5,000	\$50,000 RDV grant and \$17,060
Southern Aurora Memorial Committee under auspice Violet Town Action Group	Southern Aurora Open Day	\$3,718	\$2,480
Euroa Chamber of Business and Commerce	Twilight Shop Local Christmas Event	\$4,500	\$2,103
Longwood Football Netball Club	Longwood Beer Wine and Cider Festival	\$4,754	\$8,336
Violet Town Action Group	Violet Town Australia Day	\$800	\$350
Bushfire Relief Concert Committee under auspice Longwood Community Centre	Longwood Bushfire Relief Concert	\$5,000	\$22,200
		\$42,974	\$143,275

Strategic Funding Agreements		
Applicant	Event	Funding
Australian National Show and Shine	Australian National Euroa Show and Shine	\$6,266
Rowing Victoria	Nagambie Rowing Regatta and State Masters	\$7,993
Victorian Wine Show Inc	Victorian Food and Wine Show	\$1,500
Associated Public Schools	Head of the River	\$10,000
		\$25,759

Council commits to review the community funding model annually to ensure:

- alignment with the Community Vision 2035, the Council Plan 2025-2029 and community needs
- the effectiveness and efficiency of operational and administrative processes including eligibility and assessment, decision making, monitoring and reporting, review and evaluation.

This review forms part of Council's continuous improvement cycle and demonstrates commitment to best practice regarding the provision of community funding.

The review takes into consideration feedback from community members, council officers, including those involved in the assessment panel and benchmarking against other Council's grant programs.

The review of the funding model for 2026-2027 has identified no significant changes to the program are required. One hundred percent (n=15) of survey participants for the 2025-2026 program found the application easy to very easy and were satisfied to very satisfied with the process. Feedback from participants included:

- ensure the support from Council continues to be as helpful as this experience
- early communication from Council advising the community that the Community Grants Program is expected to open in April would support applicants prepare for their application including allowing time for consultation with committees within normal meeting timeframes.

In response to this feedback, Council Officers will continue the one-on-one support appointments for applicants which was initiated in last year's program. These appointments helped applicants to navigate the application process, discuss project concepts, eligibility, whilst improving the quality and standard of applications.

A Communications and Engagement Plan has been developed to promote this community funding opportunity across a range of communication platforms, and to ensure accurate information is available, to enable groups to apply for the coming 2026-2027 funding rounds.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Any recommended changes are developed through a continuous quality improvement process and informed by community feedback, including applicant surveys and input from Council Officers.

Council will support the 2026-27 program through one on one appointments helping applicants navigate the process and existing print, web, and social media channels.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Council Plan

This report is consistent with the following Objectives and or actions in the 2025-2029 Council Plan:

Objective One: Connect

We are committed to enhancing access for all residents, promoting healthy living, fostering connections, and providing opportunities to thrive and participate in community life.

Objective Two: Sustain

We aim to collaborate with others to foster a sustainable environment, a thriving economy and resilient communities.

Objective Three: Deliver

We are committed to delivering quality services and infrastructure that meets the needs of our community. We aim to strengthen the Council's governance and provide improved, customer-focused experiences.

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

This report has identified the following risk(s):

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Assessor conflict of interest	Unlikely	Low	Low	Conflict of Interest declared prior to assessment of applications, and they are removed from that application
Over allocation of budget	Rare	Low	Low	Community Strengthening and Sustainability will have funding recommendations in line with the budget. Events and Quick Response grant streams close automatically when funds expended
Updated model not well received by community	Unlikely	Low	Low	Updates are based on community feedback. Community workshops to promote and improve understanding of model provided. Communication and Engagement Plan to promote updated model
Community Strengthening and Sustainability grants oversubscribed, some projects not funded as a result.	Possible	Low	Low	Transparent assessment process Clear feedback to unsuccessful applicants

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

No Council officers and/or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a general or material conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

TRANSPARENCY

For transparency and open communication with the community, this report is presented at a public Council meeting.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

There is budget allocation of \$275,000 proposed in the 2026-2027 draft budget for community funding.

The following table details the breakdown of this proposed allocation across the Community Funding Model for the 2026-2027 financial year.

There has been an increase of \$25,000 to the 2026-27 Event Grant budget allocation in response to the level of demand in 2025-2026, and to accommodate funding of Australia Day events. This increase has been offset by a reduction in the Community Grants budget allocation (Community Strengthening Grants and Sustainability Grants).

Funding is subject to Council’s budget process; the 2026–27 total will be confirmed and communicated to the community.

Grant Type	Proposed 2026-2027 allocation
Community Strengthening	\$153,000 (\$10,000 is allocated to Quick Response Grants)
Sustainability	
Quick Response	
Events	\$75,000
Community Support Funding (Community Insurances and Community Planning)	\$47,000
TOTAL FUNDING	\$275,000

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Economic

Community Funding supports economic growth across the Shire by boosting the visitor economy. Projects and events attract more visitors, increase their length of stay, and encourage applicants to source goods and services locally.

Social

The Community Funding Model encourages social impact projects and events that will support building a vibrant, inclusive and connected community.

Environmental

Environmental sustainability is promoted as part of the grants process. Community grant applicants must identify if or how their project supports Council’s Climate Change Action Plan 2022-2027, which includes protecting our natural environment.

Environmental impacts of projects and events will be assessed, with mitigation strategies included in funding agreements.

Climate Change

The Community Funding Model supports Council's Climate Change Action Plan 2022–2027 through a dedicated emissions-reduction funding stream, encouraging energy efficiency, solar and battery installation, electrification of appliances, and projects that reduce landfill waste.

Community and Event Grant applications must address climate change by proposing projects that minimise landfill waste and reduce impacts on the natural environment.

Event Grants recipients must also complete a Waste Wise Plan which includes the ban on single use plastics.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Regular review of the community funding model demonstrates a continuous improvement approach taking into consideration community feedback, benchmarking against other Council programmes and key learnings from the delivery of the 2025-26 community funding program.

COLLABORATION

Benchmarking against other Council's has occurred to ensure Council's community funding model is fit for purpose and reflects best practice grant/community funding principles.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

The recommendation does not limit any human rights under the Victorian *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

CONCLUSION

Community funding enables community groups to deliver projects aligned with the Council Plan 2025–2029 objectives and priorities.

The proposed 2026–27 Community Funding Model and guidelines are presented for Council's consideration.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 20260415 2026-2027 Community Funding Model

OFFICIAL

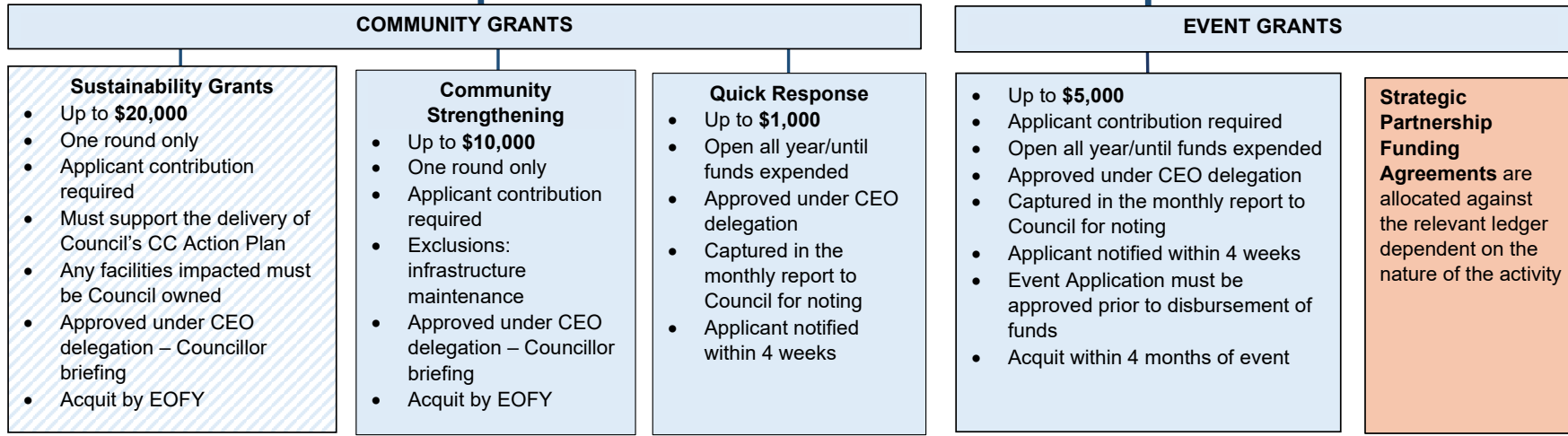
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2026-2027 COMMUNITY FUNDING MODEL

COMMUNITY GRANTS, EVENT GRANTS & COMMUNITY SUPPORT FUNDING
 Open to not-for-profit community groups, organisations or clubs; Community Action Groups & Community Houses

Objectives: Council values the role community plays in building a resilient, inclusive, vibrant Strathbogie Shire and their vital contribution to the Shire’s economic and tourism development, and visitor economy. Community Grants and Event Grants contribute funds to community-led projects and events that align with the Community Vision and supports Council to meet its legislated obligations by bringing people together to connect, collaborate, celebrate, upskill, share resources, and put ideas into action.

Outcomes: Outcomes of funded projects and events may include, for example, social connection, inclusion, health, wellbeing, safety, community arts, positive cultural or environmental outcomes, upskilling of local volunteers, economic development, and increased visitor economy.



Variations

- All variation requests, and extension of time variation go to Director Community and Planning
- The Director Community and Planning will decide if scope variation requests are considered a variation or a new project.
- Decision outcomes listed in Exceptions Report to Council for noting.

Community Support Funding
Action Groups x 7: - \$1,000 administration, \$500 Community Engagement, and \$500 *Community Engagement for Community Plan* x 1 (Avenel 2026) **and** insurance reimbursement of up to \$2,000.
Council Committee of Management x 11: insurance reimbursement of up to \$2,000

OFFICIAL

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11.2.2 Fire Recovery Relief - Building, Planning and Environmental Health

AUTHOR Managers Community and Planning Directorate
Manager Fire Recovery

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Director Community and Planning

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Longwood Berrys Lane Fire started on 7 January 2026 and burnt through approximately 135,000 hectares across a range of shires. In Strathbogie Shire it impacted approximately 12% of the municipality, with most impacts on agricultural properties. More than 110 dwellings and 248 sheds were destroyed.

Council has been advocating strongly to the State Government to offset the cost to Council to provide waivers for planning, building and health, to ensure these essential rebuilding services can be streamlined and reduce emotional and financial burden for the community wishing to rebuild.

This report considers fire recovery relief measures that may be implemented by Council to support those impacted to rebuild and recover while Council continues our advocacy efforts.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Continue to advocate for adequate State Government funding and fast-tracked statutory planning processes to provide relief and recovery, supporting impacted residents to rebuild following the Longwood Berrys Lane Fire**
- 2. Waive 50 percent of planning application fees, wastewater fees and building permit fee categories as outlined in Attachment One, for fire affected residents on their fire affected properties until 30 June 2028**
- 3. Waive the requirement for a Land Capability Assessment (LCA) for fire-affected residents rebuilding on the same site, except where the proposal is identified as high risk through a standardised risk assessment process aligned with ISO 31000:2018 – Risk Management Guidelines**
- 4. Note that recommendation three is consistent with the recommendations of the Victorian Auditor-General's report 'Managing the Impacts of Domestic Wastewater 2018', the requirements of the *Environment Protection Act 2017* and the Environment Protection Regulations 2021**
- 5. Note that recommendation three is not in accordance with Strathbogie Shire Council Domestic Wastewater Management Plan 2015.**

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to seek a Council decision on fire recovery relief measures that can be provided to those wishing to rebuild in the fire impacted area.

For fire impacted residents, this includes:

- Waiving relevant planning application fees, wastewater (septic permit) fees and building permit fees until 30 June 2028, and
- Removal of Council’s requirement for Land Capability Assessments (LCA) for low-risk properties.

Given the recent fire event and ongoing recovery, it is necessary to consider whether current fee structures and LCA requirements remain appropriate for affected property owners.

The Environment Protection Regulations provide Council with discretion to waive or refund fees. Under Regulation 215, Council may waive or refund fees, in whole or in part, where it is satisfied that it is reasonable to do so in the circumstances.

These proposed relief measures are applicable to fire affected residents, on their impacted property, and applicable to dwellings, and other structures which may require these permits.

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

Relief Measure One: Financial Impact of Planning, Wastewater and Building Fees

Fire-affected property owners are experiencing significant financial pressure associated with rebuilding. This includes planning, onsite wastewater application fees and a range of building-related statutory fees.

Current - All existing fees charged in full
<p>Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures consistency with a standard regulatory approach • Does not provide targeted financial relief to affected residents.
Proposed – 50% Waiver of fees
<p>Considerations:</p> <p>Waive 50% of applicable statutory planning, onsite wastewater and relevant building-related fees for eligible fire-affected properties; relevant fees and charges are attached to this report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported by Regulation 215 of the Environment Protection Regulations, allowing partial and or full fee waiver where reasonable. • Provides strong and immediate financial relief to support community recovery • Aligns with Council’s role in supporting recovery following emergency events • Removes financial barriers to rebuilding, enabling faster recovery outcomes • Fees are typically applied to enable Council to recover the administrative costs associated with officers processing applications. Under the proposed fee waiver, State Government Recovery funding will be reprioritised to enable employment and engagement of dedicated recovery staff to fulfil this function recognising that this is one of the most significant recovery needs in the Strathbogie Community.

Relief Measure Two: Requirement for Land Capability Assessments (LCAs)

Council’s current Domestic Wastewater Management Plan require LCAs for all applications, exceeding legislative requirements. Under legislation, LCAs are only mandated within Special Water Supply Catchments.

Within the fire-affected area, the declared catchment is limited to the Nine Mile Creek Catchment (approximately 4.8 km²).

Land capability assessment (LCA) is defined under the Environment Protection Regulations and the Victorian Planning Provisions. It describes an assessment of the risks of harm to human health and the environment of the proposed or existing onsite wastewater management system at the site, considering the proposed or existing use of the system.

Land Capability Assessments provide information about the site and soil conditions, including an assessment of the land’s capability to sustainably manage wastewater onsite. It may also provide recommendations on proposed onsite wastewater treatment, the treatment level required, and effluent dispersal and management strategies. The LCA is performed by a person the council considers is suitably qualified – for example, an independent soil science professional. The process produces a report on the outcomes of the assessment prepared to a standard acceptable to the council.

The cost and timeframe associated with obtaining an LCA is considered onerous for fire-affected property owners and may delay rebuilding.

Council’s Domestic Wastewater Management Plan 2015 requires all permit applications to be accompanied by a Land Capability Assessment.

LCAs are prepared by specialist consultants, typically take more than eight weeks to complete, and cost between \$2,000 and \$3,000.

Under the Environment Protection Act and Regulations, LCAs are only mandated for properties within Special Water Supply Catchments. Council’s current Domestic Wastewater Management Plan requirements exceed these legislative requirements. A review of, and a new Domestic Wastewater Management Plan is scheduled to be completed in 2026.

Current – Maintain Current Domestic Wastewater Management Plan Requirement
<p>Require Land Capability Assessment for all applications:</p> <p>Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a consistent and risk-averse approach • May result in unnecessary cost and delays where risk is low • Exceeds legislative requirements, adding unnecessary burden to impacted residents wanting to rebuild.
Proposed – Risk-Based Assessment with Defined Triggers
<p>Considerations:</p> <p>Authorise officers to determine whether a property presents a high risk through a standardised risk assessment aligned with ISO 31000:2018 – Risk Management Guidelines.</p>

- Maintains compliance where legislatively required
- Reduces unnecessary financial and administrative burden
- Enables a practical, risk-based assessment approach.

In accordance with these Guidelines, if the property and use is deemed high risk an LCA will still be required, however if the risk is deemed low or moderate risk a LCA will not be required.

This approach is consistent with the recommendations of the Victorian Auditor-General's report *Managing the Impacts of Domestic Wastewater* and the requirements of the *Environment Protection Act 2018*.

As some planning, building and health application fees have already been paid, officers will offer a reimbursement to those applicants.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community Recovery Officers have engaged with affected residents and noted a strong community expectation that Council waive permit fees for rebuilding. This relief is expected to reduce financial stress and support residents through their recovery.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Council Plan

This report is consistent with the following objectives and or actions in the 2025-2029 Council Plan:

Objective Two: Sustain

We aim to collaborate with others to foster a sustainable environment, a thriving economy and resilient communities.

Objective Three: Deliver

We are committed to delivering quality services and infrastructure that meets the needs of our community. We aim to strengthen the Council's governance and provide improved, customer-focused experiences.

Regional, State and National Plans, Policies and Legislation

This report is aligned with the following legislation, council policies and key strategic documents:

- *Building Act 1993*
- *Planning and Environment Act 1987*
- Planning and Environment (Fees) Regulations 2016
- *Environment Protection Act 2018*
- Environment Protection Regulations 2021
- Domestic Wastewater Management Plan 2015
- Council Plan 2025-2029

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

This report has identified the following risk(s):

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Delayed Community Recovery	Almost Certain	Moderate	High	Dedicated staffing and waiver of fees to support rebuilding
Financial Hardship for Residents	Almost Certain	Moderate	High	Ongoing advocacy to State Government, Waive Council fees
Increased stress and mental health risk for residents	Almost Certain	Major	High	Waive Council fees. Promotion of Mental Health and Wellbeing supports available
Reputational Risk to Council	Almost Certain	Major	High	Communication and transparency. Waive Council fees
Reduced Community Confidence in Council's ability to lead recovery	Almost Certain	Major	High	Communication and transparency. Waive Council fees
Increased complaints from impacted residents	Almost Certain	Major	High	Waive Council Fees. Communication and responsiveness to complaints to increase further risk to Council and community health and wellbeing
Residents choosing not to rebuild due to associated costs and the longer term economic impacts	Probable	Moderate	Medium	Waive Council fees
Residents choosing to build structures without appropriate permits	Almost Certain	Moderate	High	Waive Council Fees

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are no significant legal considerations associated with this report.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

No Council officers and/or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a general or material conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

TRANSPARENCY

In the interests of transparency and open and honest communication with our community, this report is presented to a public Council meeting.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

The financial implications associated with this report are outlined below. Fees and charges are adopted annually by Council, and the current fees and and charges relevant to this report are attached.

The figures outlined below are general and indicative estimates only. Final fees will be determined at the time of lodgement, based on a detailed assessment of all applicable planning controls and statutory triggers.

Type of Fee	Estimate of monies lost if 50 % of fees are waived across two years (2026-30 June 2028)
<p>Planning Fees</p> <p>Assumptions:</p> <p>All 110 proposed dwellings will require a planning permit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The estimated fee range has been calculated on the basis that the cost of development per dwelling is between \$100,000 and \$500,000, consistent with the applicable fee brackets. <p>It is further assumed that approximately 200 sheds will be constructed, comprising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100 sheds assessed under the VicSmart provisions, and 100 sheds that cannot be assessed under VicSmart, and therefore will be subject to the standard planning permit process and associated higher statutory fees 	<p>\$169,952.50</p>
<p>Building Fees</p> <p>It is estimated that approximately 110 dwellings were destroyed because of the fire event and a further 200 sheds. However, it is acknowledged that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not all affected residents will choose to rebuild, and Of those who do rebuild, only a proportion will require Council-held documentation, such as retrieval of historical building plans or records. <p>The projected fee revenue and workload assumptions have therefore been based on a reduced uptake scenario, recognising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some property owners will engage private building surveyors and rely on their own documentation Some will not require historical plans due to complete rebuilds under new designs and Others may choose not to rebuild at all. 	<p>\$30,000</p>
<p>Wastewater Fees</p> <p>Assumptions</p>	<p>\$40,892.50</p>

<p>The initial analysis of Secondary Impact Assessment (SIA) data indicates that approximately 60% of affected properties will require major amendments to onsite wastewater systems, with the remaining 40% requiring only minor amendments. This would be the loss of revenue if every one of these septic systems were repaired/replaced.</p> <p>New Installation or Major Alteration (48.88 fee units) - \$821.70 Minor Alteration (37.25 fee units) - \$626.20</p>	
<p>Total</p>	<p>\$240,845</p>

The planning permit fee estimates provided are indicative only and are intended to offer a general guide based on a standard application scenario. Actual statutory fees may vary depending on the specific circumstances of a proposal, including the number and nature of planning triggers applicable under the relevant provisions of the planning scheme.

Similarly, within the Farming Zone, a range of additional triggers may arise, including (but not limited to) requirements relating to setbacks from waterways, existing dwellings, and front, side and rear boundaries. Where such triggers are activated, they may result in additional permit requirements and associated fee variations.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Economic

Waiving fees and charges for fire-affected residents will ease financial pressure and support timely rebuilding. Faster returns will also boost the local economy by driving demand for local contractors and businesses.

Social

Fee waivers will support community wellbeing by demonstrating practical assistance during recovery. Reducing financial barriers to rebuilding helps residents return to stable housing sooner, strengthening social connections, mental health, and community cohesion.

Environmental

Lower fees encourage property owners to seek approvals rather than undertake unregulated work, ensuring wastewater and building standards are met, reducing environmental risk, and supporting better long-term outcomes.

Climate Change

Lower financial barriers support compliant, timely rebuilding and improved standards, energy efficiency, and climate resilience—strengthening long-term resilience to extreme weather.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The approach to waiving fees and supporting the cost recovery through State Government recovery funding demonstrates an innovative approach to providing relief for communities impacted by the fire event. This approach centres around what is most important to the Community.

COLLABORATION

No formal collaboration informed this report; only informal discussions were held with neighbouring affected councils on potential solutions.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

There are no significant human rights implications arising from this report.

CONCLUSION

The Longwood Berrys Lane Fire has significantly impacted Strathbogie Shire residents, with rebuilding costs adding to financial hardship.

While Council continues to advocate to the State Government for cost offsets, immediate relief is needed. This report outlines measures Council can implement to support recovery. Waiving fees offers a cost-effective way to provide much needed financial relief to affected communities.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Current Planning Permit Fees

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Planning Permit Fees

Council provides services under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* which attract a fee in accordance with the Planning and Environment (Fees) Regulations 2016.

The fee for the planning permit depends on the cost of the development and the type of the development. Fees for applications for single dwelling permits in FY25/26 are:

Single Dwelling Permit Fees – FY 2025/26

Cost of Development	Fee (AUD)
\$10,000 or less	\$226.90
More than \$10,000 but not more than \$100,000	\$714.40
More than \$100,000 but not more than \$500,000	\$1,462.50
More than \$500,000 but not more than \$1,000,000	\$1,580.10
More than \$1,000,000 but not more than \$2,000,000	\$1,697.80

VicSmart Permit Fees – FY 2025/26

Cost of Development	Fee (AUD)
\$10,000 or less	\$226.90
More than \$10,000	\$487.50

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Other Development Types Permit Fees – FY 2025/26

Cost of Development	Fee (AUD)
\$100,000 or less	\$1,302.80
More than \$100,000 but not more than \$1,000,000	\$1,756.60
More than \$1,000,000 but not more than \$5,000,000	\$3,874.70
More than \$5,000,000 but not more than \$15,000,000	\$9,875.90
More than \$15,000,000 but not more than \$50,000,000	\$29,123.30
More than \$50,000,000	\$65,458.10

Additional Non-Statutory Planning Fees – FY 2025/26

Service	Fee (AUD)
Request for written planning advice	\$106.15
Matter to be done to the satisfaction of a responsible authority under the planning scheme	\$369.80

Wastewater (Septic) Related Fees – FY 2025/26

Application Type	Fee (AUD)
New installation or major alteration (48.88 fee units)	\$821.70
Minor alteration (37.25 fee units)	\$626.20

OFFICIAL

Statutory Building-Related Fees – FY 2025/26

Service	Fee (AUD)
Request for Information (Reg. 51(1), (2) & (3))	\$53.60
Request for Information – Priority	\$105.10
Legal Point of Discharge (Reg. 133(2))	\$238.20
Report and Consent for Demolition (Section 29A)	\$96.70
Report and Consent for Siting Matters, Projections and Related Matters	\$461.40
Erection of Precautions over Street Alignment (Reg. 116(4))	\$334.52
Building Permit Lodgement Fee (Section 30)	\$138.30

11.2.3 Variations and Grants Approved Under CEO Delegation March 2026

AUTHOR Manager Community and Culture

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Director Community and Planning

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to inform Council and the community of community grants or variations approved under delegation by the Chief Executive Officer or relevant Director, for the period 1 March to 31 March 2026.

The 2025-2026 Community Funding Model and associated Grant Guidelines provides authorisation for the Chief Executive Officer to determine and award Community Grants and Event Grants under delegation, following a robust eligibility and assessment process, and subject to budget availability.

Variations to Community Grants and Event Grants can also be approved by the Chief Executive Officer and/or the Director Community and Planning.

This report ensures transparency for the community regarding decisions made under delegated authority in relation to the Community Funding Model 2025–2026.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Note that there was one Quick Response Grant awarded to the total value of \$550 by the Chief Executive Officer between 1 March to 31 March 2026.**
- 2. Note that there was one Event Grant awarded to the total value of \$5,000 by the Chief Executive Officer between 1 March to 31 March 2026.**

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to inform Council and the community of community grants or variations approved under delegation by the Chief Executive Officer or relevant Director for the period 1 March to 31 March 2026.

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

In line with Council's commitment to transparency and good governance, a report outlining grants awarded and variations approved under delegated authority will be presented for information at each Council Meeting where such decisions have occurred during the reporting period.

This report details grants awarded and any variations approved under delegated authority by the Chief Executive Officer, as well as variations approved by the Director Community and Planning, within their respective financial delegations and in accordance with Council's 2025–26 Community Funding Model.

Grants Awarded Under Delegation

Grant	Applicant	Project	Brief Description	Amount
QR 22 Quick Response Grant	Avenel Memorial Hall	Small Halls Concert	The Small Halls Event at the Avenel Memorial Hall brings people together through entertainment to connect and relax after a devastating start to the year. The event provides access to renowned artists for rural Victoria and provides an opportunity to showcase and promote Avenel as a visitor destination.	\$550
EG17 Event Grant	Bushfire Relief Concert Committee under auspice of Longwood Community Centre	Longwood Bushfire Relief Concert	A community led concert featuring renowned artist 'Tones and I' with local supporting artists to bring the local community together, to raise money for the local community following the Longwood Berrys Lane bushfire in January 2026.	\$5,000

In line with the 2025–26 Community Funding Model and Grant Guidelines, applications were reviewed for eligibility and assessed through a comprehensive process, with recommendations provided to the Chief Executive Officer to determine grant outcomes and recipients.

Applications for the 2025-2026 Quick Response Grants opened on 1 July 2025 and remain open until 31 May 2026 or until such time as funds are exhausted.

Following the award of the Quick Response Grant, the remaining funds in the Quick Response Grant budget is \$41

Applications for the 2025-2026 Event Grants opened on 1 June 2025 and are open until 1 June 2026 or until such time as funds are exhausted.

Following the award of this Event Grant, the remaining funds in the Event Grant Budget is \$6,267

Variations Awarded under delegation

Nil.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Inform - To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities, and/or solutions.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Council Plan

This report is consistent with the following key strategic objectives and or actions in the 2025-29 Council Plan:

- Objective One:** Connect
- Objective Two:** Sustain
- Objective Three:** Deliver

Regional, State and National Plans, Policies and Legislation

- Community Funding Model and Grant Guidelines 2025-26
- Council Plan 2025-2029

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

This report has identified the following risk(s):

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Lack of transparency with community	Unlikely	Moderate	Low	Regular reporting to Council and the community on grants awarded under delegation
Without grants being awarded under delegation, delays are caused, resulting in community not being able to deliver projects in a timely manner	Possible	Moderate	Low	Delegations in place and regular reporting to Council and the community on grants and variations awarded under delegation.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are no legal considerations associated with this report.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

No Council officers and/or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a general or material conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

TRANSPARENCY

In the interests of transparency and open and honest communication with our community, this report is presented to a public Council meeting.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Grants were awarded within the 2025–26 budget allocation of \$10,000 for Quick Response Grants and \$75,000 for Event Grants, and in line with financial delegations.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Economic

Community funding supports economic growth across the Shire. Local businesses benefit from an increased visitor economy with projects and events assisting in an increase in visitors as well as an increase in the average length of stay of those visitors. Applicants are also encouraged to buy from local suppliers where possible.

Social

The Community Funding Model encourages projects and events that demonstrate significant social benefits, that will support building a vibrant, inclusive, and connected community.

Environmental

Environmental sustainability is promoted at various stages of the grants process. Impacts of projects and events on the natural environment will be assessed in the assessment process and mitigation strategies included in funding agreements.

Climate Change

Community Grant and Event Grant applications must also consider climate change including minimising waste going to landfill and ensure that their project or event is minimising harmful impacts on our natural environment. Event Grant recipients must complete a Waste Wise Plan.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The chance to award all grants under CEO delegation in the 2025-2026 community funding model demonstrates continuous improvement by streamlining the process for applicants, reducing administration time and incorporating the findings from the VAGO Fraud Control over Local Government Grants Report 2022.

COLLABORATION

No formal collaboration was involved in the preparation of this report.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

There are no significant implications for human rights arising from this report.

CONCLUSION

It is essential that all decisions and actions taken under delegation are clearly documented and transparent. This report informs Council of any grants awarded or variations approved under the delegation of the Chief Executive Officer or Director Community and Planning, in accordance with Council's 2025–26 Community Funding Model and Grant Guidelines.

There was one Quick Response Grants, and one Event Grant awarded under CEO delegation during the reporting period from 1 March to 31 March 2026.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

11.3 Infrastructure

11.3.1 Quarterly Report - Capital Works

AUTHORS Projects Coordinator
Manager Capital Infrastructure and Strategic Projects

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Director Sustainable Infrastructure

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Note: All amounts mentioned in this report are exclusive of GST.

Council adopted the 2025-26 Capital Works Budget at the Council Meeting held on 17 June 2025.

The Capital Works Program is structured across three key categories:

Category	Total 25-26 Adopted (\$'1000)	Total Forecast (\$'1000)
Property	1,910	1,885
Plant and Equipment	2,020	1,299
Infrastructure	10,202	9,537
Total	14,132	12,721

This report provides an update on the status of the Capital Program as of 31 March 2026.

RECOMMENDATION

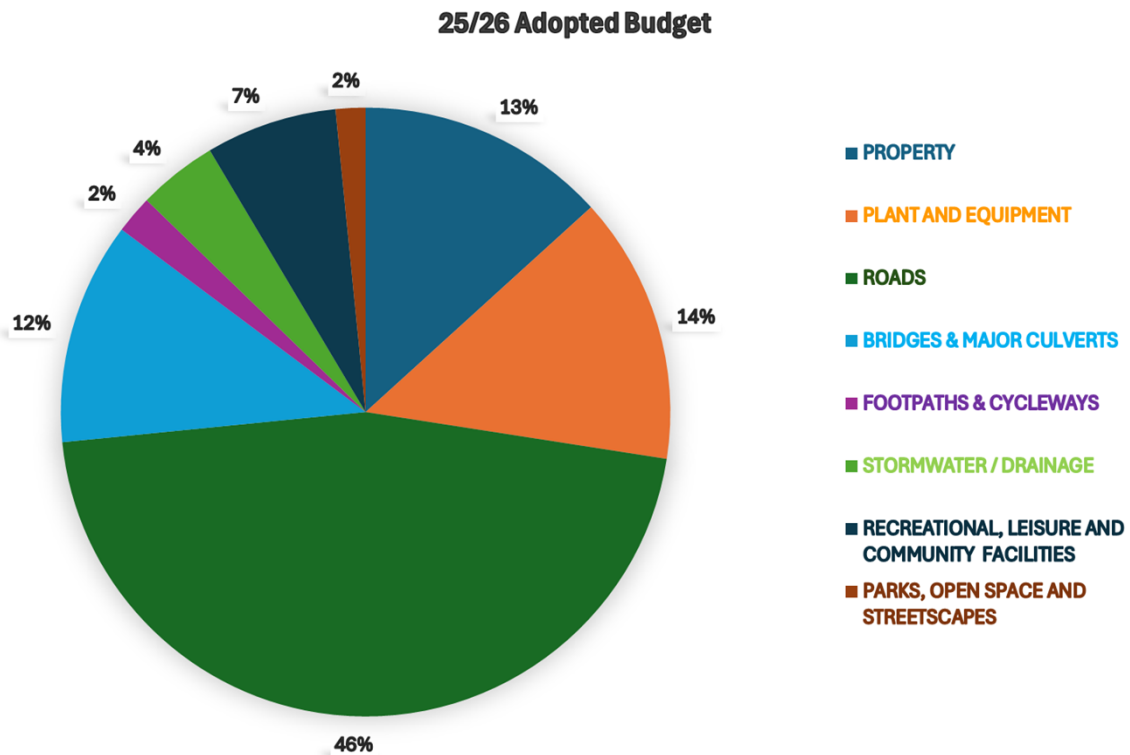
That Council:

- Note the status of the Capital Works Program for the period to 31 March 2026.**

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The Council’s Capital Works Program provides a structured approach to planning, funding, and delivering priority infrastructure, property, and equipment projects across the municipality. The program supports the Council’s strategic objectives, ensures ongoing maintenance and renewal of assets, and addresses emerging community needs.

The 2025-26 Capital Works Budget was adopted by the Council on 17 June 2025, establishing the approved investment levels and project allocations for the year, and reflected year one of the Financial Plan 2025-35 and Asset Plan 2025-2035. The program incorporates both new initiatives and carry-forward projects from the 2024-25 financial year (that were known when the draft budget was finalised in April 2025). The figure below shows the breakdown of adopted budget breakdown into major budget categories.



This report provides an update on the status of projects at the end of the third quarter of the 2025-26 financial year.

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

This section explains the status of the 2025-26 Capital Works Program as of 31 March 2026, highlighting key achievements, issues, opportunities, and further considerations.

Capital Works Update March 2026

- Chinaman’s Bridge demolition – Formal tender issued in March, Evaluation of the tenders will commence in April, alongside working with Heritage consultant.
- Gravel road resheeting works to be completed in April
- 2025-26 Roads Reseal Program completed in March
- Footpath work completed:
 - Bury Street, Euroa (Kirkland Avenue to Binney Street)
 - Scott Street, Euroa (Beaton Street to Garrett Street)
 - Vickers Road, Nagambie (Blayne Lane to High Street)
 - High Street, Nagambie (opposite Vickers Road to Myola Crescent)
 - Tarcombe Street, Euroa
 - Queen Street, Avenel
 - Mansfield Road, Euroa
- Paget Road - major culvert remediation - Works Completed
- Valentines Lane - Avenel, drainage rectification – Works Completed
- Killens Hill - culvert and slip repair - In Progress
- Transport Accident Commission road safety upgrades (Euroa Strathbogrie Road, Harrys Creek Road and Longwood Ruffy Road) - In progress
- 2025-26 Road Rehabilitation Program - In progress

Contracts Awarded and Current Status

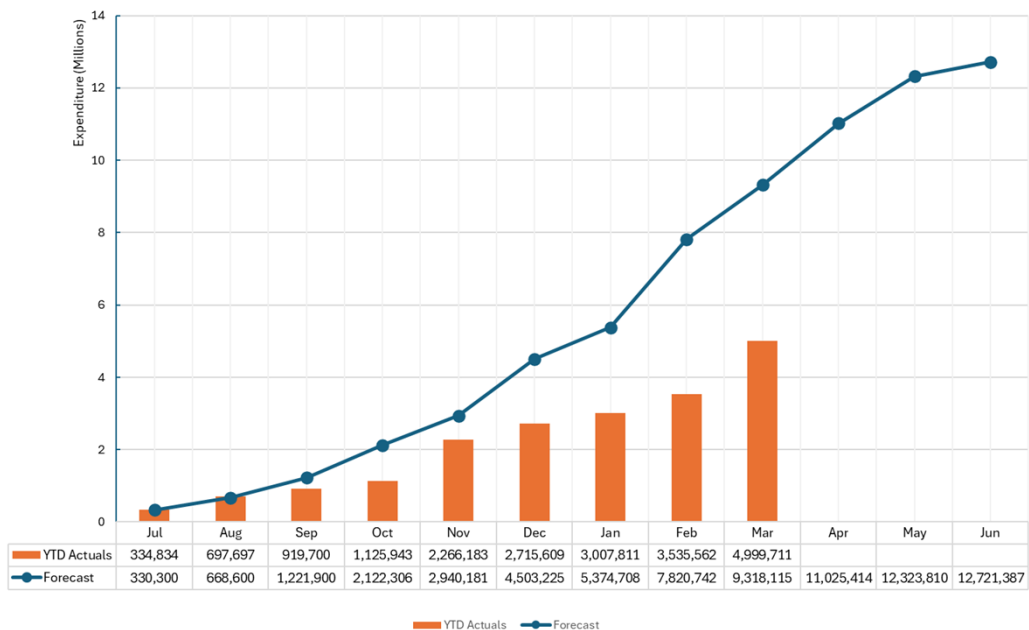
- Tarcombe Road Culvert – Contract awarded in March, works to be complete by June
- Harrys Creek Landslip – Contract to be awarded in April.

- Committed projects from last financial year (2024-25):
 - Nagambie streetscape design works continue to progress
 - Pitch my project – Strathbogie Shire Art Trail - Platypus sculpture at Euroa Sevens Creek Park progressing anticipate completion at the end of April 2026
 - Pitch My Project – Strathbogie walking path detailed design completed.
 - Draft Storm Water Strategy currently under review
 - Harry's Creek Road Land Slip detail design completed

- Additionally, the following projects related to plant and equipment are in progress:
 - Plant and fleet delivered
 - New Motor Grader
 - New Mower
 - Plant and fleet on order
 - Ranger Vehicle with animal loading platform
 - Mower with catcher
 - Plant and fleet procurement in process
 - Two Trucks
 - One Tipper Truck
 - One Ute - operations
 - Hardware replacement program – replacement IT hardware procurement to be finalised in April.
 - CODI – Lower North East Regional Council Collaboration Digital Transformation project – New CRM and Finance management systems implemented

The graph below shows Capital Works Program expenditure against the budget for the end of third Quarter 2025–26.

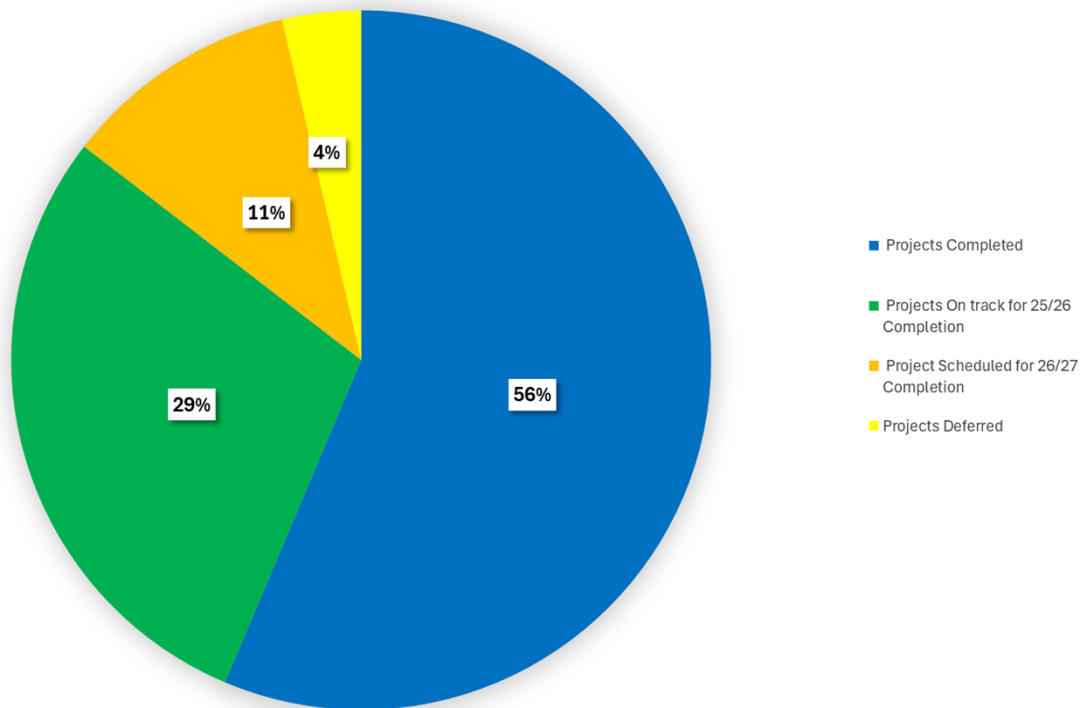
Capital Works Program Expenditure FY 2025/26



A more detailed project status report is attached to this report as Attachment 1 - Capital Works Status Report – 31 March 2026.

The graph below shows the overall project status summary representing all capital works (including through to 31 March 2026).

Capital Program 25/26 - Status Overview by Number of Projects



Currently the project completed count is 56% (31 projects). 29% (16 projects) of projects remain on track for completion this financial year, with 11% (6 projects) on track to be completed early in the 2026/27 financial year.

The 4% of projects identified as at risk relate to the Nagambie Streetscape – design will be finalised in 2026-27, and Chinaman’s Bridge Demolition Project – works will commence in 2026-27.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Inform - To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities, and/or solutions.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Council Plan

This report is consistent with the following objectives and or actions in the 2025-2029 Council Plan:

Objective Three: Deliver

We are committed to delivering quality services and infrastructure that meets the needs of our community. We aim to strengthen the Council’s governance and provide improved, customer-focused experiences.

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

The 2025-26 Capital Works Program includes several major projects that are predominantly funded through State and Federal Government grants. This reliance on external funding, together with the recent loss of one major grant, introduces risks to program delivery, timing, and scope.

Program delivery is also dependent on approvals from external authorities including the Department of Transport and Planning, Goulburn-Murray Water, Goulburn Valley Water, Taungurung Land and Waters Council, and the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority, as well as planning permits. Delays in obtaining these approvals can adversely affect project schedules.

Internal resource constraints within the Council's project delivery team and supporting departments further increase the risk of delays or reduced program efficiency.

This report has identified the following risk(s):

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Loss or withdrawal of external grant funding	Possible	Major	High	Maintain engagement with funding agencies; explore alternative funding sources; adjust project scope or sequencing where required.
Delays in project delivery due to grant funding approval processes	Probable	Moderate	High	Monitor funding milestones; align project schedules with approval timelines; maintain readiness for early mobilisation.
Delays in obtaining approvals from external agencies or planning permits	Probable	Major	High	Engage early with relevant agencies; track approval progress; sequence works to commence where approvals are in place.
Cost escalation affecting project affordability and scope	Possible	Major	High	Include contingencies in budgets; regularly review costs; pursue additional funding if required.
Resource constraints within Council project teams and departments	Probable	Moderate	High	Prioritise workloads; allocate additional resources or external support; strengthen cross-departmental coordination.
Inability to deliver the full program due to market capacity or procurement delays	Possible	Moderate	Medium	Stagger project delivery; prioritise shovel-ready works; actively engage contractors and suppliers.

Community or stakeholder concern from delays, scope changes, or funding/approval issues	Possible	Moderate	Medium	Implement a clear communication strategy to update stakeholders on project progress, funding, and approvals.
Fire Event Related Risks				
Damage to existing assets and infrastructure (roads, bridges, culverts, drainage, signage) requiring urgent repair or replacement	Possible	Major	High	Conduct rapid condition assessments; prioritise emergency reinstatement; adjust program to accommodate urgent works
Access restrictions to sites due to fire-damaged roads, debris, or safety exclusions	Possible	Major	High	Liaise with emergency services; update access plans; reschedule works; implement alternate traffic management plans
Regulatory delays due to emergency management focus or additional approvals required for works in affected areas	Possible	Moderate	Medium-High	Early engagement with regulators
Increased project costs due to inflationary pressures, emergency pricing, and extended delivery	Likely	Major	High	Review budgets; seek additional funding or grants; adjust project scope

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are no significant legal considerations associated with this report.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

No Council officers and/or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a general or material conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

TRANSPARENCY

In the interests of transparency and open and honest communication with our community, this report is presented to a public Council meeting.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Financial and delivery risks identified in the risk consideration section are closely linked, as funding certainty, resource capacity, and project timing directly influence the long-term viability

of the 2025-26 Capital Works Program. The 2025-26 Capital Works Program has been informed and is consistent with the Financial Plan 2025-2035 and Asset Plan 2025-2035.

As of 31 March 2026, actual expenditure remains below the budget forecast. This variance reflects the continued focus on project scoping, design development, statutory approvals, and procurement activities, which typically incur lower levels of expenditure. Construction and physical delivery are commencing across a number of projects, and expenditure is expected to increase progressively in subsequent quarters as works advance.

The financial viability of the program remains strongly influenced by external funding from State and Federal Government grants. While these grants support program delivery, they also create exposure to risks associated with approval of timing, changing funding conditions, and compliance requirements.

Ongoing cost escalation pressures, supply chain constraints, and delays in obtaining approvals from external agencies or through planning processes may further affect project viability and timing. Council officers are continuing to evaluate opportunities to introduce additional infrastructure and facility projects using identified savings within existing allocations.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

The 2025-26 Capital Works Program advances Council's sustainability goals by addressing economic, social, environmental, and climate factors. Economically, it supports local jobs and ensures value through strategic infrastructure investment. Socially, it enhances community wellbeing, accessibility, and safety.

Environmentally, projects incorporate sustainable construction, resource efficiency, and protection of natural assets. Climate change resilience is embedded through durable, low-carbon infrastructure and adaptation measures where feasible to do so.

Together, these initiatives ensure the program delivers long-term, balanced benefits for the community and environment.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Council is committed to fostering innovation and continuous improvement across its capital program. This includes exploring and adopting new technologies, construction methods, and sustainable materials to enhance project efficiency, reduce environmental impact, and deliver better value to the community.

Lessons learned from completed projects are systematically reviewed and applied to future initiatives, ensuring that Council's approach to planning, procurement, and delivery remains adaptive, forward-looking, and aligned with best practice.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

The recommendation does not limit any human rights under the Victorian *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

CONCLUSION

The management and delivery of the Capital Works Program continue to progress in alignment with Council's strategic objectives, with the majority of projects on track for delivery within the current financial year.

While some projects have been affected by external dependencies and required deferrals, these are being actively managed through ongoing planning and stakeholder engagement.

Officers recommend the status of the Capital Works Program to 31 March 2026 be noted.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment 1 - Capital Works Status Report - March 2026

OFFICIAL

Attachment 1 – Capital Works Status Report – March 2026

	Project	Location	Status	Remarks	Budget (\$)	Forecast Actual at Completion (\$)
Property					1,910,000	799,438
1	Euroa Caravan Park	Euroa	1 Complete	Completed	160,000	132,727
2	Essential Safety works at kindergartens	Euroa, Avenel, Nagambie & Violet Town	1 On track	Majority of Priority 1 works completed	150,000	100,000
3	Croquet club septic upgrade	Euroa	1 On track	Delayed due to pump. Completed by end of April	25,000	6,030
4	Air Conditioning to Violet Town Community Hall	Violet Town	1 Complete	Completed	18,000	25,000
5	Ruffy Tablelands Centre Veranda	Ruffy	1 Complete	Completed	25,000	681
6	Miscellaneous Buildings	Whole Shire		Project not required. Savings to other projects	7,000	-
7	Nagambie Library Works	Nagambie	1 On track	Tender in progress. Planned to award in April	75,000	95,000
New	Euroa Saleyards Truckwash	Euroa	1 Complete	Completed	-	180,000
New	Additionl works at Longwood Female Changerooms	Longwood	1 On track	Airconditioning installations - completed Concrete path Extension with disabled car parking - Works in Progress Handrail Balustrades - Works in Progress		60,000
8	Euroa Friendlies Pavillion	Euroa	1 On track	\$1.0M grant unsuccessful, remaining budget of \$450K proposed to be spent on resolving septic issues at Euroa (estimate ~\$200,000) Friendlies Reserve – Council initiated discussions with GVW and ongoing – awaiting GVW response on design parameters. Balance of \$250k to be reallocated to Kirwans Bridge Rectification Council Contribution	1,450,000	200,000
Roads					6,053,890	5,573,934
9	Gravel Road Re-sheet Program	Whole Shire	1 On track	Multiple road segments - works commenced and expected to be completed by May, Increased the allocation from R2R funding and reseal savings, focus on completion of works in fire affected areas as a priority (not including damaged roads that can be claimed through Disaster recovery funding)	557,527	1,935,000
10	Road Reseal Program	Whole Shire	1 Complete	Works Completed	1,301,857	516,651
11	Road Rehabilitation Program	Alexandersons Road Ruffy Terip Road Euroa Strathbogie Road	1 On track	Works commenced mid march and expect to be completed by end of April	900,310	1,193,308
12	Unallocated Road to Recovery funds	Whole Shire		Reallocated to Gravel Resheet Program and Road Rehabilitation Program	1,277,196	-
13	TAC Road safety improvements	Harrys Creek Road Longwood Ruffy Road Euroa Strathbogie Road	1 On track	Works commenced and in February planned completion by April	1,967,000	1,296,338
14	Killeens Hill road slip and Culvert repair	Gooram	1 On track	Contract awarded, works commencing in April DRFA Funded Project planned completion by May		282,636
15	Harrys Creek road slip and culvert repair	Boho	1 On track	Tender evaluation in progress - plan to award in April		Subject to tender outcome
New	Rehabilitation of 1km at McDonalds Road	Nagambie	1 On track	Geotech Investigations in progress		300,000
	Special Charges Scheme/ Road Safety Projects	Nagambie	1 On track	This allocation will be spent on Nagambie Goulburn Street crossing safety upgrades as per the Road Safety Audit completed	50,000	50,000

OFFICIAL

	Project	Location	Status	Remarks	Budget (\$)	Forecast Actual at Completion (\$)
Bridges and Major Culverts					2,023,291	1,861,012
17	Chinamans Bridge demolition	Nagambie	1 Deferred	External consultants are preparing reports to address Heritage Victoria Permit requirements, Initial estimate for the works significantly over budget, flags the requirement of significant additional funding towards the project. Council identified identified potential Contractors through a Expression of Interest process – Formal tender issued in March, Evaluation of the tenders in progress	1,312,777	Subject to tender outcome
18 A	Paget Road major culvert remediation	Baddaginnie	1 Completed	Completed	292,514	171,888
18 B	Betterment Fund - Tarcombe Road Culvert Replacement	Tarcombe	1 On track	Contract awarded - Works to commence in April and to be completed in May	343,000	447,582
18 C	Delatite County Road Bridge Replacement	Gooram	1 On track	Contract awarded - Works to commence in April and to be completed in May		100,000
19	Bridge Condition Inspection	Whole Shire	1 On Track	Inspection Report received - additional inspections arranged for Fire affected Bridges	75,000	141,543
New	Kirwans Bridge Rectification Council Contribution	Nagambie	0 On Track	Council commitment to grant application seeking \$5 million for bridge rectification works. Grant submission due 30 April and outcome expected Allocation of \$460,000 from Nagambie Splashpark Allocation of \$250,000 from Euroa Friendlies Pavillion Allocation of \$290,000 from FY 2026/27 Budget		1,000,000
Footpaths and Cycleways					287,000	489,191
20	Bury Street (Kirkland Ave. to Binney street)	Euroa	1 Completed	Completed	48,500	26,610
21	Mansfield Road (Anderson Street to Kennedy Street)	Euroa	1 On track	Completed	66,250	60,068
22	Scott street (Beaton Street to Garrett Street)	Euroa	1 Completed	Completed	40,500	19,636
23	Vickers Road (Blayney Lane to High Street)	Nagambie	1 Completed	Completed	56,675	26,182
24	High Street (opposite Vickers Road to Myola Crescent)	Nagambie	1 Completed	Completed	26,500	14,198
25	High Street (Vickers Road to 215 High Street)	Nagambie	1 Completed	Completed	48,575	19,528
New	Railway Precinct Footpath works	Euroa	1 On Track	Stage 1 and 2 of Euroa Pathway Connection works completed. Remaining works to procurement in progress, all works will be completed by June		200,000
New	Tarcombe Street (41m at No. 25 – renewal)	Euroa	1 Completed	Completed		23,405
New	Queen Street (74m at No. 13-9 – Renewal)	Avenel	1 On track	Contract awarded – works will be completed by mid February		14,973
New	Mansfield Road (430m at No 23-57 – New)	Euroa	1 On track	Completed		84,591
Stormwater/Drainage					599,100	317,257
26	Valentines Lane – drainage rectification	Avenel	1 On track	Completed	120,000	220,237
27	Storm water strategy	Whole Shire	1 On track	Draft strategy in review	174,100	97,020
28	Drainage Strategy Priorities	Whole Shire	0 Deferred	On hold – pending storm water strategy	180,000	-
29	Pit and Pipe replacement program	Whole Shire	0 Deferred	On hold – pending storm water strategy	125,000	-

OFFICIAL

	Project	Location	Status	Remarks	Budget (\$)	Forecast Actual at Completion (\$)
Recreational, Leisure and Community Facilities					1,035,000	404,172
30	Lions park play space	Euroa	1 On track	Construction ongoing and planned to complete by April	220,000	241,686
31	Swimming Pool Chlorinators & pump house infrastructure	Selected Pools	0 Deferred	Pending Condition assessment of current infrastructure	315,000	100,000
32	Nagambie Splash Park	Nagambie	1 Completed	Floor rectification completed	500,000	40,000
New	Violet Town Multipurpose Court Repairs and New Root Barriers	Violet Town	1 Completed	Completed		13,127
New	Violet Town Old Netball Court Chain Mesh Fence	Violet Town	1 On track	Contract awarded - Works will be completed by May		9,359
Parks, Open Space and Streetscapes					224,106	123,880
33	LED upgrade to Streetlights	Whole Shire	0 Deferred	On hold – pending options paper from external consultant	50,000	-
34	Town Entry Sign Upgrades	Whole Shire	0 Deferred	Not proceeding at this stage	39,106	-
35	Sporting Fields and Courts	Euroa and Nagambie	1 Completed	Completed	60,000	46,930
36	Strathbogie Shire Art Trail	Euroa	1 On track	Platypus sculpture at Euroa sevens creek park progressing anticipate completion by April	25,000	50,000
37	Strathbogie walking path study	Strathbogie	1 On track	Detail design completed	25,000	26,950
38	Euroa Branding Project Stage 2	Euroa	0 Deferred	On hold -Stage 1 community consultation to finalise to commence stage 2	25,000	-
Plant and Equipment					2,020,283	2,118,542
39	Plant, equipment and machinery		1 On track	Procurement underway for new Grader, mowers and replacement of 2 trucks	1,299,000	1,299,000
40	Information Technology		1 On track	Ongoing asset replacement as needed	271,283	271,283
41	CODI – NERCC Councils IT project		1 On track	Finance system upgrades implemented	450,000	548,259
Committed projects from last Financial Year (24/25)						499,218
1	Foreshore walk deck replacement	Nagambie	1 Complete	Completed in July		1,858
2	New female friendly netball changerooms	Longwood	1 Complete	Completed in August		11,500
3	Septic system upgrade	Longwood Recreation Reserve	1 Complete	Works completed in September, EPA permit process ongoing		47,030
4	Cowslip Street Streetscape	Violet Town	1 Complete	Completed in October		256,715
5	Nagambie High Street Streetscape	Nagambie	1 Deferred	Excessive delays in design process due to addressing evolving requirements from Department of Transportation and Planning		131873
6	Avenel Memorial Hall Generator	Avenel	1 Complete	Completed in August		5,500
7	Violet Town Recreation Reserve Oval Lighting	Violet Town	1 Complete	Completed in September		19,757
8	Foot Path - Barnes Street	Euroa	1 Complete	Completed in July		21,385
9	Foot Path - Templeton Street (Holland to Barnes Streets)	Euroa	1 Complete	Completed in July		3,600
10	Arboretum Link Study	Euroa	1 Complete	Designs finalised		-

11.4 Corporate

11.4.1 Fraud and Corruption Policy and Control System Procedures

AUTHOR Governance Officer

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Director People and Governance

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Fraud and Corruption Policy and Control System Procedures clearly articulate Council's commitment to a comprehensive and systematic approach to preventing, detecting and responding to fraud or corruption.

The Policy sets expectations about acceptable behaviour and makes it clear that dishonest conduct will not be tolerated.

A robust Fraud and Corruption Policy reduce the risk of financial loss and legal breaches. By outlining roles, responsibilities, and reporting processes, it ensures issues are identified and managed quickly and consistently.

Importantly, the policy builds a culture of accountability and trust. It encourages employees to speak up about concerns, supports them in doing so, and helps safeguard them from retaliation. This openness strengthens governance and promotes ethical decision-making across the organisation.

The Fraud and Corruption Policy is attached to this report for Council's consideration.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Adopt the Fraud and Corruption Policy and Control System Procedure**
- 2. Authorise Council Officers to place the Fraud and Corruption Policy and Control System Procedure on Council's website, along with the publication of a notice in Council's newspaper column and social media pages informing the community of the policy.**

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The purpose of the report is for Council to adopt the updated Fraud and Corruption Policy and Control System Procedure following from a recent, scheduled review.

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of the Fraud and Corruption Policy and Control System Procedure is to clearly articulate Council's commitment to a comprehensive and systematic approach to preventing, detecting and responding to fraud or corruption.

Fraud and corruption are criminal offences and are not tolerated at Council. An essential part of this commitment is the maintenance and monitoring of this policy that sets out the Council's

position on suspected, alleged or detected fraud and corruption and on any attempt to gain financial or other benefits by deceit or dishonest conduct.

The Fraud and Corruption Policy lead and complements Council's Fraud and Corruption Control System which outlines the Council's activities, structures and reporting requirements to prevent, detect and respond to fraud and corruption, and was prepared in the context of AS 8001:2021.

There are no substantive changes to the policy, and the most significant changes are highlighted in yellow. The changes relate to improvements around:

- Roles and responsibilities
- Definitions, especially regarding corruption and corrupt conduct
- Updates to correct titles and roles relating to detection and reporting
- There are other minor changes to improve editing and formatting of the document.

The Fraud and Corruption Policy and Control System Procedure was reviewed by the Audit and Risk Committee on 6 March 2026 and recommended that Council endorse the policy.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Council Plan

This report is consistent with the following objectives and or actions in the 2025-2029 Council Plan:

Objective Three: Deliver

We are committed to delivering quality services and infrastructure that meets the needs of our community. We aim to strengthen the Council's governance and provide improved, customer-focused experiences.

Regional, State and National Plans, Policies and Legislation

This report is aligned with the following legislation, council policies and key strategic documents:

Legislation

- *Financial Management Act 1994*
- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012*
- *Audit Act 1994.*
- *Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)*
- *Ombudsman Act 1973*
- *Public Administration Act 2004* and the Code of Conduct for Public Sector Employees (Code of Conduct)
- Financial Management Regulations 2004
- Standing Directions 2018 under the Financial Management Act
- *Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2011*

Related Council Documents

- Instruments of delegation and authorisation, particularly the Instrument of delegation for certain financial transactions and procurement functions

- Model Councillor Code of Conduct
- Councillor Expenses Policy
- Privacy and Data Protection Policy
- Procurement Policy and Procurement Procedures
- Public Interest Disclosures Policy and Procedures
- Purchasing Card Policy
- Risk Management Policy and Risk Management Framework
- Staff Code of Conduct CEO Directive

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

This report has identified the following risk(s):

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Failure to have a robust policy in place leaves the organisation vulnerable to financial losses, legal liability and reputational damage	Low	Possible	Low	Adopt the Fraud and Corruption Policy and Control System Procedure

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Fraud and Corruption Policy and Control System Procedure is framed in accordance with the *Financial Management Act 1994* Standing Directions Incorporating revisions to 13 December 2019, Section 3.5.1 Fraud, Corruption and Other Losses policy that requires the Responsible Body to:

- (a) take all reasonable steps to minimise and manage the risk of fraud, corruption and other losses
- (b) establish a Fraud, Corruption and Other Losses prevention and management policy that is implemented across the Agency.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

No Council officers and/or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a general or material conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

TRANSPARENCY

In the interests of transparency and open communication with our community, this report is presented to a public Council meeting.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Policies are reviewed regularly to ensure they promote best practice and meet current legislative requirements.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

The recommendation does not limit any human rights under the Victorian *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

CONCLUSION

A strong Fraud and Corruption Policy and Control System Procedure promote transparency and accountability, helping to prevent misconduct before it occurs and providing clear procedures for reporting and investigating suspicious activities. A robust fraud and corruption policy builds trust with councillors, employees, and stakeholders while ensuring the organisation operates responsibly and lawfully.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 20260421 Fraud and Corruption Policy and Control System Procedures

OFFICIAL

Strathbogie Shire Council

Fraud and Corruption Policy and Control System Procedures

April 2026

Strathbogie
SHIRE COUNCIL

OFFICIAL

Contents

FRAUD AND CORRUPTION POLICY AND CONTROL SYSTEM.....2

PART 1 POLICY3

1. PURPOSE3

2. POLICY STATEMENT3

3. APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY3

4. ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES4

5. INTEGRITY FRAMEWORK.....7

6. REPORTING OBLIGATION.....8

7. COMMUNICATIONS.....9

8. DEFINITIONS.....9

9. RELATED POLICIES AND LEGISLATION12

10. POLICY REVIEW13

PART 214

11. PROCEDURES14

12. DETECTION AND REPORTING.....18

13. RESPONSE.....20

14. AUDITING AND REPORTING.....20

15. CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES ACT 2006 AND THE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY ACT 2010.....23

Fraud and Corruption Policy and Control System Procedures

Document ID:	18891
Effective Date:	17 December 2002
Last Review:	September 2023
Current Review:	April 2026
Date Adopted by Council:	
Next Scheduled Review Date:	April 2030
Responsible Officer:	Director People and Governance

OFFICIAL**PART 1 POLICY****1. PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Fraud and Corruption Policy is to clearly articulate Council's commitment to a comprehensive and systematic approach to preventing, detecting and responding to fraud or corruption.

Fraud and corruption are criminal offences and are not tolerated at Council. An essential part of this commitment is the maintenance and monitoring of this policy that sets out the Council's position on suspected, alleged or detected fraud and corruption and on any attempt to gain financial or other benefits by deceit or dishonest conduct.

The Fraud and Corruption Policy leads and complements Council's Fraud and Corruption Control System which outlines the Council's activities, structures and reporting requirements to prevent, detect and respond to fraud and corruption, and was prepared in the context of AS 8001:2021.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

Council has a zero tolerance towards any type of fraud and corruption. Instances of fraud or corruption significantly impact the Council by causing financial loss, reputational damage, and eroding the Council's ability to deliver its strategic vision. The Council requires all Councillors, employees, volunteers, agents and contractors to act honestly, with integrity and to safeguard the public resources for which the Council is responsible.

Council is committed to implementing and maintaining an effective Fraud and Corruption Control Policy to set out the approach, structures and processes to prevent, detect and respond to fraud and corruption, and to ensure compliance with all legislative requirements.

Council is committed to ensuring employees feel confident to speak up about suspected fraud and corruption and has in place a Protected Interest Disclosure Coordinator to assist employees. The Council does not tolerate detrimental action being taken in reprisal against employees who speak up about their concerns.

The Fraud and Corruption Policy is framed in accordance with the *Financial Management Act 1994* Standing Directions Incorporating revisions to 13 December 2019, Section 3.5.1 Fraud, Corruption and Other Losses policy that requires the Responsible Body to:

- (a) take all reasonable steps to minimise and manage the risk of Fraud, Corruption and Other Losses; and
- (b) establish a Fraud, Corruption and Other Losses prevention and management policy that is implemented across the Agency.

The Fraud and Corruption Policy has considered *Integrity and Accountability Legislation Amendment (Public Interest Disclosures, Oversight and Independence) Act 2019* and Independent Broad-Based Anti-Corruption Commission (IBAC) guidelines.

The Fraud and Corruption Policy also aligns with the Procurement Policy, especially in relation to Section 8, Governance, Standards and Policy Control - reporting suspicious activity, and probity, accountability and transparency considerations, also acknowledging the heightened risk of fraud during post-disaster recovery.

3. APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY

The Fraud and Corruption Policy applies to all Councillors, employees, council appointed Committee members, contractors, volunteers and any agents and contractors either engaged by Council or by an authorised contractor of Council undertaking activity for or on behalf of the

Fraud and Corruption Policy Document 18891

OFFICIAL

Council. Councillors are also obliged to maintain standards as mandated by the *Local Government Act 2020*, Part 6 Division 5, Councillor Conduct.

Agents of Council extend to include contractors working in-house, employees on exchange, members of Delegated Committees, Community Asset Committees and Advisory Committees, volunteers, work experience students or graduate placements who perform work for Council as well as external suppliers and other related contractors and subcontractors.

The Fraud and Corruption Policy does not cover general misconduct involving either a Councillor or employee. These matters are dealt with in accordance with relevant legislation and Council’s Codes of Conduct and associated disciplinary policies and procedures.

4. ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Role	Responsibilities
Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approves the Fraud and Corruption Control Policy • Fosters and maintains the highest standards of ethical behaviour • Councillors must be conversant and comply with this Policy, including immediately reporting any suspected fraud or corruption to the Director People and Governance. Councillors must also be aware of, and adhere to, the provisions of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>.
CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishes and maintains a culture of risk awareness and management • Implements the requirements of the <i>Financial Management Act</i> and the Standing Directions • Notifies IBAC of corrupt conduct in accordance with the mandatory notification provisions of the <i>Independent Broad-based Anticorruption Commission Act 2011</i> • Oversees the Council’s prevention, detection and investigation activities with respect to fraud and corruption • Provide input to Council in relation to approval of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • actions required to mitigate significant organisational risks • all matters identified as high or critical risks in Group risk registers. • Responsible for ensuring council appoints an Audit and Risk Committee under section 53 of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>
Audit and Risk Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members of the Audit and Risk Committee must understand their obligations of appointment under section 54 of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> • The Audit and Risk Committee is designed to undertake independent reviews of various auditing activities undertaken by Council, including oversight of the Independent Audit program • The Audit and Risk Committee is a key risk management control tool in relation to the mitigation of fraud and corruption.
Director People and Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for review and maintenance of the policy • Ensures the Risk Officer is discharging their duties in relation to fraud and corruption control, including the completion of annual risk assessments for high-risk areas

OFFICIAL

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures the Risk Officer applies this policy and its procedures on a day-to-day basis.
Executive Leadership Team (ELT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide assurance that the Council has a robust framework for managing integrity risks and lifting integrity performance. The ELT does this by overseeing the development and delivery of integrity reforms which strengthen the organisation’s three lines of defence for risk management • Provides leadership and oversight to the development and review of the Fraud and Corruption Control Policy • Approves the Fraud and Corruption Control System
Public Interest Disclosure Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide advice and guidance to areas of the Council and statutory authorities where required • Oversees statutory reporting of fraud, corruption and other losses in accordance with the <i>Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012</i>, <i>Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Act 2011</i> and the Standing Directions • Receives, assesses and refers potential public interest disclosures • Collects and oversees the provision of information in relation to fraud or corruption matters to IBAC and the Ombudsman
Public Interest Disclosure Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assists the Public Interest Disclosure Coordinator in providing advice and guidance to areas of the Council and statutory authorities where required • Assists the Public Interest Disclosure Coordinator in overseeing statutory reporting of fraud, corruption and other losses in accordance with the <i>Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012</i>, <i>Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Act 2011</i> and the Standing Directions • Assists the Public Interest Disclosure Coordinator, receives, assesses and refers potential public interest disclosures • Assists the Public Interest Disclosure Coordinator, collects and oversees the provision of information in relation to fraud or corruption matters to IBAC and the Ombudsman
Directors and Executive Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversee the implementation of the Fraud and Corruption Control Policy in their business area(s) • Establish and maintain a culture of integrity • Ensure fraud, corruption and other loss risks within their business area are identified and managed • Ensure appropriate second-line monitoring of policy compliance is undertaken • Ensure policies are kept up to date, are accessible, and changes to policies are communicated to staff appropriately
Managers and Coordinators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure staff know about and comply with departmental policies, procedures and guidelines, including the Fraud Policy • Ensure internal controls are established and are operating effectively to mitigate fraud and corruption risks

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain systems, procedures and an enabling culture that supports employees to confidentially report concerns • Receive and act on reports of fraud or corruption by notifying the Public Interest Disclosure Coordinator and otherwise maintain confidentiality regarding the report • Facilitate and support regular workplace conversations in relation to the Council's integrity at work • Notify the Director People and Governance of any suspected incidence of fraud, corruption or other losses as soon as practicable • Fraud and Corruption Control to be standing items on agendas of Executive Leadership Team and ELT\Management Group Team meeting
<p>Manager People and Culture</p>	<p>Provide advice on matters that require investigation pursuant to the Council's Disciplinary Procedure, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advice on the application of the Disciplinary CEO Directive • ensures fraud and corruption prevention education is incorporated into the Council's staff training and development program • ensures that fraud and corruption prevention responsibilities are specified in the position descriptions of all senior staff, managers, team leaders and officers in high-risk roles (e.g. where responsibilities relate to money handling or financial transactions)
<p>Risk Officer</p>	<p>is responsible for assisting the Director People and Governance in the implementation of this Policy. In particular, the Officer will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assist the Director People and Governance with benchmarking the policies that comprise the Council's Fraud and Corruption Control Framework with other like organisations to ensure we adopt best practice • assist the Director People and Governance with the development and assessment of fraud and corruption awareness training • develop and make available risk assessment tools on fraud and corruption • act as the conduit between the organisation, the insurers and the investigators where a fraud is suspected to have occurred • develop and implement a process to store, record and preserve any evidence discovered during an investigation • collate the outputs of fraud and corruption risk assessment exercises for review by the Director People and Governance • ensure that all high-risk activities are subject to an annual risk analysis • assist Managers and members of the Executive Leadership Team in the conduct of regular internal assessments of high-risk functions and oversee the completion of a fraud and corruption risk assessment for all other teams every four years • record and audit the implementation of action plans developed by individual departments to mitigate fraud and corruption as identified through detailed risk assessments

OFFICIAL

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • retain copies of completed departmental risk assessments for audit purposes • assist the Director People and Governance, in reviewing this Policy every two years or in the case of major change to Council's business and/or operations or legislation.
Procurement and Tender Officer	<p>Is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensuring that all tender and contract documentation contains reference to, and requirements to read and abide by, this policy and its procedures • where advised by the Risk Officer, completing a risk management analyses for fraud and corruption prior to seeking quotes or tender submissions • ensuring that procurement, quotation and tender processes meet the highest standard of integrity and incorporate fraud and corruption risk mitigation measures • ensuring that the Contractors' employees have access to and are made aware of their responsibilities and acceptable behaviours under this policy • proactively supervising Contractors to ensure fraud and risk corruption mitigation systems are implemented during the life of the contract.
Internal and External Auditors	<p>Council's appointed Internal Auditors are responsible for the testing and identification of weaknesses in Council's systems and processes. Internal Audit activity is a key part of the overall control environment to identify the indicators of and the potential for fraud and corruption.</p>
Employees and others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uphold the Code of Conduct by demonstrating the Council's values at all times in the workplace • Understand and comply with all Council policies, procedures and guidelines • Identify, manage and mitigate fraud, corruption and other losses risks Report suspicions of fraud, corruption and other losses to an appropriate manager, the Public Interest Disclosure Coordinator, the Council, or IBAC • Support and apply fraud and corruption prevention initiatives • Undertake all mandatory induction and training • Maintain the security of the Council's assets, including physical assets, data and intellectual property

5. INTEGRITY FRAMEWORK

5.1 Management and the Fraud and Corruption Control System

The Council's integrity framework recognises that its strength comes from our leaders consistently demonstrating the Council's values and fostering an ethical culture. The Council's risk management framework's 'the three lines of defence model' sets out a framework for controlling behaviours, internally prescribing and monitoring behaviour and externally monitoring behaviours to prevent, detect and respond to fraud and corruption, including allocation of ownership, accountabilities, resources and governance responsibilities. The Fraud Control System outlines in more detail the three lines of defence:

Fraud and Corruption Policy Document 18891

OFFICIAL

1. The first line of defence is employees managing risk in their area of responsibility as part of their everyday work.
2. The second line supports the Council in its compliance obligations and mitigate risks through policies, advice and systems, and by monitoring the adequacy and effectiveness of controls.
3. The third line provides independent assurance that the risk management and internal control framework is working as designed.

External oversight bodies, including the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC), the Victorian Ombudsman (Ombudsman), the Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO) and the Victorian Local Government Inspectorate hold the Council to account for its performance and investigate allegations of fraud or corruption where appropriate. These oversight bodies also provide insights for continuous improvement of controls and strategies to prevent fraud and corruption.

6. REPORTING OBLIGATIONS

Public Interest Disclosure

Under the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012*, the Council has established procedures to facilitate making and handling disclosures. Under those procedures, the Council Public Interest Disclosure Coordinator (PDC) must assess reports of suspected fraud and corruption to determine whether they may be public interest disclosures. Matters that the Public Disclosure Coordinator considers may be public interest disclosures must be referred to IBAC.

The Public Interest Disclosures system provides whistleblowers with protections from reprisals and requires strict confidentiality of these reports be maintained.

Mandatory Notifications

Under the *Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Act 2011*, the relevant principal officer must notify IBAC of any matter which they suspect on reasonable grounds involves corrupt conduct occurring or having occurred, irrespective of whether the incident is considered serious or systemic.

The CEO is the relevant principal officer of the Council. The CEO's obligation to notify IBAC of suspected corrupt conduct is pursuant to section 57(1) of the IBAC Act.

Criminal Offences

Internal and external fraud, theft or other criminal offences that are perpetrated against the Council that result in financial loss must be reported to Victoria Police. In relation to external fraud, the Director of the business area that sustained the loss is responsible for ensuring the matter is reported to Victoria Police. The Director People and Governance can provide support to business areas if required.

In relation to fraud and corruption perpetrated by a Councillor, employee, council appointed committee member, volunteer, contractor and agent, the CEO in consultation with the Director People and Governance is responsible for notifying the Victoria Police.

Recording Reports of Fraud and Corruption

Other than for matters reported to the PDC, all reports of suspected fraud or corruption by employees will be copied to the Director People and Governance to be recorded in the Fraud and Corruption Control Case Register for the purpose of monitoring and reporting. This information will be kept securely and limited to staff within the Governance and Records Management area.

OFFICIAL

Consequences and Recovery

Investigation: The Council treats all complaints about, and instances of, fraud and corruption seriously. Other than matters referred through the PDC, the Director People and Governance and the Manager People and Culture will assess all allegations of fraud or corruption that are referred to the Director People and Governance and make a determination as to the investigation required.

In some circumstances this may lead to an internal investigation by a senior executive, or by an appointed external specialist. The Council may be prevented from taking action as a result of matters being subject to assessment or investigation by IBAC, VAGO, the Ombudsman or Victoria Police.

Where an internal investigation has concluded with adverse findings, those findings will be referred to the PDC, Director People and Governance and the Director or Manager of the employee to whom the allegations relate and may lead to the commencement of disciplinary action in accordance with the Council's Disciplinary Corporate Policy.

Recovery: The Council will take action to recover losses caused by fraud or corruption (where avenues for recovery exist), where there is clear evidence of who is responsible for the loss and taking into account whether the likely benefit of such action will exceed the resources required for that action.

Register: A register will be maintained to ensure any Councillor, employee, council appointed committee member, volunteer, agent or contractor who is found guilty of undertaking in improper conduct in relation to fraud and corruption cannot be reengaged or employed by Council.

7. COMMUNICATION

This policy will be available on Council's website along with the guidelines for making and handling Public Interest Disclosures. Council maintains internal controls to provide for the security and accountability of Council's resources and to prevent or reduce the opportunity for fraud. Council's fraud awareness program will include the following:

- A fraud awareness training program for all new employees as part of their mandatory compliance and refresher training every two years, or as deemed necessary.
- Provide updates to staff on reviewed fraud systems and policies as required.
- Communicate Council's Protected Disclosure Policy to all staff.
- Brief the Audit and Risk Committee each quarter on any suspected or alleged fraud.
- Monitor fraud control actions quarterly through the Executive Leadership Team.
- Review and assessment of Council's fraud risk annually.

8. DEFINITIONS

A full and detailed list of definitions is set out below. The Council has adopted the following definitions of fraud and corruption as set out in Australian Standard: Fraud and Corruption Control AS 8001:2021

Fraud is defined as *dishonest activity causing actual or potential financial loss to any person or entity including theft of moneys or other property by persons internal or external to the organisation and where deception is used at the time, immediately before or immediately following the activity. This also includes the deliberate falsification, concealment, destruction or use of falsified documentation used or intended for use for a normal business purpose or the improper use of information or position for personal financial benefit.*

Corruption is defined as *dishonest activity in which a person associated with an organisation (e.g. director, councillor, executive manager, manager, or employee or contractor) acts*

Fraud and Corruption Policy Document 18891

OFFICIAL

contrary to the interests of the organisation and abuses their position of trust in order to achieve personal advantage or advantage for another person or organisation. This can also involve corrupt conduct by the organisation, or a person purporting to act on behalf of and in the interests of the organisation in order to secure some form of improper advantage for the organisation either directly or indirectly

Term	Meaning
<i>The Act</i>	means the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> and any future versions of this document.
Bribe	means the act of paying a secret commission to another individual and the payment itself
Control	means a process, policy, device, practice or other such action that minimises negative risks and/ or enhances positive outcomes.
Council	means Strathbogie Shire Council
Councillors	means the individuals holding the office of a member of Strathbogie Shire Council
Council Employee	means all Council staff, contractors and Council registered volunteers.
Corruption	means misuse of public power, position or funds by a staff member, manager, member of the Executive Leadership Team, Councillor, contractor, council registered volunteer or appointed member of a council committee. It can happen through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improper or unlawful actions • failure to act by public sector staff or agencies • people trying to improperly influence the functions or decisions of the public sector.
Corrupt Conduct	Under section 4 (1) of the Independent Broad-Based <i>Anti-corruption Commission Act 2011</i> means: Conduct <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) of any person that adversely affects the honest performance by a public officer or public body of his or her or its functions as a public officer or public body; or b) of a public officer or public body that constitutes or involves the dishonest performance of his or her or its functions as a public officer or public body; or c) of a public officer or public body that constitutes or involves knowingly or recklessly breaching public trust; or d) of a public officer or a public body that involves the misuse of information or material acquired in the course of the performance of his or her or its functions as a public officer or public body, whether or not for the benefit of the public officer or public body or any other person

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It includes asking for, or receiving a benefit of any kind, the acceptance of a bribe, in any form, which is punishable under law by the Victorian common law offence of 'Bribery of a Public Official' and offences under the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> (Vic).
Councillor Code of Conduct	means the Strathbogie Shire Councillor Code of Conduct and any future versions of this document.
Employee Code of Conduct	means the Strathbogie Shire Staff Code of Conduct, CEO Directive and any future versions of this document.
Effective Control	means a control that is considered to prevent or detect fraud or corruption.
Evidence	means oral testimony either given in legal proceedings or which a witness indicates that they are prepared to give under oath or affirmation in legal proceedings, along with documents of any description that can be legally admitted as evidence in a Court of Law.
Fraud	<p>For the purpose of this policy, in accordance with the Australian Standards AS8001-2021, Fraud and Corruption Control means an</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “dishonest activity causing actual or potential financial loss to any person or entity including theft of moneys or other property by persons internal or external to the organisation and where deception is used at the time, immediately before or immediately following the activity. This also includes the deliberate falsification, concealment, destruction or use of falsified documentation used or intended for use for a normal business purpose or the improper use of information or position for personal financial benefit”. The theft of property belonging to Council where deception is not used Fraud is not restricted to tangible benefits only and includes intangibles such as information. A fraudulent act can also be committed by an act of omission, dishonesty or deceitful and misleading behaviour
Improper Conduct	<p><i>The Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012</i> captures fraudulent and corrupt behaviour and specifically the following conduct by a public officer or public body in their capacity as a public officer or public body:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corrupt conduct and/or Any of the following conduct by a public officer or public body in their capacity as a public officer or public body: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A criminal offence Serious professional misconduct* - Dishonest performance of public functions

OFFICIAL

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An intentional breach or reckless breach of public trust • An intentional or reckless misuse of public trust • An intentional or reckless misuse of information or material acquired in the course of the performance of public functions • A substantial mismanagement of public resources • A substantial risk to the health or safety of one or more persons • A substantial risk to the environment. <p>* The Act does not define serious professional misconduct.</p>
IBAC	means the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission
Integrity Framework	Council brings together in an integrity framework the policies, processes, structures and conditions necessary to foster integrity and prevent corruption. Our Integrity framework includes elements of risk management, governance, leadership commitment, deterrent and prevention measures, detection measures, and staff education and training.
Investigation	means a search for evidence connecting or tending to connect a person (either a natural person or a body corporate) with conduct that infringes the criminal law or the policies and standards set by the Council
Public Interest Disclosure Coordinator (PDC)	As of the current date of this Policy the PDC is the Director People and Governance, unless the disclosure relates to the incumbent PDC then the disclosure shall be made to the Public Interest Disclosure Officer or Chief Executive Officer.
Ombudsman	means the Victorian Ombudsman
VAGO	means Victorian Auditor-General's Office

9. RELATED POLICIES AND LEGISLATION

The Fraud and Corruption Control Policy has been developed in accordance with the following legislative requirements:

Legislation

- *Financial Management Act 1994*
- Financial Management Regulations 2004
- Standing Directions 2018 under the Financial Management Act
- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Public Administration Act 2004* and the Code of Conduct for Public Sector Employees (Code of Conduct)
- *Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Act 2011*
- *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012*
- *Audit Act 1994.*

Fraud and Corruption Policy Document 18891

OFFICIAL

- *Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)*
- *Ombudsman Act 1973*

Related Council Documents

- Instruments of delegation and authorisation, particularly the Instrument of delegation for certain financial transactions and procurement functions
- Model Councillor Code of Conduct
- Councillor Expenses Policy
- Privacy and Data Protection Policy
- Procurement Policy and Procurement Procedures
- Public Interest Disclosures Policy and Procedures
- Purchasing Card Policy
- Risk Management Policy and Risk Management Framework
- Staff Code of Conduct CEO Directive

10. POLICY REVIEW

Council may review this policy at any time and at least four years from the date of adoption.

Minor amendments to the policy may be authorised by the CEO at any time where such changes do not alter the substance of the policy (e.g. a change to the name of a related document, or a change in legislation).

OFFICIAL

PART 2**11. PROCEDURES****11.1 Fraud and Corruption Control Documents**

The Local Government Act 2020 requires Council to maintain adequate internal control systems, and to establish codes of conduct and an Audit and Risk Committee. The *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012* requires Council to establish written procedures for handling of any public interest disclosures. Offences of fraud may be prosecuted under a number of different Victorian laws. The offences are covered under the *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic). This System was prepared with reference to:

- Cash Handling and Receipting CEO Directive
- Model Councillor Code of Conduct
- Councillor Expenses Policy
- Disciplinary CEO Directive
- Disposal or Sale of Council Assets Policy
- Governance Rules incorporating the Election Period Policy
- Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy
- Information Security Policy
- Procurement Policy
- Privacy and Data Protection Policy
- Public Interest Disclosures Policy and Procedure
- Purchasing Card Policy
- Records Management CEO Directive
- Recruitment, Selection and Appointment CEO Directive
- Risk Management Policy and Risk Management Framework
- Security Check CEO Directive
- Staff Code of Conduct CEO Directive
- Instruments of delegation, particularly the Instrument of delegation for certain financial transactions and procurement functions

The Council has a program of continual improvement, and all of the documents that comprise the Fraud and Corruption Control Framework will be regularly reviewed, as specified in the policy or procedure itself, and benchmarked against industry and other Local Government organisations to ensure we adopt best practice wherever possible.

All Council employees, contract employees, and Councillors will, on commencement of employment, engagement or election, be provided with directions on how to find the policies that comprise the Council's Fraud and Corruption Control Framework and be required to review these policies as relevant.

Induction programs for new Councillors, Council's employees and contractors will include information around fraud and corruption policies and definitions within the local government context.

OFFICIAL**11.2 Risk Assessments**

Fraud and corruption risk assessments are to be undertaken by all business areas of the Council every two years and on an annual basis for identified high risk teams or functions.

The Risk Officer will assist departments to perform these risk assessments as required. All risk assessments are to be undertaken in line with the Council's Risk Management Policy and AS/NZ ISO 31000-2009 Risk Management – Principles and Guidelines.

The results of the fraud and corruption risk assessments undertaken are to be submitted to the Director People and Governance by the Risk Officer.

Areas of weakness identified as part of the risk assessment process are to be mitigated with the implementation of appropriate controls and will be reflected in the Strategic Risk Register.

The outcomes of the fraud and corruption risk assessments will also be provided to Internal Audit for consideration in the Strategic Audit Plan and will be forwarded to the Audit Committee for review.

11.3 Mitigating the Risk of Corruption

In addition to the Policies that comprise the Fraud and Corruption Control Framework and the completion of regular risk assessments, our organisation uses the following fraud and corruption prevention mechanisms:

- creating a culture where the reporting of suspected fraud and corruption is encouraged and systems to receive reports are simple but robust
- personnel in 'at risk' positions are proactively managed to ensure that improper relationships are less likely to develop
- high risk providers are subjected to random internal audits at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer, Council and the Audit and Risk Committee
- separation of tasks in relation to financial, procurement and tendering functions
- maintenance of detailed records such as asset registers
- discussion of ethical behaviours in annual performance reviews
- completion of regular fraud and corruption risk assessments
- monitoring of various discrete behaviours which may indicate impropriety
- internal audit reviews
- discrete preliminary investigation into any incidents of concern.

11.4 Conflict of Interest

Conflict of Interest - can be actual, potential or perceived:

- An actual conflict of interest occurs when a public officer's duties actually do conflict with their private interests.
- A potential conflict arises when a public officer's duties could conflict with their private interests. A public officer can anticipate potential conflicts by thinking about how their private interests and associations might influence their public duties.
- A perceived conflict stem from the reasonable view of the public or a third party that a public officer's private interests could improperly influence their decisions or actions,

OFFICIAL

or the actions or decisions of their organisation. The perception is that a public officer may not be objective in their dealings as a result of the conflict.

Conflict of Interest is addressed specifically in the Councillor Code of Conduct and the Staff Code of Conduct CEO Directive. Gifts and hospitality are also addressed specifically in these documents and the Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy and Procedure.

11.5 Internal Audit Activity

Internal audit supports fraud prevention by ensuring employees conform to internal controls, and by deterring potential perpetrators with the increased prospect of being caught. It has a key role in detection of fraud and provides necessary inputs into the Council's responses to fraud.

The Director People and Governance under the oversight of the Audit and Risk Committee, will ensure that internal audit schedules or plans adequately address Council's fraud risk exposures and adequately test Council's fraud risk controls. If deemed necessary, the Council may utilise the role of the internal auditor in the investigation and reporting of any suspected fraud or corrupt activity.

11.6 External Audit

External audit can detect material misstatements in Council's financial statements due to fraud or error. The Council's external auditors meet with the Audit and Risk Committee:

- Prior to conducting audits, where they present the audit methodology
- After conducting the audit, where they present a closing report. The Director People and Governance will ensure that the external auditors are briefed about the Council's expectations on external audit to detect fraud and appropriately supported by Council staff to enable this.

11.7 Monitoring

The Audit and Risk Committee provides a key role in monitoring the Council's fraud control processes. Any incident of fraud will be reported to the Committee as part of the regular risk review report at the quarterly meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee.

The Audit and Risk Committee reviews whole of organisation risk and determines the Annual Internal Audit Plan delivered by the Internal Auditor. Included in this review is a scan of the relevant external environment.

Internal review of controls (systems, processes and procedures) will be undertaken by Council staff as identified in the fraud risk assessment, and/or may be selected by the Audit and Risk Committee for internal audit as part of the Annual Internal Audit Plan.

Where a suspected fraud or corrupt behaviour is reported or detected and it is assessed by the CEO as likely to have an impact on Council's reputation or operations, the CEO will inform the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee as soon as practicable within five (5) working days of the incident subject to the limitations on disclosure that may be imposed by external integrity bodies.

11.8 Training

Councillors and Employees will be informed of Council's Policy, the consequences arising from fraud and corruption, and who to speak to if they suspect fraud and/or corrupt conduct is occurring.

Training and support on the conduct of risk assessments will also be provided by the Risk Officer and conducted at regular intervals.

Fraud and Corruption Policy Document 18891

OFFICIAL

Fraud and corruption awareness training will be provided to all employees through our online module on an annual basis.

Additional training will be part of a broader good governance training program for Council Employees and Councillors relating to management of conflicts of interests, ethical behaviour, codes of conduct and other key policies that mitigate fraud and corruption.

Fraud and corruption awareness and discussions about Council's Fraud and Corruption Framework will also form part of the induction process for newly elected councillors.

11.9 Employment Screening

Screening of new employees is an effective fraud and corruption prevention mechanism. The Recruitment, Selection and Appointment CEO Directive outlines provisions for the screening of prospective employees, including Police checks as well as detailed reference checks to confirm the veracity of the applicant's integrity, identity and credentials.

The following screening shall be undertaken with the express consent of the individual concerned for all prospective employees:

- Verification of identity requiring at least two forms of identity (passport, birth certificate, drivers' licence, rate certificate, at least one must include photo identification)
- Police criminal history check
- Working with children check – relevant identified positions
- Reference checks with two most recent employers
- Consideration of any gaps on employment history and the reasons for the gaps
- Verification of formal qualifications claimed.

11.10 Customer and Supplier Vetting

The Council will continue to undertake supplier vetting for new and ongoing suppliers in accordance with the Procurement Policy and practices.

Financial and/or Performance assessments will be undertaken where the contract poses a key financial risk to Council or where it is a new supplier that has never been used by Council before and the risk of poor performance or financial collapse is likely to adversely affect Council.

Financial and Performance assessment checks may also be undertaken where Council wishes to understand the financial and previous contract performance of the supplier or if no security is in place. For effective prevention, active management and ownership is required by the Managers responsible for the above strategies within Council. Executive oversight through sound governance arrangements will ensure that each strategy does not operate in isolation, and that interdependency is effectively identified and managed appropriately.

11.12 Preventing Technology Based Fraud

Information security is a duty of all Council employees. Given the size and resources of Council a dedicated Information Security Management System Officer (as per AS 8001:2021) has not been appointed. The responsibility for Information Security is shared within the Digital Innovation and Technology Department.

Council protects its data and systems on its managed network through firewalls. The firewalls are intrusion tested regularly. The data on portable items (laptops) is protected by passwords, as is the data on personal computers. IT equipment is included on the asset register and physical security of IT equipment is achieved through building security.

All staff are trained in cyber security awareness through an on-line training module.

Fraud and Corruption Policy Document 18891

OFFICIAL

12. DETECTION AND REPORTING

Any matter relating to suspected fraudulent or corrupt behaviour can be reported as a public interest disclosure. This provides legal protections for the complainant against any repercussions of reporting the alleged behaviour and so is an option worthwhile considering by anyone thinking of supporting such conduct.

Council’s Public Interest Disclosures Policy provides clear guidance around making and processing allegations and also includes a form complainants can use to report suspected fraudulent or corrupt behaviour.

This section outlines the procedures for the reporting of suspected fraudulent and/or corrupt behaviour, which is summarised in the table below.

PERSON SUSPECTED OF FRAUDULENT OR CORRUPT BEHAVIOUR	FIRST REPORT	SECOND REPORT
Employee	Director People and Governance	Council’s Public Interest Disclosures Officer or Chief Executive Officer
Contract Manager	Director People and Governance	Council’s Public Interest Disclosures Officer or Chief Executive Officer
Manager	Director People and Governance	Council’s Public Interest Disclosures Officer or Chief Executive Officer
Contractor	Director People and Governance	Council’s Public Interest Disclosures Officer or Chief Executive Officer
Manager	Director People and Governance	Council’s Public Interest Disclosures Officer or Chief Executive Officer
Directors	Chief Executive Officer	Council’s Public Interest Disclosures Coordinator or Public Interest Disclosure Officer
Chief Executive Officer	Director People and Governance	Council’s Public Interest Disclosures Officer
Councillors	Chief Executive Officer	Director People and Governance or Council’s Public Interest Disclosures Officer
Members of the Public	Director People and Governance	Council’s Public Interest Disclosures Officer or Chief Executive Officer

OFFICIAL**12.1 Employees**

Where an employee suspects that an act of fraud or corrupt conduct is occurring or has occurred, that employee must immediately report their suspicions to their direct Manager or Group Manager.

Where the employee does not feel comfortable reporting their suspicions to their Manager, they should report such matters Council's Public Interest Disclosures Officer.

12.2 Director or Manager

On receiving a report of suspected fraud or corrupt conduct, the Director, the Executive Manager - Communications, Advocacy & Customer Service or Manager must record details of the report, including the time and date the report is made and details of matters raised. As much evidence as possible needs to be collated, along with a list of potential witnesses and related parties that may be able to help in the investigation of the matter.

The matter must then be immediately reported to the Public Interest Disclosure Officer and the Chief Executive Officer.

Where the matter may involve disciplinary action against an employee, the Manager People and Culture must also be advised prior to any such action being undertaken.

12.3 Contractors

Contractors or other people involved in the contracting processes may become aware of or have information indicating fraudulent or unfair activity in relation to the procurement/tender processes or service provision.

Where contractors feel reluctant to report suspected fraud and/or corruption, behaviour that is intimidatory or grossly unfair for fear of repercussions affecting their future business dealings with Council, they are requested to contact the Manager overseeing the department managing the contract or alternatively make a public interest disclosure.

The above advice must be included in all procurement / tender documentation to ensure all prospective contractors are aware of these provisions.

12.4 Reporting Avenues

Contractors or other people involved in the contracting processes may become aware of or have information indicating fraudulent or unfair activity in relation to the procurement/tender processes or service provision.

Where contractors feel reluctant to report suspected fraud and/or corruption, behaviour that is intimidatory or grossly unfair for fear of repercussions affecting their future business dealings with Council, they are requested to contact the Manager overseeing the department managing the contract or alternatively make a public interest disclosure.

The above advice must be included in all procurement / tender documentation to ensure all prospective contractors are aware of these provisions.

12.5 Notifying the Chief Executive Officer

Except where suspected fraud or corruption reported as a Public Interest Disclosure all reported incidents of suspected fraud or corrupt conduct must be reported to the Chief Executive Officer by the person notified immediately, and prior to, any investigation of such allegations being undertaken.

Where the allegation relates to the Chief Executive Officer, the report is to be made to the Director People and Governance or another Director. In such cases, the Mayor is also to be

OFFICIAL

informed of the allegation as well as the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission.

12.6 Notification of the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC)

The Chief Executive Officer, as a *relevant principal officer* is obliged to report any matter which they suspect on reasonable grounds involves corrupt conduct either having occurred, or that is occurring, immediately to IBAC under section 57 of the *Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Act 2011*.

12.7 Anonymous Reports

Anonymous reports are not encouraged due to the difficulty in conducting a thorough investigation and keeping the complainant informed about the action being taken in response to the issues they have raised.

In the event that an anonymous complaint is made, it must be accompanied by sufficient information and detail (i.e. dates, names, times, other potential witnesses) to allow an investigation to be undertaken.

13 RESPONSE

For all matters subject to mandatory reporting to IBAC, no action will be taken until IBAC has assessed the matter and informed the Chief Executive Officer of its decision. Exceptions to this only apply where the action is:

- necessary to lessen or prevent a serious threat to the life, health, safety or welfare of an individual or to public health or safety; or
- taken to comply with another legal obligation, such as a duty to report the matter under other legislation; or
- reporting the matter to Victoria Police

For all other reports of detected or suspected fraud or corruption and any matters subsequently referred back by IBAC for Council to consider, the Council will investigate first, and determine a course of action second, depending on the outcomes of the investigation.

The Chief Executive Officer will remain impartial to any investigation and not be a member of any investigation team. All suspected incidents of fraud and/or corruption detected will be investigated pursuant to these procedures. This includes incidents detected through proactive detection programmes or by a report from an employee or other person.

13.1 Investigation

All reported fraudulent or corrupt behaviour, or suspected behaviour, whether by staff, Councillors or business associates/suppliers, will be investigated either by the Council, an external investigator or Victoria Police. The purpose of an investigation is to:

- Determine if in fact fraudulent or corrupt behaviour has been committed
- Identify the person(s) responsible for the fraudulent or corrupt behaviour
- Discover the extent of the fraudulent or corrupt behaviour and determine the action to be taken
- Provide the basis of any insurance claim; and
- Identify how long the fraudulent or corrupt behaviour has been occurring and thereby the extent of the breakdown of internal controls.
- Identify any gaps or weaknesses in the controls and systems associated with the activity that is subject to the investigation.

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14 AUDITING AND REPORTING

Upon receipt of a report of fraudulent or corrupt behaviour, or suspected behaviour, the Director People and Governance will as soon as practicable ensure that an independent investigation is conducted into the alleged misconduct.

The Chief Executive Officer will be consulted and decide whether the Police or any external assistance will be employed. The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the selection of the personnel to be involved in the independent investigation. This may include referring the investigation to the Internal Auditor for action.

The independent investigator(s) may be from an independent authority or agency, a manager or other senior person within the Council or an external consultant such as a specialised fraud investigator operating under the direction of the Director People and Governance. The Director People and Governance will ensure that the investigator appointed is mindful of legislative provisions that are relevant to the investigation, including the provisions of the *Information Privacy Act 2001*(Vic) regarding the disclosure and use of personal information.

An allegation of fraud or corruption will constitute an alleged breach of the Councillor or Staff Code of Conduct. Any staff member contacted by an appointed internal investigator or external investigator is required to cooperate with any investigations into breaches of the Staff Code. In all reports of alleged fraudulent or corrupt behaviour, strict confidentiality and the principles of natural justice will be observed and maintained. Where a Council employee is the subject of an investigation, the Director People and Governance will seek the advice of the Manager People and Culture to ensure adherence to the provisions of Council's Disciplinary Procedure and relevant industrial relations laws.

14.1 External Investigation

The Chief Executive Officer may decide that the investigation shall be conducted by an independent authority or agency or if the matter shall be referred directly to Victoria Police. Any referral direct to an independent authority or Victoria Police will be coordinated by the Director People and Governance. The Police or the authority they contact will then conduct the investigation.

Where the allegation has arisen through a Protected Disclosure, then the investigation will be in accordance with Council's Protected Disclosure Guidelines and Procedures. A report of the investigation from an external authority will be considered by the Director People and Governance in consultation with the Manager People and Culture and they will make recommendations to the Chief Executive Officer as to the most appropriate course of action as soon as practicable.

14.2 Internal Investigation

The investigation shall be conducted as quickly as practicable, including but not limited to the following steps:

- **Develop the terms of reference**, identifying:
 - Confirming who shall conduct the investigation
 - Who shall be interviewed
 - What records shall be examined
 - Who shall be kept informed, on a 'need to know' basis
- **Conduct the investigation** – ensure confidentiality and right to privacy is considered in conducting the investigation:
 - Collect witness statements
 - Examine records and collect and collate records and evidence

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- Advise the person(s) against who allegation is made that there is an investigation and invite them to be interviewed
 - Conduct interviews under a presumption of innocence basis, outlining the allegations made against the person allowing them an opportunity to respond within a reasonable timeframe
 - A person being interviewed shall be allowed a support person in the interviews, but that person may not represent them or provide comment
 - All parties must maintain confidentiality and propriety at all times
- **Compile a report:**
 - Summarise the evidence collected during the investigations, including all evidence that supports the allegation and all evidence that refutes the allegation or supports the alleged persons response
 - Draw conclusions and make findings as to the likely truth or otherwise of the allegations based objectively on the evidence and statements
 - Assess the seriousness of the misconduct or behaviour and its impact on Council
 - Report on any detected gaps or weaknesses in the controls and systems associated with the alleged activity.
 - Register the report in Records Management system using a highly restricted security classification.

The Director People and Governance will consider the report and make recommendations to the Chief Executive Officer as to the most appropriate course of action as soon as practicable.

14.3 Responses to Investigations

The Chief Executive Officer, upon receipt of recommendations from the external or internal investigation, shall decide on the most appropriate course of action, and act or delegate actions accordingly, as soon as practicable. The Council's responses to investigations may include disciplinary action, reporting to Victoria Police, and/or civil action to recover losses.

- **Disciplinary action** - The Director People and Governance will coordinate disciplinary action in accordance with Council's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.
- **Reporting to Victoria Police** - The Director People and Governance will coordinate the reporting of the investigation outcome to Victoria Police.
- **Civil action to recover losses** - The Council will pursue recovery of any losses due to fraud or corruption where there is clear evidence of fraud and corruption and where the likely benefits of such recovery will exceed the funds and resources required to be invested in the recovery action. - The Director People and Governance will coordinate any civil action taken by Council to recover losses resulting from the fraud or corruption.

14.4 Third Parties

The CEO will decide whether to inform directly or indirectly impacted third parties to the fraud or corruption, including individual or multiple ratepayers, suppliers and community groups.

14.5 Disruption

The Council may consider it appropriate to engage in disruption of identified fraud and corruption by any of the following methods:

- Increased audit activity
- Increased post transactional reviews
- More rigorous authorisation procedures

Fraud and Corruption Policy Document 18891

OFFICIAL

- Separation of duties
- Website protection
- Additional training.

14.6 Review of Internal Controls

Where fraud or corruption is detected, the relevant service unit Manager, in consultation with the Director People and Governance will review the findings and assess the adequacy of the relevant internal control environment and provide a report to the Director of that service and any recommended improvements identified.

Where internal controls may be practicably improved, the relevant responsible Officer shall ensure as soon as practicable that those improvements are developed, documented and implemented, and understood by those who have roles and responsibilities in them.

14.7 Record Keeping

The Director People and Governance will maintain a record of reports of fraudulent and corrupt behaviour, or suspected behaviour, and investigation outcomes

All investigative documentation will comply with relevant legislative provisions, will remain strictly confidential and will be retained in accordance with the Council's Information Privacy Policy and Records Management system controls.

14.8 Media

The Media Policy shall be observed at all times, and no employee, Councillor or other persons associated with Council other than the CEO, unless specifically delegated to do so, shall make any public comment in relation to any suspected fraud or corruption, whether proven or otherwise.

No comment, statement or posting in relation to any suspected fraud or corruption, whether proven or otherwise is to be made by Council staff and contractors on their personal accounts that is contrary to Council's Social Media Policy and must not make any comment or post any material which might damage Council's reputation.

Where it is deemed necessary to make a statement to the media, the CEO shall consider legal and media advice prior to making the statement

15. CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES ACT 2006 AND THE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY ACT 2010

The Council acknowledges the legal responsibility to comply with the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* and the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*. The *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* is designed to protect the fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens. The Charter gives legal protection to 20 fundamental human rights under four key values that include freedom, respect, equality and dignity.

11.4.2 Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy

AUTHOR Governance Officer

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Director People and Governance

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy provide clear guidance on the appropriate offering, acceptance, and reporting of gifts, benefits, and hospitality within the organisation.

By implementing this policy, the organisation aims to promote ethical behaviour, maintain public and stakeholder trust, and ensure compliance with relevant laws and governance requirements.

All Councillors, council employees, volunteers and contractors are expected to understand and follow the policy to uphold the organisation's reputation and commitment to fair and responsible business practices.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Adopt the Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy**
- 2. Authorise Council Officers to place the Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy on Council's website, along with the publication of a notice in Council's newspaper column and social media pages informing the community of the policy.**

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The purpose of the report is for Council to adopt the updated Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy following from a recent, scheduled review of the policy.

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

This policy establishes guidelines for receipt and offering of gifts, benefits and hospitality by Councillors and Council staff to avoid any potential conflicts of interest or breaches of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

This policy is designed to assist when Councillors, council employees, volunteers and contractors are:

- assessing whether acceptance or offering of the gift, hospitality or benefit is appropriate
- ensuring that a declarable indirect conflict of interest is not created through the acceptance of gifts, hospitality or benefits
- declaring and recording the offer of the gift, hospitality or benefit.

It ensures Strathbogie Shire Council:

- registers the receipt of the gift, benefit or hospitality and maintains a gift register

- where appropriate, distributes the gift in an appropriate manner
- records all declined gifts, benefits or hospitality for maximum transparency and accountability
- has a system of review and reporting in place to assess compliance with this policy and to identify any potential issues of concern that require further action.

Following the review, the most substantive changes relate to:

- Section 5 - includes the GIFT test which was previously excluded from the policy
- Section 7 – breaches not previously included in the policy
- Section 8 – quarterly auditing by the Director of People and Governance
- Increasing nominal value from \$50 to \$100
- Other changes relate to more concise language and readability without changing the intent of the policy.

The Audit and Risk Committee reviewed the Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality policy on 6 March 2026, and recommended that Council adopt the policy.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Council Plan

This report is consistent with the following objectives and or actions in the 2025-2029 Council Plan:

Objective Three: Deliver

We are committed to delivering quality services and infrastructure that meets the needs of our community. We aim to strengthen the Council's governance and provide improved, customer-focused experiences.

Regional, State and National Plans, Policies and Legislation

This report is aligned with the following legislation, council policies and key strategic documents:

Legislation

- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Crimes Act 1958*
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020
- Fraud and Corruption Controls – Local Government, Victorian Auditor General of Victoria, June 2019

Related Council Documents

- Model Councillor Code of Conduct
- Fraud and Corruption Policy
- Discretionary Expenditure Guide
- Procurement Policy
- Public Transparency Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct CEO Directive
- Governance Rules
- Delegations and Instruments of Authorisation

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

This report has identified the following risk(s):

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Not having a robust policy in place may lead to corruption, bribery, conflicts of interest, and severe reputational damage.	Low	Possible	Low	Adopt the Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the *Local Government Act 2020*, Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020, other relevant legislation, and the Model Councillor Code of Conduct.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

No Council officers and/or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a general or material conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

TRANSPARENCY

In the interests of transparency and open communication with our community, this report is presented to a public Council meeting.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Policies are reviewed regularly to ensure they promote best practice and meet current legislative requirements.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

The recommendation does not limit any human rights under the Victorian *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

CONCLUSION

A robust Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy play an important role in protecting the integrity, transparency, and reputation of Council. By establishing clear guidelines on the acceptance and offering of gifts, benefits, and hospitality, the policy helps prevent conflicts of interest, bribery, and unethical behaviour.

Adherence to this policy ensures Council support a fair and ethical workplace culture, strengthens trust with clients and partners, and ensures compliance with legal and organisational standards.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 20260421 Gifts Benefits and Hospitality Policy

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Strathbogie Shire Council Gift, Benefits and Hospitality Policy

March 2026

Strathbogie
SHIRE COUNCIL

OFFICIAL

Contents

GIFTS, BENEFITS AND HOSPITALITY POLICY.....2

PART 1 POLICY3

1. PURPOSE3

2. POLICY STATEMENT3

3. APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY3

4. DEFINITIONS4

5. GIFTS, BENEFITS OR HOSPITALITY5

6. RISK ASSESSMENT8

7. BREACHES9

8. MONITORING.....9

9. RELATED POLICIES AND LEGISLATION.....9

10. POLICY REVIEW.....10

11. CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES ACT 2006 AND THE
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY ACT 2010.....10

10. PART 2 PROCEDURES.....11

Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy

Document ID:	608496
Effective Date:	18 December 2019
Last Review:	October 2023
Current Review:	March 2026
Date Adopted by Council:	
Next Scheduled Review Date:	March 2028
Responsible Officer:	Director People and Governance

OFFICIAL**PART 1 POLICY****1. PURPOSE**

This policy is to establish guidelines for the receiving and giving of gifts, benefits and hospitality by Councillors and Council staff to avoid any potential conflicts of interest or breaches of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

This policy is designed to assist when Councillors, Council Employees, volunteers and contractors are:

- assessing whether acceptance or giving of the gift, hospitality or benefit is appropriate
- ensuring that a declarable indirect conflict of interest is not created through the acceptance or giving of gifts, hospitality or benefits
- declaring and recording the offer of the gift, hospitality or benefit.

It ensures Strathbogie Shire Council:

- registers the receipt of the gift, benefit or hospitality and maintains a gift register
- where appropriate, distributes the gift in an appropriate manner
- records all declined gifts, benefits or hospitality for maximum transparency and accountability
- has a system of review and reporting in place to assess compliance with this policy and to identify any potential issues of concern that require further action.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

Council is committed to upholding the highest standards of integrity, impartiality and public trust. Councillors, Council staff, volunteers and contractors must perform their duties in a manner that is free from improper influence, conflicts of interest and perceptions of bias.

This policy provides a transparent and consistent framework for the identification, declaration, management and, where appropriate, refusal of gifts, benefits and hospitality offered in the course of official duties. All individuals covered by this policy are required to act in the public interest, avoid accepting or giving any offer that may compromise—or be perceived to compromise—their integrity, and ensure full disclosure of any reportable offers.

Council promotes a culture where ethical behaviour, accountability and good governance are central to decision-making and service delivery.

3. APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY

This policy applies to all gifts, benefits or hospitality given, offered to, or received by, Councillors, Council Employees, volunteers and contractors in exercising their role

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the *Local Government Act 2020*, Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020, relevant Council policies and the Model Councillor Code of Conduct.

OFFICIAL

4. DEFINITIONS

Term	Meaning
Benefit	means something which is believed to be of value to the receiver, such as access to a sporting event, preferential treatment, access to confidential information, accommodation, personal services, and pleasure/vacation trips.
Conflict of Interest	means that a Councillor, member of a delegated committee or Council staff member has a conflict of interest when they have a personal or private interest that might compromise their ability to act in the public interest. A conflict of interest can exist even if no improper action results from it.
Estimated value	means the known face value or estimated retail value.
Gift	<p>means any disposition of property otherwise than by will made by a person to another person without consideration in money or money's worth or with inadequate consideration, including—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the provision of a service (other than volunteer labour); and (b) the payment of an amount in respect of a guarantee; and (c) the making of a payment or contribution at a fundraising function. <p>It includes an item, entertainment or other token of appreciation such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • goods and services given of a commercial value • property (real or otherwise) • transfers of money • loans of money or property • free services (tickets to events/conferences, accommodation, entertainment, sporting events etc) <p>goods and services made available at heavily discounted prices.</p>
Gift disclosure threshold	means \$500 received from a person in the five (5) years preceding the decision on the matter, or a higher amount or value prescribed by the regulations supporting the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> .
Gifts of appreciation	means a gift that is presented to an individual to express thanks, such as flowers, chocolates or moderately priced alcohol and the like. These gifts are generally a one-off occurrence and below nominal value identified by this policy.
Hospitality	<p>means a meal, food, drink, ticket to an event or any other type of service which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has a value greater than the nominal value identified in this policy; and • is not connected to the receiver's attendance on official Council business; and <p>which is a meal, drink, ticket or other type of service that is not offered to every participant (i.e. the Councillor, Council staff member or member of a delegated committee is being singled out for special treatment).</p>

OFFICIAL

Indirect interest	means the source of an indirect conflict of interest for a Councillor, Council officer or member of a special committee under sections 77A and 78C of the <i>Local Government Act 1989</i> (see Attachment 1)
Member of Council staff	means people employed by Council, including contractors, and volunteers registered with Council.
Member of a delegated committee	means a member of a delegated committee appointed by Council under section 63 of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> .
Monetary gifts	means cash, cheques, money orders, travellers' cheques, direct deposits or items which can be easily converted to cash. This also includes loans of money. It also includes gift cards, lottery ticket, scratch and win cards and the like.
Nominal value	means an item with a face or estimated value of less than or equal to \$100.
Official gift	means a gift presented to or given by the Shire or the Council and include gifts received/given from a Sister/Friendship City, organisations or corporations that are bestowing a corporate gift (plaques, plates, vases, trophies and artwork) or souvenirs.
Reasonable hospitality	means a meal or service provided by an organisation to a Councillor, member of Council staff or member of a delegated committee who attends a function or event in an official capacity and who receives the same hospitality or service offered to other guests.
the Act	means the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> .
the Regulations	means the Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020.
Token gift, benefit or hospitality	means a gift, benefit or hospitality of nominal value as identified by this policy and infrequently received (up to two times in a 12-month period). Token gifts, benefits or hospitality may include low-priced promotional items, souvenirs or corporate gifts such as pens, mugs, gifts of single bottles of reasonable priced alcohol, free or subsidised meals of a modest nature, invitations to appropriate corporate or social functions organised by community groups or organisations, door prizes at conferences, trade shows etc.

5. GIFTS, BENEFITS OR HOSPITALITY

In accordance with the key principles of this Policy before deciding whether to offer or accept an offer, Councillors should first consider if the offer could be perceived as influencing them in performing their duties or lead to reputational damage. The more valuable the offer, the more likely that a conflict of interest or reputational risk exists.

Developed by the Victorian Public Sector Commission, the GIFT test is a good example of what to think about when deciding whether to accept or decline a gift, benefit or hospitality.

OFFICIAL

G	Giver	<p>Who is providing the gift, benefit or hospitality and what is their relationship to me? Does my role require me to select contractors, award grants, regulate industries or determine government policies? Could the person or organisation benefit from a decision I make?</p>
I	Influence	<p>Are they seeking to gain an advantage or influence my decisions or actions? Has the gift, benefit or hospitality been offered to me publicly or privately? Is it a courtesy or a token of appreciation or valuable non-token offer? Does its timing coincide with a decision I am about to make?</p>
F	Favour	<p>Are they seeking a favour in return for the gift, benefit or hospitality? Has the gift, benefit or hospitality been offered honestly? Has the person or organisation made several offers over the last 12 months? Would accepting it create an obligation to return a favour?</p>
T	Trust	<p>Would accepting the gift, benefit or hospitality diminish public trust? How would the public view acceptance of this gift, benefit or hospitality? What would my colleagues, family, friends or associates think?</p>

5.1 Declaration of Gifts Benefits and Hospitality

All gifts, benefits and hospitality must be declared by Councillors, members of Council staff and members of delegated committees regardless of their value and whether or not the offer of the gift, benefit or hospitality was declined.

All declared gifts, benefits and hospitality will be entered onto Council’s Gift, Benefit and Hospitality Register and available for public review upon request.

The details of any gift, benefit and hospitality received by or offered to (but declined/returned) a Councillor, members of Council staff must be declared and recorded in the Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Register within five business days (5) days of acceptance or return/refusal.

Councillors, Council Employees and members of delegated committees must not solicit, demand or request gifts or any personal benefit by virtue of their position which could prejudicially influence, or be perceived to influence, a person in the performance of their public or professional duties.

5.2 Token Gifts, Benefits or Hospitality

Token gifts, benefits or hospitality are those below the nominal value (\$100) identified by this policy. Gifts of a token nature may be accepted only when:

- Acceptance would not cause any potential perceived or actual compromise or conflict of interest
- The gift does not have a significant monetary value and is considered more a gesture of goodwill than a gift Examples may include flowers, small food items, mugs, ornaments
- The gift is offered on a one-off basis and is not a regular occurrence and the gift does not exceed \$100 in value

Given their token nature and small monetary value, such items are appropriate to accept, provided the provisions of the Act are met. However, this does not mean that all token gifts, benefits, and hospitality should automatically be accepted.

Consideration should be given as to whether the acceptance of any token gift could create a perceived or actual conflict of interest.

OFFICIAL

5.3 Official Gifts

Individuals may be involved in social, cultural or community events where official gifts are presented or exchanged.

Where it would appear impolite or inappropriate to decline the offer, it is reasonable for official representatives of Council to accept official gifts on behalf of the Council.

A letter of thanks will be prepared and sent by Council staff acknowledging the gift to Council and not the individual Councillor.

All official gifts received by Councillors are to be reported to the Chief Executive Officer via the Executive Assistant to the Chief Executive Officer and recorded in the Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Register within five business days (5) of receipt.

The gift will be considered the property of Council, and where suitable, the gift will be displayed in an appropriate and secure location for public viewing.

Where an item is not suitable for public display, the recipient can make an application to the Chief Executive Officer to retain the gift. The Chief Executive Officer will consider such applications on a case by case basis and will use their discretion as to the appropriate disposal/utilisation of the official gift. The outcome of this process will be recorded in the Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Register.

5.4 Gifts of Appreciation

Individuals are not to seek or give a gift or benefit in appreciation of services rendered. However, it is acknowledged that from time to time members of the community do offer gifts of appreciation to Councillors, members of Council staff and members of delegated committees.

Acceptable gifts of appreciation might include a letter or card of thanks as this is less likely to result in a situation that compromises either party.

Gifts of appreciation exceeding the nominal value identified by this policy (eg a bouquet of flowers, a box of chocolates) are not to be accepted.

5.5 Gifts Never to be Accepted

The following gifts or benefits are considered totally inappropriate and must not be accepted or offered directly or indirectly under any circumstances:

- anonymous gifts (where the name and address of the person making the gift are not known to the Councillor, member of Council staff or member of a delegated committee as per section 137 (1) of the Act) *
- monetary gifts, regardless of the amount
- access to confidential information
- promise of a new job or contracted employment
- preferential treatment (may include reciprocal favours given in return for a service provided by Council).

*** Please note that in accordance with section 137(2) of the Act, if the name and address of the person making the gift are not known to the Councillor for whose benefit the gift is intended, the Councillor is not in breach of subsection 137(1) if the Councillor disposes of the gift to the Council within 30 days of the gift being received.

It should also be noted that a finding of guilt for a Councillor in breach of section 137(1) of the Act means the Councillor is liable to a penalty of 60 penalty units and must also

OFFICIAL

pay to Council an amount equal to the value of the gift accepted in contravention of that subsection.

5.6 Reasonable Hospitality

Where hospitality is less than the nominal value identified in this policy and provides an opportunity to network or undertake business of a common purpose, it may be appropriate for Councillors, a member of Council staff or delegated committee member to accept such invitations.

Hospitality received when attending a function or event in an official capacity is exempt if:

- the hospitality is reasonable and not excessive in the circumstances and
- others at the event are offered the same form of hospitality and
- the Councillor, member of Council staff is performing an official role at the function or event.

Hospitality is considered to be a disclosable gift where a Councillor, member of Council staff attends an event or function:

- using free tickets received and has no official duties to perform and/or
- where free membership is offered and/or
- where the hospitality exceeds the nominal value.

All hospitality received must be recorded in the Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Register within five business (5) days of their acceptance.

Any refusal of hospitality must also be recorded on the Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Register.

5.7 Other Circumstances

Christmas

Christmas is a time when Councillors, members of Council staff and members of delegated committees are often offered gifts and invitations to functions. Annual notification to all Councillors, members of Council staff and members of delegated committees reminding them of their obligations in respect to the receipt of gifts and invitations will be sent out by the CEO's office in late November.

Expressions of Interest/Tender Documentation

All Expression of Interest (EOIs) and tender documentation (specifications and contracts) must state that *"No offers of gifts, of whatever value, may be made to Councillors, members of delegated committees or members of Council staff. Any such offer during the procurement process will automatically exclude that participant from that process"*.

A link to this policy must also be included in the expression of interest/tender documentation.

6. RISK ASSESSMENT

In order to comply with its obligations under the *Local Government Act 2020* and maintain the trust and confidence of the community, it is critical that Council and Councillors maintain the highest possible standards of good governance, integrity, ethical behaviour and conduct.

This Policy and the associated procedures mitigate Council's risks and enables:

- a) Councillors to understand their requirements and obligations under the Councillor Code of Conduct Governance Rules and Election Period Policy (and under the Act.

Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy Document 608496

OFFICIAL

- b) Council to demonstrate its commitment to probity in the management of potential breaches of the *Local Government Act 2020*, *Crimes Act 1958*, Codes of Conduct and Council policies.
- c) Community confidence and public trust in Council to be maintained or improved through appropriate and transparent declaration and use of gifts thereby minimising risks to Council, Councillors or staff reputations.
- d) Councillors and staff to mitigate the risk of fraud and appropriately manage situations which may be regarded as unethical conduct or behaviour

7. BREACHES

Where an employee fails to comply with this policy, the issue shall be dealt with in accordance with Strathbogie Shire Council's Staff Code of Conduct CEO Directive.

Where a Councillor fails to comply with this policy, the issue shall be dealt with in accordance with the Model Councillor Code of Conduct and *Local Government Act 2020* requirements.

8. MONITORING

8.1 Quarterly Auditing

The Gift Register will be monitored by the Director People and Governance, and a report will be presented to the Executive Leadership Team and the Audit and Risk Committee on any identified systematic pattern of gifts, benefits or hospitality offered and accepted to ensure that unacceptable cultures do not develop within Council.

8.2 Annual Reporting

The Director People and Governance will be responsible for providing an annual report to the Audit and Risk Committee and the Executive Management Team within three (3) months of the end of the financial year.

8.3 Internal Audits

Council's independent internal auditors may undertake periodic reviews of gifts and benefits register as part of the ongoing audit program.

9. RELATED POLICIES AND LEGISLATION

Legislation

- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Crimes Act 1958*
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020
- Fraud and Corruption Controls – Local Government, Victorian Auditor General of Victoria, June 2019

Related Council Documents

- Model Councillor Code of Conduct
- Fraud and Corruption Policy
- Discretionary Expenditure Guide
- Procurement Policy

Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy Document 608496

OFFICIAL

- Public Transparency Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct CEO Directive
- Governance Rules
- Delegations and Instruments of Authorisation

10. POLICY REVIEW

Council may review this policy at any time and at least two years from the date of adoption. Minor amendments to the policy may be authorised by the CEO at any time where such changes do not alter the substance of the policy (eg a change to the name of a related document, or a change in legislation).

11. CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES ACT 2006 AND THE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY ACT 2010

The Council acknowledges the legal responsibility to comply with the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* and the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*.

The *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* is designed to protect the fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens. The Charter gives legal protection to 20 fundamental human rights under four key values that include freedom, respect, equality and dignity.

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10. PART 2 PROCEDURES

The following procedures are designed to ensure that all decisions relating to this policy are made in a consistent and open manner.

10.1 Reporting Offers, Refusals or Receipt of Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality

All gifts, benefits and hospitality offered, received or declined/returned must be reported to the Chief Executive Officer if accepted by a Councillor, member of a delegated committee or a member of the Executive Leadership Team.

The relevant departmental manager/Executive Leadership Team member will receive declarations from members of Council staff.

Where the recipient of the gift, benefit or hospitality is the CEO, the form will be forwarded to the Director People and Governance for processing and approval via the electronic workflow.

All declarations of gifts, benefits or hospitality, whether received or declined must be recorded by completing the Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Form.

The completed form must be submitted within five (5) working days. The Manager will then forward the Executive Assistant to the Chief Executive Officer for registration on the Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Register.

10.2 Use of Electronic Approval Workflows

All completed forms must be submitted to Records Management, who will assign the appropriate workflow for review.

Process	Roles and Responsibilities
STAFF PROCESS	
Gift, benefit or hospitality offered or received	<p>Member of Council Staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completes the Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality form and submits form to their Departmental Manager. • If the recipient is a Manager, their relevant Executive Leadership Team member. <p>Manager/Executive Leadership Team member</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advises the Director People and Governance if the value exceeds the nominal value identified in this policy (currently \$100) • Determines compliance in accordance with this Policy • Formally acknowledges the donor by way of a letter if required • Ensures all documentation is saved in Council's electronic document management system. • Finalises form and submits form to the Records team for scanning and workflow allocation. <p>Executive Assistant to the CEO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enters the gift, benefit or hospitality on the Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Register once the workflow has been completed.

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COUNCILLOR, MEMBER OF A DELEGATED COMMITTEE OR EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM MEMBER PROCESS	
<p>Gift, benefit or hospitality offered or received</p>	<p>Councillor/Member of the Executive Leadership Team/Member of a delegated committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completes form and submits the Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality form to Executive Assistant to the CEO. <p>Executive Assistant to the CEO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refers the form to Records for scanning and allocation of workflow • Drafts formal acknowledgement letter for the donor via letter from CEO or Mayor (to be determined given nature of gift) • Updates Gift and Hospitality Register after CEO has signed the form once the workflow is completed. • Ensures all documentation is saved in Council's electronic document management system. <p>CEO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determines compliance in accordance with Policy • Where necessary consults with the Mayor on the matter and action to be taken • Finalises form and requests the Executive Assistant to the CEO to update the Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Register • Signs and sends the acknowledgement letter to the donor

11.3 Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Register

The Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Register will be made available for public inspection and contain the following information:

- date
- description of the gift, benefit or hospitality
- value, with a note as to whether the gift is a token gift or over the nominal value identified by the policy
- the recipient
- the donor/provider details
- action taken (i.e. was it personally accepted, declined or returned to the donor, placed on display, or retained by the Manager/Chief Executive Officer to be pooled for staff use).

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11. FORMS



GIFT, BENEFITS AND HOSPITALITY DECLARATION FORM

Submit the completed form to Records for allocation to the appropriate approval workflow.

Details – Recipient to complete			
Name of Recipient			
Position Title			
Name of Donor			
Donor Address (Agency/Organisation) Note: If the donor is anonymous the gift, benefit or hospitality must be declined.			
Relationship of Donor to recipient (e.g. permit applicant, consultant, business owner)			
Description of gift, benefit or hospitality			
Reason for gift, benefit or hospitality			
Estimated Value	\$	Date Received or Offered	
Donor Acknowledged?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
Details of the gift, benefit or hospitality being declined or returned to the donor:			
<i>To my knowledge the donor is not currently subject to any tender, permit application processes or matters under consideration, for which this gift may be perceived as exercising a beneficial interest over any Councillor or member of Council staff, including myself.</i>			
Recipient Signature		Date	

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Unless otherwise determined, all official gifts remain the property of Council.

Gift Allocation – Line Manager/ member of the Executive Leadership Team to complete			
<input type="checkbox"/> Gift to be retained and pooled for staff use		<input type="checkbox"/> Gift to be returned to donor	
<input type="checkbox"/> Gift to be retained by individual		<input type="checkbox"/> Other (explain below)	
Line manager Instructions/ comment			
Line Manager Signature		Date	
Manager/ELT Member Name <i>(please print)</i>			
Manager/ELT Member comment <i>(if applicable)</i>			
CEO comment <i>(if applicable)</i>			
CEO Signature		Date	
EA to CEO	<i>Gift, benefit or hospitality entered into the Gift, Benefit and Hospitality Register</i>	Date	
<i>The personal information requested on this form is being collected by Council for the purpose of maintaining Council's Gift Register. The personal information will be used solely by Council for this primary purpose or directly related purposes. The employee, contractor or Councillor understands that the personal information provided is for these purposes and that they may apply to Council for access and/or amendment of the information.</i>			

OFFICIAL**12. ATTACHMENT****128 Material Conflict Of Interest**

- (1) Subject to section 129, a relevant person has a material conflict of interest in respect of a matter if an affected person would gain a benefit or suffer a loss depending on the outcome of the matter.
- (2) The benefit may arise or the loss incurred—
 - (a) directly or indirectly; or
 - (b) in a pecuniary or non-pecuniary form.
- (3) For the purposes of this section, any of the following is an affected person—

....

 - (h) a person from whom the relevant person has received a disclosable gift.
- (4) For the purposes of subsection (3)(h), disclosable gift means one or more gifts with a total value of, or more than, \$500 or if an amount is prescribed for the purposes of this subsection, the prescribed amount, received from a person in the five years preceding the decision on the matter—
 - (a) if the relevant person held the office of Councillor, was a member of Council staff or was a member of a delegated committee at the time the gift was received; or
 - (b) if the gift was, or gifts were, or will be, required to be disclosed as an election campaign donation—

but does not include the value of any reasonable hospitality received by the relevant person at an event or function that the relevant person attended in an official capacity as a Councillor, member of Council staff or member of a delegated committee.

11.4.3 Generative Artificial Intelligence Policy

AUTHOR Manager Digital Innovation and Technology

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Director People and Governance

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Generative Artificial Intelligence Policy provides guidance and procedures to govern the use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) by Strathbogie Shire Council.

The policy aims to ensure that AI technologies are used ethically, uphold legal standards and regulations, and benefit the community. Council supports the use of AI to enhance decision making, improve process efficiency, and improve the efficacy of services.

Councillors received a briefing in March 2026, and amendments were made to the policy to reflect their feedback.

This is a new policy and is presented to the Council for consideration.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Adopt the Generative Artificial Intelligence Policy**
- 2. Authorise Council Officers to place the Generative Artificial Intelligence Policy on Council's website, along with the publication of a notice in Council's weekly newspaper column and social media pages informing the community of the policy.**

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The purpose of the report is for Council to adopt the Generative Artificial Intelligence Policy.

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

There is a need for clear policies and procedures outlining when GenAI tools may be used for Council business, including strict limitations on their use with personal, confidential, or sensitive information.

Any use of these tools must align with relevant legislation and standards, including obligations relating to (but not limited to) privacy, information security, records management, intellectual property, procurement, and human rights.

It is also important to ensure appropriate human oversight, accountability, and transparency when GenAI is used to inform advice, draft documents, or support decision-making. Council must actively manage risks such as inaccurate or biased outputs, over-reliance on automated tools, cyber security vulnerabilities, vendor lock-in, and potential reputational harm. These approaches should remain consistent with Council Plan commitments to digital transformation, innovation, customer experience, and strong governance and risk management.

Proposed policy – key components

- Statement of purpose: to support responsible, lawful and ethical use of GenAI that improves services while protecting community trust, privacy and data security
- Scope: applies to councillors, employees, volunteers, contractors and third parties using GenAI on behalf of Council or with Council data
- Principles: human-centred, lawful, transparent, secure, fair, accountable and risk-based use of GenAI tools, aligned with national and Victorian AI governance frameworks
- Acceptable use: permitted use cases (e.g. drafting routine text, summarising non-sensitive material, idea generation) and prohibited or restricted uses (e.g. automated decision-making about individuals, entry of personal or confidential information into public GenAI tools)
- Roles and responsibilities: governance roles for Executive, ICT, Information Management, Privacy, Risk and Business Units, including approval processes for new GenAI tools
- Risk, privacy and security requirements: mandatory risk assessments, privacy impact considerations, data classification controls, and alignment with cyber security frameworks before adoption of GenAI solutions
- Training and awareness: ongoing education for staff and councillors on safe and responsible GenAI use, including examples of appropriate and inappropriate use.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

As this policy reflects requirements set out in relevant legislation, no community engagement was undertaken in its development.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Council Plan

This report is consistent with the following objectives and or actions in the 2025-2029 Council Plan:

Objective Three: Deliver

We are committed to delivering quality services and infrastructure that meets the needs of our community. We aim to strengthen the Council's governance and provide improved, customer-focused experiences.

Regional, State and National Plans, Policies and Legislation

This report is aligned with the following legislation, council policies and key strategic documents:

- *Local Government Act 2020*
- Council Plan 2025-2029
- ICT Strategy 2026-2028
- Information Security Policy
- Privacy and Data Protection Policy
- Victorian Government Guidance for the safe and responsible use of generative artificial intelligence in the Victorian public sector
- Australian Government Policy for the responsible use of AI in Government
- Australian Privacy Principles

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

This report has identified the following risk(s):

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Long term maintenance and operational costs underestimated	Possible	Moderate	Medium	Ensure adoption and ongoing maintenance of GenAI technologies aligns with GenAI policy
Lack of governance controls over the use of GenAI tools	Almost Certain	Major	High	Ensure GenAI policy is adopted and reviewed at least annually
Information security and privacy risk if personal, confidential or sensitive information is entered into public GenAI tools or used inadequately controlled systems.	Possible	Moderate	High	Ensure continued education on the use of GenAI technologies
Governance and compliance risk if AI use is inconsistent with legislation, standards or external guidance, leading to potential regulatory scrutiny or adverse findings.	Possible	Moderate	High	Ensure GenAI policy is maintained in line with current legislation and guidelines
Operational and service delivery risk arising from inaccurate, biased or outdated GenAI outputs influencing advice, reports or decisions without sufficient human verification.	Possible	Moderate	Medium	Ensure all GenAI outputs are reviewed by human before being published
Ethical and reputational risk if community members perceive that Council uses GenAI in ways that are opaque, unfair or contrary to community expectations.	Possible	Moderate	Medium	Ensure GenAI policy is made available to public via council website
Strategic risk if Council fails to adopt appropriate digital tools and governance, limiting its ability to innovate and deliver efficient, modern services.	Probably	Moderate	Medium	Ensure business case for required GenAI systems is completed as required

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Council must exercise its powers under the *Local Government Act 2020*, including the overarching governance principles and public transparency obligations, when implementing and using GenAI tools.

Conflicts of interest must be managed in accordance with sections 127 (general conflict of interest) and 128 (material conflict of interest) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, including in relation to any AI-related procurements or projects.

Council must comply with Victorian privacy and data protection legislation and relevant guidance from the Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner (OVIC) on AI and enterprise GenAI tools.

Council must consider applicable Commonwealth privacy and information security obligations and guidance, including in relation to use of third-party AI providers and cloud services.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

No Council officers and/or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a general or material conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

TRANSPARENCY

In the interests of transparency and open communication with our community, this report is presented to a public Council meeting.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Development of the policy and supporting guidance can be delivered within existing staff resources.

Any additional costs associated with training, enterprise-grade GenAI tools, enhanced security controls or specialist advice is expected to be managed within existing budget parameters, or otherwise the subject of separate budget bids as required.

No external grants or specific funding have been identified for this policy, although the framework will support more efficient delivery of services and projects that may be grant-funded.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Economic

Economic considerations revolve around balancing initial investment costs against long term savings and efficiency gains. While GenAI requires upfront spending, council can achieve substantial returns through automation of routine tasks, reduced administrative overhead, and improved service delivery.

Social

Ethical and fairness concerns are central to GenAI in Local Government, particularly around bias in algorithms that can lead to discriminatory outcomes. Human oversight is essential as GenAI cannot replace human judgement in decisions affecting people's lives. Final decisions must involve human input to interpret context, navigate ethical gray areas, and uphold social justice.

Environmental

Environmental impact of GenAI tools is a growing concern, primarily driven by the energy

and water demands of GenAI-powered systems and the datacenters that support them.

Climate Change

GenAI systems can contribute to carbon emissions through energy intensive computing. Where possible, council should procure GenAI services from providers committed to net-zero targets and prioritise energy efficient algorithms.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Generative AI technologies are increasingly being used in the public sector to improve productivity, support service design, and assist with communication and analysis.

COLLABORATION

Councils involved in the Collaborative Digital Transformation group were consulted during the development of this policy based on any existing GenAI policies.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

The recommendation does not limit any human rights under the Victorian *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

CONCLUSION

Adoption of a Generative Artificial Intelligence Policy will provide Council with a clear, contemporary framework for the safe, ethical and effective use of GenAI tools. This aligns with relevant legislation and public sector guidance, and the strategic objectives set out in the 2025-2029 Council Plan.

ATTACHMENT

1. 20260421 Generative Artificial Intelligence AI Policy

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Strathbogie Shire Council

Generative Artificial Intelligence Policy

April 2026

Strathbogie
SHIRE COUNCIL

OFFICIAL

Contents

Generative Artificial Intelligence Policy2

PART 1 POLICY3

1. PURPOSE.....3

2. POLICY STATEMENT3

3. APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY3

4. DEFINITIONS.....3

5. ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES4

6. RELATED POLICIES AND LEGISLATION4

8. GENDER EQUITY.....5

8. POLICY REVIEW.....5

9. CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES ACT 2006 AND THE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY ACT 20105

PART 2 PROCEDURES6

Generative Artificial Intelligence Policy

Document ID:	SSCEDOC-43802981-505
Effective Date:	
Last Review:	New
Current Review:	April 2026
Date Adopted by Council:	
Next Scheduled Review Date:	April 2027
Responsible Officer:	Director People and Governance

OFFICIAL

PART 1 POLICY

1. PURPOSE

This policy provides guidance and procedures to govern the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) by Strathbogie Shire Council (Council) at both an individual and organisational level.

The policy aims to ensure that AI technologies are used ethically, uphold legal standards and regulations, and benefit the community. Council supports the use of AI to enhance decision making, improve process efficiency and improve the efficacy of services within a secure framework considering privacy and the accuracy of information generated.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

The policy recognises the rapid evolution of AI technologies and their growing application across the public sector. It enables the appropriate, safe, and ethical use of generative AI within the organisation, while protecting data from unauthorised exposure.

Council fosters an innovation culture that encourages the responsible use of AI to augment human capability, enhance service delivery, drive efficiency, and respond to community needs in an environment where risks are appropriately identified, managed, and ethical standards upheld with clear documentation.

3. APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY

This policy applies to Councillors, employees, volunteers, contractors, and service providers who operate within Council’s environment or handle information on behalf of Council.

Adherence to this policy is mandatory for all Council operations involving AI tools or technologies.

4. DEFINITIONS

Term	Meaning
Artificial Intelligence (AI)	Technologies that mimic human intelligence to perform tasks, learn from experience, and improve over time
Machine Learning (ML)	A subset of AI that involves algorithms and statistical models that enable computers to improve their performance on tasks through experience.
AI Tools	Software or platforms that use AI to assist with or automate tasks including content creation, analysis, or decision-making
Council	the Strathbogie Shire Council
Enterprise Generative AI Tool	A generative AI tool procured and managed by Council operating within a secure enterprise environment and integrated within Council’s systems. Examples include tenanted Microsoft 365 Copilot, Chat GPT Enterprise, Duet AI for Google Workspace, Zoom IQ and Slack GPT
Generative AI	AI technology that creates new content or curates existing content, including text, images, music, code,

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	and more, based on the data the technology accesses
Public Generative AI Tools	AI tools available to the general public that generate content based on user input. Examples include: ChatGPT, MidJourney, Bard, and Microsoft Co-Pilot (previously referred to as Bing Chat Enterprise)
Sensitive Information	Any data or information that could potentially cause harm, damage, embarrassment, or discrimination to an individual (or organisation) if it is disclosed, accessed, or used without authorisation
Confidential Information	Personal private information or proprietary information that is not in the public domain including business information e.g., Property Owner’s Name, Rating information, Contract terms
Data Privacy	Protection of personal data from unauthorised access and ensuring individuals’ control over their own data.
Bias	Systematic and unfair discrimination in AI outcomes, often due to biased data or algorithms.
Transparency	The degree to which AI decision-making processes are open and understandable to stakeholders

5. ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Role	Responsibilities
Councillors, employees, volunteers, contractors, and service providers	Are responsible for understanding and abiding by this policy and procedures at all times, and reporting privacy issues to the Coordinator Governance and Records Management
Director People and Governance	Responsible for this Policy and Procedure
Manager Digital Innovation and Technology	Responsible for updating this policy and providing technical input, implementing controls as directed by State and Federal Government agencies
Coordinator Governance and Records Management	Responsible for Information Management and Privacy

6. RELATED POLICIES AND LEGISLATION

The following Council, State, regional and national plans, and policies are relevant to this policy.

Legislation

- *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*
- *Health Records Act 2001*
- *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- *Public Records Act 1973*

AI (Artificial Intelligence) Policy Document SSCEDOC-43802981-505

OFFICIAL

- *Freedom of Information Act 1982*
- Victorian Protective Data Security Standards
- Codes of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees
- National Framework for the assurance of artificial intelligence in government

Related Council documents

- Privacy and Data Protection Policy
- Information Security Policy and Procedures
- Staff Code of Conduct CEO Directive
- Model Councillor Code of Conduct
- Health Records Policy
- Public Transparency Policy
- Records Management CEO Directive

7. GENDER EQUITY

We are committed to ensuring that all artificial intelligence systems are designed, developed, and deployed in ways that promote gender equality and prevent discrimination. Our approach recognizes that AI technologies can unintentionally reinforce existing biases, and we actively work to identify and mitigate these risks.

8. POLICY REVIEW

Council may review this policy at any time and at least twelve months from the date of adoption.

Minor amendments to the policy may be authorised by the CEO at any time where such changes do not alter the substance of the policy (eg a change to the name of a related document, or a change in legislation).

9. CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES ACT 2006 AND THE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY ACT 2010

The Council acknowledges the legal responsibility to comply with the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* and the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*.

The *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* is designed to protect the fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens. The Charter gives legal protection to 20 fundamental human rights under four key values that include freedom, respect, equality and dignity.

OFFICIAL**PART 2 PROCEDURES****AI Should Be Deployed Responsibly**

Council employees, unless otherwise authorised, should only use AI platforms in low-risk situations and take the appropriate risk mitigation strategies described in this policy. Some examples of low-risk use include using tools to brainstorm ideas or options, or to do initial drafting of content, emails, and reports. Council must ensure that all uses of AI platforms comply with Council's Acceptable Computer Use Policy, Privacy Policy, and Records Management Policy.

AI functions which pose a considerable risk to Council include but are not limited to:

- Using any Council data considered to be sensitive or confidential.
- Services which will be directly delivered by AI, or decisions made solely by AI.
- Information or data which will be used in government systems. This includes IT code or information generated by AI.

The use of AI for any functions which may pose a considerable risk to Council should be considered by the ICT Team or approved by the CEO, prior to their application.

Note: Any outputs from AI must be reviewed by employees prior to it being input into Council systems or used to inform decision making.

Accountability and Human-Centred Decision Making

All users utilising AI must:

- Complete mandatory training prior to utilising AI systems
- Use AI to support human decision-making
- Use AI in a manner that respects human rights, promotes fairness, and avoids discrimination
- Regularly assess and consider biases in AI systems to ensure fairness and equity
- Regularly assess risk for each task where AI is employed
- Independently verify the validity of information provided by an AI system.

Users must not:

- Feed sensitive, confidential, or personally identifiable information into an AI system, unless the system is specifically approved for that purpose by the Information Management Team or CEO.

Users who are designing and implementing AI systems must:

- Implement AI in a manner that respects human rights, promotes fairness, and avoids discrimination
- Mitigate biases in AI systems to ensure fairness and equity
- Maintain comprehensive documentation of internally developed AI systems, including their purpose, functionality, data sources and decision-making processes
- Demonstrate appropriate risk assessment and establishment of controls
- Implement data governance practices, including data anonymisation, data retention policies, and consent management
- Ensure public facing AI systems are accessible to all, including people with disabilities, and consider the diverse needs of the community

OFFICIAL

- Include diverse perspectives and design principles in AI development and deployment processes.
- Implement systems for continuous monitoring of AI performance, accuracy, and impact
- Conduct periodic reviews and updates to adapt to new challenges and regulatory changes
- Follow established best practices for developing and testing AI systems, ensuring reliability, robustness and security
- Incorporate ethical considerations into the design and deployment phases
- Establish mechanisms for community and stakeholder feedback on AI deployments and use feedback to continuously improve AI systems and policies.

Procurement processes where AI systems are being considered ought to:

- Prioritise vendors committed to ethical AI practices and transparency
- Include ethical standards in the evaluation criteria for AI systems and vendors
- Establish protocols for evaluating third-party AI solutions to ensure they meet ethical and technical standards prior to onboarding
- Conduct risk assessments for each AI system being evaluated throughout the procurement process
- Implement contracts that contain stringent confidentiality, protection of privacy, data security, and intellectual property (IP) provisions to address AI-generated content not currently covered.

Senior Leadership must:

- Include AI as a standing agenda item in the IT Steering Committee
- Provide ongoing training on ethical AI use, data privacy and security including risks such as hallucinations and bias
- Implement programs to raise awareness about AI technologies and their implications
- Foster collaboration between departments to ensure consistency in AI policy application and share knowledge
- Develop a unified strategy for AI deployment across departments
- Establish protocols for responding to incidents where AI systems fail or cause unintended consequences
- Implement mechanisms for reporting incidents and conducting investigations.

The Manager Digital Innovation and Technology must:

- Oversee the ethical AI deployment, review policies, and address ethical dilemmas
- Conduct regular risk assessments to identify and mitigate ethical, social, and legal risks
- Remain abreast of new applicable developments in AI.

Council engages in a broad range of activities and delivers many services for the municipal community. Accountability is a one of Council's organisational values and as such those who use AI to produce content are responsible for that content and must be able to explain and justify their advice and decisions.

Any responses or outcomes provided by AI tools must be critically analysed for appropriateness and accuracy before being used, as they can provide incorrect or inappropriate answers in a confident way.

OFFICIAL

Council employees should consider:

- Whether responses or outcomes are factually accurate, meet community expectations, or influenced by known biases in the training data; and
- intellectual property rights of third parties as well as broader privacy and copyright issues when using these tools

Privacy Protection and Security

Any data entered into AI tools is likely to be stored externally to Council.

Inputs into AI tools should not include or reveal any classified information, including but not limited to commercial in confidence and proprietary documentation, or personal information held by council. All activities and inputs in relation to the use of information with AI tools should be considered a disclosure of that information and must comply with Council's Privacy and Data Protection Policy, relevant legislation, and the information privacy principles.

Generally, Council information should only be entered into these tools if it has already been made public or would be acceptable to be made public, unless the specific tool has been identified and approved for corporate use by the ICT Team or CEO.

Where possible de-identify information before entering it into an AI tool. For example, you want to use ChatGPT to draft a letter to a resident – enter a fictitious name and address into ChatGPT and then just modify the result it produces. Council staff must also not enter information that would allow AI platforms to extrapolate classified or sensitive information based on the aggregation of content you have entered over time. Additionally, Council must avoid sharing any information that could be used for identity theft, fraud, or hacking attempts. Where available, Council should disable any settings or permissions which save data or use history.

Compliance

- Ensure AI systems comply with local, state, and federal laws, including data protection and anti-discrimination laws on a regular basis
- Policy breaches must be escalated as per the Code of Conduct
- Breaches may result in disciplinary action.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Where a breach of this policy, whether accidental or intentional, is identified individual users and system and information owners are required to notify the Manager Digital Innovation and Technology immediately.

The Manager Digital Innovation and Technology will notify the Director People and Governance. Any breach of this policy will be handled within the Council policy framework, Code of Conduct and if appropriate, the Disciplinary Procedure.

11.4.4 Video Surveillance Policy

AUTHOR Acting Manager Digital Innovation and Technology

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Director People and Governance

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council is committed to the responsible use of Closed Circuit Television (CCTV), and video surveillance systems, to enhance community safety, safeguard Council assets, and discourage unlawful or aggressive behaviour, while respecting individual privacy and complying with all relevant legislation.

A new Video Surveillance Policy has been drafted and is presented to Council for adoption.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Adopt the Video Surveillance Policy**
- 2. Authorise Council Officers to place the Video Surveillance Policy on Council's website, along with the publication of a notice in Council's newspaper column and social media pages informing the community of the policy.**

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is for Council to adopt the Video Surveillance Policy.

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

Implementing CCTV and other surveillance systems is a complex mix of legal compliance and community trust. Issues that may arise include (but not limited to):

- Privacy intrusion and legal compliance
- Unclear purpose of the surveillance systems
- Community trust and privacy concerns
- Data security and cyber risks
- Data retention
- Governance and internal misuse
- Poorly designed surveillance systems

The Video Surveillance Policy sets out Council's guidelines for the implementation and use of CCTV and surveillance systems and the steps to be taken to safely and lawfully implement the same.

The policy considers important guidelines including:

- Principles for use
- Installation, operation and maintenance
- Collection, storage and retention of recordings
- Access and release of recordings

- Privacy and limitations
- Transparency and community awareness
- Discontinuance of a CCTV system
- Breaches of the policy

A robust Video Surveillance policy provides Council and staff with clear guidance on the purpose and use of CCTV and other surveillance systems, ensuring strong governance and legal compliance while safeguarding individual privacy and safety.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Council Plan

This report is consistent with the following objectives and or actions in the 2025-2029 Council Plan:

Objective One: Connect

We are committed to enhancing access for all residents, promoting healthy living, fostering connections, and providing opportunities to thrive and participate in community life.

Objective Three: Deliver

We are committed to delivering quality services and infrastructure that meets the needs of our community. We aim to strengthen the Council's governance and provide improved, customer-focused experiences.

Regional, State and National Plans, Policies and Legislation

This report is aligned with the following legislation, council policies and key strategic documents:

- *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*
- *Surveillance Devices Act 1999*
- *Public Records Act 1973*
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- *Freedom of Information Act 1982*
- *Privacy Act 1988* (Commonwealth)
- *Local Government Act 1989*
- *Local Government Act 2020*

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

This report has identified the following risk(s):

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Failure to have a robust policy in place leaves the organisation vulnerable to legal and regulatory breaches and human rights violations	Low	Possible	Low	Adopt the Video Surveillance Policy

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

No Council officers and/or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a general or material conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

TRANSPARENCY

In the interests of transparency and open communication with our community, this report is presented to a public Council meeting.

Council will publish and maintain a register of active CCTV locations on its website to support transparency.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

The recommendation does not limit any human rights under the Victorian *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

CONCLUSION

A clear Video Surveillance Policy is essential to ensure that surveillance systems are used responsibly, lawfully, and transparently. It helps balance the need for community safety and asset protection with the protection of individual privacy, providing clear guidance on how footage is collected, stored, accessed, and used.

By setting up consistent standards and accountability measures, a Video Surveillance Policy builds public trust, reduces the risk of misuse, and ensures the Council meets its legal and ethical obligations.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 20260421 Video Surveillance Policy

OFFICIAL

Strathbogie Shire Council Video Surveillance Policy

April 2026

Strathbogie
SHIRE COUNCIL

OFFICIAL

Contents

VIDEO SURVEILLANCE POLICY2

1. PURPOSE3

2. POLICY STATEMENT3

3. APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY3

4. ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES3

5. SCOPE4

6. AUTHORISED STAFF6

7. DEFINITIONS6

8. RELATED POLICIES AND LEGISLATION7

9. GENDER EQUITY7

10. POLICY REVIEW7

11. CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES ACT 2006 AND THE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY ACT 20107

Video Surveillance Policy

Document ID:	SSEDOC-43802981-525
Effective Date:	
Last Review:	New
Current Review:	March 2026
Date Adopted by Council:	
Next Scheduled Review Date:	
Responsible Officer:	Director People and Governance

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1. PURPOSE

Council uses closed circuit television (CCTV) and video surveillance devices in limited locations to:

- Provide a safe and secure environment for staff, contractors, customers, and the community
- Deter unlawful and aggressive behaviour
- Assist law enforcement in the investigation of criminal or anti-social behaviour
- Support Council’s asset protection and risk management.

Council recognises the importance of balancing community safety with the right to privacy.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

Council is committed to using CCTV and video surveillance devices responsibly to promote community safety, protect Council assets, and deter unlawful or aggressive behaviour, while respecting individual privacy and complying with legislation.

3. APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY

This policy applies to all CCTV systems and video surveillance devices owned, operated, or managed by Council in Council facilities, vehicles, and designated public spaces. It covers the collection, storage, access, and release of surveillance footage for security, safety, and risk management purposes.

This policy does not apply to:

- Council owned dash cameras as covered by other Council Policy
- Privately owned CCTV, video surveillance devices, or dash camera systems
- Surveillance conducted by Victoria Police or other authorised agencies
- Victorian Government roads where Council does not have a maintenance responsibility
- Privately owned or controlled land
- Victorian Government owned land that Council does not control
- Federal Government owned land that Council does not control.

4. ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All Councillors, staff, contractors, and volunteers are responsible for understanding and applying this policy in the course of their work with Council.

Specific responsibilities include:

Role	Responsibilities
All staff, contractors, and volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • must comply with the requirements of this policy when working in areas where surveillance monitoring is installed.

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Managers and supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> are responsible for ensuring their teams and contractors are aware of the policy and that procedures are followed.
Authorised staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure the secure management, access, and release of surveillance footage in accordance with this policy and relevant legislation. coordinate the installation of new CCTV and video surveillance devices as approved by the Executive Leadership Team
Executive Leadership Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess and provide approval for installation of new CCTV and video surveillance devices

5. SCOPE

5.1. Principles

5.1.1. Council will use CCTV and video surveillance devices to provide a safe and secure environment for staff, contractors, customers, and the community.

5.1.2. CCTV and video surveillance devices may be used to deter unlawful, aggressive, or anti-social behaviour and to assist law enforcement in investigations.

5.1.3. CCTV and video surveillance devices may be used to support risk management and the protection of Council assets.

5.2. Installation, Operation and Maintenance

5.2.1. CCTV and video surveillance devices will only be installed in locations where there is a demonstrated need for safety, security, or asset protection. CCTV and surveillance installations must meet security and environmental requirements.

5.2.2. Only authorised staff or appointed contractors may install, operate, and maintain CCTV or video surveillance devices.

5.2.3. All Council-owned CCTV and video surveillance devices are recognised as Council assets and will be included in Council’s asset register in line with asset management procedures. Renewal of CCTV and surveillance systems will be performed to ensure equipment meets current security and functionality requirements.

5.2.4. All CCTV installations must be under a current maintenance contract which includes regular maintenance and testing.

5.2.5 All CCTV and surveillance installations must be capable of complying with the retention requirements as set out in section 5.3

5.2.6. Any new CCTV and surveillance installation requirements must be presented to Executive Leadership Team for approval.

5.3. Collection, Storage and Retention of Recordings

5.3.1. Recordings must be stored securely and managed in accordance with the *Public Records Act 1973* and the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*.

OFFICIAL

5.3.2. Recordings may be retained for up to ninety (90) days, after which they will be automatically overwritten, unless required for investigation, court proceedings, or other lawful purposes.

5.3.3 Documentation relating to the installation, operation, and access to CCTV and video surveillance devices and their recordings must be retained for seven years.

5.3.4. The retention of, and access to, recorded material will only be for the purpose provided by this Policy and applicable legislation.

5.3.5. Copies of recordings will only be made where required for evidence or lawful investigation, via formal written requests to Council.

5.3.6. Material recorded on CCTV systems contracted by the Council will be held in accordance with the storage terms and conditions of the contract.

5.3.7. Upon becoming aware of a potential breach of data privacy, a Council Officer must notify the Chief Executive Officer.

5.4. Access and Release of Recordings

5.4.1. Only authorised staff may access or view recordings. A register must be maintained which captures details of any access to CCTV or surveillance recordings, including maintenance performed on CCTV and surveillance systems.

5.4.2. Staff with responsibility for the maintenance or management of a Council asset or facility may view CCTV systems and video surveillance devices, whether live or recorded, where operationally required to carry out their functions or to respond to an actual or reported emergency.

5.4.3. Internal requests to access recordings must be made in writing and approved by the Chief Executive Officer or the Director People and Governance.

5.4.4. Recordings may be released to Victoria Police, other law enforcement agencies, or as required by law (e.g. court order).

5.4.5. Recordings may be released to the general public. This right of access is subject to limited exceptions and exemptions. These requests are to be made in line with the Victorian *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

5.4.6. External organisations, clubs, or groups are not permitted access to CCTV or surveillance devices or recordings unless required by law or requested in line with the Victorian *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

5.4.7 Recordings may be blurred, redacted, or otherwise modified to protect the privacy of persons or property captured in footage that is unrelated to the request

5.5. Privacy and Limitations

5.5.1. Council will not install or use CCTV or video surveillance devices in areas where staff and members of the public have a reasonable expectation of privacy, including bathrooms, change rooms, and private offices.

5.5.2. Recordings will not be used to monitor general staff performance. CCTV and video surveillance devices may only be reviewed in relation to incidents of alleged serious misconduct, safety, or security matters.

OFFICIAL

5.5.3. Recordings must not be used to monitor community members using Council facilities in ordinary circumstances. Footage may only be reviewed where necessary for the purposes outlined in this Policy.

5.6. Transparency and Community Awareness

5.6.1. Signage will be displayed at the entrance to all facilities and public spaces where CCTV or surveillance devices are in operation.

5.6.2. Council will publish and maintain a register of active CCTV and video surveillance locations on its website to support transparency.

5.7. Discontinuance of a CCTV or Video Surveillance System

5.7.1. The decision to discontinue a CCTV or video surveillance system may be made at any time by the Chief Executive Officer or the Director People and Governance.

5.7.2. A CCTV or video surveillance system must be discontinued as soon as practicably possible if its operation is found to be inconsistent with the purposes set out in this Policy, or when directed by a law enforcement agency.

5.7.3. A CCTV system that is identified as having cyber security vulnerabilities will be taken offline pending remediation of vulnerabilities or replacement of that CCTV system.

5.8. Breaches of this Policy

5.8.1. Staff, contractors, or volunteers found to be accessing or using CCTV or video surveillance footage in a manner not consistent with this Policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or contract.

5.8.2. The unauthorised sharing or distribution of CCTV or video surveillance footage is strictly prohibited and will be treated as serious misconduct.

5.8.3. Any use of CCTV or video surveillance footage for criminal purposes will be referred to Victoria Police or the appropriate law enforcement agency.

6. AUTHORISED STAFF

Authorised Staff

- Freedom of Information Officer
- Manager Digital Innovation and Technology

Facility Maintenance and Management

- Manager Operations
- Coordinator Waste and Environment

Authorised Staff may be updated by CEO approval.

7. DEFINITIONS

ITEM	MEANING
CCTV Video Surveillance Devices	Closed Circuit Television: system of fixed or mobile cameras installed by Council to monitor and record activity.

OFFICIAL

Council	Strathbogrie Shire Council
Authorised Staff	Council officers authorised to manage or review CCTV and video surveillance devices and recordings
Public Place	Any area owned, managed, or controlled by Council that is open and accessible to the community, including facilities, parks, reserves, roadsides and transfer stations.
Recording	Any still image, video footage, or audio captured by CCTV or other video surveillance device, whether stored digitally or in another format.

8. RELATED POLICIES AND LEGISLATION

The following council, state, regional and national plans and policies are relevant to this policy:

- *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic)
- *Surveillance Devices Act 1999* (Vic)
- *Public Records Act 1973* (Vic)
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* (Vic)
- *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Vic)
- *Privacy Act 1988* (Commonwealth)
- *Local Government Act 1989* (Vic)
- *Local Government Act 2020* (Vic)
-

9. GENDER EQUITY

Council is committed to ensuring that the use of video surveillance technologies is conducted in a manner that upholds gender equity, fairness, and respect for all individuals. We recognize that surveillance systems, including those enhanced by artificial intelligence, may carry risks of bias or disproportionate impact across different genders.

10. POLICY REVIEW

Council may review this policy at any time and at least two years from the date of adoption.

Minor amendments to the policy may be authorised by the CEO at any time where such changes do not alter the substance of the policy (e.g. a change to the name of a related document, or a change in legislation).

11. CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES ACT 2006 AND THE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY ACT 2010

The Council acknowledges the legal responsibility to comply with the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (the Charter)* and the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*. The *Charter* is designed to protect the fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens. *The Charter* gives legal protection to twenty fundamental human rights under four key values that include freedom, respect, equality and dignity.

11.4.5 S11A and S11B Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation

AUTHOR Governance Officer

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Director People and Governance

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Regular reviews are required to be made to the S11A Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation (*Planning and Environment Act 1987*) and the S11B Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation (*Environmental Protection 2017*) to ensure alignment with current organisational structures and legislation.

The *Local Government Act 1989* is still active in relation to the appointment of authorised officers, not the *Local Government Act 2020*. These Instruments give specified officers the ability to enforce legislation and ensure any enforcement action is undertaken on behalf of the Council in a legal and efficient manner. The Instruments also appoint officers to key roles and positions including (but not limited to) Senior Strategic Planner, Senior Environmental Health Officer, and Community and Planning Compliance Officer.

The instruments come into force immediately after the Council's Chief Executive Officer signature is affixed to the instrument and remains in force until Council determines to vary or revoke it.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

In the exercise of the powers conferred by section 224 of the *Local Government Act 1989* (the Act) and the other legislation referred to in the attached instruments of appointment and authorisation (S11A and S11B), Strathbogie Shire Council (Council) resolves that:

- 1. The members of Council staff referred to in the instruments be appointed and authorised as set out in the instruments**
- 2. The S11A Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation (*Planning and Environment Act 1987*) endorsed by Council at its meeting on 17 February 2026 be revoked and replaced by the Instrument dated 21 April 2026**
- 3. The S11B Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation (*Environment Protection Act 2017*) endorsed by Council at its meeting on 17 February 2026 revoked and replaced by the Instrument dated 21 April 2026**
- 4. The Instruments be executed by the Chief Executive Officer**
- 5. The Instruments come into force immediately when the Chief Executive Officer executes the Instruments, and the Instruments remain in force until Council determines to vary or revoke it/them.**

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to update changes to the S11A Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation (*Planning and Environment Act 1987*) and the S11B Instrument of Appointment

and Authorisation (*Environment Protection Act 2017*) due to organisation changes, and specific legislation relating to:

1. Changes to Delegated Officers

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

The S11A Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation (*Planning and Environment Act 1987*) is used to authorise officers to enforce the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and institute proceedings on behalf of the Council or represent the Council.

The S11B Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation (*Environment Protection Act 2017*) is used to authorise officers to enforce the *Environmental Protection Act 2017* and institute proceedings on behalf of the Council or represent the Council.

A person who is appointed to a position has the authority to exercise the powers of that position directly from the enabling legislation. Authorisations also allow the relevant officers of Council to generally institute proceedings for offences against Acts and regulations as Authorised Officers under the various Act(s).

Council's endorsement of the S11A and S11B Instruments means that:

- Updated Instruments of Appointment reflect the current organisation structure
- Council is practicing good governance in line with its obligations under the *Local Government Act 1989 and Local Government Act 2020* and other statutory bodies that affect Council operations
- Public safety is monitored and maintained in line with our legislative obligations.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Council Plan

This report is consistent with the following key strategic focus areas and or actions in the 2025-2029 Council Plan:

Objective Three: Deliver

We are committed to delivering quality services and infrastructure that meets the needs of our community. We aim to strengthen the Council's governance and provide improved, customer-focused experiences

Regional, State and National Plans, Policies and Legislation

This report is aligned with the following legislation, Council Policies and key strategic documents:

- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Local Government Act 1989*
- *Planning and Environment Act 1987*
- *Environment Protection Act 2017*

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

This report has identified the following risk(s):

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
If the Instruments of Appointment and Authorisations are not current, the enforceability of decisions and actions taken may be compromised, and there may be legal, reputational, and administrative concern for the Council.	Low	Low	Low	Legal, reputational, and administrative risk is minimised by maintaining the currency of Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation and reviewing them every six months or as required.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Not maintaining Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation can compromise compliance and impact on enforcement capability.

A copy of the Instruments will be made available to the public in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and regulations.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

No Council officers and/or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a general or material conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

TRANSPARENCY

This report will be presented in a Council meeting, open to the public and live streamed to the public. This is consistent with the Council's Transparency Policy, enabling the community to have oversight into the matters being discussed by Council and the decisions being made.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

There are no human rights implications arising from this report.

CONCLUSION

The S11A and S11B Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation give specified officers the ability to enforce legislation under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and *Environment Protection Act 2017*, and ensuring any enforcement action undertaken on behalf of Council is legal and enforceable.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 202604 S11A_Instrument_Appoint_Authorisation_Planning_Environment Act1987
2. 202604 S11B_Instrument Appointment Authorisation_EPA_Act 2017

S11A Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation (Planning and Environment Act 1987)



Strathbogie Shire Council

**Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation
(*Planning and Environment Act 1987* only)**

Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation (*Planning and Environment Act 1987*)

In this instrument "officer" means -

Rachael Frampton	Director Community and Planning [DCP]
Vaughn Notting	Director Sustainable Infrastructure [DSI]
Awais Sadiq	Manager Planning and Investment [MPI]
Leanne Carbonneau	Manager Community Safety [MCS]
Lisa Eade	Senior Environmental Health Officer [SEHO]
Jennifer Rebecchi	Environmental Health Officer [EHO]
Daniel Moloney	Senior Strategic Planner [SP1]
Jack Francis	Senior Planner [SP2]
Stephanie Glasbergen	Town Planner [TP]
Barbara Taylor	Town Planner [TP]
Tracey Maney	Community Compliance Officer [CCO]
Brendan Dudley	Community Compliance Officer [CCO]
Vacant	Community and Planning Compliance Officer [CPCO]
Marque Shedden	Tree Project Officer [TPO]

By this instrument of appointment and authorisation Strathbogie Shire Council -

under s 147(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* – authorises the officers to carry out the duties or functions and to exercise the powers of an authorised officer under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*; and

[SP1, SP2, TP, MPI, DCP, SEHO, EHO, MCS, CCO, CPCO, DSI, TPO]

and

1. under s 313 of the *Local Government Act 2020* authorises the officers either generally or in a particular case to institute proceedings for offences against the Acts and regulations described in this instrument.

[SP1, SP2, TP, MPI, DCP, SEHO, EHO, MCS, CCO, CPCO, DSI, TPO]

It is declared that this instrument -

- comes into force immediately upon its execution
- remains in force until varied or revoked.

This instrument is authorised by a resolution of the Strathbogie Shire Council on 21 April 2026

This Instrument is made by the Chief Executive Officer of Strathbogie Shire Council in the exercise of their authority to act on Council's behalf, which includes the authority conferred by resolution of Council made on 21 April 2026.

Signed by Rachelle Quattrocchi the Chief)
Executive Officer of Council in the presence of:)

.....
Witness

Date:

Date:

*S11B Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation
(Environment Protection Act 2017)*



Strathbogie Shire Council

**Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation
(*Environment Protection Act 2017* only)**

**Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation
(Environment Protection Act 2017)**

In this instrument "officer" means -

Rachael Frampton	Director Community and Planning [DCP]
Vaughn Notting	Director Sustainable Infrastructure [DSI]
Awais Sadiq	Manager Planning and Investment [MPI]
Leanne Carboneau	Manager Community Safety [MCS]
Lisa Eade	Senior Environmental Health Officer [SEHO]
Jennifer Rebbechi	Environmental Health Officer [EHO]
Daniel Moloney	Senior Strategic Planner [SP1]
Jack Francis	Senior Planner [SP2]
Stephanie Glasbergen	Town Planner [TP]
Barbara Taylor	Town Planner [TP]
Shaun Langlands	Environment and Waste Coordinator [EWC]
Tracey Maney	Community Compliance Officer [CCO]
Brendan Dudley	Community Compliance Officer [CCO]
Vacant	Community and Planning Compliance Officer [CPCO]
Marque Shedden	Tree Project Officer [TPO]

By this instrument of appointment and authorisation, Strathbogie Shire Council -

under s 242(2) of the *Environment Protection Act 2017* ('Act') and the Instrument of Delegation of the Environment Protection Authority under the Act dated 4 June 2021 - appoints the officers to be authorised officers for the purposes of exercising the powers and functions set out in the Instrument of Direction of the Environment Protection Authority under the Act dated 4 June 2021.

[SEHO, EHO, MPI, SP1, SP2, TP, MCS, EWC, CCO, CPCO, DCP, DSI, TPO]

It is declared that this instrument -

- comes into force immediately upon its execution
- remains in force until varied or revoked.

This instrument is authorised by a resolution of the Strathbogie Shire Council on 21 April 2026

This Instrument is made by the Chief Executive Officer of Strathbogie Shire Council in the exercise of their authority to act on Council's behalf, which includes the authority conferred by resolution of Council made on 21 April 2026.

Signed by Rachelle Quattrocchi the Chief)
Executive Officer of Council in the presence of:)

.....
Witness

Date:

Date:

11.4.6 S18 Instrument of Sub-Delegation under the Environment Protection Act 2017

AUTHOR Governance Officer

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Director People and Governance

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Section 11 of the *Local Government Act 2020* allows Council to delegate powers, duties, or functions to the Chief Executive Officer or delegated officers.

The *Environment Protection Act 2017* and Environment Protection Regulations 2021 commenced on 1 July 2021. While local government's regulatory role remains unchanged, the legislation updates council powers, including delegations from the Environment Protection Authority (EPA).

The S18 Instrument sub-delegates EPA-derived powers from Council to designated staff positions.

This Instrument also covers powers that cannot be sub-delegated by the Chief Executive Officer and must be delegated directly by Council to subject matter experts, specifically under the *Environment Protection Act 2017*.

RECOMMENDATION

1. **The officers delegated to positions referred to in the S18 Instrument of Sub-Delegation under the *Environment Protection Act 2017* be appointed and authorised as set out in the Instrument**
2. **The Instrument be executed by the Chief Executive Officer**
3. **The Instrument come into force immediately when the Chief Executive Officer executes the Instrument, and the Instrument remains in force until Council determines to vary or revoke it.**

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to update changes to the S18 Instrument of Sub-Delegation under the *Environment Protection Act 2017*, due to organisational changes and specific legislation relating to:

1. Changes to Delegated Officers

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

Section 18 of the *Environment Protection Act 2017* allows Council that has been given powers under the Act to sub-delegate those powers to appropriately qualified staff.

The S18 Instrument of Sub-Delegation is important because:

- Enables action: It ensures authorised officers can legally exercise environmental powers (e.g. inspections, notices, enforcement).

- Compliance: Without a valid S18 delegation, decisions or enforcement actions could be invalid
- Expertise: It directs specialised powers to subject matter experts rather than general roles.
- Accountability: It clearly defines who holds which powers, reducing risk and confusion.
- Efficiency: It avoids bottlenecks by allowing decisions to be made at the appropriate staff level rather than always by Council.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Council Plan

This report is consistent with the following key strategic focus areas and or actions in the 2025-2029 Council Plan:

Objective Three: Deliver

We are committed to delivering quality services and infrastructure that meets the needs of our community. We aim to strengthen the Council’s governance and provide improved, customer-focused experiences

Regional, State and National Plans, Policies and Legislation

This report is aligned with the following legislation, council policies and key strategic documents:

- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Environment Protection Act 2017*
- Council Plan 2025-2029

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

This report has identified the following risk(s):

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
If the Instruments of Appointment and Authorisations are not current, the enforceability of decisions and actions taken may be compromised, and there may be legal, reputational, and administrative concern for the Council.	Possible	Moderate	Medium	Legal and reputational risk is minimised by maintaining the currency of Sub-Delegations and reviewing them every six months or as required.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Not maintaining Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation can compromise compliance and impact on enforcement capability.

A copy of the Instrument of Sub-Delegation will be available to the public according to the *Local Government Act 2020* and regulations.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

No Council officers and/or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a general or material conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

TRANSPARENCY

This report will be presented in a Council meeting, open to the public and live streamed to the public. This is consistent with the Council's Transparency Policy, enabling the community to have oversight into the matters being discussed by Council and the decisions being made.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

The recommendation does not limit any human rights under the Victorian *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

CONCLUSION

The S18 Instrument of Sub-Delegation give specified officers the ability to enforce legislation under the *Environment Protection Act 2017*.

It ensures environmental regulation at the Council level is lawful, effective, and carried out by the right people.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 202604 S18 Instrument Sub Delegation EPA Act 2017

OFFICIAL

***S18 Instrument of Sub-Delegation
under the Environment Protection Act 2017***



Strathbogie Shire Council

Instrument of Sub-Delegation

to

Members of Council staff

OFFICIAL

Instrument of Sub-Delegation

By this Instrument of Sub-Delegation, in exercise of the power conferred by s 437(2) of the *Environment Protection Act 2017* ('Act') and the Instrument of Delegation of the Environment Protection Authority under the Act dated 4 June 2021, the Council:

1. delegates each duty and/or function and/or power described in column 1 of the Schedule (and summarised in column 2 of the Schedule) to the member of Council staff holding, acting in, or performing the duties of the office or position described in column 3 of the Schedule
2. record that references in the Schedule are as follows

Director Community and Planning [DCP]
 Director Sustainable Infrastructure [DSI]
 Manager Planning and Investment [MPI]
 Manager Community Safety [MCS]
 Senior Environmental Health Officer [SEHO]
 Environmental Health Officer [EHO]
 Senior Strategic Planner [SP1]
 Senior Planner [SP2]
 Town Planner [TP]
 Environmental and Waste Coordinator [EWC]
 Community Compliance Officer [CCO]
 Community and Planning Compliance Officer [CPCO]
 Tree Project Officer [TPO]

3. this Instrument of Sub-Delegation is authorised by a **resolution of Council** passed on 21 April 2026 pursuant to a power of sub-delegation conferred by the Instrument of Delegation of the Environment Protection Authority under the Act dated 4 June 2021

[SEHO, EHO, MPI, SP1, SP2, TP, MCS, EWC, CCO, CPCO, DCP, DSI, TPO]

4. the delegation:
 - 4.1 comes into force immediately upon its execution
 - 4.2 remains in force until varied or revoked
 - 4.3 is subject to any conditions and limitations set out in sub-paragraph 5, and the Schedule; and
 - 4.4 must be exercised in accordance with any guidelines or policies which Council from time to time adopts; and
5. this Instrument of Sub-Delegation is subject to the following limitations:
 - 5.1 the powers, duties and functions described in column and summarised in column 2 of the Schedule are only delegated for the purpose of regulating:
 - 5.1.1 onsite wastewater management systems with a design or actual flow rate of sewage not exceeding 5000 litres on any day; and
 - 5.1.2 noise from the construction, demolition, or removal of residential premises

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- 6. the delegate must not determine the issue, take the action, or do the act or thing:
 - 6.1 if the issue, action, act, or thing is an issue, action, or thing which Council has previously designated as an issue, action, act, or thing which must be the subject of a Resolution of Council
 - 6.2 if the determining of the issue, taking of the action or doing of the act or thing would or would be likely to involve a decision which is inconsistent with a
 - (a) policy; or
 - (b) strategy
 adopted by Council
 - 6.3 if the determining of the issue, the taking of the action or the doing of the act or thing cannot be the subject of a lawful delegation; or
 - 6.4 the determining of the issue, the taking of the action or the doing of the act or thing is already the subject of an exclusive delegation to another member of Council staff.

This instrument of Sub Delegation is authorised by a resolution of the Strathbogie Shire Council on 21 April 2026

This Instrument of Sub Delegation is made by the Chief Executive Officer of Strathbogie Shire Council in the exercise of their authority to act on Council's behalf, which includes the authority conferred by resolution of Council made on 21 April 2026.

Signed by Rachelle Quattrocchi the Chief)
 Executive Officer of Council in the presence of:)

.....
 Witness

Date:

Date:

OFFICIAL

SCHEDULE

OFFICIAL

ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION ACT 2017			
Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4
PROVISION	THING DELEGATED	DELEGATE	CONDITIONS & LIMITATIONS
s 271	Power to issue improvement notice	SEHO, EHO, MPI, SP1, SP2, TP, MCS, EWC, CCO, CPCO, DCP, DSI	
s 272	Power to issue prohibition notice	SEHO, EHO, MPI, SP1, SP2, TP, MCS, EWC, CCO, CPCO, DCP, DSI	
s 279	Power to amend a notice	SEHO, MPI, EHO SP1, SP2, TP, MCS, EWC, CCO, CPCO, DCP, DSI	
s 358	Functions of the Environment Protection Authority	SEHO, MPI, EHO SP1, SP2, TP, MCS, EWC, CCO, CPCO, DCP, DSI, TPO	
s 359(1)(b)	Power to do all things that are necessary or convenient to be done for or in connection with the performance of the Environment Protection Authority's functions and duties and to enable the Authority to achieve its objective.	SEHO, MPI, EHO SP1, SP2, TP, MCS, EWC, CCO, CPCO, DCP, DSI, TPO	

OFFICIAL

s 359(2)	Power to give advice to persons with duties or obligations	SEHO, MPI, EHO SP1, SP2, TP, MCS, EWC, CCO, CPCO, DCP, DSI, TPO	
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11.4.7 Record of Informal Meeting of Councillors March 2026

AUTHOR Governance Officer

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Director People and Governance

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In accordance with Section (114) of the Strathbogie Shire Council Governance Rules, if there is a meeting of Councillors that:

- is scheduled or planned for the purpose of discussing the business of Council or briefing Councillors
- is attended by at least one member of Council staff, and
- is not a Council meeting, Delegated Committee meeting or Community Asset Committee meeting; these are known as Informal Meetings of Councillors.

The Chief Executive Officer must ensure that a summary of the matters discussed at the meeting are:

- tabled at the next convenient Council meeting
- recorded in the minutes of that Council meeting.

The details of the Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors for the period 1 March 2026 to 31 March 2026 are attached to this report.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council note the Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors from 1 March 2026 to 31 March 2026.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

No Council officers and/or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a general or material conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

TRANSPARENCY

In the interests of transparency and open communication with our community, this report is presented to a public Council meeting.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 20260303 Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors
2. 20260310 Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors
3. 20260317 Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors
4. 20260324 Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors
5. 20260331 Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors

Staff Only

Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors

Meeting Details	Title	Councillor Briefing	
	Date	3 March 2026 at 9:00 am	
Present	Location	Euroa Community Conference Centre	
	Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cr Jeffery Cr Carlson Cr Binks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cr Holloway Cr Stevens Cr Halsall
	Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rachelle Quattrocchi – Chief Executive Officer Amanda Tingay – Director People and Governance Rachael Frampton – Director Community and Planning Gary Van Driel – Director Sustainable Infrastructure Sharon Rainsbury – Executive Manager Communications, Advocacy and Customer Service Awais Sadiq – Manager Planning and Investment Dan Moloney – Senior Strategic Planner Jack Francis – Senior Planner Barbara Taylor Town Planner Nick Maple – Manager Capital Infrastructure and Strategic Projects Kate McKernan – Manager Fire Recovery Andrew Davis – Chief Financial Officer Sagara Gunasekara – Finance Coordinator Kerry Lynch – Governance Officer 	
	Guest Speakers	Guy Tierney, Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority Planning applicant and landowner	
	Apologies	Cr Ewart-Kennedy	

Disclosures of Conflict of Interests

Disclosure of Interests are to be made immediately prior to any relevant item being discussed
(Local Government Act 2020 - Section 131)

Matters Considered		Disclosures and Comments
1	Longwood Berrys Lane Fire Update	None
2	GBCMA -Declaration of 1% Annual Exceedance Probability, Nagambie	None
3	Submission – Parliamentary Inquiry into 2026 Summer Fires Across Victoria	None
4	Budget Workshop	None
5	Planning briefing and hearing of submission P2025-089	None
6	Review draft Agenda Council Meeting 17 March 2026	Amanda Tingay MAV Motions

The meeting concluded at 4:00 pm

Record completed by	Officer Name - Officer Title	Kerry Lynch – Governance Officer
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Staff Only

Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors

Meeting Details	Title	Councillor Briefing	
	Date	10 March 2026 at 9:00 am	
	Location	Euroa Community Conference Centre	
Present	Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cr Jeffery Cr Carlson Cr Binks (online) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cr Holloway Cr Stevens Cr Halsall
	Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rachelle Quattrocchi – Chief Executive Officer Amanda Tingay – Director People and Governance Rachael Frampton – Director Community and Planning Gary Van Driel – Director Sustainable Infrastructure Sharon Rainsbury – Executive Manager Communications, Advocacy and Customer Service Awais Sadiq – Manager Planning and Investment Kate McKernan – Manager Fire Recovery Leanne Carbonneau – Manager Community Safety Greg Underhill – Manager Digital Innovation and Technology Fiona Spencer – Geospatial Coordinator Shaun Langlands – Coordinator Waste and Environment Kerry Lynch – Governance Officer 	
	Guest Speakers		
	Apologies	Cr Ewart-Kennedy	

Disclosures of Conflict of Interests

Disclosure of Interests are to be made immediately prior to any relevant item being discussed
(Local Government Act 2020 - Section 131)

Matters Considered		Disclosures and Comments
1	Longwood Berrys Lane Fire Update	None
2	Advocacy Update	None
3	Native Vegetation Requirements and Planning Compliance	None
4	Return to Business as Usual Following Longwood Berrys Lane Fire	None
5	Firewood Update	None
6	POZI Update	
7	Review draft Agenda Council Meeting 17 March 2026	Amanda Tingay MAV Motions

The meeting concluded at 4:30 pm

Record completed by	Officer Name - Officer Title	Kerry Lynch – Governance Officer
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Staff Only

Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors

Meeting Details	Title	Councillor Briefing	
	Date	17 March 2026 at 1:00 pm	
Present	Location	Euroa Community Conference Centre	
	Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cr Ewart Kennedy Cr Carlson Cr Binks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cr Holloway Cr Stevens Cr Halsall
	Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rachelle Quattrocchi – Chief Executive Officer Amanda Tingay – Director People and Governance Rachael Frampton – Director Community and Planning Gary Van Driel – Director Sustainable Infrastructure Sharon Rainsbury – Executive Manager Communications, Advocacy and Customer Service Kate McKernan – Manager Fire Recovery Andrew Davis – Chief Financial Officer Sagara Gunasekara – Finance Coordinator Kerry Lynch – Governance Officer 	
	Guest Speakers		
	Apologies	Cr Jeffery	

Disclosures of Conflict of Interests

Disclosure of Interests are to be made immediately prior to any relevant item being discussed
(Local Government Act 2020 - Section 131)

Matters Considered		Disclosures and Comments
1	Longwood Berrys Lane Fire Update	None
2	Budget Update	None
3	Review Agenda Council Meeting 17 March 2026	Amanda Tingay MAV Motions

The meeting concluded at 3:30 pm

Record completed by	Officer Name - Officer Title	Kerry Lynch – Governance Officer
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Staff Only

Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors

Meeting Details	Title	Councillor Briefing	
	Date	24 March 2026 at 9:00 pm	
Present	Location	Euroa Community Conference Centre	
	Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cr Ewart Kennedy Cr Carlson Cr Binks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cr Holloway Cr Stevens Cr Halsall
	Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rachelle Quattrocchi – Chief Executive Officer Amanda Tingay – Director People and Governance Rachael Frampton – Director Community and Planning Gary Van Driel – Director Sustainable Infrastructure Sharon Rainsbury – Executive Manager Communications, Advocacy and Customer Service Andrew Davis – Chief Financial Officer Sagara Gunasekara – Finance Coordinator Nick Maple – Manager Capital Infrastructure and Strategic Projects 	
	Guest Speakers		
	Apologies	Cr Jeffery	

Disclosures of Conflict of Interests

Disclosure of Interests are to be made immediately prior to any relevant item being discussed
(Local Government Act 2020 - Section 131)

Matters Considered		Disclosures and Comments
1	Budget Workshop	None

The meeting concluded at 1:00 pm

Record completed by	Officer Name - Officer Title	Kerry Lynch – Governance Officer
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Staff Only

Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors

Meeting Details	Title	Councillor Briefing	
	Date	31 March 2026 at 9:00 pm	
	Location	Euroa Community Conference Centre	
Present	Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cr Jeffery • Cr Ewart Kennedy • Cr Carlson • Cr Binks (online) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cr Holloway • Cr Stevens • Cr Halsall
	Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rachelle Quattrocchi – Chief Executive Officer • Amanda Tingay – Director People and Governance • Rachael Frampton – Director Community and Planning • Gary Van Driel – Director Sustainable Infrastructure • Sharon Rainsbury – Executive Manager Communications, Advocacy and Customer Service • Andrew Davis – Chief Financial Officer • Sagara Gunasekara – Finance Coordinator • Awais Sadiq – Manager Planning and Investment • Nick Maple – Capital Infrastructure and Strategic Projects 	
	Guest Speakers		
	Apologies		

Disclosures of Conflict of Interests

Disclosure of Interests are to be made immediately prior to any relevant item being discussed
(Local Government Act 2020 - Section 131)

Matters Considered		Disclosures and Comments
1	Budget Workshop	None
2	Planning Refresher – Urban Growth Strategy and Rural Residential Land Use Strategy	None

The meeting concluded at 1:30 pm

Record completed by	Officer Name - Officer Title	Kerry Lynch – Governance Officer
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11.5 Communications, Advocacy and Customer Service

11.5.1 Quarterly Report - Customer Service

AUTHOR Executive Manager Communications, Advocacy and Customer Service

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Executive Manager Communications, Advocacy and Customer Service

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The quarterly Customer Service Report summarises Council's customer service performance, key metrics and outcomes for the period 1 January 2026 to 31 March 2026. It informs Council and the community of progress in improving service quality and responsiveness.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

Note the Quarterly Customer Service Report for the period 1 January 2026 to 31 March 2026.

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

For Council to note the quarterly Customer Service Report for the period 1 January 2026 to 31 March 2026.

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

The attachment to this report provides a comprehensive summary and graphical representation of core Customer Service activities undertaken between 1 January 2026 to 31 March 2026.

The summary covers key operational metrics, including customer request volumes and types, inbound calls handled by the Customer Service team and service centre foot traffic.

These results show that the Customer Service team successfully resolved 85 per cent of queries received via phone at first contact. January recorded the highest number of new queries registered in the Altitude system with 1254. A higher number of calls and queries were received in January due to the Longwood Berrys Lane bushfire. In comparison, there were 1143 inquiries registered in Altitude in March.

With the appointment of a new Customer Service Coordinator, reporting criteria will be reassessed to ensure Council is gathering and reporting data that provides the best indication of our customer service response.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Council Plan

This report is consistent with the following objectives and or actions in the 2025-2029 Council Plan:

Objective One: Connect

We are committed to enhancing access for all residents, promoting healthy living, fostering connections, and providing opportunities to thrive and participate in community life.

Objective Two: Sustain

We aim to collaborate with others to foster a sustainable environment, a thriving economy, and resilient communities.

Objective Three: Deliver

We are committed to delivering quality services and infrastructure that meets the needs of our community. We aim to strengthen the Council’s governance and provide improved, customer-focused experiences.

Regional, State and National Plans, Policies and Legislation

This report is aligned with the following legislation, council policies and key strategic documents:

- Customer Service Charter
- Council Plan 2025-2029

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

This report has identified the following risk(s):

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Inaccurate or incomplete data could lead to misleading conclusions about service performance	Unlikely	Minimal	Low	Implement regular data validation and quality checks and ensure clear definitions and consistent recording of customer service metrics.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

No Council officers and/or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a general or material conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

TRANSPARENCY

In the interests of transparency and open and honest communication with our community, this report is presented to a public Council meeting.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Economic

Analysis of customer service data supports the identification of trends and informs service improvement initiatives.

Social

Ongoing monitoring of performance metrics supports the continued effectiveness of customer service functions.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

This Quarterly Customer Service Report presents performance to Council and the community, demonstrating an innovative approach to transparency and accountability. It supports continuous improvement by measuring outcomes and tracking progress in service quality and responsiveness.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

The recommendation does not limit any human rights under the Victorian *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

CONCLUSION

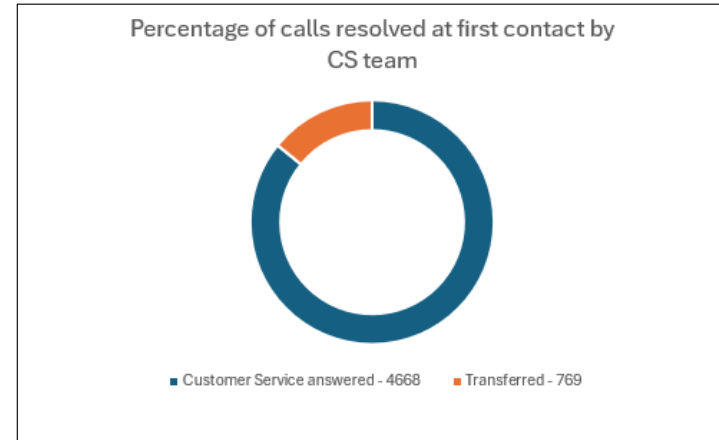
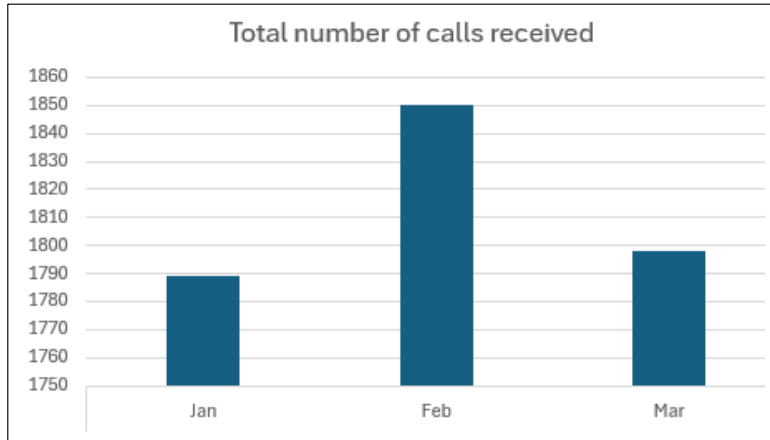
The quarterly Customer Service Report provides Council and the community with a detailed overview of customer service performance during the reporting period, performance metrics and outcomes achieved for the period 1 January 2026 to 31 March 2026.

ATTACHMENT

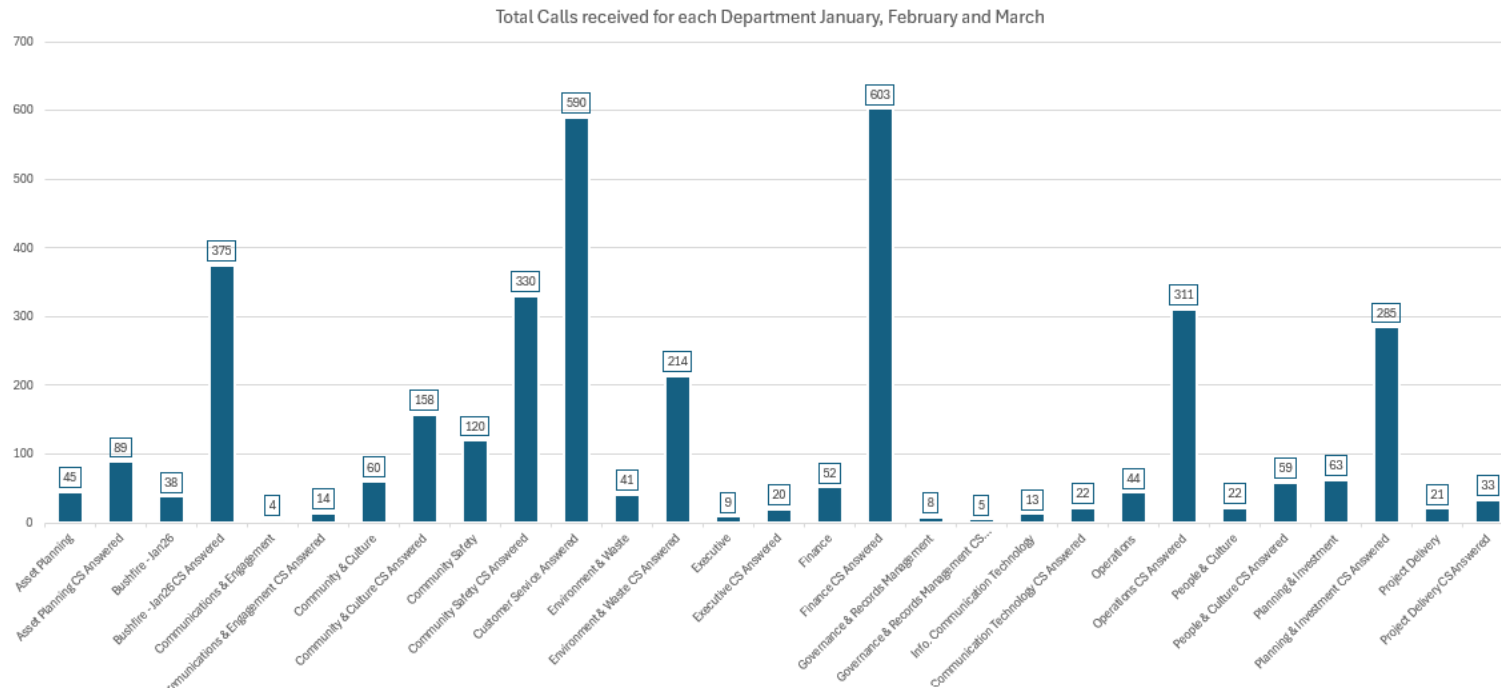
- 1. Summary of Customer Service metrics 1 January 2026 to 31 March 2026**

OFFICIAL

Customer Service calls and inquiries Q1 2026

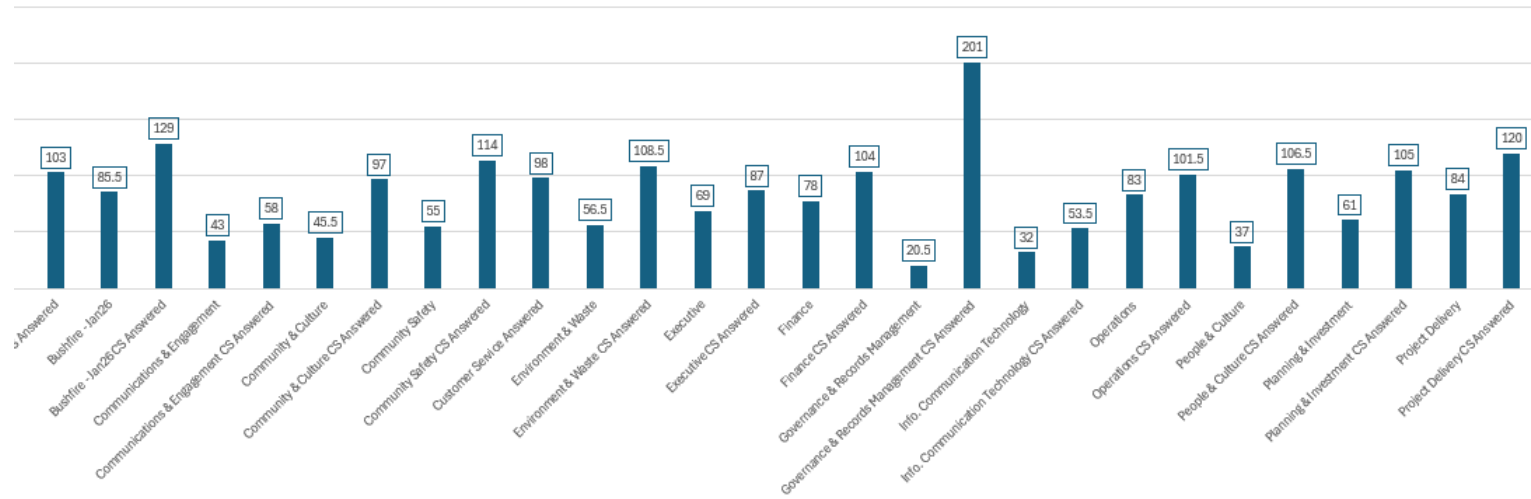


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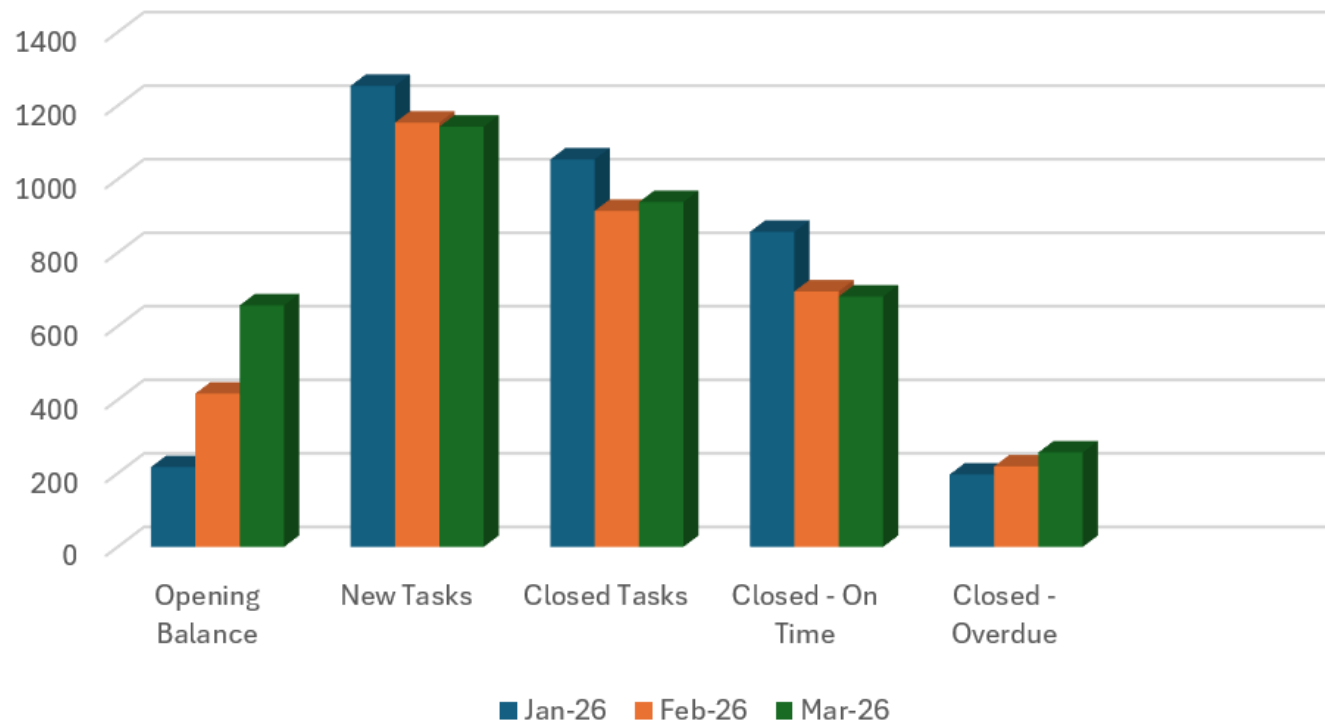
OFFICIAL

Average Call Length in seconds recorded by Department for January, February, March)

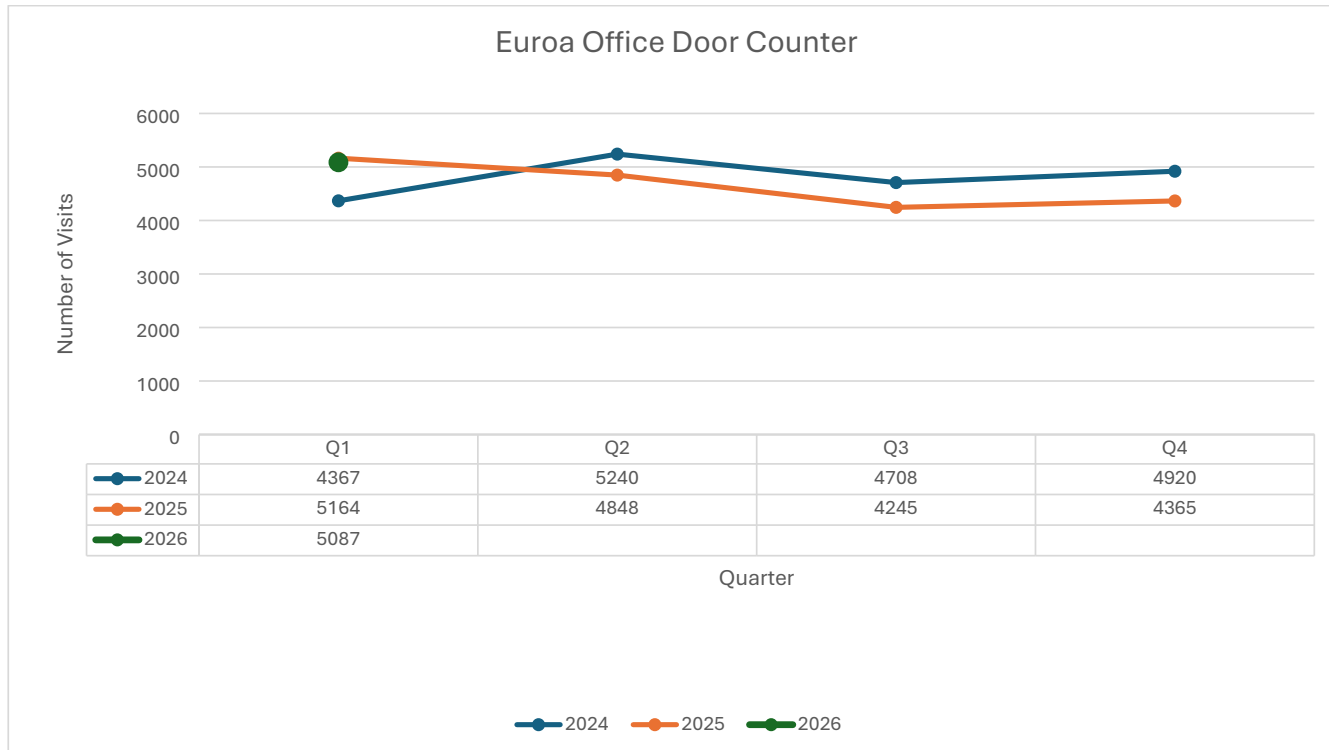


OFFICIAL

Customer queries recorded in Altitude



OFFICIAL



12 Notice of Motion

Nil

13 Notice of Rescission

Nil

14 Confidential Business

Nil

15 Urgent Business

Nil

16 Next Meeting

The next meeting of Strathbogie Shire Council will be held on 5 May 2026 at Euroa Community Conference Centre commencing at 4:00 pm.

17 Closure of Meeting

There being no further business the meeting closed atpm.