

# Minutes

## Ordinary Meeting of Council

Held at 10:30 am, Wednesday 24 April 2024  
Towong Shire Council Office  
32 Towong Street, Tallangatta

### **Our Community Vision**

Towong Shire will be the ideal place to be: welcoming, vibrant and diverse communities with quality facilities and services.

This information is available in alternative formats on request.

**Minutes for the Ordinary Meeting of Council held at  
32 Towong Street, Tallangatta, Victoria  
on Wednesday 24 April 2024 commencing at 10:30 am**

**Commonly Used Acronyms**

Abbreviation	Title
Council Officers	
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
DIE	Director Infrastructure and Environment
DCP	Director Community and Planning
DCOD	Director Corporate and Organisational Development
MF	Manager Finance
SAE	Senior Asset Engineer
Government/Organisation	
CH	Corryong Health (formerly Upper Murray Health and Community Services)
DFFH	Department of Families, Fairness and Housing
DJSIR	Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions
DTP	Department of Transport and Planning
DEECA	Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action
GMW	Goulburn Murray Water
HRGLN	Hume Region Local Government Network
MAV	Municipal Association of Victoria
NECMA	North East Catchment Management Authority
NERPEN	North East Regional Procurement Excellence Network
NEW	North East Water
NEWRRG	North East Waste and Resource Recovery Group
RCV	Rural Councils Victoria
RDA	Regional Development Australia
RDV	Regional Development Victoria
THS	Tallangatta Health Service
VGC	Victorian Grants Commission
WBNC	Walwa Bush Nursing Centre

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Unconfirmed

The Mayor declared the meeting open, the time being 10:34 am.

## 1 Opening Prayer

The Mayor Read the opening Prayer

“Almighty God, we ask that you be present at this meeting to assist us in our service to the Community through Local Government.

We pray that our decisions will be wise and taken with goodwill and clear conscience.

Amen.”

## 2 Councillor and Officer Presence at the Meeting

### Councillor Attendance

Crs Whitehead, Anderson, Dikschei, Scales and Wortmann

Officer Attendance:	Title:
Ms Pagan	Acting Chief Executive Officer
Ms Gadd	Director Infrastructure and Environment
Mr Florence	Acting Director Community and Planning
Ms Taylor	Director Corporate and Organisational Development

## 3 Apologies and Granting of Leave of Absence

Nil.

## 4 Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

Section 130 of the Act requires that a ‘Relevant person’ (which means a person who is a Councillor, a member of a delegated committee who is not a Councillor or a member of Council staff) disclose any conflict of interest in the manner required by Council’s Governance Rules and exclude themselves from the decision making process in relation to the matter including any discussion or vote on the matter at any Council meeting.

Council's Governance Rules state as follows:

**A2 Obligations with regards to conflict of interest**

*Councillors, members of delegated committee, and Council staff are required to:*

- a. Avoid all situations which may give rise to conflicts of interest;*
- b. Identify any conflicts of interest; and*
- c. Disclose or declare all conflicts of interest.*

**A3 Disclosure of a conflict of interest at a Council meeting**

*A Councillor who has a conflict of interest in a matter being considered at a Council meeting at which he or she:*

*A3.1 is present must disclose that conflict of interest by explaining the nature of the conflict of interest to those present at the Council meeting immediately before the matter is considered; or*

*A3.2 intends to be present must disclose that conflict of interest by providing to the Chief Executive Officer before the Council meeting commences a written notice:*

*A3.2.1 advising of the conflict of interest;*

*A3.2.2 explaining the nature of the conflict of interest; and*

*A3.2.3 detailing, if the nature of the conflict of interest involves a Councillor's relationship with or a gift from another person, the:*

- a. name of the other person;*
- b. nature of the relationship with that other person or the date of receipt, value and type of gift received from the other person; and*
- c. nature of that other person's interest in the matter, and then immediately before the matter is considered at the meeting announcing to those present that he or she has a conflict of interest and that a written notice has been given to the Chief Executive Officer under this sub-Rule.*

*The Councillor must, in either event, leave the Council meeting immediately after giving the explanation or making the announcement (as the case may be) and not return to the meeting until after the matter has been disposed of.*

There were no disclosures of any conflicts of interest.

## 5 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meetings listed below were circulated to Councillors following each respective meeting. Confirmation of the minutes is now sought.

- Ordinary Council Meeting 27 March 2024

### **Recommendation:**

That the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on the 27 March 2024, be confirmed.

### **Council Resolution:**

**CR DIKSCHAI  
CR SCALES**

**THAT THE MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THE 27 MARCH 2024, BE CONFIRMED.**

**CARRIED**

Unconfirmed

## 6 Petitions and Joint Letters

Nil.

## 7 Public Question Time

In accordance with Council's Governance Rules, all questions must be submitted to Council in writing by 2.00pm on the day prior to the Council meeting.

An online form is available on Council's website, and a hard copy of the form is available at both the Tallangatta and Corryong Council offices.

Public Notice of Public Question Time was included in the advertisement for the Council meeting.

The CEO will advise of any Public Question Time submissions at the meeting.

One submission was made after the distribution of the agenda as below.

**Submitter:** Mr Matthew Spurgeon

**Subject:** 186 funded events

**Question:**

1. On 15th December you posted on Facebook that you have supported 186 community events. Can you please supply a list of those events including date and the cost. Thank you

**Council Response:**

Ms Pagan thanked the submitter for their enquiry. Council's support of events across the Shire is something to be very proud of, which is reflected in the post made on Council's Facebook page on 15 December 2023.

The post related to a range of events Council supported, including 44 events organised by Council staff. These events varied from workshops funded through bushfire and flood recovery, to holiday programs for young people aged 12 to 25. In addition to those 44 events, Council provides a range of in-kind support for numerous major events across the Shire, including the Man From Snowy River Festival, ANZAC Day events, field days, and the Mitta Muster. This support ranges



from facilitating road closures to provision of waste services, to enable these events to operate at a lower cost to the organisers. Council also waived Room Hire fees for community groups on 146 occasions, which provides community groups the opportunity to run cost-effective events and gatherings.

At the conclusion of the calendar year, total events supported throughout 2023 was 190 events, four more than reported in mid-December. Although most of these events are funded through recovery programs that have a short-term expiry date, the majority of them are still ongoing with regular levels of support to the community.

## 8 Informal Meetings of Councillors

In accordance with Council's *Governance Rules*, a written summary of the matters discussed at each informal meeting of Councillors is to be tabled at the next convenient Council meeting and recorded in the minutes of that meeting.

The Meeting Records from the Informal Meeting of Councillors held on 10 January, 24 January, 14 February, 28 February, 13 March, 20 March, 28 March 2024 are attached as follows:

1. 10 January 2024 [**8.1.1** - 3 pages]
2. 24 January 2024 [**8.1.2** - 3 pages]
3. 14 February 2024 [**8.1.3** - 4 pages]
4. 28 February 2024 [**8.1.4** - 4 pages]
5. 13 March 2024 [**8.1.5** - 3 pages]
6. 20 March 2024 [**8.1.6** - 2 pages]
7. 28 March 2024 [**8.1.7** - 2 pages]

### Recommendation:

That the information be noted.

### Council Resolution:

**CR WORTMANN  
CR DIKSCHAI**

**THAT THE INFORMATION BE NOTED.**

**CARRIED**

## 9 Organisational Improvement

### 9.1 Dangerous Dog Management

#### **Disclosure of Interests (S.130):**

This report was prepared by Mr Justin Troy, Coordinator Governance and Compliance.

At the time of preparation of this report, the officer did not have a general or material conflict of interest in any matter to which the report or advice relates.

#### **Purpose of Report:**

A decision of Council is required.

#### **Summary:**

Council has demonstrated its commitment to comply with the provisions of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* with the adoption and implementation of the *Towong Shire Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025*. The Plan allows responsible pet owners to enjoy the benefits of owning a pet, whilst also ensuring the safety of our communities. This includes our commitment to removing all dogs declared as dangerous and restricted dog breeds from the shire.

To do this, a proactive educational campaign is being proposed to promote the registration of dogs to assist in identifying restricted breed dogs and mitigate the risk of dog attacks.

#### **Recommendation:**

That:

1. Dangerous and restricted breed dogs are not permitted in Towong Shire;
2. Officers develop and deliver an awareness campaign to promote responsible pet ownership, registration of animals, and the benefits it provides to the community, as well as education on how the community can assist with identifying dangerous dogs in the municipality.

**Attachment:**

1. domestic-animal-management-plan-2021-2025 [9.1.1 - 13 pages]

**Background/History:**

Council has an obligation to comply with the provisions of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* (the Act), which is primarily delivered through the Towong Shire *Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025* (the Plan). The Plan acknowledges the role Council plays in promoting responsible pet ownership, whilst also balancing the needs of pet ownership with safety considerations for the municipal community. The Plan specifically outlines the programs, services and strategies in place to manage companion animals (mainly dogs and cats).

The Plan also acknowledges that dog attacks are to be attended to with the highest priority with appropriate actions to be taken as soon as possible. Dog attacks within the municipality are increasingly reported to Council, with over 10 reports made this financial year already. As such, a campaign aimed towards mitigating the risk of dog attacks should be considered, which can be achieved through the delivery of awareness and education of the following topics:

*Dangerous, Menacing and Restricted Breed dogs*

Restricted breed dogs are identified through the Act as the following:

- Japanese Tosa;
- Fila Brasileiro;
- Dogo Argentino;
- Perro de Presa Canario (or Presa Canario); or
- American Pit Bull Terrier (or Pit Bull Terrier)

Any reports made in relation to dog attacks are reviewed to determine if it is appropriate to declare the dog as dangerous or menacing. In this instance, the dog will be subject to seizure and removal from the municipality or strict control requirements, respectively.

Officers may attend properties unannounced to conduct on-the-spot inspections where there are complaints relating to restricted breed dogs and suspected dogs may be seized. It is encouraged that the community continue to notify Council of any suspected dog that may be a restricted breed.

As identified in the Plan, a commitment has been made to conduct compliance and educational activities to mitigate the risks associated with these cases.

Registration and desexing of Dogs in the Municipality

Registration of companion animals is a requirement under the Act, which contributes toward enabling Council's animal control services. The registration of dogs is a fundamental aspect of responsible pet ownership and can prevent lost dogs from being impounded, as well as owners incurring infringement for non-compliance. It also assists with Council having oversight of the dogs within the municipality and mitigating the risk of allowing dangerous or restricted breed dogs within our communities.

Another strategy for mitigating the risk of aggressive tendencies, wandering behaviours in dogs, as well as unwanted litters is through early desexing. It has been demonstrated the probability of dogs being involved in an attack decreases if it has been desexed. Desexed dogs are eligible for significant registration discounts for these reasons, which provides financial incentive for owners to consider this option.

**Relevant Law (s.9(2)(a)):**

Local Government Act 2020

Section 10 – General Power

*"(1) Subject to any limitations or restrictions imposed by or under this Act or any other Act, a Council has the power to do all things necessary or convenient to be done in connection with the performance of its role."*

Domestic Animals Act 1994

Section 10 - Requirement to apply for registration

*"(1) The owner of a dog or cat must apply to register that dog or cat with the Council of the municipal district in which the dog or cat is kept, if the animal is over 3 months old.*

*(2) The owner of a dog or cat which is registered must apply for renewal of the registration of that dog or cat with the Council of the municipal district in which the dog or cat is kept, before the expiration of the current registration.*

*(3) If a person is making an application under subsection (1) in relation to a dog, that person must include with the application a declaration as to whether or not the dog in respect of which the application is made is a restricted breed dog."*

Section 68A - Councils to prepare domestic animal management plans

*"(1) Subject to subsection (1A), each Council must, in consultation with the Secretary, prepare a domestic animal management plan on 4 December 2021 and at the end of each period of 4 years after that day.*

*(2) A domestic animal management plan prepared by a Council must—*

(c) outline programs, services and strategies which the Council intends to pursue in its municipal district—

(i) to promote and encourage the responsible ownership of dogs and cats; and

(ii) to ensure that people comply with this Act, the regulations and any related legislation; and

(iii) to minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals; and

(iv) to address any over-population and high euthanasia rates for dogs and cats; and

(v) to encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats; and

(vi) to minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance; and

(vii) to effectively identify all dangerous dogs, menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs in that district and to ensure that those dogs are kept in compliance with this Act and the regulations

**Options – Best Outcomes for the Community (s.9(2)(b)):**

Promoting the registration of companion animals and reporting of dangerous dogs in the shire, as well as providing education on the ongoing benefits for current and future generations will contribute towards the management of companion animals. This will also assist Council with identifying dangerous dogs and restricted breeds and ensuring the protection of our communities.

**Sustainability Implications (s.9(2)(c)):**

*Economic*

The revenue gained from increased registrations of animals across the shire will contribute to Council's ability to deliver essential services and functions within the community. Increased oversight and responsible ownership of companion animals within the municipality will also ensure Council's limited resources are being utilised more effectively.

*Social*

Increased oversight of companion animals within the municipality will enable Council to proactively address any matters involving dangerous dogs or restricted breeds. This will in turn promote safer and more sociable communities with the risk of attacks being mitigated.

*Environmental/Climate Change*

Not applicable.

**Community Engagement (s.9(2)(d)):**

Community engagement activities will be conducted to deliver the educational campaign and drive awareness around the importance of pet registration as well as awareness around dog attacks or other offences. This will be delivered through our normal community engagement practices.

**Innovation and Continuous Improvement (s.9(2)(e)):**

Continuous improvement is being sought in managing dangerous and restricted breed dogs, as well as the development and delivery of a community awareness campaign. Awareness and education of the benefits associated with responsible ownership is intended to increase community appreciation and compliance with registering and adequately securing companion animals, as well as mitigating the risks of our communities being exposed to potentially dangerous dogs. Any constructive feedback and input provided by community members will also be used to consider opportunities for improvement towards internal procedures.

**Collaboration (s.9(2)(f)):**

Officers will collaborate with vet clinics, community groups and volunteer organisations where possible, in order to promote and deliver a community awareness campaign. These organisations are naturally embedded into the management of companion animals and share the same goals as Council in promoting responsible ownership and preventing exposure to dangerous dogs within our communities.

**Financial Viability/Budget Impact (s.9(2)(g)):**

Budget requirements and availability have been confirmed, grant funding has been sought where possible, most recently through a grant application to Ag Vic to promote cat desexing and vaccination programs which will tie into the above Council resolution.

**Regional, State and National Plans and Policies (s.9(2)(h)):**

Not applicable.

**Council Plans and Policies:**

Council Plans:

This report supports the following Council Plan 2021-2025 priorities:

6. *Organisational Improvement - Maintain a high performing customer-centred organisation that works with the community to develop and deliver priorities.*

6.1 *Continue to improve awareness, engagement and involvement of the community in relation to matters that affect them*

Council Policies:

*Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025*  
*Amenity Local Law 2021 – No.2*

**Transparency of Decision (s.9(2)(i)) :**

It is the officer's view that it is appropriate to consider this matter in a Council meeting that is open to the public.

**Risk Assessment:**

Mitigating the risk of dog attacks and the exposure of dangerous dogs within our communities is considered to be a priority of the highest order. Identifying the obligations and benefits of being a responsible pet owner and reinforcing procedures for reporting to Council is intended to empower community members to assist Council in their commitment to ensuring a safe and enjoyable municipality.

**Officer's View:**

It is the officer's view that Council should take measures to address the increasing community concern of dog attacks within our municipality by restating its position that Council does not allow dangerous and restricted breed dogs in the shire, in addition to committing to a campaign to educate and empower the community to promote responsible ownership across the shire. Increasing transparency on what the community should do when faced with the risk of a potentially dangerous dog or dog attack, as well as the consequences for dogs and owners who are found to be involved in such circumstances, will contribute to mitigating the risk of dog attacks and enable a safer municipality for residents and visitors to enjoy.

**Council Resolution:**

**CR ANDERSON  
CR SCALES**

**THAT:**

- 1. DANGEROUS AND RESTRICTED BREED DOGS ARE NOT PERMITTED IN TOWONG SHIRE;**
- 2. OFFICERS DEVELOP AND DELIVER AN AWARENESS CAMPAIGN TO PROMOTE RESPONSIBLE PET OWNERSHIP, REGISTRATION OF ANIMALS, AND THE BENEFITS IT PROVIDES TO THE COMMUNITY, AS WELL AS EDUCATION ON HOW THE COMMUNITY CAN ASSIST WITH IDENTIFYING DANGEROUS DOGS IN THE MUNICIPALITY.**

**CARRIED**

Unconfirmed



## 9.2 Action Sheet Report (CEO-06/06/0010)

### **Disclosure of Interests (S.130):**

This report was prepared by Mr Justin Troy, Coordinator Governance and Compliance.

At the time of preparation of this report, the officer did not have a general or material conflict of interest in any matter to which the report or advice relates.

### **Purpose of Report:**

The purpose of the report is to provide information.

### **Summary:**

At the Ordinary Council meeting held on 27 March 2024, several resolutions were passed requiring action by Council officers. This report is to provide to Council an update on the progress of these actions.

### **Recommendation:**

That the report be noted.

### **Attachment:**

1. Action Sheet from Ordinary Council Meeting 27 March 2024 [9.2.1 - 4 pages]

### **Background/History:**

Not applicable.

### **Relevant Law (s.9(2)(a)):**

No relevant laws are applicable with any Council decisions or actions required from this report.

### **Options – Best Outcomes for the Community (s.9(2)(b)):**

Not applicable.

**Sustainability Implications (s.9(2)(c)):**

Not applicable.

**Community Engagement (s.9(2)(d)):**

Not applicable.

**Innovation and Continuous Improvement (s.9(2)(e)):**

Not applicable.

**Collaboration (s.9(2)(f)):**

Not applicable.

**Financial Viability/Budget Impact (s.9(2)(g)):**

Not applicable.

**Regional, State and National Plans and Policies (s.9(2)(h)):**

Not applicable.

**Council Plans and Policies:**

Not applicable.

**Transparency of Decision (s.9(2)(i)) :**

It is the officer's view that it is appropriate to consider this matter in a Council meeting that is open to the public.

**Risk Assessment:**

Not applicable.

**Officer's View:**

It is the officer's view that good progress has been made in relation to the actions arising from previous meetings.

**Council Resolution:**

**CR DIKSCHAI  
CR ANDERSON**

**THAT THE REPORT BE NOTED.**

**CARRIED**

Unconfirmed

### 9.3 Council Plan Priorities (DCOD-07/05/0022)

#### **Disclosure of Interests (S.130):**

This report was prepared by Ms Narelle Taylor, Director Corporate and Organisational Development.

At the time of preparation of this report, the officer did not have a general or material conflict of interest in any matter to which the report or advice relates.

#### **Purpose of Report:**

The purpose of the report is to provide information.

#### **Summary:**

In accordance with section 90 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council must prepare and adopt a Council Plan for a period of at least the next four financial years after a general election in accordance with its deliberative engagement practices. This report provides a quarterly update on the progress of the priorities in our *2021-2025 Council Plan*.

#### **Recommendation:**

That the report be noted.

#### **Attachment:**

1. Council Plan Priorities - Q 3 - Jan- Mar 2024 [9.3.1 - 33 pages]

#### **Background/History:**

Each quarter Council officers provide an update to Council on the progress of the priorities listed in the Council Plan.

#### **Relevant Law (s.9(2)(a)):**

Not applicable.

#### **Options – Best Outcomes for the Community (s.9(2)(b)):**

Not applicable

**Sustainability Implications (s.9(2)(c)):**

The Council Plan priorities included in the appendix are addressed in individual reports to Council, where sustainability information relevant for Councillor consideration is provided.

**Community Engagement (s.9(2)(d)):**

Community Engagement activities are included in the Council Plan Priorities. Progress against this priority is noted in the appendix to this report.

**Innovation and Continuous Improvement (s.9(2)(e)):**

Innovation and continuous improvement are built into the Council Plan Priorities, and we continue to progress this as noted in the appendix to this report.

**Collaboration (s.9(2)(f)):**

Collaboration and pursuing shared service opportunities are included in the Council Plan Priorities. Progress against this priority is noted in the appendix to this report.

**Financial Viability/Budget Impact (s.9(2)(g)):**

Budget requirements and availability have been confirmed, grant funding has been sought where possible and all expenditure is being monitored and managed within agreed budget allocations.

**Regional, State and National Plans and Policies (s.9(2)(h)):**

Not applicable.

**Council Plans and Policies:**

This is a quarterly report to provide an update on the progress of the Council Plan 2021-2025 priorities.

**Transparency of Decision (s.9(2)(i)) :**

It is the officer's view that it is appropriate to consider this matter in a Council meeting that is open to the public.

**Risk Assessment:**

Not applicable.

**Officer's View:**

It is the Officer's view that despite the many challenges faced by the organisation since the adoption of the Council Plan, progress continues to be made on a significant number of the priorities.

**Council Resolution:**

**CR SCALES  
CR DIKSCH EI**

**THAT THE REPORT BE NOTED.**

**CARRIED**

Unconfirmed

## 9.4 Corporate and Organisational Development Report (DCOD-06/01/0011)

### Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Ms Narelle Taylor, Director Corporate and Organisational Development.

At the time of preparation of this report, the officer did not have a general or material conflict of interest in any matter to which the report or advice relates.

### Purpose of Report:

The purpose of the report is to provide information.

### Summary:

The attached report provides an overview of activities within the Corporate and Organisational Development team between January and March 2024.

Highlights in this quarter included:

- The commencement of our IT and Records Management Project, which aims to transform our information technology and information management systems to transition from several different file servers and cloud-based document storage systems to a single cloud-based location with an integrated record management solution.
- The completion of a Safety Audit in accordance with an international safety standard (ISO 450001). Through the audit findings, Council can create an action plan for execution that will drive us toward best practise to ensure the safety of our staff and the wider community are being effectively managed.
- Successfully transitioning Council's meeting agenda processes onto a cloud-based software.

### Recommendation:

That the report be noted.

### Attachment:

1. Corporate and Organisational Development March 2024 [9.4.1 - 1 page]

**Background/History:**

The Corporate and Organisational Development Report is provided on a quarterly basis.

**Relevant Law (s.9(2)(a)):**

Corporate and Organisational Development activities and decisions have been made in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*.

**Options – Best Outcomes for the Community (s.9(2)(b)):**

Not applicable.

**Sustainability Implications (s.9(2)(c)):**

Not applicable.

**Community Engagement (s.9(2)(d)):**

The Communications and Engagement team continues to support numerous community engagement activities in relation to community-facing projects and activities across the organisation. These activities are documented to Councillors in the monthly Communications and Engagement report.

**Innovation and Continuous Improvement (s.9(2)(e)):**

Our IT & Records Management team have progressed the transition from file servers to a cloud-based, in-place records management system.

**Collaboration (s.9(2)(f)):**

Not applicable.

**Financial Viability/Budget Impact (s.9(2)(g)):**

We have progressed the Budget 2024/25 and long-term financial plan, which highlights that with the progression and conclusion of Recovery-funded infrastructure projects, and the associated expenditure, the future financial sustainability of Council will continue to be reliant on one-off capital grants.



**Regional, State and National Plans and Policies (s.9(2)(h)):**

Not applicable.

**Council Plans and Policies:**

The activities of the Corporate and Organisational Development team during the quarter supported the *Council Plan 2021-2025* priorities as outlined in the Report on Council Plan Priorities.

**Transparency of Decision (s.9(2)(i)) :**

It is the officer's view that it is appropriate to consider this matter in a Council meeting that is open to the public.

**Risk Assessment:**

The February Audit and Risk Committee meeting was held during the quarter, and the minutes to this meeting were made available to Council in the March 2024 Ordinary Council meeting.

**Officer's View:**

The goals we set out to achieve during the quarter have been met, and have progressed us towards our over-arching objectives of providing a high level of customer service to residents and support to the rest of the organisation.

**Council Resolution:**

**CR DIKSCHAI  
CR ANDERSON**

**THAT THE REPORT BE NOTED.**

**CARRIED**

## 9.5 OHS Bi-monthly Report

### **Disclosure of Interests (S.130):**

This report was prepared by Mr Wayne Carter, OHS Officer.

At the time of preparation of this report, the officer did not have a general or material conflict of interest in any matter to which the report or advice relates.

### **Purpose of Report:**

The purpose of the report is to provide a bi-monthly update on Occupational Health and Safety activities throughout the organisation.

### **Summary:**

Major Occupational Health and Safety activities conducted during the period included:

- Preparation and lodgement of Council's insurance renewal.
- Follow up on current insurance claims.
- Obtain quotes for anchor points for when Contractors are working at heights when inspecting air conditioners or cleaning gutters on Council building roofs.
- Following up information and requirements relating to Chain of Responsibility for users of heavy vehicles and discuss this with relevant staff.
- Review of changes following the introduction of Victorian Traffic Management Reform legislation and how it might affect our business as usual.
- Facilitating an audit of the Occupational Health and Safety Management System in accordance with ISO 450001.

### **Recommendation:**

That the report be noted.

### **Attachment:**

1. OHS Report April 2024 [9.5.1 - 5 pages]

**Background/History:**

The OHS report is provided on a bi-monthly basis to communicate the work being undertaken to ensure a healthy and safe work environment. The report highlights progress in strengthening processes, procedures and practices across the organisation and details how emerging health and safety risks are being addressed.

**Relevant Law (s.9(2)(a)):**

OHS activities are governed by the principles of health and safety protection in accordance with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* and the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017*. Employees, Councillors, other people at work and members of the public are given the highest level of protection against risks to their health and safety that are reasonably practicable in the circumstances.

**Options – Best Outcomes for the Community (s.9(2)(b)):**

Not Applicable.

**Sustainability Implications (s.9(2)(c)):**

Not applicable.

**Community Engagement (s.9(2)(d)):**

During the insurance renewal process, officers engaged with members of Committees of Management for community assets that are covered under Council's JMAPP Policy for loss and/or damage. Engagement involved site visits and email/phone interactions relating to insurance requirements, inspections of assets.

**Innovation and Continuous Improvement (s.9(2)(e)):**

Progress continued in relation to the 2021 Audit of Council's OHS Management System with 37 actions complete, 13 in progress, and six yet to be started out of the 56 recommended actions. Focus has now shifted to follow-up actions from the current Audit which was completed in February 2024, and address overlaps of outstanding actions from the 2021 audit.

**Collaboration (s.9(2)(f)):**

Not Applicable.

**Financial Viability/Budget Impact (s.9(2)(g)):**

Not Applicable.

**Regional, State and National Plans and Policies (s.9(2)(h)):**

Not Applicable.

**Council Plans and Policies:**

Council Plans:

This report supports the following Council Plan 2021-2025 priorities.

6. Organisational Improvement - Maintain a high performing customer-centred organisation that works with the community to develop and deliver priorities.

6.7 Provide a safe and healthy workplace for all Councillors and staff in a continually evolving environment

6.13 Continually improve the risk management and governance frameworks and practices

Council Policies:

*Occupational Health and Safety Policy.*

*Risk Management Policy.*

**Transparency of Decision (s.9(2)(i)) :**

It is the officer's view that it is appropriate to consider this matter in a Council meeting that is open to the public.

**Risk Assessment:**

Activities are prioritised commensurate to the likelihood and impact of identified OHS risks.

**Officer's View:**

Follow-up actions to reduce risks continued in relation to the installation of the weighbridge and truck wash and the surrounding area at the Corryong Saleyards. There continues to be an increased focus on the Skills Matrix and Training Plan especially for the outdoor crews to ensure training is undertaken to maintain competency. Actions from the 2021 OHS Management System Audit were addressed up to February 2024, and minor changes are made to the Integrated Management

System Compliance Manual. A new focus on the actions following the OHS Management System Audit in January and February 2024 has commenced and will continue this year.

**Council Resolution:**

**CR ANDERSON  
CR WORTMANN**

**THAT THE REPORT BE NOTED.**

**CARRIED**

Unconfirmed

## 10 Bushfire Relief and Recovery

There are no Bushfire Relief and Recovery reports.

## 11 Community Wellbeing

### 11.1 Youth, Arts and Culture Report – October 2023 to March 2024 (DCP-04/01/0006)

#### **Disclosure of Interests (S.130):**

This report was prepared by Mr Joe Calvert, Youth, Arts and Culture Co-ordinator

The officer would like to declare that he is the Chair of Youth Albury Wodonga which is referenced in this report. The officer did not have a general or material conflict of interest in any other matters to which the report or advice relates.

#### **Purpose of Report:**

The purpose of the report is to provide information.

#### **Summary:**

The attached report provides an overview of Youth, Arts and Culture activities from 1st September 2023 to 31st March 2024. A summary of the key activities during the quarter is as follows:

- The planning of all FReeZA events for the year.
- A range of school holiday activities and youth events
- Successful implementation of the Evolve Music Festival
- Work began on the Towong Shire Council Youth Plan 2024 to 2029
- Work began on the Towong Shire Council Art Strategy 2024 to 2029
- Coordination of five Australia Day events and citizenship ceremonies.

#### **Recommendation:**

That the report be noted.

#### **Attachment:**

1. Youth Arts and Culture Report Sep 2023 to Feb 2024 [**11.1.1** - 4 pages]

**Background/History:**

This report is provided every six months to inform Council and the community of progress and activity in the Youth Arts and Culture area.

This report covers the period when structural changes were introduced and a new Youth, Arts and Culture Co-ordinator and a new Recreation and Community Development position was created and filled. The transition of the former Recreation Co-ordinator into the Youth, Arts and Culture position restricted some progress on any Youth, Arts and Culture activities in order to support a smooth handover process with the new Coordinator Recreation and Community Development.

**Relevant Law (s.9(2)(a)):**

Youth, Arts and Culture activities are conducted under relevant legislation, including the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*.

**Options – Best Outcomes for the Community (s.9(2)(b)):**

Youth, Arts and Culture activities support community well-being by promoting connectedness and engagement, as well as offering community members to develop skills, and to exhibit talents and expertise.

**Sustainability Implications (s.9(2)(c)):**

The *Towong Shire Council Youth Plan 2019-2023* supports the decision-making for future developments and projects. The plan will be revised in 2024 to ensure its relevance. In this way the Youth Plan helps shape the sustainability of Youth Services over the next five years.

**Community Engagement (s.9(2)(d)):**

Community engagement was conducted during the development of the *Towong Shire Council Youth Plan 2019-2023*. A new Youth Plan will ensure that renewed engagement occurs, and that Council is planning and developing action on the up-to-date and relevant needs of the 12–24-year-old cohort of the community.

Similarly, the development of an Arts Strategy will provide Council with direction on how best to support the Towong Shire arts community, and how arts can be used as a basis for community events and activities.

**Innovation and Continuous Improvement (s.9(2)(e)):**

During the reporting period there has been limited scope and opportunity to introduce any innovative practices. The development of the Youth Plan and the Arts Strategy is expected to feature new ways to engage, support and enhance opportunities.

**Collaboration (s.9(2)(f)):**

Any activities in the Youth, Arts and Culture service area can only be successful through the collaborative efforts of various agencies, including Council. Schools continue to be important partners in the Youth space, along with Corryong and Tallangatta Health Services, and the Corryong Neighbourhood Centre's Youth unit.

**Financial Viability/Budget Impact (s.9(2)(g)):**

All activities during the reporting period were conducted within allocated budgets.

**Regional, State and National Plans and Policies (s.9(2)(h)):**

Activities have been conducted in accordance with relevant state and national plans including:

- *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*
- *The Victorian State Government's Creative State 2016-2020*
- *Victoria's Gender Equality Act 2020 (the Act)*

**Council Plans and Policies:**

Council Plans:

This report supports the following Council Plan 2021-2025 priorities.

2. Community Wellbeing - Encourage and support all people in our Shire to be healthy, happy, connected and resilient.

- 2.6 Develop a strategy for arts and cultural offerings across the Shire
- 2.8 Renew the Youth Plan to embed the 'youth voice' in all aspects of service delivery

Council Policies:

Not applicable.



**Transparency of Decision (s.9(2)(i)) :**

It is the officer's view that it is appropriate to consider this matter in a Council meeting that is open to the public.

**Risk Assessment:**

Not Applicable.

**Officer's View:**

Despite some limitations in capacity during the reporting period, activities in the Youth, Arts and Culture service unit have progressed, and it is expected that the next six months will be productive.

**Council Resolution:**

**CR SCALES  
CR DIKSCH EI**

**THAT THE REPORT BE NOTED.**

**CARRIED**

## 11.2 Recreation and Community Development (DCP-04/01/0006)

### **Disclosure of Interests (S.130):**

This report was prepared by Miranda Mouat, Recreation and Community Development Co-ordinator, and Katherine Lanigan, Tallangatta Neighbourhood House Co-ordinator.

At the time of preparation of this report, the officers did not have a general or material conflict of interest in any matter to which the report or advice relates.

### **Purpose of Report:**

The purpose of the report is to provide information.

### **Summary:**

This report provides information on the activities undertaken by the Recreation and Community Development area and the Tallangatta Neighbourhood House from 1 October 2023 to 31 March 2024.

Activities which were of focus during the reporting period included:

- Participating in project management activities to bring the Bullioh Recreation Reserve Female Friendly Facilities project to construction tender stage;
- Completing acquittal processes and milestone reports for completed sport infrastructure funded projects;
- Managing and facilitating the transition of the management and operations of the swimming pools from Council to Belgravia Leisure (subject of an individual report to the Council meeting in May);
- Review of the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan actions and progress;
- Activation of the Tallangatta Neighbourhood House in former Kindergarten building; and
- Delivery of programs, activities and events from the Tallangatta Neighbourhood House.

### **Recommendation:**

That the report be noted.

**Attachment:**

1. Recreation and Community Development and Tallangatta Neighbourhood House Report [**11.2.1** - 5 pages]

**Background/History:**

This report is provided every six months to inform Council and the community of progress and activity in the Recreation and Community Development and Tallangatta Neighbourhood House areas.

Recreation and Community Development actions are critical elements of supporting community health and wellbeing. The activities are typically diverse in nature, ranging from:

- infrastructure development at sporting clubs;
- operations of the swimming pools;
- development of programs and projects to support various community organisations;
- working with health service providers and schools; and
- linking and collaborating with government agencies in the delivery of targeted funded programs.

The Tallangatta Neighbourhood House promotes active lifestyles and offers opportunities for community members to engage in meaningful activities that enhance well-being. By fostering inclusivity and a warm, welcoming environment, the House collaborates with community service providers and local groups to jointly address the needs of the community.

**Relevant Law (s.9(2)(a)):**

No relevant laws are applicable with any Council decisions or actions required from this report.

**Options – Best Outcomes for the Community (s.9(2)(b)):**

All of the activities undertaken were focussed on achieving the best outcomes for the community.

**Sustainability Implications (s.9(2)(c)):**

Not applicable.

**Community Engagement (s.9(2)(d)):**

Not Applicable.

**Innovation and Continuous Improvement (s.9(2)(e)):**

Not Applicable.

**Collaboration (s.9(2)(f)):**

There has been notable collaboration in the preparation of grant applications for new sporting infrastructure, with many community groups actively participating and supporting the grant process.

Although the new management operations for the swimming pools took some time to establish, the season was successfully completed thanks to effective collaboration with Belgravia Leisure.

The Tallangatta Neighbourhood House maintains strong partnerships with local organisations and service providers, working together to deliver diverse programs and activities.

**Financial Viability/Budget Impact (s.9(2)(g)):**

All activities were undertaken within budget allocations.

**Regional, State and National Plans and Policies (s.9(2)(h)):**

Not Applicable.

**Council Plans and Policies:**

Council Plans:

This report supports the following Council Plan 2021-2025 priorities:

2. Community Wellbeing - Encourage and support all people in our Shire to be healthy, happy, connected and resilient.
  - 2.4 Support the development of recreational activities and infrastructure to encourage active lifestyles for all ages and stages

Council Policies:

Not applicable.

**Transparency of Decision (s.9(2)(i)) :**

It is the officers view that it is appropriate to consider this matter in a Council meeting that is open to the public.

**Risk Assessment:**

Not applicable

**Officer's View:**

It is the officers' review that good progress is being made against the Council Plan 2021-2025 priorities.

**Council Resolution:**

**CR ANDERSON  
CR SCALES**

**THAT THE REPORT BE NOTED.**

**CARRIED**

Unconfirmed

## 11.3 Community Sport Fair Access Policy

### Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Mrs Miranda Mouat, Co-ordinator Recreation and Community Development.

At the time of preparation of this report, the officer did not have a general or material conflict of interest in any matter to which the report or advice relates.

### Purpose of Report:

This report recommends the release of the draft *Community Sport Fair Access Policy* and associated Action Plan for community feedback.

### Summary:

From 1 July 2024, all Victorian Local Governments will be required to have a Fair Access Policy and Action Plan (or equivalent) in place and be able to demonstrate progress against that policy and action plan, to be eligible for Victorian State Government funding programs relating to community sports Infrastructure.

### Recommendation:

That:

1. The Chief Executive Officer be authorised to place the draft *Community Sport Fair Access Policy* and *Action Plan* on public exhibition and invite submissions; and
2. At the Council Meeting on 26 June 2024:
  - a. Any submissions in relation to the proposed draft *Community Sport Fair Access Policy* and *Action Plan* be considered;
  - b. Any person or their representative who wishes to speak in support of their submission be heard; and
  - c. The draft *Community Sport Fair Access Policy* and *Action Plan* be considered for adoption.

### Attachment:

1. TSC Community Sport Fair Access Policy DRAFT April 24 [**11.3.1** - 8 pages]
2. TSC Fair Access Policy Action Plan DRAFT April 2024 [**11.3.2** - 3 pages]

**Background/History:**

In August 2022, the Victorian Government announced a new Fair Access Policy Roadmap, which supports gender equitable access and use of community sports infrastructure across the state. The Fair Access Policy Roadmap requires all Victorian councils from 1 July 2024 to have gender equitable access and use policies in place to be considered eligible to receive infrastructure funding.

The scope of the *Community Sport Fair Access Policy* is to support positive action towards achieving gender equity in the access and usage of community sports infrastructure.

The Policy applies specifically to community sports infrastructure where Council is the land manager and/or operator of the facility, of which there are eight identified facilities. These facilities are:

- Walwa Recreation Reserve
- Dartmouth Oval
- Tallangatta Swimming Pool
- Tallangatta Bowling Club
- Tallangatta Tennis Courts and Clubrooms
- Corryong Swimming Pool
- Corryong Skate Park
- Cudgewa Tennis Courts

However, the multitude of sporting and recreation facilities in Towong Shire that are not directly managed or operated by Council will also benefit from implementation of the Policy and Action Plan. Furthermore, the relevant committees and sporting groups will be supported and encouraged to adopt the principles of the policy or develop their own.

**Relevant Law (s.9(2)(a)):**

*Gender Equality Act 2020 (Vic)*

*Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)*

*Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)*

**Options – Best Outcomes for the Community (s.9(2)(b)):**

This report provides an opportunity to improve access and equity for women and girls in community sport and recreation in Towong Shire. The Policy and Action Plan will support women and girls to fully participate in community sport and recreation, with fair opportunity and access to their local facilities.

**Sustainability Implications (s.9(2)(c)):***Social*

This report provides an opportunity to increase social outcomes due to improved access to community sport for women and girls.

**Community Engagement (s.9(2)(d)):**

It is proposed that the draft *Community Sport Fair Access Policy and Action Plan* be available for public exhibition on Council's website for the duration of the exhibition period. Targeted engagement with the sporting and recreation groups that utilise the community sporting infrastructure identified in the Policy will be conducted.

**Innovation and Continuous Improvement (s.9(2)(e)):**

The implementation of the Policy and Action Plan will provide opportunities for Council to ensure community sport is accessible and inclusive for all people. This will include the design of future community sporting infrastructure developments, to be undertaken with an innovative approach to delivering female friendly and gender accessible built environments.

**Collaboration (s.9(2)(f)):**

The Policy has been developed through continuous engagement with the *Office for Women in Sport and Recreation (OWSR)*, and participation in the Fair Access Roadshow and Hume Region forums. This has occurred throughout the consultative phase of the Fair Access Policy Roadmap, and in the policy development process. Collaboration with other councils has also informed the development of the Policy.

**Financial Viability/Budget Impact (s.9(2)(g)):**

Budget requirements and availability have been confirmed, grant funding has been sought where possible and all expenditure is being monitored and managed within agreed budget allocations.

**Regional, State and National Plans and Policies (s.9(2)(h)):**

In December 2015, the Victorian Government released a report from the independent Inquiry into Women and Girls in Sport and Active Recreation, which highlighted gender inequality in Victorian sports and recreation and led to the Change Our Game initiative. The Fair Access Policy Roadmap aims to develop a statewide foundation to improve the access to, and use of, community sports infrastructure for women and girls. The



Roadmap is being delivered through the *Office for Women in Sport and Recreation*, in partnership with *Sport and Recreation Victoria* and *VicHealth*, and aligns with Victoria's *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

**Council Plans and Policies:**

Council Plans:

This report supports the following Council Plan 2021-2025 priorities.

2. Community Wellbeing - Encourage and support all people in our Shire to be healthy, happy, connected and resilient.

2.4 Support the development of recreational activities and infrastructure to encourage active lifestyles for all ages and stages.

In addition to the Council Plan, the following are relevant to this policy:

*Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025*

*Gender Equality Action Plan 2022-2025*

*Recreation Strategy for Towong Shire 2022-2033*

**Transparency of Decision (s.9(2)(i)):**

It is the officer's view that it is appropriate to consider this matter in a Council meeting that is open to the public.

**Risk Assessment:**

Community submissions during the public exhibition phase could result in negative feedback or the requirement to make alterations to the Policy and/or Action Plan. While this is possible, it is unlikely to impact progression of the Policy to formal adoption stage by 1 July 2024, as sufficient time has been allocated to receive, consider and incorporate community feedback into the process.

Failure to comply with the Victorian Government's direction regarding the adoption of a Fair Access Policy and Action Plan would result in us being ineligible to receive state funding for community sport infrastructure. This is unlikely to occur due to Council ensuring that documentation meets Victorian Government requirements within set time frames.

**Officer's View:**

It is the officer's recommendation that Council approve the *Community Sport Fair Access Policy* and the *Action Plan* being placed on public exhibition.

**Council Resolution:**

**CR SCALES**

**CR ANDERSON**

**THAT:**

- 1. THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER BE AUTHORISED TO PLACE THE DRAFT *COMMUNITY SPORT FAIR ACCESS POLICY AND ACTION PLAN* ON PUBLIC EXHIBITION AND INVITE SUBMISSIONS; AND**
- 2. AT THE COUNCIL MEETING ON 26 JUNE 2024:**
  - a. ANY SUBMISSIONS IN RELATION TO THE PROPOSED DRAFT *COMMUNITY SPORT FAIR ACCESS POLICY AND ACTION PLAN* BE CONSIDERED;**
  - b. ANY PERSON OR THEIR REPRESENTATIVE WHO WISHES TO SPEAK IN SUPPORT OF THEIR SUBMISSION BE HEARD; AND**
  - c. THE DRAFT *COMMUNITY SPORT FAIR ACCESS POLICY AND ACTION PLAN* BE CONSIDERED FOR ADOPTION.**

**CARRIED**

Unconfirmed

## 12 Asset Management

There are no Asset Management reports.

## 13 Land Use Planning

### 13.1 Tallangatta, Bellbridge and Corryong Structure Plans

#### Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Ms Amanda Pagan, Director Community and Planning.

At the time of preparation of this report, the officer did not have a general or material conflict of interest in any matter to which the report or advice relates.

#### Purpose of Report:

To seek approval to place the draft structure plans for Bellbridge, Corryong and Tallangatta on public exhibition for community feedback.

#### Summary:

The draft township structure plans for Bellbridge, Corryong, and Tallangatta are the result of extensive background research, preliminary community engagement, and government agency stakeholder workshops. These comprehensive plans delve into various facets, including reviewing past strategic planning policies, examining demographic shifts and trends, infrastructure considerations, and the broader economic landscape. They also draw insights from the outcomes of the Our Towns – Towards 2030 project.

The key aim of each structure plan is to develop a shared vision for the townships and to identify the type and scope of change projected within the towns over time to provide for sustainable and orderly growth cognisant to local and regional changes. The goal is to incorporate the structure plans into the Towong Planning Scheme to guide land use and development through the planning system to 2044.

The purpose of the exhibition is to understand community views and values associated with the draft structure plans with a view that submissions will assist in informing final structure plan recommendations before “in-principle” adoption by Council. Final adoption by Council cannot be made until approval to amend a planning scheme has been granted by the Minister for Planning and a public gazettal process is completed.

**Recommendation:**

That:

1. The Chief Executive Officer be authorised to place the draft Tallangatta, Bellbridge and Corryong Structure Plans on public exhibition and invite submissions; and
2. At the Council Meeting in June 2024:
  - a) Any submissions in relation to the draft structure plans be considered;
  - b) Any person or their representative who wishes to speak in support of their submission be heard; and
  - c) The draft structure plans be considered for in-principle adoption.

**Attachment:**

1. Tallangatta - Emerging Options [**13.1.1** - 105 pages]
2. Corryong - Emerging Options [**13.1.2** - 63 pages]
3. Bellbridge - Emerging Options [**13.1.3** - 60 pages]

**Background/History:**

Structure plans define a council's preferred direction of future growth within towns (major settlements) and articulate how it will be managed. Each town is unique, and local governments are encouraged to work with their communities to determine how their towns should grow, considering regional population trends and economic growth.

Structure plans also guide the major changes to land use, built form and public spaces that together can achieve economic, social and environmental objectives for the centre. They form part of the local planning policy within a planning scheme.

Towong's Planning Scheme Structure Plans for Bellbridge, Corryong and Tallangatta have not been updated for some time. However, the growing demands for housing, the imperative of climate adaptation, and other shifts in the macroeconomic landscape are exerting significant pressure on these towns. Consequently, there arises an urgent need to revisit and update the existing plans to effectively address the evolving needs and challenges facing these communities.

In partnership with Tomkinson, specialist strategic planning consultants, the Planning Team has developed draft structure plans for the townships of Bellbridge, Corryong, and Tallangatta. These plans propose a range of short-, medium- and long-term changes to support the towns' development up to 2044. The draft township structure plans are the result of extensive background research, preliminary community

engagement, and government agency stakeholder workshops. These comprehensive plans delve into various facets, including reviewing past strategic planning policies, examining demographic shifts and trends, infrastructure considerations, and the broader economic landscape. They also draw insights from the outcomes of the *Our Towns – Towards 2030* project.

The draft structure plans are geared towards outlining a forward-looking vision for each community, encompassing measures to safeguard their distinct character while fostering appropriate and sustainable expansion into the future, all while nurturing a robust local economy. In summary, the plans aim to:

1. Align with the regional and local dimensions of transportation, commerce, economic activity, social dynamics, environmental sustainability, demographics, and housing functions within the townships.
2. Define township boundaries that are sufficiently expansive to accommodate future growth while effectively managing impacts beyond the town center.
3. Identify distinct precincts, thematic elements, and a desired future character for each area, promoting appropriate growth and evolution over time.
4. Foster housing choice and diversity, informed by housing development data, housing capacity considerations, and State planning policy.
5. Identify zones for and areas of separation required where conflict relating to future or current land uses exist.
6. Highlight areas warranting further strategic examination, risk assessments and planning interventions.

The intention of placing the structure plans on public exhibition is to seek formal community feedback on the proposed drafts. Following the display period, revised drafts will be produced and an in-principle approval will be sought from Council for these revised drafts. Final adoption by the Council cannot be made until the Minister for Planning grants approval to amend a planning scheme and a public gazettal process is completed.

**Relevant Law (s.9(2)(a)):**

*The Local Government Act 2020*

**Options – Best Outcomes for the Community (s.9(2)(b)):**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the Local Government Act 2020 is that priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

The proposed township structure plans seek to meet the needs of the existing population while maintaining the ability of future generations to meet their own needs through the fair and equitable use and development of land in and around these townships. These structure plans will guide future planning decisions to ensure the appropriate separation of land uses, ongoing supply of residential, commercial, and industrial land with respect to local environmental and risk factors.

### **Sustainability Implications (s.9(2)(c)):**

#### *Economic*

The Structure Plans will support a broad range of economic activities through land use separation, appropriate zoning and setting aside areas for future growth and change.

#### *Social*

Each Structure Plan includes aspects for housing, social infrastructure, and transportation to build a healthy social fabric within each township into the future.

#### *Environmental/Climate Change*

The proposed township boundaries are derived in part from an understanding and investigation into the surrounding environmental risk factors such as bushfire, natural resource management (agricultural land), topography, waterway management and infrastructure provision. The proposed Structure Plans seek to balance the local environment with future growth of each township in a balanced and sustainable way.

### **Community Engagement (s.9(2)(d)):**

Community engagement was undertaken during the Structure Planning Process following the development of a draft plan for each township and the background issue and opportunity reports. The engagement process consisted of in-person community engagement sessions at each township on the below dates:

- Bellbridge 19/03/2024– 3:30pm – 7:30pm
- Corryong 20/03/2024 –3:30pm – 7:30pm
- Tallangatta 21/03/2024 –3:30pm – 7:30pm

### **Innovation and Continuous Improvement (s.9(2)(e)):**

The proposed Structure Plans seek to provide for future growth and innovation in each of the respective townships by facilitating new housing, commercial activity, appropriately located industrial land uses, robust social infrastructure, and active

transport options. The future of Bellbridge, Corryong and Tallangatta will be guided by the proposed Structure Plans and allow for well-planned change and growth of these areas in line with community expectations and a rapidly changing world.

**Collaboration (s.9(2)(f)):**

Engagement with statutory and stakeholder authorities was also undertaken at the initial draft stage of the program in early 2023 and in March 2024. The following agencies have been critical in developing the structure plans:

- Department of Transport and Planning
- Department of Environment, Energy and Climate Action
- Goulburn Murray Water
- North East Catchment Management Authority
- North East Water
- Country Fire Authority
- Department of Agriculture
- Parks Victoria
- VICPOL
- State Emergency Services
- Ambulance Victoria

**Financial Viability/Budget Impact (s.9(2)(g)):**

Budget requirements and availability have been confirmed, grant funding has been sought where possible and all expenditure is being monitored and managed within agreed budget allocations.

**Regional, State and National Plans and Policies (s.9(2)(h)):**

The structure plans' content, layout and scope are derived from previous State, Regional and local plans and policies and are consistent with the best practices approach for preparing Structure Plans in Victoria. These documents and policies have been reviewed as part of each township's "issues and opportunity" reports. This information has been used to create the Structure Plans to ensure that the overarching themes in these guiding documents have been addressed.

There are several key themes throughout the Hume Regional Growth Plan (2014) that the Structure Plans seek to address for future planning of the Townships, these include:

- Impacts of climatic conditions such as long-term droughts, widespread floods and an increase in the number of days of extreme heat and fire danger.
- Changes in economic sectors, particularly agriculture and manufacturing.

- Regional demographic changes include an ageing population and global demographic trends.

Regional plans and policies were reviewed and incorporated into the Structure Plans, these included:

- *NSW Draft Riverina Murray Regional Plan 2041*
- *Upper Murray 2030 Vision Plan (2016)*
- *Hume Regional Plan – Sustainable Communities 2010 – 2020 (2010)*

### **Council Plans and Policies:**

Council Plans:

This report supports the following Council Plan 2021-2025 priorities:

4. Land Use - Ensure that Council's planning, building and environmental health services support all aspects of liveability and sustainable population growth.
- 4.3 Develop structure plans for Corryong, Tallangatta and Bellbridge and incorporate into the planning scheme

Council Policies:

Local plans and policies were reviewed and incorporated into the structure plans, including:

- *Towong Rural Land Use Study (2009)*
- *Our Bellbridge Masterplan (2015)*
- *Recreation Strategy for Towong Shire*
- *Economic Development Strategy for Towong Shire 2022-2026*
- *Previous C25 Planning Scheme Amendment*
- *Landscape Scale Land Capability Assessment (2015)*
- *Destination Management Plan 2022-2026 (2022)*
- *Towong Shire Council Plan 2021-2025*
- *Activating Lake Hume Masterplan (2024 – Not yet adopted)*

### **Transparency of Decision (s.9(2)(i)) :**

It is the officer's view that it is appropriate to consider this matter in a Council meeting that is open to the public.

### **Risk Assessment:**

Not applicable.



**Officer’s View:**

The proposed structure plans have considered all relevant strategic plans, policies and feedback from relevant stakeholders, authorities and the local community. While it is difficult to appease all parties, the proposed structure plans result from the most practical, balanced, and sustainable feedback available. They will accomplish appropriate and measured planning outcomes in the future.

**Council Resolution:**

**CR ANDERSON  
CR WORTMANN**

**THAT:**

- 1. THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER BE AUTHORISED TO PLACE THE DRAFT TALLANGATTA, BELLBRIDGE AND CORRYONG STRUCTURE PLANS ON PUBLIC EXHIBITION AND INVITE SUBMISSIONS; AND**
- 2. AT THE COUNCIL MEETING IN JUNE 2024:**
  - a. ANY SUBMISSIONS IN RELATION TO THE DRAFT STRUCTURE PLANS BE CONSIDERED;**
  - b. ANY PERSON OR THEIR REPRESENTATIVE WHO WISHES TO SPEAK IN SUPPORT OF THEIR SUBMISSION BE HEARD; AND**
  - c. THE DRAFT STRUCTURE PLANS BE CONSIDERED FOR IN-PRINCIPLE ADOPTION.**

**CARRIED**

## 14 Environmental Sustainability

### 14.1 Forestry Report (DIE-03/05/0000)

#### **Disclosure of Interests (S.130):**

This report was prepared by Mr Stephen Sjoberg, Technical Officer Environment.

At the time of preparation of this report, the officer did not have a general or material conflict of interest in any matter to which the report or advice relates.

#### **Purpose of Report:**

The purpose of this report is to provide a biannual update on forestry and related activities including a summary of timber harvesting that has been conducted on private land across the Shire.

#### **Summary:**

Throughout the Shire, there are significant areas of pine plantations located in state forests and on private land. Where timber harvesting operations occur on private land, Council is responsible for ensuring compliance, as timber production is a defined land use in the Victoria Planning Provisions and associated planning schemes.

#### **Recommendation:**

That the report be noted.

#### **Attachment:**

Not Applicable

#### **Background/History:**

Council has a responsibility to ensure environmental compliance relating to forestry operations occurring on private land across the Shire. Compliance work involves inspecting and auditing forestry operations, liaising with forestry owners and the local community.

Council has received 32 timber harvesting plans since April 2023.

An increase in harvesting activity has occurred with forestry operators achieving good progress in relation to their harvest plans having exceeded plan targets due to

favourable weather conditions which allowed acceleration of planned works with minimal disruption.

In the last period 1320 ha of plantation has been harvested, producing an estimated 216,533 m<sup>3</sup> of timber. Of this 64,780 m<sup>3</sup> (29.8%) of the volume is clear fall and 151,753 m<sup>3</sup> of the volume is thinning.

The inspections below were completed as part of Council's oversight of forestry operations:

- 12 inspections of harvesting operations;
- 32 Timber Harvesting Plan reviews;
- 8 post haulage road inspections.

Major harvesting operations include those conducted by Hancock Victorian Plantations in the Shelley Railway and Koetong (Emu) areas. Harvesting also commenced in Jingellic were completed in May 2023.

Agriwealth is currently harvesting the French Wrights Road area of the Tallangatta Valley. Southern Forests is currently harvesting the Smith coupe in the Burrowye area.

The emergence of fleabane weed (*Enigeron bonarlensis*) is noticeable in the recently harvested areas. HVP do not apply herbicides for control as fleabane is not a declared or restricted weed in Victoria. It is considered best practice to retain the fleabane as it offers a level of shelter for the newly planted pine seedlings. As the trees become established they outcompete the fleabane.

When reviewing THPs the following factors are considered:

- Risk of soil erosion and mitigation strategies such as using booms or hay bales to slow the rate of water runoff. Constructing windrows to reduce wind and water erosion.
- HVP provides Rare And Threatened Species And Communities (RATSAC) assessments and set out exclusion zones and modify harvest methods accordingly.
- Roads used for harvest operations are returned to pre-harvest condition by the operator. School bus operators are considered when planning timber haulage.
- Traffic control is deployed where required, such as night harvesting or harvesting close to a road.
- Restricting harvest operations in wet weather when harvesting steep terrain.

HVP conduct blackberry and feral deer control programs. Council has requested and is awaiting cost estimates pertaining to the damage/ loss in production caused by introduced plants and animals.

**Relevant Law (s.9(2)(a)):**

All forestry activities were conducted in accordance with the *Code of Practice for Timber Production 2014* (the Code). The Code outlines the environmental standards for planning and conducting commercial timber harvesting operations and is referenced by the Victorian Planning Provisions.

**Options – Best Outcomes for the Community (s.9(2)(b)):**

Not Applicable.

**Sustainability Implications (s.9(2)(c)):**

The presence of a viable private plantation industry contributes to the Shire’s economic and environmental sustainability.

**Community Engagement (s.9(2)(d)):**

The Towong Shire Plantations Committee meets twice yearly and provides a forum for forestry related community issues to be raised and discussed between plantation owners and community representatives. Council representatives have attended these meetings.

**Innovation and Continuous Improvement (s.9(2)(e)):**

Not Applicable.

**Collaboration (s.9(2)(f)):**

Council officers liaise with the following organisations and groups in relation to planned forestry activities:

- Towong Shire Plantation Committee
- Department Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions
- Parks Victoria
- Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action
- D & R Henderson with Agriwealth
- Southern Forests
- Hancock Victorian Plantations
- VicForests

**Financial Viability/Budget Impact (s.9(2)(g)):**

Not Applicable

**Regional, State and National Plans and Policies (s.9(2)(h)):**

Forestry activities are undertaken in accordance with the following regional, state and national plans:

- *Code of Practice for Timber Production 2014*
- *North East Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27*
- *NE Waterway Strategy 2014*
- *North East Community Support Plan 2017*

**Council Plans and Policies:**

Not Applicable

**Transparency of Decision (s.9(2)(i)):**

It is the officer's view that it is appropriate to consider this matter in a Council meeting that is open to the public.

**Risk Assessment:**

Not Applicable

**Officer's View:**

It is the officer's view that forestry operations are progressing across the Shire in compliance with legislative requirements. Council's oversight has ensured the appropriate standards are maintained for commercial timber harvesting operations on private land.

**Council Resolution:**

**CR DIKSCHAI**

**CR SCALES**

**THAT THE REPORT BE NOTED.**

**CARRIED**

## 15 Economic and Tourism Development

### 15.1 Adoption of Lake Hume Masterplan

#### Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Ms Amanda Pagan, Director Community and Planning.

At the time of preparation of this report, the officer did not have a general or material conflict of interest in any matter to which the report or advice relates.

#### Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider adoption of the Activating Lake Hume Masterplan.

#### Summary:

In 2021, Council secured funding via the Victorian State Government's *Investment Fast Track* program to develop the *Activating Lake Hume Masterplan*. This comprehensive plan outlines the trajectory for future infrastructure and activity development in and around the lake, aiming to enhance the economic vitality of the Lake Hume region

On 20 December 2023, Council resolved to place the draft *Activating Lake Hume Masterplan* on public exhibition to seek community feedback. The feedback period is now complete, and 28 responses were received. These were considered in the final plan.

#### Recommendation:

That Council adopt the *Activating Lake Hume Masterplan*.

#### Attachment:

1. Activating Lake Hume Masterplan - Final [**15.1.1** - 88 pages]

#### Background/History:

Completed in early 2021, the *Towong Shire Destination Management Plan* underwent extensive community and stakeholder engagement, identifying Lake Hume as a crucial social and economic development opportunity. Securing funding through the *Investment Fast Track* program, officers initiated the development of an *Activating Lake*

*Hume Masterplan*, aiming to enhance the economic performance of Lake Hume and its surrounding region as a prominent recreation and tourism asset for the Shire.

To facilitate the plan's development, a community and stakeholder project steering group was established, overseeing the project through a Request for Quotation process that led to the appointment of Urban Enterprise as the project consultant. Community engagement sessions, well-received by Towong Shire residents residing on the lake foreshore, were conducted. Urban Enterprise also engaged with various authority stakeholders, including Goulburn Murray Water.

The resulting masterplan delves into tourism trends, governance, regulations, the visitor economy, and the community's recreational aspirations for Lake Hume. It outlines a vision for the lake's future, along with priorities and actions categorised under four themes: Enabling Investment and Growth; Positioning, Branding and Awareness; Foreshore Activation; and On-water Activation and Access.

On 20 December 2023, Council resolved to place the draft *Activating Lake Hume Masterplan* on public exhibition to seek community feedback. The feedback period is now complete, and 28 responses were received. These were considered in the final plan.

**Relevant Law (s.9(2)(a)):**

The *Local Government Act 2020*

**Options – Best Outcomes for the Community (s.9(2)(b)):**

A central tenet of the Local Government Act 2020, as outlined in section 9, emphasises prioritising the best outcomes for the community, focusing on current and future generations.

Presently, the Towong Shire economy predominantly depends on the agriculture and forestry sectors. Introducing diversification measures is essential to bolster private sector investment, attract young families to the region, and mitigate economic shocks stemming from natural disasters.

Investing in additional recreational infrastructure and facilities to enhance social connectedness is crucial. The investment will improve the well-being of Towong Shire residents and contribute to future generations' health and happiness.

**Sustainability Implications (s.9(2)(c)):**

*Economic*

Implementing the masterplan will drive further investment in tourism, generate employment opportunities and contribute to economic stability.

### **Community Engagement (s.9(2)(d)):**

During the community engagement process to formulate the Destination Management Plan, the development of a masterplan for Lake Hume emerged as a priority.

Development of the Activating Lake Hume Masterplan was overseen by a community and stakeholder steering group consisting of:

- Community members
- Lake Hume adjoining landowners
- Tourism North East
- Goulburn Murray Water
- Regional Development Victoria
- Local governments adjacent to Lake Hume.

The community played a substantial role in shaping the masterplan, contributing insights through information sessions, one-on-one stakeholder meetings, and an online survey.

### **Innovation and Continuous Improvement (s.9(2)(e)):**

The Lake Hume Masterplan is pivotal in fostering continuous improvement within the municipality by strategically expanding the tourism offering, enhancing recreational activities, and introducing new arts and cultural experiences. Through targeted initiatives, the masterplan seeks to attract a diverse range of visitors, thereby stimulating economic growth and providing new opportunities for local businesses. Enhancing recreational activities around Lake Hume enriches residents' quality of life and positions the area as a desirable destination for outdoor enthusiasts.

Additionally, integrating arts and cultural activities previously unavailable in the municipality adds a distinctive and enriching dimension to the local community, contributing to a vibrant cultural scene. The masterplan serves as a catalyst for positive change, promoting sustained development and an improved quality of life for residents and visitors alike.

### **Collaboration (s.9(2)(f)):**

The Lake Hume region encompasses five local government areas:



- Towong Shire (VIC)
- Indigo Shire (VIC)
- Wodonga City (VIC)
- Albury City (NSW)
- Greater Hume (NSW)

The masterplan considers opportunities for the lake and the surrounding land. Whilst the plan focuses on Towong Shire, consideration was given to activation opportunities that involve the other four local government areas. Collaboration with adjoining local governments may be sought to implement plan elements.

**Financial Viability/Budget Impact (s.9(2)(g)):**

The masterplan does not immediately impede the Council's financial viability or budget. Officers will investigate opportunities to apply for grant funding to support the delivery of the masterplan. To ensure financial sustainability, these opportunities will be progressed alongside a thorough review of the potential maintenance costs associated with any public infrastructure that Council might need to maintain.

**Regional, State and National Plans and Policies (s.9(2)(h)):**

The masterplan drew insights from many State, Regional, and local plans and policies.

Both Victorian and NSW tourism strategies align on several key themes, emphasising the need to:

- Enhance landscapes and waterways for immersive nature-based experiences;
- Provide high-quality tourism products and experiences that meet market expectations;
- Invest in infrastructure and future planning to ensure the ongoing prosperity of the visitor economy; and
- Generate visitation demand through marketing and events to enhance awareness.

Furthermore, the recognition and support for recreational values are evident in the Victorian State Government's waterway planning.

In examining regional tourism strategies and plans for Victoria's High Country and the Murray Region, a shared strategic focus emerges, highlighting the strengths of:

- Water sports, fishing, and cruising;
- Nature-based experiences;
- Cycle tourism;

- Food, wine, and produce; and
- Arts and cultural heritage.

These aspects have been considered in formulating the masterplan.

### **Council Plans and Policies:**

Council Plans:

This report supports the following Council Plan 2021-2025 priorities:

3. Economic and Tourism Development - Expand economic and employment opportunities across our Shire in a sustainable way.

3.13 Seek funding to develop a master plan for Lake Hume as a tourism destination including houseboats and the Narrows project

Council Policies:

The masterplan strongly aligns with numerous Council strategies including the:

- *Towong Shire Council Plan 2021-25*
- *Towong Shire Economic Development Strategy 2021-25*
- *Our Bellbridge Masterplan 2015*
- *Tallangatta Tomorrow Masterplan 2012*

These strategies provide the context for future development in Towong Shire, specifically Tallangatta and Bellbridge. They reveal the community's desire to achieve economic, tourism, and population growth while acknowledging the natural and local community values that need to be protected.

The opportunity for tourism and recreational development on and around Lake Hume has been recognised and supported in these documents.

### **Transparency of Decision (s.9(2)(i)) :**

It is the officer's view that it is appropriate to consider this matter in a Council meeting that is open to the public.

### **Risk Assessment:**

Adopting the masterplan presents a potential risk, as it may inadvertently convey to the community that the Council is poised to support its development financially. We are not able to allocate substantial funds to the projects outlined in the plan without significant state and federal government support. It is crucial that officers actively seek grant funding to deliver the proposed projects, as outlined in the masterplan. Securing these grants may pose challenges, and the process could extend over

several years or even decades if a singular, substantial funding source cannot be identified. Clear communication is paramount to managing community expectations.

**Officer's View:**

Lake Hume is a prominent recreation and tourism asset for our Shire. The *Activating Lake Hume Masterplan* is an excellent piece of work, presenting a clear vision of how the lake and surrounding land could be used into the future for social and economic benefit for Towong Shire residents and ratepayers, and visitors to the area.

The funding provided by the Victorian State Government under the *Investment Fast Track* program is acknowledged with thanks. Without this funding, the project would not have been possible.

It is the Officer's recommendation that Council adopt the plan.

**Council Resolution:**

**CR ANDERSON  
CR WORTMANN**

**THAT COUNCIL ADOPT THE *ACTIVATING LAKE HUME MASTERPLAN*.**

**CARRIED**

## 16 Councillor Reports

An opportunity is provided for Councillors to table or present a Delegate's report.

Nil.

## 17 Urgent Business

In accordance with Council's Governance Rules, matters of urgent business can only be considered if:

- a) It relates to or arises out of a matter which has arisen since distribution of the agenda; and
- b) It cannot safely or conveniently be deferred until the next Council meeting; and
- c) The Council resolves to admit an item considered to be urgent business.

Nil.

## 18 Committee Minutes

There are no Committee Meeting minutes for review or confirmation this month.

## 19 Council Policies

### 19.1 Policies for Review

The following policies are tabled for review in accordance with Council's agreed review cycle. Feedback should be provided to the nominated officer by 22 May 2024 to ensure any input can be considered prior to tabling the policies for adoption:

- Asset Management
- Asset Valuation
- Procurement Policy

#### Attachment:

1. Asset Management Policy [**19.1.1** - 6 pages]
2. Asset Valuation Policy [**19.1.2** - 4 pages]
3. Procurement Policy [**19.1.3** - 15 pages]

**Recommendation:**

That the policies tabled for review be noted.

**Council Resolution:**

**CR DIKSCHAI  
CR SCALES**

**THAT THE POLICIES TABLED FOR REVIEW BE NOTED.**

**CARRIED**

Unconfirmed

## 20 Sealing of Documents

Nil.

## 21 Confidential

Section 66 of the *Local Government Act 2020* declares that meetings are to be open to the public unless the following specified circumstances apply:

1. *A Council or delegated committee must keep a meeting open to the public unless the Council or delegated committee considers it necessary to close the meeting to the public because a circumstance specified in subsection (2) applies.*
2. *The circumstances are –*
  - a) *the meeting is to consider confidential information; or*
  - b) *security reasons; or*
  - c) *it is necessary to do so to enable the meeting to proceed in an orderly manner.*
3. *If the circumstance specified in subsection (2)(b) or (2)(c) applies, the meeting can only be closed to the public if the Council or delegated committee has made arrangements to enable the proceedings of the meeting to be viewed by members of the public as the meeting is being held.*
4. *For the purposes of subsection (3), the arrangements may include provision to view the proceedings on the Internet or on closed circuit television.*
5. *If a Council or delegated committee determines that a meeting is to be closed to the public to consider confidential information, the Council or delegated committee must record in the minutes of the meeting that are available for public inspection –*
  - a) *the ground or grounds for determining to close the meeting to the public by reference to the grounds specified in the definition of confidential information in section 3(1); and*
  - b) *an explanation of why the specified ground or grounds applied.*

*As defined in section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2020 "confidential information" means the following information*

- a. *Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released;*
- b. *Security information, being information that if released is likely to endanger the security of Council property or the safety of any person;*

- c. *Land use planning information, being information that if prematurely released is likely to encourage speculation in land values;*
- d. *Law enforcement information, being information which if released would be reasonably likely to prejudice the investigation in an alleged breach of the law or the fair trial or hearing of any person;*
- e. *Legal privileged information, being information to which legal professional privilege or client legal privilege applies;*
- f. *Personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs;*
- g. *Private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that –*
  - (i) *relates to trade secrets; or*
  - (ii) *if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage;*
- h. *Confidential meeting information, being the records of meetings closed to the public under section 66(2)(a);*
- i. *Internal arbitration information, being information specified in section 145;*
- j. *Councillor Conduct Panel confidential information, being information specified in section 169;*
- k. *Information prescribed by the regulations to be confidential information for the purposes of this definition; and*

*Information that was confidential information for the purposes of section 77 of the Local Government Act 1989.*

Nil.

## **22 Closure of Meeting**

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting closed, the time being 11:13 am.

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**Mayor**

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