

Agenda

Ordinary Meeting of Council

10:30am, Wednesday 23 July 2025

Council Chamber, Corryong Council Office

76 Hanson Street, Corryong, Victoria

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.

**Agenda for the Ordinary Meeting of Council to be held at
76 Hanson Street, Corryong, Victoria
on Wednesday 23 July 2025 commencing at 10:30am**

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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1 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, Wortmann, Tolsher and Pitman

Officer Attendance:	Title:
Ms Phelps	Chief Executive Officer
Mr Heritage	Director Infrastructure and Environment
Mr Florence	Director Community and Planning
Ms Taylor	Director Corporate and Organisational Development

3 Apologies and Granting of Leave of Absence

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.

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 held on 25 June 2025

Recommendation:

That the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 25 June 2025 be confirmed.

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.

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 11 June 2025, 20 June 2025 and 25 June 2025 are attached as follows:

1. Workshop Meeting Records- 11 June 2025 [**8.1.1** - 4 pages]
2. Plan Workshop Meeting Records - 20 June 2025 [**8.1.2** - 2 pages]
3. Workshop Meeting Records - 25 June 2025 [**8.1.3** - 3 pages]

Recommendation:

That the information be noted.

9 Organisational Improvement

9.1 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 this report is to inform Councillors of the status of the resolutions from the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 25 June 2025.

Summary:

The attached report summarises the progress made in relation to the resolutions from the Ordinary Council meeting held on 25 June 2025.

Recommendation:

That the report be noted.

Attachment:

1. Action Sheet from Ordinary Council Meeting 25 June 2025 [**9.1.1** - 8 pages]

Background/History:

Not applicable.

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)):

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.

9.2 Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillor Allowances (07/03/0012-DCOD)

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 present the updated base and remote area travel allowances payable to the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor and the Councillors from 1 July 2025.

Summary:

Under the *Local Government Act 2020* (LGA 2020) the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors are to be paid allowances in accordance with a Determination of the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal. In March 2022, the Tribunal made its first Determination which indicated an increase in allowance levels to be phased in over a number of years. Each increase noted in the Determination will not come into effect until it is resolved by Council.

Recommendation:

That:

1. The Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillor allowances be set at the adjusted levels specified by the Determination of the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal as follows for the period 1 July 2025 – 17 December 2025:
 - a. Mayor: \$89,323 per annum
 - b. Deputy Mayor: \$44,661 per annum
 - c. Councillors: \$28,110 per annum
2. The Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillor allowances be set at the adjusted levels specified by the Determination of the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal as follows for the period 18 December 2025 ongoing:
 - a. Mayor: \$91,613 per annum
 - b. Deputy Mayor: \$45,807 per annum
 - c. Councillors: \$28,110 per annum
3. The Remote Area Travel Allowance be set at the adjusted level of \$48.90 as specified by the Determination of the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal for the period 1 July 2025 ongoing;
4. The Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors individually advise the Chief Executive Officer if they elect to receive a partial allowance or no allowance;
5. Backdated allowance payments be made to reflect that the adjusted Determination took effect from 1 July 2025; and
6. Future allowance payment adjustments from the Determination take effect automatically from 18 December 2025 ongoing.

Attachment:

1. Allowance-payable-to- Mayors,- Deputy- Mayors-and- Councillors - 1 July 2025 Determination [**9.2.1** - 25 pages]

Background/History:

The LGA 2020 provides for the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor and the Councillors to be entitled to receive allowances. Under the LGA 2020, the responsibility for setting these allowances has moved from the Minister for Local Government to the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal.

The Tribunal made its first Determination on 7 March 2022 with initial allowance levels taking effect from 18 December 2021. The Determination sets a base allowance for each Council member depending on their role (Mayor, Deputy Mayor or Councillor) and the Council allowance category allowance assigned to the Council. The allowance is a fixed amount and is inclusive of an equivalent superannuation guarantee contribution and is to be indexed annually. It also sets a remote area travel allowance for Council members and provides eligibility criteria for claiming it.

Council is a Category 1 council for the purpose of determining allowances, based on council revenue and population. Accordingly, the allowance levels as per the Determination are as follows for current and future periods:

7. Mayor:

Time	Amount
18 December 2024 – 30 June 2025	\$86,722
1 July 2025 – 17 December 2025	\$89,323
18 December 2025 onwards	\$91,613

8. Deputy Mayor:

Time	Amount
18 December 2024 – 30 June 2025	\$43,360
1 July 2025 – 17 December 2025	\$44,661
18 December 2025 onwards	\$45,807

9. Councillors:

Time	Amount
1 July 2024 onwards	\$27,291
1 July 2025 onwards	\$28,110

Councillors are also entitled to the reimbursement of any necessary out-of-pocket expenses they incur while performing their duties as a Councillor.

In addition, the remote area travel allowance has been adjusted from \$47.50 to \$48.90. The remote area travel allowance is paid to a Council member who normally resides more than 50 kilometres by the shortest possible practicable road distance from the location or locations specified for the conduct of ordinary, special or committee meetings of the Council, or any municipal or community functions which have been authorised by Council resolution for the Council member to attend, for each day on which one or meetings or authorised functions were attended, up to a maximum of \$6,112.50 per annum.

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

Section 39 of the *Local Government Act 2020* stipulates that Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors are entitled to receive allowances in accordance with a Determination of the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal under the *Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal and Improving Parliamentary Standards Act 2019*.

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

The Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal has considered the ability to attract and retain quality candidates to the Council in the best interests of the community.

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

The increased allowance levels as set by the Determination help to provide for the sector's ability to attract and retain suitable Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors.

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

Not applicable.

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

The allowance structure provided by the Determination simplifies the prior approach which involved Councils adopting allowance levels from a range.

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

Not applicable.

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

Councillor allowances have been factored into Council's annual budget.

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.

6.14 Provide ongoing support and development of Councillors in fulfilling their roles

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:

The allowance structure provided by the Determination sets fixed allowance levels, compared to the prior allowance structure whereby councils were required to adopt their own allowance levels from a range. This helps to mitigate reputational risk associated with councillors deciding on their own remuneration.

Officer's View:

It is the officer's view that The Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal has justified the reasoning for the mid-year increase in base allowances and remote area travel allowances, which is consistent with the increase to the basic salary for Members of Parliament from 1 July 2025.

10 Community Wellbeing

There are no Community Wellbeing reports to present this meeting.

11 Asset Management

11.1 Flood Damage Recovery Works (DIE)

Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Mr Jamie Heritage, Director of Infrastructure and 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 seek approval for a contract variation for flood damage repair works (for the western section of the municipality) to the current contractor Tallangatta Construction and Maintenance Pty Ltd (TCM).

This approval is being sought as TCM are the current contract undertaking flood repair works along Lake Road, with additional funding being obtained through the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program Phase-4 and Roads 2 Recovery for Lake Road upgrades, work efficiency and timeline gains are presented.

Summary:

At the 26 March 2025 Council Meeting officers presented a report seeking approval to award contracts for flood damage rectification works following the receipt of DRFA funding approval (DRFA – ARGN 1037).

Council resolved to award the Western Section Priority 1 and 2 works to Tallangatta Construction and Maintenance Pty Ltd for the sum of

2024/25-031	Towong Shire Western Section Priority 1 works	\$684,691 (ex. GST)	Tallangatta Construction and Maintenance
2023/24-041	Towong Shire Western Section Priority 2 works	\$600,996 (ex. GST)	Tallangatta Construction and Maintenance

With funding be obtained as follows;

Source Name	Source Acronym	Value (\$)
Local Road Council Infrastructure Program	LRCI	\$ 250,000
Roads to Recovery	R2R	\$ 200,000
Flood Funding Betterment	DRFA – ARGN 1037	\$ 298,200

As Tallangatta Construction and Maintenance are on Council's Prequalified Supplier Panel and the proposed works variation being above \$100,000 a Council decision is required.

Officers prepared a scope of works, schedule of quantities for the additional works not covered under the existing contract within the flood damage rectification works. A written quotation from TCM to the Scope of works was obtained, compared / vetted against other comparable works and found to be competitive.

Recommendation:

That:

1. Contract 2023/24-041 for Flood Damage Repair Works (Towong Shire Western Section – Priority 2 Works) be amended to include funding sources from Local Roads Council Infrastructure Program Phase 4, Roads to Recovery and Flood Funding Betterment to the total of \$748,000 ex. GST;
2. The Chief Executive Officer be authorised to sign and seal the contract documents in accordance with Local Law 1 – Common Seal and Miscellaneous Penalties; and
3. The Chief Executive Officer be authorised to approve contract variations up to the total value of the allocated budget.

Attachment:

Confidential attachments have been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.

Background/History:

In January and October 2022, the Shire experienced severe storm events resulting in extensive damage to the municipal road network. Officers have applied for Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) through Emergency Management Victoria

(EMV) to undertake remedial works following these storm events. The events have been registered with Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) under Australian Government Reference Number AGRN 1004 and AGRN 1007 and AGRN 1037.

AGRN 1004 and 1009 have been completed as immediate emergency works while 1037 is a more extensive remedial works program for Council Road network. In line with delivering repair and maintenance caused by ARGN 1037 flood event, four tenders were advertised in March 2024 on www.tenders.net, local newspapers and Council's Facebook site in accordance with the Procurement Policy in March 2024.

These tenders were divided into the Eastern (2 tenders) and Western (2 tenders) ends of the Shire. Two submissions were received for each tender and contractor evaluation was done to determine the appropriate contractors for their respective works.

Funding from *DRFA (ARGN 1037)* has been approved by Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) to deliver flood remediation works.

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

The Local Government Act 2020

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

With Tallangatta Construction and Maintenance current undertaking flood repair works along Lake Road and other locations within Towong Shire, efficiency, cost and timeline gains are to be had.

Including being on Council's Prequalified Supplier Panel as local contractor economic benefits remain within the local communities.

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

Economic

Where possible, local suppliers are engaged, this provides for ongoing economic sustainability in our shire.

Social

Successful completion of the project will improve road safety conditions across the Shire.

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

Local community members will be notified of any impacts before work commences.

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)):

Budget requirements and availability have been confirmed, grant funding has been sought through DRFA, 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:

Council Plans:

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

1. Asset Management - Maintain and improve our Shire's infrastructure to meet the levels of service established in consultation with our communities.

Council Policies:
Procurement 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:

The significant risk for this project is the limited time to spend the allocated grant funding and the possibility of weather delays. This risk will be mitigated where

possible by active supervision and management of the contractor.

Officer's View:

It is the officer's recommendation that Council proceed with amending Contract No. 2023/24-041 to Tallangatta Construction and Maintenance Pty Ltd

12 Land Use Planning

There are no Land Use Planning reports to present this meeting.

13 Environmental Sustainability

There are no Environmental Sustainability reports to present this meeting.

14 Economic and Tourism Development

There are no Economic and Tourism Development reports to present this meeting.

15 Councillor Reports

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

16 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.

17 Committee Minutes

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

18 Council Policies

There are no policies for review or adoption.

19 Sealing of Documents

Nil.

20 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.

21 Closure of Meeting

Council Meeting - 23 July 2025 Attachments

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Meeting Record

Councillor Workshop

Wednesday 11 June 2025 - Tallangatta

Attendees: Crs Whitehead, Tolsher, Anderson, Wortmann and Pitman
Juliana Phelps (CEO) and officers as listed below

Apologies: Nil

Disclosures of Conflicts of Interest: Nil

9.30am Councillor feedback/issues/questions:

The following matters were raised by Councillors:

Cr Wortmann:

Cr Tolsher:

Cr Anderson:
Hospital Rally - Corryong

Cr Pitman:

Cr Whitehead:
HRLGN
Emergency Services Volunteer Fund Levy

10.30am Corryong Junior Campus – Masterplan

Councillors met with representatives from ClarkeHopkinsClarke to discuss the Corryong Junior Campus Masterplan, being Ms Ngaio Chalmers and Mr Andrew Amos.



11.00am Indigo Power – Resilient Building Project

Councillors met with a representative from Indigo Power to discuss the Resilient Building Project, being Mr Heath Shakespear - Project Manager

11.30am Director Community and Planning (Mark Florence)

Mr Mark Florence provided information in relation to the following:

June Council Meeting reports:

Recreation and Community Development
Economic Development
Early Years Report
Land Use Planning
Emergency Management Report
Pool Report
Library Report

Updates:

Early Years – Strategic items (Jason Pearson)
Youth Years – Strategic items
Bulloh Female Friendly project
Tallandoon Tennis Court project
Drought Assistance
Mitta Mountain Bike Park
Modular Housing
Corryong CBD Artwork (Kerissa Heritage)

12.30pm Lunch

Mr Mark Florence continued with Community and Planning items



1.00pm 290A Talgarno Gap Road, Bethanga

Councillors met with the applicant and objectors for a planning matter in relation to 290A Talgarno Gap Road, Bethanga.

2.00pm Long Term Financial Plan

Councillors met with CT Management to discuss the Long Term Financial Plan, being Mr Michael Courtney and Ms Sonia Giofches.

3.30pm Director Corporate and Organisational Development (Narelle Taylor)

Ms Narelle Taylor provided information in relation to the following:

Performance Reporting Graphs
Budget - Submissions
 - Early Years

4.00pm Director Infrastructure and Environment (Jamie Heritage)

Mr Jamie Heritage provided information in relation to the following:

Tree maintenance Tallangatta
Meeting with VicRoads update
Capital Works progress

4.30pm Chief Executive Officer (Juliana Phelps)

Ms Juliana Phelps provided information in relation to the following:

Submission to Inquiry into Ambulance Victoria
Submission to Health Infrastructure NSW – Northeast Building
Meeting with Leader of the Opposition – Mr Brad Battin
Local Safety Committee



5.00pm Councillor Time

5.30pm Close



Meeting Record

Council Plan Workshop

Friday 20 June 2025 – The Cube, Wodonga

Attendees: Crs Whitehead, Anderson, Tolsher, Wortmann and Pitman
Ms Phelps, Ms Taylor, Mr Florence

Apologies: Mr Heritage

9.30am Council Plan Consultation Summary

Councillors were provided with a briefing on the Council Plan 2025-29 Consultation summary, following the completion of community consultation sessions.

11.45am Mayor, Cr Anderson and CEO

The Mayor, Councillor Anderson and Ms Phelps met with the following representatives:

Brad Battin, Leader of the Opposition
Georgie Crozier, Shadow Health Minister
Bill Tilley, Member for Benambra

12.00pm Lunch

1.15pm Council Plan – session continued

3.00pm Workshop Items

The following items were discussed:

Colac Colac Caravan Park lease
Native Title application
Towong Drought Committee/Think Tank
Drought Infrastructure Grant \$5,000
Bullioh Female Friendly project
Walwa Recreation Reserve oval



Walwa Fire Shed
Corryong CBD - sealing works
Survey results
Chair CEO Performance and Remuneration Committee
Meeting with Brad Battin, Leader of the Opposition
Corryong Cemetery request
Walwa Playground – City of Kingston

5.00pm **Close**



Meeting Record

Councillor Workshop

Wednesday 25 June 2025 - Tallangatta

Attendees: Crs Whitehead, Tolsher, Wortmann and Pitman
Officers as listed below

Apologies: Cr Anderson and Ms Phelps (CEO)

Disclosures of Conflicts of Interest: Nil

9.30am Councillor feedback/issues/questions:

The following matters were raised by Councillors:

Cr Wortmann:

13 Jun - Early Years Infrastructure/Service Levels

23 Jun - Bellbridge Boathouse

Cr Tolsher:

23 Jun – Rates Collected by locality

Cr Anderson:

Cr Pitman:

Cr Whitehead:

10.00am Council Meeting

12.30pm Lunch



1.00pm Director Corporate and Organisational Development (Narelle Taylor)

Ms Narelle Taylor provided information in relation to the following:

Updates:

Lease and Licencing Policy
Domestic Animal Management Plan
Colac Colac Caravan Park Lease
Corryong Innovation Space Lease

2.00pm Albury Wodonga Foodshare

Councillors met with representatives from Albury Wodonga Foodshare, being Ms Katrina Pawley – Chief Executive Officer.

2.30pm Director Community and Planning (Mark Florence)

Mr Mark Florence provided information in relation to the following:

Updates:

Walwa Recreation Reserve Oval
Walwa Playground – City of Kingston

3.00pm North East Catchment Management Authority

Councillors met with representatives from the North East Catchment Management Authority, being Ms Katie Warner – Chief Executive Officer, and Mr Tim Loffler – Manager Waterways and Floodplain Planning

3.30pm Director Infrastructure and Environment (Jamie Heritage)

Mr Jamie Heritage provided information in relation to the following:

Updates:

Walwa CFA Fire Shed
Corryong CBD/sealing works



DTP Works

4.00pm Councillor Time

4.30pm Close

ACTION SHEET
FROM 25 JUNE 2025 ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	PROGRESS/ COMPLETE
5	<u>Confirmation of Minutes</u> That the Minutes of the Special Council Meeting held on 14 May 2025 and the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 28 May 2025 be confirmed.	Coordinator Governance and Compliance	Confirmed Minutes added to Council's website. Complete
9.4	<u>Final Budget Report 2025/26</u> That: 1. The increase in the childcare fees commence from 1 October 2025 and the Budget 2025/26 be amended and adopted accordingly; 2. The Chief Executive Officer be authorised to give public notice of the adoption of the <i>Budget 2025/26</i>; 3. Pursuant to section 158 of the <i>Local Government Act 1989</i>, the amounts to be raised by general rates, municipal charges, service rates and service charges for the 2025/26 financial year are as follows: a. General rates – \$7,362,000; b. Municipal charge – \$1,390,000; c. Kerbside collection charges – \$1,493,000; d. Waste facilities management charge – \$416,000; 4. Pursuant to section 159 of the <i>Local Government Act 1989</i>, a municipal charge of \$347 per rateable property be declared for the 2025/26 financial year; 5. Pursuant to section 159 of the <i>Local</i>	Director Corporate and Organisational Development	Document has been finalised and uploaded onto the Website for public access. Complete

ACTION SHEET
FROM 25 JUNE 2025 ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

	<i>Government Act 1989</i>, the following annual service charges be declared for the 2025/26 financial year: a. Waste facilities management – \$104; b. Garbage and recycling standard service – 140L/240L bins – \$340; c. Garbage and recycling – 240L/240L bins – \$380; d. Garbage and recycling – 80L/240L bins – \$310; e. Garbage, Recycling and FOGO - 80L/240L/240L bins - \$470; f. Garbage, Recycling and FOGO - 140L/240L/240L bins - \$495; g. Garbage, Recycling and FOGO - 240L/240L/240L bins - \$530; h. Additional garbage – 140L bin – \$380; i. Additional garbage – 240L bin – \$495; j. Additional garbage – 80L bin – \$325; k. Additional FOGO 240L Bin - \$155; l. Additional recycling – 240L bin – \$180; and m. Garbage and recycling service extension (per km) - \$0.20; 6. Pursuant to section 161 of the Local Government Act 1989, general rates are raised by the application of differential rates to rateable properties and that the following rates in the dollar are applied for each type of rate to be levied for the 2025/26 financial year, with the definition of each type or class of land contained within the Budget 2025/26: a. Residential properties – 0.2367 cents in the dollar of capital improved value;		
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ACTION SHEET
FROM 25 JUNE 2025 ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

	b. Rural residential properties – 0.2367 cents in the dollar of capital improved value; c. Rural properties – 0.1894 cents in the dollar of capital improved value; d. Business properties – 0.2130 cents in the dollar of capital improved value; and e. Undeveloped residential properties – 0.7574 cents in the dollar of capital improved value; 7. In exercise of the power conferred by section 169 of the Local Government Act 1989, rebates are granted to each owner (or where applicable, occupier) of rateable land of the declared municipal charge and waste facilities management charge in respect of the financial year, if: a. The rateable land is farm land within the meaning of section 2(1) of the <i>Valuation of Land Act 1960</i> or would be farm land if it were 2 hectares or more in area; b. The rateable land forms part of a single farm enterprise; c. A rebate is not granted in respect of at least one other rateable property which forms part of the single farm enterprise; and d. In the case of a single farm enterprise, which is occupied by more than one person, a rebate is not granted in respect of more than one principle place of residence; 8. It is Council's position that rebates assist in the proper development of the municipal district by encouraging the retention of farms and reducing the rates and charges		
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ACTION SHEET
FROM 25 JUNE 2025 ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

	burden on owners (and, where applicable, occupiers) of single farm enterprises; 9. In exercise of the power conferred by section 169 of the <i>Local Government Act 1989</i>, the following concessions be granted: a. 50% of the rates levied on the four elderly person units located at 24 Willong Street, Tallangatta, as per the existing agreement dated in 1994 between the Ministry of Housing and Council; b. 50% of the rates, municipal charge and waste management charges levied on the property at 25 Wheeler Street, Corryong, as per the Council Minutes dated 1 May 2000; and 10. In accordance with section 167 of the Local Government Act 1989, rates and charges are to be paid in four instalments on or before 30 September 2025, 30 November 2025, 28 February 2026 and 31 May 2026.		
9.5	<u>Final Revenue and Rating Plan 2025/29</u> That the Revenue and Rating Plan 2025/29 be adopted.	Director Corporate and Organisational Development	Document has been finalised and uploaded onto the Website for public access. Complete
9.7	<u>Chief Executive Officer – Employment and Remuneration Committee</u>	Chief Executive Officer	Chairperson has been reappointed.

ACTION SHEET
FROM 25 JUNE 2025 ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

	That Leisa Clarke be re-appointed as the Independent Chairperson of the Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Committee for a further term of four years.		Complete
10.4	<u>Bullioh Recreation Reserve – Female Friendly Facility</u> That: 1. Contract 2024/25 - 023 for the Female Friendly Facilities at Bullioh / Wyeeboo Recreation Reserve not be awarded to any tenderer; 2. An additional \$300,000 be allocated towards the project from savings and reallocations in the ERV Recovery and Resilience fund; 3. A negotiated contract 2024/25-061for \$614,796 be awarded to Barton Street Developments Pty Ltd for the revised scope project; 4. The use of the Common Seal in accordance with Local Law 1 – Common Seal and Miscellaneous Penalties be authorised for the purpose of signing the contract documents; and 5. The Chief Executive Officer be authorised to approve contract variations up to the total value of the allocated budget.	Director Community and Planning	Contract has been finalised. Complete
10.5	<u>Tallandoon Tennis Courts Redevelopment – Tender Evaluation</u> That: 1. Contract 2024/2025 - 001A Tallandoon Tennis Courts	Director Community and Planning	Contract has been finalised. Complete

ACTION SHEET
FROM 25 JUNE 2025 ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

	Redevelopment be awarded to Global Turf Projects Pty Ltd for the lump sum of \$510,180.42 Excluding GST; 2. The Chief Executive Officer be authorised to sign and seal Contract No 2024/25 - 001A in accordance with Local Law 1 – Common Seal and Miscellaneous Penalties; and 3. The Chief Executive Officer be authorised to approve contract variations up to the value of the total allocated project budget.		
10.6	<u>Youth Strategy Adoption</u> That: 1. The Draft Towong Shire Youth Strategy 2025-2029 as presented, be adopted; and 2. The Towong Shire Youth Strategy 2025-2029 Action Plan be endorsed and noted as a tool by which the Strategy will be implemented.	Director Community and Planning	Document has been finalised and uploaded onto the Website for public access. Complete
11.1	<u>Plant Replacement Program – Tender Evaluation</u> That: 1. Contract No. 2024/25 – 049 for the supply of a CAT 432 model backhoe be awarded to William Adams for the lump sum of \$212,500 excluding GST. 2. The Chief Executive Officer be authorised to sign Contract No. 2024/25 – 049 in accordance with Local Law 1 – Common Seal and Miscellaneous Penalties; and	Director Infrastructure and Environment	Contract has been signed and delivered. Complete

ACTION SHEET
FROM 25 JUNE 2025 ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

	3. The Chief Executive Officer be authorised to approve contract variations up to the total value of the allocated budget.		
11.3	<u>Capital Works Report</u> That the following be noted: 1. Reallocation of \$395,000 from the 2024/2025 Georges Creek Road/River Road Intersection capital budget to the Georges Creek Road Widening Works budget; 2. Reallocation of \$250,000 from the 2024/2025 Bellbridge Walking Track and Seal capital budget to the Lake Road Upgrade budget; and 3. Reallocation of \$75,000 from the 2024/2025 Building Demolitions capital budget to the Early Years Capital Projects budget.	Director Infrastructure and Environment	Reallocations have been completed. Complete
12.1	<u>290A Talgarno Gap Road Bethanga</u> That the item be deferred until the August 2025 Council Meeting.	Director Community and Planning	Item will be addressed in a future meeting.
12.2	<u>Omeo Highway Mitta Mitta Mountain Bike Trail</u> That the item be deferred until the end of the calendar year or until we have an agreement in place.	Director Community and Planning	Item will be addressed in a future meeting.

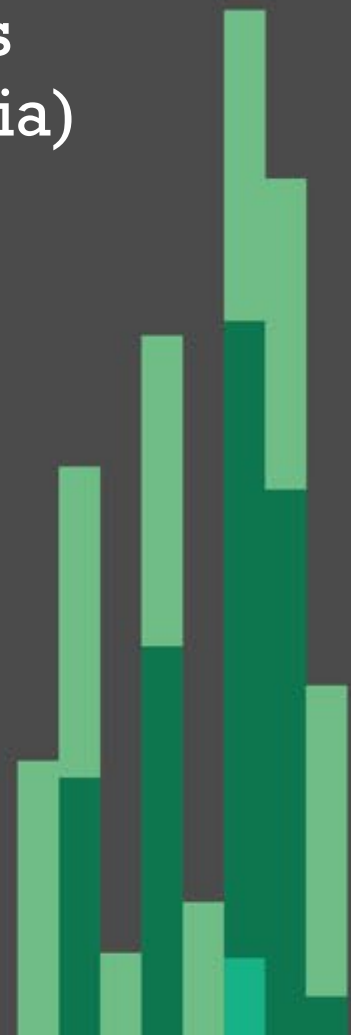
ACTION SHEET
FROM 25 JUNE 2025 ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

18.1	<u>Policies for Adoption</u> That the following policies as amended and presented be adopted, with the Chief Executive Officer authorised to make minor administrative changes where necessary: • Councillor Correspondence • Councillor Gift Policy	Coordinator Governance and Compliance	Policies have been adopted and made available on Council's website Complete
18.2	<u>Policies for Review</u> That the policies tabled for review be noted.	Coordinator Governance and Compliance	Complete

Victorian
Independent
Remuneration
Tribunal

Allowance payable to
Mayors, Deputy Mayors
and Councillors (Victoria)
Annual Adjustment
Determination 2025

Statement of Reasons





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Abbreviations and glossary



Term or abbreviation	Definition
2025 Local Government Annual Adjustment Determination	<i>Allowance payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors, and Councillors (Victoria) Annual Adjustment Determination 2025</i>
2025-26 Budget	<i>Victorian Budget 2025-26</i>
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
Comprehensive Determination	<i>Allowance payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors (Victoria) Determination No. 01/2022</i>
Council member	A Mayor, Deputy Mayor or Councillor
CPI	Consumer Price Index
DTF	Department of Treasury and Finance
EA	Enterprise Agreement
ESC	Essential Services Commission
FWC	Fair Work Commission
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GSP	Gross State Product
MP	Member of the Parliament of Victoria
p.a.	per annum
RBA	Reserve Bank of Australia
Tribunal	Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal
VAGO	Victorian Auditor-General's Office
VPS	Victorian Public Service
VIRTIPS Act	<i>Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal and Improving Parliamentary Standards Act 2019 (Vic)</i>
Wages Policy	Wages Policy and the Enterprise Bargaining Framework
WPI	Wage Price Index

Summary



The Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal has made a Determination providing for an annual adjustment to the values of the allowances payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors (Council members).

The Tribunal has increased the base allowance payable to each Council member by 3 per cent from 1 July 2025 as set out below:

Allowance Category	Value of base allowance from 1 July 2025 (\$ p.a.)		
	Mayor	Deputy Mayor	Councillor
Category 1	89,323	44,661	28,110
Category 2	115,347	57,673	35,049
Category 3	142,661	71,329	41,992
Category 4	285,324	142,662	62,988

The 3 per cent increase also applies to the future phase-in of increases to the base allowance for Mayors and Deputy Mayors, which will apply from 18 December 2025.

The Tribunal has also increased the value of the Remote Area Travel Allowance by 3 per cent. This allowance compensates eligible Council members for time spent on long distance travel to Council meetings or functions. From 1 July 2025, the Remote Area Travel Allowance will be \$48.90 per day for eligible Council members, up to a maximum of \$6,112.50 per annum.

This Statement of Reasons outlines the Tribunal's consideration of the following factors set out in legislation:

- the Victorian Government's wages policy
- the financial position and fiscal strategy of the State of Victoria
- current and projected economic conditions and trends
- submissions received in relation to the proposed Determination.

The Tribunal considered the current Wages Policy and the Enterprise Bargaining Framework (Wages Policy) in light of the current fiscal strategy of the State of Victoria, but notes that the policy does not apply to local Councils.

The Tribunal noted recent data that show economic growth remains subdued. However, headline inflation has now moderated and sits within the Reserve Bank of Australia's target range of between 2 and 3 per cent. At the same time, higher wages growth has been reflected in increases in real wages.

Several submissions received by the Tribunal from current Councillors called for substantive increases to Councillor allowances to reflect the scope and complexity of the work and the time commitment required. The Tribunal considers that an examination of these broader issues is more appropriate in the context of a comprehensive determination, and has proposed to the government that one be made in 2026.

The Tribunal was also mindful of:

- recent annual remuneration adjustments for Councillors in other Australian jurisdictions, ranging from 2.5 to 4 per cent
- the Victorian Government's rate cap of 3 per cent for Councils in 2025-26
- the overall financial performance of local Councils reflected in the most recent audit of the local government sector by the Victorian Auditor-General's Office
- the Fair Work Commission's decision to increase the National Minimum Wage and modern award minimum wages by 3.5 per cent from 1 July 2025.

For ease of reference, the Tribunal has published the current values of Council allowances on its website, incorporating the values set in *Allowance payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors (Victoria) Determination No. 01/2022* and changes in subsequent annual adjustments.

1 Context



The Tribunal is required to make an annual adjustment to the values of the allowances payable to Council members set in a determination under the *Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal and Improving Parliamentary Standards Act 2019* (Vic) (VIRTIPS Act).¹

The current determination is the *Allowance payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors (Victoria) Determination No. 01/2022* (Comprehensive Determination), which was made in March 2022.² The Tribunal has made three subsequent annual adjustments to the values set in the Comprehensive Determination — in December 2022, June 2023 and July 2024.

Those determinations set a base allowance for every Council member in Victoria, the value of which varies according to role (Mayor, Deputy Mayor or Councillor) and the allowance category to which a Council has been assigned. They also set the eligibility criteria for, and value of, a Remote Area Travel Allowance payable to Council members for time spent travelling to Council meetings or functions.

The Tribunal is required to include a statement of reasons in a determination.³ This Statement of Reasons relates to the *Allowance payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors (Victoria) Annual Adjustment Determination 2025* (2025 Local Government Annual Adjustment Determination).

1.1 The Tribunal's approach

The Tribunal published notice of its intention to make a Determination on its website in March 2025. The notice contained a summary of the matters the Tribunal was required to consider and called for submissions by 4 April 2025.

The Tribunal emailed information about the notice of intention and how to make a submission directly to all Councillors. Local Government Victoria, part of the Department of Government Services, also sent a bulletin to all Councils advising them of the notice.

¹ VIRTIPS Act, s 23B.

² Tribunal (2022).

³ VIRTIPS Act, s 24(3).

Chapter 2 of this Statement of Reasons sets out how the Tribunal considered legislative matters, namely:⁴

- any statement or policy issued by the Government of Victoria which is in force with respect to its wages policy (or equivalent) and the remuneration and allowances of any specified occupational group
- the financial position and fiscal strategy of the State of Victoria
- current and projected economic conditions and trends
- submissions received in relation to the proposed Determination.

Chapter 3 contains the Tribunal's decisions on the values of the base allowances for Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors and the value of the Remote Area Travel Allowance.

⁴ VIRTIPS Act, s. 24(2).

2 Factors considered



This chapter summarises the legislative and other factors that the Tribunal has considered in determining its adjustment to the allowances payable to Council members.

2.1 Current and projected economic conditions and trends

The Tribunal's consideration of current and projected economic conditions has been informed by a range of sources, including:

- the latest data on key economic indicators published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)
- statements by the Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA)
- the latest Commonwealth and Victorian budgets.

Economic growth is still subdued but may be showing early signs of recovery

Economic growth has slowed in Victoria and Australia and remains below the long-term average growth rate.⁵ In the year to the March quarter 2025, growth in Australia's real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was 1.3 per cent.⁶

In its latest statement on monetary policy, the RBA noted that the economic outlook remains uncertain, with ongoing volatility in international markets.⁷ The RBA forecasts that economic activity in Australia will pick up over 2025 as consumption recovers — but potentially slower than previously expected — and public demand continues to support growth.⁸ The RBA forecasts that GDP will increase by 2.1 per cent through the year to December 2025, and by 2.2 per cent through the years to June 2026 and June 2027.⁹

⁵ Real GDP - annual change, average value over the period from 2000 to 2019 (inclusive).

⁶ ABS (2025a).

⁷ RBA (2025), p. 1.

⁸ RBA (2025), p. 1.

⁹ RBA (2025), p. 4.

The *Victorian Budget 2025-26* (2025-26 Budget) noted that a pickup in economic activity is underway in Victoria, despite cost-of-living pressures and elevated interest rates.¹⁰ Victoria's real Gross State Product (GSP) is forecast to grow by 2 per cent in 2024-25.¹¹

The 2025-26 Budget forecasts that economic growth in Victoria will strengthen in 2025-26, with forecast real GSP growth of 2.5 per cent.¹² Activity is expected to be driven by increased household consumption, reflecting higher real household disposable income, lower inflation and expected further easing in interest rates.¹³

Inflation has moderated and now sits inside the RBA's target range

Inflation outcomes in Australia have moderated, with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) increasing by 2.4 per cent over the year to the March quarter 2025 — within the RBA's 2–3 per cent target range.¹⁴ Trimmed mean inflation was 2.9 per cent for the year to the March quarter 2025, down from 3.3 per cent in the year to the December quarter 2024.¹⁵

The RBA forecasts that inflation will settle around the middle of the target range, although CPI growth is expected to increase for a short period when cost-of-living support measures end.¹⁶

Inflation has also moderated in Victoria, with the Melbourne CPI rising 2.3 per cent over the year to the March quarter 2025.¹⁷

The 2025-26 Budget forecasts Melbourne CPI growth to average 2.75 per cent in both 2025-26 and 2026-27, before slowing to an average of 2.5 per cent from 2027-28.¹⁸

¹⁰ DTF (2025), p. 17.

¹¹ DTF (2025), p. 20.

¹² DTF (2025), p. 2.

¹³ DTF (2025), p. 2.

¹⁴ ABS (2025b).

¹⁵ ABS (2025b).

¹⁶ RBA (2025), p. 4.

¹⁷ ABS (2025b).

¹⁸ DTF (2025), p. 18.

Nominal wages growth continues to moderate

The Victorian labour market is strong, with both the share of working-age Victorians in employment and participation remaining at historically high levels.¹⁹ Unemployment remains low, although it has risen moderately over the past year, as growth in labour supply has exceeded labour demand. Long-term unemployment and youth unemployment have risen moderately but remain below long-term historical average rates.²⁰

Nominal wages growth in Australia continues to moderate. After peaking at 4.3 per cent in the December quarter 2023, annual growth in the Wage Price Index (WPI) was 3.4 per cent in the March quarter 2025.²¹

The RBA forecasts annual WPI growth to ease gradually to 3 per cent by December 2026.²² Private sector wages growth is expected to slow as labour market conditions ease, while public sector wages growth is expected to remain elevated in 2025 — as several large enterprise agreements (EAs) are negotiated — before easing.²³

Wages in Victoria — as measured by the Victorian WPI — grew by 3.3 per cent over the year to the March quarter 2025.²⁴ The 2025-26 Budget noted that future growth is expected to be supported by ongoing low unemployment and the earlier period of elevated inflation continuing to be factored into wage negotiations.²⁵ Annual growth in the Victorian WPI is expected to average 3.25 per cent from 2025-26 through to 2028-29.²⁶

While wages growth in Victoria has been above inflation in the past two quarters, wages are still lower in real terms than in 2020.²⁷ Wages growth is forecast to exceed inflation over the 2025-26 Budget forecast period.²⁸

¹⁹ DTF (2025), p. 27.

²⁰ DTF (2025), p. 27. “Long-term unemployment” means those unemployed for more than a year.

²¹ ABS (2025c).

²² RBA (2025), p. 62.

²³ RBA (2025), p. 61.

²⁴ ABS (2025c).

²⁵ DTF (2025), p. 30.

²⁶ DTF (2025), p. 18.

²⁷ DTF (2025), p. 30.

²⁸ DTF (2025), p. 18.

2.2 Financial position and fiscal strategy of the State of Victoria

In the 2025-26 Budget, the Victorian Government provided an update on its five-step fiscal strategy to restore the State's finances following the COVID-19 pandemic:²⁹

- Step 1: creating jobs, reducing unemployment and restoring economic growth
- Step 2: returning to an operating cash surplus
- Step 3: returning to operating surpluses
- Step 4: stabilising net debt levels as a proportion of GSP
- Step 5: reducing net debt as a proportion of GSP.

The Government achieved Step 2 of its fiscal strategy by delivering operating cash surpluses consecutively across 2022-23 and 2023-24 and is forecasting surpluses across the forward estimates.³⁰

The net result from transactions for the general government sector is forecast to be in surplus by \$0.6 billion in 2025-26 (Step 3). This is smaller than previously expected due to additional expenditure on health services and cost-of-living measures.³¹ Further surpluses are expected across the forward estimates.

Net debt is forecast to increase to \$194 billion by June 2029, but is expected to stabilise and then decline as a proportion of GSP by the end of the forward estimates, consistent with Steps 4 and 5 of the fiscal strategy.³² Net debt as a proportion of GSP is forecast to reach 25.2 per cent by June 2027, before declining to 24.9 per cent by June 2029.³³

2.3 Wages Policy

The Tribunal is required by the VIRTIPS Act to consider the government's wages policy, but notes that this policy does not apply to local governments, which can negotiate their own EAs.

²⁹ DTF (2025), p. 42.

³⁰ DTF (2025), p. 42.

³¹ DTF (2025), p. 42.

³² DTF (2025), p. 42.

³³ DTF (2025), p. 42.

The Wages Policy and the Enterprise Bargaining Framework (Wages Policy) sets out the parameters within which Victorian public sector employers are required to bargain and make EAs.³⁴

The key features of the current Wages Policy, which was introduced in April 2023, are:

- increases in wages and conditions will be funded at a rate of growth of 3 per cent per annum over the life of an agreement
- in addition to annual wage increases, a separate lump sum cash payment will be available, equivalent to 0.5 per cent of overall agreement costs.

2.4 Matters raised in submissions

The Tribunal received 15 written submissions and one verbal submission which have been published on the Tribunal's website in line with its submission policy.

Apart from one submission, all submissions were from Councils, individual Councillors or a peak body.

Two submitters proposed a specific annual adjustment for Councillor allowances between 2.4 and 3.5 per cent.

In addition to the statutory factors that the Tribunal is required to consider, several submitters proposed that the Tribunal consider increases in housing and childcare costs for Councillors in adjusting allowance values.

It was also suggested that a new allowance be created for those Councillors who serve on Council and external committees. Submitters considered that such an allowance may encourage Councillors to participate in these roles given the additional time commitment.

More broadly, a common theme among submissions was that remuneration for local Councillors was not commensurate with the responsibilities of the position. In line with this broad theme, submissions suggested that:

- the role of a local Councillor had increased in complexity in recent years and that remuneration levels for Councillors did not reflect this change

³⁴ IRV (2023).

- the current definition of allowances mean that Councillors are not receiving certain benefits that may be available to others working in part-time roles, such as leave entitlements
- remuneration levels for Councillors may be a barrier to attracting more capable and diverse Councillors, particularly young people, people with disabilities, women and those with caring responsibilities
- the current allowance categories and the allocation of Councils to specific categories should be revised to better reflect the responsibilities of Councils.

The Tribunal considers that an examination of these broader issues is more appropriate in the context of a comprehensive determination. The relevant provisions of the VIRTIPS Act mean that the next comprehensive determination must be made within six months of the 2028 Council elections. The Minister for Local Government may also request that the Tribunal make a new comprehensive determination at any time.³⁵

The Tribunal believes, given the nature and weight of the substantive issues raised by stakeholders, that a new comprehensive determination should be completed in 2026. This would allow the Tribunal to address these issues through a transparent and independent process before the next Council elections in 2028. This would also align with the four-year timeframe for MPs and other groups within the Tribunal's remit.

The Tribunal has written to the Minister for Local Government proposing that the next comprehensive determination be undertaken in 2026.

2.5 Other relevant considerations

Adjustments to allowances in other jurisdictions

Table 2.1 summarises the adjustments that have been made to allowances for Council members in other Australian jurisdictions in 2025, where available. Adjustments range from 2.5 per cent to 4 per cent.

³⁵ VIRTIPS Act, s 23A.

Table 2.1: Adjustments to allowances for Council members in other Australian jurisdictions

Jurisdiction	Adjustment from 1 July 2025 (unless otherwise stated) (%)
New South Wales	3
Queensland	2.5 – 3 ^(a)
South Australia	TBA ^(b)
Western Australia	3.5
Tasmania	TBC ^(c)
Northern Territory	4

Notes: (a) The Local Government Remuneration Commission decided to increase the remuneration levels for Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors by 3 per cent for Council categories A1, A2, A3 and B1. It decided to increase the remuneration levels for Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors by 2.5 per cent for the remaining Council categories. The Commission observed that, in most cases, maximum remuneration levels increased by 3-5 per cent compared to existing levels, with regional and rural Councils receiving larger increases than metropolitan Councils. (b) Allowances are automatically indexed on the first, second and third anniversaries of the relevant periodic local government elections to reflect changes in the Adelaide CPI. The next adjustment will be in, and take effect from, November 2025. As an indicator, over the year to the March quarter 2025, the Adelaide CPI rose by 2.2 per cent. (c) Allowances are automatically indexed on and effective from 1 November each year in line with the annual change in the Tasmanian WPI. As an indicator, over the year to the March quarter 2025, this indicator increased by 3.2 per cent. Sources: Local Government Remuneration Tribunal (New South Wales) (2025), p. 3; Local Government Remuneration Commission (Queensland) (2024), p. 5; Local Government Association of South Australia (2024); Salaries and Allowances Tribunal (Western Australia) (2025) p. 5; Office of Local Government (Tasmania) (2024), p. 1; Northern Territory Remuneration Tribunal (2025), p. 2.

Council rate cap for 2025-26

In December 2024, on the recommendation of the Essential Services Commission (ESC), the Victorian Government announced a rate cap of 3 per cent for the 2025-26 financial year.³⁶ This is the maximum amount by which a Council can increase general rates and municipal charges in 2025-26.

Councils had until 31 March 2025 to apply to the ESC for a higher rate cap, with two Councils receiving approval for a higher rate increase for 2025-26 — Hepburn Shire Council (10 per cent) and Indigo Shire Council (7.54 per cent).³⁷

Council financial performance

Each year, the Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO) conducts an audit of the local government sector, including an assessment of Councils' financial performance.³⁸

In April 2025, VAGO published its report for the 2023-24 financial year. VAGO observed that fifty Councils recorded a surplus in 2023-24, compared to 74 in the previous year. The sector surplus in 2023-24 was lower, largely due to the timing of annual financial assistance grants.

³⁶ ESC (2025).

³⁷ ESC (2025).

³⁸ VAGO (2025), p. 17.

The 'adjusted underlying result' measures Councils' ability to generate operating surpluses from their regular business. Over the past six years this indicator has fallen from plus 4 per cent to minus 15 per cent. This negative trend suggests some Councils are becoming less financially sustainable.

Councils' cash and other financial assets were lower at 30 June 2024, although almost all Councils reported positive operating cash inflows.

Annual Wage Review Decision 2024-25

The Fair Work Commission's Annual Wage Review 2024-25 decision increased the National Minimum Wage and all modern award minimum wages by 3.5 per cent with effect from 1 July 2025.³⁹

The Tribunal's 2025 Annual Adjustment Determination of MP salaries and allowances

As a reference point, the Tribunal's *Members of Parliament (Victoria) Annual Adjustment Determination 2025* increased the value of salaries payable to MPs by 3 per cent, effective from 1 July 2025.⁴⁰

³⁹ FWC (2025) p. 2.

⁴⁰ Tribunal (2025).

3 Tribunal's decisions



3.1 Base allowance

Having regard to all considerations from Chapter 2, the Tribunal has decided to increase the values of all base allowances by 3 per cent from 1 July 2025. This adjustment is broadly in line with movements in prices, wages and adjustments to allowances in other jurisdictions.

The Tribunal's Determination also applies to the future phase-in of increases to the base allowances for Mayors and Deputy Mayors which will apply from 18 December 2025.

Tables 3.1 – 3.3 set out the new base allowance values for all elected Council members from 1 July 2025 and the phased increases for Mayors and Deputy Mayors from 18 December 2025.

Table 3.1: Value of the base allowance for Mayors

Council allowance category	Value of base allowance (\$ per annum)	
	1 July 2025	18 December 2025
Category 1	89,323	91,613
Category 2	115,347	118,303
Category 3	142,661	146,319
Category 4	285,324	292,639

Table 3.2: Value of the base allowance for Deputy Mayors

Council allowance category	Value of base allowance (\$ per annum)	
	1 July 2025	18 December 2025
Category 1	44,661	45,807
Category 2	57,673	59,152
Category 3	71,329	73,159
Category 4	142,662	146,320

Table 3.3: Value of the base allowance for Councillors

Council allowance category	Value of base allowance (\$ per annum)	
	1 July 2025	
Category 1	28,110	
Category 2	35,049	
Category 3	41,992	
Category 4	62,988	

3.2 Remote Area Travel Allowance

Taking into account the legislative factors it is required to consider and the other factors to which the Tribunal has referred in determining the increase to the base allowance, the Tribunal has also determined to increase the value of the Remote Area Travel Allowance by 3 per cent.

From 1 July 2025, the Remote Area Travel Allowance will be \$48.90 per day for eligible Council members, up to a maximum of \$6,112.50 per annum.

3.3 Conclusion

This Statement of Reasons explains the Tribunal's considerations in making the 2025 Local Government Annual Adjustment Determination.

Before making the Determination, the Tribunal published notice of its intention to make a Determination and called for submissions in March 2025. The Tribunal considered each submission it received and expresses its appreciation to all those who made submissions or otherwise participated in the process and assisted the Tribunal to perform its functions.

This Determination adjusts the value of the base allowance payable to each Council member by 3 per cent. The Determination also adjusts the value of the Remote Area Travel Allowance by 3 per cent.

The Determination will take effect on 1 July 2025.

References



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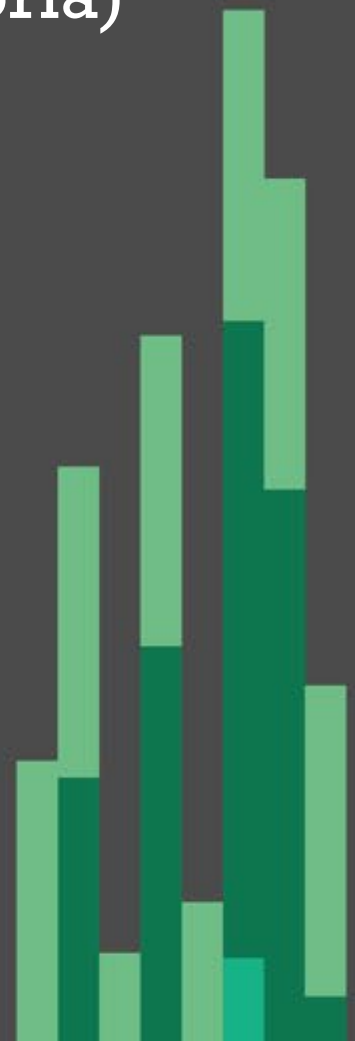
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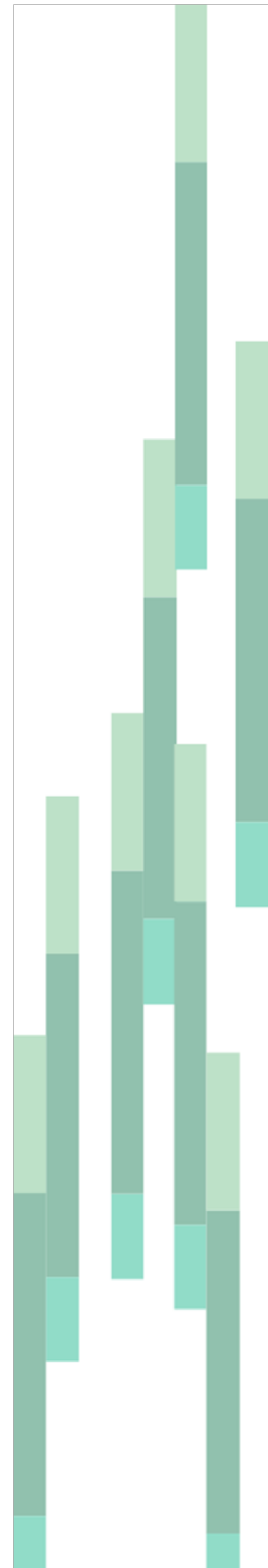
— — — (2025), *Members of Parliament (Victoria) Annual Adjustment Determination 2025*.

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Victorian
Independent
Remuneration
Tribunal

Allowance payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors (Victoria) Annual Adjustment Determination 2025





DETERMINATION

[2025] [DCMA] 01

Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal and Improving Parliamentary Standards Act 2019 (Vic)

Part 3—Determinations for annual adjustments in relation to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors.

Allowance payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors (Victoria) Annual Adjustment Determination 2025



A. Pursuant to section 23B(1) of the *Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal and Improving Parliamentary Standards Act 2019* (Vic) (VIRTIPS Act), the Tribunal determines to make the following adjustments to the *Allowance payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors (Victoria) Determination No. 01/2022*.

A.1 Delete clauses 7 to 9 and Tables 1 to 7 and replace them with the following:

7. Value of the base allowance for Mayors

7.1 The values of the base allowances for Mayors are:

(a) from 1 July 2025 until 17 December 2025, the values set out in Table 1

(b) from 18 December 2025, the values set out in Table 2.

Table 1: Value of the base allowance for Mayors, by Council allowance category, 1 July 2025 until 17 December 2025

Council allowance category	Value of allowance (\$ per annum)
Category 1	89,323
Category 2	115,347
Category 3	142,661
Category 4 – Melbourne City Council	285,324

Table 2: Value of the base allowance for Mayors, by Council allowance category, from 18 December 2025

Council allowance category	Value of allowance (\$ per annum)
Category 1	91,613
Category 2	118,303
Category 3	146,319
Category 4 – Melbourne City Council	292,639

8. Value of the base allowance for Deputy Mayors

8.1 The values of the base allowances for Deputy Mayors are:

(a) from 1 July 2025 until 17 December 2025, the values set out in Table 3

(b) from 18 December 2025, the values set out in Table 4.

Table 3: Value of the base allowance for Deputy Mayors, by Council allowance category, 1 July 2025 until 17 December 2025

Council allowance category	Value of allowance (\$ per annum)
Category 1	44,661
Category 2	57,673
Category 3	71,329
Category 4 – Melbourne City Council	142,662

Table 4: Value of the base allowance for Deputy Mayors, by Council allowance category, from 18 December 2025

Council allowance category	Value of allowance (\$ per annum)
Category 1	45,807
Category 2	59,152
Category 3	73,159
Category 4 – Melbourne City Council	146,320

9. Value of the base allowance for Councillors

9.1 The values of the base allowances for Councillors from 1 July 2025 are the values set out in Table 5.

Table 5: Value of the base allowance for Deputy Mayors, by Council allowance category, from 1 July 2025

Council allowance category	Value of allowance (\$ per annum)
Category 1	28,110
Category 2	35,049
Category 3	41,992
Category 4 – Melbourne City Council	62,988

A.2 In clause 10.1, delete '\$47.50' and '\$5,937.50' and replace with '\$48.90' and '\$6,112.50' respectively.

B. This Determination commences on 1 July 2025.

C. The *Allowance payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors (Victoria) Determination No. 01/2022* as varied is available on the Tribunal's website.



L. a. Gardner



Warren McCann

Laurinda Gardner

Gregory Wilson

Chair

Member

Member

Victorian Independent
Remuneration Tribunal

Victorian Independent
Remuneration Tribunal

Victorian Independent
Remuneration Tribunal

Date: 30 June 2025