

Minutes

Ordinary Meeting of Council

Held at 10:30 am, Wednesday 26 November 2025
Council Chamber, Tallangatta Council Office
32 Towong Street, Tallangatta, Victoria

Our Community Vision

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

Confirmed

**Minutes for the Ordinary Meeting of Council held at
32 Towong Street, Tallangatta, Victoria
at 10:30 am on Wednesday 26 November 2025**

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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The Mayor declared the meeting open, the time being 10:41 am.

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 Acknowledgement of Country

Towong Shire Council acknowledges all the Traditional Custodians throughout the Shire, we recognise their continued care of lands and waters, and their living knowledges and wisdom.

We pay our respect to elders past and present. We are committed to listening and working together to help build a stronger and more inclusive society.

3 Councillor and Officer Presence at the Meeting

Councillor Attendance

Crs Whitehead, Wortmann, Anderson, Pitman and Tolsher.

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

4 Apologies and Granting of Leave of Absence

Nil

5 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.

Cr Whitehead disclosed a material conflict of interest in relation to Item 17.1 – PA250001 207 Touzel Road Cudgewa, as he is the owner of a quarry within the municipality.

Ms Phelps, Chief Executive Officer, disclosed a material conflict of interest in relation to Item 14.3 – Chief Executive Officer - Annual Performance Review, as it is the CEO performance report that is being presented, and the result of the review will be considered when the annual remuneration review is undertaken.

6 Election of Mayor (CEO - 2.4.3)

The Mayor is to vacate the chair and the Chief Executive Officer is to assume the chair to preside over the mayoral term resolution and the election of the Mayor.

The Mayor vacated the chair and the Chief Executive Officer assumed the chair to preside over the mayoral term resolution and the election of Mayor, the time being 10.42am.

6.1 Election of Mayor (preamble)

Section 25 of the *Local Government Act 2020* which sets out the requirements in relation to the election of a Mayor is provided below for the information of Councillors.

Election of Mayor

1. *At a Council meeting that is open to the public, the Councillors must elect a Councillor to be the Mayor of the Council.*
2. *Subject to section 167, any Councillor is eligible for election or re-election to the office of Mayor.*
3. *The election of the Mayor must—*
 - a. *be chaired by the Chief Executive Officer; and*
 - b. *subject to this section, be conducted in accordance with the Governance Rules.*
4. *Subject to subsections (5) and (6), the Mayor must be elected by an absolute majority of the Councillors,*
5. *If an absolute majority of the Councillors cannot be obtained at the meeting, the Council may resolve to conduct a new election at a later specified time and date.*
6. *If only one Councillor is a candidate for Mayor, the meeting must declare that Councillor to be duly elected as Mayor.*
7. *In this section, "absolute majority" means the number of Councillors which is greater than half the total number of the Councillors of a Council.*

Section 26(3) requires a resolution of Council be made before the election of Mayor whether the Mayor is to be elected for a one or two year term.

6.2 Term of Office of Mayor

Section 26 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires that, before the election of the Mayor, Council determine by resolution whether the Mayor is to be elected for a one (1) year or a two (2) year term.

In accordance with Council's Governance Rules, the Chief Executive Officer will request a motion on the term of the office of Mayor. The term must be either one year or two years.

Recommendation:

That the Mayoral term be determined.

Council Resolution:

**CR WORTMANN
CR TOLSHER**

THAT THE MAYORAL TERM BE FOR A ONE (1) YEAR TERM.

CARRIED

6.3 Election of Mayor

The role of the Mayor is defined in Section 18 of the Act and the specific powers of the Mayor are set out in Section 19 of the Act. Both sections are provided below for the information of Councillors:

Role of the Mayor

- (1) *The role of the Mayor is to—*
 - (a) chair Council meetings; and
 - (b) be the principal spokesperson for the Council; and
 - (c) lead engagement with the municipal community on the development of the Council Plan; and
 - (d) report to the municipal community, at least once each year, on the implementation of the Council Plan; and
 - (e) promote behaviour among Councillors that meets the standards of conduct set out in the Councillor Code of Conduct; and
 - (f) assist Councillors to understand their role; and
 - (g) take a leadership role in ensuring the regular review of the performance of the Chief Executive Officer; and
 - (h) provide advice to the Chief Executive Officer when the Chief Executive Officer is setting the agenda for Council meetings; and
 - (i) perform civic and ceremonial duties on behalf of the Council.
- (2) *The Mayor is not eligible to be elected to the office of Deputy Mayor.*

Specific powers of the Mayor

- (1) *The Mayor has the following specific powers—*
 - (a) to appoint a Councillor to be the chair of a delegated committee;
 - (b) to direct a Councillor, subject to any procedures or limitations specified in the Governance Rules, to leave a Council meeting if the behaviour of the Councillor is preventing the Council from conducting its business;
 - (c) to require the Chief Executive Officer to report to the Council on the implementation of a Council decision.
- (2) *An appointment under subsection (1)(a) prevails over any appointment of a chair of a delegated committee by the Council.*

In accordance with Council's Governance Rules, the Chief Executive Officer will invite nominations for the office of Mayor, and will ask for a seconder for each nomination. If a seconder is not forthcoming the nomination will lapse.

If a nomination is seconded, the Chief Executive Officer will ask the nominated Councillor if they accept the nomination. If the nominated Councillor refuses the nomination the nomination lapses. If the nominated Councillor accepts the nomination, the nomination is put to the vote.

If only one nomination (seconded and accepted) is received, a vote is not taken and the councillor nominated will be declared elected to the office of Mayor.

Following the election of the Mayor, the Chief Executive Officer, in accordance with Council's Governance Rules, will invite the outgoing Mayor to address the Council. The Chief Executive Officer will also invite the incoming Mayor to address the Council.

Recommendation:

That a Councillor be elected to the Office of Mayor.

Mayoral election:

The Chief Executive Officer called for nominations for the Office of Mayor.

Cr Wortmann nominated Cr Tolsher for the Office of Mayor, the nomination was seconded by Cr Pitman.

Cr Tolsher accepted the nomination.

There being no further nominations, the Chief Executive Officer declared Cr Tolsher duly elected to the Office of Mayor.

6.4 Statement by Outgoing Mayor

In accordance with Council's *Governance Rules*, the Chief Executive Officer will invite the outgoing Mayor to address the Council.

The Outgoing Mayor, Cr Whitehead, addressed the meeting as follows:

Thank you very much.

Four years is quite a stint as Mayor, a lot of things happened in that term, a lot that we can be very proud of as a Council that we've been able to achieve.

I'd like to thank my fellow Councillors for all their efforts over that time. There are a couple of Councillors who are no longer on Council, Cr Aaron Scales and Cr Peter Dikschei, both were great contributors to the term while I was Mayor. I thank them as well as the four Councillors who sit before me today.

My time as Mayor has come to an end, for this time anyway. It has definitely been a long journey, and it is a long way from the other side of Corryong to go to meetings, and it will give me a bit more time to play on the farm.

I am still very committed to what we are about at Towong, and still very much looking at trying to get the best outcomes I can for our Communities. I will continue on in the role with the Health Alliance, trying to get better outcomes for our hospitals and a new hospital in Albury Wodonga.

I would like to thank the staff, right through the organisation. I think they can be very proud of what we, as a team, achieve, and they are a big part of that. Also our Senior Management team, an exceptional team at the moment. It allows for a much better Council environment when you've got such a great team supporting the Councillors.

To our CEO, over the four years I've had many phone calls and chats with our CEO. I can't speak more highly of the role Ms Phelps plays within Council and the ability to allow Councillors, and especially the Mayor, to do their role to the best of their abilities. So thank you very much Juliana for the last four years, and it's something I will miss.

So thank you very much. It's been a great honour to be Mayor of Towong. Thank you and congratulations to Councillor Tolsher on putting your hand up for this role. I know you are, as are the other Councillors, very much community-focused and community-minded, and I have great confidence in your ability to lead this Council in the coming year.

Thank you very much and I'll vacate the Chair.

6.5 Statement by Incoming Mayor

In accordance with Council's *Governance Rules*, the Chief Executive Officer will invite the incoming Mayor to address the Council.

At the conclusion of the Mayoral election the Mayor must take the Chair of the meeting and preside over the balance of the business to be transacted at the meeting including the matters relating to the office of Deputy Mayor.

The Chief Executive Officer invited the Incoming Mayor, Cr Tolsher, to address the Council.

Cr Tolsher addressed Council as follows:

I would like to thank the Councillors for the confidence they have in me to fulfil the role of mayor. The last Mayor that was Tallangatta-based was in the 1960s and it is something that I have aspired to do after being elected onto Council and now have the time to do.

I have big shoes to fill with the past two Mayors who have led the team through hard times, Councillor Wortmann with the fires in 2019/20 and Councillor Whitehead taking the helm in 2021 for the past 4 years.

Some highlights that have happened over this time:

- The leadership both Mayors, CEO and Senior Managers have shown through the rebuild of the Upper Murray after the devastating fires,
- Streetscapes in Corryong, Mitta, Walwa, Granya,
- Connecting the community by Adopting our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and Hosting IDAHOBIT Day,
- Structure Plans for Tallangatta, Corryong, and Bellbridge,
- Advocacy for a new regional hospital on a green field site, including a tri-Council meeting with Indigo and Alpine Councils, and a rally in Corryong, assisted greatly by Cr Anderson,
- Advocacy regarding the Emergency Services Volunteers Fund levy,
- Upgrade of Georges Creek Road,
- Splash Park and pump track at Dartmouth \$350K project,
- Sealing of the Bellbridge Walking track \$500K project,
- The Corryong Circuit Trail and Skate Park \$1,630K project combined,
- The resilient buildings project - \$1m allocation,

Just to name a few.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to lead our team. The legacy that the previous leaders have left will make my role much easier. Our team of Senior Managers, CEO and Councillors is a strong, cohesive and respectful group that I am honoured and proud to be part of. I am sure together we can continue to make our Community proud.

Thank you.

The Chief Executive Officer vacated the chair and Cr Tolsher assumed the chair to preside over the balance of the meeting, the time being 10.54am.

Confirmed

7 Election of Deputy Mayor (Mayor - 2.4.3)

7.1 Election of Deputy Mayor (preamble)

Section 20A of the *Local Government Act 2020* states that a Council may establish an office of Deputy Mayor.

Section 21 of the *Local Government Act 2020* sets out the role and powers of the Deputy Mayor and is provided below for the information of Councillors.

Role and powers of the Deputy Mayor

The Deputy Mayor must perform the role of the Mayor and may exercise any of the powers of the Mayor if—

- (a) the Mayor is unable for any reason to attend a Council meeting or part of a Council meeting; or*
- (b) the Mayor is incapable of performing the duties of the office of Mayor for any reason, including illness; or*
- (c) the office of Mayor is vacant.*

If the Council does not establish an office of Deputy Mayor, Section 20B of the Act contains the following provisions in relation to the role of 'Acting Mayor':

Acting Mayor

(1) A Council may appoint a Councillor to be the Acting Mayor when—

- (a) the Mayor is unable for any reason to attend a Council meeting or part of a Council meeting; or*
- (b) the Mayor is incapable of performing the duties of the office of Mayor for any reason, including illness; or*
- (c) the office of Mayor is vacant.*

(2) An appointment under subsection (1) must be for a period specified by the Council.

(3) If—

- (a) an appointment has not been made under subsection (1) or has expired; and*
- (b) any of the circumstances specified in subsection (1)(a), (b) or (c) apply—*

the Council must appoint a Councillor to be the Acting Mayor for a period specified by the Council.

(4) An Acting Mayor—

- (a) must perform the role of the Mayor; and*
- (b) may exercise any of the powers of the Mayor—*

until the circumstances specified in subsection (1) no longer apply or the period of the appointment expires, whichever first occurs.

- (5) If an Acting Mayor has been appointed, unless inconsistent with the context or subject matter, a reference in this Act (except in sections 20 and 23, Division 4 of this Part and sections 61(6) and 236(4)) to the Mayor includes a reference to the Acting Mayor.*

7.2 Office and Term of Deputy Mayor

In past years the office of Deputy Mayor has been established by Council. This has enabled the continuity of Council business when the Mayor has been unable to attend Council meetings or perform the duties of the office of Mayor.

Whilst an Acting Mayor is an alternative option for Council should the Mayor not be available, an Acting Mayor can only be appointed by Council at a Council meeting and this may be problematic in terms of scheduling a Council meeting at short notice.

In accordance with Council's *Governance Rules*, Council must also decide on the term of office for the Deputy Mayor prior to the election of a Deputy Mayor. The term must be either one year or two years.

Council has, historically, aligned the length of the term of the Deputy Mayor to that of the office of the Mayor.

Recommendation:

That the establishment of the Office of Deputy Mayor, and the term of that office, be determined.

Council Resolution:

**CR WHITEHEAD
CR PITMAN**

THAT THE OFFICE OF DEPUTY MAYOR BE ESTABLISHED FOR A ONE (1) YEAR TERM.

CARRIED

7.3 Election of Deputy Mayor

Section 25 of the *Local Government Act 2020* applies to the election of a Deputy Mayor by the Councillors as if any reference in that section to the Mayor was a reference to the Deputy Mayor.

In accordance with Council's Governance Rules, the Mayor will invite nominations for the office of Deputy Mayor, and will ask for a seconder for each nomination. If a seconder is not forthcoming the nomination will lapse.

If a nomination is seconded, the Mayor will ask the nominated Councillor if they accept the nomination. If the nominated Councillor refuses the nomination the nomination lapses. If the nominated Councillor accepts the nomination, the nomination is put to the vote.

Recommendation:

That a Councillor be elected to the Office of Deputy Mayor.

Deputy Mayor election:

Cr Tolsher called for nominations for the Office of Deputy Mayor.

Cr Wortmann nominated Cr Anderson for the Office of Deputy Mayor, the nomination was seconded by Cr Whitehead.

Cr Anderson accepted the nomination.

There being no further nominations, Cr Tolsher declared Cr Anderson duly elected to the Office of Deputy Mayor.

8 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.

- Special Council Meeting held on 1 October 2025
- Ordinary Council Meeting held on 22 October 2025

Recommendation:

That the Minutes of the Special Council Meeting held on 1 October 2025 and the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 22 October 2025, be confirmed.

Council Resolution:

**CR WHITEHEAD
CR ANDERSON**

THAT THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 1 OCTOBER 2025 AND THE ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 22 OCTOBER 2025, BE CONFIRMED.

CARRIED

9 Petitions and Joint Letters

Nil

10 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.

At the time of preparing the agenda, one question was received. The CEO will advise of any Public Question Time submissions at the meeting.

10.1 Submitter - Debbie Monteny

Subject: Dumping of rubbish and unregistered vehicles in the alleyways.

Questions:

1. What are the Council By-Laws pertaining to the length of time people/businesses can dump rubbish along the edge of the alleyway? How long are unregistered vehicles allowed to clutter up the alleyway making it impossible to get through when other vehicles park there? Please do not fob me off with you are working with business, providing alternatives etc ... As that is NOT working. Thanks to the the state of the alleyway I was blocked from going to my business, had an argument with another business owner who thought his need to block the alleyway was greater than my legal right to use a road, which forced me to reverse my car in the alleyway as he would not move his car, blocking it as he would only be 10 minutes, and when he finally said he would move it, I was in his way due to all the rubbish. Do you know how hard it is to reverse past rubbish, parked trailers that stay there all the time, and unregistered vehicles that are dumped there?

Council Response:

As the submitter was not present at the meeting, the CEO advised that a response would be provided directly to the submitter.

11 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:

- 13 August 2025
- 27 August 2025
- 10 September 2025
- 24 September 2025
- 8 October 2025
- 22 October 2025
- 12 November 2025

are attached as follows:

1. Workshop Meeting Record 13 Aug 2025 [**11.1.1** - 4 pages]
2. Workshop Meeting Record 27 Aug 2025 [**11.1.2** - 3 pages]
3. Workshop Meeting Record 10 Sep 2025 [**11.1.3** - 3 pages]
4. Workshop Meeting Record 24 Sep 2025 [**11.1.4** - 3 pages]
5. Workshop Meeting Record 8 Oct 2025 [**11.1.5** - 3 pages]
6. Workshop Meeting Record 22 Oct 2025 [**11.1.6** - 3 pages]
7. Workshop Meeting Record 12 Nov 2025 [**11.1.7** - 3 pages]

Recommendation:

That the information be noted.

Council Resolution:

CR PITMAN
CR ANDERSON

THAT THE INFORMATION BE NOTED.

CARRIED

12 Appointment to Committees and Boards (CEO - 1.5.1)

Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Ms Juliana Phelps, Chief Executive 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 report is provided for Council to determine Councillor appointments to internal and external boards and committees for the next twelve (12) months.

Summary:

Several internal and external boards and committees require Councillor representation. A Council resolution is required for the appointment of Councillors. Formal endorsement by Council ensures that any expenses incurred by a Councillor in discharging their responsibilities in representing Council can be reimbursed.

Recommendation:

That representatives be determined for the boards and committees listed.

Attachments:

Nil.

Background/History:

Council representatives are required for the boards and committees shown in the table following. The Officer recommendations for 2026, based on Councillor feedback, are shown in the following table:

COMMITTEE	2025	2026
Advisory Committees		
Audit and Risk Committee	Mayor (Substitute Deputy Mayor)	Mayor (Substitute Deputy Mayor)
CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee	All Councillors	All Councillors

Corryong Saleyards	Cr Whitehead	Cr Whitehead
Community Asset Committee		
Riverview Independent Living Units (Walwa) Community Asset Committee	Cr Pitman (Substitute Cr Wortmann)	Cr Pitman (Substitute Cr Wortmann)
External Committees		
Alliance of Councils and Shires of the Upper Murray (ACSUM)	All Councillors	All Councillors
Australian Local Government Women's Association	Cr Anderson	Cr Anderson
Bellbridge Peninsula Community Network (BPCN)	Cr Wortmann (Substitute Cr Anderson)	Cr Wortmann (Substitute Cr Anderson)
Better Border Health	Cr Anderson (Substitute Cr Wortmann)	Cr Whitehead Cr Anderson
Corryong Cemeteries Trust	All Councillors	All Councillors
Dartmouth Progress Association	Cr Tolsher (Substitute Cr Anderson)	Mayor (Substitute Cr Anderson)
Emergency Management Committee (MAV)	Cr Wortmann (Substitute Cr Tolsher)	Cr Wortmann (Substitute Cr Tolsher)
Eskdale Progress Association		Mayor
Goulburn Murray Climate Alliance	Cr Tolsher	Mayor
Hume Region Local Government Network (HRLGN)	Mayor (Substitute Deputy Mayor)	Mayor (Substitute Deputy Mayor)

Local Development Strategy (LDS) Steering Group and Leadership Group	Cr Whitehead (Substitute Cr Pitman)	Cr Whitehead (Substitute Cr Pitman)
Local Development Strategy (LDS) - Pumped Hydro Working Group	Cr Pitman	Cr Pitman
Local Development Strategy (LDS) - Biomass Working Group	Cr Whitehead	Cr Whitehead
Mitta Valley Inc	Cr Tolsher (Substitute Cr Anderson)	Mayor (Substitute Cr Anderson)
Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)	Cr Wortmann (Substitute Cr Anderson)	Cr Wortmann (Substitute Cr Anderson)
Municipal Fire Management Plan Committee	Constitution of committee to be advised.	Constitution of committee to be advised.
Murray Darling Association	Cr Wortmann (Substitute Cr Tolsher)	Cr Wortmann (Substitute Mayor)
North East Waste and Resource Recovery Group (NEWRRG)	Cr Tolsher	Mayor
Roadsafe North East	Cr Tolsher (Substitute Cr Pitman)	Mayor (Substitute Cr Pitman)
Rural Councils Victoria	Mayor	Mayor
Thrive	Cr Whitehead	Cr Whitehead
Towong Alliance	Mayor (Substitute Deputy Mayor)	Mayor (Substitute Deputy Mayor)
Towong Shire Plantations Committee	Cr Whitehead (Substitute Cr Pitman)	Cr Whitehead (Substitute Cr Pitman)
Upper Murray Incorporated	Cr Pitman	Cr Pitman (Substitute Cr Whitehead)

	(Substitute Cr Whitehead)	
Tallangatta Health Service – Consumer Engagement Advisory Group (CEAG)		Cr Anderson
Corryong Health Service – Community Health Advisory Group (CHAG)		Cr Whitehead (Substitute Cr Pitman)

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

Local Government Act 2020

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

It is in the interests of Council and the communities we serve to have Councillor representations on the internal and external boards and committees as listed.

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 opened to the public.

Risk Assessment:

Not applicable.

Officer's View:

It is the officer's recommendation that Council formally endorse Councillor appointments to the boards and committees as detailed in this report.

Council Resolution:

**CR ANDERSON
CR PITMAN**

THAT REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE BOARDS AND COMMITTEES BE AS LISTED.

CARRIED

13 Council Meeting Arrangements (CEO - 2.4.3)

Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Ms Juliana Phelps, Chief Executive 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:

To determine the 2026 Ordinary Council meeting schedule.

Summary:

In accordance with Council's Governance Rules, the date, time and locations of Ordinary Council meetings is to be determined by Council. A schedule of Council meetings must be prepared and published on Council's website at least once a year, and with such frequency as the Chief Executive Officer determines.

Council needs to decide its meeting arrangements and schedule for 2026. It is proposed that these meetings alternate between Tallangatta and Corryong according to the schedule below.

Recommendation:

That the Ordinary Council meetings for 2026 be scheduled as follows, with the meetings commencing at 10.30am:

Date	Location
28 January 2026	Tallangatta
25 February 2026	Corryong
25 March 2026	Tallangatta
29 April 2026	Corryong
27 May 2026	Tallangatta
24 June 2026	Corryong
22 July 2026	Tallangatta
26 August 2026	Corryong
23 September 2026	Tallangatta
28 October 2026	Corryong
25 November 2026	Tallangatta
16 December 2026	Corryong

Attachments:

Nil.

Background/History:

Historically, Ordinary Council meetings have been held on the fourth Wednesday of the month, commencing at 10.30am with meeting venues alternating between the Corryong and Tallangatta Council offices. There were some changes to this in the 2025 year due to the community consultations sessions for the new Council Plan and the renovation to the Elyne Mitchell library.

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

Council meetings are held in accordance with section 61 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Council's Governance Rules.

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

Option 1

That Council resolve to hold the Ordinary meeting of Council, commencing at 10.30am, according to the schedule included in this report.

Option 2

That Council consider holding the Ordinary meetings of Council on a different day, at a different time or at a different location.

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

Not applicable.

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

No community engagement has been undertaken recently to gauge the views of the community in relation to where and when Council meetings are held.

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)):

There are additional costs involved in holding Council meetings in locations other than Tallangatta and Corryong.

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 an open meeting.

Risk Assessment:

Not applicable.

Officer's View:

It is the officer's view that Council should resolve to hold all Ordinary Council meetings at the Corryong and Tallangatta Council offices as set out in the table included in this report. This schedule maintains consistency and transparency.

Council Resolution:**CR PITMAN****CR WHITEHEAD****THAT THE ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS FOR 2026 BE SCHEDULED AS FOLLOWS, WITH THE MEETINGS COMMENCING AT 10.30AM:**

Date	Location
28 January 2026	Tallangatta
25 February 2026	Corryong
25 March 2026	Tallangatta
29 April 2026	Corryong
27 May 2026	Tallangatta
24 June 2026	Corryong
22 July 2026	Tallangatta
26 August 2026	Corryong
23 September 2026	Tallangatta
28 October 2026	Corryong
25 November 2026	Tallangatta
16 December 2026	Corryong

CARRIED

14 Organisational Improvement

14.1 Action Sheet Report (CEO)

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 this report is to provide an update on the status of the resolutions from the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 22 October 2025.

Summary:

The attached report summarises the progress made in relation to the resolutions from the Ordinary Council meeting held on 22 October 2025.

Recommendation:

That the report be noted.

Attachment:

1. Action Sheet Ordinary Council Meeting 22OCT2025 [**14.1.1** - 2 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.

Council Resolution:

CR WHITEHEAD

CR PITMAN

THAT THE REPORT BE NOTED.

CARRIED

Confirmed

14.2 Quarterly Budget Report (DCOD)

Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Mr Dylan Howard, Manager Finance.

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 present the Quarterly Budget Report in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Summary:

The headline result is a surplus of \$11.1 million for the quarter ending 30 September 2025 against a full year adopted budget surplus of \$4.005 million.

Expenditure remains near to the pro-rata budget, however timing variances on some grants received as well as the issuance of 100% of the full year rates and charges results in Council reporting a significant surplus at present. We expect as the year continues on, the reported surplus will reduce.

Detailed analysis is supplied in the attached report regarding grant income, expenditure including employee costs, cash and debtors.

Recommendation:

That the report be noted.

Attachment:

1. Quarterly Budget Report 30 September 2025 [**14.2.1** - 8 pages]

Background/History:

This report provides a quarterly update on the financial performance of the organisation.

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

Section 97 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires the following:

- (1) *As soon as practicable after the end of each quarter of the financial year, the Chief Executive Officer must ensure that a quarterly budget report is presented to the Council at a Council meeting which is open to the public.*
- (2) *A quarterly budget report must include –*
 - (1) *a comparison of the actual and budgeted results to date; and*
 - (2) *an explanation of any material variations; and*
 - (3) *any other matters prescribed by the regulations.*

This report meets the requirements of the Act.

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)):

The adopted Budget 2025/26 report a surplus for the year of \$4M. At the time of budget preparation there was certain information that wasn't known and therefore budget variances are expected. Notably this includes the Bethanga Rec Reserve grant, and associated expenditure. The net effect of this project on the Adjusted underlying result in this financial year is expected to be negligible, and at this time it is anticipated that the result will not vary materially from the Budget.

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

Not Applicable.

Council Plans and Policies:

Council Plans:
Not applicable.

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:

Whilst the quarterly budget report presents a positive operating result and the cash position remains strong, a large portion of this is committed to projects (operating and capital) for which the funding was obtained.

Officer's View:

The organisation remains in a strong financial position with net current assets of \$25M at quarter end.

A significant portion of Council resources are committed to budgeted capital works and services such as flood recovery funding, early years and community projects. The presentation of the Long Term Financial Plan for 2025/26 - 2034/35 highlighted that into the future, Council remains dependent on the receipt of one-off grant funding to support renewal of its aging infrastructure into the future. Asset renewal is prioritised over new infrastructure spend.

Council Resolution:

**CR ANDERSON
CR WHITEHEAD**

THAT THE REPORT BE NOTED.

CARRIED

Ms Juliana Phelps left the Chamber, the time being 11.09am.

14.3 Chief Executive Officer - Annual Performance Review (Mayor)

Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Cr Andrew Whitehead, Mayor.

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 present the annual Performance Review of the Chief Executive Officer for the period 1 August 2024 to 30 November 2025.

Summary:

The Chief Executive Officer's Performance Review for the period 1 August 2024 to 30 November 2025 was conducted during November 2025 by the Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Committee. The review process was facilitated by an independent consultant, Ms Fiona Shanks, Director, HR Partners.

The Chief Executive Officer's performance is generally reviewed annually in line with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* and the Chief Executive Officer's *Contract of Employment*. This review is for a sixteen-month period as the previous review was conducted in advance of the caretaker period for the 26 October 2024 election and was only for an eight-month period.

Recommendation:

That:

1. the Performance Review for Chief Executive Officer Ms Juliana Phelps, for the period 1 August 2024 to 30 November 2025, be adopted;
2. the Chief Executive Officer be congratulated on her performance; and
3. A review of the Chief Executive Officer's remuneration package be reviewed within one month of the performance review in accordance with the Chief Executive Officer's Contract of Employment.

Attachment:

The Performance Review report prepared by Ms Shanks was provided to Councillors prior to the meeting.

Background/History:

Section 45 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires that Council maintain a Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy that provides for, amongst other things, performance monitoring and an annual review of the Chief Executive Officer.

In accordance with Council's Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy, the annual review of the Chief Executive Officer's performance was overseen by the Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Committee comprising an Independent Chairperson and all Councillors.

The Committee conducted a Request For Quotation process and recommended the selection of an independent consultant, Ms Fiona Shanks, Director, HR Partners to lead the review. Ms Shanks was appointed by Council.

The performance appraisal was made against the agreed KPI's and Performance Criteria set out in the Chief Executive Officer's *Contract of Employment*, and a report was provided to the Committee.

It is also a requirement of the Chief Executive Officer's *Contract of Employment* that a review of the Chief Executive Officer's Remuneration Package be reviewed annually within one month following the Performance Review having regard to:

- (a) the Employment and Remuneration Policy;
- and, to the extent the following are not inconsistent with the Employment and Remuneration Policy,
- (b) the Officer's achievement of the Performance Criteria;
- (c) the extent of any increase over the preceding 12 months in the Consumer Price Index (All Groups, Melbourne) as issued by the Australian Statistician;
- (d) market rates for comparable positions; and
- (e) the acquisition and satisfactory utilisation of new or enhanced skills by the Officer is beneficial to or required by the Council.

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

The *Local Government Act 2020*, section 45(2)(b)(iv) states that Council must undertake an annual review of the Chief Executive Officer's employment and remuneration.

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)):

The establishment of the Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Committee, led by an Independent Chairperson, has strengthened the robustness and independence of the annual review of the Chief Executive Officer.

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

Not applicable.

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

The total cost of the Performance Review was within the allocated budget.

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

Not applicable.

Council Plans and Policies:

The Performance Review was conducted in accordance with the Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy.

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

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

Risk Assessment:

The Local Government Inspectorate highlights several risks in their 2019 report "Protecting Integrity: Leading the way – Managing the employment cycle of a council CEO" given that there has historically been a lack of sector guidance for Councillors regarding how the employment cycle of the Chief Executive Officer is to be managed.

The *Local Government Act 2020* has introduced additional controls by requiring that councils adopt a Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy. Further, Council's policy requires that the employment cycle is overseen by a Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Committee which is led by an Independent Chairperson, providing additional independence and assurance.

Mayor's View:

The performance of our CEO over the review period has once again been of a high standard and the independent review process demonstrated that Juliana has performed very well against the Key Performance Indicators.

It is my recommendation that the Performance Review for the period 1 August 2024 to 30 November 2025 be adopted and Juliana be congratulated on her performance.

Council Resolution:

**CR WHITEHEAD
CR PITMAN**

THAT:

- 1. THE PERFORMANCE REVIEW FOR CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER MS JULIANA PHELPS, FOR THE PERIOD 1 AUGUST 2024 TO 30 NOVEMBER 2025, BE ADOPTED;**
- 2. THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER BE CONGRATULATED ON HER PERFORMANCE; AND**
- 3. A REVIEW OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REMUNERATION PACKAGE BE REVIEWED WITHIN ONE MONTH OF THE PERFORMANCE REVIEW IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT.**

CARRIED

Ms Phelps returned to the Chamber, the time being 11.13am.

Mr Heritage left the Chamber, the time being 11.13am.

Mr Heritage returned to the Chamber, the time being 11.14am.

Confirmed

15 Community Wellbeing

15.1 Bellbridge Early Years Funding Application (DCP)

Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Mr Jason Pearson, Manager Early Years.

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 retrospective approval for the funding application which was submitted on 27 October 2025 to the Victorian Government Building Blocks Improvement Program for funding of \$727,300 for an internal renovation of Bellbridge Early Learning Centre (BEYLC).

Summary:

The report seeks Council's retrospective approval for a funding application to the Victorian Government Building Blocks Improvement Program for an internal renovation of the BEYLC. The BEYLC provides Kindergarten, Long Day Care and Before School Care Services to the Bellbridge and surrounding area.

Council's Early Years Services have benefitted from previous Building Blocks funding rounds, with this round offering up to \$727,300 to renovate or refurbish facilities to improve the quality of learning environments for kindergarten children.

Internal improvements to the BEYLC have been identified as a priority to meet demand for Early Years Services in Bellbridge and surrounds. This project will also support the increased demand resulting from the rollout of the Best Start, Best Life reforms which will increase Four-Year-Old Kindergarten Services from 15 to 30 hours per week by 2036.

Four18 Architecture has been engaged as consultants on this project, with proposed designs and a quantity survey report identifying a total cost of \$684,986 to deliver the project. Additional costs include project management, planning and contingency which will also be funded by the grant, for a total cost of \$727,300. There is no contribution required from Council to apply for this funding however it is anticipated that there will be operational costs of around \$50,000 to operate the service from another location.

The project was discussed with Councillors at the Councillor Workshop in the lead up to the closing date for the application, however due to extenuating circumstances it was not possible to arrange and hold a Special Council Meeting to seek Council's approval prior to the application being submitted.

Recommendation:

That the application that was made to the Building Blocks Improvement Grant on 27 October 2025 for up to the maximum grant amount of \$727,300 for the Bellbridge Early Years Learning Centre be approved.

Attachment:

Nil

Background/History:

The BEYLC has a licenced capacity of 45 children per day, which is determined by the internal floor space of the designated care environments. Current occupancy across the week sits at approximately 60% due to restrictions on how the internal floor area can be utilised. The floor space is divided into three care environments which are separated by a concertina wall and temporary room dividers. This layout does not foster functionality and imposes restrictions on the Service optimising its licenced capacity.

Following a Request for Quotation process Towong Shire has engaged Four18 Architects to develop a design concept and costings to define the care environments with permanent walls. The concept also factors in provision of compliance requirements, including toileting facilities, catering to sleep and rest, meal and bottle preparation areas and staff amenities.

The aim of the BEYLC upgrade is to optimise the licenced capacity of the existing Service, which will allow existing demand to be met, along with the flexibility to expand Kindergarten as funding becomes available and demand increases resulting from the Best Start Best Life reforms that will allow 30 hours of funded 4 year old Kinder.

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

The *Local Government Act 2020*

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

Several options are proposed for consideration, with Option 1 recommended to achieve the best outcome for the community.

- That Council approves the grant application made to the Victorian Government's Building Blocks Improvement Grant on 27 October 2025 for \$727,300 to fund the internal renovation of the Bellbridge Early Years Learning Centre.
- That Council does not approve the application, and the Victorian Government be advised that Council's application is withdrawn, and Council instead seeks alternative funding through other sources.
- That Council does not pursue the internal renovation of the Bellbridge Early Years Learning Centre.

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

Economic

The improved facilities provided by the renovation are not expected to increase on-going maintenance and operating costs. The project construction is expected to use local contractors, providing a positive impact on the local economy.

Social

The refurbishment of BEYLC will increase the Service's capacity to facilitate more Childcare and Kindergarten enrolments than the existing layout allows.

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

Community consultation is reflected during the Council Plan consultation process, which developed the initiative to improve the building used for Bellbridge Early Years services to better meet the needs of the service and secure funding to implement modifications.

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

Bellbridge Early Years has been sustainably operated by Council from what was once Berringa Community Hall for the past six (6) years. As this service continues to see increased demand and greater involvement in the community, this project will support Council's focus on innovation and continuous improvement.

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

Collaboration for this project has occurred through consultation with staff during the planning and design process. This consultation was supported by staff working within the service, who have trialled various formats of service delivery and layout to support the merits of the final decision.

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

Council is not required to provide any funding contributions towards the completion of this project. There will however be some cost involved during the construction phase if the service continues to operate at another location.

These costs will involve rent and utilities at another facility, along with cost to relocate resources and furniture. The anticipated duration that the BEYLC site will be unusable is six (6) months, and the expected operational costs during this period is \$50,000.

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

This project will support the future demand stemming from the State Government's Best Start, Best Life reforms.

Council Plans and Policies:

Council Plans:

This report supports the following *Council Plan 2025-2029* priorities.

1. Community Wellbeing - Encourage and support all people in our Shire to be healthy, happy, connected and resilient.
- 1.26 Continue to implement the priority actions and processes from the 2024/2025 Early Years Review.
- 1.28 Finalise and implement priorities from the Kindergarten Infrastructure Services Plan (KISP) and Childcare Demand Assessments.
- 1.31 Continue to plan for the mandatory provision of free 30 hours per week 4 year old kindergarten and 15 hours per week 3 year old kindergarten.
- 1.33 Develop options to improve the building used for Bellbridge Early Years services to better meet the needs of the service and secure funding to implement modifications.

Council Policies:

External Grants Policy

Under the external grants application policy, Council officers must seek approval from Council for any projects greater than \$150,000 and/or where a Council contribution of \$50,000 or more is required that has not been included in the annual budget.

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 risk associated with the delivery of this project relate to Council reputation in the community associated with possible disruption to service delivery during the construction phase. This risk will be mitigated through planning and consultation with the community and Schools to ensure any disruption is minimised and communicated affectively.

Officer's View:

An internal renovation of the BEYLC has been identified as a priority with funding allocated via the Building Blocks Improvement Grant to complete design, planning and construction of the project.

The refurbishment will increase capacity to accept additional Long Day Care and Kindergarten enrolments which will facilitate unmet demand in the community for the foreseeable future.

The funding opportunity presented through the Victorian State Government's Building Blocks Improvement Grant is an opportunity to access funding up to \$727,300 to complete the internal renovation of the BEYLC with a small cost of around \$50,000 to Council for the temporary relocation of the Service during the six month construction phase.

Council Resolution:

**CR WORTMANN
CR ANDERSON**

**THAT THE APPLICATION THAT WAS MADE TO THE BUILDING BLOCKS
IMPROVEMENT GRANT ON 27 OCTOBER 2025 FOR UP TO THE MAXIMUM
GRANT AMOUNT OF \$727,300 FOR THE BELLBRIDGE EARLY YEARS LEARNING
CENTRE BE APPROVED.**

CARRIED

Confirmed

15.2 Grant Application - VicHealth Partners in Place (DCP)

Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Ms Danielle Brooke, Senior Community Development Officer Culture and Inclusion.

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 to apply to the VicHealth Partners in Place program for up to \$500,000 in funding over five years.

Summary:

Funding is available through the VicHealth Partners in Place – Council 2026–2031 Local Government Program, to support the delivery of health and wellbeing initiatives aligned with Council's Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025–2029, Youth Strategy 2025–2029, and Council Plan 2025–2029. Funding will be delivered in two stages:

- Stage One: Up to \$300,000 over three years (June 2026 – June 2029).
- Stage Two: Subject to a successful mid-way review, an additional \$200,000 may be provided to extend funding through to 2031.

If successful, the Partners in Place funding would provide long-term investment for Council to deliver stable, sustainable initiatives with dedicated staffing to build community capacity.

The VicHealth Partners in Place fund aims to deliver place-based prevention activities, focusing on improving health and wellbeing of young people aged 0-25. The partners in place funding requires Councils to use VicHealth's identified 'strategic leavers' to drive change within one of VicHealth's three (3) prevention systems.

Recommendation:

That the Chief Executive Officer be authorised to make an application to the VicHealth Partners in Place Grant for an amount up to \$500,000 to support the delivery of initiatives aligned to the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan, the Youth Strategy and the Council Plan.

Attachment:

Nil

Background/History:

The *VicHealth Partners in Place – Local Government Program* presents an opportunity to seek funding to deliver on the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan, specifically, in the priority areas of improving mental health through social connection reduced loneliness.

Evidence from preparation of the Towong Shire Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 and Youth Strategy 2025-2029 identified mental wellbeing as a high priority due to structural barriers such as socioeconomic status, geographic remoteness, and mental health distress statistics.

The plan establishes Council's role to advocate, partner, and fund programs that strengthen mental health and wellbeing. The VicHealth Partners in Place program provides an opportunity to collaborate with stakeholders and outreach services to implement these strategies. Participation in the program will also enable Council to advance the Towong Shire Youth Strategy 2025–2029, which identifies mental health and wellbeing as a priority across multiple strategic areas.

Local schools have recently experienced reductions in funding for mental wellbeing programs. Support through this grant would enable Council to partner with schools and outreach providers to deliver targeted mental health initiatives.

In year one, the Partners in Place funding will support a scoping assessment. Council can allocate additional resources under this funding to identify and plan actions and budgets that strengthen delivery of the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025–2029, leveraging available partnerships and strategic mechanisms.

Years two to five of the funding provides for delivery of place-based prevention initiatives and capacity building activities for greater social connection, better mental wellbeing and reduced loneliness.

The VicHealth Partners in Place program closes Friday 5 December 2025.

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

The *Local Government Act 2020*

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

Council has several options for consideration:

- That Council approves the submission of an application to the VicHealth Partners in Place – Local Government Program for the maximum \$500,000 to deliver on the Towong Shire Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 and Youth Strategy 2025-2029.
- That Council does not make a submission to the VicHealth Partners in Place Local Council Fund and seeks alternative sources of funding.

Option 1 is the recommended option to achieve the best long term sustainable outcome for the community.

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

Economic

The funding will enable the engagement of experts and consultants through local partnerships, generating positive economic benefits within the community. In addition, the funding will reduce pressure on Council's limited resources.

Social

Improving wellbeing for mental health to achieve the outcome of greater social connection, better mental wellbeing and reduced loneliness for young people 0-25 in Towong Shire.

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

The Towong Shire Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025–2029 and the Youth Strategy 2025–2029 have been developed following extensive community engagement processes. These consultations included input from residents, community organisations, schools, service providers, and young people across the Shire. The engagement activities ensured that the priorities and actions identified within both documents reflect the lived experiences, aspirations, and needs of the community.

Should Council's funding application be successful, delivery will involve further community engagement as per the scoping requirements of the program. Engagement will involve local schools and outreach providers. Years two to five will involve significant community engagement through delivery of the programs.

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

Delivery of the Partners in Place funding will assist in building community capacity, increasing community resilience and providing improvement in wellbeing outcomes.

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

The project will be delivered as a strong collaboration with local schools, local service providers and key community stakeholders. This partnership approach is a core requirement of the program and is designed to ensure that initiatives are co-developed, locally relevant, and responsive to community needs. By engaging schools, service providers, and other partners, the project will foster shared ownership, strengthen delivery capacity, and enhance outcomes for mental health and wellbeing across Towong Shire.

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

Council is not required to provide a matched funding contribution towards the VicHealth Partners in Place program. If Council's submission is successful, the program will reduce reliance on ratepayer funds to support the delivery of mental wellbeing initiatives.

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

- Tallangatta Health Service Strategic Direction 2018-2027
- and Operational Plan 2025-2027
- Gateway Health Community Health Promotion Program 2023-2025
- Corryong Health Strategic Plan 2019-2024
- Ovens Murray Community Health – Health Promotion Strategic Plan 2025-2029
- Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2023-2027
- Victorian Department of Health Strategic Plan 2023-27
- Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Outcomes Framework 2025
- Victorian suicide prevention and response strategy 2024-34
- National Preventative Health Strategy 2021-2030

Council Plans and Policies:

Council Plans:

This report supports the following *Council Plan 2025-2029* priorities.

1. Community Wellbeing – To enhance the health and wellbeing of all residents and communities through access to a range of inclusive and culturally diverse activities, programs and facilities.

1.1 Implement the actions from the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029.

1.4 Implement actions from the Youth Strategy 2025-2029.

Council Policies:

Towong Shire Council External Grants Policy - Council officers must seek approval from Council for any grants greater than \$150,000 and/or where a Council contribution of \$50,000 or more is required and that has not been included in the annual budget.

Community Engagement Policy – Community engagement delivered through the Program would strongly align with the Towong Shire's Community Engagement 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:

There is a minor risk that reliance on partnerships with schools and community organisations may affect project delivery if these relationships are not sustained. In addition, as the funding is time-limited, there is a low risk that community expectations for ongoing initiatives could place future pressure on Council resources once the external funding concludes.

The key risk lies with not applying for this funding opportunity as this will lead to the potential loss of opportunity to secure external investment to deliver on Council's strategic health and wellbeing priorities. Without this funding, Council may face significant challenges in identifying alternative avenues of support.

This would increase reliance on Council's own constrained resources and, in turn, place greater financial pressure on ratepayers. Furthermore, the absence of external funding may reduce Council's ability to form strong partnerships with schools, service providers, and community organisations, thereby weakening collaborative approaches to addressing mental health and wellbeing needs across the Shire.

Officer's View:

Mental wellbeing initiatives are identified as a priority in the Council plan, Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan and Youth Strategy as outlined in the background and history. Mental wellbeing has been identified as a priority issue through community consultation and substantive evidence reports through detailed analysis from reputable regional research organisations.

The funding opportunity presented by VicHealth Partners in Place grant is an opportunity to access funding of up to \$500,000 for mental health wellbeing initiatives and programs to benefit young people across the Shire.

Council Resolution:

CR ANDERSON

CR PITMAN

THAT THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER BE AUTHORISED TO MAKE AN APPLICATION TO THE VICHEALTH PARTNERS IN PLACE GRANT FOR AN AMOUNT UP TO \$500,000 TO SUPPORT THE DELIVERY OF INITIATIVES ALIGNED TO THE MUNICIPAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN, THE YOUTH STRATEGY AND THE COUNCIL PLAN.

CARRIED

16 Asset Management

16.1 Capital Works Report (DIE)

Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Mr Matthew Fleet, Manager Capital and 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 this report is to give an overview of the delivery of the 2025/26 Capital Works Program to 30 September 2025.

Summary:

This report presents the overall status of the capital works program to the end of September 2025 and includes updates on project status, progress, expenditure and completion risk. A detailed budget breakdown has been circulated separately to Councillors prior to the meeting.

Recommendation:

That the report be noted.

Attachment:

Nil

Background/History:

Council's 2025–2026 Capital Works Program totals \$15.3 million and includes 61 projects, comprising both new initiatives and carry-over works from previous years.

The 14 largest projects represent approximately 38% of the overall budget. Of these, one is currently in progress, four are under construction, three have been completed, and six are either in the engage/design or tendering phases.

The remaining projects are on track to be completed within the 2025–2026 financial year or as programmed. The Hanson Street upgrade is progressing and is currently in the concept design stage, with community consultation planned in the coming weeks. This project will be delivered over coming years through staged works.

Annual programs for resealing, guardrail replacement, gravel re-sheeting, and footpath renewal have also been finalised within the current financial year, ensuring the ongoing maintenance and improvement of Council's infrastructure network.

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

The *Local Government Act 2020*

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

Not Applicable.

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

Economic

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

Community engagement activities have continued and is proposed across several capital projects, most notably there will be a significant amount of community engagement regarding the Hanson Street, (Western End) works in the coming weeks.

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

The Capital Works Program provides a structured framework for the ongoing strategic enhancement and renewal of assets across the Shire.

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

Not Applicable.

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

As of 30 September 2025	\$	%
Total Budget	\$15,362,755.00	100%
Year to Date spend (30 September 2025)	\$3,133,322.00	20%

Detailed budget and job closure analysis is included in the appendix to this report.

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

Not Applicable.

Council Plans and Policies:

Council Plans:

This report identified progress towards achieving the following *Council Plan 2025-2029* priorities.

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

2.1 Deliver the annual Capital Works Program.

2.3 Complete upgrades of Hanson Street, Corryong from Sugarloaf Road to Kiel Street in staged increments.

2.4 Progressively deliver the upgrade of the unsealed sections of Lake Road.

2.21 Undertake critical infrastructure upgrades at Colac Colac Caravan Park.

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:

Contractor availability has affected timelines for several road construction, social infrastructure and public open space construction projects, driven by strong demand for qualified contractors across the state. To address this, Council has continued to actively engage with local and regional contractors to encourage tender submissions and maintain competitive quotations for Council.

While recruitment has been challenging, some great strides have been made in this area. Efforts will continue to secure experienced project managers and technical assistants.

Officer's View:

The team has made significant progress in delivering the 2025/26 Capital Works Program, with outcomes so far this year exceeding those of previous financial years. As of 30 September 2025, year-to-date (YTD) expenditure totals \$3.1 million, representing approximately 20% of the total capital budget.

A diverse suite of social infrastructure and road/bridge projects have recently been delivered or are scheduled for completion in the coming months. These include the Bellbridge Walking Track, Lake Road Upgrade (Stage 1), Corryong Circuit Trail, Corryong CBD Revitalisation, Corryong Toilet Block, Dartmouth Splash Pad, Towong Walking Track, Corryong Landfill Capping (Cell 2), Corryong Library Refurbishment, and the removal and disposal of old emulsion drums and IBCs.

Looking ahead, Council has secured Roads to Recovery (R2R) funding for delivery of the Yabba Road Bridge renewal project. In addition, we are making strong progress toward securing grant funding for several key infrastructure projects under the SLRSP program, which are planned for possible inclusion in the 2025/26 Capital Works Program.

Council Resolution:

**CR PITMAN
CR WHITEHEAD**

THAT THE REPORT BE NOTED.

CARRIED

Cr Whitehead left the Chamber, the time being 11.27am.

17 Land Use Planning

17.1 PA250001 207 Touzel Road Cudgewa (DCP)

Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Mrs Margaret Fox, Contract Planning 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 this report is to seek a decision in relation to a Planning Permit PA250001 application for the use and development of the land for extractive industry.

Summary:

Council has received a Planning Permit application for extractive industry use at Crown Allotment 2D Section 13, Parish of Wabba, part of 207 Touzel Road, Cudgewa. The site is zoned Rural Activity and affected by the Bushfire Management Overlay.

The proposal involves gravel extraction over less than 5 hectares and to a depth under 5 metres, with no blasting. Under Section 77G of the *Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Act 1990*, a work authority is not required for small quarries operating in accordance with the Code of Practice for Small Quarries. A planning permit is required.

Gravel will be extracted and processed on-site, with haulage via Touzel Road, Whiteheads Road, and Cudgewa Valley Road—a route of approximately 6 km. Touzel and Whiteheads Roads are gravel; Cudgewa Valley Road is within the Transport 2 Zone. One existing dwelling is located along the haul route, with another approved for construction. A third dwelling is situated west of the Touzel–Whiteheads Road intersection.

The application was advertised to nearby landowners and occupiers. Three objections were received. The proposal has been assessed against the Towong Planning Scheme, and it is considered that concerns raised can be addressed through permit conditions.

Recommendation:

That Planning Permit Application PA250001 be approved, and a Notice of Decision issued, with the following conditions:

Compliance with documents approved under this permit

1. At all times what the permit allows must be carried out in accordance with the requirements of any document approved under this permit to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

Commencement of Permit

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

Approved and endorsed Plans – Rehabilitation Plan

3. Before works start plans must be approved and endorsed by the Responsible Authority. The plans must:
 - a. Be prepared to the satisfaction of the responsible authority
 - b. Be drawn to scale with dimensions
 - c. Submitted in electronic form
 - d. Show the following details:
 - i. Area of land to be rehabilitated
 - ii. Methods to rehabilitate the land
 - iii. Post rehabilitation contour plans
 - iv. Details of all planting to be undertaken as part of the rehabilitation plan
 - e. The rehabilitation plan must be prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Code of Practice for Small Quarries.

Agreements under Section 173 of the Act

4. Before the works start, the owner of the land must enter into an agreement with the responsible authority under Section 173 of the Planning & Environment Act 1987. The agreement must provide the following:
 - a. Within six months of the use of the land for extractive industry ceases the land must be rehabilitated in accordance with the endorsed and approved rehabilitation plan.
 - b. The owner of the land must pay all the responsible authority's reasonable legal costs and expenses of this agreement, including preparation, execution and registration on title.

Access

5. Before the works start the internal access track, must be upgraded to an all-weather access suitable for emergency services vehicles.

Dust Suppression

6. Before the works start plans must be approved and endorsed by the Responsible Authority. The plans must:
 - a. Be prepared to the satisfaction of the responsible authority
 - b. Be drawn to scale with dimensions
 - c. Submitted in electronic form
 - d. Show the following details:
 - i. Dust suppression measures to be undertaken for a total distance of 300m in front of each dwelling along the haulage route
 - ii. A sealed surface 20m before the bell mouth of the intersection with Cudgewa Valley Road
 - iii. All other dust suppression measures to be undertaken along the haulage route.

Photogrammetry survey

7. Before the works start a photogrammetry survey of the extraction site must be undertaken and submitted to the responsible authority.

Road maintenance contribution

8. Before the works start including bulk excavation, the owner of the land must enter into an agreement with the responsible authority under Section 173 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987. The agreement must provide the following:
 - a. Provide for payment of a monetary contribution to be applied based on the volume of quarry produce extracted and the commensurate heavy vehicle traffic generated.
 - b. The contribution payment is to be calculated at a rate of \$0.151 per cubic metre extracted.
 - c. The contribution payment is to be indexed for CPI and calculated annual by 31 July.
 - d. The landowner must provide an annual report detailing the volume extracted by 31 July each year.
 - e. The responsible authority will issue an invoice annually for the contribution payment.
 - f. The owner of the land must pay all of the responsible authority's reasonable legal costs and expenses of this agreement, including preparation, execution and registration on title.

Mandatory Condition – no alteration to topography

9. Except in accordance with this permit, no alteration may be made to the natural condition or topography of the land within 20 metres of the boundary of the land. This does not apply to driveway, drains, bund walls or landscaping.

Mandatory condition – planting

10. Shrubs and trees must be planted and maintained to screen activity on the land.

Mandatory condition – parking

11. Parking areas must be provided for employees' cars and all vehicles used on the land.

Stages

12. The extraction must proceed in the order of stages as shown on the endorsed plan unless otherwise agreed in writing by the responsible authority.

Hours of operation

13. Activities and operations associated with the approved use must only be undertaken between the hours of 7.00am to 6.00pm Monday to Friday (excluding public holiday). This condition can only be varied with the written consent of the responsible authority.

Use of explosives

14. No blasting or use of explosives is permitted.

Loaded vehicles

15. All vehicles carrying material to and from the site must have the material covered.

Trucks to be cleaned

16. All vehicles exiting the quarry on to the public road network must be cleaned of mud prior to entering the public road.

Limiting truck movements

17. Only one truck is permitted along the haulage route from Touzel Road to Cudgewa Valley Road at any one time.

No works on total fire ban days

18. No excavation, processing of materials or mechanical loading and unloading of vehicles is permitted on declared fire ban days.

General amenity

19. The use and development must be managed so that the amenity of the area is not adversely impacted or affected by the:

- a. Transport of materials, goods or commodities to or from the land;
- b. Appearance of any building, works or materials; and
- c. Emission of noise (including unnecessary use of exhaust brakes) artificial light, vibration, smell, smoke, vapour, dust, waste water, waste products, oil.

Dust

- 20. Dust suppression measure must be undertaken along Touzel Road and Whiteheads Road to Cudgewa Valley Road. Dust emissions must comply with the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (as amended from time to time) to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

Noise

- 21. At all times noise emanating from the land must comply with the requirements of the Environment Protection Regulations 2021 (as amended from time to time) as measure in accordance with the Noise Protocol to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

Goulburn Murray Water – in accordance with Code of Practice

- 22. All works associated with the quarry activities must be undertaken in accordance with DEDJTR, Code of Practice Small Quarries (2010).

Goulburn Murray Water – no works within 30m of waterway

- 23. There must be no excavation, stockpiling or other works within 30m of the top of the bank of any waterways.

Goulburn Murray Water – sediment control

- 24. Sediment control principles outlined in EPA Publication 1834.1 Civil Construction, Building and Demolition Guide (September 2023). must be implemented on the site to ensure that no sediment laden run-off is able to leave the site or be discharged to waterways or drainage lines. Appropriate sediment control measures must be maintained to ensure their effectiveness.

Goulburn Murray Water – rehabilitation

- 25. At the completion of all quarrying activities, the site must be rehabilitated to prevent erosion and sediment transport off-site.

NECMA – silt control measures

- 26. Prior to the commencement of and during the extractive industry operations, appropriate silt control measures, as required by the Code of Practice for Small Quarries (DPI 2010) must be installed to prevent sediment laden runoff from entering any waterway. The silt control measures must be maintained throughout the extractive industry operations at the site.

NECMA water crossings

27. Prior to the commencement of the extractive industry operations, all waterway crossings on the farm road used to access the extractive industry site must have a fit for purpose culvert or bridge crossing in place to protect the waterway from any damage that may be caused by vehicles crossing the waterway.

DEECA adjoining Crown land

28. Adjoining Crown land must not be used for truck turning areas, entry points, parking areas or temporary stack sites during the construction of buildings or works.

DEECA access

29. Access to the site must only be from the government road adjoining the subject land.

DEECA – no encroachment

30. No encroachment of or formal access to/from the Crown land is to occur because of the use or development.

DEECA – access only via Touzel Road

31. No access is permitted to the subject land via Crown land, except for the existing Touzel Road.

DEECA – no pathways

32. No pathways are to be created on the Crown land from the adjoining property.

DEECA no polluted and/or sediment laden run-off

33. No polluted and/or sediment laden run-off is to be discharged directly or indirectly onto Crown land. Overland flows must be maintained at the same rate post-development as on the developed land.

Expiry

34. This permit will expire if the use and development has not commenced within five years of the issue date of this permit.

Notes

- A. The unnamed waterway running from east to west through the property is gazetted by the Authority to be a designated waterway under the Water Act 1989. A Works on Waterways permit must be obtained from the Authority in accordance with By-Law No 2024/01 Waterways Protection prior to commencing any works in, on or over designated waterways (such as landscaping, access crossings, storm water outlets, etc). Further information and an application form can be obtained from the Authority at:

<http://www.necma.vic.gov.au/About-Us/Programs-Initiatives/Undertake-Works-onWaterway>

Attachment:

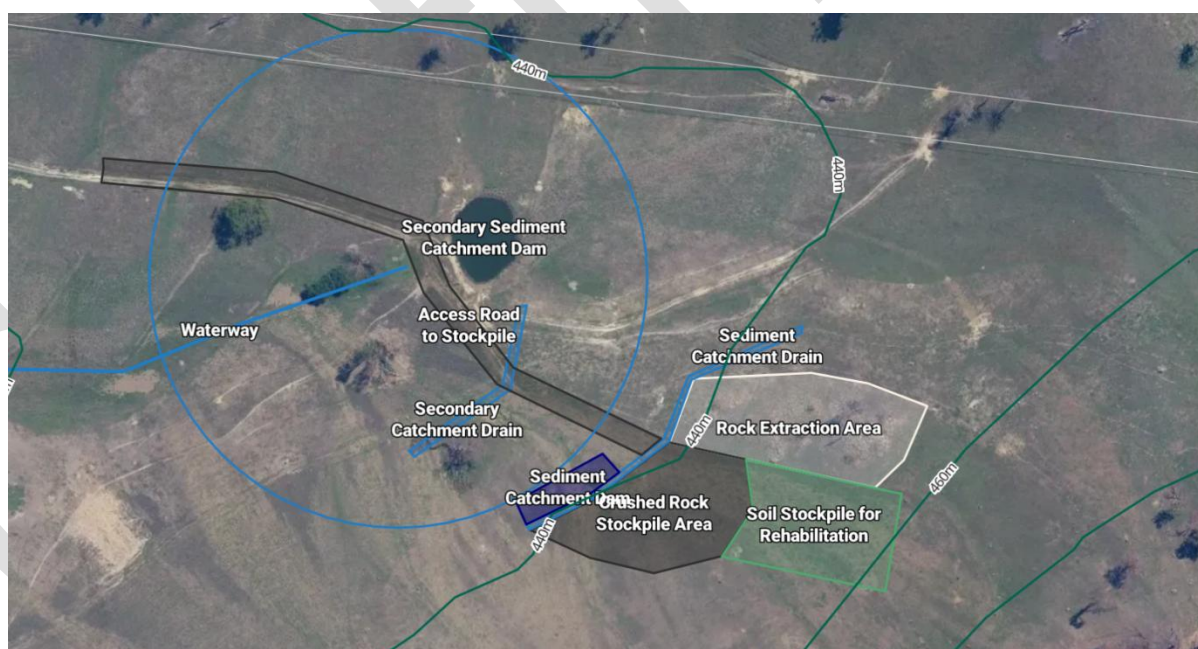
1. Acknowledged 5 AA Exemption - 207 Touzel Road, Cudgewa, Allot 2 D Section 13 Parish of Wabba - Mark [17.1.1 - 3 pages]
2. 2039 001 (1) (1) [17.1.2 - 3 pages]
3. Maps [17.1.3 - 5 pages]
4. Conditions Touzel Road Cudgewa (1) [17.1.4 - 6 pages]

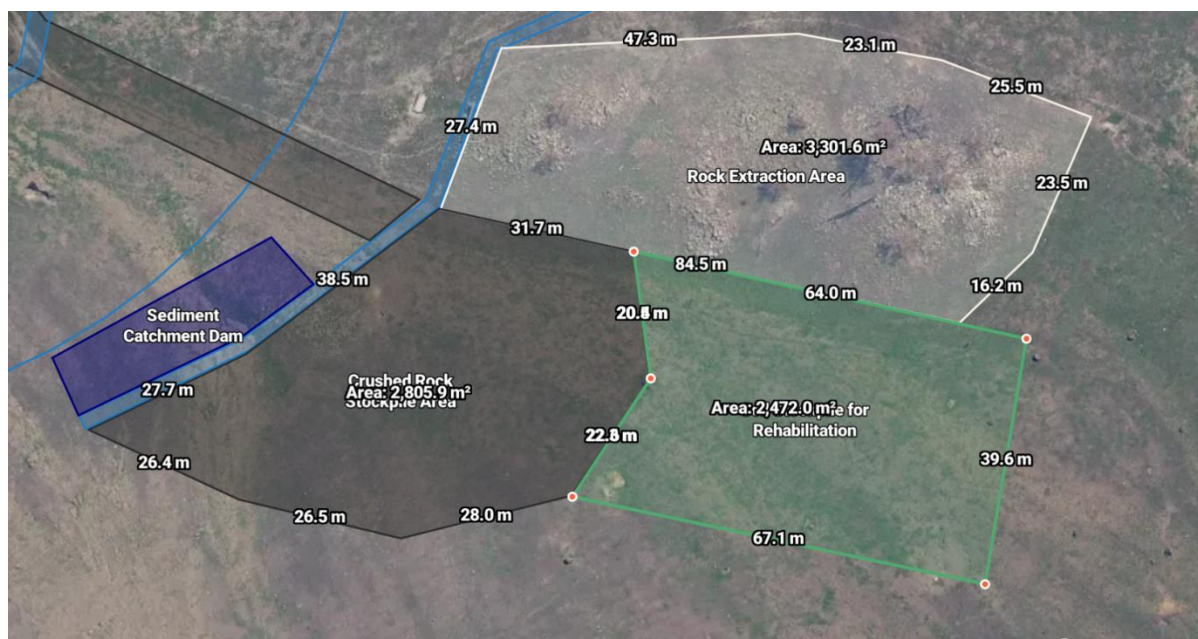
Background/History:

The site is located northwest of Cudgewa and comprises a single parcel within a larger landholding, covering approximately 60.6 hectares. It lies in a valley surrounded by steep forested slopes, with Crown Land to the north and northwest. An intermittent waterway traverses the northern section of the allotment. A dwelling occupied by the applicant is situated northeast of the proposed extraction area.

The township of Cudgewa is approximately 6 km southeast of the site.

The proposed extraction area is clear of native vegetation, and no removal is required.





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

The Planning & Environment Act 1987 provides the overarching standard process for assessing a planning permit application.

The Towong Planning Scheme sets out the planning permit triggers that require a planning permit application.

A planning permit is triggered under the Rural Activity Zone. The land is within the Bushfire Management Overlay however no planning permit is required within the overlay for the use and development of the land for extractive industry.

Clause 35.08-1 identifies that the use of the land for extractive industry is a section 2 use (any other use not in Section 1 or 3). A planning permit is therefore required.

Clause 35.08-4 identifies that a planning permit is required to carry out works associated with the use of the land for Extractive Industry.

Clause 35.08-5 requires consideration of the following decision guidelines:

General issues

- *The Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.*
- *Any Regional Catchment Strategy and associated plan applying to the land.*
- *The capability of the land to accommodate the proposed use or development, including the disposal of effluent.*
- *How the use or development relates to sustainable land management.*

- *Whether the site is suitable for the use and development and whether the proposal is compatible with adjoining and nearby land uses.*

Agricultural issues

- *Whether the use or development will support and enhance agricultural production.*
- *The potential for the use or development to limit the operation and expansion of adjoining and nearby agricultural uses.*
- *The capacity of the site to sustain the agricultural use.*
- *The agricultural qualities of the land, such as soil quality, access to water and access to rural infrastructure.*
- *Any integrated land management plan prepared for the site.*
- *Accommodation issues*
- *Whether the dwelling will result in the loss or fragmentation of productive agricultural land.*
- *Whether the dwelling will be adversely affected by agricultural activities on adjacent and nearby land due to dust, noise, odour, use of chemicals and farm machinery, traffic and hours of operation.*
- *Whether the dwelling will adversely affect the operation and expansion of adjoining and nearby agricultural uses.*
- *The potential for accommodation to be adversely affected by vehicular traffic, noise, blasting, dust and vibration from an existing or proposed extractive industry operation if it is located within 500 metres from the nearest title boundary of land on which a work authority has been applied for or granted under the Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Act 1990.*

Environmental issues

- *The impact of the proposal on the natural physical features and resources of the area, in particular on soil and water quality.*
- *The impact of the use or development on the flora, fauna and landscape features of the locality.*
- *The need to protect and enhance the biodiversity of the area, including the retention of vegetation and faunal habitat and the need to revegetate land including riparian buffers along waterways, gullies, ridgelines, property boundaries and saline discharge and recharge area.*
- *The location of on-site effluent disposal areas to minimise the impact of nutrient loads on waterways and native vegetation.*

Design and siting issues

- *The impact of the siting, design, height, bulk, colours and materials to be used, on the natural environment, major roads, vistas and water features and the measures to be undertaken to minimise any adverse impacts.*
- *The impact on the character and appearance of the area or features of architectural, historic or scientific significance or of natural scenic beauty or importance.*

- *The location and design of existing and proposed infrastructure including roads, gas, water, drainage, telecommunications and sewerage facilities.*
- *Whether the use or development will require traffic management measures.*
- *The need to locate and design buildings used for accommodation to avoid or reduce the impact from vehicular traffic, noise, blasting, dust and vibration from an existing or proposed extractive industry operation if it is located within 500 metres from the nearest title boundary of land on which a work authority has been applied for or granted under the Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Act 1990.*

Response

The proposal aligns with the Municipal Planning Strategy and Planning Policy Framework. Goulburn Murray Water has reviewed the application and supports the issue of a planning permit, subject to conditions addressing water quality. The extraction area is centrally located on the site and is unlikely to impact surrounding agricultural activities.

The land is of low agricultural value, with rocky terrain unsuitable for productive use. The proposed extraction is not expected to fragment viable agricultural land.

No accommodation is proposed.

While the extraction will alter the site's physical features, rehabilitation will be required upon completion.

The intermittent waterway on the northern boundary flows into Cudgewa Creek, a habitat for threatened species including Murray Cod and Murray Spiny Crayfish. Permit conditions will ensure protection of these waterways from sediment and pollutants.

Traffic management measures will be necessary to control dust and maintain road conditions along the haulage route.

Clause 52.09-1 (Extractive Industry and Extractive Industry Interest Areas) applies to an application to use or develop land for extractive industry.

Clause 52.09-4 states:

Before deciding on an application to use and develop land for extractive industry, in addition to the decision guidelines in Clause 65, the responsible authority must consider, as appropriate:

- *The effect of the proposed extractive industry on any native flora and fauna on and near the land.*

- *The impact of the proposed extractive industry on sites of cultural and historic significance, including any effects on Aboriginal places.*
- *The effect of the proposed extractive industry on the natural and cultural landscape of the surrounding land and the locality generally.*
- *The ability of the proposed extractive industry to contain any emissions within the boundaries of the land in accordance with relevant legislation.*
- *The effect of vehicular traffic, noise, blasting, dust and vibration on the amenity of the surrounding area.*
- *The ability to rehabilitate the affected land to a form or for a use which is compatible with the natural systems or visual appearance of the surrounding area.*
- *The ability to rehabilitate the land so it can be used for a purpose or purposes beneficial to the community.*
- *The effect of the proposed extractive industry on groundwater quality and the impact on any affected water uses.*
- *The impact of the proposed extractive industry on surface drainage and surface water quality.*
- *Any proposed provisions, conditions or requirements in a work plan that has received statutory endorsement under the Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Act 1990.*

Response

The proposed extraction site is already cleared, and no native vegetation removal is required. Although an intermittent waterway feeds into Cudgewa Creek, appropriate site management will prevent environmental impact. The site is outside areas of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Sensitivity.

The quarry qualifies as a Small Quarry under relevant legislation and is not expected to significantly affect the surrounding natural or cultural landscape. Rehabilitation of the site will be mandated post-extraction.

The extraction area is approximately 1 km from the site entrance, with the nearest dwellings located over 2 km away. A permit condition will require noise monitoring at the entrance to ensure compliance with EPA standards.

Blasting will not occur. Dust suppression measures will be implemented along the haul route, and an indexed annual contribution based on extracted gravel volume will be payable to support road maintenance.

Extraction depth will be limited to 5 metres or above the groundwater table, whichever is less. Surface water and drainage impacts will be mitigated through permit conditions. Goulburn Murray Water has reviewed the application and supports the permit subject to conditions.

The applicant must comply with the Code of Practice for Small Quarries.

Municipal Planning Strategy and Planning Policy Framework

Clause 02.03 outlines Council's strategic direction to promote economic diversification. The applicant proposes gravel extraction to support the Bellbridge subdivision.

Clause 02.03-2 seeks to protect environmental and landscape values. The proposal does not involve native vegetation removal. Although a waterway traverses the northern part of the site, risks can be mitigated through permit conditions. Goulburn Murray Water has supported the application. The site's remote location and poor agricultural quality ensure minimal landscape impact.

Clause 02.03-3 addresses environmental risks and amenity. The site is in a high bushfire risk area under the Bushfire Management Overlay. While a permit is not required under the overlay, conditions will restrict operations during extreme fire danger periods.

Soil degradation, erosion, and landslip risks are minimal due to the site's flat terrain. Rehabilitation will be required post-extraction.

Clause 02.03-4 aims to protect high-quality agricultural land. The site's poor soil quality supports its use for extractive purposes.

Clause 02.03-7 notes Towong Shire's economic reliance on agriculture. The proposal contributes to economic diversification.

Clause 12 outlines Victoria's strategic direction for preserving environmental and landscape values. The proposal aligns with **Clause 12.01**, which seeks to protect biodiversity, as no native vegetation will be removed. Permit conditions will safeguard flora and fauna. **Clause 12.03** addresses the protection of waterways; conditions will ensure sediment and pollutants are prevented from entering nearby systems.

Clause 13 focuses on environmental risks and amenity. Risks related to waterways, bushfire, and soil degradation will be mitigated through permit conditions. **Clause 13.06-1** requires consideration of air quality; dust suppression measures will be implemented along the haulage route, particularly near dwellings.

Clause 14.03-1S encourages resource extraction in line with environmental standards. Buffers will be maintained, and noise monitoring will ensure EPA compliance. **Clause 14.03-1R** supports local availability of construction materials; the extracted gravel will be used for roadworks in the Bellbridge subdivision.

Clause 18.01-1S seeks to protect transport infrastructure. The applicant will contribute to haulage route maintenance, secured via a Section 173 Agreement.

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

The proposal will contribute to the diversification of Towong Shire's economy. The quarry is a small-scale quarry and the forecast volume of material quarried, and truck movements are considered to be minor.

It is considered that the objectors concerns can be mitigated through conditions on any permit issued for the proposal and, on balance, it is the officers view that the proposal is consistent with the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.

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

Economic

It is anticipated that the proposed quarry will contribute to the economic diversity of Towong Shire and provide some minor employment opportunities.

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

Notice of the application was given to all adjoining and nearby landowners and occupiers. Three objections were received that raised the following concerns:

Nature of Objection	Response
Concerns regarding a lack of community engagements	Clause 52 of the Planning & Environment Act 1987 requires notices to be given to all adjoining and nearby landowners. This was provided together with the application material. After the objections were received the applicant addressed all concerns raised and this was circulated to the objectors.
Environmental Impacts – there are concerns that the quarry could impact the Cudgewa Creek and the protection of the waterways	Permit conditions will be placed on any permit issued that will ensure the installation of silt traps and water management.

Noise and dust	Permit conditions will require noise monitoring at the entrance to the site. Further dust suppression measures are required along the haulage route.
Road width is not wide enough for trucks to pass and road safety	Traffic safety has been considered by Councils Infrastructure department and conditions will be place on the permit to limit the truck movements to a single truck on Touzel Road and Whiteheads Road
Road degradation	Conditions will be placed on the permit to make a contribution based on the volume extracted to the maintenance of the road. Conditions will be placed on the permit requiring the bell mouth at Whiteheads Road & Cudgewa Valley road to be upgraded.

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)):

As with all planning matters, there is a risk that this matter may be appealed pursuant to Section 82 of the Planning and Environment Act 19987 to the Victorian Civil Administrative Tribunal (VCAT). It is the officer's view that proceeding to VCAT would have a budgetary impact. It is not possible to quantify this now.

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

The proposal is consistent with the Planning Policy Framework as discussed above.

Council Plans and Policies:

Council Plans:

This report supports the following *Council Plan 2025-2029* priorities.

4. Land Use - Ensure that Council's planning, building and environmental health services support all aspects of liveability and sustainable population growth.

4.1 Facilitate the development and management of land and properties through the delivery of quality Land Use Planning, Building, Environmental Health, and Compliance Services.

Council Policies:

The proposal is consistent with the Municipal Strategic Statement as discussed above.

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 application assessment has considered all relevant elements of the Planning Scheme and Policy provisions, and risks associated with various items have been assessed and considered.

Officer's View:

It is the officer's view that for all the reasons articulated in the assessment and in this report the application for the use of the land for extractive industry be approved subject to the conditions attached to this report.

Council Resolution:

CR PITMAN

CR ANDERSON

THAT PLANNING PERMIT APPLICATION PA250001 BE APPROVED, AND A NOTICE OF DECISION ISSUED, WITH THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

COMPLIANCE WITH DOCUMENTS APPROVED UNDER THIS PERMIT

- 1. AT ALL TIMES WHAT THE PERMIT ALLOWS MUST BE CARRIED OUT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF ANY DOCUMENT APPROVED UNDER THIS PERMIT TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY.**

COMMENCEMENT OF PERMIT

- 2. THIS PERMIT WILL OPERATE FROM THE ISSUED DATE OF THIS PERMIT.**

APPROVED AND ENDORSED PLANS – REHABILITATION PLAN

- 3. BEFORE WORKS START PLANS MUST BE APPROVED AND ENDORSED BY THE RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY. THE PLANS MUST:**

- a. BE PREPARED TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY**
- b. BE DRAWN TO SCALE WITH DIMENSIONS**
- c. SUBMITTED IN ELECTRONIC FORM**
- d. SHOW THE FOLLOWING DETAILS:**
 - i. AREA OF LAND TO BE REHABILITATED**
 - ii. METHODS TO REHABILITATE THE LAND**
 - iii. POST REHABILITATION CONTOUR PLANS**
 - iv. DETAILS OF ALL PLANTING TO BE UNDERTAKEN AS PART OF THE REHABILITATION PLAN**
- e. THE REHABILITATION PLAN MUST BE PREPARED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR SMALL QUARRIES.**

AGREEMENTS UNDER SECTION 173 OF THE ACT

- 4. BEFORE THE WORKS START, THE OWNER OF THE LAND MUST ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY UNDER SECTION 173 OF THE PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT ACT 1987. THE AGREEMENT MUST PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING:**

- a. **WITHIN SIX MONTHS OF THE USE OF THE LAND FOR EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRY CEASES THE LAND MUST BE REHABILITATED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ENDORSED AND APPROVED REHABILITATION PLAN.**
- b. **THE OWNER OF THE LAND MUST PAY ALL THE RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY'S REASONABLE LEGAL COSTS AND EXPENSES OF THIS AGREEMENT, INCLUDING PREPARATION, EXECUTION AND REGISTRATION ON TITLE.**

ACCESS

5. **BEFORE THE WORKS START THE INTERNAL ACCESS TRACK, MUST BE UPGRADED TO AN ALL-WEATHER ACCESS SUITABLE FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES VEHICLES.**

DUST SUPPRESSION

6. **BEFORE THE WORKS START PLANS MUST BE APPROVED AND ENDORSED BY THE RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY. THE PLANS MUST:**
 - a. **BE PREPARED TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY**
 - b. **BE DRAWN TO SCALE WITH DIMENSIONS**
 - c. **SUBMITTED IN ELECTRONIC FORM**
 - d. **SHOW THE FOLLOWING DETAILS:**
 - i. **DUST SUPPRESSION MEASURES TO BE UNDERTAKEN FOR A TOTAL DISTANCE OF 300M IN FRONT OF EACH DWELLING ALONG THE HAULAGE ROUTE**
 - ii. **A SEALED SURFACE 20M BEFORE THE BELL MOUTH OF THE INTERSECTION WITH CUDGEWA VALLEY ROAD**
 - iii. **ALL OTHER DUST SUPPRESSIONS MEASURES TO BE UNDERTAKEN ALONG THE HAULAGE ROUTE.**

PHOTOGRAMMETRY SURVEY

7. **BEFORE THE WORKS START A PHOTOGRAMMETRY SURVEY OF THE EXTRACTION SITE MUST BE UNDERTAKEN AND SUBMITTED TO THE RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY.**

ROAD MAINTENANCE CONTRIBUTION

8. **BEFORE THE WORKS START INCLUDING BULK EXCAVATION, THE OWNER OF THE LAND MUST ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY UNDER SECTION 173 OF THE PLANNING**

AND ENVIRONMENT ACT 1987. THE AGREEMENT MUST PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING:

- a. **PROVIDE FOR PAYMENT OF A MONETARY CONTRIBUTION TO BE APPLIED BASED ON THE VOLUME OF QUARRY PRODUCE EXTRACTED AND THE COMMENSURATE HEAVY VEHICLE TRAFFIC GENERATED.**
- b. **THE CONTRIBUTION PAYMENT IS TO BE CALCULATED AT A RATE OF \$0.151 PER CUBIC METRE EXTRACTED.**
- c. **THE CONTRIBUTION PAYMENT IS TO BE INDEXED FOR CPI AND CALCULATED ANNUAL BY 31 JULY.**
- d. **THE LANDOWNER MUST PROVIDE AN ANNUAL REPORT DETAILING THE VOLUME EXTRACTED BY 31 JULY EACH YEAR.**
- e. **THE RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY WILL ISSUE AN INVOICE ANNUALLY FOR THE CONTRIBUTION PAYMENT.**
- f. **THE OWNER OF THE LAND MUST PAY ALL OF THE RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY'S REASONABLE LEGAL COSTS AND EXPENSES OF THIS AGREEMENT, INCLUDING PREPARATION, EXECUTION AND REGISTRATION ON TITLE.**

MANDATORY CONDITION – NO ALTERATION TO TOPOGRAPHY

9. **EXCEPT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS PERMIT, NO ALTERATION MAY BE MADE TO THE NATURAL CONDITION OR TOPOGRAPHY OF THE LAND WITHIN 20 METRES OF THE BOUNDARY OF THE LAND. THIS DOES NOT APPLY TO DRIVEWAY, DRAINS, BUND WALLS OR LANDSCAPING.**

MANDATORY CONDITION – PLANTING

10. **SHRUBS AND TREES MUST BE PLANTED AND MAINTAINED TO SCREEN ACTIVITY ON THE LAND.**

MANDATORY CONDITION – PARKING

11. **PARKING AREAS MUST PROVIDED FOR EMPLOYEES' CARS AND ALL VEHICLES USED ON THE LAND.**

STAGES

12. **THE EXTRACTION MUST PROCEED IN THE ORDER OF STAGES AS SHOWN ON THE ENDORSED PLAN UNLESS OTHERWISE GREED IN WRITING BY THE RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY.**

HOURS OF OPERATION

13. **ACTIVITIES AND OPERATIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE APPROVED USE MUST ONLY BE UNDERTAKEN BETWEEN THE HOURS OF 7.00AM TO**

6.00PM MONDAY TO FRIDAY (EXCLUDING PUBLIC HOLIDAY). THIS CONDITION CAN ONLY BE VARIED WITH THE WRITTEN CONSENT OF THE RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY.

USE OF EXPLOSIVES

14.NO BLASTING OR USE OF EXPLOSIVES IS PERMITTED.

LOADED VEHICLES

15.ALL VEHICLES CARRYING MATERIAL TO AND FROM THE SITE MUST HAVE THE MATERIAL COVERED.

TRUCKS TO BE CLEANED

16.ALL VEHICLES EXISTING THE QUARRY ON TO THE PUBLIC ROAD NETWORK MUST BE CLEANED OF MUD PRIOR TO ENTERING THE PUBLIC ROAD.

LIMITING TRUCK MOVEMENTS

17.ONLY ONE TRUCK IS PERMITTED ALONG THE HAULAGE ROUTE FROM TOUZEL ROAD TO CUDGEWA VALLEY ROAD AT ANY ONE TIME.

NO WORKS ON TOTAL FIRE BAN DAYS

18.NO EXCAVATION, PROCESSING OF MATERIALS OR MECHANICAL LOADING AND UNLOAD OF VEHICLES IS PERMITTED ON DECLARED FIRE BAN DAYS.

GENERAL AMENITY

19.THE USE AND DEVELOPMENT MUST BE MANAGED SO THAT THE AMENITY OF THE AREA IS NOT ADVERSELY IMPACTED OR AFFECTED BY THE:

- a. TRANSPORT OF MATERIALS, GOODS OR COMMODITIES TO OR FROM THE LAND;**
- b. APPEARANCE OF ANY BUILDING, WORKS OR MATERIALS; AND**
- c. EMISSION OF NOISE (INCLUDING UNNECESSARY USE OF EXHAUST BRAKES) ARTIFICIAL LIGHT, VIBRATION, SMELL, SMOKE, VAPOUR, DUST, WASTE WATER, WASTE PRODUCTS, OIL.**

DUST

20.DUST SUPPRESSION MEASURE MUST BE UNDERTAKEN ALONG TOUZEL ROAD AND WHITEHEADS ROAD TO CUDGEWA VALLEY ROAD. DUST EMISSIONS MUST COMPLY WITH THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELLBEING ACT 2008 (AS AMENDED FROM TIME TO TIME) TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY.

NOISE

21. AT ALL TIMES NOISE EMANATING FROM THE LAND MUST COMPLY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION REGULATIONS 2021 (AS AMENDED FROM TIME TO TIME) AS MEASURE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE NOISE PROTOCOL TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY.

GOULBURN MURRAY WATER – IN ACCORDANCE WITH CODE OF PRACTICE

22. ALL WORKS ASSOCIATED WITH THE QUARRY ACTIVITIES MUST BE UNDERTAKEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH DEDJTR, CODE OF PRACTICE SMALL QUARRIES (2010).

GOULBURN MURRAY WATER – NO WORKS WITHIN 30M OF WATERWAY

23. THERE MUST BE NO EXCAVATION, STOCKPILING OR OTHER WORKS WITHIN 30M OF THE TOP OF THE BANK OF ANY WATERWAYS.

GOULBURN MURRAY WATER – SEDIMENT CONTROL

24. SEDIMENT CONTROL PRINCIPLES OUTLINED IN EPA PUBLICATION 1834.1 CIVIL CONSTRUCTION, BUILDING AND DEMOLITION GUIDE (SEPTEMBER 2023). MUST BE IMPLEMENTED ON THE SITE TO ENSURE THAT NO SEDIMENT LADEN RUN-OFF IS ABLE TO LEAVE THE SITE OR BE DISCHARGED TO WATERWAYS OR DRAINAGE LINES. APPROPRIATE SEDIMENT CONTROL MEASURES MUST BE MAINTAINED TO ENSURE THEIR EFFECTIVENESS.

GOULBURN MURRAY WATER – REHABILITATION

25. AT THE COMPLETION OF ALL QUARRYING ACTIVITIES, THE SITE MUST BE REHABILITATED TO PREVENT EROSION AND SEDIMENT TRANSPORT OFF-SITE.

NECMA – SILT CONTROL MEASURES

26. PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF AND DURING THE EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRY OPERATIONS, APPROPRIATE SILT CONTROL MEASURES, AS REQUIRED BY THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR SMALL QUARRIES (DPI 2010) MUST BE INSTALLED TO PREVENT SEDIMENT LADEN RUNOFF FROM ENTERING ANY WATERWAY. THE SILT CONTROL MEASURES MUST BE MAINTAINED THROUGHOUT THE EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRY OPERATIONS AT THE SITE.

NECMA WATER CROSSINGS

27. PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRY OPERATIONS, ALL WATERWAY CROSSINGS ON THE FARM ROAD USED TO ACCESS THE EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRY SITE MUST HAVE A FIT FOR PURPOSE CULVERT OR BRIDGE CROSSING IN PLACE TO PROTECT THE

WATERWAY FROM ANY DAMAGE THAT MAY BE CAUSED BY VEHICLES CROSSING THE WATERWAY.

DEECA ADJOINING CROWN LAND

28. ADJOINING CROWN LAND MUST NOT BE USED FOR TRUCK TURNING AREAS, ENTRY POINTS, PARKING AREAS OR TEMPORARY STACK SITES DURING THE CONSTRUCTION OF BUILDINGS OR WORKS.

DEECA ACCESS

29. ACCESS TO THE SITE MUST ONLY BE FROM THE GOVERNMENT ROAD ADJOINING THE SUBJECT LAND.

DEECA – NO ENCROACHMENT

30. NO ENCROACHMENT OF OR FORMAL ACCESS TO/FROM THE CROWN LAND IS TO OCCUR BECAUSE OF THE USE OR DEVELOPMENT.

DEECA – ACCESS ONLY VIA TOUZEL ROAD

31. NO ACCESS IS PERMITTED TO THE SUBJECT LAND VIA CROWN LAND, EXCEPT FOR THE EXISTING TOUZEL ROAD.

DEECA – NO PATHWAYS

32. NO PATHWAYS ARE TO BE CREATED ON THE CROWN LAND FROM THE ADJOINING PROPERTY.

DEECA NO POLLUTED AND/OR SEDIMENT LADEN RUN-OFF

33. NO POLLUTED AND/OR SEDIMENT LADEN RUN-OFF IS TO BE DISCHARGED DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY ONTO CROWN LAND. OVERLAND FLOWS MUST BE MAINTAINED AT THE SAME RATE POST-DEVELOPMENT AS ON THE DEVELOPED LAND.

EXPIRY

34. THIS PERMIT WILL EXPIRE IF THE USE AND DEVELOPMENT HAS NOT COMMENCED WITHIN FIVE YEARS OF THE ISSUE DATE OF THIS PERMIT.

NOTES

A. THE UNNAMED WATERWAY RUNNING FROM EAST TO WEST THROUGH THE PROPERTY IS GAZETTED BY THE AUTHORITY TO BE A DESIGNATED WATERWAY UNDER THE WATER ACT 1989. A WORKS ON WATERWAYS PERMIT MUST BE OBTAINED FROM THE AUTHORITY IN ACCORDANCE WITH BY-LAW NO 2024/01 WATERWAYS PROTECTION PRIOR TO COMMENCING ANY WORKS IN, ON OR OVER DESIGNATED WATERWAYS (SUCH AS LANDSCAPING, ACCESS CROSSINGS, STORM WATER OUTLETS, ETC). FURTHER INFORMATION AND AN APPLICATION FORM CAN BE OBTAINED FROM THE AUTHORITY AT:

[HTTP://WWW.NECMA.VIC.GOV.AU/ABOUT-US/PROGRAMS-INITIATIVES/UNDERTAKE-WORKS-ONWATERWAY](http://www.necma.vic.gov.au/about-us/programs-initiatives/undertake-works-onwaterway)

CARRIED

Cr Whitehead returned to the Chamber, the time being 11.31am

Confirmed

18 Environmental Sustainability

18.1 Environmental Sustainability Report (DIE)

Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Mr Greg Karlson, Coordinator Circular Economy 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 provide an update on environmental sustainability activities.

Summary:

This report provides an update on environmental sustainability activities throughout the Shire for the period March 2025 to September 2025.

Council's environmental sustainability activities continue to be focused on the management of recycling operations at resource recovery centres along with actions related to the circular economy waste and recycling transition processes.

Recommendation:

That the report be noted.

Attachment:

Nil

Background/History:

Waste and recycling services

Ongoing education and reminders regarding campaign around the three bin system continue to be promoted through Council's digital platforms as well as exposure through the Halve Waste platform which enjoys TV promotional content. Grant monies provided in part funds which defrayed some of this cost during rollout over the first year under the new system.

Recent activities around kerbside waste since the transition shows 64.30% of households with an existing kerbside bin service had taken up the additional FOGO bin. Although this figure seems low, it was heavily influenced by the level of opt-outs from eligible rural residents, who represented 38.3% of total households. Overall the participation rate of rural households was a modest 26.8% of total households.

YTD performance to June 25 highlights:-

- Organics tonnage levels - 719 tonnes from now 2175 monthly serviced households
- General Waste tonnage levels – 921 tonnes from now 3061 monthly serviced households
- Recycling tonnage levels – 526.43 tonnes from 3059 monthly serviced households

For the month of June 2025 the Recycling Contamination Rate was - 0.14 tonnes with total contamination volume for the year at 2.08 tonnes. The average monthly contamination rate was 0.39%. For FOGO 719 tonnes has been collected with average monthly contamination levels of 0.14%.

With the three bin system State Government initiative Towong Shire has achieved a current diversion rate# of 57.49% from landfill.

Diversion rate – The amount of waste diverted from landfill. Calculated by dividing the tonnes of recyclables and organics collected (less contaminants) by the total tonnes of waste and recyclables and organics collected.

Summary of key results from recent bin audit undertaken by third party EC Sustainability:

- Bin audit shows resource recovery rate with the recycling stream recording a reduction from 81% in 2021 to 79.04% in 2025 representing a reduction of 1.96%. The Organics stream recorded an outstanding result of 91.22%.
- The new system saw an increase capture rate of food waste in the food and garden organics where in 2021 46% of FOGO accepted materials could have been recovered in a green lidded bin. By proportion of weight, the mixed recyclables in the waste stream increased from 10.59% in 2021 to 15.04% in 2025, an increase of 4.45%. Garden organics reduced from 12.67% to 0.20% in 2025 a reduction of 12.47% Loose food also decreased 23.4% in 2021 to 16.92%.
- The introduction of the FOGO service for areas as surveyed from recent bin audit resulted in the effective diversion of garden organics and loose food

from general waste stream. However, the increase in the proportion of mixed recyclables within the residual waste stream was likely due to the removal of FOGO accepted material with the weight of mixed recyclables decreasing significantly which was also likely impacted by the introduction of Container Deposit Scheme Vic.

To aid with waste collection during the high visitation period of Easter, Council provided additional public bins at key locations, increased the frequency of collections and promoted respectful disposal behaviours for visitors with flyers provided to caravan operators.

Council encouraged the reporting of overflowing bins and Cleanaway promptly responded to callouts over this period whilst Council provided added services and assistance to key hospitality businesses during this time.

Many businesses were supported over the peak period with “in kind support” given to event organisers such as the Man from Snowy River Bush Festival. Additionally commercial operators were also supported under a user pay system which was successfully managed in collaboration with town maintenance contractors, assistance from Cleanaway and via use of Council-owned vehicle fleet.

For peak holiday periods additional work will be undertaken as Council strives to improve education around best waste practices. A future initiative will include new bin coral stands with sign messaging at Walwa Recreation Reserve. Also Council proposes to explore new street signage in our major outer townships which will include a theme such as ‘Carry In Carry Out’ policy that will be promoted in key camper locations and high patronage areas. Council will look to partner with other stakeholders such as DEECA and Parks Victoria with the intention to reduce dumped waste or unnecessary waste build up at Council supplied bin locations.

Both signs and flyer materials will be used as tools to mitigate incorrect and poor disposal habits during these periods.

Container Deposit Scheme (CDS)

Local business and community groups in Tallangatta and Corryong were successfully established as CDS point operators for the State Government’s 10c deposit scheme for eligible glass, plastic, aluminium and cardboard drink containers.

For Corryong YTD results Nov through to June 2025 saw 2,171,364 containers returned, \$218,316.40 paid out in refunds which saw the Shire ranked 18 of 25 for North Zone ahead of Alpine and Indigo Shire. For reference Wodonga City Council area ranked 5th overall with 20,800,313 containers.

Resource Recovery Centres

The operational plan for both centres has been reviewed with the existing retaining wall at Tallangatta RRC to be upgraded with a new concrete block structure to reinforce wall integrity. Slide chute railing at the bay entry is also to be installed with similar railing works at Corryong proposed to ensure both are "fit for purpose" and meet safety requirements for public and worker use.

Balance of government grant monies has been exhausted which has seen introduction of enhanced signage to promote designated drop off areas for waste items.

Corryong Landfill - Council has operated the premise as a landfill from 1992 to 2023. The original landfill area was an unlined trench and fill operation in the northeast portion of the site operated under EPA licence ES504 and capped in 2014 (Mackenzie Environmental, 2021). The western portion of the site continues to be operated by Council and has ongoing use as a waste transfer station operated by Council, and for which we hold an EPA A13c registration R000301955. The more recent landfill area (mapped in appendix 1, [Mackenzie Environmental, 2021]) consists of two lined landfill cells (Cell 1 and Cell 2) & a leachate pond. At that time, these cells were considered Landfills Exempt from Licencing (LEFLs) under the Environment Protection Act 1970 and did not require an EPA permission to operate.

The facility has reached full capacity and has been closed for public access since October 2023. Bulk bins supplied by contractor has proven the best method for disposal and transportation of general waste.

The externally prepared Aftercare and Environmental Management Plan has been ratified by EPA. The tender was granted to third party contractor NECC for proposed capital project works with works commencing in June with estimated completion expected in late August 2025.

Climate Action

Climate Action Plan has been produced by Ironbark Sustainability Group who recommends investment in climate future with changes to Council vehicle fleet and landfill management practices. The removal of putrescible waste which was identified as a major factor which has now been addressed following the introduction of Food and Garden Organics Bins Kerbside collection service which has now reached its first anniversary.

Changes to council passenger fleet vehicles to electric vehicles or hybrids to reduce carbon emissions is still to be explored further with cost impost proving a barrier for change. Further review will be undertaken as grant monies become available and as vehicle lease renewals near end dates and future upgrades occur.

Resource Recovery Centre continues to provide a supply of repurposed crushed concrete material as base for all infrastructure road work as part of Council's maintenance program schedules.

To measure emission levels in 2019 Council adopted a software tool – Trellis which primarily enabled a method to measure emission levels from Council-owned assets. Broadly it allowed organisations to manage data relating to its consumption of utilities, including electricity, gas, water, waste disposal, business travel and other resources such as fuel and refrigerant gas.

For the 24/25 FY carbon emission levels measured 2,945 2Co2-e generated across Council-owned assets which was up 12.8% on prior year. The main resource contributor to emission levels was derived from waste 73% or 2152TCo2-e

Tree and Weed Programs

Further tree planting has been undertaken on Playles Hill with a further 15 trees planted. There are 12 different species contributing to the biodiversity required to mitigate risk from emerging pathogens and pests. These plantings have a focus on a diversity of flowering trees including dogwoods, forest pansy and magnolias.

Other tree plantings include:-

- 15 red oaks planted in Cudgewa, completing the Avenue of Honour replacement plan.
- Approx 15 trees planted on Playles Hill, these plantings have a focus on a diversity of flowering trees including dogwoods, forest pansy and magnolias.
- Removal 2 ash trees and a pinoak from Tallangatta Triangles, these trees were diseased and had reached the end of useful lifespan.
- Planting of 3 established red oaks to replace trees removed from Triangles.
- 6 trees planted at Tallangatta skate park.
- 5 trees planted at various streets within Tallangatta.
- 10 crepe myrtles planted in Granya.
- Rare Davidia (Dove tree) planted at Walwa, in front of nursing home.
- 3 Japanese elm planted in the Arcade, Corryong.
- 5 trees planted in Attree Park, Corryong as part of succession plan to replace mature trees that are approaching the end of useful lifespan.
- 11 established maples with root directors and wicking systems planted in the centre of Hansen St CBD.

- 5 dogwood trees planted in new parking bays Donaldson St Corryong.
- 3 large liquidambar trees causing damage to storm water system identified for removal from Kiel St Corryong

A high incidence of rabbit infestation is prevalent throughout the Shire and in an attempt to manage numbers, the following has been undertaken:

Calicivirus has been released in Playles Hill -Corryong, Granya, Mitta, Bethanga and Talgarno as part of rabbit control program. Fumigation using phostoxin of multiple warrens in and around Granya, Talgarno and Bethanga has also been carried out, whilst rabbit proof netting has been installed around water storage tank at old Granya Primary School site.

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

All environmental sustainability actions have been undertaken in accordance with the service performance principles outlined in the *Local Government Act 2020*, *Environmental Protection Act 2017* and the *Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling Act) 2021*.

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

Not Applicable.

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

Economic

Enhanced recycling methods will diminish the volume of waste sent to landfills, while adopting a four-stream waste system enhances the circular economy framework for waste management in Victoria.

Social

The projects mentioned in this report promote sustainability education for the community.

Environmental/Climate Change

Actions undertaken on recycling of materials and ongoing review of tree management practice and climate adaption will contribute positively towards the mitigation of Council's impact on the environment and adherence to risk management best practice.

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

Community Education on Recycling - Council received grant funding from Sustainability Victoria under the Circular Economy Household Education Fund (CEHEF). The community education package included digital and print material post rollout to reinforce messaging.

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

Not applicable

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

Council officers liaise regularly with representatives of the Goulburn Murray Climate Alliance, waste management officers from councils in the Hume region and government representatives from the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) and Sustainability Victoria (SV) relating to environmental and sustainability activities.

Council is also currently a partner with the Innovation Upper Murray Group who is looking at grant opportunities to support a proposed Biomass facility within the region. The Group are currently exploring use of consultants to commission a scoping study to assess the availability of woody biomass in the region, with the intent of identifying opportunities for utilisation in a proposed pyrolysis plant in the Upper Murray.

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.

	Note	June 2025 YTD (Actual) \$	2024/25 Full Year (Forecast)	2024/25 Full Year (Budget) \$	Forecast to Budget (Variance) \$	Forecast to Budget (Variance) %	
Income							
Kerbside collection	1	1,528,599.84	1,543,449.44	1,360,560.00	182,889.44	12%	
Waste facilities management	2	458,297.12	458,297.12	506,000.00	(47,702.88)	-10%	
Total Income		1,986,896.96	2,001,746.56	1,866,560.00	135,186.56		
Expenditure							
Kerbside collection	3	1,350,191.55	1,454,434.31	1,290,236.00	164,198.31	12%	
Waste facilities management	4	446,013.79	444,204.07	227,057.00	217,147.07	49%	
Total Expenditure		1,796,205.34	1,898,638.38	1,517,293.00	381,345.38	21%	
Net Income / (Expenditure)		190,692	103,108	349,267			

- Revenue for kerbside collection surpassed budget with collection charges up 6% with additional revenue of circa \$52K derived from waste contractor for payment in lieu of Council servicing own streetscape bins (recycling and general waste public bins.) There has been nominal growth from rates with some additional households added to the collection service. Other income recorded included non recurring grant monies -\$16,150 from Sustainability Victoria
- Waste facility management fees met budget whilst Resource Recovery Centres gated revenues fell below budget projections with lower-than-expected tip fees from lower patronage.
- Full year Budget for kerbside collection charges were below budget projections given cost base is fully quantifiable under waste contractor terms. Bin purchases for FOGO and Glass associated with the transition under Kerbside Reform rollout totalled \$167K which will be non-recurring going forward. Other one-off costs were incurred that were attributable to external contractors/consultants appointed as part of final landfill capping.
- Garbage and recycling charges increased more than budgeted as projections were underestimated with too little provision made for tonnage levels of

general waste, green waste generated at RRC for disposal into Albury landfill. Additionally, no allowance was made for contractors- waste management which largely centred on additional concrete crushing works because of Corryong streetscape project works.

Other one-off costs included the provision of mobile toilet upgrades identified following an OHS audit - \$13K as well as a \$25k consultancy fee for a report commissioned around options analysis for roadside vegetation.

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 2025-2029* priorities.

5. Environmental Sustainability - Integrate sustainable environmental management practices into all of our activities.

5.2 Continue to implement recycling service operations as per Victorian Government Circular Economy Strategy to deliver a system for waste and recycling collection including separation of glass, green waste and organics.

5.3 Improve the use of recycled materials in infrastructure projects e.g. crushed concrete, glass and rubber.

5.4 Seek funding to investigate options and feasibility for the establishment of a recycling industry within the Shire.

5.5 Invest in community education programs to improve waste and recycling separation.

5.6 Investigate options for hard waste, green waste and agricultural waste management.

5.7 Implement required measures to ensure management of closed landfills is compliant with EPA requirements.

5.8 Investigate and implement options for the management of roadside vegetation.

5.9 Continue to implement Climate Adaptation objectives to achieve increased coverage in urban streets.

5.10 Develop a Climate Variability Action Plan (including actions to reduce carbon emissions, electric vehicle charging, improve health and wellbeing impacts on our aging population).

5.11 Seek funding to establish a network of electric car charging stations.

5.12 Explore the option of establishing a native vegetation offset site within the Shire.

Council Policies:

Climate Adaptation Policy.

Kerbside Refuse and Recycling Collection Policy

Tree 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:

Not Applicable.

Officer's View:

Environmental Sustainability strategic priorities under the *Council Plan 2021-2025* have been mostly achieved with ongoing progress being made to meet all nominated objectives.

It is the officer's recommendation that the report be noted.

Council Resolution:

**CR PITMAN
CR ANDERSON**

THAT THE REPORT BE NOTED.

CARRIED

19 Economic and Tourism Development

19.1 Bethanga Cricket Nets - Local Sports Infrastructure Program Application (DCP)

Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Ms Kerissa Heritage, Acting Manager Community Wellbeing.

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 Council approval to submit an application to the State Government's Local Sports Infrastructure Fund (LSIF) for the delivery of *Net Gains Bethanga* - a project that will provide a new, compliant cricket training facility at the Bethanga Recreation Reserve.

Summary:

The *Net Gains Bethanga* project proposes the redevelopment of the Bethanga Cricket Club training nets, which have been identified as a priority in the Bethanga Recreation Reserve Master Plan 2022–2031. The existing facilities are widely recognised as unsafe and inadequate within the Cricket Albury Wodonga District competition, with significant issues including deteriorated concrete surfaces, insufficient netting, and water inundation. These deficiencies present ongoing health and safety risks, diminish the quality of the training environment, and act as a barrier to participation for both senior and junior players.

The proposed facility, designed in accordance with Cricket Australia guidelines, will deliver a modern three-lane, 33-metre cricket training facility incorporating consistent surfacing, perimeter fencing, and roof netting to ensure safety, durability, and accessibility for the club and wider community.

Funding for the redevelopment was previously sought through the LSIF program in 2024 but was unsuccessful. The LSIF program is currently open, providing a renewed opportunity to secure external funding to deliver this project. In line with Council's External Grants Policy, applications for funding in excess of \$150,000 require formal Council endorsement. Approval to apply to the LSIF will enable Towong Shire Council, in partnership with Cricket Albury Wodonga, Bethanga Cricket Club, and the Bethanga Recreation Reserve Committee, to progress this fully scoped and costed

project, ensuring the provision of safe, compliant, and high-quality cricket infrastructure.

Recommendation:

That:

1. The Chief Executive Officer be authorised to submit an application to the Regional Local Sport Infrastructure Fund for the amount of \$173,350 for the *Net Gains Bethanga* project; and
2. Council commits up to \$29,450 to the project, subject to the grant application being successful.

Attachment:

Nil

Background/History:

The *Net Gains Bethanga* project forms part of a broader program of investment in the Bethanga Recreation Reserve, which has been identified by Council as a critical community asset serving Bethanga and surrounding townships including Bellbridge, Talgarno, and Granya. The Reserve is the only full-sized sports oval in this catchment and is home to the Bethanga Cricket Club, Bethanga Tennis Club, and a range of community events such as the Easter Gymkhana.

Council has recently committed significant resources to the Reserve, including a \$3 million Sports Pavilion project supported by both Council and the Victorian Government, which will deliver new changerooms, amenities, and multipurpose spaces for sport and community use.

Within this context, *Net Gains Bethanga* addresses the need to redevelop the cricket training nets, which are currently unsafe, non-compliant, and a barrier to participation. The project has been fully scoped and costed through collaboration between Towong Shire Council, Cricket Albury Wodonga, Bethanga Cricket Club, and the Bethanga Recreation Reserve Committee. Further engagement has included consultation with Cricket Victoria to ensure adherence to Cricket Australia guidelines, and cricket infrastructure specialists, Gabba, have provided detailed design and quotation for supply and installation. The proposed facility will deliver a 33 metre, three-lane cricket net complex with modern surfacing, perimeter fencing, and roof netting, significantly improving safety, training quality, and accessibility. Project delivery is expected to involve local contractors, creating employment opportunities and strengthening community ownership.

Together with the new Sports Pavilion, delivery of *Net Gains Bethanga* will represent a coordinated investment in the Reserve that will enhance its role as a regional hub for sport and recreation.

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)):

Council has three options in relation to the *Net Gains Bethanga* project:

- Council endorses the submission of a grant application to the LSIF for the delivery of the *Net Gains Bethanga* project, with an estimated cost of \$217,800. Under this proposal, Council would commit up to \$29,450 as a financial contribution to the funding application and towards project construction, subject to the grant being approved.
- Council chooses not to submit an application to the LSIF and instead to pursue other potential funding programs to support delivery of the project.
- Council elects not to pursue the delivery of the *Net Gains Bethanga* project at this time.

Officers recommend Option 1 as the preferred course of action, as it provides the greatest opportunity to secure external funding and achieve the best long-term outcome for the Bethanga community and future generations.

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

Economic

The redevelopment will reduce ongoing maintenance costs associated with unsafe and deteriorating infrastructure, delivering long-term savings for the Recreation Reserve and Bethanga Cricket Club. Increased visitation for training, matches, and community events will also strengthen the viability of local clubs and businesses, supporting broader community and economic sustainability.

If Council does not proceed, the opportunity to secure substantial external funding will be lost, and future costs are likely to escalate due to inflation and further deterioration of the existing facilities.

Social

The *Net Gains Bethanga* project will deliver substantial social sustainability outcomes by providing safe, modern, and accessible sporting infrastructure that encourages participation across all age groups. By replacing unsafe and inadequate facilities with a purpose-built training environment, the project will reduce injury risks and promote safe physical activity. Enhanced facilities will support regular exercise, skill development, and team participation, all of which contribute positively to physical health, mental wellbeing, and social connection.

Access to quality sporting infrastructure is particularly important in Towong communities, where opportunities for structured recreation can be limited. The new facility will encourage greater involvement from junior players, families, and schools, fostering lifelong participation in sport and strengthening community cohesion.

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

The *Net Gains Bethanga* project has been developed through extensive community engagement and collaboration between Towong Shire Council, Cricket Albury Wodonga, Bethanga Cricket Club, and the Bethanga Recreation Reserve Committee.

Engagement activities have focused on identifying the specific needs of the club and wider community, ensuring the proposed facility design is fit-for-purpose and compliant with Cricket Australia guidelines. Cricket Albury Wodonga has worked closely with Bethanga Cricket Club to determine the scope specifications, while also consulting with Cricket Victoria to confirm support for the project and alignment with broader infrastructure priorities.

Community input was central to the preparation of the Bethanga Recreation Reserve Master Plan 2022–2031, which highlighted the redevelopment of the cricket nets as a key priority. The Master Plan was informed by consultation with local sporting clubs, schools, and community members, reflecting strong demand for improved facilities at the Reserve. This engagement process reinforced the importance of cricket as a recreational activity in Bethanga and surrounding townships.

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

The *Net Gains Bethanga* project will replace outdated, unsafe infrastructure with a modern, facility designed to national standards.

Continuous improvement is achieved through the project's alignment with Cricket Australia guidelines, ensuring best practice in design, safety, and usability. By engaging specialist suppliers, leveraging in-kind project management expertise from Cricket Albury Wodonga, and utilising local contractors, the project also

demonstrates innovation in delivery, combining technical excellence with community-based collaboration.

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

The *Net Gains Bethanga* project is built on strong collaboration between Towong Shire Council, the Bethanga Cricket Club, the Bethanga Recreation Reserve Committee of Management (CoM) and Sport and Recreation Victoria. These partners have worked closely to scope and cost the project, ensuring the facility design reflects the needs of players, families, and the wider community. The Club and CoM have provided critical input into the scope and priorities.

This collaboration will continue through the delivery phase should funding be successful. Council will maintain oversight and governance, while the Club and CoM will remain actively engaged in decision-making, coordination, and communication to ensure the facility meets community expectations. Cricket Albury Wodonga will provide in-kind project management, supported by Cricket Victoria to ensure compliance with Cricket Australia guidelines. Local contractors will be engaged to undertake construction, strengthening community ownership and creating local employment.

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

The *Net Gains Bethanga* project is estimated to cost \$217,800.

Financial contributions are being sought from collaborating organisations, including the Bethanga Cricket Club, and the Bethanga Recreation Reserve Committee of Management; however, the level of contribution from these partners has not yet been confirmed.

A cash financial contribution of \$15,000 has been confirmed from Cricket Albury Wodonga in support of the project, along with \$10,000 in-kind contribution for project management.

The State Government's Local Sports Infrastructure Fund (LSIF) – Community Facilities Stream operates on a 3:1 funding ratio, whereby for every dollar contributed by Council, the State Government will provide three dollars, up to a maximum of \$500,000.

In the unlikely event that no further partner organisations pledge additional funding, Council would be required to commit up to a maximum of \$29,450 to ensure delivery of the project.

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

- Cricket Albury Wodonga Strategic Priorities
- Regional Sport Victoria Strategic Plan (2025)
- Victorian Cricket Infrastructure Strategy 2018–2028
- Australian Government Sport 2030 Plan

Council Plans and Policies:

Council Plans:

This report supports the following *Council Plan 2026-2029* initiative:

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

1.16 Finalise funding and construction of a new cricket training facility at Bethanga Recreation Reserve.

External Grants Policy - In accordance with Council's External Grants Policy, officers are required to seek formal Council approval for any grant applications relating to projects with a total value exceeding \$150,000, and/or where a Council contribution of \$50,000 or more is required that has not been allocated within the adopted annual budget.

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:

If Council proceed with the funding application, risks include:

- The application may be unsuccessful, resulting in time and resources invested without funding return.
- Community expectations will be raised by the submission; failure to secure funding could lead to disappointment or reputational impact.
- Ongoing maintenance and management of the new facility will require clear responsibilities between Council, the Bethanga Recreation Reserve, and Bethanga Cricket Club.

Should Council choose not to proceed with the application, risks include:

- The unsafe and non-compliant cricket nets will remain, limiting participation and posing ongoing safety risks.
- Failure to act would conflict with priorities identified in the Bethanga

Recreation Reserve Master Plan and Towong Shire Recreation Strategy.

- The community, clubs, and stakeholders may perceive Council as not supporting grassroots sport, damaging trust and relationships.
- Delaying the project could increase costs over time due to inflation.

Officer's View:

The Officer strongly supports the submission of a grant application to the Local Sports Infrastructure Fund for the *Net Gains Bethanga* project. The redevelopment of the cricket nets has been identified as a priority in the Bethanga Recreation Reserve Master Plan and through extensive community engagement, with clear evidence that the current facilities are unsafe, non-compliant, and a barrier to participation. The project will deliver modern, fit-for-purpose infrastructure that enhances safety, supports junior and senior player development, and encourages greater community involvement in sport and recreation.

Importantly, the project aligns with Council's strategic objectives of fostering community wellbeing, and continuous improvement, while also complementing recent investment in the Bethanga Sports Pavilion. By leveraging the Local Sports Infrastructure Fund's 3:1 funding ratio, Council has an opportunity to secure significant external investment, maximising value for ratepayers and ensuring long-term sustainability of the Reserve.

Council Officers consider this project to be a high priority, as it will deliver lasting health, wellbeing, and social benefits for Bethanga and surrounding townships, while strengthening Council's reputation as a proactive supporter of local sporting programs.

Mr Stanton advised during his presentation of the report that funding of \$10,000 had been committed (\$5,000 from Bethanga Cricket Club and \$5,000 from Bethanga Recreation Reserve) which meant that the commitment required from ratepayer funds was up to \$19,450 instead of \$29,450.

Council Resolution:

**CR ANDERSON
CR WORTMANN**

THAT:

- 1. THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER BE AUTHORISED TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION TO THE REGIONAL LOCAL SPORT INFRASTRUCTURE FUND FOR THE AMOUNT OF \$173,350 FOR THE *NET GAINS BETHANGA* PROJECT; AND**
- 2. COUNCIL COMMITS UP TO \$19,450 TO THE PROJECT, SUBJECT TO THE GRANT APPLICATION BEING SUCCESSFUL.**

CARRIED

20 Councillor Reports

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

Cr Anderson presented a verbal report to Council pertaining to Albury Wodonga Health and will supply a written report as soon as possible.

Council Resolution:

**CR ANDERSON
CR WHITEHEAD**

THAT THE REPORT BE NOTED.

CARRIED

21 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.

22 Committee Minutes

22.1 Albury Wodonga Regional Local Government Health Alliance (CEO)

Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Mrs Rhonda Ramsdale, Executive Assistant to the CEO.

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 information from Albury Wodonga Regional Local Government Health Alliance. This group is an independent collective of the Council's in the Albury Wodonga Health District and has been formed exclusively to advocate on issues concerning hospital services and healthcare delivery. The Mayor and Cr Anderson attend these meetings on behalf of Council.

Summary:

Discussion topics for 22 September 2025, 16 October 2025 and 30 October 2025 meetings are detailed below:

22 September 2025

1. The brief for the services of a lobbyist has been developed with an estimated costing.
2. Lobbyist proposal will be dependent on funding.
3. Indigo Shire Council and Alpine Shire Council looking at local rallies.
4. Concerns for extra parking at current site
5. Health Infrastructure NSW to brief Albury City Councillors.

16 October 2025

1. Advocacy proposals.
2. Lake Hume By-election result.

30 October 2025

1. Lobbyist brief and scope of works.
2. Indigo Shire Council Rally.
3. Terms of Reference for Alliance.
4. NSW Health Infrastructure.
5. Media presence.

Recommendation:

That the report be noted.

Council Resolution:

CR WHITEHEAD

CR PITMAN

THAT THE REPORT BE NOTED.

CARRIED

22.2 Murray Darling Association Region 1 (CEO)

Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Mrs Rhonda Ramsdale, Executive Assistant to the CEO.

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 information from Murray Darling Association (MDA) Region 1.

Summary:

Murray Darling Association (MDA) Region 1 is an independent collective of local Council's and community members in the Albury Wodonga district who participate in quarterly meetings to access and contribute information to the management of Basin resources.

The Annual General Meeting Minutes from the MDA on 6 December 2024 are attached with the following topics presented.

- Chairs Report
- Chief Executive Officer's Report
- Election of officer bearers
- Future meeting dates
- Presentation by NSW DCCEEW Paul Childs

Recommendation:

That the unconfirmed minutes from the MDA Region 1 Annual General Meeting held 6 December 2024 be noted.

Council Resolution:

**CR WORTMANN
CR WHITEHEAD**

**THAT THE UNCONFIRMED MINUTES FROM THE MDA REGION 1 ANNUAL
GENERAL MEETING HELD 6 DECEMBER 2024 BE NOTED.**

CARRIED

23 Council Policies

23.1 Policies for Review (DCOD)

The following policies are tabled for review in accordance with Council's agreed review cycle. Feedback should be provided to the nominated officer by 10 December 2025 to ensure any input can be considered prior to tabling the policies for adoption:

- Public Interest Disclosure Policy
- Fraud and Corrupt Conduct Policy

Attachment:

1. Policy - Public Interest Disclosure - 23 AU G 2023 [23.1.1 - 4 pages]
2. Policy - Fraud and Corrupt Conduct - 24 JA N 24 [23.1.2 - 8 pages]

Recommendation:

That the policies tabled for review be noted.

Council Resolution:

**CR WHITEHEAD
CR ANDERSON**

THAT THE POLICIES TABLED FOR REVIEW BE NOTED.

CARRIED

24 Sealing of Documents

Nil

25 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

26 Closure of Meeting

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting closed, the time being 11:55 am.

Mayor