

SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL

Council Meeting Minutes

Wednesday 16 April 2025



Council Chambers, Leongatha
Commenced at 2:00 PM



*South Gippsland
Shire Council*



OUR COUNCIL VISION

We care deeply about our people, the land and the future of South Gippsland.

Our Vision is to support the whole Shire in creating economic, environmental and social prosperity for this and future generations.

The Council Agenda relates to the following Strategic Objectives of the Council Plan 2022-2026:

- ◆ Connecting our People and Places ◆
 - ◆ Economy and Industry ◆
- ◆ Healthy and Engaged Communities ◆
 - ◆ Leading with Integrity ◆
- ◆ Protecting and Enhancing our Environment ◆
 - ◆ Sustainable Growth ◆

PRESENT

COUNCILLORS:	<p><i>Coastal Promontory Ward</i> Councillor Sarah Gilligan, Deputy Mayor Councillor Steve Finlay Councillor Scott Rae</p> <p><i>Strzelecki Ward</i> Councillor Bron Beach Councillor Nathan Hersey Councillor John Kennedy</p> <p><i>Tarwin Valley Ward</i> Councillor Brad Snell Councillor Clare Williams Councillor John Schelling, Mayor</p>
NOT PRESENT:	
OFFICERS:	<p>Allison Jones, Interim Chief Executive Officer Tony Peterson, Director Sustainable Infrastructure Lucas Gardiner, Director Future Communities Michelle Jorgensen, Acting Director Performance and Innovation Christian Stefani, Acting Director Strategy and Partnerships Rhys Matulis, Manager Governance & Integrity Thomas Hender, Desktop Support Officer Jodi Cumming, Acting Governance Coordinator Ally Low, Governance Officer</p>

SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL

Council Meeting Wednesday 16 April 2025
Council Chambers, Leongatha, commenced at 2:00pm

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. PRELIMINARY MATTERS	6
1.1. LIVE-STREAMING COUNCIL MEETING DISCLAIMER	6
1.2. WELCOME TO THE COUNCIL MEETING	6
1.3. OPENING PRAYER	6
1.4. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS	6
1.5. APOLOGIES	7
1.6. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES	7
1.7. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST FOR COUNCILLORS	8
1.8. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST FOR STAFF	9
2. COUNCIL REPORTS	10
2.1. DRAFT INTEGRATED PLANNING DOCUMENTS FOR COMMUNITY CONSULTATION	10
2.2. RENAMING OF A SECTION OF SPEIGHT STREET LOCH - COMMUNITY CONSULTATION	11
2.3. INSTRUMENT OF APPOINTMENT - S11A PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT ACT 1987	13
2.4. AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE - 3 DECEMBER 2024 MINUTES	16
2.5. SUMMARY OF STRATEGIC BRIEFINGS - 19 FEBRUARY 2025 -12 MARCH 2025	17
2.6. DOCUMENTS SEALED, CONTRACTS VARIED, AWARDED OR EXTENDED BY CEO - 13 FEBRUARY 2025 -12 MARCH 2025	18
3. NOTICES OF MOTION AND/OR RESCISSION	19
3.1. NIL	19
4. COUNCILLOR REPORTS	19
4.1. REQUESTS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE	19
4.2. COUNCILLOR UPDATES	19

5. URGENT BUSINESS	22
6. PUBLIC QUESTIONS	23
6.1. PETITIONS AND JOINT LETTERS	23
6.2. ANSWERS TO PREVIOUS QUESTIONS ON NOTICE	24
6.3. SUBMITTED PUBLIC QUESTIONS	25
7. CLOSED SESSION	28
8. MEETING CLOSED	29

Privacy Statement

Council is required to keep minutes of each Council meeting. The minutes contain details of proceedings which may include personal information about community members disclosed as part of presentations, submissions and questions. The minutes of Council meetings are a public record and can be inspected by members of the public.

1. PRELIMINARY MATTERS

1.1. LIVE-STREAMING COUNCIL MEETING DISCLAIMER

This Council Meeting is being streamed live, recorded and published in accordance with Council's *Live Streaming in Council Meetings Policy*.

Access to the live stream through Council's Internet is an option to view the 'open' component of a Council Meeting. Link to the Live Stream on Council's website: [Live Streaming | Live Streaming | South Gippsland Shire Council](#)

The Chair and/or the CEO have the discretion and authority at any time to direct the termination or interruption of live streaming. Such direction will only be given in exceptional circumstances where deemed relevant. Circumstances may include instances where the content of debate is considered misleading, defamatory or potentially inappropriate to be published.

Today's Meeting is being streamed live as well as recorded and published on Council's website.

1.2. WELCOME TO THE COUNCIL MEETING

Public Questions

In accordance with *Governance Rules (C82)*, clause 56.4(d) the placement of public questions has now closed. Questions must be received prior to the commencement of the Council Meeting and placed in the receptacle at Governance Officers table. Questions received after the commencement of the Meeting will be considered at the next Council Meeting.

1.3. OPENING PRAYER

As we gather here from diverse backgrounds and beliefs, may we hold privilege with good care and trust. As we deliberate and discuss, may we be wise in our discernment, fair in our decisions and visionary in our planning. May we be guided by our common goal of a strong and united South Gippsland.

The opening prayer was read by Councillor Williams

1.4. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS

We acknowledge the Bunurong and Gunaikurnai people as the Traditional Custodians of South Gippsland and pay respect to their Elders, past, present, and future, for they hold the memories, traditions, culture, and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of Australia.

The acknowledgment of traditional custodians was read by Councillor Gilligan

1.5. APOLOGIES

Nil

1.6. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RECOMMENDATION

That the Minutes of the South Gippsland Shire Council Meeting held on 19 March 2025 in the Council Chambers, Leongatha be confirmed.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Gilligan

SECONDED: Councillor Kennedy

That the Minutes of the South Gippsland Shire Council Meeting held on 19 March 2025 in the Council Chambers, Leongatha be confirmed.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

1.7. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST FOR COUNCILLORS

The *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act), Division 2 sets out the requirements relating to Conflict of Interest. Disclosure of a conflict of interest in respect of a matter to be considered at a Council Meeting is required under section 130(1)(a) and specifically applies to a relevant person being a Councillor, member of a delegated committee who is not a Councillor and a member of Council staff.

Council's *Governance Rules (C82)* (the Rules), clause 3.0 Disclosure of a Conflict of Interest at a Council Meeting sets out the prescribed manner required to disclose a conflict of interest at South Gippsland Shire Council.

The Rules require a Councillor and/ or staff member who has a conflict of interest in a matter being considered at a Council Meeting to announce before the matter is considered and disclose this in a written notice to the Chief Executive Officer. The details included in the disclosure, explain the nature conflict of interest, whether it is classified as general or material (s.127 and s.128), the name of the relevant person(s) and their relationship to them.

Failure to comply with disclosures of conflict of interest (s.130) may be subject to penalty points and/ or other disciplinary measures depending on the nature of the conflict.

The *Local Government Act 2020* can be accessed from the Victorian Legislation and Parliamentary documents website at www.legislation.vic.gov.au.

Council's *Governance Rules (C82)* can be accessed from [Council's Policies](#) webpage.

Councillor Nathan Hersey has declared a material conflict of interest in Agenda Item 2.2. Renaming of a Section of Speight Street Loch - Community Consultation, as Councillor Hersey owns property in the Loch township.

1.8. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST FOR STAFF

The *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act), Division 2 sets out the requirements relating to Conflict of Interest. Disclosure of a conflict of interest in respect of a matter to be considered at a Council Meeting is required under section 130(1)(a) and specifically applies to a relevant person being a Councillor, member of a delegated committee who is not a Councillor and a member of Council staff.

Council's *Governance Rules (C82) (the Rules)*, Chapter 5, clause 7, 8 and 9 sets the prescribed manner required for staff to disclose a conflict of interest when:

- Preparing Reports for Meetings
- Exercise of Delegated Power
- Exercise of a Statutory Function

Council staff must immediately upon becoming aware of a conflict of interest provide a written notice to the Chief Executive Officer disclosing the conflict of interest, explain the nature of the conflict and how it will be managed. Upon becoming aware and declaring a conflict of interest, a staff member may not exercise a power or perform a function in the matter. All prepared reports will record that staff member(s) have considered a conflict of interest and include if any, the details of a disclosure.

Failure to comply with disclosures of conflict of interest (s.130) may be subject to penalty points and/ or other disciplinary measures depending on the nature of the conflict.

The *Local Government Act 2020* can be accessed from the Victorian Legislation and Parliamentary documents website at www.legislation.vic.gov.au.

Council's *Governance Rules (C82)* can be accessed from [Council's Policies](#) webpage.

Nil

2. COUNCIL REPORTS

2.1. DRAFT INTEGRATED PLANNING DOCUMENTS FOR COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Directorate:	Strategy & Partnerships
Department:	Governance and Integrity

Council Plan

Objective - Leading with Integrity

The development of these Draft Integrated Plans sets the strategic direction of the Council over the next four-year term and aligns with the South Gippsland Community Vision 2040 revision.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present the review of the Community Vision 2040 and present the suite of Draft Integrated Planning (*Draft Plans*) documents for consideration and endorsement for community consultation from 17 April to 7 May 2025.

The documents for consideration include:

- Community Vision 2040 review (**Attachment [2.1.1]**);
- Draft Council Plan 2025 – 2029 (**Attachment [2.1.2]**);
- Draft Financial Plan 2025/26 – 2034/35 (**Attachment [2.1.3]**);
- Draft Revenue and Rating Plan 2025 – 2029 (**Attachment [2.1.4]**);
- Draft Budget 2025/26 – 2028/29, including the Draft 2025/26 Council Plan Annual Initiatives (**Attachment [2.1.5]**);
- Draft Asset Plan 2025 – 2035 (**Attachment [2.1.6]**); and
- Draft Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025 – 2029 (**Attachment [2.1.7]**).

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Adopts the Community Vision 2040 Review (Attachment [2.1.1]) in accordance with s.88 of the Local Government Act 2020 and publishes the reviewed Community Vision 2040 on Council's website;
2. Endorses the Draft Council Plan 2025 - 2029 (Attachment [2.1.2]) for community consultation;
3. Endorses the Draft Financial Plan 2025/26 - 2034/35 (Attachment [2.1.3]), Draft Revenue and Rating Plan 2025 - 2029 (Attachment [2.1.4]) and the

Draft Budget 2025/26 - 2028/29 (Attachment [2.1.5]); including the Draft 2025/26 Council Plan Annual Initiatives for community consultation;

4. Endorses the Draft Asset Plan 2025 - 2035 (Attachment [2.1.6]) for community consultation;
5. Endorses the Draft Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025 - 2029 (Attachment [2.1.7]) for community consultation; and
6. Approves commencement of the final stage of community engagement from 17 April to 7 May 2025 for these suite of Integrated Planning documents endorsed at the 16 April 2025 Council Meeting, in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Strategy 2020 - 2024.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Schelling

SECONDED: Councillor Gilligan

That Council:

1. **Adopts the Community Vision 2040 Review (Attachment [2.1.1]) in accordance with s.88 of the Local Government Act 2020 and publishes the reviewed Community Vision 2040 on Council's website;**
2. **Endorses the Draft Council Plan 2025 - 2029 (Attachment [2.1.2]) for community consultation;**
3. **Endorses the Draft Financial Plan 2025/26 - 2034/35 (Attachment [2.1.3]), Draft Revenue and Rating Plan 2025 - 2029 (Attachment [2.1.4]) and the Draft Budget 2025/26 - 2028/29 (Attachment [2.1.5]); including the Draft 2025/26 Council Plan Annual Initiatives for community consultation;**
4. **Endorses the Draft Asset Plan 2025 - 2035 (Attachment [2.1.6]) for community consultation;**
5. **Endorses the Draft Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025 - 2029 (Attachment [2.1.7]) for community consultation; and**
6. **Approves commencement of the final stage of community engagement from 17 April to 7 May 2025 for these suite of Integrated Planning documents endorsed at the 16 April 2025 Council Meeting, in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Strategy 2020 - 2024.**

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Councillor Hersey has declared a conflict of interest for agenda item 2.2 and left the room at 2:25pm

2.2. RENAMING OF A SECTION OF SPEIGHT STREET LOCH - COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Directorate:	Strategy & Partnerships
Department:	Governance and Integrity

Council Plan

Objective - Leading with Integrity

Ensuring that Council meets its statutory obligations to consult with the community before making decisions as naming authority, is consistent with the objective of Leading with Integrity.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider the renaming of a section of Speight Street in Loch to be renamed Albert Road and undertake community consultation from the 17 April 2025 to the 2 May 2025.

The current naming of Speight Street is not consistent with the current Naming Rules issued by Geographic Names Victoria, and it is in the public interest to consider a renaming proposal.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Undertake community consultation for a period of four weeks from 17 April 2025 to the 18 May 2025, inviting the community to provide feedback on the proposed renaming of a section of Speight Street, Loch to Albert Road; and
2. Notes a report will be presented at the 25 June 2025 Council Meeting, outlining the outcome of the community consultation and any relevant next steps.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Rae

SECONDED: Councillor Gilligan

That Council:

- 1. Undertake community consultation for a period of four weeks from 17 April 2025 to the 18 May 2025, inviting the community to provide feedback on the proposed renaming of a section of Speight Street, Loch to Albert Road; and**
- 2. Notes a report will be presented at the 25 June 2025 Council Meeting, outlining the outcome of the community consultation and any relevant next steps.**

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Councillor Hersey returned to the meeting at 2:27pm

2.3. INSTRUMENT OF APPOINTMENT - S11A PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT ACT 1987

Directorate:	Strategy & Partnerships
Department:	Governance and Integrity

Council Plan

Objective - Leading with Integrity

Council's governance is strengthened by maintaining currency in the delegations to Officers with the functions they are required to perform on behalf of Council.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report recommends that Council adopts S11A Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation (Planning and Environment Act 1987) for staff member, Rodney Banks, under the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolves, in the exercise of the powers conferred by s.147(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, s.224 of the *Local Government Act 1989* and s.313 of the *Local Government Act 2020*:

1. The members of Council staff referred to in the Instrument of Appointment and Authorisations (Attachment 2.4.1) be appointed and authorised as set out in the instrument and detailed in this report; and
2. The Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation come into force immediately when signed by Council's Chief Executive Officer. It will remain in force until such time as Council determines to vary it, or it is revoked by Council's Chief Executive Officer in the event:
 - a. the officer resigns from Council; or
 - b. is appointed to a position where this appointment and authorisation is not required or suitable.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Rae

SECONDED: Councillor Finlay

That Council resolves, in the exercise of the powers conferred by s.147(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, s.224 of the *Local Government Act 1989* and s.313 of the *Local Government Act 2020*:

- 1. The members of Council staff referred to in the Instrument of Appointment and Authorisations (Attachment 2.4.1) be appointed and authorised as set out in the instrument and detailed in this report; and**
- 2. The Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation come into force immediately when signed by Council's Chief Executive Officer. It will remain in force until such time as Council determines to vary it, or it is revoked by Council's Chief Executive Officer in the event:**
 - a. the officer resigns from Council; or**
 - b. is appointed to a position where this appointment and authorisation is not required or suitable.**

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

2.4. AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE - 3 DECEMBER 2024 MINUTES

Directorate:	Performance and Innovation
Department:	Financial Strategy

Council Plan*Objective - Leading with Integrity*

Council's risk management and governance is strengthened by effectively monitoring and reporting on the activities and advice provided by the Audit and Risk Committee.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 3 December 2024 (**Attachment [2.5.1]**) are provided to Council for noting.

Audit and Risk Committee members at the meeting included:

- Ms Jen Johanson (Audit and Risk Committee Chair)
- Mr Mick Jaensch
- Ms Marilyn Kearney
- Cr Sarah Gilligan (Council member)
- Cr Steve Finlay (Council member)
- Cr John Schelling (Mayor) (Ex-officio Council Member)

RECOMMENDATION

That Council Notes the Audit and Risk Committee Minutes - 3 December 2024 (Attachment [2.5.1]).

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Gilligan

SECONDED: Councillor Kennedy

That Council Notes the Audit and Risk Committee Minutes - 3 December 2024 (Attachment [2.5.1]).

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

2.5. SUMMARY OF STRATEGIC BRIEFINGS - 19 FEBRUARY 2025 -12 MARCH 2025

Directorate:	Strategy & Partnerships
Department:	Governance and Integrity

Council Plan

Objective - Leading with Integrity

Council's transparency and governance is strengthened by regularly reporting on summaries of briefings held, that assist Council to make informed decisions in Council Meetings on behalf of the community.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the information presented to Councillors between 19 February 2025 and 12 March 2025.

This aligns with the principles of the *Local Government Act 2020* and supports transparency around Council decisions and actions.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes this report the Summary of Strategic Briefings - 19 February 2025 -12 March 2025.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Williams

SECONDED: Councillor Rae

That Council receives and notes this report the Summary of Strategic Briefings - 19 February 2025 -12 March 2025.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

2.6. DOCUMENTS SEALED, CONTRACTS VARIED, AWARDED OR EXTENDED BY CEO - 13 FEBRUARY 2025 -12 MARCH 2025

Directorate:	Performance and Innovation
Department:	Financial Strategy

Council Plan

Objective - Leading with Integrity

Council's transparency of financial decisions made and overall financial sustainability is strengthened by regularly reporting on documents sealed, contracts awarded, varied or extended under the CEO's delegation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report documents the following actions undertaken by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) which occurred during the period 13 February 2025 to 12 March 2025. Council's *Procurement Policy (C32)* requires the CEO to report to Council any of the following actions undertaken to the next appropriate Meeting:

- Documents sealed;
- Contracts awarded after a public tender process within the CEO's delegation; and
- Contracts varied or extended by the CEO which exceeded the CEO's delegation.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes this report Documents Sealed, Contracts Varied, Awarded or Extended by CEO - 13 February 2025 -12 March 2025.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Hersey

SECONDED: Councillor Beach

That Council receives and notes this report Documents Sealed, Contracts Varied, Awarded or Extended by CEO - 13 February 2025 -12 March 2025.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

3. NOTICES OF MOTION AND/OR RESCISSION

Nil

4. COUNCILLOR REPORTS

4.1. REQUESTS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Nil

4.2. COUNCILLOR UPDATES

Councillor Steve Finlay addressed Council by reporting on attendance or made comments on:

- Commented on Public Question Time

Councillor Brad Snell addressed Council by reporting on attendance or made comments on:

- Attended media training provided by Council
- Commented on the importance of the Integrated Planning Documents
- Thanked community members attending Council Chambers

Councillor Bron Beach addressed Council by reporting on attendance or made comments on:

- Spoke to the Country Women's Association of Victoria Inc. Bass Group for their presentation in Loch.
- Commented on the importance of local community groups to strengthen and support friendships
- Attended an open exhibition at Coal Creek Gallery. Spoke about The Spinners and Toora Arts Network. Encouraged community to visit Coal Creek throughout the school holidays.
- Commented on the importance of elevating the arts space across the Shire
- Wished everyone a safe, happy and restful Easter break

Councillor Scott Rae addressed Council by reporting on attendance or made comments on:

- Spoke on the Easter break being a time of reflection and coming together. Wished everyone well.

Councillor Nathan Hersey addressed Council by reporting on attendance or made comments on:

- Noted upcoming Easter Break and ANZAC Day
- Spoke to South Gippsland Shire Brass Band AGM. Acknowledged and encouraged the younger community members that are part of the Committee. Congratulated the new president of the Committee.
- Spoke to a positive One Gippsland meeting. Topics covered: Housing and Development Victoria; Developer Opportunities; Plan Victoria; Financial Support for planning and infrastructure; Invited Minister to Nyora; Natural Disasters; Land for Local Government uses; Offshore Wind and Energy Transition and Tourism Projects. Also noted the hospital in Warragul and the opportunities for education in the Shire.
- Mentioned Councillor Rae will be attending the next One Gippsland on his behalf, to discuss the Gippsland Agenda

Councillor John Kennedy addressed Council by reporting on attendance or made comments on:

- Thanked community members attending Council Chambers
- Talked to Public Question Time
- Mentioned his upcoming attendance at ANZAC Day Celebrations around the Shire

Councillor Clare Williams addressed Council by reporting on attendance or made comments on:

- Encouraged Community members to contact Councillors with any questions, directing community to the Council website for Councillor contact details
- Encouraged community members to the 'Visit South Gippsland' website
- Commented on the Easter break, encouraging everyone to check in on their neighbours. Also encouraged everyone to shop local and attend local events, such as Easter in the Park at McIndoe Park, Leongatha this weekend

Councillor Sarah Gilligan, Deputy Mayor, addressed Council by reporting on attendance or made comments on:

- Spoke to the setup of the Coastal Round Table
- Reported on meeting with Local Government Minister as position of Executive Officer of ALGWA, who encouraged taking part in the creation of uniformed model Council Governance Rules
- Provided a verbal submission regarding Council remuneration
- Spoke to new Council Plans and the focus on connection to community
- Commented on the success of the Art Cubes and the Film night set-up
- Spoke to Gippsland Skies regarding the marine transmission investigation route being withdrawn following community feedback

Councillor John Schelling, Mayor, addressed Council by reporting on attendance or made comments on:

- Acknowledged the importance of his role as Mayor, with invitations to attend multiple events such as: Gippsland Hills CWA 70th Birthday Celebrations; Dementia trials; MAV Conference at Cape Shank and to visit Canberra for seats meetings
- Acknowledged and thanked the local community for being enriched with people who give their time to allow the children of the Shire to enjoy events such as LDNA Debutante Ball, Cricket Grand Finals & the Jobs Expo
- Commented on upcoming Federal Election and the candidates from Monash
- Thanked Cr Hersey and Interim CEO Jones for advocating for South Gippsland

5. URGENT BUSINESS

Normally no motion should be debated by Councillors unless the matter is already included as an item on the Agenda. However, in some circumstances it is possible to raise urgent motions.

Council's *Governance Rules 2020* (clause 22 - Urgent Business) adopted on 19 October 2022, allows for where a situation has not been provided for under the *Governance Rules*, the Council may determine the matter by resolution. Established practice has provided for urgent motions to be raised at Council provided the matter cannot be dealt with at the next Council Meeting or by Officers under delegation.

It is necessary for the Councillor wishing to raise a matter of urgent business to raise a motion similar to the following:

'That consideration of (the issue) be dealt with as a matter of urgent business and Councillor....be allowed a 'short period' to indicate the reason(s) why the matter should be considered as a matter of urgent business.' If the Chairperson accepts the motion as meeting the urgent business criteria, normal meeting procedures in Council's *Governance Rules 2020*, clause 22 will apply.

If the motion to accept the item as a matter of urgent business is passed by Council, the motion relating to the specific issue can then be put and debated in the normal way.

Nil

6. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

6.1. PETITIONS AND JOINT LETTERS

Petitions and Joint Letters are written requests that have been signed by a number of community members. According to the *Governance Rules (C82)*, *clause 57*, members of the community may submit a valid petition or joint letter to a Councillor or to Council addressed to the Chief Executive Officer.

At the Meeting a petition or joint letter is presented, Council will consider a motion to receive it, the matter itself will not be considered unless determined as urgent business.

The Councillor presenting the petition or joint letter is responsible for ensuring that they are familiar with the contents and purpose of the petition or joint letter and that it does not contain language disrespectful to Council.

The requirements of the lead petitioner are detailed in the *Governance Rules (C82)*, *clause 57*.

Source: [Governance Rules \(C82\)](#) – adopted 19 October 2022.

Nil

6.2. ANSWERS TO PREVIOUS QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Answers to previous questions taken on notice at a former Council Meeting, are included in the Minutes of this Meeting.

Background material submitted with a question will not be recorded in the Council Meeting Minutes.

Source: [Governance Rules \(C82\)](#) – adopted 19 October 2022.

Council received two public questions at the last Council Meeting which were taken on notice. Both questions were unable to be answered as they did not comply with the Governance Rules relating to public questions.

6.3. SUBMITTED PUBLIC QUESTIONS

All community member questions for Council Meetings are to be written and submitted to the Governance Team by 9.00am on the Monday morning preceding the Council Meeting to allow time for a response to be prepared, where possible, for the Council Meeting. All reasonable attempts will be made to answer pre-submitted questions at the Meeting. When further time is required to prepare an answer, questions may be taken on notice and responses will be provided at the next Council Meeting.

On the day of the Meeting, questions on the prescribed form must be received prior to the commencement of the Council Meeting by 2.00pm and placed in the receptacle at the Governance Officers table. These questions will be taken on notice, included in the Minutes and responses provided at the next Council Meeting.

Public Question Time in Council Meetings is to be used for matters that are relevant to the business or functions of Council and are clear and legible. Questions may not be allowed where the question(s) is deemed to be:

- Related to a matter beyond or outside the powers of Council;
- Trivial or frivolous;
- Defamatory, indecent, abusive or objectionable;
- Derogatory or designed to embarrass a Councillor, a member of Council staff or a member of the community;
- Related to subject matter previously received and responded to;
- Related to a matter already considered and resolved upon by Council;
- Breach Council's confidentiality obligations; and/or
- Illegible, vague or not make sense.

A person may submit a maximum of three (3) questions for any one Council Meeting, this includes a combined total of three (3) questions for related parties or groups. The total word count of all questions submitted is to be 100 words or fewer.

Background material submitted with a question will not be read out or recorded in the Council Meeting Minutes.

The CEO retains the discretion, in consultation with the Mayor, to not refer questions to Council meetings if there is a more effective or appropriate way to respond to the matters raised. Answers to questions from a member of the community who is present in the gallery will be read out at the Council Meeting by the CEO or Mayor.

Source: [Governance Rules \(C82\)](#) – adopted 19 October 2022.

Council received six public questions. The responses to all six questions are provided in these minutes.

Mr John McCombe asked three questions relating to the review process for confidential documents.

Question 1:

When is document 'SGSC Procurement Review - In2 Project Management PTY LTD - 20 Dec 2017 - Version 2.1 - Final' due for its regulated review re its 'Confidential' classification?

Response:

There is no requirement under the Local Government Act 2020 to review the confidential status of documents once applied.

Question 2:

Whose responsibility is the review, and has that Officer(s) done a previous review of the same document?

Response:

There is no requirement under the Local Government Act 2020 to review the confidential status of documents once applied.

Question 3:

How is the reviewer informed of the how and why the document was originally classified as 'Confidential' only after it was sighted by the then CEO as the document itself is not deemed to be confidential by the originator.

Response:

There is no requirement under the Local Government Act 2020 to review the confidential status of documents once applied.

Luke Hannigan asked three public questions relating to Vandalism and Maintenance.

Question 1:

How much has council spent in the past financial year on repairing and cleaning up after incidents of vandalism across the municipality?

Response

The costs for vandalism repairs are not specifically tracked, so are estimates only. Vandalism is estimated to cost Council approximately \$30,000 to \$40,000 this financial year, after settlement of insurance claims.

Question 2:

Of this amount, how much has been spent specifically on vandalism-related repairs and cleaning in Korumburra?

Response

It is estimated that approximately 60 per cent of recent costs to Council for vandalism repairs are in Korumburra.

Question 3:

What strategies does the council currently have in place to prevent vandalism, and have any new initiatives been considered to reduce these costs?

Response:

Council constructs new facilities in accordance with Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles, which are aimed to reduce the risk of anti-social behaviours such as vandalism. Additionally, Council supports public art including murals, which are proven to reduce vandalism.

Council coordinates the South Gippsland Local Safety Council who meet regularly to discuss community safety items including crime prevention. The Safety Council includes key stakeholders in the Shire including Victoria Police.

Council consistently report vandalism to Victoria Police and provides collected evidence where available to help identify offenders.

7. CLOSED SESSION

The *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act), section 66 provides that 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.

The Act defines ***confidential information*** in s.3(1)(a)-(l), and includes information that may prejudice or impact; commercial negotiations, the security of Council, land use planning, law enforcement, legal privilege, personal information, private commercial information, confidential meeting information, internal arbitration, Councillor conduct panel information and information specified under s.77 of the previous *Local Government Act 1989*.

Once confidential information has been considered and decided in a closed session of a Council Meeting, a further resolution to resume open Council is required.

Nil

8. MEETING CLOSED

NEXT MEETING

The next Council Meeting open to the public will be held on Wednesday, 21 May 2025 commencing at 2.00pm in the Council Chambers, Leongatha.

The Council meeting closed at 3:05pm.

Confirmed this 21st day of May 2025

.....
Councillor John Schelling, Mayor