

SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL

Council Meeting Agenda

Wednesday 21 May 2025



Council Chambers, Leongatha
Commencing 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 ◆

SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL

Notice is hereby given that Council Meeting of the
South Gippsland Shire Council will be held on Wednesday 21 May 2025
in the Council Chambers, Leongatha, commencing at 2:00pm

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Tony Peterson
Interim Chief Executive Officer

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.

Thank you

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.

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.

1.5. APOLOGIES

1.6. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RECOMMENDATION

That Council confirm the Minutes of the South Gippsland Shire Council Meetings, held on:

- **16 April 2025 in the Council Chambers, Leongatha; and**
- **30 April 2025 in the Council Chambers, Leongatha be confirmed.**

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.

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.

2. COUNCIL REPORTS

2.1. ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE REPORT - JULY 2024 TO MARCH 2025

Directorate:	Strategy & Partnerships
Department:	Governance and Integrity

Council Plan

Objective - Leading with Integrity

Council's governance is strengthened by regular organisational and financial performance reporting against the 2024/25 Budget and the Council Plan 2022-2026 Annual Initiatives.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to update Council on the organisation's progress in the delivery of the Council Plan 2022-2026, as well as the responsible management of the Budget.

The Organisational Performance Report for the period of 1 July 2024 to 31 March 2025 (**Attachment [2.1.1]**) includes the financial and organisational performance updates against the adopted Council Budget and highlights progress of the 2024/25 Annual Initiatives from the Council Plan 2022-2026 (Council Plan). Of the 21 Annual Initiatives, two are completed, and the remaining are on-track to be completed by 30 June 2025.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Receives and notes the Organisational Performance Report for the period July 2024 to March 2025 (Attachment [2.1.1]);**
- 2. Approves the changes to the Council Budget 2024/25 Full-Year Approved Forecast;**
- 3. Endorses the capital forecast changes to enable delivery of the committed Capital Works Program in 2024/25; and**
- 4. Provides the Organisational Performance Report for the period July 2024 to March 2025 to Council's Audit and Risk Committee for information.**

REPORT

The role of Council is to provide leadership for the good governance of the Shire. This is achieved, in part, by establishing strategic directions articulated in a four-year Council Plan and supported by an adopted Budget that contains the first (annual) financial year and subsequent three financial years.

These requirements are legislated under Section 90 and Section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (Act).

Council endorsed the 2024/25 Annual Initiatives (Annual Initiatives) as part of the Council Plan 2022-2026 at the 26 June 2024 Council Meeting.

The Council Plan outlines the strategic objectives, priorities, major initiatives and measure of success indicators for the term of Council.

The Organisational Performance Report ensures the organisation remains in budget and mitigates the risk of annual initiatives not being monitored throughout the financial year.

Key Highlights of the Organisational Performance Report

- 100 per cent of Council Plan actions are on-track to be completed by 30 June 2025.
- The third-quarter budget review has proposed a favourable adjustment of \$146,000 to the management cash result, reflecting financial prudence through identified savings and increased income recognition.
- The capital expenditure to March 2025 has reached an impressive \$23 million, which is ahead of the forecast amount of \$18.7 million.
- The organisation is on track, meeting both time and budget targets.

2024/25 Annual Initiatives

Annual Initiatives are developed annually and include significant activities that progress the achievement of the objectives and priorities outlined in the Council Plan. These Annual Initiatives are adopted each year in the Budget.

For connectivity, they are also captured each year as an update to the Council Plan. Progress against these Annual Initiatives and service performance indicators are monitored and reported to Council within each Quarterly Performance Report.

Council adopted 21 annual initiatives for 2024/25 which are currently on-track to be completed by 30 June 2025.

The Organisational Performance Report – July 2024 to March 2025 (**Attachment [2.1.1]**) has been prepared and is presented to Council for consideration.

Year to Date Financial Analysis

The third-quarter financial review identified permanent differences between year-to-date results and forecast income/expenditure against the 2024/25 Adopted Budget and has proposed a favourable adjustment of \$146,000 to the management cash result.

The movement between Adopted Budget and Approved Forecast is attributed to forecast changes previously endorsed by Council on 11 September 2024 and 19 March 2025.

The detailed mid-year budget review is presented to Council with the July to December 2024 Organisational Performance Report.

CONSULTATION / COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Organisational Performance Report will be provided to Council's Audit and Risk Committee for information.

RESOURCES / FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The 2024/25 Annual Initiatives are funded through the 2024/25 Annual Budget.

RISKS

The Organisational Performance Reports ensure the organisation remains on budget and mitigates the risk of annual initiatives not being monitored throughout the financial year.

These activities are priority actions required by Council. Inadequate monitoring of their progress may result in activities not within budget, not being achieved, or without understanding the reasons for any delay or budget constraints.

STAFF DISCLOSURE

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have considered and determined that they do not have a conflict of interest in the matter.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachments are available on Council's website at the following [LINK](#).

1. Organisational Performance Report - 1 July 2024 to 31 March 2025 [2.1.1 - 31 pages]

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Council's Good Governance Framework

Pillar 8. Monitoring & Performance Review

Council Policy / Strategy / Plans

Documents are available on Council's website at the following [LINK](#).

Annual Budget

Council Plan 2022-2026

Legislative Provisions

Local Government Act 2020

Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020

Regional, State and National Plan and Policies

Nil

SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL

Organisational Performance Report

July 2024 to March 2025



South Gippsland
Shire Council

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Acknowledgment of Country

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.



Eucalyptus, (genus Eucalyptus)

About this Report

This Report is prepared as a key component of South Gippsland Shire Council's commitment to transparent reporting and accountability to our community and to meet statutory reporting requirements under the *Local Government Act 2020* and associated regulations.

South Gippsland Shire Council developed the following equally important six Strategic Objectives of the Council Plan to guide Council over the years 2022 to 2026:

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

South Gippsland Shire Council measures its performance delivering the Plan through:

- Results achieved against the Strategic Objectives in the Council Plan; and
- Progress against the Annual Major Initiatives identified in the Annual Budget.



Council Plan Theme:

Connecting our People and Places

Objective

Improving the safety and condition of our sealed and gravel road networks and connectivity for residents and basic services is a major community and Council priority.

We commit to continuous safety improvement in our road management, planning and processes, and a commitment to advocacy for public and community transport options and Shire wide digital connectivity.

Priorities

- Continuously improve our road maintenance processes and community feedback mechanisms.
- Prioritise safety black-spots with advocacy for appropriate speed limits, signage and traffic calming measures.
- Advocate for improved regional connections and improved maintenance of the infrastructure.
- Enhance the network of trails and footpaths to improve pedestrian accessibility and flow to create all-ability connections between towns, tourism sites, health services and within local neighbourhoods.
- Plan and advocate for public and community transport solutions to connect residents to our larger service towns and health services.
- Advocate for whole of Shire digital telecommunications coverage and emergency backup planning.

Achievements to Date:




- 2024/25 Building Maintenance Program is on-track and additional budget has been allocated.
- Annual building inspections have been completed ahead of schedule.
- Council's next priority gravel-to-seal project has been scoped and design is underway for the Walkerville South Road.
- The Roadside Drainage Maintenance Spraying program is well progressed which aims to improve roadside drainage and pavement conditions on our roads.



Pictured: Jupiter Boulevard, Venus Bay redevelopment

Major Initiatives

The following comments review the performance of Council against the 2024/25 Annual Initiatives of the 2022-2026 Council Plan identified in the 2024/25 Budget.

Initiative	Comment	Percentage Complete
Increase allocation for Building Maintenance	<p>A new building maintenance contract commenced on 1 July 2024. Annual building inspections are ahead of schedule, with most completed in the first quarter of this financial year.</p> <p>The additional budget allocation will ensure improved building maintenance within the Shire.</p>	 75%
Continue developing designs for sealing priority gravel roads	<p>Scoping and design is underway for Council's next priority gravel-to-seal project, which is Walkerville South Road. A site level and feature survey, and geotechnical investigation has been completed.</p>	 75%
Roadside Drainage Maintenance Spraying Program.	<p>The delivery plan for the Roadside Drainage Maintenance Program has been finalised, and is now underway.</p> <p>The team continues to take advantage of favorable weather conditions when they occur for spraying activities. Additional resources were allocated to maximise opportunities when weather conditions were favorable for spraying and the program is back on-track from quarter two reporting period.</p>	 50%

Council Plan Theme: Economy and Industry

Objective

The next four years are a time of change and growth for South Gippsland. We see this as an opportunity to define who we are and grow our economy, and to welcome innovation and investment in our key industries; agriculture, tourism and the arts.

Farming is our economic backbone and we will actively encourage investment, partnership and new business aligned with our core rural and environmental values.

We see the arts and tourism as a way to share our story, to welcome newcomers and support economic growth, whilst communicating and protecting what's special about our environment and way of life.

We understand the need to act now for future generations to contribute to our long-term viability, so we will focus on providing more reasons for young people to stay, study, work and invest in South Gippsland.

Priorities

- Support agriculture, food and fibre production to remain a competitive and significant contributor to our local and national economy.
- Strengthen economic resilience and encourage innovation to build the economy of the future.
- Enhance and diversify the visitor experience through investment attraction, product development, strategic branding, and marketing.
- Ensure land use planning and economic development are aligned to facilitate appropriate business investment, particularly in areas zoned for commercial, industrial, farming and rural activity zones.
- Implement our Economic Development, Visitor Economy and Art, Culture and Creative Industries Strategies to strengthen our economic output, jobs and creative industries.
- Provide career pathways through Council supported scholarships, traineeships and apprenticeships, mentoring programs and work experience.
- Encourage commercial opportunities for improved visitor accommodation, encouraging tourists to visit and remain longer in our region.
- Partner with youth, education providers and industry to facilitate education and employment pathways.

Achievements to Date:





- Delivered and facilitated the Jobs Expo in Leongatha.
- Printed the new Great Southern Rail Trail brochure for promotion.
- Progressed Tiny Towns Grant application for Mirboo North Community and Business Resilience Hub.
- ArtCubes successfully moved to Venus Bay with an exciting program of activities to be conducted in January to April.



Pictured: ArtCubes

Major Initiatives

The following comments provide the results of the prescribed service performance outcome indicators of the 2022-2026 Council Plan identified in the 2024/25 Budget.

Initiative	Comment	Percentage Complete
Implement the annual action plan of the <i>2021–2031 Economic Development Strategy</i> .	Implemented actions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supported the development of the Gippsland Dairy Strategy through participation in workshops Progressed Tiny Towns Grant for Mirboo North Community and Business Resilience Hub Supported Offshore Wind Projects Community Event in Leongatha Delivered the South Gippsland Jobs Expo in Leongatha Delivered Small Business Social Media workshops Supported Marinus Link Industry Briefing: Meet the Proponents session. 	
Implement the annual action plans of the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>2021–2031 Visitor Economy Strategy</i> and; <i>2022-2031 Great Southern Rail Trail (GSRT) Visitor Experience and Marketing Plan</i>. 	Implemented actions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commenced printing of a new Great Southern Rail Trail brochure Great Southern Rail Trail passport ready for promotion Eat Drink Play Gippsland Festival contracts completed Network and business visits conducted to understand current environment undertaken. 	
Implement the annual actions of the <i>Arts, Culture and Creative Industries Strategy</i> .	Implemented actions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ArtCubes moved to Venus Bay with a program of activities Hosted Mandy Gunn and Out of the Box exhibition at Coal Creek Community Park and Museum gallery Supported the summer series program at Coal Creek Community Park and Museum Supported the Festival of Small Halls Program. 	
Plan for and support our community to maximise the benefits of the emerging renewable energy industry, through continuation of the fixed term Renewable Energy Development Officer for 2024/25.	Renewable Energy Development Officer appointed for 2024/25 year. Council has adopted the South Gippsland and Latrobe City Renewable Energy Impact and Readiness Study 2024 and is implementing the directions from the Study.	

Council Plan Theme:**Healthy and Engaged Communities****Objective**

Regional Australia is going through unprecedented growth and demographic change and Council plays an important role in advocacy across all levels of government to attract funding and implement planning controls that ensure South Gippsland's growth is socially, environmentally and economically sustainable. The unique environmental values and cultural heritage of our 28 towns, villages and hamlets are a drawcard to the region. We will protect the visual character of our landscapes and streetscapes via community plans, land-use reviews, environmental assessments and township design frameworks.

Council will plan for sustainable growth with an appropriate mix of residential properties, farming and lifestyle, industrial and commercial properties, encouraging affordable housing projects, options for aged and health care, and suitable investment in services, transport, childcare and open space.

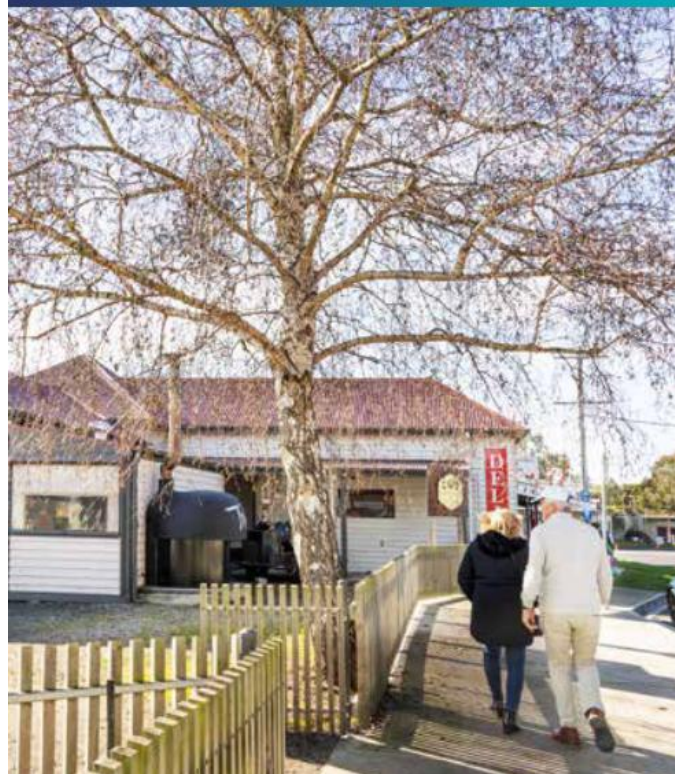
We value local knowledge, history and experience, and are committed to including the community in conversations around important change decisions and processes. We will consider the environmental and cultural impacts of growth and land-use change in our actions and decision making.

Priorities

- Develop a strong relationship and partnership with the Bunurong and Gunaikurnai people to support our common environmental, cultural, social and economic objectives.
- Create places and spaces for people to connect and participate in local activities, sports and leisure, community events, and enjoy our libraries, parks, gardens and coastal areas.
- Advocate for improved health services for our community.
- Foster a sense of belonging and connectedness through involvement in community groups, fostering community leadership and engaging with our creative industries.
- Support and celebrate our volunteers through community grants and National Volunteer Week.
- Advocate for increased access to early years services including kindergarten, playgroups, childcare and for equitable access to health and social services for our community.
- Support community sport and recreation groups to grow, to build our healthy communities and enhance community connections.
- Partner with youth, education providers and industry to facilitate education and employment pathways.

Achievements to Date:




- Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan partners engaged to provide updates on the current Plan.
- Community Planning Network meeting held focusing on how to engage a community for community planning.
- Continued to support communities in their community plan initiatives including Sandy Point Community Group, Outtrim Community Hall, Meeniyan Progress Association and Kongwak.



Pictured: Meeniyan

Major Initiatives

The following comments review the performance of Council against the 2024/25 Annual Initiatives of the 2022-2026 Council Plan identified in the 2024/25 Budget.

Initiative	Comment	Percentage Complete
Implement actions from the 2022-2026 <i>Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan</i> (MPH&WP).	<p>Implemented actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement was undertaken with our Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan delivery partners to provide updates on the current Plan. Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee were introduced to the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan process Live4Life Program members met with representatives from the Chairo Christian School and Community College Gippsland to discuss their inclusion in the program. 	 <p>70%</p>
Deliver the Live4Life Program 2024/25, which provides mental health education and suicide prevention for young people in rural communities.	<p>The following activities have been undertaken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted an Expression of Interest process for Live4Life Crew, including an interview process. Each participating school has a Live4Life Crew of six to seven members, with a focus on delivering Mental Health promotion in their schools Live4Life Crew Induction was held at the end of February 2025 for 30 young people. They selected their theme for the year that will be unveiled at their launch in Term Two Youth Mental Health First Aid Training calendar for the community was released Formed two new subcommittees, tasked with focusing on fundraising and communication of the Live4Life Program. 	 <p>75%</p>
Continue to facilitate community plan development, to support South Gippsland communities to develop and grow.	<p>The following activities have been undertaken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Community Plan Network meeting was well attended with the focus on how to engage a community for community planning Continued to support and provide assistance to communities who needed assistance actioning initiatives in their community plans such as; Sandy Point Community Group, Outtrim Community Hall, Meeniyen Progress Association and Kongwak. 	 <p>75%</p>

Council Plan Theme:**Leading with Integrity****Objective**

Over the next four years, we will endeavour to always lead with integrity, care, good governance and accountability. Council will be outward focused and engage regularly and genuinely with our community.

We recognise trust between Council and the community was broken, and that it's our job to earn that trust back, and to do that we first must be trustworthy.

We will not always get everything right but promise to always look for continuous improvement in the way we do things, to listen to your problems and ideas, to answer your questions and genuinely engage with you around the challenges ahead in these uncertain times.

Council will provide and promote community leadership, investing in our people and the people of South Gippsland. We are a new Council, this is a new relationship, our firm commitment is that we will listen to learn, and act with integrity. We hope you join us.

Priorities

- Understand our community's priorities, ensure their needs are being met, and engage openly and often.
- Place our community at the centre of everything we do and be outward focused.
- Explore alternatives for revenue opportunities and manage our resources sustainably.
- Develop our people to build our organisation's capacity, create efficiencies and deliver quality services to the community.
- Strategically advocate with our partners to the State and Federal Government on issues and opportunities that impact our community.
- Invest in the leadership skills of existing and emerging community leaders, volunteers, community groups and networks.
- Support community sport and recreation groups to grow, to build our healthy communities and enhance community connections.
- Partner with youth, education providers and industry to facilitate education and employment pathways.

Achievements to Date:

- The combined Community Leadership Program between South Gippsland and Bass Coast Shire Councils was successfully launched with 25 participants.
- Community engagement was conducted in February 2025 to assist in the development of Council's Integrated Planning documents; which include the Community Vision 2040 (Review), Council Plan, Financial Plan, Annual Budget, Revenue and Rating Plan, Asset Plan, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.



Pictured: South Gippsland Shire Councillor Clare Williams, Councillor Bron Beach and Mayor John Schelling participating in community engagement in February 2025

Major Initiatives

The following comments review the performance of Council against the 2024/25 Annual Initiatives of the 2022-2026 Council Plan identified in the 2024/25 Budget.

Initiative	Comment	Percentage Complete
Deliver Council's biannual Community Leadership Program to strengthen community expertise and volunteering.	South Gippsland and Bass Coast Shire Council's continued to work together to plan the combined South Coast Community Leadership Program. The Community Leadership Program was successfully launched with 25 participants at the Korumburra Community Hub.	60%
Establish and support South Gippsland Shire Council's 2024/25 advocacy priorities.	Council's existing 2024 Advocacy Priorities remain current. Upon completion of the Council Plan 2025-2029, Council will consider in quarter four of this financial year, the new Advocacy Priorities for 2025/26 year.	50%
Develop and deliver a range of key strategic plans: • <i>2025-2029 Council Plan</i> (to be developed with the new Council) • <i>Revenue and Rating Plan</i> • <i>Four-year Budget and ten-year Long-Term Financial Plan.</i>	The adoption of the suite of Integrated Planning documents, including the Community Vision 2040 (Review), Council Plan, Financial Plan, Annual Budget, Revenue and Rating Plan, Asset Plan, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan are on-track for endorsement by Council before the deadline of 30 June 2025. The first round of community engagement was completed in February 2025 and using this community feedback, the documents have been drafted and will be presented at the 16 April 2025 Council Meeting for further community	75%
Review the Community Vision to ensure it continues to represent the community's aspirations for the future of the municipality.	Community engagement was successfully completed in February 2025. Using the feedback from the community the Community Vision has been reviewed and will be presented to Council at the 16 April 2025 Council Meeting.	75%
Support the effective delivery of the October 2024 Council elections, welcome South Gippsland's new Councillors, and deliver an induction and transition program to support Councillors.	All preparations for the Council election have been completed by Council with voting being overseen by the Victorian Electoral Commission. Council developed a comprehensive Councillor Transition program which has been completed in December 2024 by the new Councillor group.	100%

Council Plan Theme:**Protecting and Enhancing our Environment****Objective**

Agriculture, bushland, residential and tourism can thrive side by side. South Gippslanders will leave a legacy of a healthier integrated environment for future generations. Council will proactively work with landholders and land management agencies in preparing for changes in weather patterns, extreme storms, flooding and coastal erosion and the impacts of climate change.

Our aim is to support appropriate regeneration and revegetation initiatives and the development of bio-link corridors, particularly around our waterways, and acknowledge the importance of protecting our agricultural land's biosecurity, whilst expanding biodiversity. We will do this with community partnerships, planning controls and weed and feral pest management education, and support for those who farm our lands.

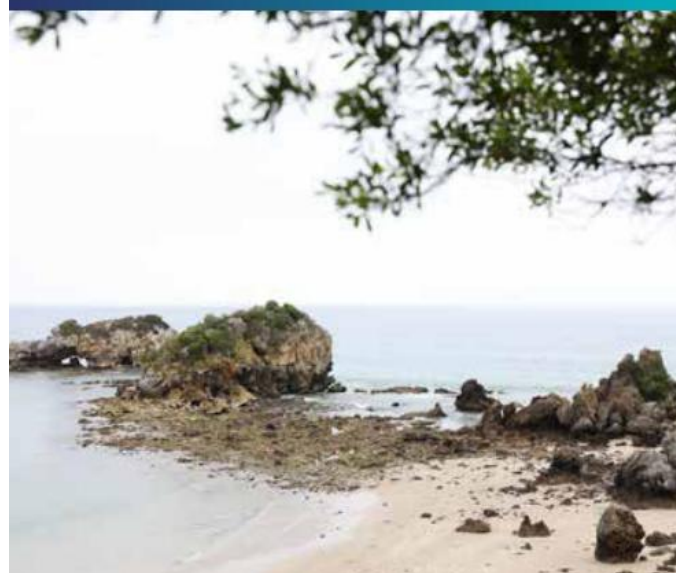
Over the next four years, we will reduce landfill across the Shire via our circular waste strategy. In our own organisation, we are setting a target of reducing our emissions through energy and waste efficiency measures. We will also drive change toward improved consumer behaviour of all in our Shire, through a 'buy less' campaign whilst also encouraging residents to reduce, reuse and recycle.

Priorities

- Understand our community's priorities, ensure their needs are being met, and engage openly and often.
- Place our community at the centre of everything we do and be outward focused.
- Explore alternatives for revenue opportunities and manage our resources sustainably.
- Develop our people to build our organisation's capacity, create efficiencies and deliver quality services to the community.
- Strategically advocate with our partners to the State and Federal Government on issues and opportunities that impact our community.
- Invest in the leadership skills of existing and emerging community leaders, volunteers, community groups and networks.
- Build resilience in our community and organisation to mitigate risk and damage caused by extreme weather events.

Achievements to Date:

- A Memorandum of Understanding with South Gippsland Landcare and action plan have been completed.
- A copy of the Memorandum of Understanding will be presented at the May 2025 Council Meeting.




Pictured: Walkerville South

- Empower our community through education and information to improve their waste management.
- As part of the Domestic Animal Management Plan, investigate enforceable dogs on leashes and curfews for domestic cats.
- Engage with the relevant State Government agencies regarding the use of jet skis in relation to personal safety, amenity and threats to marine wildlife.

Major Initiatives

The following comments review the performance of Council against the 2024/25 Annual Initiatives of the 2022-2026 Council Plan identified in the 2024/25 Budget.

Initiative	Comment	Percentage Complete
To establish and implement a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with South Gippsland Landcare. This will help to build our land management partnership and assist with weed control and biodiversity initiatives.	Memorandum of Understanding with South Gippsland Landcare and the accompanying action plan has been completed. A copy will be presented at the 21 May 2025 Council Meeting.	

Council Plan Theme: Sustainable Growth

Objective

Regional Australia is going through unprecedented growth and demographic change and Council plays an important role in advocacy across all levels of government to attract funding and implement planning controls that ensure South Gippsland's growth is socially, environmentally and economically sustainable.

The unique environmental values and cultural heritage of our 28 towns, villages and hamlets are a drawcard to the region. We will protect the visual character of our landscapes and streetscapes via community plans, land-use reviews, environmental assessments and township design frameworks.

Council will plan for sustainable growth with an appropriate mix of residential properties, farming and lifestyle, industrial and commercial properties, encouraging affordable housing projects, options for aged and health care, and suitable investment in services, transport, childcare and open space.

We value local knowledge, history and experience, and are committed to including the community in conversations around important change decisions and processes. We will consider the environmental and cultural impacts of growth and land use change in our actions and decision making.

Priorities

- Manage urban growth within defined town boundaries to deliver fit-for-purpose infrastructure in partnership with other agencies that share this responsibility.
- Protect the character of our communities, including our built, natural and cultural heritage.
- Celebrate our communities and foster a sense of pride in the unique characters of our townships.
- Support new developments that include diverse block sizes and make a positive long-term contribution to the community and increased affordable housing opportunities.
- Support our coastal communities to respond to existing and emerging risks to their liveability and environmental health.
- Align land-use planning and economic development planning to facilitate appropriate business investment.
- Investigate opportunities to better manage the impacts of unregistered Short Stay Accommodation.

Achievements to Date:

- Introduced a new Local Policy into the Planning Scheme (C129) to strengthen support for affordable housing in South Gippsland.
- Delivery of workshops with stakeholders commenced as part of the Coal Creek Community Park and Museum Strategic Plan.
- Project scope has commenced to investigate options for heritage precinct protection controls.
- Planning controls guiding residential density have been progressed in accordance with the South Gippsland Coastal Strategy.



Pictured: Grand Ridge Road, Halston

Major Initiatives

The following comments review the performance of Council against the 2024/25 Annual Initiatives of the 2022-2026 Council Plan identified in the 2024/25 Budget.

Initiative	Comment	Percentage Complete
Implement actions from the Social and Affordable Housing Strategy.	<p>Introduced a new Local Policy into the Planning Scheme under Amendment C129 to strengthen support for affordable housing in South Gippsland, and specifically reference the adopted <i>South Gippsland Social and Affordable Housing Strategy 2022</i>.</p> <p>Work is continuing to advocate for funding allocations from the State Government and building relationships with key stakeholders in the region. Alternative approaches to future property development that do not require contributions by developers are also being investigated.</p>	50%
Complete development of a Strategic Plan for Coal Creek Community Park and Museum and commence implementation of actions.	<p>The Coal Creek Community Park and Museum Strategic Plan was endorsed at the August 2024 Council Meeting.</p> <p>Development of a Coal Creek Community Park and Museum Business Case has commenced with delivery of workshops with stakeholders underway.</p>	60%
Continue to progress implementation of action items identified in Council's Coastal Strategy.	Final draft of new coastal planning controls to implement key elements of the Coastal Strategy has been prepared. Advice has been sought from the State Government on the proposed controls and suitability for a future planning scheme amendment.	75%
Increase awareness and advocacy for heritage preservation.	Project scoping commenced to investigate options for heritage precinct protection controls to be prepared in 2025/26 financial year.	50%
Continue work to plan for the growth and development in the Nyora township.	A Discussion Paper with recommended options for Nyora's two northern Low Density Residential Zone precincts with options is currently under consultation. Infrastructure delivery and funding requires further consideration before a preferred development option is identified.	50%

South Gippsland Shire Council

Financial Report

1 July 2024 to 31 March 2025





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Section 1 – Financial Report Overview and Progress

1.1 Management Cash Result Statement

Whilst the Comprehensive Income Statement is prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, it contains several items which are “non-cash” in nature such as depreciation on assets and the written down (book) value of assets sold. It also excludes capital expenditure, new borrowings and loan repayments and as such, does not provide an accurate indication of the surplus/deficit cash position within a financial year. The Statement below provides a management cash result for the period 1 July 2024 to 31 March 2025 which removes non-cash items and adds back cash items that are excluded from the Comprehensive Income Statement.

The Approved Forecast includes the year-end carry forwards from 2023/24 of \$12.18 million, endorsed by Council on 11 September 2024.

As part of regular fiscal oversight, a third quarter budget review has proposed a favourable adjustment of \$146,000 to the management cash result, with changes explained in section 1.2.

	Year to Date			Full Year			
	Actual YTD FY25 \$'000	Approved Forecast \$'000	Variance Fav / (Unfav) \$'000	Approved Forecast \$'000	Proposed Forecast \$'000	Variance Fav / (Unfav) \$'000	Adopted Budget \$'000
Income Statement							
Income	68,482	59,812	8,670	94,939	95,035	96	94,323
Expenditure	59,458	55,999	(3,459)	77,141	77,191	(50)	72,679
Net surplus / (deficit) - ongoing operations	9,024	3,813	5,211	17,798	17,844	46	21,644
Management Accounting result							
<u>Add back (less) non cash items</u>							
Depreciation	10,074	10,327	(253)	13,769	13,769	0	12,699
Depreciation - right of use assets	69	69	0	92	92	0	93
Amortisation - intangible assets	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Landfill provision	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Contributions - non-monetary	0	(331)	331	(441)	(441)	0	(441)
Found assets (recognised)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fair value adjustments of investment properties	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Written down value of assets sold/disposed	1,720	493	1,227	658	658	0	658
Sub total	11,863	10,558	1,305	14,078	14,078	0	13,009
Net operating surplus	20,887	14,371	6,516	31,876	31,922	46	34,653
<u>Less (add) non operating cash items</u>							
Capital Works expenditure	23,064	18,674	(4,390)	41,380	41,280	100	36,327
Transfers to/(from) Reserves	3,082	3,082	0	4,554	4,554	0	314
New loan borrowings	(2,330)	0	2,330	(3,150)	(3,150)	0	(3,150)
Loan Repayments	721	753	32	1,073	1,073	0	1,069
Lease Repayments	69	69	0	92	92	0	93
Sub total	24,606	22,578	(2,028)	43,949	43,849	100	34,653
Cash surplus / (deficit)	(3,719)	(8,207)	4,488	(12,073)	(11,927)	146	0

Section 1 – Financial Report Overview and Progress

1.2 Proposed Budget Adjustment Summary

Income

Rates and Charges \$0.05 million - Favourable

To account for increase of \$46k in supplementary rates for the 2025 financial year.

Grants – operating \$0.05 million – Favourable

Due to expected receipt of State Government Grant income for Eat, Drink, Play Gippsland that was not anticipated in the 2024/25 financial year, offset by increased expenditure.

Expenditure

Materials and Consumables \$0.05 million – Unfavourable

Increase in expenses expected to be utilised from the receipt of State government grant income for Eat, Drink, Play Gippsland.

Capital Works Expenditure \$0.1 million – Favourable

Due to expected costs being lower than anticipated for Ross St Meeniyah Gravel to Seal Project.

Section 1 – Financial Report Overview and Progress

1.3 Year to Date Variances

	Actual YTD FY25 \$'000	Year to Date				Full Year			
		Approved Forecast \$'000	Variance Fav / (Unfav) %	Actual YTD FY24 \$'000	Variance Fav / (Unfav) %	Approved Forecast \$'000	Proposed Forecast \$'000	Variance (Fav / Unfav) \$'000	Adopted Budget \$'000
INCOME									
Rates and charges	39,474	39,403	0%	38,141	3%	52,463	52,509	46	52,353
Statutory fees and fines	626	808	(23%)	724	(14%)	1,074	1,074	0	1,015
User fees	3,186	3,073	4%	2,835	12%	4,301	4,301	0	4,293
Grants - operating	13,723	13,308	3%	2,906	372%	14,191	14,241	50	13,868
Grants - operating - natural disasters	4,256	0	100%	897	100%	0	0	0	0
Grants - capital	5,110	868	489%	7,846	(35%)	8,810	8,810	0	8,849
Grants - capital - natural disasters	41	0	0%	2,474	0%	10,285	10,285	0	10,285
Contributions - monetary	488	971	(50%)	(19)	(2668%)	1,247	1,247	0	1,146
Contributions - non monetary	0	331	(100%)	3,259	0%	441	441	0	441
Net gain on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	68	(426)	(116%)	160	(58%)	83	83	0	83
Other income	1,510	1,476	2%	2,176	(31%)	2,044	2,044	0	1,990
Total income	68,482	59,812	14%	61,399	12%	94,939	95,035	96	94,323

Operating Income Key Variance Detail:

Statutory Fees and Fines – Unfavourable (\$0.18 million) Due to receiving less in Statutory Planning fees and charges, trending to be under budget and impact the bottom line at year end although remain difficult to predict at this stage. Additionally, \$0.06 million in wastewater fees coded in error to be corrected with no variance.

Grants Operating Natural disasters – Favourable (\$4.26 million) Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangement reimbursements received for expenses related to declared disaster events, detailed further in section 1.7.

Grants Capital– Favourable – \$4.24 million Capital grants received earlier than forecast, primarily for the Roads to Recovery program (\$3.1 million), Department of Infrastructure (\$0.24 million) and Leongatha and Korumburra Railway (\$0.28 million). No impact to year end position.

Contributions Monetary – Unfavourable (\$0.48 million) Predominately due to Developer Contributions not being received as budgeted. This is outside control of Council as it is based on the stage the developers have reached. Potential year end impact to be monitored.

Contributions – Non Monetary – Unfavourable (\$0.33 million) Related to Developer Contributions and is dependent upon the development stages of projects.

Section 1 – Financial Report Overview and Progress

1.3 Year to Date Variances

	Actual YTD FY25 \$'000	Year to Date				Full Year			
		Approved Forecast \$'000	Variance Fav / (Unfav) %	Actual YTD FY24 \$'000	Variance Fav / (Unfav) %	Approved Forecast \$'000	Proposed Forecast \$'000	Variance (Fav / Unfav) \$'000	Adopted Budget \$'000
EXPENSES									
Employee costs	22,255	22,495	1%	21,473	(4%)	31,102	31,102	0	31,127
Materials and services	20,240	20,477	1%	20,714	2%	28,493	28,543	(50)	25,341
Natural disasters	2,779	0	(100%)	2,935	5%	295	295	0	0
Depreciation	10,074	10,327	2%	9,685	(4%)	13,769	13,769	0	12,699
Depreciation - Right of use assets	69	69	0%	69	0%	92	92		93
Borrowing costs	108	125	14%	106	(2%)	167	167	0	164
Finance costs - Leases	3	3	0%	4	25%	4	4		4
Other expenses	3,930	2,503	(57%)	4,263	8%	3,219	3,219	0	3,251
Total expenses	59,458	55,999	(6%)	59,249	(0%)	77,141	77,191	(50)	72,679

Operating Expenditure Key Variance Detail:

Natural disasters – Unfavourable (\$2.78 million) August 2024 storm event expenditure, with reimbursement to be sought through the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangement process, detailed further in section 1.7.

Other Expenses – Unfavourable (\$1.43 million) Largely due to accounting entries of capital work in progress written off to operating (\$1.14 million) as well as assets disposed but not sold (\$0.24 million).

1.4 – Capital Works

Capital Works Statement as at 31 March 2025

The Capital Works program comprises of asset renewal, expansion, upgrade and the investment in new assets.

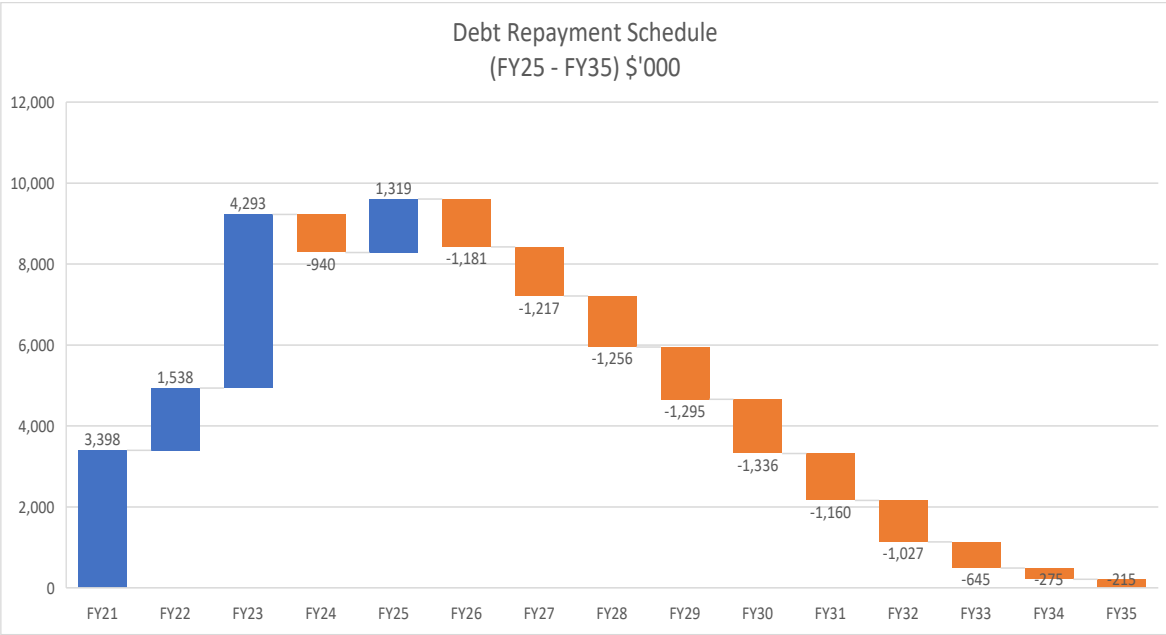
Following the third quarter budget review, there is a proposed reduction of \$0.1 million to expenditure.

	Actual YTD FY25 \$'000	Year to Date		Full Year			
		Approved Forecast \$'000	Variance Fav/(Unfav) %	Approved Forecast \$'000	Proposed Forecast \$'000	Variance (Fav/Unfav) \$'000	Adopted Budget \$'000
Property							
Buildings	2,345	2,212	6%	3,890	3,890	0	2,881
Heritage buildings	(2)	15	(113%)	20	20	0	20
Total buildings	2,343	2,227	5%	3,910	3,910	0	2,901
Total property	2,343	2,227	5%	3,910	3,910	0	2,901
Plant and equipment							
Plant, machinery and equipment	1,958	213	819%	3,662	3,662	0	3,123
Computers and telecommunications	349	527	(34%)	702	702	0	702
Total plant and equipment	2,307	740	212%	4,364	4,364	0	3,825
Infrastructure							
Roads	11,044	9,732	13%	20,528	19,628	(900)	19,880
Bridges	120	273	(56%)	331	331	0	1,031
Major culverts	71	0	100%	104	104	0	104
Footpaths and cycleways	604	205	195%	915	915	0	767
Drainage	232	15	1447%	450	450	0	450
Kerb & channel	219	30	630%	400	400	0	310
Waterway infrastructure	0	0	0%	180	180		120
Waste	1,336	812	65%	2,458	2,458	0	919
Other infrastructure	4,788	4,640	3%	7,740	8,540	800	6,020
Total infrastructure	18,414	15,707	17%	33,106	33,006	(100)	29,601
Total capital works expenditure	23,064	18,674	24%	41,380	41,280	(100)	36,327

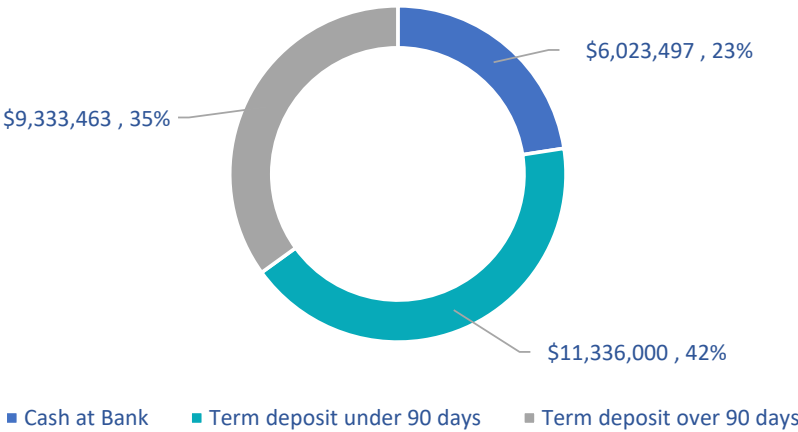
1.5 - Treasury

Council has paid \$0.72 million in scheduled principal debt repayments year to date. Full year principal debt repayments are on schedule, with a forecasted closing position of \$9.6 million.

Loans Maturing	YTD Feb 2025				Full Year			
	Opening Balance \$'000	Proceeds \$'000	Repayments \$'000	Closing Balance \$'000	Opening Balance \$'000	Proceeds \$'000	Repayments \$'000	Closing Balance \$'000
Current Loans	965	0	0	965	965	0	216	1,181
Non-Current Loans	7,324	2,330	(722)	8,932	7,324	2,330	(1,227)	8,427
	8,289	2,330	(722)	9,897	8,289	2,330	(1,011)	9,608

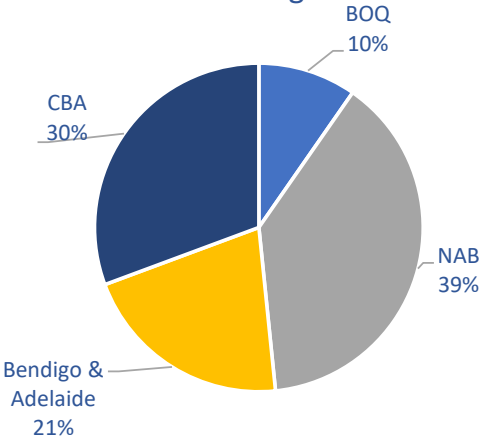


Cash and Investment Breakdown



Cash and investment holdings total \$26.7 million as of 31 March 2025. Council has \$20.7 million in term deposits earning an average interest rate of 4.63% and \$6.0 million in cash at bank required to cover scheduled employee and supplier payments.

Investment Holdings Breakdown

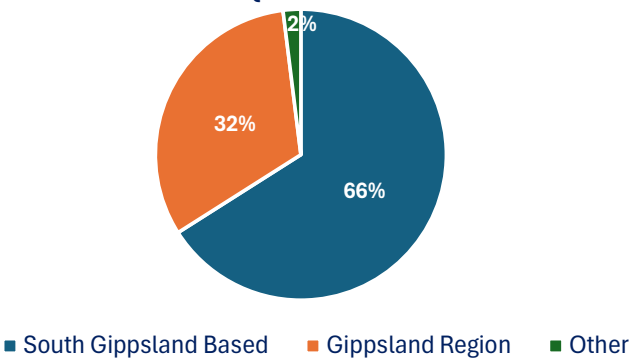


1.6 – Local Procurement

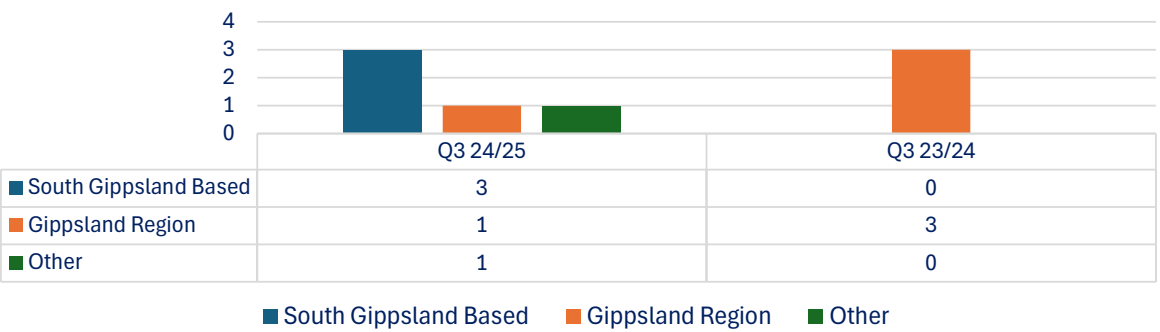
The contracts awarded by South Gippsland Shire Council for the March 2025 quarter.

Contract Number	Contract Name	Date of Award	Supplier	Estimated Contract Value (Ex. GST)	Contract Period	Supplier Location
CON/410	North Poowong Road - Gravel to Seal	16/01/2025	Sure Constructions (Vic) Pty Ltd	\$1,304,433.28	16 Weeks	Gippsland Region
CON/338	Mirboo North Early Learning Centre Concept Design	29/01/2025	Vanovac Tuon Architecture Studio, trading as VTAS Architecture	\$80,105.00	12 Weeks	Other (Melbourne)
CON/432	Korumburra Rail Precinct Stage 3	11/02/2025	Ace Earthmoving (Vic) Pty Ltd	\$687,794.00	20 Weeks	South Gippsland Based
CON/423	Korumburra Commercial Street, Hub Pedestrian Link	17/02/2025	Hugh Patrick Pty Ltd, trading as BJs Earthmoving	\$442,267.95	16 Weeks	South Gippsland Based
CON/419	Fish Creek Streetscape	6/03/2025	Ace Earthmoving (Vic) Pty Ltd	\$1,558,253.05	36 Weeks	South Gippsland Based

\$ Value of contracts awarded by supplier location
Q3 2024/25



Contracts Awarded Q3 2023/24 VS Q3 2024/25



1.7 – Disaster Recovery Funding

South Gippsland Shire Council funds immediate relief and recovery works following natural disaster events and seeks reimbursement through the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA). The DRFA is a cost sharing arrangement between the Commonwealth and State Governments to support certain relief and recovery activities following an eligible disaster. The below table outlines the status of active claims for eligible disasters:

	Expenditure by Council \$'000	Approved DRFA Funding \$'000	Pending DRFA Assessment \$'000	Ineligible for DRFA funding \$'000	Grants Commission Contribution \$'000	DRFA Claim submission in progress \$'000
Event						
AGRN 1147 (28/08/24) Aug Sep Wind	2,799	0	0	159	0	2,640
AGRN 1142 (15/07/24) July Storm	34	0	34	0	0	0
AGRN 1108 (13/02/24) Mirboo North	6,110	4,563	833	521	6	187
AGRN 1096 (26/12/23) Welshpool / Toora	983	41	854	73	0	15
AGRN 1087 (29/11/23) Toora	89	44	0	18	22	5
AGRN 1072 (03/10/23) Foster	257	130	0	86	35	6
AGRN 1037 (21/11/22) Toora / Dumbalk	225	40	0	96	23	67
AGRN 1029 (13/08/22) Poowong East	5,465	514	544	4	35	4,367
AGRN 1022 (06/06/22) Foster	1,687	54	1,590	0	24	19
AGRN 985 (30/09/21) Rain Event	1,497	1,456	0	0	0	41
Total	19,146	6,842	3,855	957	145	7,347

Section 2 – Financial Statements

2.1 Income Statement as at 31 March 2025

	Actual YTD FY25 \$'000	Approved Forecast \$'000	Year to Date Variance		Actual YTD FY24 \$'000	Variance Fav / (Unfav) %	Full Year Variance			Adopted Budget \$'000
			Fav / (Unfav) %				Approved Forecast \$'000	Proposed Forecast \$'000	(Fav / Unfav) \$'000	
INCOME										
Rates and charges	39,474	39,403	0%		38,141	3%	52,463	52,509	46	52,353
Statutory fees and fines	626	808	(23%)		724	(14%)	1,074	1,074	0	1,015
User fees	3,186	3,073	4%		2,835	12%	4,301	4,301	0	4,293
Grants - operating	13,723	13,308	3%		2,906	372%	14,191	14,241	50	13,868
Grants - operating - natural disasters	4,256	0	100%		897	100%	0	0	0	0
Grants - capital	5,110	868	489%		7,846	(35%)	8,810	8,810	0	8,849
Grants - capital - natural disasters	41	0	0%		2,474	0%	10,285	10,285	0	10,285
Contributions - monetary	488	971	(50%)		(19)	(2668%)	1,247	1,247	0	1,146
Contributions - non monetary	0	331	(100%)		3,259	0%	441	441	0	441
Net gain on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	68	(426)	(116%)		160	(58%)	83	83	0	83
Other income	1,510	1,476	2%		2,176	(31%)	2,044	2,044	0	1,990
Total income	68,482	59,812	14%		61,399	12%	94,939	95,035	96	94,323
EXPENSES										
Employee costs	22,255	22,495	1%		21,473	(4%)	31,102	31,102	0	31,127
Materials and services	20,240	20,477	1%		20,714	2%	28,493	28,543	(50)	25,341
Natural disasters	2,779	0	(100%)		2,935	5%	295	295	0	0
Depreciation	10,074	10,327	2%		9,685	(4%)	13,769	13,769	0	12,699
Depreciation - Right of use assets	69	69	0%		69	0%	92	92		93
Borrowing costs	108	125	14%		106	(2%)	167	167	0	164
Finance costs - Leases	3	3	0%		4	25%	4	4		4
Other expenses	3,930	2,503	(57%)		4,263	8%	3,219	3,219	0	3,251
Total expenses	59,458	55,999	(6%)		59,249	(0%)	77,141	77,191	(50)	72,679
Surplus / (deficit) for the period	9,024	3,813	137%		2,150	320%	17,798	17,844	46	21,644

Section 2 – Financial Statements

2.2 Balance Sheet as at
31 March 2025

	Year to Date				Full Year	
	Actual YTD FY25 \$'000	Actual YTD FY24 \$'000	Year over Year Variance Fav / (Unfav) \$'000 %		Adopted Budget \$'000	Proposed Forecast \$'000
Current assets						
Cash and cash equivalents	17,359	8,398	8,961	107%	7,119	3,589
Trade and other receivables	17,092	16,310	782	5%	5,502	4,947
Other financial assets	9,333	30,510	(21,177)	(69%)	18,104	16,326
Inventories	253	238	15	6%	159	296
Prepayments	470	30	440	1467%	0	582
Total current assets	44,507	55,486	(10,979)	(20%)	30,884	25,740
Non-current assets						
Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	854,482	774,658	79,824	10%	810,764	870,507
Investment property	857	820	37	5%	820	857
Right-of-use assets	200	292	(92)	(32%)	178	177
Total non-current assets	855,539	775,770	79,769	10%	811,762	871,541
TOTAL ASSETS	900,046	831,256	68,790	8%	842,646	897,281
Current liabilities						
Trade and other payables	3,365	2,300	(1,065)	(46%)	4,909	5,187
Trust funds and deposits	4,151	3,315	(836)	(25%)	1,686	2,434
Contract and other liabilities	1,233	1,667	434	26%	3,342	1,709
Provisions	7,224	6,584	(640)	(10%)	6,583	6,887
Interest-bearing liabilities	965	940	(25)	(3%)	1,294	1,296
Lease liabilities	23	15	(8)	(53%)	94	94
Unearned rates revenue	12,980	12,484	(496)	(4%)	0	0
Total current liabilities	29,941	27,305	(2,636)	(10%)	17,908	17,607
Non-current liabilities						
Provisions	6,492	5,011	(1,481)	(30%)	4,950	7,178
Interest-bearing liabilities	8,932	7,587	(1,345)	(18%)	9,032	9,071
Lease liabilities	181	281	100	36%	88	87
Total non-current liabilities	15,605	12,879	(2,726)	(21%)	14,070	16,336
TOTAL LIABILITIES	45,546	40,184	(5,362)	(13%)	31,978	33,943
NET ASSETS	854,500	791,072	63,428	8%	810,668	863,338
Equity						
Accumulated surplus	267,719	274,009	(6,290)	(2%)	293,509	275,085
Reserves	582,144	515,750	66,394	13%	515,613	582,144
Other Reserves	4,637	1,313	3,324	253%	1,546	6,109
TOTAL EQUITY	854,500	791,072	63,428	8%	810,668	863,338

Section 2 – Financial Statements

2.3 Cashflow
Statement for the
period 1 July 2024 to
31 March 2025

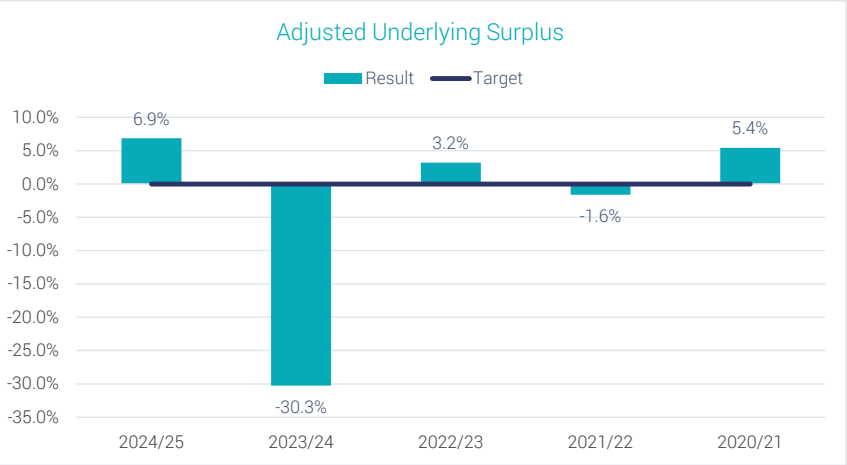
	Year To date				Full Year	
	Actual YTD	Actual YTD	Year over Year Variance		Adopted	Proposed
	FY25	FY24	Fav / (Unfav)		Budget	Forecast
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	%	\$'000	\$'000
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES						
Rates and charges	43,982	41,177	2,805	7%	51,982	54,591
Statutory fees and fines	626	724	(98)	(14%)	1,011	1,123
User fees	3,754	3,350	404	12%	4,277	4,496
Grants - operating	17,503	2,139	15,364	718%	13,868	14,241
Grants - capital	5,151	10,320	(5,169)	(50%)	19,134	19,095
Contributions - monetary	488	(19)	507	(2668%)	1,146	1,246
Interest received	1,011	1,464	(453)	(31%)	1,000	1,000
Other receipts	937	922	15	2%	1,156	1,445
Employee costs	(22,744)	(21,562)	(1,182)	5%	(31,295)	(31,317)
Materials and services	(25,235)	(26,662)	1,427	(5%)	(25,476)	(29,036)
Other payments	(2,525)	(2,510)	(15)	1%	(3,270)	(3,241)
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	22,948	9,343	13,605	146%	33,533	33,643
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES						
Payments for property, infrastructure, plant & equipment	(23,064)	(19,215)	(3,849)	20%	(36,327)	(41,280)
Proceeds from sale of property, infrastructure, plant & equipment	380	616	(236)	(38%)	741	741
Payments for / from Other Financial Assets	6,992	761	6,231	819%	0	0
Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities	(15,692)	(17,838)	2,146	(12%)	(35,586)	(40,539)
CASHFLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES						
Finance costs	(105)	(116)	11	(9%)	(164)	(167)
Proceeds from borrowings	2,330	0	2,330	0%	3,150	3,150
Repayment of borrowings	(721)	(702)	(19)	3%	(1,069)	(1,073)
Interest paid - lease liability	(3)	(3)	0	0%	(4)	(4)
Repayment of leases	(69)	(68)	(1)	1%	(93)	(92)
Net cash provided by (used in) financing activities	1,432	(889)	2,321	(261%)	1,820	1,814
Net increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	8,688	(9,384)	18,072	(193%)	(233)	(5,082)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year	8,671	17,782	(9,111)	(51%)	7,352	8,671
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period	17,359	8,398	8,961	107%	7,119	3,589

Section 3 – Year to Date Financial Analysis

3.1 Financial Ratios

Operating Position

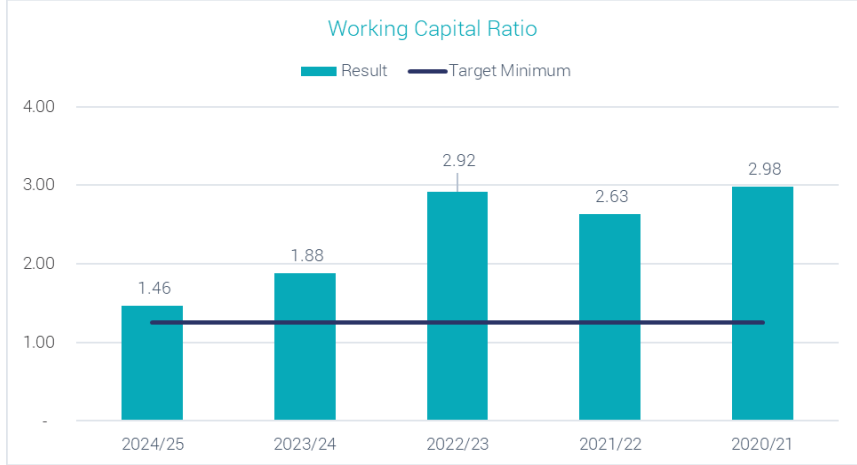
The adjusted underlying result demonstrates Council's ability to generate a surplus in its ordinary course of business, excluding non-recurrent capital grants, non-monetary asset contributions and other contributions to fund capital works from its net result. A surplus or increasing surplus suggest an improvement in the operating position.



The adjusted underlying result for 2024/25 is forecast to be a surplus of 6.9%.

Liquidity

The Working Capital Ratio, which assesses Council's ability to meet current commitments, is calculated by measuring Council's current assets as a percentage of current liabilities.



Council's proposed forecast as of 30 June 2025 has a Working Capital Ratio of 1.46. The decrease in the forecast compared to previous years is due to a decline in cash and cash equivalents and other financial assets (expected to be \$19.9 M as of 30 June 2025), to fund disaster recovery works and capital works program.

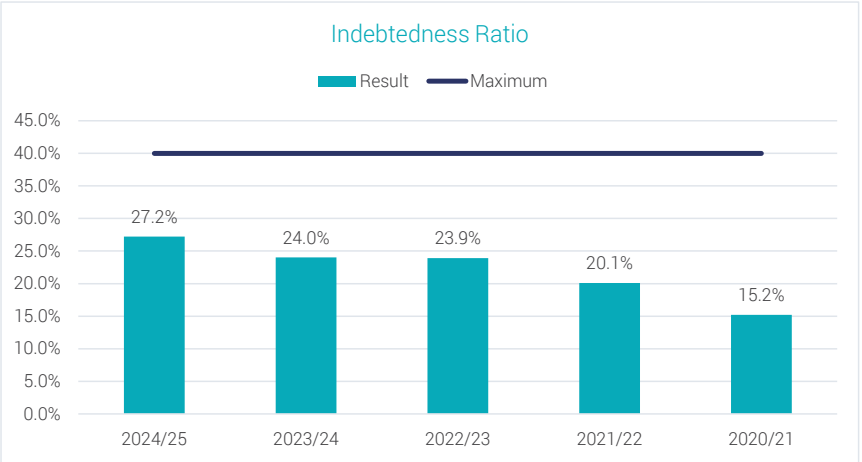
Section 3 – Year to Date Financial Analysis

3.1 Financial Ratios

Obligations

The Indebtedness Ratio Percentage measures Council's ability to pay the principal and interest on borrowings when they are due from the funds it generates. Own-sourced revenue is used in the calculation, not including any grants or contributions.

Council's proposed forecast Indebtedness Ratio as of 30 June 2025 is 27.2 per cent, and is well within the maximum of 40 per cent or lower. The increase over the previous years is due to additional construction drawdown facilities forecasted for 2025 financial year.

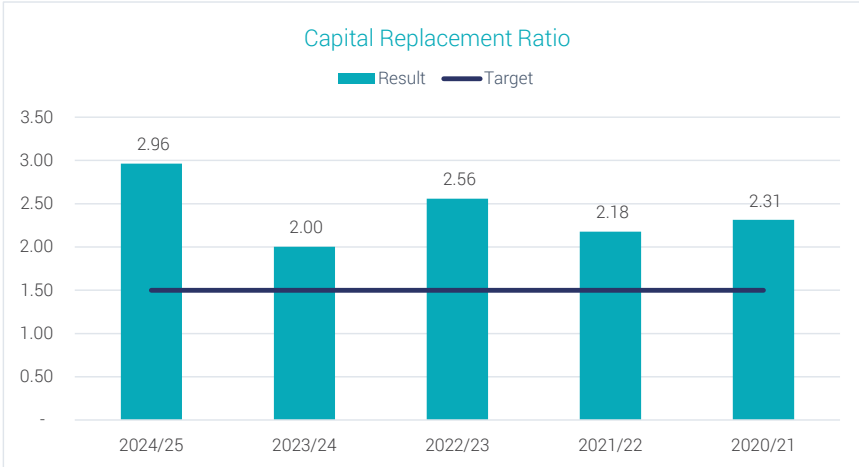


Asset Renewal

Council aims to ensure that it is able to maintain its infrastructure assets at the expected levels, while at the same time continuing to deliver the services needed by the community. The investment in asset renewal for the 2024/25 year is forecasted to be \$32.8M.

The Capital Replacement Ratio compares the total rate of spending on new infrastructure, property, plant and equipment with its depreciation. Ratios of higher than 1:1 indicate that spending is faster than the depreciation rate. Council's proposed forecast Capital Replacement Ratio of 2.96 for the year ending 30 June 2025, which is well above the target of 1.5.

The investment in asset renewal for 2024/25 is forecasted to be \$32.8 million resulting in a higher ratio forecast compared to previous years, where renewal expenditure was \$21 million in 2023/24 and the average over the previous four years was \$27 million per year.





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2.2. LANDCARE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)

Directorate:	Sustainable Infrastructure
Department:	Open Space and Environment

Council Plan

Objective - Protecting and Enhancing our Environment

This report recommends the endorsement of a Memorandum of Understanding between South Gippsland Shire Council and the South Gippsland Landcare Network providing for a stronger partnership, the leveraging of resources and creating enhanced value and investment outcomes.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's endorsement of the draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between South Gippsland Shire Council and the South Gippsland Landcare Network (SGLN).

RECOMMENDATION

That Council endorses the Draft Memorandum of Understanding between South Gippsland Shire Council and the South Gippsland Landcare Network and the 2024/25 Proposed Action Plan (Attachment [2.2.1]) and (Attachment [2.2.2]).

REPORT

The development of a draft Memorandum of Understanding between South Gippsland Shire Council and the South Gippsland Landcare Network was a budget initiative in the 2024/25 Council Budget process. Landcare and Council share many key environmental and natural resource management objectives presenting a key opportunity to partner together.

The draft MOU enables the leveraging of both organisations' resources, creating improved value and investment outcomes. It also includes leveraging the talent, skills and expertise across both organisations. Through the draft MOU Council commits to providing access to public land, works crews and machinery and equipment whilst Landcare commits to providing access to a committed volunteer base, social capital and funding from other government and philanthropic sources.

Each year an Action Plan will be developed detailing the activities Landcare will be undertaking in collaboration with Council. Examples of actions in the proposed Action Plan may include:

- Outreach support to South Gippsland residents, landowners and farmers,
- Community education workshops and programs, and

- Joint grant applications and education materials.

Funding for the draft MOU is for a three-year period from 2024 to 2027 and will be reviewed in 2026/27 to determine if it should be extended. The proposed Action Plan for 2024/25 is attached (**Attachment [2.2.2]**).

CONSULTATION / COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The draft MOU and proposed Action Plan have been developed through consultation between Landcare and Council.

RESOURCES / FINANCIAL VIABILITY

A budget allocation of \$50,000 each year, for three years has been included in the draft Open Space and Environment budget.

RISKS

Potential risks will be managed by both organisation via the agreed adoption of an annual action plan. The proposed Action Plan will outline the intended joint activities and use of annual funding for the following financial year.

SGLN will measure and monitor the works undertaken with the annual contribution and report on these in an Annual Report.

Updates will be provided to Council through regular meetings and the provision of an end-of-year update and an annual review.

STAFF DISCLOSURE

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have considered and determined that they do not have a conflict of interest in the matter

ATTACHMENTS

Attachments are available on Council's website at the following [LINK](#).

1. Draft Memorandum of Understanding - South Gippsland Shire Council and South Gippsland Landcare Network [**2.2.1** - 10 pages]
2. SGSC and SGLN MOU Action Plan 2024-25 [**2.2.2** - 3 pages]

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Council's Good Governance Framework

Good Governance Framework Not Applicable

Council Policy / Strategy / Plans

Documents are available on Council's website at the following [LINK](#).

Nil

Legislative Provisions

Nil

SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL

DRAFT Memorandum of Understanding 2024-2027



*Between South Gippsland Shire Council
and South Gippsland Landcare Network*



Background

South Gippsland Shire Council and the South Gippsland Landcare Network have enjoyed a strong partnership for many years. This has included supporting each other in delivering Natural Resource Management education activities and revegetation events.

South Gippsland Landcare Network and South Gippsland Shire Council share the goals of supporting sustainable land use, managing pest plants and animals, protecting and enhancing native vegetation (habitat), improving water quality, and promoting conservation and biodiversity practices and principles.

In a region where agriculture is the primary industry, South Gippsland Shire Council recognises that the South Gippsland Landcare Network's members are largely made up of farmers and landowners who rely on our soils and water for their livelihoods. Landcare members are acutely aware of the importance of our natural resources and the need to protect and enhance our natural environment.

Shared objectives for both organisations include:

- Protecting the natural resource base of the South Gippsland.
- Promotion and delivery of activities that protect biodiversity and encourage sustainable agricultural practices.
- Pest and weed management, including educational activities and innovative collaborative projects.
- A strategic planned approach to increasing and improving the wildlife habitat and water quality throughout the Shire.
- Promoting and supporting ecologically sustainable agricultural practices that prioritise biodiversity.
- Implementing actions contained in the South Gippsland Biodiversity Protection Plan.

South Gippsland Shire Council's Environment and Sustainability Focus

This Memorandum of Understanding aligns with and supports the *South Gippsland Community Vision 2040*.

Vision Statement

"South Gippsland: celebrating our First Peoples, diverse populations, culture, heritage, environment, agriculture and industries. We support and empower positive change through education and action.

We sustainably adapt to protect and enhance our unique natural environment, towns and villages through community-led planning and initiatives.

We're an inclusive community, a place where people come to visit and want to stay."

In addition to the Vision Statement, the partnered activities outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding between South Gippsland Shire Council and the South Gippsland Landcare Network, specifically align to the following Vision priorities and outcomes:

- Our activities promote a sense of belonging and fun, and we have plenty to do for people regardless of age and ability.
- Our community is resilient and ready to face future environmental challenges.
- Our farmland is a leading food bowl in Victoria; our high quality produce is sustainably grown and creates food security.
- Our agricultural industries use regenerative land management practices to ensure the long-term viability of our land.
- Our natural resources are used sustainably with a long-term time frame in mind.
- Our care of our natural environment and waterways encourages generational connections to the natural world around us.
- Our native bushland is protected and strengthened through initiatives such as rate relief for bush areas, covenants and a Shire-wide approach to revegetation.
- Our community is educated and informed about weed and pest management.
- Our wildlife connectivity is encouraged through extensive tree canopies, healthy waterways and habitat corridors.

There is also strong alignment with many of the priorities and objectives in the Council Plan 2022 to 2026, including:

Economy and Industry

- Support agriculture, food and fibre production to remain a competitive and significant contributor to our local and national economy.

Healthy and Engaged Communities

- Foster a sense of belonging and connectedness through involvement in community groups, fostering community leadership and engaging with our creative industries.

Protecting and Enhancing Our Environment

- Educate and empower our communities to reduce and control weeds and pests.
- Plan and implement biolink corridors to increase the percentage of tree cover and habitat in our Shire and support our community, including landowners, to partner with us in implementing bio-links.
- Number of partnered revegetation activities with Landcare each year.
- Partner with land managers, farmers and Landcare to develop and implement weed and pest mitigation programs.
- Continue to deliver South Gippsland's indigenous native vegetation planting program and explore partnership opportunities to expand the program.

This Memorandum of Understanding also connects with the goals and strategic themes of South Gippsland Shire Council's *Economic Development Strategy 2021 to 2031*, specifically in supporting industries that rely on our natural resources and land such as agriculture and visitor economy. For example:

To build a sustainable and growing economy that:

- *Broadens, builds and strengthens industry sectors;*
- *Utilises the natural environment and improves liveability in the Shire;*
- *Establishes the Shire as a food hub that feeds our State and beyond; and*
- *Builds partnerships in order to achieve these goals.*

About the South Gippsland Landcare Network

The South Gippsland Landcare Network was formed in 1995, and in 2025 celebrates 30 years of community-led care for the South Gippsland landscape.

The South Gippsland Landcare Network has 16 member groups (Landcare and Friends groups), 600+ member families and 1,100+ subscribers to their eNews.

The South Gippsland Landcare Network operates over an area of 3,296 square kilometres, over landscapes including the Strzelecki Ranges, foothills and coastal plains. The area largely mirrors that of the South Gippsland Shire, with the exclusion of Wilsons Promontory and small portions of Bass Coast, Baw Baw and Latrobe shires.

It is a not-for-profit incorporated organisation, currently employing four part-time staff, two Landcare Group Facilitators, a Project Coordinator and Project Officer. It is overseen by a multi-skilled volunteer board, and its accounts are audited annually by a professional auditor for presentation to the membership at the Annual General Meeting.

In 2020, the South Gippsland Landcare Network developed its 2020 to 2030 Strategy with members, which guides its activities. The three main pillars are:

- Sustainable Agriculture;
- Biodiversity; and
- Pest, Plant and Animal Control.

In 2024, the South Gippsland Landcare Network delivered a 10-Year Biodiversity Protection Plan for South Gippsland. This was developed in conjunction with key stakeholders who manage land in South Gippsland, including South Gippsland Shire Council.

Purpose of the Memorandum of Understanding

Both organisations share the view that a partnership is mutually beneficial for both parties and promotes improved outcomes for the South Gippsland community and the environment.

A partnership will ensure continuity and integration of programs and projects, and increase the potential for both organisations to achieve their agricultural sustainability and biodiversity objectives.

This Memorandum of Understanding's intention is to:

- Describe and confirm the supporting activities and actions of mutual benefit to both parties in achieving their strategic direction and goals.
- Confirm the support to be provided by the South Gippsland Shire Council to the South Gippsland Landcare Network.
- Confirm the support to be provided by the South Gippsland Landcare Network to South Gippsland Shire Council.
- Confirm the future work to be undertaken by both organisations which meets the strategic direction of both organisations.

This Memorandum of Understanding describes the relationships, responsibilities and funding commitment that supports the collaborative working arrangements between both organisations.

Scope

South Gippsland Landcare Network and South Gippsland Shire Council understand:

- This Memorandum of Understanding provides a formal, mutually beneficial framework to work collaboratively.
- This Memorandum of Understanding aims to strengthen the relationship and enhance existing activities between South Gippsland Shire Council and the South Gippsland Landcare Network.
- This Memorandum of Understanding does not create a legal relationship between South Gippsland Shire Council and the South Gippsland Landcare Network. Nothing in this agreement constitutes a contractual arrangement.
- South Gippsland Shire Council and the South Gippsland Landcare Network will nominate a management representative as the principal contact for discussion in relation to the activities under the Memorandum of Understanding.

Commitments

South Gippsland Shire Council undertakes to:

- Commit to fund the South Gippsland Landcare Network for the amount of \$50,000 per annum for three financial years ending in 2027/28.
- Partner with Landcare on pest, animal and plant projects in Council-managed reserves.
- Support the South Gippsland Landcare Network procurement of a pest, plants and animals resource that could:
 - » Provide outreach support to South Gippsland residents, landowners and farmers.
 - » Strategically plan and implement works and programs designed to mitigate and minimise the impacts of pests, plants and animals in South Gippsland. This would include partnering with Council, particularly in coordinated efforts relating to Council-managed land (bush reserves and the Great Southern Rail Trail).
 - » Apply for and attract grant funding for pest, plant and animal projects.
 - » Facilitate community education workshops and programs, in partnership with South Gippsland Shire Council.
 - » Develop joint educational material that can be accessed on both organisations social media platforms.
- Support the South Gippsland Landcare Network through the provision of meeting rooms and bookable spaces at South Gippsland Shire Council-managed facilities including Leongatha Memorial Hall, Korumburra Community Hub and South Gippsland Shire Council offices. Bookings will be for Landcare-coordinated events such as community education forums, stakeholder meetings and workshops.
- Provide in-kind support through staff availability for assistance with community events including education events, forums and workshops.
- Provide in-kind support through preparation works for planting sites on Council-managed land, such as the Great Southern Rail Trail.
- Provide in-kind support for signage and small materials (tree guards, jute matting etc.) for planting sites on Council-managed land, such as the Great Southern Rail Trail, and ongoing maintenance at these sites.
- Provide advice, input and guidance into the preparation of the South Gippsland Landcare Network's strategic planning and major projects.
- Commit to partner with the South Gippsland Landcare Network on a minimum of two planting events (or similar) and two education events (or similar) each year.

The South Gippsland Landcare Network undertakes to:

- Provide an annual report, including a value statement demonstrating funds/projects leveraged from South Gippsland Shire Council's contribution to the South Gippsland Landcare Network, works undertaken to build ongoing social capital in Landcare activities, demonstrated partnered activities with Council, and demonstrating solvency.
- Present an annual Council Briefing on the achievements of the year, particularly relating to what was achieved through the Memorandum of Understanding and annual funding.
- Provide technical expertise, advice and input to South Gippsland Shire Council to assist with responding to public enquiries and planning for events and strategic plans.
- Provide support to South Gippsland Shire Council in engaging with Landcare members, leveraging the South Gippsland Landcare Network's social capital to engage the community and private landowners.
- Promote and encourage landowners and members to actively participate in revegetation and vegetation protection aligning with South Gippsland Shire Council's strategic plans and Vision.
- Commit to partnering with South Gippsland Shire Council on a minimum of two planting events (or similar) and two education events (or similar) each year.
- Utilise the funding provided towards agreed activities.

Ongoing works between both parties will include:

- Identifying opportunities for cross promotional media in relevant publications and social media platforms.
- Promotion of the partnership between both organisations.
- Appropriate use of organisation logos, seeking permission when required.
- Establishing annual joint work plans, including a minimum of two planting events (or similar) and two education events (or similar) each year.
- Measure and monitor on-ground works and projects annually to report against.

Governance

South Gippsland Shire Council and the South Gippsland Landcare Network will agree on an Annual Action Plan by 1 July each year, that will outline the intended joint activities and use of annual funding for the following financial year.

This Annual Action Plan will be shared with Councillors by 1 August each year after the initial year.

South Gippsland Shire Council and the South Gippsland Landcare Network will have regular meetings to support the implementation of the Annual Plan.

The South Gippsland Landcare Network will:

- Measure and monitor the works undertaken with the annual \$50,000 contribution and report on these in the Annual Report;
- Provide updates to Council through bi-monthly meetings; and
- Provide a mid- and end-of-year review update to Councillors.

South Gippsland Shire Council and the South Gippsland Landcare Network will work together towards continuous improvement of the partnership, including a mid- and end-of-year review process between both parties to discuss opportunities for improvement.

Commencement and Review

The Memorandum of Understanding will commence on the date signed and remain valid until 30 June 2028. A formal review of the Memorandum of Understanding will be conducted prior to its expiration.

Amendments to this Memorandum of Understanding require agreement from both parties. Changes are to be in the format of an addendum to the Memorandum of Understanding and signed by both parties.

SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL

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SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL

South Gippsland Shire Council and South Gippsland Landcare Network Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Action Plan



South Gippsland
Shire Council

Objective	Range of actions	Council Plan 2022-26 objectives and priorities	Council Environmental Sustainability Strategy Framework
Support implementation of Biodiversity Protection Plan (BPP) for South Gippsland	Run 2 BPP implementation working groups to identify actions e.g. South Gippsland BPP - Draft Year 1 Actions Reviewed 26 Feb 2025.	Protecting and enhancing our environment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council will work proactively with landholders and land management agencies in preparing for changes in weather patterns...and impacts of climate change. Council will support appropriate regeneration and revegetation initiatives and the development of bio-link corridors... with community partnerships. 	Council will continue to work towards protecting the biodiversity of the region.
	Present BPP to Council staff and Councillors to show how it can be used as a decision-making tool to achieve biodiversity outcomes. e.g. Biolinks Mapping Project (recently commenced)		Council will look to work with developers around offset trees and vegetation planting practices when going through planning applications.
	Publicity campaign to raise awareness of the BPP, including positive collaboration stories about SGLN/SGSC partnership e.g. GSRT Pedal and Plant Events and the Firewise Demonstrations Gardens Project (Loch and Meeniyen)	Healthy and Engaged Communities: partnering in community plans and initiatives. Sustainable Growth: Council will consider the environmental impacts... of growth and land use change in our actions and decision-making.	Council can send clear signals to developers and builders about expectations when it comes to designing and building new building stock.

Develop biolinks plan for South Gippsland	<p>Refine proposal and apply for funding from variety of sources.</p> <p>e.g. Biolinks Mapping Project (recently commenced).</p> <p>The Project will provide SGSC with detailed biolinks mapping data; which will enable SGSC to make strategic biodiversity planning decisions.</p>	Plan and implement bio-link corridors to increase percentage of tree cover and habitat.	<p>4.4</p> <p>Council will continue to work collaboratively with community and other NRM agencies to prevent further habitat loss and establish strategic wildlife corridors to maintain genetic diversity, with our Council vegetation team retaining large trees for habitat purposes.</p>
Facilitate collaborative management of Rail Trail and reserves by Council and Landcare volunteers	<p>Work with Council staff and Landcare groups to identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suitable sites for collaboration • Issues for inclusion in a collaborative management plan. <p>e.g. Ongoing collaboration with Friends of Baths Road Reserve (auspiced by Mardan Mirboo Nth Lc Group).</p> <p>Develop draft collaborative management plan template.</p> <p>Draft management plan template, has been developed to aid in collaborative on-ground works.</p> <p>Implement pilot project at one site to trial collaborative management agreement with view to replicating at other sites in the future.</p>	<p>Volunteers play an important role in our community and Council is committed to celebrating and supporting them.</p> <p>Create places for people to enjoy our parks, gardens and coastal areas.</p> <p>Council will support appropriate regeneration.</p> <p>Plan and implement bio-link corridors to increase percentage of tree cover and habitat.</p>	<p>4.4</p> <p>Working on land that Council directly manages, Council will act to reduce the impacts of land use practices on habitat and biodiversity loss.</p> <p>Council will continue to work collaboratively with community and other NRM agencies to prevent further habitat loss.</p>

Protect biodiversity through improved weed and pest management	Education event about weed and pest management.	Council will expand biodiversity with community partnerships and weed and feral pest management education.	4.4 Council aims to work with new community members to educate around the importance of weed and pest management.
	SGSC Environment Team staff present at SGLN Weed Workshops.		
	Collate resources to share with ratepayers and land managers to help understand and manage the feral deer problem.		
	Media campaign to increase reporting of feral deer in FeralScan to assist with future funding applications by Council and SGLN		
	Promote FeralScan via SGSC Social Media.		
	Implement pilot project at one site to trial collaborative management agreement with view to replicating at other sites in the future.		
Support Council's strategic weed management of roadsides	Liaise with SGSC staff regarding any roadside weed issues impacting on SGLN project sites.		4.3 Council's Environment Team actively manages Shire roadsides to prevent habitat loss, primarily from invasive weed species.
	SGSC consults with SGLN on priority roadsides for treatment (linked to SGLN Projects).		
Recognise the contribution of Landcare volunteers	Publish the stories of Landcare quiet achievers as part of SGLN's 30 year celebrations.	Continue to support our existing and emerging volunteers.	

2.3. ACCESS AND INCLUSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE - NEW MEMBERS

Directorate:	Future Communities
Department:	Community, Customer and Visitor

Council Plan

Objective - Connecting our People and Places

Objective - Healthy and Engaged Communities

An active Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee supports the positive representation of people experiencing barriers to access and/or inclusion, and implementation of the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report to Council is to consider the community representative submissions received in response to the Expressions of Interest for membership of the South Gippsland Shire Council Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee (Committee).

The report recommends that the submitters be endorsed to participate on the Committee.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council thank the community representatives for their submissions and endorse their membership in Confidential Attachment [10.1.1] on to the South Gippsland Shire Council Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee.

REPORT

South Gippsland Shire Council is committed to supporting universal access and inclusion. To support this commitment, Council convenes an Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee (the Committee) to provide Council with advice on access and inclusion opportunities and barriers within South Gippsland.

The Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee Terms of Reference (**Attachment [2.3.1]**) allow membership to comprise of a maximum of nine community members, and five organisations with an access and inclusion focus. The Committee currently has five community representatives and four organisation representatives. Expressions of interest for community representatives are currently open as there are vacancies.

Three expressions of interest (**Confidential Attachment [10.1.1]**) have been received in April, and all submissions meet the required selection criteria:

- have lived experience of access and/or inclusion barriers or;
- have experience caring for and/or advocating for someone with access and/or inclusion barriers; and

- be able to consider universal access and inclusion from many points of view.

This report recommends Council endorse the submissions, thank the submitters and invite them to participate on the Committee.

CONSULTATION / COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Expressions of Interest in participating in the Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee are open when there are vacancies. All expressions of interest are compared to selection criteria, and all eligible submitters are contacted for a conversation around expectation and requirements for participation before requesting endorsement from Council.

RESOURCES / FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee is supported by the Community Development team and is included in the current operational budget.

RISKS

Nil

STAFF DISCLOSURE

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have considered and determined that they do not have a conflict of interest in the matter.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Access & Inclusion Advisory Committee - Terms of Reference [2.3.1 - 6 pages]

CONFIDENTIAL ATTACHMENTS

The consideration of confidential information in a closed session of Council is in accordance with s.66(2)(a) and s.66(5)(a) and (b) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Confidential Attachments [10.1.1], [10.1.2], [10.1.3] – Expression of Interest – is designated confidential information pursuant to the *Local Government Act 2020*, s.3(1)(f) - personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs.

The grounds for designation have been made to protect the privacy of an individual's personal information.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Council's Good Governance Framework

Pillar 1. Direction & Leadership

Pillar 2. Culture & Behaviour

Pillar 3. Decision Making

Pillar 5. Communications & Community Engagement

Council Policy / Strategy / Plans

Documents are available on Council's website at the following [LINK](#).

Nil

Community Strengthening Strategy

Council Plan 2022-2026

Disability Action Plan

Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan

Legislative Provisions

Disability Discrimination Act 1992

Equal Opportunity Act 2020

Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008

Regional, State and National Plan and Policies

Nil



ACCESS AND INCLUSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE 2024 - 2027

Context

South Gippsland Shire Council is committed to supporting universal access and inclusion. To support this commitment, Council convenes an Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee (the Committee) to provide Council with advice on development and implementation of a South Gippsland Access & Inclusion Action Plan, a plan for equitable access to goods, services and facilities across the municipality.

To ensure the Committee represents the interests of all people in the municipality with lived experience of barriers to access and inclusion and all who will benefit from universal design, Committee members will be selected to represent diverse views and lived experience of access and/or inclusion barriers. Council recognises groups within our society experience barriers to living an active, engaged, and happy life. These barriers affect different groups in different ways and are often part of the structures of our community. The Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee will support these groups to overcome and dismantle these barriers.

The Committee's establishment supports the South Gippsland Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2022–2025. This Plan seeks to improve the health and well-being of the South Gippsland community and the implementation plan contains actions and activities aimed at minimising and removing barriers to inclusion.

Terms of Reference

1. Purpose

The Committee has an advisory role only, advice is given to Council for its consideration.

The Committee will provide advice to Council on:

- access & inclusion issues
- promoting inclusion, access, and equity
- development and implementation of the Council's Access & Inclusion Action Plan, and other policies, strategies, and plans.



2. Role of the Committee

the Committee will:

- a) assist Council in the development of the Council's Access & Inclusion Action Plan, based on the actions within the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2022–2025
- b) provide advice to the Council on the implementation of the Access & Inclusion Action Plan in line with the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2022–2025
- c) provide advice to Council on especially vulnerable people with disability and/or access and inclusion barriers
- d) provide advice to the Council on issues, policies, documents, and projects relating to universal access and inclusion
- e) provide advice to the Council on issues that may require advocacy
- f) provide a link between the community and the Council on advocacy issues for people with access and/or inclusion barriers
- g) assist in increasing awareness and knowledge of issues related to disability
- h) encourage and support; people with access and/or inclusion barriers and support groups to raise their profile.

3. Membership

The Committee will aim to reflect the community's diversity and will comprise up to 15 members.

- a) up to nine total community representatives. There must be a minimum of five members
- b) at least half the community representatives will be people with access and/or inclusion barriers
- c) Community representatives will:
 - have lived experience of access and/or inclusion barriers or
 - have experience caring for and/or advocating for someone with access and/or inclusion barriers
 - be able to consider universal access and inclusion from many points of view
- d) When selecting Committee members, Council will pay specific attention to reflecting the diverse gender and cultural identities of the community
- e) up to five total service organisation representatives. There must be a minimum of two organisations represented, and the organisations must have an access and inclusion focus.
- f) The nominated Councillor or Councillors
- g) Council's Social Planning Officer and Community Strengthening Officer (or delegates) will attend the meetings, but not have voting rights.
- h) Members of the Committee require endorsement by Council. Council may set terms of appointment.
- i) Councillor representatives will be appointed/reappointed at a Council Meeting
- j) Committee vacancies will be filled at the discretion of the Council

SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL | Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee



- k) Members may be granted a leave of absence and replaced by an appropriate substitute for the period of the absence.

4. Code of Conduct

- a. The Committee will work in line with the values of the South Gippsland Shire Council and Community.
- b. Members of the Committee will represent both the Committee and Council in general and will:
 - Be respectful of each other and the different views expressed in the Committee
 - act and speak in the interest of the Committee and Council
 - be respectful of different views expressed by the Committee and advocacy groups
 - consider the interests of the entire South Gippsland community

5. Removal Process and Losing Membership

Should a Committee member act against the Committee's interest or violate the code of conduct, and the situation cannot be resolved to allow the member to remain on the Committee, the Committee may vote to request that Council revoke their membership. This removal process details how this is done.

- a) The Committee becomes aware of a potential issue that following an investigation may require the removal of a member. This may be through:
 - A complaint or report by a community member
 - The report of Council staff
 - The report of a Committee member
- b) The Committee should try to resolve the issue to allow the member to stay on the Committee. A resolution would require the member to acknowledge the potential problem and decide to continue to work according to the Committee's goals and code of conduct.
- c) Where a resolution is impossible, a member may call for a vote to request the Council revoke the challenging representative's membership.
- d) This vote requires a two-thirds majority for the resolution to pass.

6. Resigning and Revoking

- a) Council may revoke the membership of any member of the Committee at any time.
- b) Council can withdraw the membership of any person found to be acting outside the interests of the South Gippsland Shire Council.
- c) A member will lose their membership if they are absent from three consecutive meetings without a Leave of Absence, and in agreement with the Chairperson.
- d) A member may resign from the Committee by informing the Chairperson of their resignation.
- e) Records of resignations are to be submitted to the Chairperson, who will forward

SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL | Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee



these to Council.

- f) Council has the authority to terminate the services of the Committee at any time after consultation with the Committee.

7. Filling Vacancies

- a) When there is a vacancy on the Committee, it will be filled according to these terms of reference and the selection criteria.
- b) The Advisory Committee Chair or their delegate will actively participate in the recruitment and induction of new members.
- c) Proposed membership of the Advisory Committee is to be confirmed by Council.

8. Resources

To ensure community members are provided equitable access and inclusion within the Committee all community Committee members will be provided with the resources and support required to attend meetings and make meaningful contributions to the Committee's work.

As members of this Committee may be people with lived experience of disability, the needs of each member may differ and be unique. Resources that Council will provide include but are not limited to:

- Helping with transport when required to attend a venue.
- Provide IT help and expertise when required to attend virtually.
- Providing the equipment, including IT equipment, needed to attend and contribute to the meeting.
- Ensuring both virtual and in-person venues are accessible to all members of the communities.
- Provide training and leadership opportunities to support the Committee's work
- Considering the individual inclusion and accessibility needs of the members with disability.

9. Committee Operations

- a) The Committee will appoint the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson (if required) for the period of one year, with an option to extend if the Committee agrees.
- b) Council Officers will be regularly invited to meetings to discuss developments and initiatives relevant to the Access & Inclusion Action Plan and broader universal access related issues.
- c) the Community Strengthening team will provide administrative support and information to the Committee
- d) Committee members may be reimbursed for expenses incurred, as agreed with the Council.

10. Proceedings

10.1 Meetings



- a) The Advisory Committee will meet at least four times per year or more often as required.
- b) Each meeting should not be longer than two hours.
- c) Meetings will follow standard meeting procedures (training will be provided)
- d) The agenda will be prepared by the appointed Officer and provided to the Committee members at least four days before the meeting.
- e) Council encourages Committee members to add items to the agenda.
- f) Minutes will be taken by the appointed Officer for each meeting and distributed to Committee members and relevant staff in the week following the meeting.

10.2 *Quorum*

- a) A quorum of the Committee is half of the members plus one.
- b) If a quorum is not present within 30 minutes after the start of the meeting, the meeting will not be able to make any binding decisions.
- c) The notes from this meeting can be ratified at the next meeting as long as there is a quorum.

10.3 *Recommendation making*

- a) The Committee will make every effort to reach consensus on recommendations to Council.
- b) If consensus is not possible, a recommendation may be voted on by a simple majority. In the event of a tie, the Chairperson has the casting vote.
- c) Council is not obligated to respond to or act upon recommendations made by the Committee

10.3 *Reporting*

- a) Recommendations to Council should reflect a consensus view. Where there is no consensus, the report will clearly outline the different points of view
- b) Reports to Council will be coordinated through the Councillor Representative
- c) Members may present the minutes to their organisations.

11. Terms of Committee, Evaluation and Review

- a) The Committees' term will run until the end date of the Access & Inclusion Action Plan or until disbanded by Council.
- b) Council will review the Committee and these Terms of Reference every four years.
- c) The Committee will be an active participant in this review and will use this process to monitor and evaluate the Committee's effectiveness.

12. Conflicts of Interest

- a) A conflict of interest, in this case, would be the decision of the Committee



conflicting with other interests' members may have.

- b) Committee members must disclose any conflict of interest to the Chairperson (or nominated Councillor in the case of the Chairperson).
- c) The conflict of interest may be of a direct or indirect nature.
- d) The disclosure must be made at the beginning of the meeting, and the Committee member should leave the meeting when the matter is being discussed. The Committee member may return to the meeting immediately after deciding the matter.
- e) Advisory Committee members should be guided by the Conflict of Interest legislation and guidelines as they apply to Councillors. Guidance and training will be provided for the Committee by Council.

13. Confidentiality

The Committee may deal with items of a confidential nature. This requires confidentiality, discretion and sensitivity. This Committee, more than others, may become aware of sensitive and personal information about our community as it will be working on issues relating to disability and barriers to access and inclusion. Disability is an intensely personal and often stigmatised aspect of our community. This Committee will strive to create a safe space for any confidential information to arise and be kept confidential within the Committee.

If members of the public (not members of the Committee) are in attendance, they should be asked to leave during such discussions.

14. Dispute resolution and grievance procedure

Should a dispute or grievance arise, the Committee should attempt to resolve the matter. If unable to resolve the issue, it should be referred to Director Economy and Community who will arrange guidance and appropriate dispute resolution.

2.4. NAMING OF ROADS IN POOWONG - 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 undertaking community consultation for the commemorative naming of two new roads to be created as part of the approved plans for Planning Permit - 2021/321 for 14 Brisbane Street, Poowong.

It is proposed that community consultation is undertaken from the 22 May 2025 to 23 June 2025.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Undertake community consultation for a period of four weeks from 22 May 2025 to the 23 June 2025, inviting the community to provide feedback on the proposed naming of the two roads to be created as part of approved plans for Planning Permit - 2021/321; and**
- 2. Notes a report will be presented at the July 2025 Council Meeting, outlining the outcome of the community consultation and any relevant next steps.**

REPORT

Background

The naming of roads, assets or any other geographic feature in Victoria is governed by the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998* and associated Naming Rules issued by Geographic Names Victoria (GNV). Council has specific powers under Section 206 of the *Local Government Act 1989* in relation to the naming of roads.

Naming Proposals

In accordance with condition (d) under the Functional Layout Plan in Planning Permit 2021/321, a functional layout plan must be submitted and approved by the Responsible authority including proposed street names.

The Function Layout Plan submitted to Council proposes to name the two roads to be created as part of the new subdivision with commemorative names as defined by the Naming Rules.

Road 1 – Proposed Name – Beckett Street

This name is to commemorate Daniel Beckett. Daniel Beckett was a resident of Poowong when Poowong was first surveyed in 1878. David Beckett was the first selector of original crown allotment for the land in question at 14 Brisbane Street, Poowong.

References:

- *Poowong The First 30 Years The story of its Early History*, Published by Joseph White. (Page 140)
- *History of the Shire of Korumburra*, Published by Joseph White. (Page 53)

Road 2 - Proposed Name – Horsley Street

This name is to commemorate the Horsley Family who ran the first Post Office in Poowong in 1883, particularly Susan Horsley who oversaw the Post Office until 1890. To this day, descendants of the Horsley family still have a connection with the Poowong township.

References:

- *Poowong The First 30 Years The story of its Early History*, Published by Joseph White. (Page 56)

Naming Rule Considerations

The Naming Rules require Council to consider 13 principles. For the two naming proposals in this report, four principles are particularly relevant:

Principle C - Linking the name to place

Names should have a link to place to ensure the preservation of our cultural heritage. Naming authorities play an important role in recognising and promoting our cultural heritage, as do surveyors, developers and the general public in suggesting names.

Names that link the name to the place could relate to Traditional Owner culture and occupation of the land. Other examples include local flora and fauna, Australian war contributions, past exploration and settlement, local geography and geology, significant events, the cultural diversity of past and current inhabitants, or patterns of land usage and industrial/mineral/agricultural production.

Both naming proposals have a link to the settlement of the township of Poowong.

Principle D - Ensuring names are not duplicated

Proposed names must not duplicate another name within a locality, or the distances set by the rules, irrespective of Council boundaries.

Whilst there are no other roads named Beckett or Horsley within the Shire, there is a A'Beckett Street in Leongatha located 22kms away from the proposed site which is within the 30kms radius for rural or remote areas.

As part of the community consultation, Council will seek the views of the community if they feel A'Beckett and Beckett are too similar and should be considered duplicate names.

Principle G - Gender Equality

Gender equality in the naming of roads, features and localities is encouraged. When developing a naming proposal consideration should be given to gender equality.

The naming proposals commemorate both a female and male settler.

Principle I - Using commemorative names

Naming often commemorates an event, person or place. When considering a commemorative name, the following must be considered:

- the person should be or have been held in strong regard by the community;
- the person's achievements;
- the relevant history and association to the area; and
- the significance of the family/person to the area/land. For example, a family that has been associated with an area for at least 25 years.

Both naming proposals have a connection to the township of Poowong, and its history is included in books related to the history of Poowong.

CONSULTATION / COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

It is proposed that Council undertake community consultation for a period of four weeks from the 22 May 2025 to the 23 June 2025, inviting the community to provide feedback on the proposed naming of the two roads.

Council will undertake this community consultation using its Your Say platform and contact all owners and residents within 100 metres of the location of the proposed roads by printed letter.

RESOURCES / FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The community consultation and possible of naming of roads will be managed with existing operational budgets from the relevant Council departments.

RISKS

Council as a Naming Authority must undertake its responsibilities in accordance with the Naming Rules and ensure that road users are able to use roads effectively.

STAFF DISCLOSURE

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have considered and determined that they do not have a conflict of interest in the matter.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Council's Good Governance Framework

Pillar 5. Communications & Community Engagement

Council Policy / Strategy / Plans

Documents are available on Council's website at the following [LINK](#).

Community Engagement Policy (C06)

Legislative Provisions

Geographic Place Names Act 1998

Local Government Act 1989

Local Government Act 2020

Regional, State and National Plan and Policies

Nil

2.5. VICTORIAN ELECTORAL COMMISSION ELECTION REPORT

Directorate:	Strategy & Partnerships
Department:	Governance and Integrity

Council Plan

Objective - Leading with Integrity

The running of effective and compliant Council elections is important for ensuring that the community has confidence that Council can lead with integrity.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is for Council to receive the *Election Report - South Gippsland Shire Council 2024 Local Government Elections* (**Attachment [2.5.1]**).

This report has been created by the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) and provides a summary of the recent Council Election in accordance with s.83 of the *Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2020*.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the Victorian Electoral Commission's Election Report - South Gippsland Shire Council 2024 Local Government Elections (Attachment [2.5.1]).

REPORT

Background

The Victorian Local Government General Elections are held every four years as set out in the *Local Government Act 2020* (Act). In 2024, general elections were held for 78 of the 79 Victorian councils with Saturday 26 October 2024 marking election day.

In accordance with s.263(1) of the Act, the VEC is the statutory election service provider for the conduct of Local Government elections in Victoria.

As per s.83 of the *Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2020*, the VEC must prepare a report to Council's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) on the conduct of the election within the period of six-months following the election day.

This report must include a certified record of the number of ballot-papers and declarations printed, issued, used, spoiled and returned. Once received, the CEO must ensure that the report is submitted at the earliest practicable Council Meeting.

Council's Interim CEO received a copy of the election report from the VEC on 14 April 2025 with the earliest Council Meeting being 21 May 2025.

Summary of the Election Report

The Election Report provides information on the 2024 South Gippsland Shire Council general election including details of the end-to-end service delivery of electoral activities throughout the election timeline. The Election Report also provides details of post-election activities including compulsory voting enforcement.

Information provided in the Election Report includes:

- At certification, the voters' roll for the 2024 South Gippsland Shire Council general election included 24,876 enrolled voters.
- The VEC election office was established at 6-12 Smith Street, Leongatha. The office location was provided by Council.
- A total of 225 telephone calls were recorded at the VEC's centralised contact centre for South Gippsland Shire during the 2024 Local Government elections.
- At the close of nominations, 17 candidates had successfully nominated for the elections:
 - Coastal-Promontory Ward - five nominations
 - Strzelecki Ward - five nominations
 - Tarwin Valley Ward - seven nominations
- The VEC mailed 24,876 ballot packs between Monday 7 October and Thursday 10 October 2024. 521 ballot packs were returned to the election office by Australia Post as return-to-sender mail. In most cases, this was likely due to the addressee no longer residing at the address.
- 627 replacement ballot packs were issued across all wards during the voting period.
- The total returned ballot paper envelopes for South Gippsland Shire Council were 21,880.
- The results of the 2024 South Gippsland Shire Council general election were declared at 3.00pm on Friday 8 November 2024 at Memorial Hall, 6-8 McCartin Street, Leongatha for all wards.
- The overall participation rate in the South Gippsland Shire Council election was 87.52%, which is higher than the state average of 83.79% (excluding Melbourne City Council) and higher than the 84.17% rate at the 2021 South Gippsland Shire Council general election.
- The VEC received seven written complaints relating to the election for South Gippsland Shire Council.

CONSULTATION / COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Nil

RESOURCES / FINANCIAL VIABILITY

Council elections require significant Council resources, both financially and in terms of Council officer time, across various departments. Council has not yet received the invoice from the VEC for the 2024 South Gippsland Shire Council general election. This invoice is expected to be received by 30 June 2025.

RISKS

Council elections are highly legislated and technical in nature. It is essential that they are conducted with the highest level of integrity to ensure the validity of the results is beyond reproach or challenge.

To minimise any risks associated with the Council election, Council officers commenced preparations for the 2024 South Gippsland Shire Council election in October 2023.

STAFF DISCLOSURE

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have considered and determined that they do not have a conflict of interest in the matter.

ATTACHMENTS

1. VEC - South Gippsland Shire Council - Local Government 2024 Election Report [2.5.1 - 54 pages]

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Council's Good Governance Framework

Pillar 4. Structure, Systems & Policies

Council Policy / Strategy / Plans

Documents are available on Council's website at the following [LINK](#).

Election Period Policy (C30)

Legislative Provisions

Local Government Act 2020

Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2015

Regional, State and National Plan and Policies

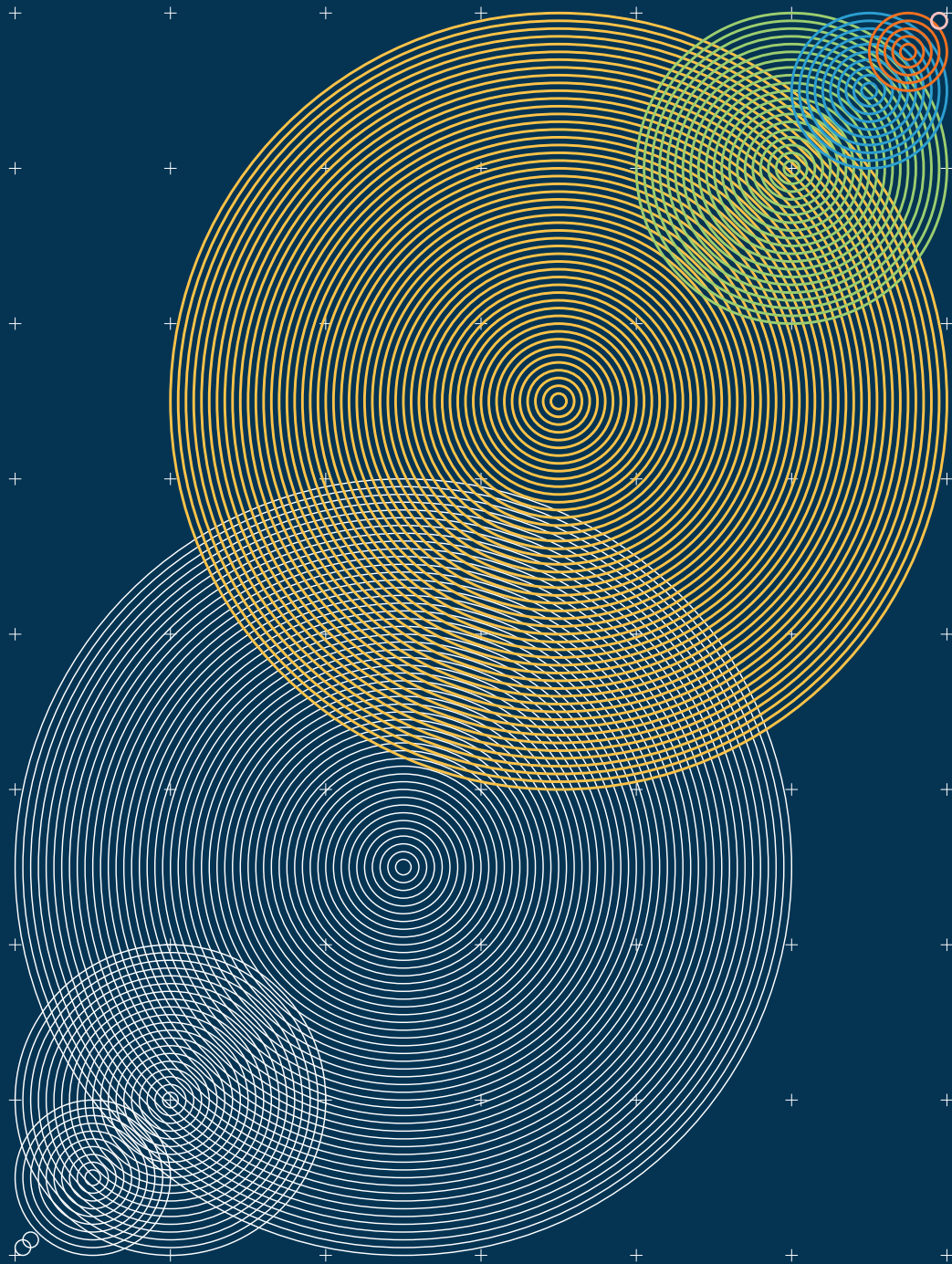
Nil

Election report

South Gippsland Shire Council

2024 Local government elections

April 2025



Letter of Transmittal

14 April 2025

Ms Kerry Ellis
Chief Executive Officer
South Gippsland Shire Council
Private Bag 4
Leongatha VIC 3953

Dear Ms Ellis

Pursuant to Regulation 83 of the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2020, I submit this report to the Chief Executive Officer of South Gippsland Shire Council on the general election held in October 2024.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Bluemmel', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Sven Bluemmel
Electoral Commissioner

Acknowledgement of Country

The Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of this nation, as the traditional custodians of the lands on which the VEC works and where we conduct our business. We pay our respects to ancestors and Elders, past, present, and emerging. The VEC is committed to honouring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas and their rich contribution to society.

Election report
South Gippsland Shire Council
2024 Local government elections

Voter turnout (front cover)

Graphic representation of the Council's voter turnout rate for the 2024 and 2021 Local Government elections.

Rings are grouped into units to visualise the turnout percentage, each ring representing 1%. Data for 2024 is depicted using coloured rings, while data for 2021 is shown in white.

South Gippsland Shire Council

Turnout (2024): 85.77%

Turnout (2021): 81.51%

1% 

5% 

10% 

20% 

50% 

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1. Introduction

The Victorian local government general elections are held every 4 years as set out in the *Local Government Act 2020* (Vic) (**LG Act**). In 2024, general elections were held for 78 of the 79 Victorian councils with Saturday 26 October marking election day. In accordance with section 263(1) of the LG Act, the Victorian Electoral Commission (**VEC**) is the statutory election service provider for the conduct of local government elections in Victoria.

This report provides information on the 2024 South Gippsland Shire Council general election including details of the end-to-end service delivery of electoral activities throughout the election timeline. This report also provides details of post-election activities including compulsory voting enforcement.

About the Victorian Electoral Commission

The VEC is an independent statutory authority established under the *Electoral Act 2002* (Vic) (**Electoral Act**). The VEC's principal functions are to conduct State elections, local government elections, certain statutory elections and polls, commercial and community elections, and to support electoral representation processes for local councils and the Electoral Boundaries Commission for State electoral boundaries. The VEC is also responsible for maintaining the Victorian register of electors and administering political funding and donation disclosure laws. The VEC has a mandated role to conduct electoral research, provide communication and education services, and inform and engage Victorians in the democratic process.

Sven Bluemmel is the appointed Electoral Commissioner and Dana Fleming is the appointed Deputy Electoral Commissioner. The Electoral Commissioner and Deputy Electoral Commissioner report to the Victorian Parliament in relation to the VEC's operations and activities.

The Electoral Commissioner heads the VEC's Executive Management Group that comprises the Deputy Electoral Commissioner, the Executive Director, Corporate Services and 7 Directors, each leading the main functional areas of the VEC. Each Director acts as subject matter experts and oversees legislative responsibilities under the LG Act and the Electoral Act.

The VEC has a dedicated local government election program framework that incorporates a range of programs, projects and activities that are supported through strategic planning, project management, and process mapping. The program is overseen by the VEC's Delivery Group and has sponsorship from the Executive Management Group.

2. Key changes

Changes in legislation

The *Local Government Amendment (Governance and Integrity) Act 2024* (Vic) received royal assent on 25 June 2024 and introduced a number of changes to local government electoral legislation.

The VEC implemented the necessary changes to the 2024 local government election program in response to the reforms as they applied to the elections.

Key changes from *Local Government Amendment (Governance and Integrity) Act 2024*

Close of roll	<p>The date for the close of roll was extended from 57 days to 80 days before the election. For all elections after the October 2024 general elections, including by-elections, the date for the close of roll will be 73 days before election day.</p> <p>The previous timelines were no longer viable due to an increase in the scale and complexity of local government elections, including changes to enrolment entitlements, population growth, higher number of wards, likely increase in the number of candidates, and reduction in mail services offered by Australia Post.</p> <p>By moving this date earlier, other key dates including nomination day, the lodgement date for candidate statements and questionnaires, and the period for mailing out of ballot materials have been brought forward through the <i>Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2020</i> (Vic) (LG Regulations) providing more time to ensure they are sustainable.</p>
Certification of the roll	<p>The timeframe for roll certification was increased to 23 business days (previously 13 business days) to ensure CEOs (or their delegates) and the VEC have adequate time to process enrolment applications and complete related roll certification processes.</p>
Candidate statement word limit	<p>In response to the pandemic, the LG Regulations permitted candidate statements to be increased from 200 to 300 words for the 2020 local government elections, acknowledging that candidates at the 2020 elections would face restrictions in campaigning.</p> <p>As candidates would no longer face pandemic-based barriers to campaigning activities, the word limit was reverted to 200 words. Equivalent amendments were also applied to the <i>City of Melbourne (Electoral) Regulations 2022</i> (Vic).</p> <p>Returning to the original word limit allowed the VEC to produce smaller candidate statement booklets, reducing associated printing costs and administrative burden.</p>
Rejection and amendment of candidate statements	<p>The time allowed for a candidate to amend their statement was reduced by one day to now be the day after the close of nominations (or 38 days before election day). This aligned the periods for rejections and amendments with the earlier deadline for lodging a candidate statement, allowing additional time to print ballot packs.</p>
Close of candidate statements, photos and questionnaires	<p>The deadline for submitting a candidate statement, photograph and questionnaire was amended to close the same day as the close of nominations at 12 noon, facilitating a more efficient process for candidates and allowing the VEC more time to print ballot packs.</p>
Mailout of ballot pack	<p>The timeline for conducting the mailout of ballot materials was extended from occurring over 3 business days to 4 business days, allowing the VEC to manage the risk of mail service level reductions and provide additional safeguards against election fraud.</p>

3. Election dates

Key timelines for the 2024 local government elections	
Deadline fixed by the VEC for council primary enrolment data	Monday 15 July 2024
Close of roll	4 pm Wednesday 7 August 2024
Opening of the election office to the public	Monday 9 September 2024
Certification of the voters' roll and opening of nominations	Monday 9 September 2024
Close of nominations	12 noon Tuesday 17 September 2024
*Deadline for lodging candidate statements, photographs and questionnaires	12 noon Tuesday 17 September 2024
*Ballot draw	From 10 am Wednesday 18 September 2024
*General mail out of ballot packs to voters	Monday 7 October to Thursday 10 October 2024
*Close of voting	6 pm Friday 25 October 2024
Day prescribed as Election Day	Saturday 26 October 2024
*Close of extended postal vote receipt period	12 noon Friday 1 November 2024
Declaration of election results	No later than Friday 15 November 2024

*Dates with asterisks relate to contested elections only.

4. About South Gippsland Shire Council

South Gippsland Shire Council is comprised of 9 councillors elected from a subdivided structure.

The structure was last reviewed in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1989* through an electoral representation review in 2012.

The internal ward boundaries of South Gippsland Shire Council were last reviewed in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* through a subdivision review in May 2024.

Figure 1: The electoral structure of South Gippsland Shire Council at the general election held on 26 October 2024.



5. Voters' roll

The VEC prepared the voters' roll for the election under section 8(2)(c) of the Electoral Act and in accordance with section 249 of the LG Act. The close of roll for the election was 4 pm on Wednesday 7 August 2024. Pursuant to section 249(4) of the LG Act, the VEC certified the voters' roll on Monday 9 September 2024.

At certification, the voters' roll for the 2024 South Gippsland Shire Council general election included 24,876 enrolled voters.

Composition of the voters' roll

Section 249 of the LG Act specifies that the voters' roll for a local government election is formed by combining 2 separate lists of voters:

1. The Electoral Commissioner's list (EC list) – list of State electors that are enrolled within that local government area.
2. The Chief Executive Officer's list (CEO list) – list of council-entitled voters.

Refer to **Appendix 1** for a breakdown of the South Gippsland Shire Council general election voters' roll.

Amendments to the voters' roll

In accordance with section 250 of the LG Act, the VEC is able to amend any error or omission in the preparation, printing or copying of the voters' roll, or correct any misnomer or inaccurate description of any person, place or thing on the voters' roll. Amendments to the voters' roll are to be certified by the VEC.

All voters added to the roll were issued with a ballot pack. Where a voter was removed from the roll after the mail-out of ballot material, the VEC had systems in place to ensure that returned ballot papers from the deleted voters could be identified and excluded from the extraction and count. Where roll amendments were required, the total number of voters on the roll was updated.

Following the close of roll, the VEC made 2 amendments to the voters' roll, zero additions and 2 deletions.

6. Advertising and communication campaign

State-wide advertising

The VEC delivered a state-wide advertising campaign to maximise public awareness and participation amongst all eligible voters. Campaign activities and consistent messaging were delivered across 2 phases – enrolment and voting – and through multiple traditional and emerging mediums, including radio, digital and social media, and offline/outdoor advertising.

Public notices

The VEC published a series of public notices on the VEC website throughout the election as required by the LG Act. The notices included critical information relevant to each milestone of the election timeline.

For the 2024 general election, South Gippsland Shire Council nominated the following newspapers for the public notices:

- › Mirboo North Times
- › South Gippsland Sentinel Times

Refer to **Appendix 2** for further information in relation to the public notices.

VEC website

The VEC provided council specific information regarding the election on its website. The VEC website went live for the local government elections in early July 2024. Whilst some council-specific data remained static during the election, the website was regularly updated with content relevant to the election and at each key milestone such as close of roll, nominations, voting and results.

Media liaison

An online media briefing was held on Monday 29 July 2024. The briefing was made available to view on the VEC website for media representatives unable to join the live event. The media briefing provided an overview of the planning, timeline, legislative changes and other key information for the 2024 local council elections.

Media outlets were provided with a media handbook that outlined the election timeline and key information, and provided the VEC's head office media contacts. This was made available along with other resources from the VEC's media centre webpage. The VEC's communication team supported each election manager with managing media interest locally in their council area.

The VEC's media liaison program principally featured scheduled state-wide and tailored council-specific media releases aimed at highlighting key milestones during the election and capitalise on existing general news coverage.

More information on the VEC's media release schedule is available at **Appendix 3**.

The media program also involved a responsive media enquiry service, as well as the translation and distribution of 3 key media releases for multiple non-English news outlets in Victoria.

Social media campaign

As part of its state-wide advertising campaign, the VEC used paid promotions on social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok and WeChat, targeting voters through audience segmentation.

This advertising was supported by a defined timeline of organic social media posts on the VEC's channels, designed to cover each of the key messages of the communication campaign to further extend the reach to the community and promote conversation about the democratic process.

VoterAlert advisories

State-enrolled voters can sign up to VoterAlert, our free SMS and email service, to receive reminder messages about elections that affect them. They can subscribe to messages via SMS, email, or both.

During the general election, we used VoterAlert to send direct messages on:

Wednesday 17 to Wednesday 31 July 2024 –
13,334 voters were contacted by VoterAlert messages sent by SMS and/or email reminding voters to enrol or update their details by the close of roll.

Monday 7 October to Monday 14 October 2024 –
13,354 voters were contacted by VoterAlert messages sent by SMS and/or email advising that we had commenced posting ballot packs.

Tuesday 22 October to Wednesday 23 October 2024 –
9,053 voters were contacted by VoterAlert messages sent by SMS and/or email reminding voters that it was the last week to post their ballot material back to us.

More information on VoterAlert is available at **Appendix 4**.

Voter engagement

The VEC delivered an extensive voter engagement program throughout Victoria, specific to local demographics.

South Gippsland Shire Council

Advertising and communication campaign

Appendix 5 contains the full list of initiatives for the 2024 local government elections.

Democracy ambassadors

The VEC delivered education sessions conducted by our Democracy Ambassadors to a range of councils. The sessions focused on enrolment and voting for the election. These sessions were offered to councils in priority areas and delivered at no cost to council. Where resourcing allowed, requests for sessions that were not in the priority area were also fulfilled.

The VEC did not deliver any sessions for the South Gippsland Shire Council election.

Blind and low-vision services

Braille and large print ballot material was available to blind and low-vision voters who registered for these products by 5 pm on Tuesday 17 September 2024.

The VEC received and processed no requests for braille ballot material and 2 requests for large print ballot material for South Gippsland Shire Council.

Interpreting services

The VEC engaged the Victorian Interpreting and Language Services' Language Loop to provide a telephone interpreting service for telephone enquiries from voters who had a first language other than English. The VEC advertised direct lines for 20 languages other than English and a general line for all other languages.

Public enquiry service

A centralised contact centre was established to respond to telephone public enquiries. This ensured consistency in messaging, early identification of themes and trends along with the opportunity to enable election offices to focus on election administration. The call centre was also responsible for emails received during the local government elections. Any calls regarding CEO list applications were referred to the relevant councils. Outside the call centre hours of operation, a recorded service was available that provided information on enrolment and voting.

Election offices fielded phone queries from local candidates on issues directly related to their candidacy (as separate to general queries about running as a candidate).

A total of 225 telephone calls were recorded for South Gippsland Shire Council during the 2024 local government elections. An overall total of 11,758 email queries were received for all councils.

7. Election manager

The VEC maintains a pool of trained senior election officials from across Victoria to fill election management roles for State and local government elections. Election-specific training is provided to senior election officials before they are appointed for each election.

The size of election management teams depends on the size of the council. Under the LG Act, an election manager is appointed to conduct each council's election and is supported by one or more assistant election managers.

In accordance with regulation 21(1) of the LG Regulations, the VEC appointed Janine Taylor as the election manager for the 2024 South Gippsland Shire Council general election.

The appointed assistant election manager was Jacqueline Checkley.

8. Election office

The election manager was responsible for establishing and managing the election office at 6-12 Smith Street, Leongatha. The premises were provided by the Council.

9. Candidates

Nominations opened at 9 am on Monday 9 September and closed at 12 noon on Tuesday 17 September 2024. Candidates were required to lodge their nomination forms in person at the election office. The nomination fee was \$250.

Candidate information

The VEC developed resources to support prospective candidates with the nomination process, including a candidate handbook. From mid-July, candidates could access information about nominating as a candidate for the election. The online Candidate Helper, accessible via the VEC website, went live on Tuesday 20 August 2024. Candidate Helper enabled candidates to complete most of their nomination forms and other forms online before lodging them in person with the election manager.

For the South Gippsland Shire Council 2024 elections, the VEC's candidate information sessions were delivered in person by the election manager. Additionally, a candidate information video was available on the VEC website from Tuesday 20 August 2024.

Nominations

At the close of nominations, 17 candidates had successfully nominated for the elections, which includes any candidates who retired after the close of nominations. Candidates who withdrew before the close of nominations are not included.

The following is a breakdown of candidate nominations per ward:

- › Coastal-Promontory Ward - 5 nominations
- › Strzelecki Ward - 5 nominations
- › Tarwin Valley Ward - 7 nominations

Ballot draws to determine the order of the names on the ballot paper were held at the election office following the close of nominations using the VEC's computerised ballot draw application.

See **Appendix 6** for the list of candidates in ballot draw order.

Candidate statements and photos

In accordance with regulation 39 of the LG Regulations, candidates were able to submit a 200-word statement and a recent photograph for inclusion in the ballot packs sent to voters. The deadline for these items was 12 noon on Tuesday 17 September 2024.

See **Appendix 6.1** for a breakdown of submitted statements and photos and **6.2** for sample ballot material.

Candidate questionnaires

In accordance with regulation 43 of the LG Regulations, candidates could also submit answers to a set of prescribed questions. The election manager accepted questionnaires from 13 of the 17 candidates at the election.

Voters could read the completed questionnaires on the VEC website or access them by contacting the election office.

Retirement of a candidate

In accordance with the LG Regulations, at any time after the close of nominations and before election day, a candidate may retire, or be retired by the VEC. A candidate can only retire if it will result in an uncontested election or if they are not qualified to be a Councillor. If the VEC believes a candidate was not entitled to nominate, it must formally query the candidate's qualification and invite written reasons why they are entitled. If the VEC remains satisfied that the candidate is not entitled, it must retire the candidate from the election.

When a candidate is retired from an election, the VEC is required to take all practicable steps to remove the retired candidate's name from ballot papers. If it is not practicable to do so, during the counting of votes the retired candidate's votes are passed on to other candidates according to voters' preferences.

There were no candidate retirements at the South Gippsland Shire Council elections.

10. Voting

Ballot pack preparation and redirection

Artwork for ballot papers and candidate statements is generated using the VEC's automation tool. This tool selects from a range of pre-defined artwork templates and populates them with the relevant candidate information directly from the VEC's election management system database.

Following an extensive quality assurance process, print-ready artwork files were securely transmitted directly to the VEC's contracted ballot material printer ready for production. The VEC's contracted mail house directly printed the voters' addresses (mailing and entitlement address) and barcodes on the ballot paper envelopes in preparation for assembly and delivery of ballot packs. The VEC utilised multiple third party providers to assemble the ballot packs prior to the mail house lodging with Australia Post. The mail house allocated a secure area within its operations that was used solely for the printing, insertion, and dispatch of ballot material. This ensured the highest standards of security were met.

Electors could apply to have their ballot material redirected to an address other than their entitlement address. Voters had until the certification day for the voters' roll (also the day that nominations open) to apply for their ballot material to be redirected. The VEC arranged for ballot material to be delivered to any voter applying for redirection to the address specified in their request. For the 2024 local government elections, voters had until Monday 9 September 2024 to submit redirection requests.

The election manager received 7 requests for redirection of ballot packs for the election.

Early votes

Voters could request an early postal ballot envelope (early vote) before the general mail out of ballot packs. The election manager processed requests and issued early votes where the request was assessed as reasonable. Requests for early votes could be processed from Wednesday 18 September 2024, the day after nominations closed, until the start of the general mail out of ballot packs on Monday 7 October 2024.

Due to the timing of early votes, some early voters may not have had access to the candidate statements, photographs or questionnaires.

The election manager issued a total of 45 early votes for the election.

Mail-out of ballot packs

The VEC mailed 24,876 ballot packs between Monday 7 and Thursday 10 October 2024.

See **Appendix 7** for a breakdown of the packs sent on each day of the general mail out. The VEC did not mail ballot packs to voters who passed away between the close of roll and generation of the mail-out file.

This included 7 ballot packs which were redirected to alternative addresses for voters who had applied to redirect their ballot pack by Monday 9 September 2024.

In accordance with regulation 49(3) of the LG Regulations, no more than 35% of ballot packs were mailed or delivered to voters on any one day during the mail-out period. All ballot packs were lodged with Australia Post under the priority paid delivery timetable.

The VEC liaised closely with Australia Post during the mail-out period to confirm that ballot packs had been delivered to voters. Australia Post confirmed all ballot packs had been delivered by Tuesday 15 October 2024.

During the voting period, 521 ballot packs were returned to the election office by Australia Post as return-to-sender mail. In most cases, this was likely due to the addressee no longer residing at the address.

Unenrolled votes

The election manager issued unenrolled votes to people whose names could not be found on the voters' roll but said they were entitled to vote at the election. The unenrolled ballot pack included a declaration for the voter to sign. The election manager assessed the declaration and decided to admit or disallow the vote.

The election manager issued one unenrolled vote and following relevant checks, none were admitted to the count.

Replacement ballot packs

Following the general mail out of ballot packs, a voter who claimed that their ballot pack had not been received, or had been lost, spoilt, or destroyed, could apply for a replacement vote by completing an online application form or contacting the public enquiry service.

A centralised team processed applications and mailed replacement ballot packs to the postal address provided. Voters also had the option to attend the election office in the council for which they hold entitlement, to have a replacement vote issued over the counter.

627 replacement ballot packs across all wards during the voting period were issued. Please refer to **Schedule 1** for further information on replacement ballot packs issued.

11. Return of ballot paper envelopes

VEC provided voters with a priority reply paid envelope to return their completed ballot paper and ballot paper envelope. The return mail was delivered to the election office from local postal facilities or mail distribution centres. Voters could also put their ballot papers and envelope in a ballot box at the election office.

As ballot paper envelopes were returned, they were progressively checked by the election manager to ensure they had been signed by the voter. Additionally, processes were in place to ensure that only one returned ballot paper from any one voter could proceed to the extraction and count.

The election manager received a total of 17,792 returned ballot paper envelopes across all wards by the close of voting at 6 pm on Friday 25 October 2024.

In accordance with regulation 57(3) of the LG Regulations, the election manager could accept returned ballot paper envelopes until 12 noon on the Friday following the close of voting, if they thought the voter had signed the envelope before voting closed.

The election manager accepted 4,088 ballot paper envelopes across all wards during the extended postal vote receipt period.

The total returned ballot paper envelopes for South Gippsland Shire Council was 21,880.

The election manager set aside 479 returned ballot paper envelopes that were not admitted to the extraction and counting process due to the voter not having signed the declaration envelope or, in the case of unenrolled declaration votes, an entitlement was not found for the person, or the declaration envelope was not returned with the vote.

Refer to **Schedule 1** for the total certified record of ballot papers and declaration envelopes across all wards for South Gippsland Shire Council.

12. Results

Extraction

The extraction process involved separating the declaration flaps containing voters' details from each admitted ballot paper envelope, and then extracting the ballot papers from the envelopes. This 2-stage process maintains anonymity and ensures the VEC can track the number of envelopes for ongoing reconciliation.

A total of 21,401 ballot paper envelopes were admitted to the extraction process.

Ballot papers were extracted at the election office from Tuesday 29 October 2024. The extraction of all admitted ballot paper envelopes was completed on Wednesday 6 November 2024, following the close of the extended postal vote receipt period.

If the VEC found any returned ballot paper envelopes that did not contain a ballot paper, contained more than one ballot paper, or did not contain the correct ballot paper, these were required to be rejected and not counted. There were 72 returned ballot paper envelopes rejected during the extraction activity.

Following the extraction of ballot papers from the ballot paper envelopes, a total of 21,329 ballot papers proceeded to the count.

Computer count

A computer count information session explaining the process was recorded and available for online streaming from the VEC website from Friday 18 October 2024.

Following the extraction of ballot papers admitted to the count for all wards, preferences on ballot papers were data entered into the VEC's computer counting application at the election office. The application distributes preferences using the proportional representation method once data entry of ballot paper preferences is complete. Results were calculated at the election office on Thursday 7 November 2024.

The VEC published provisional results on its website as they became available. Results were updated as finalised once declarations had taken place.

For a breakdown of first preference results by ward, refer to **Appendix 8**.

Recounts

At any time before a candidate is declared elected, the election manager or a candidate may initiate a recount. Election managers initiate recounts if margins in

a preference distribution are close or critical. Candidates must ask for a recount in writing, with the reasons for their request. The election manager and head office staff assess candidate recount requests and either accept or deny them.

The election manager did not receive any requests for a recount following the count.

Scrutineers

Scrutineers help deliver fair and transparent elections by observing election activities. They contribute to electoral integrity and help build public trust. Scrutineers can observe all activities involved in ballot paper and envelope processing.

Candidates are not permitted in election venues during extraction and counting activities and instead appoint scrutineers. Each candidate could appoint one scrutineer per election official involved in an activity. To appoint scrutineers, candidates completed a hardcopy 'Appointment and declaration of scrutineer form', which the candidate signed and submitted to the election manager. All scrutineers then had to sign the form's formal declaration in front of an election official. The declaration meant the scrutineers committed to eligibility and legal requirements and the VEC's conditions of entry.

A *Scrutineer handbook* was made available to all candidates and scrutineers with information on the role and responsibility of scrutineers during election activities. It included overviews of the activities so that scrutineers could understand what to expect during election activities they may attend. When scrutineers attended election venues they were briefed on their responsibilities and the processes they would witness. Scrutineers were instructed when and how they could challenge activities when ballot paper formality was being decided and votes were being counted. Scrutineers were allowed to notify election managers if they disagreed with the decision made by an election official on ballot paper formality or whether votes were counted for the selected candidate. Election managers reviewed the challenge and made a final decision on the ballot paper.

Declaration of results

In the Service Plan, the VEC committed to complete all results declarations by Friday 15 November 2024.

The results of the 2024 South Gippsland Shire Council general election were declared at 3 pm on Friday 8 November 2024 at Memorial Hall, 6-8 McCartin Street, Leongatha for all wards.

The VEC website was updated following the declaration to reflect the elected candidates.

13. Election statistics

Participation

Participation is measured by the number of voters marked off the roll as a percentage of the total enrolment and can vary from turnout. The overall participation rate in the South Gippsland Shire Council election was 87.52%, which is higher than the state average of 83.79% (excluding Melbourne City Council) and higher than the 84.17% rate at the 2021 South Gippsland Shire Council general election.

Analysis of voter participation for the different enrolment categories shows that participation is lower for voters who are enrolled on the EC's list (87.11%) compared to voters enrolled on the CEO's list (95.27%).

Refer to **Appendix 9** for further information on participation, including a breakdown by enrolment category.

Turnout

Voter turnout is measured by the number of formal and informal ballot papers counted in the election as a percentage of voters on the voters' roll for the election.

The overall voter turnout for the 2024 South Gippsland Shire Council general election was 85.77%. This is compared to the state average turnout of 81.46% (excluding Melbourne City Council). The voter turnout at the 2021 general election for the council was 81.51%.

Informality

The overall informal voting rate recorded at the 2024 South Gippsland Shire Council general election was 2.63%, compared with the State average of 3.47%. An informality rate of 3.53% was recorded at the South Gippsland Shire Council general election held in October 2021.

14. Complaints

Type of complaints

At local government elections, complaints generally fall into 2 broad categories:

1. Election Administration

Complaints about the conduct of the election and services to voters.

2. Election participation and conduct

Complaints about candidates and other participants in the election, at times alleging a breach of the LG Act or local laws.

Most complaints at the 2024 local government elections related to the second category, and often alleged inappropriate or illegal action by a person or group associated with the election.

Complaints process

The VEC have a streamlined complaints process during elections, developed with local councils and enforcement agencies. Complaints must be lodged in writing, then processed at head office. For the 2024 local government elections, customers could provide feedback and complaints online.

Complaints alleging a breach of the LG Act are forwarded to the Local Government Inspectorate. Complaints relating to local laws are referred to council. Complaints about the VEC's services, or the behaviour or actions of VEC staff and election officials, are the responsibility of the VEC.

The VEC is committed to responding to each complaint within 5 working days.

Complaints received

The VEC received 7 written complaints relating to the election for South Gippsland Shire Council.

Please see **Appendix 10** for a description of complaints received by the VEC.

15. Post-election activities

Storage of election material

The VEC will keep all records from the election safely and secretly in accordance with regulation 79 of the LG Regulations.

Refund of nomination fees

Nomination fees were refunded to eligible candidates on Tuesday 17 December 2024. Eligible candidates include those elected or who received at least 4% of the first preference vote. Any forfeited nomination fees were remitted to the council on Tuesday 17 December 2024.

Courts and tribunals

The Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) is responsible for hearing disputes on the validity of an election under section 311 of the LG Act.

Applications for a review of the declaration of the results of an election must be lodged within 14 days of the declaration and can be made by a candidate in the election, 10 persons who were entitled to vote at the election, or the VEC.

There were no applications to VCAT disputing the result of the South Gippsland Shire Council general election.

16. Non-voter follow up

In accordance with section 267 of the LG Act, the VEC has commenced its compulsory voting enforcement program. Any person who was required to vote at the election and failed to vote will be issued with an 'Apparent failure to vote' notice in February/March. Apparent non-voters have 28 days to respond.

People who do not respond to the notice, or do not provide a satisfactory response, may be issued with an infringement notice in April/May that will incur a penalty. Further follow-up with a penalty reminder notice in July may also occur – this stage includes the original penalty and a penalty reminder notice fee. Penalties collected on behalf of council will be reimbursed at the end of the infringement and reminder notice stages.

Additionally, during the infringement and penalty reminder notice stages, non-voters may ask for their matter to proceed directly to the Magistrates' Court.

These requests will be actioned at the conclusion of the infringement and penalty reminder notice stages. The VEC will lodge the file of any remaining non-voters with Fines Victoria at the end of the penalty reminder notice stage.

17. Evaluating VEC services

The VEC is committed to providing high quality election services to its local government clients. Through a formal feedback and debriefing program, the VEC can gauge its performance and seek advice for future local government election projects.

Feedback from councils

The VEC invited feedback from councils on its services in December 2024. Additional feedback can be provided to the LG2024 Program Manager by emailing LGProgram2024@vec.vic.gov.au

Internal debriefing program

After every electoral event, the VEC conducts an internal debriefing program that includes input from all areas of its workforce. Internal debriefing following the local government elections began in December 2024. The VEC will publish a consolidated report on its performance and key statistics from the elections. This will be tabled in Parliament and available on the VEC website.

Appendices

Schedule 1: Record of ballot papers and declaration envelopes

Coastal-Promontory Ward election	
Ballot papers printed	
Victorian Electoral Commission	10,000
Election manager	25
Total	10,025
Ballot papers issued	
General mail out	8,228
Early and replacement votes	207
Unenrolled declaration votes	0
Spoilt	0
Sub total	8,435
Unused	1,590
Total	10,025
Declarations returned	
General mail out admitted to the extraction	6,895
Early and replacement votes admitted to the extraction	132
Unenrolled declaration votes admitted to the extraction	0
Returned declarations unable to be admitted to the extraction	175
Declarations returned to sender	181
Sub total	7,383
Declarations not returned	1,052
Total	8,435

Schedule 1: Record of ballot papers and declaration envelopes

South Gippsland Shire Council

Strzelecki Ward election**Ballot papers printed**

Victorian Electoral Commission	12,000
Election manager	25
Total	12,025

Ballot papers issued

General mail out	8,563
Early and replacement votes	227
Unenrolled declaration votes	0
Spoilt	0
Sub total	8,790
Unused	3,235
Total	12,025

Declarations returned

General mail out admitted to the extraction	7,270
Early and replacement votes admitted to the extraction	172
Unenrolled declaration votes admitted to the extraction	0
Returned declarations unable to be admitted to the extraction	151
Declarations returned to sender	152
Sub total	7,745
Declarations not returned	1,045
Total	8,790

South Gippsland Shire Council

Schedule 1: Record of ballot papers and declaration envelopes

Tarwin Valley Ward election**Ballot papers printed**

Victorian Electoral Commission	11,002
Election manager	35
Total	11,037

Ballot papers issued

General mail out	8,085
Early and replacement votes	238
Unenrolled declaration votes	1
Spoilt	0
Sub total	8,324
Unused	2,713
Total	11,037

Declarations returned

General mail out admitted to the extraction	6,738
Early and replacement votes admitted to the extraction	194
Unenrolled declaration votes admitted to the extraction	0
Returned declarations unable to be admitted to the extraction	153
Declarations returned to sender	188
Sub total	7,273
Declarations not returned	1,051
Total	8,324

Schedule 2: Certification statement

In accordance with Regulation 77, I certify that Schedule 1 of this report on the conduct of the 2024 South Gippsland Shire Council local government election is a true and correct account of the number of ballot papers issued, returned and not used in this election and declarations not returned.



Sven Bluemmel
Electoral Commissioner

South Gippsland Shire Council

Appendix 1: Breakdown of the voters' roll

Appendix 1: Breakdown of the voters' roll

South Gippsland Shire Council election	Voters enrolled through an entitlement under section 241 of the LG Act	Voters enrolled through entitlements under sections 242–245 of the LG Act	Total voters enrolled
South Gippsland Shire Council	23,607	1,269	24,876
Coastal-Promontory Ward	7,168	1,060	8,228
Strzelecki Ward	8,435	128	8,563
Tarwin Valley Ward	8,004	81	8,085

Appendix 2: Public notices

Schedule of public notices

Close of roll notice	
VEC website/public notices	18 July 2024
Mirboo North Times	17 July 2024
South Gippsland Sentinel Times	23 July 2024
Notice of election	
VEC website/public notices	12 August 2024
Mirboo North Times	14 August 2024
South Gippsland Sentinel Times	13 August 2024
Voting details notice	
VEC website/public notices	20 September 2024
Mirboo North Times	9 October 2024
South Gippsland Sentinel Times	1 October 2024
Reminder notice	
VEC website	13 October 2024
Mirboo North Times	23 October 2024
South Gippsland Sentinel Times	15 October 2024

Notice of result	
VEC website/public notices	8 November 2024
Mirboo North Times	20 November 2024
South Gippsland Sentinel Times	26 November 2024

Appendix 2.1: Sample public notices

Close of roll

Sample Council postal election

My council, my vote

You must be enrolled to vote

A general election for Sample Council will be held in October 2024. To be able to vote in the election, you must be enrolled by the close of roll at **4 pm on Wednesday 7 August 2024**. Two categories of voters can be enrolled to vote in the Sample Council election: State-enrolled voters and Council-enrolled voters.

State-enrolled voters

Am I enrolled to vote?

You are automatically enrolled for this election if:

- you will be 18 years of age or over on Saturday 26 October 2024 and
- you live in the Sample Council and you are on the State electoral roll for your current address.

You need to enrol if:

- you are an Australian citizen aged 18 or over on Saturday 26 October 2024 and
- you live in the Sample Council and you are not on the State electoral roll or
- you have lived at your current residential address within the Sample Council for at least a month and have not yet updated your enrolment details, including any changes to your postal address.

How do I enrol?

You can enrol online at vec.vic.gov.au

You can also download an enrolment form from the website.

All enrolment applications must be received by the Victorian Electoral Commission by the close of roll at **4 pm on Wednesday 7 August 2024**.

How can I check my State enrolment?

You can check your enrolment details online at vec.vic.gov.au at any time, or call 131 832.

Council-enrolled voters

Am I enrolled to vote?

To be a Council-enrolled voter, you must be:

- 18 years of age or over on Saturday 26 October 2024 and
- not a State-enrolled voter within the Sample Council.

New rules mean you are no longer automatically enrolled if you are a non-resident property owner (e.g. a landlord or a business owner that pays rates). If you are a non-resident property owner within the Sample Council, you need to apply to enrol if you wish to vote in the Sample Council election.

Who else can enrol & vote?

You may also apply to enrol if:

- you have purchased a rateable property within the Sample Council location since the last election but you are not a resident of the Sample Council, or
- you are not an Australian citizen and you live in, and pay rates for, a property within the Sample Council location, or
- you pay rates on a property you occupy within the Sample Council and have no other voting entitlement within the Sample Council, for example you are a shop tenant and pay rates to the Council for your tenancy, and you have no other voting entitlement within the Sample Council, or
- you are a director or company secretary of a corporation within the Sample Council that pays rates to Sample Council and you have no other voting entitlement within the Sample Council.

Sample Council logo

How do I apply to be a Council-enrolled voter?

If you meet any of the above criteria and wish to enrol, contact Sample Council on 0000 0000 for a council enrolment form. Council enrolment forms must be received by the Council by the close of roll at **4 pm on Wednesday 7 August 2024**.

How can I check if I am Council-enrolled?

You can check your enrolment details by contacting the Council on 0000 0000.

Thinking about standing for election?

To nominate as a candidate for Sample Council, you must:

- be an Australian citizen and enrolled on the voters' roll for Sample Council and
- be eligible to become a councillor and
- have completed the mandatory candidate training provided by Local Government Victoria before lodging your nomination with the Election Manager.

For further information, visit vec.vic.gov.au

Enrolment closes

4 pm Wednesday 7 August 2024

State-enrolled voters can register for free VoterAlert SMS and email reminders at vec.vic.gov.au

vec.vic.gov.au | 131 832

For enquiries in languages other than English:

- العربية (Arabic) 9209 0100 • Azərbaycanca (Azerbaijani) 9209 0160 • বাংলা (Burmese) 9209 0161 • 普通话 (Mandarin) 9209 0106 • 廣東話 (Cantonese) 9209 0101
- Hrvatski (Croatian) 9209 0102 • ދިވެހި (Dhivehi) 9209 0119 • Ελληνικά (Greek) 9209 0103 • Հայերեն (Armenian) 9209 0162 • Italiano (Italian) 9209 0104
- ಕನ್ನಡ (Kannada) 9209 0192 • 한국어 (Korean) 9209 0194 • македонски (Macedonian) 9209 0105 • नेपाली (Nepali) 9209 0163 • فارسی (Persian) 9209 0195 • ภาษาไทย (Thai) 9209 0164
- Türkçe (Turkish) 9209 0110 • اردو (Urdu) 9209 0165 • Tiếng Việt (Vietnamese) 9209 0111 • All other non-English languages 9209 0112

Authorised by S. Blumel, Electoral Commissioner, 530 Collins Street, Melbourne, Victoria.

Notice of election

Sample Council postal election

My council, my vote

Vote by post this October

Ballot packs will be mailed to voters enrolled in the Sample Council general election from Monday 7 October. Complete and return your ballot material ASAP. Ballot material must be in the mail or delivered to the election manager by **6 pm on Friday 25 October**.

If you will be away

If you will be away when ballot packs are mailed, or your address has changed since Wednesday 7 August, you can request for your ballot pack to be redirected by completing the online redirection form at vec.vic.gov.au/redirections, or call 131 832.

Requests for redirection must be received by 5 pm on Monday 9 September.

Large print and braille ballot papers

Large print or braille ballot papers are available for voters who are blind or have low vision—please register by 5 pm Tuesday 10 September. To register, call 03 8620 1314 during business hours.

Early votes

If you will be away during the voting period (7–25 October), you can go to your local election office to vote in person, from 10 am on Wednesday 16 September.

The Sample Council election office is at:
Sample election office address

Sample Council logo

How to nominate as a candidate

To nominate as a candidate, you must:

- be an Australian citizen and enrolled on the voters roll for Sample Council AND
- be eligible to become a councillor should you be elected AND
- have completed the mandatory candidate training before lodging your nomination with the election manager.

To nominate, complete the nomination form and lodge it with the election manager together with the \$250 nomination fee. Nomination forms can be lodged by appointment during business hours from Monday 9 September until 12 noon on Tuesday 17 September at the election office.

Visit vec.vic.gov.au for more information and to pre-complete your nomination form using the online Candidate Helper. The online Candidate Helper will be available from Tuesday 20 August.

If you use the online Candidate Helper, print your pre-completed form and make an appointment to lodge it with the election manager along with the nomination fee.

Call the election manager from Monday 9 September on 131 832 to make a nomination appointment.

Nominations close 12 noon Tuesday 17 September.

Candidate information session

Sample time sample date at sample venue name, sample address

Candidate information kits containing nomination forms and other electoral information will be available online and from the election manager.

State-enrolled voters can register for free VoterAlert SMS and email reminders at vec.vic.gov.au

For enquiries in languages other than English:

- العربية (Arabic) 9209 0100 • Azərbaycanca (Azerbaijani) 9209 0160 • বাংলা (Burmese) 9209 0161 • 普通话 (Mandarin) 9209 0106 • 廣東話 (Cantonese) 9209 0101 • Hrvatski (Croatian) 9209 0102 • ދިވެހި (Dhivehi) 9209 0119 • Ελληνικά (Greek) 9209 0103 • Հայերեն (Armenian) 9209 0162 • Italiano (Italian) 9209 0104
- ಕನ್ನಡ (Kannada) 9209 0192 • 한국어 (Korean) 9209 0194 • македонски (Macedonian) 9209 0105 • नेपाली (Nepali) 9209 0163 • فارسی (Persian) 9209 0195 • ภาษาไทย (Thai) 9209 0164
- Türkçe (Turkish) 9209 0110 • اردو (Urdu) 9209 0165 • Tiếng Việt (Vietnamese) 9209 0111 • All other non-English languages 9209 0112

Authorised by S. Blumel, Electoral Commissioner, 530 Collins Street, Melbourne, Victoria.

Voting details notice

Sample Council postal election

My council, my vote

An election will be held for Sample Council.

Check the mail for your ballot pack

Ballot packs containing voting material will be mailed to enrolled voters from **Monday 7 October**.

This is a postal election only.

If you do not receive your ballot pack by **Tuesday 15 October** please visit vec.vic.gov.au to complete the online replacement form, or call **131 832** to arrange a replacement.

Candidates

Candidates who have nominated for election are listed in the ballot packs and at vec.vic.gov.au.

A photo and candidate statement will also be included if provided by candidates. Responses to a candidate questionnaire, if provided, are available at vec.vic.gov.au.

How to vote correctly

You must complete your ballot paper correctly for your vote to count. Put the number **1** in the box next to the candidate you want to see elected, then number all the other boxes in order of your choice. You must number **every box** and only use each number once.

How to return your ballot pack

Put your completed ballot paper in the ballot paper envelope, complete the declaration, then post it ASAP using the reply-paid envelope provided, or hand deliver it during election office hours to:

Sample election office address

Voting is compulsory

Voting is compulsory for all voters who were enrolled at 4 pm on Wednesday 7 August. This includes state-enrolled and council-enrolled voters.

If you don't vote and don't have a valid excuse, you may be fined.

Your completed ballot pack must be in the mail or hand delivered by **6 pm Friday 25 October**.

State-enrolled voters can register for free VoterAlert SMS and email reminders at vec.vic.gov.au

vec.vic.gov.au | 131 832

For enquiries in languages other than English:

- * Arabic (Arabic) 9209 0100 * Azərbaycanca (Azerbaijani) 9209 0160 * বাংলা (Burmese) 9209 0161 * 普通话 (Mandarin) 9209 0106 * 廣東話 (Cantonese) 9209 0101
- * Hrvatski (Croatian) 9209 0102 * ქართული (Georgian) 9209 0163 * Ελληνικά (Greek) 9209 0103 * Հայերեն (Armenian) 9209 0104
- * हिन्दी (Hindi) 9209 0105 * বাংলা (Bengali) 9209 0106 * বাংলা (Burmese) 9209 0161 * বাংলা (Burmese) 9209 0161
- * Türkçe (Turkish) 9209 0110 * বাংলা (Burmese) 9209 0161 * বাংলা (Burmese) 9209 0161

Authorised by S. Blummel, Electoral Commissioner, 530 Collins Street, Melbourne, Victoria.

@electionsvic

Victorian Electoral Commission

Reminder notice

Sample Council postal election

My council, my vote

An election is being held for Sample Council.

Check the mail for your ballot pack

Ballot packs containing voting material were mailed to enrolled voters from **Monday 7 October**.

This is a postal election only.

If you do not receive your ballot pack by **Tuesday 15 October** please visit vec.vic.gov.au to complete the online replacement form, or call **131 832** to arrange a replacement.

Candidates

Candidates who have nominated for election are listed in the ballot packs and at vec.vic.gov.au.

How to vote correctly

You must complete your ballot paper correctly for your vote to count. Put the number **1** in the box next to the candidate you want to see elected, then number all the other boxes in order of your choice. You must number **every box** and only use each number once.

How to return your ballot pack

Put your completed ballot paper in the ballot paper envelope, complete the declaration, then post it ASAP using the reply-paid envelope provided, or hand deliver it during election office hours to:

Sample election office address

Voting is compulsory

Voting is compulsory for all voters who were enrolled at 4 pm on Wednesday 7 August. This includes state-enrolled and council-enrolled voters.

If you don't vote and don't have a valid excuse, you may be fined.

Your completed ballot pack must be in the mail or hand delivered by **6 pm Friday 25 October**.

State-enrolled voters can register for free VoterAlert SMS and email reminders at vec.vic.gov.au

vec.vic.gov.au | 131 832

For enquiries in languages other than English:


- * Arabic (Arabic) 9209 0100 * Azərbaycanca (Azerbaijani) 9209 0160 * বাংলা (Burmese) 9209 0161 * 普通话 (Mandarin) 9209 0106 * 廣東話 (Cantonese) 9209 0101
- * Hrvatski (Croatian) 9209 0102 * ქართული (Georgian) 9209 0163 * Ελληνικά (Greek) 9209 0103 * Հայերեն (Armenian) 9209 0104
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- * Türkçe (Turkish) 9209 0110 * বাংলা (Burmese) 9209 0161 * বাংলা (Burmese) 9209 0161

Authorised by S. Blummel, Electoral Commissioner, 530 Collins Street, Melbourne, Victoria.

@electionsvic

Victorian Electoral Commission

Declaration of results

Sample Council election Declaration of results		Sample Council logo
The following candidates were elected to Sample Council at the general election held in October 2024:		
Sample Ward 1 Sample elected candidate 1	Sample elected candidate 4	Sample Ward 8 Sample elected candidate 8
Sample Ward 2 Sample elected candidate 2	Sample Ward 5 Sample elected candidate 5	Sample Ward 9 Sample elected candidate 9
Sample Ward 3 Sample elected candidate 3	Sample Ward 6 Sample elected candidate 6	
Sample Ward 4	Sample Ward 7 Sample elected candidate 7	
Further details about the results are available at vec.vic.gov.au		
Sample Election Manager name Election Manager		
Sample declaration date		
<small>vec.vic.gov.au 131 832 @electionsvic</small>		<small> Victorian Electoral Commission</small>
<small>Authorised by S. Blumel, Electoral Commissioner, 530 Collins Street, Melbourne, Victoria.</small>		

Appendix 3: Schedule of media releases and advisories

South Gippsland Shire Council council-specific media releases and advisories

Enrol now for the South Gippsland Shire Council election	Monday 29 July 2024
Call for candidates for South Gippsland Shire Council election	Thursday 22 August 2024
Ballot packs mailed for South Gippsland Shire Council election	Monday 7 October 2024
Voting closes soon for South Gippsland Shire Council election	Tuesday 15 October 2024
New councillors for South Gippsland Shire Council	Friday 8 November 2024

Statewide media releases and advisories

Victorians urged to enrol for upcoming local council elections	Monday 22 July 2024
Media advisory: 2024 local council elections briefing	Monday 22 July 2024
Last chance to enrol for Victorian council elections	Friday 2 August 2024
News alert: Enrolment closes tomorrow for October's council local elections	Tuesday 6 August 2024
Nominations open soon for Victorian local council elections	Monday 26 August 2024
Media advisory: Accessing candidate information for the 2024 Victorian local council elections	Friday 6 September 2024
Nominations for the 2024 Victorian local council elections now open	Monday 9 September 2024
Over 4.6 million enrolled for local council elections	Tuesday 10 September 2024
Time is running out to nominate for this year's local council elections	Monday 16 September 2024
Electoral Commissioner calls for transparency in the use of AI in upcoming local council elections	Tuesday 17 September 2024
Media advisory: Media attendance at local council election ballot draw	Tuesday 17 September 2024
Nominations are in for October local council elections	Wednesday 18 September 2024
Democracy ambassadors help community voices 'Be Heard'	Thursday 19 September 2024
VEC retires 16 local council election candidates	Monday 30 September 2024
Voting starts next week for Victoria's local council elections	Friday 4 October 2024

Statewide media releases and advisories

Police investigate break-in at the Ballarat election office	Thursday 10 October 2024
Voters urged to request a replacement ballot pack following van theft	Friday 18 October 2024
Local council elections voting deadline looms	Monday 21 October 2024
Voters urged to request a replacement ballot pack following theft	Thursday 24 October 2024
Final day of voting	Friday 25 October 2024
Media advisory: Results timelines for Victorian local council elections	Friday 25 October 2024
Media advisory: Media attendance at results declarations	Wednesday 6 November 2024
Suspected postal vote tampering in 2 local council elections referred for inquiry	Wednesday 13 November 2024
Didn't vote in the 2024 local council elections?	Monday 17 February 2025
Non-voters asked to explain why they didn't vote in the 2024 local council elections	Friday 7 March 2025
Infringements sent to 2024 local council election non-voters	Scheduled for Monday 14 April 2025
Act on penalty reminder notice or risk enforcement action	Scheduled for Thursday 1 July 2025

Appendix 4: VoterAlert advisories

Appendix 4.1: SMS alerts

Close of roll – sent from Wednesday 17 July to Wednesday 31 July 2024

VoterAlert: Vic council elections will be held by post this Oct. Make sure your details are correct before 4pm Wed 7 Aug. More info <https://vec.vic.gov.au/LG24>. If you'd rather not open links in this message, look up the VEC website or call 131 832 to check. Unsubscribe <https://vec.vic.gov.au/voteralert>

Reminder close of voting – sent from Tuesday 22 October to Wednesday 23 October 2024

VoterAlert: return your council election ballot pack by 6pm Fri Oct 25. If your ballot pack hasn't arrived, find out how to get a replacement at <https://vec.vic.gov.au/LG24>. Ignore if you've already voted or asked for a replacement. If you'd rather not visit links in this message, look up the VEC website or call 131 832. Unsubscribe: <https://vec.vic.gov.au/voteralert>

Uncontested election – sent from Wednesday 25 September to Tuesday 1 October 2024

VoterAlert: the election in your area is uncontested, as only one person nominated per vacancy. You do not need to vote. More info: <https://vec.vic.gov.au/LG24>. If you'd rather not visit links in this message, look up the VEC website or call 131 832. Unsubscribe: <https://vec.vic.gov.au/voteralert>


Mail-out of ballot packs – sent from Monday 7 October to Monday 14 October 2024

VoterAlert: ballot packs for the local council elections are on their way, arriving by 15 Oct. Complete and return before 6pm on Fri 25 Oct. For more info visit <https://vec.vic.gov.au/LG24>, look up the VEC website or call 131 832. Unsubscribe: <https://vec.vic.gov.au/voteralert>

Appendix 4.2: Email alerts

Close of roll email

Do not reply to this email. Replies go to an unmonitored inbox. Contact us with any questions.

VoterAlert 

Hi

Victorian local council elections are being held by post this October. You must be correctly enrolled by **4 pm on Wednesday 7 August**.

What you need to do

Not sure if your enrolment details are up to date? You can check online at vec.vic.gov.au/enrolment

If you've changed your address or name since you last voted in an election, you should update your details. Please also check the postal address listed on your enrolment, as this is where we will send your ballot pack.

[CHECK MY DETAILS](#)

If your details **haven't changed** since the last time you voted, get ready to vote. All voting in this election is by post. We will start posting ballot packs out from Monday 7 October.

The full list of candidates will be available on our website from 12 noon on Tuesday 17 September.

[Find out more about your council election.](#)

Voting is compulsory – don't risk a fine.

If you own properties in more than one Victorian council

Some people are eligible to enrol in more than one council. If you own or pay rates on a property in a Victorian council other than where you normally live, you can apply to enrol with that council. This is known as council enrolment.

Contact the council directly for more information about council enrolment.

[Find out more about council enrolment.](#)

You **must** vote for all councils you are enrolled in.

Electoral structure changes

Over half of Victoria's local councils have new electoral structures or have changed internal ward boundaries. You may be voting in a new ward this October.

You can check your council's ward boundaries on our [interactive map](#).

Information in your language

You can find election information in 20 languages other than English on our website.

[Find in-language information.](#)

Security

If you would rather not click any links in this email, all this information and more is on our website at vec.vic.gov.au. You can also hover over links to confirm they go to a vic.gov.au website before you click them.

Be aware of scams: all emails we send you will have 'Victorian Electoral Commission <voteralert@info.vec.vic.gov.au>' as the sender. We will never ask you to enter credit card details or make payments through a website.

More information




Visit vec.vic.gov.au or call us on **131 832** between 8:30 am and 5 pm Monday to Friday.

Authorised by S. Bluemmel, Electoral Commissioner, 530 Collins Street, Melbourne, Victoria.

Our mailing address is:
Level 11, 530 Collins Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

This message was sent to you by the Victorian Electoral Commission because your contact details are listed on the Victorian electoral roll. Responses are not monitored.


[UNSUBSCRIBE](#)

[VEC website](#) | [Contact us](#) | [Privacy](#) | [Legal](#)

Uncontested election email

Do not reply to this email. Replies go to an unmonitored inbox. Contact us with any questions.

VoterAlert 

Hi

The , Ward election is uncontested as there were the same number of candidates as vacancies at the close of nominations.

You are not required to vote this October.

If you own properties in any other Victorian councils

You will still get a ballot pack for any other councils you are enrolled in. Please complete and return all ballot packs you receive before **6 pm on Friday 25 October**.

If you don't vote you may risk a fine.

Check your enrolment online or contact the council directly to check your enrolment details.

[Check my enrolment](#)

Security

If you would rather not click any links in this email, all this information and more is on our website at vec.vic.gov.au. You can hover your mouse over links to make sure they go to a vic.gov.au website before you click them.

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[UNSUBSCRIBE](#)


  

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Ballot pack mail-out email

Do not reply to this email. Replies go to an unmonitored inbox. Contact us with any questions.

VoterAlert

Victorian Electoral Commission

Hi

You are enrolled to vote in the 2024 local council elections.

Your vote matters. Local council elections are your chance to vote on who represents you on the local community issues that you care about.

How to vote

Voting in these elections is by **post**.

We have started posting ballot packs to all enrolled voters. They will arrive by **Tuesday 15 October**.

Please follow the instructions in your ballot pack to complete your vote and mail it back to us as soon as possible.

If you're unsure, you can learn [how to fill out a ballot paper](#) on our website.

Voting closes at **6 pm on Friday 25 October**, but your local mail collection times may be earlier than this. We recommend you return your completed vote as soon as possible.

You can also drop your vote off at your local election office.

If you don't get a ballot pack

Ballot packs are in the mail and will arrive by **Tuesday 15 October**.

If you don't get a ballot pack by then, you can ask us to send you a replacement by calling [131 832](tel:131832) between 8:30 am and 5 pm, Monday to Friday.

Moved house or away from your address

If you are away from your mailing address you can request a replacement ballot pack. You can:

- call us on [131 832](tel:131832) between 8:30 am and 5 pm, Monday to Friday
- visit the election office of your **old address** to get a replacement on the spot. If you will be away during the election, you can fill in your vote there and return it straight away.

Find my election office

Find candidates

Information about candidates, including statements and candidate questionnaire responses are on our website.

Find candidates

Information in your language

Our website has information in more than 20 languages. There are also videos explaining how to vote in 10 different languages.

Find information in your language

Security

If you would rather not click any links in this email, all this information and more is on our website: vec.vic.gov.au. You can hover your mouse over links to confirm they go to a [vic.gov.au](http://vec.vic.gov.au) website before you click them.

Be aware of scams: all emails we send you will have 'Victorian Electoral Commission <voteralert@info.vec.vic.gov.au>' as the sender. We will never ask you to enter credit card details or make payments through a website.

More information


For more information visit vec.vic.gov.au or call us on [131 832](tel:131832) between 8:30 am and 5 pm, Monday to Friday.

Authorised by S. Bluemmel, Electoral Commissioner, 530 Collins Street, Melbourne, Victoria.

Our mailing address is:
Level 11, 530 Collins Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

This message was sent to you by the Victorian Electoral Commission because your contact details are listed on the Victorian electoral roll. Responses are not monitored.

UNSUBSCRIBE




[VEC website](#) | [Contact us](#) | [Privacy](#) | [Legal](#)

Last week to vote email

Do not reply to this email. Replies go to an unmonitored inbox. Contact us with any questions.

VoterAlert

Victorian Electoral Commission

Reminder: voting for the 2024 local council elections closes at 6 pm this Friday 25 October.

Please ignore this email if you've already voted or asked for a replacement ballot pack.

How to vote

Voting in these elections is by **post**.

Please follow the instructions in your ballot pack to complete your vote and mail it back to us as soon as possible. You can find instructions on [how to fill out a ballot paper](#) on our website.

Voting closes at **6 pm on Friday 25 October**, but your local mail collection times may be earlier than this. We recommend you return your completed vote as soon as possible.

You can also drop your vote off at your local election office.

Find my election office

If you don't get a ballot pack

If you haven't received your ballot pack in the mail yet, you can ask us to send you a replacement by:

- visiting your election office* to get a replacement on the spot. You can fill in your vote there and return it straight away.
- calling us on [131 832](tel:131832) between 8:30 am and 6 pm, Monday to Friday
- filling in our [online form](#).

*This must be the election office for your enrolled address. [Check your enrolment details](#) if you've recently moved.

Find my election office

Information in your language

Our website has information in more than 20 languages. There are also videos explaining how to vote in 10 different languages.

Find information in your language

Security

If you would rather not click any links in this email, all this information and more is on our website: vec.vic.gov.au. You can hover your mouse over links to confirm they go to a [vic.gov.au](http://vec.vic.gov.au) website before you click them.

Be aware of scams: all emails we send you will have 'Victorian Electoral Commission <voteralert@info.vec.vic.gov.au>' as the sender. We will never ask you to enter credit card details or make payments through a website.

More information


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UNSUBSCRIBE



[VEC website](#) | [Contact us](#) | [Privacy](#) | [Legal](#)

Appendix 5: Voter engagement program and initiatives

Program	Program details
Be Heard Democracy Ambassador program	This program provides free peer-led electoral education and information sessions to those under-represented in the electoral process. This includes people with disability and their carers, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, people experiencing homelessness and young people. A total of 238 sessions were provided across the state reaching over 10,000 participants.
Specialist mobile enrolment	This program delivered peer-led enrolment sessions in prisons, homeless services, schools and tertiary education settings to reach young people and Aboriginal community settings across Melbourne and regional Victoria.
CALD in-language social media videos	This project produced a series of videos in 11 different languages including Auslan. Languages were chosen to reach language groups most in need of additional support. The videos provided electoral information on how to enrol, how to vote by post, and how to respond to an Apparent Failure to Vote Notice. These were widely distributed and shared through the VEC's social media platforms, community networks, and partner organisations.
Active Citizenship program	Electoral and civics education workshops were delivered to CALD community leaders in 3 locations across regional Victoria.
Aboriginal engagement	This program delivered information and engagement sessions across the greater Melbourne area and regional Victoria. These were designed to raise awareness that voting was compulsory and taking place via post. Culturally appropriate resources were produced to provide information on how to respond to an Apparent Failure to Vote Notice, including a video which was distributed and shared through the VEC's social media platforms and partner organisations.
Easy English guide	This was produced for people with low English proficiency and designed as a co-read product where a person supports the reader. These were distributed by Democracy Ambassadors as a key resource, and also available for download from the VEC's website.

Appendix 6: Final list of candidates in ballot paper order

The candidates, in ballot paper order, were as follows:

Coastal-Promontory Ward election

McKAY, Emma

FINLAY, Steve

GILLIGAN, Sarah

RAE, Scott

POORE, Michael R.

Strzelecki Ward election

HERSEY, Nathan

BEACH, Bron

KEERIE, Jenni

FORBES, Jim

KENNEDY, John

Tarwin Valley Ward election

SCHELLING, John

WILLIAMS, Clare

COUSIN, Rosemary Anne

SNELL, Brad

MURRAY, Kathleen

TAYLOR, Aaron

HILL, Don

Appendix 6.1: Candidate statements and photographs



South Gippsland Shire Council election	Total number of candidates at close of nominations	Number of candidates that lodged a candidate statement	Number of candidates that lodged a candidate photograph
Coastal-Promontory Ward	5	5	5
Strzelecki Ward	5	5	5
Tarwin Valley Ward	7	7	7

South Gippsland Shire Council



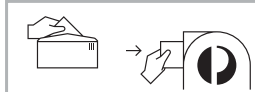

Appendix 6: Final list of candidates in ballot paper order

Appendix 6.2: Sample ballot material







Outer envelope

Sample Council	If undeliverable, return to Locked Bag 0000 LOCALITY VIC 0000	POSTAGE PAID AUSTRALIA PRIORITY
STAT-ENVM938 06/24		
Local council elections 2024 Postal ballot pack		
	Voting closes 6 pm Friday 25 October	
		

Reply-paid envelope

Sample Council Sample Ward	Delivery address: Locked Bag 0000 LOCALITY VIC 0000	 PRIORITY	No stamp required if posted in Australia
Sample Council Sample Ward STAT-ENVM937 07/24			
 Post your completed ballot pack before 6 pm on Friday 25 October Local post box collection times vary. Check the collection time on your post box to make sure your vote is in the mail on time.		 Election Manager Sample Election Office Sample Ward Reply Paid 00000 LOCALITY VIC 0000	

Ballot paper envelope

Ballot paper envelope		How to vote
  		1. Complete your ballot paper/s. 2. Put your completed ballot paper/s inside this envelope and seal it. 3. Sign the declaration on the back of this envelope. We remove it before counting to keep your vote secret. Voters unable to sign: Blind or low vision voters, or voters with low literacy or limited English can ask someone to sign for them. The authorised person must sign and write their name on the back of this envelope.
 		4. Put this ballot paper envelope into the reply-paid envelope and seal it. 5. Post it straight away.
		STAT-ENV-LG-003 06/24

Candidate leaflet

Voting closes
6 pm Friday
25 October 2024

All voting in this election is by post.
Post your vote before voting closes.
We cannot accept late votes.

Local post box collection times vary. Check the collection time on your post box to make sure your vote is in the mail on time.

You can also drop your vote off during business hours to:

Address line 1
Address line 2
Address line 3

For more information, visit vec.vic.gov.au or call 131 832 during business hours.


Voting is compulsory

You are enrolled to vote in this election.
Voting is your right. By voting, you get to have a say in who represents you on your local council.

Voting is also a responsibility. If you don't vote, you may get a fine.

If your enrolment details have changed, it is your responsibility to update them. Visit vec.vic.gov.au/update for more information.


Sample Council
Sample Ward



Candidate leaflet

**Sample Council
election 2024
Sample Ward**

Sample Ward



Notice

The contents of candidate statements are provided by the candidates. Any enquiries about candidate statements should be directed to the relevant candidate. Candidate statements are not verified or endorsed by the election manager. Candidate statements are also available at vec.vic.gov.au

Candidates may also provide answers to a questionnaire. Responses are available at vec.vic.gov.au

VEC Victorian Electoral Commission

How to vote multi-language leaflet
If applicable

How to vote leaflet


Interpreter

Language support

Visit vec.vic.gov.au/languages for more information in your language.

For interpreter assistance, call us. See the phone numbers on the next page.

STAT-LEAMUL01 07/24

VEC Victorian Electoral Commission

Ballot paper

**Sample Council
Sample Ward**

Election of 1 Councillor

Number the boxes 1 to 4 in the order of your choice.
Number every box to make your vote count.
You must not use any number more than once.

☐ CANDIDATE, Name
☐ CANDIDATE, Name
☐ CANDIDATE, Name
☐ CANDIDATE, Name

Appendix 6.3: Sample uncontested ward leaflet**Sample Council election 2024**
Sample Ward

At the close of nominations for the Sample Council, Sample Ward election, one nomination was received for one vacancy. Therefore, Candidate Name will be elected unopposed.

You are not required to vote.

Election Manager Name
Election Manager

For more information call 131 832



Appendix 7: Daily breakdown of the general mail out

South Gippsland Shire Council election	7 October 2024	8 October 2024	9 October 2024	10 October 2024	Total general mail out
South Gippsland Shire Council	8,458	8,458	3,981	3,979	24,876
Coastal- Promontory Ward	2,798	2,798	1,316	1,316	8,228
Strzelecki Ward	2,911	2,911	1,371	1,370	8,563
Tarwin Valley Ward	2,749	2,749	1,294	1,293	8,085

Appendix 8: Result information

Coastal-Promontory Ward count summary

Enrolment	8,227	
Formal votes	6,831	
Informal votes	170 (2.43% of the total votes)	
Voter turnout	7,001 (85.10% of the total enrolment)	
Candidates (in ballot paper order)	First preference votes	Percentage
McKAY, Emma	1,084	15.87%
FINLAY, Steve	1,575	23.06%
GILLIGAN, Sarah	1,831	26.80%
RAE, Scott	1,928	28.22%
POORE, Michael R.	413	6.05%

Successful candidates

RAE, Scott (1st elected)

GILLIGAN, Sarah (2nd elected)

FINLAY, Steve (3rd elected)

Strzelecki Ward count summary

Enrolment	8,563	
Formal votes	7,236	
Informal votes	189 (2.55% of the total votes)	
Voter turnout	7,425 (86.71% of the total enrolment)	
Candidates (in ballot paper order)	First preference votes	Percentage
HERSEY, Nathan	1,978	27.34%
BEACH, Bron	1,679	23.20%
KEERIE, Jenni	839	11.59%

Strzelecki Ward count summary

FORBES, Jim	993	13.72%
KENNEDY, John	1,747	24.14%

Successful candidates

HERSEY, Nathan (1st elected)

BEACH, Bron (2nd elected)

KENNEDY, John (3rd elected)

Tarwin Valley Ward count summary

Enrolment	8,085
Formal votes	6,708
Informal votes	202 (2.92% of the total votes)
Voter turnout	6,910 (85.47% of the total enrolment)

Candidates (in ballot paper order)	First preference votes	Percentage
SCHELLING, John	2,405	35.85%
WILLIAMS, Clare	1,805	26.91%
COUSIN, Rosemary Anne	617	9.20%
SNELL, Brad	524	7.81%
MURRAY, Kathleen	263	3.92%
TAYLOR, Aaron	237	3.53%
HILL, Don	857	12.78%

Successful candidates

SCHELLING, John (1st elected)

WILLIAMS, Clare (2nd elected)

SNELL, Brad (3rd elected)

Appendix 9: Election participation statistics

Participation is measured by the number of marks on the roll as a percentage of total enrolment and can vary from turnout (total ballot papers counted as a percentage of total enrolment).

South Gippsland Shire Council election participation	2024	Statewide LG 2024 – excluding Melbourne City Council
18–19	91.10%	86.64%
20–24	84.39%	80.02%
25–29	75.88%	74.09%
30–34	74.58%	73.31%
35–39	80.31%	76.18%
40–44	80.24%	78.99%
45–49	85.49%	81.92%
50–54	87.06%	84.69%
55–59	89.48%	87.46%
60–64	91.68%	89.16%
65–69	93.26%	90.41%
70+	92.03%	88.77%
Voters enrolled through section 241 of the LG Act	87.11%	86.27%
Voters enrolled through sections 243–245 of the LG Act	95.27%	60.96%
Total voters enrolled	87.52%	84.12%

Coastal-Promontory Ward 2024 election participation	2024	Statewide LG 2024 – excluding Melbourne City Council
18–19	91.21%	86.64%
20–24	85.20%	80.02%
25–29	76.20%	74.09%
30–34	69.51%	73.31%
35–39	77.49%	76.18%
40–44	75.92%	78.99%
45–49	82.60%	81.92%
50–54	86.08%	84.69%
55–59	88.17%	87.46%
60–64	89.98%	89.16%
65–69	92.98%	90.41%
70+	91.26%	88.77%
Voters enrolled through section 241 of the LG Act	85.74%	86.27%
Voters enrolled through sections 243–245 of the LG Act	95.47%	60.96%
Total voters enrolled	86.99%	84.12%

Appendix 9: Election participation statistics

South Gippsland Shire Council

Strzelecki Ward election participation	2024	Statewide LG 2024 – excluding Melbourne City Council
18–19	90.79%	86.64%
20–24	86.72%	80.02%
25–29	75.53%	74.09%
30–34	75.55%	73.31%
35–39	83.06%	76.18%
40–44	84.29%	78.99%
45–49	89.00%	81.92%
50–54	88.92%	84.69%
55–59	90.55%	87.46%
60–64	93.37%	89.16%
65–69	93.65%	90.41%
70+	92.35%	88.77%
Voters enrolled through section 241 of the LG Act	88.23%	86.27%
Voters enrolled through sections 243–245 of the LG Act	94.53%	60.96%
Total voters enrolled	88.32%	84.12%

Tarwin Valley Ward election participation	2024	Statewide LG 2024 – excluding Melbourne City Council
18–19	91.30%	86.64%
20–24	81.25%	80.02%
25–29	75.90%	74.09%
30–34	78.67%	73.31%
35–39	80.39%	76.18%
40–44	80.52%	78.99%
45–49	84.88%	81.92%
50–54	86.19%	84.69%
55–59	89.72%	87.46%
60–64	91.70%	89.16%
65–69	93.16%	90.41%
70+	92.47%	88.77%
Voters enrolled through section 241 of the LG Act	87.14%	86.27%
Voters enrolled through sections 243–245 of the LG Act	93.83%	60.96%
Total voters enrolled	87.21%	84.12%

Appendix 10: Complaints

Written complaints received by the VEC

Where an outcome is a follow-up response, the customer may have replied to the VEC's response and the VEC has therefore replied to that follow-up email.

Where an outcome has no action taken, this could be an anonymous submission that doesn't contain feedback and therefore can't be passed on to another team.

Date	Nature of complaint	Action taken by the VEC
Monday 30 September 2024	LGI Complaint - Authorisation requirements; Conduct of candidate away from election office	Referred to LGI
Tuesday 8 October 2024	VEC Complaint - Vexatious submission	No action
Friday 11 October 2024	LGI Complaint - Unauthorised material	Referred to LGI
Tuesday 15 October 2024	VEC Complaint - Outside VEC remit	Response provided
Tuesday 22 October 2024	LGI Complaint - Misleading and deceptive material	Referred to LGI
Wednesday 23 October 2024	VEC Complaint - Overseas and interstate voting	Response provided
Thursday 24 October 2024	VEC Complaint - Postal vote receipt delayed	Response provided

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(Victorian Electoral Commission)
April 2025

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vec.vic.gov.au

2.6. INTERNAL RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

Directorate:	Strategy & Partnerships
Department:	Governance and Integrity

Council Plan

Objective - Leading with Integrity

To support leading with integrity and compliance with the Model Councillor Code of Conduct, the Internal Resolution Procedure is designed to provide a framework to attempt to resolve any alleged non-compliance between Councillors.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present the Internal Resolution Procedure (**Attachment [2.6.1]**) for consideration by Council.

This Internal Resolution Procedure has been created in accordance with s.140 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and regulation 12A of the *Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020*.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council endorses the Internal Resolution Procedure (Attachment [2.6.1]).

REPORT

Background

In October 2024, as part of the changes made to the *Local Government Act 2020* (Act) and *Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020* (Regulations), a uniform Model Councillor Code of Council (Code) was created for all Councillors.

A requirement was added to the Act and Regulations for Councils to adopt an Internal Resolution Procedure (Procedure) to support Councillors to resolve any alleged breaches of the Code, internally.

The Internal Resolution Procedure is required to be adopted by Council before 1 July 2025.

Procedure

Council previously had a dispute resolution section as part of the Councillor Code of Conduct.

This Procedure provides both parties to a dispute with support and encouragement to resolve the dispute in a manner that enables the Councillors to move forward and maintain effective working relationships.

This Procedure is designed to minimise cost and disruption of disputes to Council and individual Councillors and, where possible, avoid disputes escalating and becoming the subject of an internal arbitration.

This Procedure includes three stages which are outlined below:

1. *Discussion between Councillors*

A Complainant Councillor is encouraged to raise their issue directly with the Respondent Councillor in a respectful and courteous manner, either in person or in writing

2. *Conciliation with Mayor*

Where a direct conversation between Councillors has not been successful in resolving the dispute, or a Councillor does not feel comfortable communicating directly with another Councillor, the second stage of this Procedure is conciliation with Mayor.

3. *External Mediation*

If reconciliation of the dispute is not possible after conciliation with the Mayor, Councillors are able seek assistance from an external independent mediator to resolve the dispute.

CONSULTATION / COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Officers briefed Councillors on the development of a draft Internal Resolution Procedure. Councillor feedback has been included in the version presented for this report.

RESOURCES / FINANCIAL VIABILITY

Supporting Councillors to resolve disputes informally through the Internal Resolution Procedure helps avoid the need for internal arbitration processes, as outlined in the Act, which Council is required to fund.

RISKS

The adoption of this Procedure will meet Council's legislative requirements under the Act, support compliance with the Model Councillor Code of Conduct, and promote a safe workplace for Councillors.

STAFF DISCLOSURE

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have considered and determined that they do not have a conflict of interest in the matter.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft Internal Resolution Procedure [2.6.1 - 7 pages]

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Council's Good Governance Framework

Pillar 4. Structure, Systems & Policies

Council Policy / Strategy / Plans

Documents are available on Council's website at the following [LINK](#).

Nil

Legislative Provisions

Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020

Local Government Act 2020

Regional, State and National Plan and Policies

Nil

SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL COUNCIL POLICY



INTERNAL RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

Policy No.	{policy-number}	Adoption Date:	Council Meeting 21 May 2025
Directorate:	Performance and Innovation	Department:	Governance & Integrity
Revision Date:	30 June 2029		
GOOD GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK – OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES			
Supporting Pillar:	Pillar 4. Structure, Systems & Policies		
Link to Pillar:	Good governance is effective and efficient: Councillors should implement decisions and follow processes whilst complying with the requirements of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct. Where disputes arise procedures should support the resolution of disputes effectively and efficiently.		

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Internal Resolution Procedure (**Procedure**) is to comply with the requirements of section 140 of the *Local Government Act 2020 (Act)* and regulation 12A of the *Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020*.

This Procedure will be observed when dealing with alleged breaches of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct.

2. SCOPE

Disputes between Councillors may arise in a variety of circumstances. This Procedure is to apply to those disputes in which one Councillor (**the Complainant**) alleges that another Councillor (**the Respondent**) has breached the Model Councillor Code of Conduct.

This Procedure provides both parties to a dispute with support and encouragement to resolve the dispute in a manner that enables the Councillors to move forward and maintain effective working relationships.

This Procedure is designed to minimise cost and disruption of disputes to Council and individual Councillors and, where possible, avoid disputes escalating and becoming the subject of an internal arbitration.

It is acknowledged that this Procedure will not be suitable for resolution of all disputes between Councillors.

3. FIRST STAGE OF INTERNAL RESOLUTION PROCEDURE - DISCUSSION

A Complainant is encouraged to raise their issue directly with the Respondent in a respectful and courteous manner, either in person or in writing, where they feel comfortable to do so.

Councillors are encouraged to recognise that:

- certain behaviours and communications may be perceived by others to be causing issues or offence that may not have been intended;

- it can provide useful insight to reflect on their own behaviour or motivation and possible contribution to the dispute, whether intended or not; and
- dealing with the dispute early is more likely to avoid the issue escalating and resolve it before it threatens the effective operation of Council.

It is useful to frame any issue from the Councillor's perspective (eg "I felt disrespected when you said / did ..."), rather than accusing another person of holding a particular position or taking a negative action deliberately. A Councillor should let the other Councillor know how they feel and ask for an explanation, rather than making accusations or assumptions.

4. SECOND STAGE OF INTERNAL RESOLUTION PROCEDURE – CONCILIATION WITH MAYOR

Where a direct conversation between Councillors has not been successful in resolving the dispute, or a Councillor does not feel comfortable communicating directly with another Councillor, the second stage of this Procedure is conciliation with the Mayor.

4.1 - Initiating conciliation

A Complainant initiating conciliation must notify the Mayor and the Respondent of the dispute in writing and should include:

- a. specify the names of the Complainant and Respondent;
- b. specify the provision (or provisions) of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct alleged to have been breached;
- c. detail what was said or done by the Respondent to constitute a breach of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct;
- d. attach any supporting information to provide examples of the behaviour complained of (eg screenshots or emails); and
- e. be dated and signed by the Complainant.

4.2 - Participating in conciliation

Councillors are not obliged to engage in conciliation but should only decline to participate if they honestly and reasonably believe that their participation would adversely affect their health or wellbeing or would otherwise be unsafe.

A Respondent declining to participate in the conciliation must advise the Complainant and the Mayor of their unwillingness to participate, and the reasons for it in writing

That advice must be provided no more than one week after receiving notification and request for conciliation.

4.3 - Conduct of Conciliation

Conciliation is to be conducted by the Mayor except when the Mayor is a party to the dispute or otherwise unavailable to conduct conciliation. In that case the Deputy Mayor will assume the role of the Mayor in the conciliation process. If both the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor are parties to the dispute or otherwise unavailable to conduct the conciliation, the role of the Mayor must be performed by a Councillor jointly chosen for the purpose by the parties.

When, in this Procedure, reference is made to the Mayor it includes:

- the Deputy Mayor; and
- a Councillor jointly chosen for the purpose by the parties,

when the Mayor and/or the Deputy Mayor are parties to the dispute or otherwise unavailable to conduct a conciliation.

4.4 - Roles and Responsibilities

The role of the Mayor is to provide guidance to the parties to the dispute about the Standards of Conduct in the Model Councillor Code of Conduct, and actively explore whether the dispute can be resolved by agreement between them.

The role of the Complainant and Respondent is to explain their respective positions and, in a show of goodwill, actively explore the possibility of resolving the dispute by agreement.

All Councillors are responsible for conducting themselves in a courteous and respectful manner at all times during the conciliation.

The role of the Councillor Conduct Officer is to provide the Mayor with the administrative support necessary to arrange and conduct the conciliation.

4.6 – Support from Council

Council, through the Councillor Conduct Officer, will provide administrative assistance to the Mayor when arranging a time and place for conciliation, including any technical assistance that may be required. Council will make a venue available to the Councillors within Council's offices that is private and suited to the conciliation process.

Council will not provide any substantive guidance or advice about the subject matter of the dispute, or pay the costs of legal advice or representation for any Councillor in connection with this Procedure. Parties to a dispute may seek their own legal or other advice at their own cost, if they choose to do so.

4.6 – End or Termination of Conciliation

Conciliation will end or be terminated if any of the following occurs:

- the parties cannot jointly choose a Councillor to conduct the conciliation within one week of being asked to do so;
- the Respondent notifies the Mayor that they do not wish to participate in conciliation, and the reasons for it, within one week of receiving the written notification
- the Respondent does not respond to the written notification within two weeks of receiving it;
- conciliation has not occurred within four weeks of the Complainant submitting written notification.
- conciliation has occurred and the parties have been unable to resolve the dispute; or
- the dispute has been resolved.

The time for conciliation may be extended by agreement between the parties to the dispute, whether or not the matter has been escalated to one of the formal dispute resolution procedures outlined in the Act.

4.7 – Record of Outcome

The Mayor must document any agreement that is reached between the Complainant and Respondent. The agreement must be signed by the Complainant, Respondent and Mayor. Copies must be provided to the Complainant and Respondent, and the original must be provided by the Mayor to the Councillor Conduct Officer to be saved to

Council's record keeping system. Parties and the Mayor are expected to maintain the confidentiality of the agreement reached.

5. THIRD STAGE OF INTERNAL RESOLUTION PROCEDURE – EXTERNAL MEDIATION

If reconciliation of the dispute is not possible after conciliation with Mayor, the Mayor, can request the Councillor Conduct Officer arrange for an external mediator to support mediation between Complainant and Respondent.

The Mayor must notify the Complainant and Respondent of there in intention to arrange external mediation.

5.1 - Participating in external mediation

Councillors are not obliged to engage in external mediation but should only decline to participate if they honestly and reasonably believe that their participation would adversely affect their health or wellbeing or would otherwise be unsafe.

Complainant or Respondent declining to participate in the external mediation must advise the Mayor and any other parties of their unwillingness to participate, and the reasons for it in writing

That advice must be provided no more than one week after receiving notification from the Mayor.

5.2 - Roles and Responsibilities

The role of the external mediator is to provide guidance to the parties to the dispute about the Standards of Conduct in the Model Councillor Code of Conduct, and actively explore whether the dispute can be resolved by agreement between them.

The role the Mayor is provide advice to external mediator in relation to the Standards of Conduct in the Model Councillor Code of Conduct and document any agreement made between the parties.

The role of the Complainant and Respondent is to explain their respective positions and, in a show of goodwill, actively explore the possibility of resolving the dispute by agreement.

All Councillors are responsible for conducting themselves in a courteous and respectful manner at all times during the external mediation.

The role of the Councillor Conduct Officer is to provide the Mayor with the administrative support necessary to arrange and conduct the external mediation. The Councillor Conduct Officer will comply with Council's Procurement Policy when selecting an external mediator.

5.3 – Support from Council

Council, through the Councillor Conduct Officer, will provide administrative assistance to the Mayor when arranging a time and place for the external mediation, including any technical assistance that may be required. Council will make a venue available to the Councillors within Council's offices that is private and suited to the conciliation process.

Council will not provide any substantive guidance or advice about the subject matter of the dispute, or pay the costs of legal advice or representation for any Councillor in connection with this Procedure. Parties to a dispute may seek their own legal or other advice at their own cost, if they choose to do so.

5.4 – End or Termination of external mediation

External mediation will end or be terminated if any of the following occurs:

- the Complainant or Respondent notifies the Mayor that they do not wish to participate in external mediation, and the reasons for it, within one week of receiving the written notification
- the Complainant or Respondent does not respond to the written notification within two weeks of receiving it;
- external mediation has not occurred within four weeks of the Mayor's written notification.
- external mediation has occurred and the parties have been unable to resolve the dispute; or
- the dispute has been resolved.

The time for external mediation may be extended by agreement between the parties to the dispute, whether or not the matter has been escalated to one of the formal dispute resolution procedures outlined in the Act.

5.5 – Record of Outcome

The Mayor must document any agreement that is reached between the Complainant and Respondent. The agreement must be signed by the Complainant, Respondent and Mayor. Copies must be provided to the Complainant and Respondent, and the original must be provided by the Mayor to the Councillor Conduct Officer to be saved to Council's record keeping system. Parties and the Mayor are expected to maintain the confidentiality of the agreement reached.

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

Parties and other participants are expected to maintain confidentiality concerning the dispute and the operation of this Procedure.

7. INTERNAL RESOLUTION PROCEDURE DOES NOT APPLY IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES

The following disputes are not covered by this Procedure:

- differences between Councillors in relation to policy or decision making, which are appropriately resolved through discussion and voting in Council meetings;
- complaints made against a Councillor or Councillors by a member or members of Council staff, or by any other external person;
- allegations of sexual harassment;
- disclosures made about a Councillor under the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012*, which can only be made to the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission; and
- allegations of criminal misconduct, which should be immediately referred to Victoria Police or the relevant integrity authority.

8. FORMAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

This Procedure operates alongside, and does not replace, the formal dispute resolution procedures outlined in the Act.

The formal dispute resolution procedure applies to misconduct, serious misconduct and gross misconduct.

Section 141 of the Act provides for an internal arbitration process concerning a breach of the Standards of Conduct set out in the Model Councillor Code of Conduct.

9. RISK ASSESSMENT

This document mitigates Council's risks as described below:

Financial

This Procedure is designed to minimise cost and disruption of disputes to Council and individual Councillors and, where possible, avoid disputes escalating and becoming the subject of an internal arbitration.

Governance

This procedure is designed comply with the requirements of section 140 of the *Local Government Act 2020 (Act)* and regulation 12A of the *Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020*.

Safety

This procedure supports Council to provide a safety workplace for Councillors and to resolve disputes effectively.

10. IMPLEMENTATION STATEMENT**Human Rights Charter**

This Procedure has considered the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

Gender Equality

This Procedure has considered the *Gender Equality Act 2020* in its development.

11. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

This Procedure will be reviewed and adopted by Council on a four-year cycle.

Procedures may be reviewed earlier than a four-year cycle if legislative provisions, Industry or organisation requirements change.

12. REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Legislative Provisions	Local Government Act 2020 Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020
Council Supporting Documents	
Related External Documents (optional)	Model Councillor Code of Conduct

13. DEFINITIONS

Councillor Conduct Officer	means the person appointed in writing by the Chief Executive Officer to be the Councillor Conduct Officer for the Council under section 150
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14. REVISION HISTORY

Approved By	Approval Date	Sections Modified	CM9 Ref#
Council Meeting	21 May 2025	New Policy	

15. ATTACHMENT SUMMARY

Nil

2.7. CEO EMPLOYMENT AND REMUNERATION POLICY

Directorate:	Performance and Innovation
Department:	People and Culture

Council Plan

Objective - Leading with Integrity

This Policy ensures that the Council meets its obligations to support the ongoing high performance of the CEO through recruitment, professional development, performance planning and management and appropriate recognition and remuneration.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider a revised Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Employment & Remuneration Policy (C71) (the Policy) (**Attachment [2.7.1]**).

This proposed Policy has been updated to align with, and reflect, Council's policy review cycle, reporting requirements and notice of termination provisions.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Adopts the revised Chief Executive Officer Employment & Remuneration Policy (C71) (Attachment [2.7.2]); and**
- 2. Publishes the revised Chief Executive Officer Employment & Remuneration Policy (C71) (Attachment [2.7.2]) on Council's website.**

REPORT

During the recent recruitment process to appoint a new Council Chief Executive Officer (CEO), the CEO Employment & Remuneration Committee (the Committee) noted there was an opportunity to review the current Policy (C71).

The Policy provides direction on Council's commitment to the application of good governance, transparency and fairness in all matters relating to the employment, management and remuneration of the Chief Executive Officer.

A review of the current Policy (**Attachment [2.7.1]**) by the Committee identified the opportunity to update some clauses with regard to:

- The current wording at clause 3.20.9 which states the notice of termination provisions as being a period of six (6) months; and
- The requirement to review the Policy within six (6) months of a Council election; and

- The requirement to report annually on the implementation of the Policy to the Audit and Risk Committee.

Proposed

The review recommends the following changes to the Policy - refer (**Attachment [2.7.2]**) for the proposed new Policy.

Table 1.1

Clause Number	Current clause wording	Revised clause
3.20.9	Processes for early termination, including notice of termination provisions, with notice of termination by Council being a period of six (6) months.	Processes for early termination, including notice of termination provisions, with notice of termination by Council being a period of three (3) months.
5.1	This Policy will be reviewed and adopted by Council on a four-year cycle, or more often if required by the Council, and within 6 months of each Council election.	This Policy will be reviewed and adopted by Council on a four-year cycle, or more often if required by the Council.
5.1	The implementation of this policy will be reported annually to Council's Audit & Risk Committee.	Remove this clause. This additional oversight is not required. *note that the clause numbering (being a repeat of 5.1) is also incorrect.

CONSULTATION / COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This report was prepared following discussion with the CEO Employment & Remuneration Committee.

RESOURCES / FINANCIAL VIABILITY

There are no resource or financial implications as a result of the consideration of this report.

RISKS

The removal of the additional requirements to review the Policy will remove unnecessary administrative burden on the Committee and Councillors.

The Policy will still be reviewed on a minimum four-yearly cycle, and more often as required by Council.

The revised Policy continues Council's commitment to good governance, transparency and fairness in all matters relating to the employment, management and remuneration of the Chief Executive Officer.

STAFF DISCLOSURE

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have considered and determined that they do not have a conflict of interest in the matter.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachments are available on Council's website at the following [LINK](#).

1. CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy (C71) - Current [2.7.1 - 9 pages]
2. CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy (C71) - Proposed [2.7.2 - 9 pages]

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Council's Good Governance Framework

Pillar 8. Monitoring & Performance Review

Council Policy / Strategy / Plans

Documents are available on Council's website at the following [LINK](#).

CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy (C71)

Legislative Provisions

Local Government Act 2020

SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL

COUNCIL POLICYSouth Gippsland
Shire Council**CEO EMPLOYMENT & REMUNERATION POLICY**

Policy No.	C71	Adoption Date:	Council Meeting 15 November 2023
Revision Date:	November 2027		
Directorate:	Performance & Innovation	Department:	People & Culture
GOOD GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK – OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES			
Supporting Pillar:	Pillar 4 - Structure, Systems & Policies		
Link to Pillar:	Good governance is effective and efficient: Local Government should implement decisions and follow processes that make the best use of the available people, resources and time to ensure the best possible results for their community.		

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. The purpose of the *CEO Employment & Remuneration Policy (C71)* (the Policy) is to provide direction on Council's commitment to the application of good governance, transparency and fairness in all matters relating to the employment, management and remuneration of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).
- 1.2. Supporting the high performance of the CEO is one of the key responsibilities of the Council. This Policy ensures the Council meets its obligations to support the ongoing high performance of the CEO through recruitment, professional development, performance planning and management and appropriate recognition and remuneration.
- 1.3. This Policy is made in accordance with section 45 of the *Local Government Act 2020 (the Act)*.
- 1.4. This Policy provides for the following matters which the Council is responsible for under the Act or as a requirement of this Policy:
 - 1.4.1. the recruitment and appointment of the Chief Executive Officer;
 - 1.4.2. approving the Contract of Employment entered into between the Council and the Chief Executive Officer;
 - 1.4.3. the appointment of an Acting Chief Executive Officer for periods over 28 days;
 - 1.4.4. the provision of independent professional advice in relation to the matters dealt with in the Policy;

CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy (C71)

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- 1.4.5. the monitoring of the Chief Executive Officer's performance and professional development;
- 1.4.6. an annual review;
- 1.4.7. determining the Chief Executive Officer's remuneration.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1. This Policy outlines the mechanisms which support the Council in fulfilling its obligations regarding the CEO's employment and under the Act.
- 2.2. The aims of Council in relation to this Policy are to:
 - 2.2.1. establish a CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee (the Committee);
 - 2.2.2. provide processes for the recruitment of a natural person, and their appointment, to the position of CEO;
 - 2.2.3. draft and approve the Contract of Employment entered into between the Council and the CEO;
 - 2.2.4. seek and be guided by independent professional advice in relation to the matters dealt with in the Policy;
 - 2.2.5. provide processes for determining and reviewing the CEO's Remuneration Package;
 - 2.2.6. provide processes for supporting the CEO's professional development and monitoring performance including setting the Performance Plan and conducting an annual review;
 - 2.2.7. determine, as required, whether any variations to the Remuneration Package and terms and conditions of employment of the CEO are needed;
 - 2.2.8. provide processes for appointment of an Acting Chief Executive Officer for periods in excess of 28 days.
- 2.3. The aims of the CEO in relation to this Policy are to:
 - 2.3.1. work collaboratively with the Committee in determining the Performance Plan on an annual basis;
 - 2.3.2. actively participate in the performance appraisal process as required by the Committee;
 - 2.3.3. make use of constructive feedback from Councillors and Committee Members in relation to performance appraisal;
 - 2.3.4. undertake professional development as part of the Performance Plan; and
 - 2.3.5. draw the Committee's attention to any situation where any variation of the Performance Plan may be required in light of the current circumstances.



3. POLICY PRINCIPLES

CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee

- 3.1. The Council will establish a CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee.
- 3.2. The Committee will be an advisory committee to the Council, will meet at least twice per year, and will be chaired by an independent Chairperson.
- 3.3. The Committee must include three Councillors, one of whom will be the Mayor, and an independent Chairperson appointed by the Council who is entitled to be remunerated for their services. Council may appoint more than three Councillors if it wishes, however must not appoint other persons, excluding the independent chairperson, who are not Councillors.
- 3.4. A majority quorum of Councillor members of the Committee and the independent chairperson, must be present to transact business of the Committee.
- 3.5. If the Mayoral election occurs during the recruitment period with a new Mayor elected, the Mayor at the time of commencement of the recruitment process will continue to be involved until such time as the CEO is appointed. This allows continuity within the process. The new Mayor, if not already appointed to the Committee, will join the Committee.
- 3.6. The Councillor members of the Committee will make a recommendation to Council on the appointment of an independent chairperson (Chairperson), having considered a minimum of two with a preference of three or more applications from appropriately experienced persons. The Chairperson must not be a Councillor or member of Council staff. The Chairperson will be a neutral person who has detailed knowledge and experience in executive recruitment and oversight of employment contracts as well as experience in developing and facilitating executive performance reviews. Experience and knowledge of the Local Government Sector is required. An inquiring mind and the ability to analyse information will assist in carrying out the role of Independent Chairperson.
- 3.7. The Committee is to hold meetings to:
 - 3.7.1. Meet with the CEO to discuss and review the CEO performance against an agreed set of criteria;
 - 3.7.2. prepare relevant documentation including Council reports and contractual documents for the approval of the Council;
 - 3.7.3. conduct and maintain appropriate records regarding performance reviews; and
 - 3.7.4. review the Remuneration Package and conditions of employment of the CEO.
- 3.8. Following each meeting, the Committee will brief the Councillor group. A report will then be provided to Council.
- 3.9. The Committee will determine the meeting procedures at the first meeting of the Committee, minutes will be prepared and distributed to the Committee by the



secretariat support once received from the Independent Chair, within three working days of the meeting, which will include:

- 3.9.1. Day and time of the meeting;
- 3.9.2. Quorum and attendance; and
- 3.9.3. Communicate the meeting procedure to the council after the first meeting of the committee.

Recruitment of CEO

- 3.10. The Committee will establish and manage the process to recruit the CEO, designed to ensure the Council can select the best available candidate from a short list of preferred candidates (with or without a recommendation from the Committee).
- 3.11. The Committee will engage an Executive Search Consultant to run the recruitment process.
- 3.12. The Committee must liaise with the Executive Search Consultant.
- 3.13. The Committee must have regard to the Council's *Recruitment Policy (CE22)* when considering the recruitment of the position of CEO to:
 - 3.13.1. ensure that the recruitment decision is based on merit;
 - 3.13.2. supports transparency in the recruitment process and the public advertising of the position; and
 - 3.13.3. have regard to gender equity, diversity and inclusiveness.
- 3.14. The Committee must ensure that the Executive Search Consultant publicly advertises the CEO role.

Appointment of CEO

- 3.15. Council will receive a report from the Committee on the completion of its role in the recruitment process, and Council will proceed to decide on a preferred candidate and to negotiate and finalise a draft Contract of Employment.
- 3.16. The Committee will provide a recommendation to Council on the provisions to be contained in the proposed Contract of Employment.
- 3.17. The appointment of the CEO must be made by a resolution of the Council.

Reappointment of CEO

- 3.18. No later than 6 months prior to the expiry of the current CEO's Contract of Employment, the Committee will provide a recommendation to Council on:
 - 3.17.1. whether the CEO should be reappointed under a new Contract of Employment;
 - 3.17.2. if the recommendation is to reappoint the CEO, the proposed provisions of the further Contract of Employment.



- 3.19. Any reappointment of the current CEO must be made by a resolution of the Council.

Contract of Employment

- 3.20. The Contract of Employment will at a minimum, outline the following:
- 3.20.1. the employment term which must not exceed 5 years under section 44(2) of the Act;
 - 3.20.2. the responsibilities and duties of the position including compliance with the Act and the Code of Conduct;
 - 3.20.3. the conflict of interest management requirements;
 - 3.20.4. the CEO's Remuneration Package and other entitlements;
 - 3.20.5. any legislative and contractual obligations, including those during and continuing after appointment;
 - 3.20.6. the CEO's leave entitlements;
 - 3.20.7. dispute resolution procedures;
 - 3.20.8. processes for managing unsatisfactory performance;
 - 3.20.9. processes for early termination, including notice of termination provisions, with notice of termination by the Council being a period of six (6) months;
 - 3.20.10. any other matters required to be contained in the Contract of Employment by the Regulations.
- 3.21. The Contract of Employment may only be varied by a resolution of the Council and if accepted by the CEO, recorded in a deed of variation.

Remuneration and Expenses

- 3.22. The Remuneration Package provided to the CEO will form part of the Committee's annual review, having regard to (in accordance with section 45(3) of the Act):
- 3.22.1. any statement of policy issued by the Government of Victoria which is in force with respect to its wages policy (or equivalent); and
 - 3.22.2. any Public Sector Wages Determination.
- 3.23. Remuneration will be reviewed on an annual basis, in accordance with the CEO's Performance Plan and contractual requirements.
- 3.24. The Council will meet expenses incurred by the CEO in relation to:
- 3.24.1. membership and subscription fees payable to professional associations which are reasonably necessary in order to carry out duties;
 - 3.24.2. reasonable costs incurred where attending conferences, seminars or other professional development or networking functions; and
 - 3.24.3. reasonable costs incurred in performance of required duties.

**Performance Monitoring**

- 3.25. The Council will adopt an annual Performance Plan for the CEO, which will include KPIs (Key Performance Indicators). The Performance Plan must be developed collaboratively between the CEO and the Committee.
- 3.26. The CEO is to provide progress reports to the Committee on a twice-yearly basis.
- 3.27. The Committee shall meet with the CEO following each progress report to discuss the matters contained in the progress report.
- 3.28. Following the initial three months of the CEO's term, a workshop with Councillors and the CEO should be coordinated so that:
 - 3.28.1. the CEO can prepare and present an overview of findings during the early months, and highlight any projections or forecasts of relevance to the Council during their tenure;
 - 3.28.2. the Councillors can provide feedback to the CEO on their perspective of the CEO's performance during the initial period; and
 - 3.28.3. the Council and CEO can agree to projects and priorities for inclusion in the CEO's Performance Plan and KPIs.
- 3.29. Nothing in this Policy prevents the Committee and/or the Council from monitoring the CEO's performance on an ongoing basis.

Annual Review

- 3.30. In preparation for Council's review, the Committee is required to submit an annual review report after the end of the financial year (Annual Review Report) to the Council which includes recommendations on the following:
 - 3.30.1. whether, and to what extent, the CEO has met the KPIs under the Performance Plan;
 - 3.30.2. whether any KPIs or other criteria ought to be varied under the Performance Plan;
 - 3.30.3. whether the Remuneration Package ought to be varied; and
 - 3.30.4. any other necessary matters.
- 3.31. The Committee will submit the Annual Review Report to Council only after meeting with the CEO to discuss the Committee's proposed recommendations.
- 3.32. The Council shall, after receipt of the Annual Review Report, review the recommendations in the Annual Review Report and advise the CEO of the outcomes of the review process.

Acting Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

- 3.33. The Council must appoint an Acting CEO when there is a vacancy in the office of the CEO of greater than 28 days or the CEO is unable to perform the duties of the office of Chief Executive Officer.



- 3.34. The appointment of the Acting CEO must be made by a resolution of the Council unless the Acting CEO is appointed for a period not exceeding 28 days, in which case the CEO may appoint an Acting CEO under delegation from Council pursuant to section 11(3) of the Act.
- 3.35. The Committee must advise the Council on the selection and appointment of an Acting CEO.

Independent Advice

- 3.36. The independent person appointed to the Committee is responsible for providing independent professional advice to the matters dealt with under this Policy.
- 3.37. Manager People and Culture will be nominated as secretariat to the Committee/ Council to support on employment matters and processes.
- 3.38. The Council will determine:
- 3.38.1. The term of appointment of the independent person; and
 - 3.38.2. The remuneration of the independent person.
- 3.39. The Council or the Committee can, on an as needed basis, obtain additional independent professional advice in relation to the matters dealt with under this Policy.

Interaction with the Act and Regulations

- 3.40. This Policy applies subject to any inconsistent obligations in the Act or the Regulations.

Confidentiality

- 3.41. The Council will not disclose any personal information, being information which released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs.

Delegations

- 3.42. Council must not delegate the power to appoint the CEO whether on a permanent or acting basis greater than 28 days, however, the Council may delegate to the CEO the power to appoint an Acting CEO for a period not exceeding 28 days (sections 11(2)(d) and 11(3) of the Act).
- 3.43. Council must not delegate the power to make any decision in relation to the employment, dismissal or removal of the CEO (section 11(2)(e) of the Act).

4. IMPLEMENTATION STATEMENT

Human Rights Charter

- 4.1. This Policy has considered the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* in its development.



Gender Equality

- 4.2. This Policy has considered the *Gender Equality Act 2020* in its development.

Roles and Responsibilities - Staff

- 4.3. This Policy relies on the informed judgement and professionalism of Council staff to be discerning in the management of Mayor and Councillors' correspondence.
- 4.4. There may be extraneous circumstances where the guidelines outlined may not be applicable to all situations, however at all times the adherence to the procedures will be guided by the requirement for appropriate, timely, accurate and inclusive sharing of information and the capture of appropriate public records, between all parties concerned.
- 4.5. The Policy will provide guidance to staff in administering the *Councillor Code of Conduct* and managing Freedom of Information requests.

Roles and Responsibilities - Councillors

- 4.6. This Policy also relies on the informed judgement and professionalism of Councillors to be vigilant in their responsibilities regarding capture of any correspondence they receive unopened from Council, or external sources, if it fits the criteria of being a public record. These records are best provided to the secretariat / Manager People and Culture for capturing in Council's corporate records management system, as soon as practicable.

5. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

- 5.1. This Policy will be reviewed and adopted by Council on a four-year cycle, or more often if required by the Council, and within 6 months of each Council election.
- 5.1. The implementation of this Policy will be reported annually to Council's Audit & Risk Committee.

6. REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Legislative Provisions	Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 Freedom of Information Act 1982 Gender Equality Act 2020 Local Government Act 1989 Local Government Act 2020 Local Government Regulations 2020 Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal and Improving Parliamentary Standards Act 2019
Council Supporting Documents	CEO Employment & Remuneration Policy (C71) Councillor Code of Conduct (C14) Recruitment Policy (CE22)



7. DEFINITIONS

Contract of employment	The contract of employment between the CEO and the South Gippsland Shire Council, including any schedules.
Committee	The CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee established under this Policy.
Duties	The responsibilities, duties and functions of the CEO and/or Committee under this Policy and in any related instrument of Council pursuant to the Act.
Executive Search Consultant	A consultant with specialist expertise in sourcing and evaluating candidates for senior executive roles.
Performance Plan	The annual performance plan setting out KPIs for the CEO.
Public Sector Wages Determination	Any determination that is currently in effect under section 21 of the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal and Improving Parliamentary Standards Act 2019 in relation to remuneration bands for executives employed in public service bodies.
Remuneration Package	The total gross remuneration package paid to the CEO pursuant to the Contract of Employment.

8. REVISION HISTORY

Approved By	Approval Date	Sections Modified	CM9 Ref#
<i>Council Meeting</i>	<i>15 November 2023</i>	<i>Policy Review</i>	<i>D8255723</i>

SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL

COUNCIL POLICYSouth Gippsland
Shire Council**CEO EMPLOYMENT & REMUNERATION POLICY**

Policy No.	C71	Adoption Date:	TBC
Revision Date:	May 2029		
Directorate:	Performance & Innovation	Department:	People & Culture
GOOD GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK – OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES			
Supporting Pillar:	Pillar 4 - Structure, Systems & Policies		
Link to Pillar:	Good governance is effective and efficient: Local Government should implement decisions and follow processes that make the best use of the available people, resources and time to ensure the best possible results for their community.		

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. The purpose of the *CEO Employment & Remuneration Policy (C71)* (the Policy) is to provide direction on Council's commitment to the application of good governance, transparency and fairness in all matters relating to the employment, management and remuneration of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).
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 - 3.20.10. any other matters required to be contained in the Contract of Employment by the Regulations.
- 3.21. The Contract of Employment may only be varied by a resolution of the Council and if accepted by the CEO, recorded in a deed of variation.

Remuneration and Expenses

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- 3.24.1. membership and subscription fees payable to professional associations which are reasonably necessary in order to carry out duties;
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 - 3.28.3. the Council and CEO can agree to projects and priorities for inclusion in the CEO's Performance Plan and KPIs.
- 3.29. Nothing in this Policy prevents the Committee and/or the Council from monitoring the CEO's performance on an ongoing basis.

Annual Review

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 - 3.30.1. whether, and to what extent, the CEO has met the KPIs under the Performance Plan;
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Acting Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

- 3.33. The Council must appoint an Acting CEO when there is a vacancy in the office of the CEO of greater than 28 days or the CEO is unable to perform the duties of the office of Chief Executive Officer.



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Delegations

- 3.42. Council must not delegate the power to appoint the CEO whether on a permanent or acting basis greater than 28 days, however, the Council may delegate to the CEO the power to appoint an Acting CEO for a period not exceeding 28 days (sections 11(2)(d) and 11(3) of the Act).
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4.2. This Policy has considered the *Gender Equality Act 2020* in its development.

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- 4.3. This Policy relies on the informed judgement and professionalism of Council staff to be discerning in the management of Mayor and Councillors' correspondence.
- 4.4. There may be extraneous circumstances where the guidelines outlined may not be applicable to all situations, however at all times the adherence to the procedures will be guided by the requirement for appropriate, timely, accurate and inclusive sharing of information and the capture of appropriate public records, between all parties concerned.
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- 5.1. This Policy will be reviewed and adopted by Council on a four-year cycle, or more often if required by the Council.

6. REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Legislative Provisions	Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 Freedom of Information Act 1982 Gender Equality Act 2020 Local Government Act 1989 Local Government Act 2020 Local Government Regulations 2020 Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal and Improving Parliamentary Standards Act 2019
Council Supporting Documents	CEO Employment & Remuneration Policy (C71) Councillor Code of Conduct (C14) Recruitment Policy (CE22)



7. DEFINITIONS

Contract of employment	The contract of employment between the CEO and the South Gippsland Shire Council, including any schedules.
Committee	The CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee established under this Policy.
Duties	The responsibilities, duties and functions of the CEO and/or Committee under this Policy and in any related instrument of Council pursuant to the Act.
Executive Search Consultant	A consultant with specialist expertise in sourcing and evaluating candidates for senior executive roles.
Performance Plan	The annual performance plan setting out KPIs for the CEO.
Public Sector Wages Determination	Any determination that is currently in effect under section 21 of the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal and Improving Parliamentary Standards Act 2019 in relation to remuneration bands for executives employed in public service bodies.
Remuneration Package	The total gross remuneration package paid to the CEO pursuant to the Contract of Employment.

8. REVISION HISTORY

Approved By	Approval Date	Sections Modified	CM9 Ref#
Council Meeting	15 November 2023	Policy Review	D8255723

2.8. COUNCIL POLICY REVIEWS AND REVOCATION

Directorate:	Strategy & Partnerships
Department:	Governance and Integrity

Council Plan

Objective - Leading with Integrity

Council's transparency is demonstrated by reviewing the Council Policies which are relevant to support the governance and direction of the organisation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider the revocation of nine (9) Council Policies. These policies have been reviewed and considered to now be superseded, covered in other strategic documents, merged with another existing policy or no longer serve a function of Council.

Revoking these Policies will aid in the utilisation of the most current Policies and Guidelines, encouraging effective and efficient operations of Council.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council revokes the following Council Policies:
 - a. C20 Heavy Vehicle Usage on Council Roads Policy (Attachment [2.8.1]);
 - b. C45 Waste Disposal Privileges for Fundraisers and Community Groups Policy (Attachment [2.8.2]);
 - c. C68 Public Amenities Policy (Attachment [2.8.3]);
 - d. C23 Intellectual Property Policy (Attachment [2.8.4]);
 - e. C55 Audit Policy (Attachment [2.8.5]);
 - f. C80 Citizenship Ceremony Dress Code Policy (Attachment [2.8.6]);
 - g. C56 Civic and Mayoral Reception Policy (Attachment [2.8.7]);
 - h. C57 Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillor Attendance at Functions Policy ([Attachment 2.8.8]);
 - i. C19A Business Investment and Attraction Policy (Attachment [2.8.9]); and
2. The Policies listed in this report be removed from the Council website.

REPORT

Council's commitment to continuous improvement involves the review, amendment and revocation of policies.

The list of Policies outlined in this report were reviewed and considered for revocation against each of the following criteria:

- Does the Policy serve a current function of Council;
- Can the Policy be superseded;
- Can the Policy be merged with an existing policy; or
- Is the Policy already covered within other strategic documents (strategies, plans and frameworks), whereby Council looks to the strategic document alone to determine direction and/or decision making.

The following table outlines each revised policy, their purpose and the recommended reasons to Council for revocation:

POLICY:	ADOPTED:	PURPOSE:	COMMENT:
Heavy Vehicle Usage on Council's Roads Policy (C20)	26 June 2019	Objectives of the Heavy Vehicle Usage is to ensure consistent response to applications from heavy vehicle operators and the specific conditions with regards to Council's rights to grant or refuse consent.	Council subscribes and utilises the direction of the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator Portal.
Waste Disposal Privileges for Fundraisers and Community Groups Policy (C45)	26 April 2018	This Policy has been developed to ensure a fair and reasonable approach is taken in relation to waste disposal privileges. Council recognises and appreciates the work undertaken by Fundraising and Community Groups and is happy to assist, whilst being mindful of the ever-increasing costs associated with the disposal of waste.	Council utilises the Waste and Resource Recovery Plan 2024-2034 which was adopted in September 2024.

POLICY:	ADOPTED:	PURPOSE:	COMMENT:
Public Amenities Policy (C68)	25 Oct 2017	To define the guiding principles and framework for the provision of services and sustainable management of Council owned and managed and non-council owned and managed Public Amenities in the South Gippsland Shire.	Council is now guided by the Community and Economic Infrastructure Blueprint 2021-2036, which sets the direction of Council owned and managed and non-council owned Public Amenities within the Shire.
Intellectual Property Policy (C23)	25 Nov 2020	Recognises that all Councillors, staff, contractors and consultants have a responsibility to properly identify, attribute and preserve Council's Intellectual Property. That Council's Intellectual Property is managed professionally, protected, shared and commercialised where appropriate.	Council utilises the Employee Code of Conduct for direction related to Intellectual Property requirements.
Audit Policy (C55)	28 Aug. 2019 Revised: 28 Aug. 2023	The objective of this Policy is to define and provide a framework for Council's approach to audit and review processes, to enable Council to meet its compliance requirements in undertaking its role, carrying out its functions and exercising its powers	Policy is no longer required and has been replaced by the Audit and Risk Committee Charter, which now provides direction relating to audit and risk requirements

POLICY:	ADOPTED:	PURPOSE:	COMMENT:
Citizenship Ceremony Dress Code Policy (C80)		The objective of the Citizenship Ceremony Dress Code Policy (the Policy) is to meet the requirement of the Australian Citizenship Ceremonies Code, under the Australian Citizenship Act 2007, which states that every local council should have a Dress Code for its citizenship ceremonies.	Policy is no longer required as it is no longer a legislative requirement. Council provides information to conferees via invitation letter.
Civic and Mayoral Reception Policy (C56)	24 Feb. 2016	To provide guidelines to assist in the consideration of, and where appropriate, the provision of Council funded Civic and Mayoral Receptions.	Policy is no longer required as it relates to General Council Business.
Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillor Attendance at Functions Policy (C57)	26 April 2017	The objective of this Policy is to provide guidance to Councillors and staff about attending and representing Council at official functions, events or community events	Policy is no longer required as it relates to General Council Business.

POLICY:	ADOPTED:	PURPOSE:	COMMENT:
Business Investment and Attraction Policy (C19A)	25 Nov. 2020	To provide a framework to assist the facilitation of new business development and to build the local economy. To add strategic weight to economic development proposals within the Shire by providing guidance and formalising Council's approach to business investment and attraction.	Council utilises the Economic Development Strategy 2021-2031 for direction related to business investment and attraction within the Shire.

CONSULTATION / COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Council Policies outlined in this report have been internally reviewed by appropriate Council officers and Directors.

No external consultation or community engagement has been required for these policy revocations.

RESOURCES / FINANCIAL VIABILITY

There are no direct financial or resourcing implications arising from this report.

RISKS

Policies should be reviewed and updated on a regular basis, based on external advice and sector experiences. If policies are not reviewed and updated on a regular basis, they may not support the desired outcome, or the organisation, effectively.

STAFF DISCLOSURE

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have considered and determined that they do not have a conflict of interest in the matter.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachments are available on Council's website at the following [LINK](#).

1. C20 Heavy Vehicle Usage on Council Roads Policy [2.8.1 - 3 pages]
2. C45 Waste Disposal Privileges for Fundraisers and Community Groups Policy [2.8.2 - 3 pages]
3. C68 Public Amenities Policy [2.8.3 - 5 pages]
4. C23 Intellectual Property Policy [2.8.4 - 4 pages]
5. C55 Audit Policy [2.8.5 - 4 pages]
6. C80 Citizenship Ceremony Dress Code Policy [2.8.6 - 2 pages]

7. C56 Civic and Mayoral Reception Policy [2.8.7 - 2 pages]
8. C57 Mayor Deputy Mayor and Councillor Attendance at Functions Policy [2.8.8 - 8 pages]
9. C19A Business Investment and Attraction Policy [2.8.9 - 4 pages]

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Council's Good Governance Framework

Pillar 1. Direction & Leadership

Pillar 3. Decision Making

Pillar 4. Structure, Systems & Policies

Pillar 7. Risk & Compliance

Pillar 8. Monitoring & Performance Review

Council Policy / Strategy / Plans

Documents are available on Council's website at the following [LINK](#).

C20 Heavy Vehicle Usage on Council Roads Policy Attachment [2.8.1];

C45 Waste Disposal Privileges for Fundraisers and Community Groups Policy

C68 Public Amenities Policy

C23 - Intellectual Property Policy

C55 - Audit Policy

C80 Citizenship Ceremony Dress Code Policy

C56 - Civic and Mayoral Reception Policy

C57 - Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillor Attendance at Functions Policy

C19A - Business Investment and Attraction Policy

Legislative Provisions

Local Government Act 2020

Regional, State and National Plan and Policies

Nil



HEAVY VEHICLE USAGE ON COUNCIL ROADS POLICY

Policy Number	C20	Department	Infrastructure Planning	[INF]
Adoption Date	26 June 2019	Primary Author	Asset Planning Engineer	
Revision Date	2022/23	Secondary Author	Civil Assets Coordinator	
Revision Cycle	4 years	Reference	D3800219	

POLICY OBJECTIVE

The objectives of the Heavy Vehicle Usage on Council Roads Policy are to ensure:

- Consistent response to applications from heavy vehicle operators to use Council control local roads.
- Council officers have the ability to assess consent applications and issue consent notifications to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) and VicRoads.
- Heavy vehicle operators are aware of the specific conditions with regards to Council's rights to grant or refuse consent.
- Approved local roads within the Shire remain suitable for Higher Mass Limits (HML) and Performance-Based Standards (PBS) category heavy vehicles and are listed within Council's and the NHVRs Geographic Information System (GIS).
- Council is satisfied that heavy vehicles do not pose a risk to public safety.

LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS

Bus Safety Act 2009
 Heavy Vehicle National Law Application Act 2013 (Vic)
 Heavy Vehicle National Law Application (Infringements) Regulations 2013 (Vic)
 Heavy Vehicle (General) National Regulation
 Heavy Vehicle (Vehicle Standards) National Regulation
 Road Management Act 2004
 Road Management (General) Regulations 2016
 Road Management (Works and Infrastructure) Regulations 2015
 Road Safety Act 1986
 Road Safety (Traffic Management) Regulations 2009
 Road Safety (Vehicles) Regulations 2009

DEFINITIONS

- Class 1 heavy vehicles:** Over size or over mass (OSOM) vehicles, agricultural vehicles and trailers, and vehicles with the ability to carry a large indivisible item (eg. low loaders) that exceed prescribed mass or dimension requirements. Also includes special purpose vehicles (SPV) such as mobile cranes.
- Class 2 heavy vehicles:** B-doubles, road trains, long buses, and high livestock and vehicle carriers that do not exceed prescribed mass and



dimension requirements. Also includes performance based (PBS) vehicles.

Class 3 heavy vehicles:

Loaded vehicles that exceed prescribed mass or dimension requirements and are not Class 1 heavy vehicles, such as larger truck and dog trailer combinations and B doubles or road trains that exceed prescribed mass or dimension requirements.

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy operates under the legislative provisions outlined above and recognises that Council has the appropriate consent management and operational mechanisms to enact this policy. This policy will:

- Strengthen compliance with relevant heavy vehicle legislation and procedural mechanisms.
- Provide transparency in the management of heavy vehicles throughout the Shire.
- Ensure that Council takes into account relevant freight strategies when processing heavy vehicle road access applications / requirements.
- Potentially bring to Council's attention the need to prioritise improvement works on elements of its road network to facilitate the efficient movement of freight to and from local industries.
- Work with NHVR and local industries to improve heavy vehicle access and keep local economy productive and strong.

POLICY SCOPE

Consent Management and Operation

Council authorises the Manager Infrastructure Planning, the Coordinator Civil Assets, the Asset Planning Engineer, and others as required, to assess and issue consent via the NHVR Portal, as appropriate.

Council will generally allow the use of the gazetted pre-approved local road network to be used by various types of heavy vehicles operating under HML. Pre-approval would not be granted for roads where there is a road safety or road asset integrity issue restricting safe passage of these vehicles.

All consent applications, assessments, and responses to the NHVR to be stored and made available, as necessary, to appropriate delegated officers, via the NHVR Portal.

The pre-approved gazetted list of local roads to be maintained and managed within Council's GIS, as well as the NHVR GIS, and to be consistent with existing nationally listed and abutting councils' pre-approved roads.



Mass Management

Council will conditionally allow the use of local roads for heavy vehicles where the following apply:

1. Roads that are pre-approved and gazetted for all heavy vehicles.
2. Roads that are not currently pre-approved or gazetted, be allowed to be used by heavy vehicles on a case by case basis provided:
 - 2.1. the road alignment and width is geometrically suitable for that type of vehicle;
 - 2.2. there are no load limits from assessment of bridge capacities; and
 - 2.3. the road is considered to have adequate pavement strength.
3. Roads used as school bus routes may have morning and afternoon use restrictions.

Over Size Over Mass (OSOM) Vehicles

Council will approve the use of local roads for OSOM vehicles under the following conditions:

1. Lead and following escort vehicles are to be provided and operated as per the NHVR requirements.
2. The mass of the load and vehicle will not exceed the safe load capacity of any structure over which it may pass.
3. The intended route must be geometrically suitable for OSOM vehicles.

RISK ASSESSMENT

This policy ensures Council has a structured mechanism to protect Council's road network. Roads not suitable for heavy vehicles could potentially be damaged and pose a threat to other road users.

IMPLEMENTATION | REVIEW

The responsibility for and implementation of the policy rests with the Infrastructure Directorate. Implementation will include:

- Publication on Council's website and intranet.
- Inclusion of policy reference in communications with heavy vehicle users.

In accordance with Council's policy review process, this policy will be reviewed and adopted on a 4 year cycle.



WASTE DISPOSAL PRIVILEGES FOR FUNDRAISERS AND COMMUNITY GROUPS POLICY

Policy Number	C45	Department	Infrastructure Planning [INF]
Adoption Date	26 April 2018	Primary Author	Coordinator Waste
Revision Date	2021/22	Secondary Author	Manager Infrastructure Planning
Revision Cycle	4 years	Reference	D1525218

POLICY OBJECTIVE

This policy has been developed to ensure a fair and reasonable approach is taken in relation to waste disposal privileges. Council recognises and appreciates the work undertaken by Fundraising and Community Groups and is happy to assist, whilst being mindful of the ever-increasing costs associated with the disposal of waste.

LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS

Nil

DEFINITIONS

Fundraising Group	A group that raises funds solely to provide benefit to the wider community.
Community Group	<p>A group that is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a community based organisation/service; • not for profit; • an ongoing recognised group; • not currently receiving ongoing operating funds from the South Gippsland Shire Council or State or Federal Government; • providing a service to the whole community; and • not operating for the sole benefit of its own association.
Waste	<p>Any material that cannot be reused, resold or recycled.</p> <p>Note: Only waste generated within the South Gippsland Shire will be accepted.</p>

POLICY STATEMENT

Council encourages and supports Fundraising Groups and Community Groups through the provision of financial assistance in the form of waste disposal privileges.

POLICY SCOPE

The group seeking waste disposal privileges must:

- be a recognised Fundraising Group or Community Group; and



- provide services within the South Gippsland Shire.

A group may be entitled to waste disposal privileges if:

- they are disposing of waste resulting from an emergency or natural disaster;
- the waste has been collected during Clean Up Australia Day activities;
- the waste has been collected during community clean-ups on Council owned or managed property;
- the works carried out by a Community Group would otherwise have been done by Council; or
- in the case of a fundraising group, the waste has been generated directly as a result of fundraising activities.

Fundraising Group or Community Group

A Fundraising Group or Community Group may apply to Council for waste disposal privileges at any time. Written applications must be on the group's letterhead to ensure that only incorporated groups are requesting free waste disposal.

Once a request has been received, an application form will be forwarded for completion and returned to Council. All details on the form must be completed including the estimated amount of waste likely to be disposed of by the group. Groups are asked to be as accurate as possible when estimating the amount of waste to be disposed of, as this will assist with planning for the management of waste at transfer stations and the Koonwarra Landfill. Council may limit the amount of waste to be disposed of by any group.

Groups must meet the requirements (see Definitions) of the Policy in order to qualify for waste disposal privileges.

Other Organisations

Where groups are requesting waste disposal privileges for materials generated from an emergency or natural disaster, they must contact Council to seek approval for waste disposal privileges.

Where large quantities of material are generated, the group may be directed to the Koonwarra Landfill.

Other Requirements

Recyclables must be separated from the load wherever possible and placed in the appropriate areas at the disposal facility as directed by the attendant. Recyclable materials include glass, plastic bottles, steel cans, aluminium cans, white goods (fridges must be degassed), electronic waste, metal, aluminium, paper, cardboard, green waste and clean, untreated/unpainted wood waste (free of nails etc).



COUNCIL POLICY

COUNCIL POLICY

COUNCIL POLICY

COUNCIL POLICY

COUNCIL POLICY

RISK ASSESSMENT

Financial

The major risk to Council through continuing to implement this Policy in its current state is the increased costs of the required reimbursements to Council's transfer station contractor. This is mitigated through maintaining the eligibility criteria for participating groups and through the enforcement of monthly limits on waste disposal quantities for each group.

If the Policy was discontinued, there is a risk that some dumped material may end up having to be managed by Council. There is also the risk that some groups providing community services may not be able to continue due to the cost of waste disposal often caused by illegal dumping in the case of op-shops.

IMPLEMENTATION | AUDIT | REVIEW

The responsibility and implementation of the policy rests with the Infrastructure Directorate.

This policy will be reviewed and adopted on a 4 year cycle.

This policy will be published on Council's website.



PUBLIC AMENITIES POLICY

Policy Number	C68	Department	Sustainable Communities [SCI]
Council Adoption Date	25 October 2017	Primary Author	Coordinator Building
Revision Date	2020/21	Secondary Author	Manager Sustainable Communities
Revision Cycle	4 years	Reference	D896517

POLICY OBJECTIVE

To define the guiding principles and framework for the provision of services and sustainable management of Council owned and managed and non-council owned and managed Public Amenities in the South Gippsland Shire.

It will enable Council to implement a coordinated approach to the management of Public Amenities in South Gippsland Shire that are essential for current and future service delivery.

LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS

Building Act 1993
Building Regulations 2006
Disability Discrimination Act 1992

DEFINITIONS

BAMP	Building Asset Management Plan 2017.
Council Owned or Managed	Public Amenities that are located on Council owned land, land for which Council manages through a legal tenure arrangement, and/or Public Amenities that Council has taken on responsibility due to either historical agreements (pre-amalgamations) or a resolution of Council.
CPTED	Crime Prevention through Environmental Design.
Level of Service	Describes the outputs, objectives, or activities an organisation intends to deliver to its customers.
New	An addition to the existing Council Owned or Managed Public Amenity.
Non-Council Owned or Managed	Public Amenities that Council has no ownership or responsibility for.
Operational Services	Describes the services that are of a non-capital nature and required to maintain the service and operations of Council Owned or Managed Public Amenities.
Public Amenity	Toilet, restroom, or family room provided for use by members of the public.



Renewal	The replacement of an existing Council Owned or Managed Public Amenity.
Toilet classification	Categories of Public Amenities that have been developed by Council's Public Amenities team.

POLICY STATEMENT

To provide quality, accessible, and appropriately located Public Amenities in South Gippsland Shire that take into account increased seasonal population.

1. Levels of Service

- 1.1. For Council owned or managed Public Amenities, Council will provide the following Level of Service:
 - 1.1.1. Private under cover cubicles.
 - 1.1.2. Toilet paper.
 - 1.1.3. Hand washing facilities
 - 1.1.4. Hand drying facilities towel or dryer.
 - 1.1.5. Open 24 hours a day (exception Bass Valley which is closed from 1 April to 1 October).
 - 1.1.6. A regular cleaning schedule in accordance with the Public Amenity Categories below and shown in [Appendix 1 - Public Toilets in South Gippsland Summary Data \(internal document\)](#):

Category A:	Toilets daily minimum – HIGH USE
Category B:	Toilets 3 to 6 days per week – MEDIUM USE
Category C:	Toilets 2 days per week – LOW USE
Category D:	Toilets not cleaned by Council
- 1.2. For Public Amenities that are non-council owned or managed, but Council has a pre-amalgamation agreement in place with a Committee of Management or Community Group with legal tenure to that Public Amenity, Council will continue to honour its pre-amalgamation agreement.
- 1.3. For Public Amenities that are non-council owned or managed and Council has no agreement in place with a Committee of Management or Community Group, Council will provide advice on operational matters and available grants.

2. Operational Services

- 2.1. Council allocates an annual operating budget to provide the following Operational Services to Council owned and managed Public Amenities:



- 2.1.1. Reactive and programmed maintenance in accordance with Council's BAMP.
- 2.1.2. Cleaning in accordance with a scheduled operational cleaning Level of Service, 7 days a week, 364 days a year (**Appendix 1 - Public Toilets in South Gippsland Summary Data** (*internal document*)).

3. Capital Expenditure

- 3.1. Council officers will propose capital expenditure budgets for Public Amenities for Council's consideration. This capital expenditure proposal process will:
 - 3.1.1. Plan for the capital expenditure of Public Amenities that meet the definition of Renewal or New Public Amenity.
 - 3.1.2. Prioritise Capital Expenditure for the Renewal of other existing Public Amenities using the current condition rating, accessibility, serviceability and functionality of the identified Public Amenity as the priority drivers.
 - 3.1.3. Incorporate the following design elements for Renewal and New capital projects:
 - Short life structure (25 years).
 - Universal access with at least one toilet in each block complying with disabled access standards and incorporate 'disability friendly' design features.
 - CPTED principles.
 - Sustainable building materials, fittings, and finishes.
 - Energy efficient and environmentally sustainable.
 - Consideration of the surrounding natural environment, culture, and history.

4. Demolition

- 4.1. Council will consider the demolition of a Public Amenity without replacement when:
 - 4.1.1. The condition of the Public Amenity has deteriorated below a serviceable standard and/or patronage is no longer frequent enough to justify the service provision.
 - 4.1.2. The use of the surrounding space/area has altered and the location no longer warrants the provision of a Public Amenity.
 - 4.1.3. The replacement cost is prohibitive and location is environmentally sensitive.



5. New Public Amenity Facilities

- 5.1. Council will consider taking on full responsibility for the legal tenure, ongoing service, and maintenance of non-council owned or managed Public Amenity facilities and construction of new public amenities facilities on a case by case scenario. Council will only consider these proposals when the proposal / business case is able to address clause 5.1.6 and meets two of the following remaining criteria:
 - 5.1.1. There is no existing Public Amenity within a 500m radius of high use areas (>250 visitations daily) and 1km in low use areas (<250 visitations daily) of an already established Public Amenity.
 - 5.1.2. There has been a significant increase (25%) in permanent / seasonal township population using the most recent census data as the benchmark.
 - 5.1.3. There is significant community support for the Public Amenity to become a council owned and managed Public Amenity.
 - 5.1.4. There has been a new activity established (ie. playground or barbecue / picnic facilities that attract daily usage of greater than 50 usages.
 - 5.1.5. There is a capacity problem at an existing Public Amenity – when the demand for Public Amenity use at the venue leads to queues on a daily basis.
 - 5.1.6. Council can secure legal tenure of the land/location of the proposed Public Amenity.

6. Non-Council Owned and Managed

- 6.1. Council will:
 - 6.1.1. Recognise historical operational arrangements of non-council owned and managed Public Amenities and continue to honour these agreements.
 - 6.1.2. Provide advice on operational matters and available grants to responsible authorities/committees.
 - 6.1.3. Agree to consider taking over the cleaning and maintenance responsibility of an existing non-council owned and managed Public Amenity as outlined in clause 5.1 above.

7. Design and Location of New Public Amenities

- 7.1. Council will consider incorporating the following facilities into the design of renewal and new Public Amenities on a case by case scenario:
 - 7.1.1. Baby change facilities.
 - 7.1.2. Change room facilities.



7.1.3. Syringe and sanitary disposal units.

7.2. Locate renewal or new Public Amenities in accordance with the following principles:

7.2.1. To be constructed on Council owned or managed land or on land that Council is able to secure a tenure arrangement.

7.2.2. To be located within a radius of:

- 500m of a high use area (ie. town centres, recreation reserves, or major parks/reserves that have other facilities such as playgrounds, rotundas, tourist sites/information; or
- 100m of the existing Public Amenity that is to be replaced.

7.2.3. The location is to demonstrate a sense of security through surrounding activity, with high visibility to streets or public buildings, avoiding obscured entrances that create uncertainty for patrons when entering or leaving the Public Amenity.

RISK ASSESSMENT

8. This Policy will:

8.1. Provide transparency, openness, and clarity in regards to Council's position on the future planning and operational responsibilities for Council and non-council Public Amenities.

8.2. Address the risk of Council assuming the responsibility for ongoing maintenance and operational expenditure on non-council owned and managed Public Amenities.

IMPLEMENTATION STATEMENT

9. Council's Sustainable Communities and Infrastructure Directorate has the responsibility for the effective implementation of this Policy. The Policy will be implemented and managed by:

9.1. Publishing the Policy on Council's website.

9.2. Reviewing the Policy on a 4 year cycle.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 | Public Toilets in South Gippsland Summary Data (*internal document*) [D2373817](#)



INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY POLICY

Policy Number C23
 Council Meeting Date 25 November 2020
 Next Review Date November 2024

1. POLICY OBJECTIVE

The *Intellectual Property Policy C23* (the Policy) aims to:

- Recognise the value of and protect Council's Intellectual Property;
- Acknowledge that Council owns, controls and manages all Intellectual Property (IP) that it has created or acquired;
- Recognise that all Councillors, staff, contractors and consultants have a responsibility to properly identify, attribute and preserve Council's IP; and
- Ensure that Council's IP is managed professionally, protected, shared and commercialised where appropriate.

2. POLICY SCOPE

This Policy applies to:

- All activities of Council and related activities; and
- All Councillors, staff (whether permanent or temporary or provided by an agency), consultants, contractors or other appointees.

Council wishes to foster the development of Intellectual Property that is a valuable asset to the organisation. Intellectual Property may only be used in a manner that furthers Council's purposes. Council has the right to choose which ideas are to be developed. It is the responsibility of staff to protect Council's Intellectual Property and ensure that it is used in accordance with this Policy.

3. POLICY PRINCIPLES – INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Council owns, controls and manages all IP created by Council staff.

Council staff who are also employed outside Council, cannot use Council IP as part of this external employment, unless permission has been granted in writing by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). It is also noted that Council staff cannot be employed outside Council unless this is specifically approved by the CEO.

Where Council engages any contractor or consultant or their subcontractors, and the contractor or consultant or their subcontractors creates any IP (including copyright) as part of that engagement, then there must be a written agreement which clearly sets out that Council owns this IP. This also applies to individuals employed by Council through an agency.

Should an occasion occur where commercialisation of IP is considered, Council must seek appropriate legal, financial and commercial advice when making decisions in this regard.

3.1 Staff Responsibilities



To properly identify, preserve and use Council's IP, and respect the IP of others. Where there has been an alleged infringement or misuse of IP owned by Council by a third party, staff must notify their manager who will provide a written report to their Director and the CEO.

To ensure that copyright material is identified, captured and recorded on an appropriate system.

3.2 Council's Ownership and use of Intellectual Property

It is Council policy that:

- Council is the owner of Council's IP including, without limitation, Council materials;
- Council's IP may be used only for Council's purposes (unless otherwise agreed by Council);
- Council's IP may not be reproduced in any form or communicated using any medium without Council's consent; and
- Council's IP may not be assigned to a third party without the prior written consent of the CEO.

3.3 Developed Intellectual Property

It is Council policy that by participating in any of Council's project teams, technical committees and / or the creation and adoption of Council's IP, participants and committee members (whether they are Councillors, employees or third parties) must acknowledge that Council is the owner of all Developed Intellectual Property.

If necessary, individuals who participate in Council project teams, technical committees and related activities will be required to sign an agreement acknowledging the transfer of any rights in Council's IP to Council. The rights granted by this assignment shall belong to Council in perpetuity.

For clarity, it is Council's policy that unless otherwise agreed by Council, contractors, subcontractors engaged by Council for the purposes of providing Council with specified services must acknowledge and agree that the ownership of Developed IP created or developed in the course of or in connection with the provision of services by the contractor to Council will vest in Council. Further, the contractor may be requested to execute certain documents and do certain things required by Council for the purposes of giving effect to Council's ownership of such Developed IP rights.

3.4 Third Parties' Intellectual Property

It is Council policy that the Intellectual Property of third parties must be respected and not infringed by Council or any of its committees, or any Councillor, employee, member or other person acting on behalf of Council.



3.5 Copyright and Council's Electronic Networks

The Copyright Act 1968 (Cth) (the Act) protects the rights of owners of certain work (literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work). Specifically, the Act preserves the owner's exclusive rights to, depending on the type of work, reproduce the work in a material form, publish the work, perform the work in public, make available online or electronically transmit the work to the public, make an adaptation of the work and / or enter into a commercial rental arrangement in respect of the work.

In relation to Council's electronic systems it is therefore Council policy that inputting, uploading, downloading, reproducing, transmitting, or in any way making available online Council's IP without Council's prior written permission is prohibited, with the exception that Council is not intending to limit the applicability of the 'fair dealing' concept established in the Act (the relevant sections aim to allow some 'exceptions', within the bounds of what is 'fair' - refer to the Act for more detail).

To assist Councillors and staff using Council's electronic networks and computer systems to be aware of their obligations in relation to IP, the following message is displayed upon PC start up.

'Only individuals currently authorised to log in on Council's network may use this computer. All information accessed on or generated by this computer is the property of South Gippsland Shire Council and is subject to the protection accorded to Intellectual Property (by law and Council Policy).'

4. RISK ASSESSMENT

Through the effective implementation of this Policy, Council will manage the risk of loss through the unapproved use of Council's IP or breaching the IP rights of a third party.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES STATEMENT

Council will implement this Policy by:

- Publishing the policy on the Council website;
- Managing IP in accordance with this Policy and Council's Corporate Information Management Policy;
- Ensuring all employment contracts for staff (including agency staff) and contracts with contractors, sub-contractors and consultants contain an appropriate clause relating to ownership and use of Council's IP.
- Reporting to Council's Audit Committee and Council any issues arising about Council's IP.



SUPPORTING INFORMATION			
Legislative Provisions		Copyright act (1968) (Cth) Patents Act 1990 Trademarks Act 1995 Designs Act 2003 Circuit Layout Act 1989	
File Number		TRIM Ref: D9304520	
DEFINITIONS			
Intellectual Property:		Means all rights conferred under statute, common law and equity in relation to inventions, designs, names, registered and unregistered trade marks (including service marks), trade and trade secrets, logos and get up, circuit layouts, confidential information, copyright and any other intellectual or proprietary rights as defined in Article 2 of the World Intellectual Property Organisation Convention of July 1967. Intellectual property is what our minds create that is then put into material form (i.e. written down, drawn, photographed, composed, broadcast, performed, designed, invented). IP rights are protected in a variety of ways, some of which are automatic upon creation, e.g. copyright, and some are registrable, e.g. registered trademarks and patents.	
Developed Intellectual Property		Means all Intellectual Property created or developed during the course of or in connection with any project undertaken by Council, including without limitation, projects undertaken by Council together with a third party.	
Council Materials		Means all material brought or required to be brought into existence by or for Council including but not limited to documents, logos, branding material, printed material, electronic products, databases, audio / visual products, equipment, data stored by any means and any other material or information prepared by Council or otherwise held by or for Council.	
REVISION HISTORY			
Policy Review		<i>This Policy will be reviewed and adopted on a 4-year cycle unless required earlier for legislation or other reasons.</i>	
Version	Approved	Approval Date	Sections Modified
1.0	Ordinary Council Meeting	25 June 2014	Policy Review
1.1	Ordinary Council Meeting	28 June 2017	Policy Review
1.2	Council Meeting	25 November 2020	Policy Review



South Gippsland Shire Council

AUDIT POLICY

Policy Number	C55	Directorate	Corporate and Community Services
Council Item No.	6.1	Department	Finance, Risk and Procurement
Council Adoption Date	28 August 2019	Primary Author	Senior Risk Officer
Revision Date	28 August 2023	Secondary Author	Coordinator Risk

POLICY OBJECTIVE

The objective of this policy is to define and provide a framework for Council's approach to audit and review processes, to enable Council to meet its compliance requirements in undertaking its role, carrying out its functions and exercising its powers. This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Acceptance of Gifts and Donations Policy
- Audit Committee Charter
- Fraud and Corrupt Conduct Policy
- Information Privacy Policy
- Property Insurance Coverage Policy
- Information Security Policy
- Procurement Policy and Manual
- Risk Management Policy
- Intellectual Property Policy
- Policy Framework Policy
- Protected Disclosure Guidelines
- Councillors Code of Conduct
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Business Investment Policy
- Council Land Ownership Policy

LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS

Local Government Act 1989 sections 133, 135 and 139
 Local Government (Finance and Reporting) Regulations 2004
 Audit Act 1994
 Financial Management Act 1994
 Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

DEFINITIONS

POLICY STATEMENT

Council's Audit program principles: Council will maintain an audit program underpinned by the following principles:

1. Provides for independence of audits and reviews.
2. Enables monitoring of compliance with legislated and policy requirements.
3. Provides a platform from which practices and processes can be improved and good practice achieved.
4. Enables monitoring of risk management strategies and mitigates strategic risks.



5. Commits Council to organisational cooperation with, involvement in, support of and assisting with all internal and external audits and reviews.

Council's Audit Program: will include as a minimum:

1. External Financial Audit by the Victorian Auditor General.
2. Internal Audits by Council's Internal Auditor.
3. CEO initiated reviews and audits as deemed necessary.
4. Risk Assessments as required by Council's Risk Management Framework.
5. Compliance checks as required by Council policies.
6. Participation in administrative, civil and criminal audits and reviews instigated by external regulatory authorities e.g. the Victorian Ombudsman, Victoria Police, Australian Taxation Office (ATO), Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission (IBAC), Local Government Investigations and Compliance Inspectorate and Worksafe as required.
7. Adherence to principles of natural justice and procedural fairness.

External Financial Audit by Victorian Auditor General

Each year Council will prepare an Annual Report and Performance Statements. These are submitted to external audit by the Victorian Auditor General, or its agent, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Local Government Act 1989, which includes presentation to and sign off by the Council at an open meeting of the Council.

Council's Audit Committee will be provided with the audit report and meet with the Auditor to consider the report before the report is presented to the Council. The Audit Committee may make a recommendation/s to the Council if the Committee deems this appropriate.

Internal Audits by Internal Auditor

Council will engage appropriately qualified and independent Internal Auditors to conduct an appropriate internal audit program of the Council's operations each year.

Each year an Internal Audit Strategic plan will be established in collaboration with the Internal Auditor, Chief Executive Officer and the Audit Committee and with consideration of the risks contained in the Council's Risk Registers and include financial and compliance reviews as required by legislation.

The scope for the internal audits will be developed in collaboration with Council Management, the Chief Executive Officer and the Internal Auditor. The Strategic Internal Audit plan will be approved by the Audit Committee.

The Internal Auditor will meet with the Audit Committee at the next meeting of the Audit Committee immediately after each report is completed to present the report, its observations, findings and recommendations. The Executive Leadership Team will review the internal audit report and develop an appropriate action plan to address the findings and recommendations prior to the report being presented to the Audit Committee. After the Audit Committee has considered the internal audit outcomes, the confirmed action plans will be included as part of an ongoing Audit Actions Monitoring Plan and progress with implementing the actions will be monitored on a regular basis by the Audit Committee and Strategic Risk Committee.



CEO Initiated Reviews and Audits

The CEO may initiate internal reviews, should the CEO deem that the circumstances warrant a review or audit. The review or audit will be conducted by an appropriately qualified investigator or auditor. When relevant, all such reviews will be conducted in a way that provides natural justice, confidentiality and is consistent with the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act (2006). The scope of these reviews will be provided by an appropriate review/audit/investigation plan which will be approved by the CEO before the review commences. At the conclusion of the audit or review the Audit Committee and Council will be advised by the CEO of the outcome of the review or audit as well as any actions being taken to address the findings.

Risk Assessments

Risk Assessments will be undertaken by responsible Managers and Directors in accordance with Council's Risk Management Framework. Strategic and Operational Risk Assessments will be recorded on Council's Risk Registers, which is co-ordinated and managed by Council's Strategic Risk Committee. The Strategic Risk profile and the assessments for high and extreme risks will be reported at a minimum annually to the Audit Committee and Council for oversight of the risk mitigation strategies.

Compliance Checks in Council Policies

Compliance reviews required in Council policies will be carried out in the manner and time set out in each policy and reported to the Audit Committee.

Participation in administrative, civil and criminal audits and reviews

From time to time Council may be required to be subject to, or participate in civil, administrative and criminal reviews instigated by external regulatory authorities such as the Victorian Ombudsman, Victoria Police, ATO, IBAC, Worksafe, Fair Work Australia, FOI Commissioner, Privacy Commissioner, Councillor Conduct Panel, Local Government Victoria etc. Council will participate in any such review including providing correction of any matters of fact and developing strategies to address any findings. The reports will be presented to the Audit Committee.

Natural Justice

Council will ensure that the principles of natural justice including the "no-bias" rule and the "hearing rule" are adhered to in any audit or review.

Audit program oversight: this program will be overseen by Council's Audit Committee, which will assist the Council in the effective conduct of its responsibilities for financial reporting, compliance obligations and management of risk including the Council's exposure to fraud and maintaining a reliable system of internal control. The Audit Committee will operate within a Council adopted Audit Committee Charter that will be reviewed annually by the Committee and Council.

The Chair of the Audit Committee will provide a report to Council each year outlining the activities and performance of the Committee.

Reports of all Audit Committee meetings will be reported to the next Council meeting after the Audit Committee meets. The Chair of the Audit Committee may require any



report prepared by the Audit Committee to be listed on the agenda for the next ordinary meeting of the Council.

RISK ASSESSMENT

Council is required by section 139 of the Local Government Act 1989 to establish and operate an Audit Committee. The purpose of this policy is to ensure Council minimises the risk of Council operating an ineffective Audit Committee and Internal Audit Strategic Plan by specifying how these functions are to operate.

An effective Audit Committee and Internal Audit Strategic Plan, in turn, will enable Council to adequately manage its key strategic and operational risks, which are primarily related to:

- Issues relevant to the integrity of Council's financial reporting and health; and
- Legislative compliance with the many Acts Council is required to comply with, monitored by an effective internal control and risk framework.

IMPLEMENTATION STATEMENT

Council will implement this policy through the following activities:

- Audit Committee Charter, Agenda, Internal Audit Schedule and Annual Reviews to ensure compliance with the Local Government Act 1989 and "Audit Committees: A Guide to Good Practice for Local Government" from Local Government Victoria published in January 2011;
- Reporting quarterly to Council on the Audit Committee's activities via the Audit Committee's prior meeting minutes;
- An annual Audit Committee Chair report presented to Council;
- Engaging an appropriately qualified Internal Auditor to conduct internal audits in accordance with the internal audit schedule; and
- Implementing agreed actions to meet the recommendations presented as a result of financial audits, internal audits, other external audits, internal reviews and investigations.

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CITIZENSHIP CEREMONY DRESS CODE POLICY

Policy Number C80
 Ordinary Council Meeting Date 25 March 2020
 Next Review Date March 2024

1. POLICY OBJECTIVE

The objective of the *Citizenship Ceremony Dress Code Policy* (the Policy) is to meet the requirement of the Australian Citizenship Ceremonies Code, under the *Australian Citizenship Act 2007*, which states that every local council should have a Dress Code for its citizenship ceremonies.

2. POLICY SCOPE

This Policy applies to all attendees of South Gippsland Shire Council citizenship ceremonies.

3. POLICY STATEMENT – CITIZENSHIP CEREMONY DRESS CODE

3.1 Background

The revised Australian Citizenship Ceremonies Dress Code (Citizenship Ceremony Code) was announced by the Minister for Immigration, Citizenship, Migrant Services and Multicultural Affairs, The Honourable David Coleman MP, on 20 September 2019.

The Citizenship Ceremony Code follows the *Australian Citizenship Act 2007* and sets out the legal and other requirements for conducting citizenship ceremonies as well as the roles and responsibilities for those involved in citizenship ceremonies.

One of the new requirements of the revised Australian Citizenship Ceremonies Code is for councils to adopt a dress code:

On page 25 of the Citizenship Ceremony Code it says:

"The attire of attendees at Citizenship Ceremonies should reflect the significance of the occasion.

A Dress Code is to be set by individual councils.

Councils must provide a current copy of their Dress Code to the Department of Home Affairs."

3.2 Dress Code Requirements

In order to reflect the significance of becoming an Australian citizen at a South Gippsland Shire Council citizenship ceremony, attendees should wear either formal



or business attire or smart casual attire. Traditional, national or cultural dress is welcomed to be worn.

However, the following **should not** be worn at citizenship ceremonies:

- Beach wear including swimwear of any kind;
- Rubber thongs;
- Slippers;
- Singlets or tank tops;
- Nightwear;
- Shirts and jackets containing offensive motifs;
- Sports or training apparel; and
- Overly torn clothing items.

Appropriate footwear must be worn by all attendees. Attending a citizenship ceremony with bare feet is not acceptable.

Attendees in breach of the South Gippsland Shire Council Citizenship Ceremony Dress Code will be requested to remove themselves from the venue until the ceremony concludes.

4. RISK ASSESSMENT

This Policy is a requirement of the Australian Citizenship Ceremonies Code.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES STATEMENT

This Policy will be implemented by the Mayor, Chief Executive Officer and Citizenship Ceremony Officer.

POLICY OWNERSHIP			
Directorate		Chief Executive Office	
DEFINITIONS			
Australian Citizenship Ceremonies Code (the Code)		Follows the Australian Citizenship Act 2007 and sets out the legal and other requirements for conducting citizenship ceremonies as well as the roles and responsibilities for those involved in citizenship ceremonies. The Code provides guidance to organisations to help plan and conduct citizenship ceremonies.	
Citizenship ceremony		Is the final step in the acquisition of Australian citizenship. For most people this means making the pledge of commitment at an Australian citizenship ceremony. At the citizenship ceremony, conferees pledge that they share Australia's democratic beliefs and respect the rights and liberties of the people of Australia.	
SUPPORTING INFORMATION			
Legislative Provisions		Australian Citizenship Act 2007	
External Supporting Documents		Australian Citizenship Ceremonies Code	
File Location		D2343020	
REVISION HISTORY			
Version	Approved	Approval Date	Sections Modified
1.0	Ordinary Council Meeting	25 March 2020	New Policy



CIVIC AND MAYORAL RECEPTION POLICY

Policy Number	C56	Directorate	Executive Office
Council Item No.	E.14	Primary Author	Chief Executive Officer
Council Adoption Date	24 February 2016	Secondary Author	Executive Support Staff
Revision Date	February 2020		

POLICY OBJECTIVE

To provide guidelines to assist in the consideration of, and where appropriate, the provision of Council funded Civic and Mayoral Receptions.

LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS

Nil

DEFINITIONS

Civic Reception: Formal Council event to recognise dignitaries or significant achievements as determined by the Council.

Mayoral Reception: Less formal event not involving a major function or presentation. Mayoral Receptions are provided for persons/organisations where recognition is considered appropriate but where a Civic Reception is not deemed suitable.

POLICY STATEMENT

A Council funded (in whole or part) and organised Civic or Mayoral Reception may be considered for:

- Interstate or overseas visiting dignitaries as part of an official visit to the Shire
- Interstate or overseas official delegations to the Shire
- Exceptional achievement and contribution in sport, the arts, charitable endeavours, community service or similar
- Visitors of national significance
- Others as determined by the Mayor in conjunction with the Chief Executive Officer.

A resolution of Council will be required to endorse the holding of a Civic or Mayoral Reception in accordance with this Policy. This resolution must include a budget allocation required for the event to cover administrative, venue and catering costs.

The Chief Executive Officer shall be authorised to determine the format and all other administrative arrangements associated with the organisation and conduct of the Civic and Mayoral Reception.



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RISK ASSESSMENT

Limited risk. This Policy helps to avoid confusion both for Council and the community regarding eligibility requirements to hold a civic reception. It also outlines the authorisation process necessary to approve a civic reception which clarifies the expectations and requirements for such an event to be held.

IMPLEMENTATION STATEMENT

Implementation of this Policy will be via:

- Distribution of Policy to all Councillors
- Publication of the Policy on Council's website
- Distribution of Policy to key internal teams including Media and Communications and Governance.



MAYOR, DEPUTY MAYOR AND COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE AT FUNCTIONS POLICY

Policy Number	C57	Directorate	Corporate and Community Services
Council Item No.	5.13	Department	Innovation and Council Business
Council Adoption Date	26 April 2017	Primary Author	Corporate Planning & Council Business Coordinator
Revision Date	April 2021	Secondary Author	Council Business Officer

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1. POLICY OBJECTIVE

The objective of this policy is to provide guidance to Councillors and staff about attending and representing Council at official functions, events or community events.

2. POLICY SCOPE

This policy applies to all Councillors, including the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, where a Council representative is invited to represent Council at a function or event. This may also include a requirement to make a speech or take a leading role in the proceedings.

This policy does not apply to functions open to all members of the public and where a Councillor attends in a private rather than an official capacity.

3. POLICY STATMENT

The role of Mayor, in accordance with s.73 of the Local Government Act 1989, is to take precedence at all municipal proceedings within the municipal district. In undertaking this role, the Mayor is Council's principal councillor representative to attend key, strategic events or functions.

The general role of the Deputy Mayor is to deputise for the Mayor in providing a leadership and formal representational presence at civic, ceremonial and public engagements and in chairing Council meetings on occasions when the Mayor is unable to or incapable of doing so.

All Councillors support the Mayor in representing Council at public occasions. Where the Mayor is unable to attend as the principal representative, the Deputy Mayor may attend in his/her place. However if the Mayor and Deputy Mayor cannot attend, the Mayor will nominate another Councillor to represent Council.

3.1 Traditional Custodians

If the Council representative is required to give a speech at a function within the South Gippsland Shire, the Councillor is encouraged to make an Acknowledgement of Country at the commencement of the speech. The following form is recommended:

"I would like to show my respect and acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land, of elders past and present, on which this event takes place."



3.2 *Invitations*

Any invitations for events that fall within this policy received by Councillors, other than those made in writing to the Mayor, must be forwarded to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) as soon as practicable.

Prior to accepting invitations, consideration needs to be given by the Mayor and CEO to political implications that may inadvertently be placed on Council to support a particular cause, project or event that may not necessarily be supported by Council. This may occur in instances where a particular group seeks the involvement of the Mayor in their function to influence Council or raise community expectations that Council backs their position. If there are concerns in this regard, the invitation may be politely refused, or modified as to the role the Mayor would have, if any, in the proceedings.

3.3 *Support for attending Councillors*

The Mayor and CEO will consider each invitation and decide whether an officer should accompany the nominated Councillor, whether a speech needs to be developed for the Mayor/Councillor, and whether the event should be used as an opportunity for a media release.

A request for speech/brief information will be sent by the CEO to the inviting organisation for completion and returned to the CEO two weeks prior to the event. Council staff from the Directorate primarily related to the event will provide assistance to the organisation to prepare the "Request for Speech/Brief Information".

In the event of the Mayor relinquishing attendance at a function to a Councillor, the CEO will communicate with the nominated Councillor to ensure that the Councillor is aware of relevant issues, and is prepared for the function.

3.4 *Representatives*

The Deputy Mayor will normally substitute for the Mayor, however where the Deputy Mayor cannot attend, the Mayor will nominate another Councillor, having regard to the following:

- Whether the function is associated with the Councillor's Ward.
- Whether the function is associated with a group or committee to which a Councillor has been appointed as Council's representative.
- Where the event relates to an issue relevant to a Ward, a designated Councillor from that Ward shall be the delegated attendee.
- Where the event is of relevance to a group or committee to which a Councillor has been appointed, then one of the appointed Councillors will be the designated representative.



In reaching a determination, the Mayor will have regard to whether the invitation is made to an individual Councillor or Councillors.

In the event that the nominated Councillor/s cannot attend, the Mayor may nominate a substitute representative.

3.5 Information to assist Council representative

Every effort should be made to obtain information on the nature of the event and specific requirements from the host organisation. This helps to ensure that the Council representative is prepared for the event and therefore can represent Council well. A Running Sheet Template for Mayor or Councillor Attendance at Community Events and Functions can be found in **Attachment 1**.

Protocols for welcoming or introducing other dignitaries or Councillors attending the function, are outlined as a guide in **Attachment 2**.

Information to be provided if a speech is required, is outlined in **Attachment 3**.

4. IMPLEMENTATION STATEMENT

A copy of this policy will be provided to all Councillors and placed on Council's website.

After the election of each Mayor and Deputy Mayor, the CEO will brief both about this Policy.

The CEO will provide the administrative support necessary to implement this Policy.

5. RISK ASSESSMENT

Council will have representation at a level appropriate to the occasion. This will mitigate Council's reputational risk arising from over or under-representation.

The preparation of speeches and background information prior to the event, will also mitigate Council's reputational risk of a Councillor being under-prepared to represent Council.

6. LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS AND COUNCIL POLICY

Legislative Provisions

- Local Government Act 1989
- Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

Council Policy

- Acceptance of Gifts and Donations Policy
- Councillor Code of Conduct
- Civic and Mayoral Reception Policy
- Councillor Support and Expenditure Policy



7. DEFINITIONS

Function: Is defined as official functions and engagements (including civic and ceremonial), meetings, events or community activities organised by Council or external to Council to which a Councillor is formally invited to represent Council. Functions include those organised and managed by the Council where it is customary for the Mayor to be invited. Examples include:

- Music for the People;
- Sustainability Festival;
- Opening of Council managed facilities;
- Community organised and managed events where the Mayor or Councillor is invited as a guest e.g. Arty Gras Festival, local Agricultural Shows, Daffodil Festival.

8. ATTACHMENTS

- **Attachment 1:** Running Sheet Template for Mayor or Councillor Attendance at Community Events and Functions
- **Attachment 2:** Protocol for introductions based on the Victorian Table of Precedence for Introducing Government Dignitaries
- **Attachment 3:** South Gippsland Shire Speech Template

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ATTACHMENT 1

**South Gippsland Shire Council Running Sheet for Mayor or Councillor
Attendance at Community Events and Functions**

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Name of Inviting Organisation:	
Background of organisation and purpose of the function:	
Type of Function e.g. meeting, opening of event, presentation:	
Date:	
Starting Time:	
Councillor's partner invited?:	
Venue and address of venue:	
Person/s who will meet Council representative and where:	
Time of arrival of Council representative if different from above:	
Departure time of Council representative:	
Finishing Time if different from departure time of Council representative:	
Telephone number (including mobile) of organiser or their representative:	
Special guest attending e.g. MPs, dignitaries, other Councillors:	
Is a speech required: Yes/No If Yes then: Duration: e.g. 5 minutes Subject: Any matters that should be included in speech:	
Dress e.g. white tie, black tie, lounge suit, jacket and tie, jacket, casual:	

This form should be completed and returned to the CEO's office at least five working days before the event.



ATTACHMENT 2

Protocol for introductions based on the Victorian Table of Precedence for Introducing Government Dignitaries

- I. The Governor
- II. The Premier
- III. The Mayor (when in own municipality e.g. South Gippsland Shire)
- IV. Victorian Parliamentary Ministers
- V. Federal Parliamentary Ministers
- VI. Victorian Members of Parliament
- VII. Federal Members of Parliament
- VIII. Councillors
- IX. Councillors (including Mayors) of other Councils

Introductions of Mayor and Councillors

1. When function attended by one Council representative
“introducing the Mayor, Councillor...” or “Councillor...”
2. When function attended by more than one Council representative
“introducing the Mayor, Councillor ... and Councillors...”
3. When introducing a Councillor who is deputising for the Mayor
“introducing Councillor...who is deputising for the Mayor in their absence”

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ATTACHMENT 3

South Gippsland Shire Council Speech Template

The information you provide in this template will allow the Media & Communications Team to prepare an informative and accurate speech. Please include as much information as you can.

Please Note: The following details must be returned to the Media & Communications Team at least two working weeks prior to the event.

Name of Event: _____

What is the Event: _____

Contact Person: _____

Contact Telephone Number: _____

Contact Email: _____

Date of Function: _____

Location of Function: _____

TIME:

START: _____ **FINISH:** _____

Time you would like the Mayor/Councillor to arrive:

Who will meet the Mayor/Councillor:

Dress: (PLEASE CIRCLE) FORMAL/BUSINESS/CASUAL

What is the Mayor/Councillor's role at the function? ie. speech, presentation of awards? Please give as much detail as possible and attach an order of proceedings.

How long would you like the Mayor/Councillor to speak for? (maximum of five minutes is recommended) _____

Please attach a copy of the running order

What is Council's role in the event?



Please list people to be acknowledged at beginning of speech: e.g. important guests (VIPs. MPs, event organisers)

What would you like the Mayor/Councillor to speak about? Please provide as much detail as possible and attach any supporting documentation available.

-
-
-
-

In order for the Mayor/Councillor to speak informatively at your event please provide the following details about your group/organisation:
A History – When, How, Why, Was Your Group/Organisation Formed?

Community Role – the Group/Organisation's contribution to the community:

What else has the Council done or supported in this area recently? Relevant policies, programs, strategies, partnerships etc.

Any opportunities for people in the audience to attend future events or take part in programs?

People to be thanked (at end of speech):

PLEASE ATTACH ANY OTHER INFORMATION THAT MAY BE RELEVANT



BUSINESS INVESTMENT AND ATTRACTION POLICY

Policy Number	C19A	Directorate	Development Services
Council Item No.	E	Department	Strategic Planning and Development
Council Adoption Date	June 2014	Primary Author	Ken Fraser
Revision Date	July 2019	Secondary Author	

COUNCIL POLICY

POLICY OBJECTIVE

To provide a framework to assist the facilitation of new business development and to build the local economy. To add strategic weight to economic development proposals within the Shire by providing guidance and formalising Council's approach to business investment and attraction.

COUNCIL POLICY

LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS

Section 3C of the Local Government Act 1989 defines the primary objective of a Council is to endeavour to achieve the best outcomes for the local community having regard to the long term and cumulative effects of decisions.

To achieve this objective the Act defines a number of facilitating objectives that are relevant to this policy:

- to promote the social, economic and environmental viability and sustainability of the municipal district;
- to promote appropriate business and employment opportunities;
- to ensure transparency and accountability in Council decision making.

COUNCIL POLICY

DEFINITION

Nil

COUNCIL POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

Council is committed to sustainable economic development and as a result aims to attract new businesses to the Shire. This is a key element of Council's Economic Development and Tourism Strategy. New and expanding businesses help to provide additional economic growth, employment and new services to the community.

Council acknowledges a significant role and responsibility in utilising its resources to provide an appropriate environment for the private and public sector to generate local economic development, wealth and employment opportunities.

In facilitating local economic development Council may provide assistance to encourage strategic and major development within South Gippsland, where it can be demonstrated that such development provides significant benefit to the community.

South Gippsland Shire Council encourages strategic, sustainable business investment that will support ongoing prosperity, high value employment, career development opportunities for residents and promote further investment.



This Policy supports the implementation of the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy.

Council's Role in Promoting Business Investment

Council will:

Use its powers and influence to provide and advocate for:

- Sufficient supply of suitably zoned land for commercial, industrial, agricultural and residential purposes;
- High quality transport, telecommunications, energy, waste and water infrastructure;
- A skilled and flexible workforce;
- Increased population.

Provide a positive climate to encourage business development through:

- Facilitation and assistance with new investment through its Economic Development and Tourism team.
- Provision of efficient approvals and regulatory services.
- Support for coordination and facilitation of proposed 'Projects of Local Significance'.

Assistance available

Council provides a range of services to assist business development, including:

1. Support with development approvals processes;
2. Identification of development sites;
3. Infrastructure co-ordination;
4. Relocation and expansion advice and support;
5. Links to government, business and employment support programs;
6. Introductions to other businesses, authorities and organisations within the Shire;
7. Assistance and advice with obtaining Government grants;
8. Access to statistical and general information;
9. Access to a range of local networks and contacts;
10. Access to business workshops and seminars;
11. Access to feasibility studies.

Projects of Local Significance

The Chief Executive Officer may declare a 'Project of Local Significance' due to its ability to provide significant economic impact.

A "Project of Local Significance" is a project, which in the opinion of Council may have one or more of the following attributes:

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1. Is a large employer or has the potential to be a significant employer;
2. Has a strong supply base or economic links in the local area;
3. Competes with the outside market i.e. outside South Gippsland;
4. Has a long-term commitment to South Gippsland and is able to operate and grow in a profitable and viable manner;
5. Is an exporter or has export potential and/or the ability to replace imports to the region;
6. Will have significant flow on effects to existing businesses or the potential to lead to further business activity or investment;
7. Will add to the diversity of the Shire's economic base;
8. Will add value to the existing primary production of the Shire;
9. Is a major retail operation, particularly in areas not currently available;
10. Is a significant tourism business such as major accommodation, conference venue or attraction;
11. Will introduce new technology or infrastructure such as new telecommunications;
12. Will add services to the community such as Government offices, health and education services or in areas that are currently lacking either functionally or geographically.

Where a proposal is declared to be a 'Project of Local Significance', Council will appoint:

- a Council Liaison Officer for the project and
- an internal project coordination team;
- Coordinate the timing of the approvals processes.

Council is prepared to negotiate with developers and businesses on a case-by-case basis in relation to development support that may be offered, however Council will generally not provide direct financial assistance to a business.

The level of support which may be offered by Council will be related to the level of benefit the community will derive from the investment.

Any proponent may request a formal briefing to Council regarding their proposal.

Transparency

Generally Council will disclose any assistance provided to a proponent after the final negotiations have concluded and Council has made its final decision.

A proponent may submit a request for consideration by Council that information relating to the proposal remain confidential due to reasons of "Commercial-in-Confidence".

The provision of support/assistance will not limit, prejudice or in any way fetter Council's proper exercise of its statutory responsibilities and discretions.



RISK ASSESSMENT

The intention of the policy is to minimise risk to Council and the community and provide clear direction for facilitating business investment. Proposals will be assessed individually to ascertain their level of risk.

IMPLEMENTATION STATEMENT

- The Policy will be implemented in conjunction with Economic Development and Tourism Strategy. It is an element of the Strategy's Action Plan and will be included in reporting on outcomes from the Strategy.
- The Policy will be publically available on Council's Website.
- Businesses seeking to invest will be informed of the Policy.
- Other Council Departments will be made aware of the Policy.
- The Manager Strategic Planning and Development is responsible for implementing and updating this policy.
- The Policy will be reviewed by July 2019.

COUNCIL POLICY

COUNCIL POLICY

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COUNCIL POLICY

2.9. CHANGES TO COUNCIL MEETING TIMETABLE - 25 JUNE 2025

Directorate:	Strategy & Partnerships
Department:	Governance and Integrity

Council Plan

Objective - Leading with Integrity

Council's transparency and governance is demonstrated at its Council Meetings where decisions are made on behalf of the community.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Council consideration to reschedule the June Council Meeting. The Meeting was originally scheduled for 25 June 2025 and this report recommends it be rescheduled to 18 June 2025.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Move the scheduled Council Meeting to be held in the Council Chambers, Leongatha on 2:00pm Wednesday 25 June 2025 to 2:00pm Wednesday 18 June 2025; and**
- 2. Provide public notice of Council Meeting changes.**

REPORT

Background

Council Meeting dates for 2025 were determined at the 27 November 2024 Council Meeting. Council Meetings are normally held on the third Wednesday of the month at 2.00pm in the Council Chambers, Leongatha.

The *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act), Part 3 Division 2 sets out the requirements relating to procedures and proceedings relating to Council decision-making.

One of the ways in which Council decision making is undertaken is by resolution at a Council Meeting, and it is a requirement under the Act that the conduct of Council Meetings be set out in its Governance Rules.

As per Council's *Governance Rules* (C82) (the Rules), Clause 12.1 provides that:

'Council by resolution, or the Chief Executive Officer, may change the date, time and place of, or cancel, any Council Meeting which has been fixed and must provide notice of the change to the public'

Public notice is usually provided via local newspapers and placed on Council's website.

Council is to consider the proposed change of the 25 June Council Meeting to be held on the 18 June 2025, at 2:00pm and held in the Council Chambers, Leongatha.

CONSULTATION / COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Consultation ensures that legislative requirements are adhered to ensure the appropriateness of Council Meetings.

RESOURCES / FINANCIAL VIABILITY

There are no financial implications in changing the proposed date of the Council Meeting in June 2025.

RISKS

The timely determination of Council Meeting dates and appropriate communication to the public ensures the seamless transactions of Council Meetings.

STAFF DISCLOSURE

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have considered and determined that they do not have a conflict of interest in the matter.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachments are available on Council's website at the following [LINK](#).

Nil

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Council's Good Governance Framework

Pillar 1. Direction & Leadership

Council Policy / Strategy / Plans

Documents are available on Council's website at the following [LINK](#).

Governance Rules (C82)

Legislative Provisions

Local Government Act 2020

Regional, State and National Plan and Policies

Nil

2.10. SUMMARY OF STRATEGIC BRIEFINGS - 13 MARCH 2025 - 12 APRIL 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 13 March 2024 and 12 April 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 - 13 March 2025 – 12 April 2025.

REPORT

Meeting Title	Details
Wednesday 19 March 2025	
Integrated Planning – Workshop 5	<p>Councillor Attending Clare Williams, John Schelling, Scott Rae, Sarah Gilligan, Nathan Hersey, Steve Finlay, Bron Beach, John Kennedy and Brad Snell</p> <p>Conflict of Interest: Nil</p>
Wednesday 26 March 2025	
Integrated Planning - Workshop 6	<p>Councillor Attending Clare Williams, John Schelling, Scott Rae, Sarah Gilligan, Nathan Hersey, Steve Finlay, Bron Beach, John Kennedy and Brad Snell</p> <p>Conflict of Interest: Nil</p>

Meeting Title	Details
Wednesday 2 April 2025	
Councillor Charter Review	<p>Councillor Attending Clare Williams, John Schelling, Scott Rae, Nathan Hersey, Steve Finlay, Bron Beach, John Kennedy and Brad Snell</p> <p>Conflict of Interest: Nil</p>
Paths and Trails Strategy - Update	<p>Councillor Attending Clare Williams, John Schelling, Scott Rae, Nathan Hersey, Steve Finlay, Bron Beach, John Kennedy and Brad Snell</p> <p>Conflict of Interest: Nil</p>
Planning – Monthly Briefing Update	<p>Councillor Attending Clare Williams, John Schelling, Scott Rae, Nathan Hersey, Steve Finlay, Bron Beach, John Kennedy and Brad Snell</p> <p>Conflict of Interest: Nil</p>
Flood Study Implementation	<p>Councillor Attending Clare Williams, John Schelling, Scott Rae, Nathan Hersey, Steve Finlay, Bron Beach, John Kennedy and Brad Snell</p> <p>Conflict of Interest: Nil</p>
Internal Resolution Procedure Discussion	<p>Councillor Attending Clare Williams, John Schelling, Scott Rae, Nathan Hersey, Steve Finlay, Bron Beach, John Kennedy and Brad Snell</p> <p>Conflict of Interest: Nil</p>
Council Policy Review	Councillor Attending

Meeting Title	Details
	<p>Clare Williams, John Schelling, Scott Rae, Nathan Hersey, Steve Finlay, Bron Beach, John Kennedy and Brad Snell</p> <p>Conflict of Interest: Nil</p>
Wednesday 9 April 2025	
Integrated Planning Document Update	<p>Councillor Attending John Schelling, Scott Rae, Sarah Gilligan, Nathan Hersey, Steve Finlay, Bron Beach, John Kennedy</p> <p>Conflict of Interest: Nil</p>
Community Planning – Introduction and Update	<p>Councillor Attending John Schelling, Sarah Gilligan, Nathan Hersey, Steve Finlay, Bron Beach, John Kennedy</p> <p>Conflict of Interest: Nil</p>
Coal Creek Community Park and Museum – Business Planning Workshop	<p>Councillor Attending John Schelling, Sarah Gilligan, Nathan Hersey, Steve Finlay, Bron Beach, John Kennedy</p> <p>Conflict of Interest: Nil</p>

STAFF DISCLOSURE

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have considered and determined that they do not have a conflict of interest in the matter.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Council's Good Governance Framework

Pillar 3. Decision Making

Council Policy / Strategy / Plans

Documents are available on Council's website at the following [LINK](#).

Public Transparency Policy (C75)

Legislative Provisions

Local Government Act 2020

2.11. DOCUMENTS SEALED, CONTRACTS VARIED, AWARDED OR EXTENDED BY CEO - 13 MARCH 2025 -12 APRIL 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 March 2025 to 12 April 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;
- Contracts varied or extended by the CEO which exceeded the CEO's delegation.

RECOMMENDATION

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

REPORT

Under the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act), s.14 states that each Council is a body corporate with perpetual succession; and must have a common seal. Sealing a document makes it an official document of Council as a corporate body. Documents that require sealing include agreements, leases or any other contractual or legally binding document that binds Council to another party.

Use of the *General Local Law 2024*, Part 5 - Administration, clause 65 – Common Seal of Council, states that if the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) uses the Common Seal in a manner described by sub-clause (5), this means on the authority of a Council resolution, then Council must be advised of such use on a regular basis.

In accordance with the *General Local Law 2024*, Part 5 - Administration, clause 65 (6), the following are presented to Council as documents sealed during the period from 13 March 2025 to 12 April 2025.

1. Nil

Section 173 Agreements are prepared in accordance with s.173 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, allowing Council to enter into agreements relating to the use or development of land, conditions to which the land be used or developed or any matter that relates to planning or planning schemes in Victoria. Section 174 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* requires that such an agreement be under seal and must bind the owner to the covenants specified in the agreement.

In accordance with the *General Local Law 2024*, Instrument of Delegation and *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, the following are presented to Council as documents sealed during the period from 13 March 2025 to 12 April 2025.

1. Section 173 Agreement between South Gippsland Shire Council and the owner of 20 Lyrebird Lane, Woorarra West for the use and development of a dwelling – Rural Industry and development of a shed. Seal applied 19 March 2025.
2. Section 173 Agreement between South Gippsland Shire Council and the owner of 2 Ogilvie Street, Mirboo North for the development of land with eight (8) dwellings, an eight (8) lot subdivision and native vegetation removal. Seal applied 27 March 2025.
3. Section 173 Agreement between South Gippsland Shire Council and the owner of 1B Sawyer Street, Leongatha for a three lot subdivision, restriction and removal of native vegetation. Seal applied 1 April 2025.

Contracts Awarded, Varied or Extended

In accordance with Council's Procurement Policy where contracts are awarded under delegation, varied or extended, they are required to be reported to the next practicable Council Meeting.

1. Contracts awarded by Council after a public tender process, signed by the CEO between 13 March 2025 to 12 April 2025.
 - a. Nil
2. Contracts awarded after a public tender process within the CEO's delegation between 13 March 2025 to 12 April 2025.
 - a. CON/434 for the KiRC Civil Drainage Project awarded to South Gippsland Quarries Pty Ltd for the lump sum of \$126,305.00 excluding GST. Signed by the CEO 26 March 2025.
3. Contract variations approved by the CEO between 13 March 2025 to 12 April 2025.
 - a. Nil

4. Contract extensions approved by the CEO 13 March 2025 to 12 April 2025.
 - a. Nil

STAFF DISCLOSURE

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have considered and determined that they do not have a conflict of interest in the matter.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Council's Good Governance Framework

Pillar 3. Decision Making

Council Policy / Strategy / Plans

Documents are available on Council's website at the following [LINK](#).

Governance Rules (C82)

General Local Law 2024

Procurement Policy (C32)

Legislative Provisions

Local Government Act 1989

Local Government Act 2020

Planning and Environment Act 1987

3. NOTICES OF MOTION AND/OR RESCISSION

3.1. NIL

4. COUNCILLOR REPORTS

4.1. REQUESTS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

4.2. COUNCILLOR UPDATES

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.

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.

Two petitions have been received relating to:

- **Support of the Yanakie Automated Weather Station**
- **Traffic calming measures for Venus Bay danger zones**

One joint letter has been received relating to:

- **Elmores Road in Korumburra**

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.

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.

One public question has been received relating to:

- **Footpaths in Clarence Street, Loch**

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.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council pursuant to section 66(5)(a) and (b) of the *Local Government Act 2020* close the Council Meeting to the public to consider the following confidential information:

1. **Per s.3(1)(a) Agenda item 9.1 – Award Contract CON/439 Swimming Pools Maintenance, designated as Council business information;**
 - a. **being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released; and**
 - b. **the grounds for designation have been made to protect Council's commercial negotiations position, as the contract has not yet been awarded.**

8. MEETING CLOSED

NEXT MEETING

The next Council Meeting open to the public will be held in June 2025, in which the date was determined at this Council Meeting for Agenda item 2.9 Changes to Council Meeting Timetable - 25 June 2025 commencing at 2.00pm in the Council Chambers, Leongatha.