



Murrindindi
Shire Council

Scheduled Meeting of Council

Minutes

Wednesday 26 August 2026

Yea Council Chambers

15 The Semi Circle Yea

6.00pm

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1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY AND COUNCILLORS' PLEDGE

1.1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The meeting will be opened with the Mayor reading the following on behalf of the Murrindindi Shire Council:

“Murrindindi Shire Council is proud to acknowledge the Taungurung and Wurundjeri people as the traditional custodians of the land we now call Murrindindi Shire.

We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging, who are the keepers of history, traditions, knowledge and culture of this land.”

1.2. COUNCILLORS' PLEDGE

“The Councillors, democratically elected to represent our community as the Murrindindi Shire Council, are committed to working together in the best interests of the people who live in our municipality, those who conduct business here and those who visit.”

2. PROCEDURAL MATTERS

2.1. PRIVACY NOTE

This public meeting is being streamed live via our Facebook page and website. A recording of the meeting along with the official Minutes of the meeting will also be published on our website.

2.2. APOLOGIES AND REQUEST FOR PLANNED LEAVE

Apologies: Cr J Adams

Present:

Councillors A Carr, P Hildebrand, D Gallagher, S McAulay, S Carpenter, E Lording

In attendance:

Chief Executive Officer: Livia Bonazzi

Director People & Corporate Performance: Michael Chesworth

Director Community & Development: Andrew Paxton

Director Sustainability & Infrastructure: Kim O'Connor

Manager Governance and Risk: Amanda Vogt

2.3. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST OR CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Nil

2.4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 22 July 2026.

RESOLUTION

Cr S McAulay / Cr A Carr

That Council confirm the minutes of the 22 July 2026 Council Meeting.

CARRIED

2.5. PETITIONS

Nil

2.6. COMMUNITY RECOGNITION

Nil

2.7. MATTERS DEFERRED FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Nil

2.8. URGENT BUSINESS

Council may by resolution admit an item of urgent business only if:

- a. it relates to or arises out of a matter which has arisen since distribution of the Agenda; and
- b. deferring the item until the next Meeting will mean a decision on the item will not have any effect on the matter; or
- c. the item involves a matter of urgency as determined by the Chief Executive Officer; and
- d. it cannot be addressed through an operational service request process.
- e. Provided the matter does not:
 - I. substantially affect the levels of Council service
 - II. commit Council to significant expenditure not included in the adopted budget
 - III. establish or amend Council Policy.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

3.1. OPEN FORUM

Greg Conlon - Spoke in relation to Killingworth Road Residents Group against application Quarry Molesworth

Charles Spanjer - Killingworth quarry

Therese Bradshaw - Killingworth quarry

Ken Eades - registered but didn't speak - said that everything had already been said - Killingworth

Raelene F Mold - Spoke in relation to Killingworth quarry

Jennifer Walden - Spoke in relation to Killingworth

Nick Anderson - Spoke in relation to planning permit application for Yea - Development plan stage

Ruth Huffett - Spoke in relation to planning application for sub-division

Terry King - Spoke in relation to Downey Street and Grant Street intersection safety.

Trevor Johson - spoke in relation to the quality of unsealed road repairs on xx street

3.2. QUESTIONS OF COUNCIL

Nil

4. REPORTS - COMMUNITY & DEVELOPMENT GROUP

4.1 Grants and Sponsorships – Quarterly Allocations

Department	Community Wellbeing
Approved by	Andrew Paxton, Director Community Development)
Presenter	Cr E Lording
Portfolio	Community Wellbeing
Purpose	For Decision
Attachment(s)	Nil

Executive Summary

Council's Grants and Sponsorship program provides funding for projects that support our communities to improve the liveability of our towns and places, build connections, create opportunities for participation in community and civic life, improve personal and community health and wellbeing, protect our natural environment and assist communities to plan for the future.

This report presents applications received between May and July 2026 and seeks Council endorsement of recommended grant allocations, alongside noting grants awarded under delegation, with the Panel Assessment Report for consideration.

RESOLUTION

Cr A Carr / P Hildebrand

That Council:

1. Note the following Quick Response grants awarded under delegation:

- Flowerdale Men's Shed – Stay Safe, Stay Connected Shed Wi-Fi Upgrade Initiative - \$646
- Eildon Golf Club – Replacement of Furniture, Chairs in the Club House - \$1,800
- Rotary Club of Yea – Garden Expo 2026 - \$1,500
- Thornton Eildon District Football & Netball Club – End of Season Day Sponsors Function - \$650
- Rotary Club of Kinglake Ranges – Youth Showcase Night - \$500
- Alexandra Primary School – Boite Chorus Performance Opportunity at the Melbourne Town

- Hall for Young Singers from Murrindindi Shire - \$2,500
- g. Alexandra and District Dog Obedience Club Inc – Shipping Container Storage - \$2,000
 - h. Yea Arts Inc – Sarah Belkner Concert and Artist in Residence Weekend - \$2,000
 - i. Alexandra Secondary College – Production I'm Big, You're Little - \$1,000
 - j. Buxton Progress Association Inc. - Buxton Hall Disabled Parking Space - \$1,000
 - k. Marysville Information and Regional Artspace – Marysville Art Show 2026 - \$2,500
 - l. Flowerdale Community House – 2026 Flowerdale Quilt Show - \$500

2. Endorse the allocation of funding for the following Project grants, as recommended by the Grants and Sponsorship Assessment Panel:

- a. Mange Management Inc – Protecting Murrindindi's Wombats from the Suffering and Fatal Impact of Sarcoptic Mange - \$5,000
- b. Kinglake Ranges Neighbourhood House – Food Share - \$4,000

3. Endorse the allocation of funding for the following Sponsorship grant, as recommended by the Grants and Sponsorship Assessment Panel:

- a. Triangle Arts Group Inc – Music in The Park 2027 - \$3,500

4. Endorse the allocation of funding for the following Local (Multi) Events grant as recommended by the Grants and Sponsorship Assessment Panel:

- a. Rotary Club of Alexandra – Rotary Community Events Program for Alexandra and Murrindindi - \$10,000

CARRIED

4.2. Planning Scheme Review 2026

Department	Economic Development
Approved by	Andrew Paxton, Director Community and Development
Presenter	Cr S Carpenter
Portfolio	Sustainable Population Growth and Land Use Planning
Purpose	For Decision
Attachment(s)	1. Murrindindi Planning Scheme Review Report 2026 2. Marked up planning scheme ordinance

Executive Summary

Murrindindi Shire Council is required to undertake a review of their planning scheme for alignment with current State Government Policy and to incorporate any changes as part of the four-yearly review of the Murrindindi Planning Scheme in accordance with the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (the Act). This review has been completed by an independent consultant and supported by the State Government, and the review is captured in the Murrindindi Planning Scheme Review Report 2026 for Council consideration.

The report finds that the local planning scheme is generally performing well and can be further improved by a range of actions over the coming period. Initial implementation via a planning scheme amendment will bring the Murrindindi Planning Scheme up to date across multiple policy areas, while subsequent strategic planning work will address emerging issues and respond to State Government planning reforms and policy direction.

RESOLUTION

Cr S Carpenter / Cr E Lording

That Council:

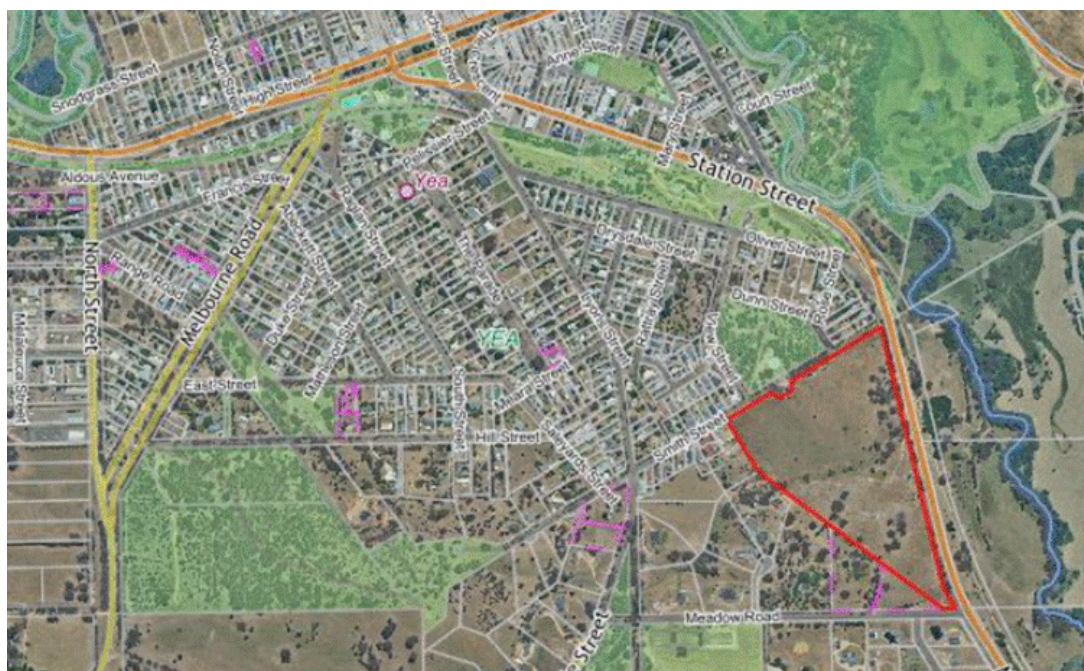
- 1. Approve the Planning Scheme Review Report 2026 and lodge it with the Minister for Planning in accordance with Section 12B of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*; and**
- 2. Request Authorisation from the Minister for Planning to prepare an Amendment to the Murrindindi Planning Scheme to implement the recommendations of the Planning Scheme Review Report 2026 and authorise officers to finalise amendment documentation in consultation with the Department of Transport and Planning.**

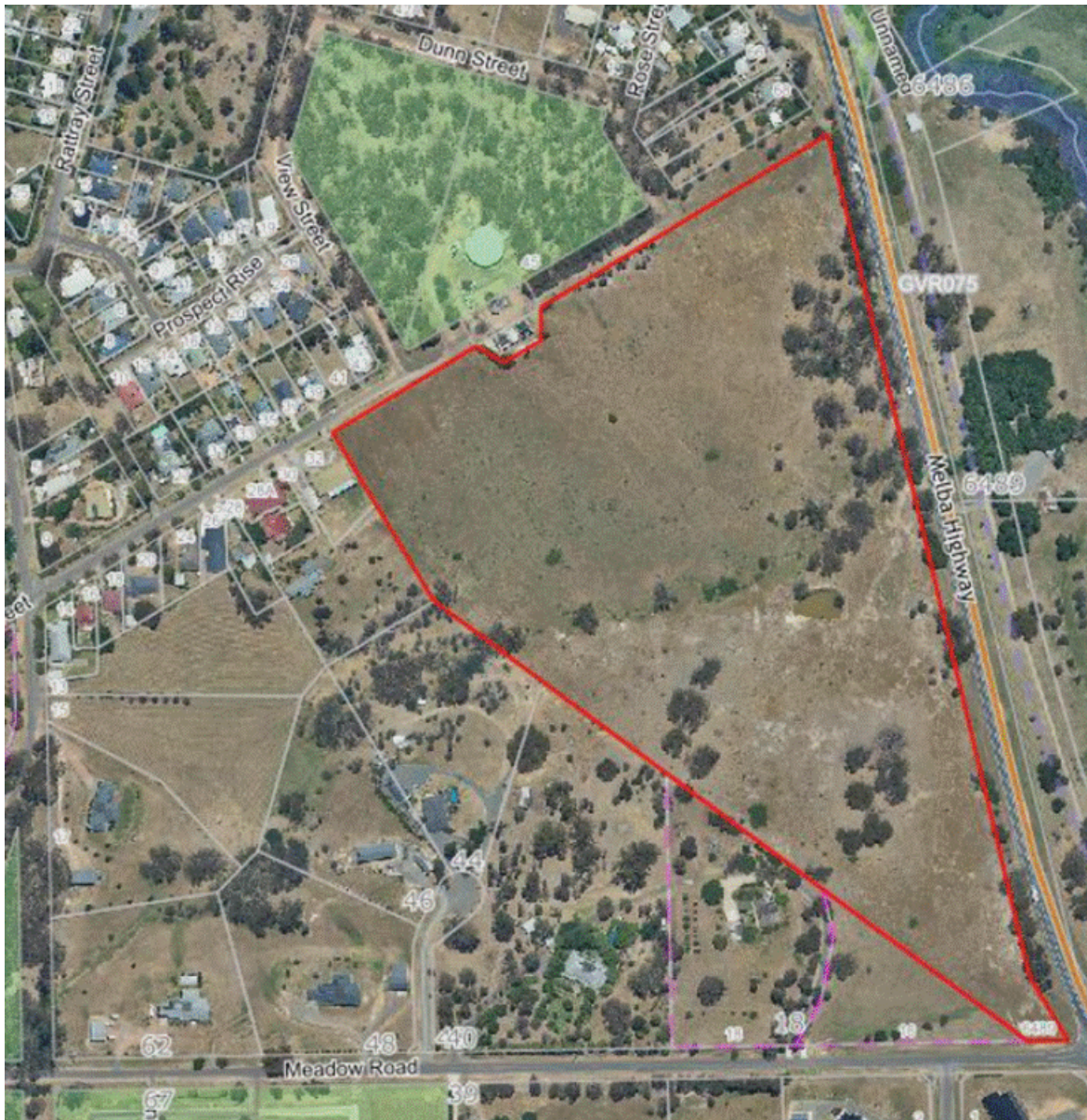
CARRIED

4.3. Planning Application - 6489 Melba Highway, Yea

Department	Development Services Development Services
Approved by	Andrew Paxton, Director Community Development
Presenter	Cr S Carpenter
Portfolio	Sustainable Population Growth and Land Use Planning
Purpose	For Decision
Attachment(s)	1. Smith Street Development Plan - Draft Development Plan [4.4.1 - 8 pages] 2. Smith Street Development Plan - Applicant Report [4.4.2 - 14 pages] 3. Smith Street Development Plan - Title [4.4.3 - 4 pages] 4. Smith Street Development Plan - Native Vegetation Assessment Report [4.4.4 - 76 pages] 5. Smith Street Development Plan - Traffic [4.4.5 - 10 pages]

Locality Plan





Executive Summary

This report recommends that Council approve the Development Plan at 6489 Melba Highway, Yea 3717 attached to this report.

The site is described as 6489 Melba Highway, Yea or Lot 1 on Title Plan 558411C. The site is located approximately 1.5 kilometres southeast of Yea township and has an area of approximately 11.84 hectares. The land is currently vacant and is in the Low Density Residential Zone and is affected by the Development Plan Overlay. The topography of the land is undulating and falls from Smith Street to the Melba Highway. There is a depression running in an west-east direction in the middle of the site where a waterway is located.

Access to the site is available from Smith Street and Meadow Road. Surrounding parcels to the south and west are developed for residential purposes on larger parcels of land. North of the site is standard residential development, the Goulburn Valley Water Treatment Facility and nature reserve. East of the site, on the opposite side of the Melba Highway is the Great Victorian Rail Trail and agricultural land.

The development plan proposed includes the construction of a new internal road and will provide up to 22 lots. The Development Plan application has been advertised to adjoining landowners and relevant referral authorities. External agencies have provided general comments for inclusion in the Development Plan. No written submissions were received from adjoining landowners.

This report recommends that Council approve the submitted development plan for the land located at 6489 Melba Highway, Yea.

RESOLUTION

Cr S Carpenter / Cr P Hildebrand
That Council approve the Development Plan (Smith Street Development Plan) for 6489 Melba Highway, YEA 3717 in accordance with Schedule 2 to the Development Plan Overlay in the Murrindindi Planning Scheme

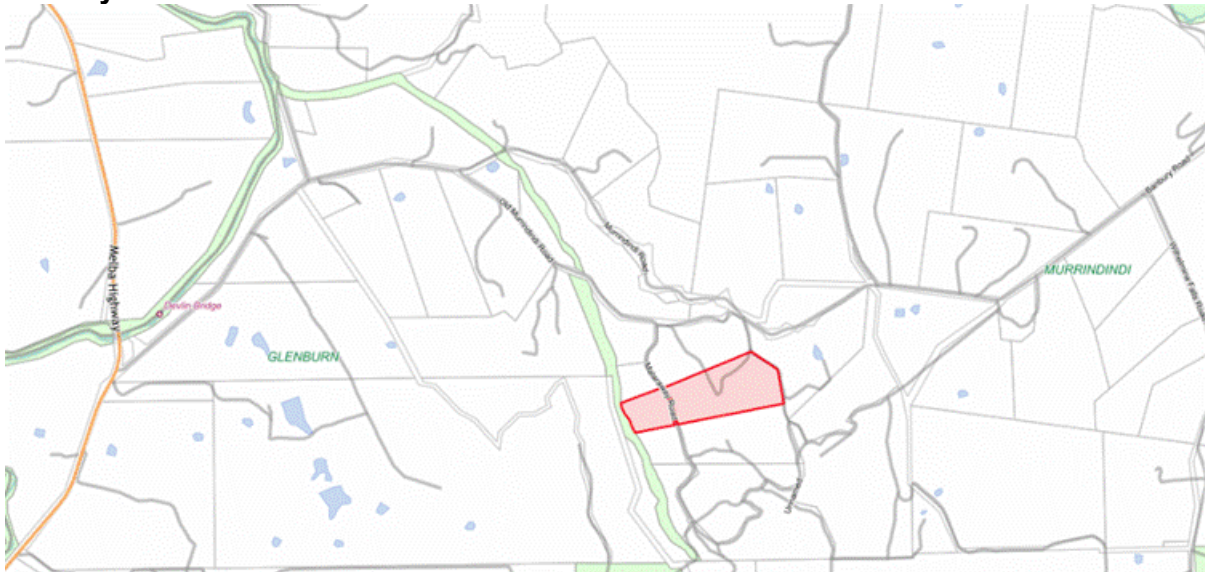
CARRIED

4.4. Planning Application - 30 Malaraway Road, Glenburn

Department	Development Services
Approved by	A Paxton, Director Community and Development
Presenter	Cr S Carpenter
Portfolio	Sustainable Population Growth and Land Use Planning
Purpose	For Decision
Attachment(s)	1. 30 Malaraway Road, Glenburn - Native Vegetation Assessment [4.5.1 - 44 pages] 2. 30 Malaraway Road, Glenburn - DEECA NVRR [4.5.2 - 12 pages] 3. 30 Malaraway Road, Glenburn - Land Management Plan Revised [4.5.3 - 27 pages] 4. 30 Malaraway Road, Glenburn - Proposed Dwelling- Shedding [4.5.4 - 5 pages] 5. 30 Malaraway Road, Glenburn - Application Submission Proposal [4.5.5 - 23 pages] 6. 30 Malaraway Road, Glenburn - Application Form [4.5.6 - 4 pages]
Land:	30 Malaraway Road, GLENBURN 3717
Proposal:	Two lot subdivision (house lot excision), use and development of land for a dwelling and removal of native vegetation
Applicant:	Ruth Parfett
Zoning:	Farming Zone
Overlays:	Erosion Management Overlay (EMO) Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO)
Triggers:	44.01-2 (Erosion Management Overlay): Construct a building or construct or carry out works 44.01-5 (Erosion Management Overlay): Subdivide Land 52.17-1 (Native Vegetation): Remove, destroy or lop native vegetation 35.07-4 (Farming Zone): Construct a building within 100m of a waterway, wetlands or designated flood plain 35.07-4 (Farming Zone): Buildings and works associated with a Section 2 use 35.07-3 (Farming Zone): Subdivide land

35.07-1 (Farming Zone): Use land for two dwellings

Locality Plan:



Executive Summary

This report recommends that a refusal to grant a permit be issued for a two lot subdivision (house lot excision), use and development of land for a dwelling and removal of native vegetation at 30 Malaraway Road, GLENBURN 3717.

An application has been received for a two-lot subdivision (house lot excision), use and development of land for a dwelling and removal of native vegetation at 30 Malaraway Road, Glenburn under the provisions of the Murrindindi Planning Scheme.

The land is in the Farming Zone and is subject to the Bushfire Management Overlay. A planning permit is required for the subdivision of land and the use and development of a dwelling under the provisions of both the zone and the overlay. A planning permit is required for the removal of native vegetation under Clause 52.17 of the Murrindindi Planning Scheme.

The application proposes to subdivide the land into two lots by retaining the existing dwelling on Lot 1 (4.57 Hectares) and creating a balance lot (Lot 2) of 15.45 hectares. The application proposes the

construction of a dwelling on Lot 2. The dwelling on Lot 2 is proposed to be constructed to support a future equine business to support up to 6 horses on the land. As part of the construction of the dwelling, the application proposes the clearing of approximately 3 hectares of vegetation to create defensible space.

The application also proposes some minor clearing beyond the defensible space.

The application fails to meet the objective of Clause 14.01-1L of the Murrindindi Planning Scheme, which seeks to limit house lot excision, is inconsistent with the purpose and decision guidelines of the Farming Zone as well as inconsistent with the Bushfire Management Overlay and the native vegetation objectives within the Planning Policy Framework.

RESOLUTION

**Cr S McAulay / Cr S Carpenter
That Council**

Issue a Refusal to grant a planning permit for a two lot subdivision (house lot excision), use and development of land for a dwelling and removal of native vegetation at 30 Malaraway Road, Glenburn (Lot 3, PS402370), based on the following grounds:

- 1. The proposal fails to meet the objective of Clause 14.01-1L of the Murrindindi Planning Scheme, which seeks to limit house lot existions**
- 2. The proposal does not meet the relevant objectives at Clause 12.01-1S and Clause 12.01-2S of the Murrindindi Planning Scheme as the proposal will result in excessive vegetation losses with limited to no environmental benefit.**
- 3. The application fails to meet the objective of Clause 13.02-1S as the proposed dwelling and additional lot in an area of high bushfire risk**
- 4. The application is inconsistent with the purpose and decision guidelines of the Farming Zone**
- 5. The application is inconsistent with the purpose and decision guidelines of the Bushfire Management Overlay.**

CARRIED

4.5 Planning Scheme Amendment C79 – Yea Structure Plan

Department	Economic Development
Approved by	Andrew Paxton, Director Community and Development
Presenter	Cr S Carpenter
Portfolio	Sustainable Population Growth and Land Use Planning
Purpose	For Decision
Attachment(s)	1. Amendment C79 - Summary of Submissions and Responses 2. C79 – Adoption – ordinance changes in response to submissions

Executive Summary

The Yea Structure Plan (Yea SP) was adopted in October 2025, with a resolution to commence the process for a planning scheme amendment to implement some key recommendations in the report.

Amendment C79 has been prepared, authorised and exhibited. Five submissions were received, including one late submission. The three submissions from referral agencies were substantially supportive with one request for a minor change. The two submissions from land owners included a

mix of support for the amendment overall, some requests for changes and some issues unrelated to the amendment itself. These issues have been resolved through engagement with the submitters and a second minor change to the amendment is recommended.

Council is now able to formally consider submissions and resolve whether to adopt Amendment C79 with two minor changes.

RESOLUTION

Cr S Carpenter / Cr S McAulay

That Council:

1. **Adopt Planning Scheme Amendment C79muri as exhibited, with two minor changes as shown in the C79 – Adoption – ordinance changes in response to submissions document; and**
2. **Submit the Amendment to the Minister for Planning for approval.**

CARRIED

5. REPORTS - PEOPLE & CORPORATE PERFORMANCE GROUP

Nil

6. REPORTS - ASSETS & ENVIRONMENT GROUP

6.1 Capital Works - Quarter 4 Report

Department	Asset Recovery
Approved by	K O'Connor, Director Sustainability and Infrastructure
Presenter	Cr P Hildebrand
Portfolio	Sustainability and Assets
Purpose	For information
Attachment(s)	Nil

Executive Summary

This report provides a summary of the delivery of the Capital Works Program for the 2025/26 financial year and seeks approval for the carry forward of projects to be included in the 2026/27 Capital Works Program.

Council adopted a capital works budget of \$17.21 million for 2025/26 and delivered \$14.43 million in capital works during 2025/26 despite the significant disruption caused by the January 2026 bushfires. This equates to 84% of the budget adopted.

The January 2026 bushfires had a major impact on the availability of contract resources and our ability to deliver projects, with many staff diverted to delivering impact assessments and emergency works. This was addressed by Council in March 2026 with the rephasing of some projects to later financial years. All rephased projects are included in the current multi-year program, and many have already been included in the 2026/27 adopted budget. Following rephasing, the new target budget was \$15.414M.

A significant number of new grant-funded projects were approved or confirmed during the financial year. Many of these projects are multi-year in nature and have been scheduled for delivery across future financial years as detailed in this report.

RESOLUTION

Cr E Lording / Cr S McAulay

That Council:

- 1. Note the 30 June 2026 Capital Works Report for the 2025/26 financial year.**
- 2. Endorse the rephrasing and carry forward adjustments detailed in Table 2, including \$2.12M of carry forward projects for inclusion in the 2026/27 Capital Works Program.**

CARRIED

7. COUNCILLOR AND CEO REPORTS

7.1 Notices of Motions

Nil

7.2 Cr Sue Carpenter

Winter is nearly behind us, and the wattles and blossom trees are putting on a show. I am looking forwards to some milder weather as I plan for planting my summer vegetable crops.

Healthy Foundations Murrindindi is a new program that has been funded by a State Government grant. We aim to help shape a healthier future for children and families in Murrindindi, and have an opportunity to design bold, practical and place-based solutions that create lasting change for current and future families, by bringing together health professionals, education providers, community organisations, etc to design interventions to improve health outcomes for the community and in particular children. I am looking forward to this collaboration with the community and will be attending a "Design sprint" at the Yea shire hall to be held on the 15th to 17th September. The program seeks to address the poor health outcomes identified in the Community Health and Wellbeing plan and it is pleasing to see Council stepping up and leading this initiative.

It was unfortunate that a large gum tree had to be removed in Melbourne rd Yea. It had been leaning for many years and the rootball was lifting the road. In the future it was at risk of becoming dangerous and could have fallen and taken the road out, or even traffic on the road so it was necessary to remove it. Fortunately there are several other large gums in the vicinity.

In my portfolio of Sustainable Population Growth and Planning, we focus on planning to having enough population growth and a critical mass to support the services we need. We do not want to become a suburb of Melbourne. We want to retain and protect our unique rural charm, whilst having a thriving population that can be supported by our GP's, hospitals, schools etc. The Yea Structure Plan and work in Alexandra have demonstrated that there is enough community infrastructure (ovals, schools, etc) to sustain growth and commercial land for retail, jobs, etc. Population growth will attract and strengthen the services we need.

The Planning scheme review has been completed and endorsed tonight with several "minor changes to align with State Policy. This sets a pathway of Strategic planning work to support future growth and sustainability of our wonderful shire.

It provides confidence with an independent report on the Statutory planning service outperforming similar Councils across Victoria and ahead of the State average. For a small Shire that has been impacted by fires and floods this is great to see that the team are so responsive and supportive. The Yea Structure Plan clearly sets out how Yea can grow while retaining its charm in the future, while foreshadowing future growth opportunities for housing, employment, services and movement. Tonight we have also endorsed a development plan for land on the east side of Yea, which will unlock this potential in an organized and structured way as we welcome more families. Our future looks exciting.

Recently Council has approved a development plan in Alexandra unlocking growth opportunities across multiple properties to the east of the Hospital

- Residential Design Guidelines ensure that growth and development can be done in a sensitive way to protect our valued landscapes and charm
- As a Council we are also building homes in Eildon with the support from the State for key workers

The team have secured external funding and support to undertake this valuable work, reducing the demand on our funds.

The future work identified in the planning scheme review will provide a framework for growth in local employment, homes, and growing our economic prosperity, all whilst protecting our unique charm and character.

7.3 Cr Sandice McAulay

7.4 Cr Paul Hildbrand

The past month has again been dominated by the weather, with good rainfall across most of the Shire. The rain has brought plenty of runoff, with some minor flooding in parts of the district causing a few concerns. Lake Eildon's storage level has continued to rise and is now around 57% capacity. While there is still plenty of mud and wet paddocks making travel around properties a little more difficult, the outlook is very positive, and it is shaping up to be a good spring.

Late last month, I attended the Yarck Community Gathering and Recognition Event, held in conjunction with Christmas in July. It was fantastic to see the Yarck Hall full, with everyone enjoying a traditional Christmas roast and pudding supplied by Kat from Foodie Cat Catering in Eildon. We were also entertained by Derrin Nauendorf, a new musician to our Shire. It was a great night of food, music and community, and I believe everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

On 29 July, Council travelled to Toolangi for a community meeting. There was a good turnout, with residents taking the opportunity to raise a number of local concerns and issues. These community meetings are important, as they give Councillors and Council staff the opportunity to listen directly to residents and better understand what matters to each community.

On the 1st of August, a number of Councillors and Council staff attended the Terip Terip Trivia Night. The hall was packed and the competition was extremely close. Our team, the **Pothole Warriors**, finished on the same score as two other tables. After a bit of luck in the final result, the Pothole Warriors were declared the winners! It was a great night and another example of the strong community spirit in Terip Terip.

I also attended two Comedy and Conversation events, the first at Molesworth Hall and the second at the Habbies Howe shearing shed in Highlands. Both events were very well attended and there were plenty of laughs, with comedians Des Dowling and Dave O'Neil having the crowds in stitches. Warren Davies, the Unbreakable Farmer, also spoke at both events, sharing his experiences and

talking about resilience, mental health and the challenges faced by people living and working in rural communities. These events are a great way of bringing people together while also opening up important conversations.

On Friday night, I attended a men's night at Fawcett Hall. It was a great evening with a good meal, a few beers and plenty of good conversation. James Jensen also made the trip to speak with the group and was happy to sit down and have a chat with anyone who wanted to talk. It was a relaxed and enjoyable night and another good example of our local halls being used to bring communities together.

Over the past weekend, the Yea Tigers women's football team played off in the Outer Eastern Football Division 2 Senior Women's Grand Final. Jess Kennedy and her team brought the premiership cup home to Yea. Congratulations to Jess, all the players, coaches, volunteers and supporters. It was a fantastic achievement and one the whole Yea community can be proud of.

On Saturday night, I dusted off the penguin suit and attended the Hunt Club Association of Victoria Black Tie Ball held at Flowerdale Estate, Flowerdale. It was a fantastic evening, with plenty of people to meet and catch up with, a delicious meal and a great cover band playing a number of hit songs. It was a very enjoyable night and a great event for the district.

On Sunday morning I travelled to Terip Terip to hear James Jensen, a former SAS patrol commander, speaking about his military service and his experiences with leadership and resilience. It was a very interesting and thought-provoking presentation. His experiences highlighted the importance of leadership, teamwork, looking after those around you and remaining resilient when faced with difficult circumstances.

It has been another busy month across the Shire, but what continues to stand out is the strength of our local communities. Whether it is a community gathering, a trivia night, a sporting grand final, a men's night or simply people getting together for a meal and a conversation, these events are important. They provide an opportunity for people to catch up, support one another and maintain the strong community connections that make Murrindindi such a great place to live.

7.5 Cr Eric Lording

Operations and Maintenance

- Works programming is underway for the 2026/27 Financial year period with Road grading programs already developed,
- The current wet weather is delaying the program.
- Pit and Drain cleaning programs are planned and Line marking program due for commencement towards the end of the calendar year.
- The roadside slashing program will be open for quoting soon with commencement due to start mid to late spring.
- We will report any service request – comment to general community. Use Snap Send Solve for a fast response.

Bushfire Recovery:

- Road emergency works packages being finalised – signs etc.
- Culvert damage assessment is continuing. Recent rain is causing damage to drainage on fire impacted roads.

Roadworks

Works on Melba Highway north of Devlins bridge should be finished by the 28th Aug subject to rain events,

Flowerdale Post Office

The highly successful Post Office at the Flowerdale Community House is going from strength to strength. Volunteers are to be thanked for their efforts and support to make it the success it is proving to be. It is now a very busy site.

I am looking forward to the Science day with Kinglake Central Primary school at the Kinglake Library on Friday.

7.6 Cr Anita Carr

INTEGRITY, FINANCE & ENGAGEMENT PORTFOLIO UPDATE

Library Strategy and Action Plan 2027-2030 - Community Consultation

Community consultation on the Murrindindi Library Strategy and Action Plan 2027-2030 commenced on Monday 27 July and closes this Friday 28 August 2026. A final reminder for residents to share their feedback and help shape the future of library services across the Shire. Community members can provide feedback for the next 2 days online through The Loop, complete paper surveys at Alexandra, Yea and Kinglake libraries or in the Mobile Library, submit written feedback, participate in ideas boards or speak directly with library staff.

Rates Notices on their way

The 2026-27 rate notices are on their way to your letterboxes and inboxes, with notices being distributed this week, so keep an eye out for them.

There are several ways to pay your rates. While the traditional quarterly instalment option and lump sum payment due in February remain available, additional payment options introduced over recent years may better suit many ratepayers and help them stay on top of their accounts.

When you receive your notice, you can set up a direct debit payment plan that works for your household budget. Payments can be made weekly, fortnightly, or monthly, providing greater flexibility and making it easier to spread the cost across the year. I encourage everyone to review their notice as soon as it arrives and consider whether a direct debit arrangement would be beneficial.

It is also important to note that you have two months from the date of issue to query your property valuation with the Valuer-General Victoria. Property valuations are conducted by the Valuer-General and not by Council. If you believe your valuation is incorrect, please contact the Valuer-General's Office directly. Contact details and relevant information will be included on the back of your rates notice.

Another aspect of this year's rates notice is the State Government's Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund (ESVF) charge. Council is required to collect this charge through council rates as part of State Government policy. It is important to understand that every dollar collected for the ESVF is passed directly to the State Government. Council does not retain any of these funds. If you are experiencing financial hardship or have overdue rates, I strongly encourage you to contact Council's Rates Department as soon as possible to discuss your situation confidentially and develop a payment plan. The sooner you seek assistance, the easier it is to manage the debt and avoid additional interest charges. Council officers are there to help and work with you to find a suitable solution.

For assistance, please contact the Rates Department on (03) 5772 0333.

DEPUTY MAYOR/EILDON WARD REPORT

Lake Eildon Update

Lake Eildon is still on the rise and has now surpassed the level it was at this time last year, sitting on 58% as at 9am this morning. With a dry spring and summer predicted, the more rain that falls now, the better it will be for everyone.

With an earlier start to the fire season expected this year, I encourage everyone to keep an eye on information from their local CFA regarding preparations ahead of the season, tips for staying safe

throughout the fire danger period, and the importance of being proactive by creating or updating your personal fire plan.

Millbuilt Tour

On 29th July, I was excited to be given a tour of the Millbuilt offices and factory in Toolangi. Millbuilt is the company building the Key Worker Homes on 21st Street in Eildon as part of the Eildon Key Worker Housing Project.

To say "wow" is an understatement. The setup at Millbuilt is next level, the quality of the homes is outstanding, and the people behind the business are even more impressive. It is a fantastic outcome to have these homes for key workers being built locally within our shire by a local business.

I am looking forward to seeing the 21st Street homes completed and welcoming their new residents. It is also exciting to see the next stage of the project on 8th Street set to commence very soon, helping to deliver even more housing opportunities for key workers in Eildon for the district.

Alexandra Secondary College Production: *I'm Big, You're Little*

On Thursday, 6 August, I attended the opening night of Alexandra Secondary College's production of *I'm Big, You're Little* and was absolutely blown away by the talent of the students.

It was a fun, engaging, and entertaining performance inspired by the movie *Matilda*, with the live music and lighting adding greatly to the overall theatrical experience.

It was fantastic to see so many students involved and shining on stage. They all had their moments to shine and brought their own unique interpretation to their roles, along with individual quirks and personalities that made the performance so special.

Congratulations and well done to everyone involved. Your hard work, dedication, and talent were on full display, and you should all be incredibly proud of what you achieved.

Yea Sale Yards

On Friday, 7 August, I headed over to the Yea Saleyards for their Combined Agents Sale. Having never attended a sale before, I wasn't quite sure what to expect, but I can honestly say it was a brilliant morning.

It was great to spend time talking with farmers about a wide range of topics and to experience the excitement of the live bidding firsthand. The Yea District Memorial Hospital nurses were also onsite in the Murrindindi Health Van, focusing on mental health and having many valuable conversations throughout the day.

Council's Fire Recovery Team officers, Vee and Amanda, were there as well. They were two very friendly and approachable faces, available to assist community members with a range of challenges and recovery-related issues.

The Yea Saleyards is an incredible facility, and having these additional support services available onsite for farmers is so important. Thank you to the Yea Saleyards team and all of the partner organisations involved in providing these services to our farming communities. The support, care and connection offered through initiatives like these matter more than words can express.

Vietnam Veterans Day

On Tuesday 18th August, I joined veterans, RSL members from Alexandra, Eildon and surrounding areas, emergency service personnel, our State member for Eildon - Cindy McLeish, Mayor Damien Gallagher, and many community members at the Alexandra Cenotaph to commemorate Vietnam Veterans Day.

The sun shone as the service commenced, with many speakers paying tribute to those who served. The Ode read by local Secondary College student Riley Cole, raising of the flag by RSL member Gerry Laws, and the National Anthem are always especially meaningful on occasions such as these, and that significance was certainly felt throughout the crowd. This year held particular importance as it marked the 60th anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan. After the service concluded attendees were welcomed back to the Alexandra RSL rooms for refreshments. It was such a special atmosphere in the room and I enjoyed speaking with many different people and enjoying some delicious morning tea.

sincere thank you to the Alexandra RSL for organising this important commemorative service and for their ongoing dedication to honouring and remembering those who have served our nation. Lest We Forget.

Eildon Local Brock Edwards auditions on The Voice Australia

I'd like to give a special shoutout to Eildon local Brock Edwards who auditioned on The Voice Australia last night. What an incredibly talented performer Brock is and it was just so cool seeing a local on national television – his intro speaking about Eildon was a highlight but his performance even better. Unfortunately no chair turns but congratulations Brock on giving it a crack as you said you were there to do and getting your voice out to the nation.

Ongoing Learning

Over the past month, I have taken part in a range of professional development opportunities to help me continue growing as a leader and better represent our communities. I have thoroughly enjoyed participating in numerous online and in-person events through the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV), with several more sessions already scheduled over the coming months.

I am also pleased to have been accepted into the MAV's Local Leadership Series, which commenced last Friday and includes four additional sessions over the next three months. I am looking forward to learning from peers across councils throughout Victoria and bringing those insights and experiences back into my role over the next two years of this Council term.

There is always something new to learn, and I remain committed to continuous learning, personal growth, and strengthening my ability to represent and advocate for our community.

In Memory of Syd Savage

I would like to pay tribute to a wonderful local legend, Syd Savage, who sadly passed away on 11 August.

My thoughts are with Syd's wife of 65 years, Chris, along with his children, grandchildren, and all those who knew and loved him during this difficult time.

Syd was a proud local through and through. Born at Alexandra Hospital in 1940, he spent most of his 86 years living in and contributing to the area he loved. His funeral was held yesterday at the Eildon Pondage Lions Rotunda, a fitting location given that the rotunda was one of his passion projects in the late 1990s.

During the service, Syd's family thanked the staff at Alexandra District Health for their care and support of Syd in his final weeks and days. Many stories were shared by family and friends with many laughs had throughout the service – it was a true celebration of Syd's life. The rain held off just long enough for the hundreds of people in attendance to give Syd a fitting farewell, with a special guard of honour and a heartfelt round of applause as he made his final journey from the rotunda.

Returning to the significance of the rotunda, Syd once visited a small country town which featured a beautiful rotunda. Inspired by what he saw, he returned home with a vision to create something similar for Eildon.

Sometime later, while walking along the pondage, Syd came across two people using wheelchairs, one of whom had become bogged. After helping them get safely on their way, he recognised the need for better access to the water and began developing another idea, this time for an accessible fishing pier.

Determined to turn his vision into reality, Syd worked tirelessly along side others to bring these projects to life. Through his persistence and passion for the community, the rotunda and all-abilities fishing pier were constructed, creating lasting amenities that allow residents and visitors of all abilities to enjoy the beauty of the Eildon Pondage. His legacy continues to be enjoyed by countless people every day.

As a founding member of the Eildon Lions Club, Syd made an enormous contribution to our community in so many ways. It was particularly special to see him and fellow Lions members celebrate the Club's 50th anniversary last year, where he and wife Chris were honoured with hand-

painted portraits in recognition of their many years of service before proudly cutting the anniversary cake together.

Known for his dedication, community spirit, and willingness to lend a hand, Syd was a true local icon whose impact will be felt for generations to come. His legacy can be seen not only in the projects he helped create, but also in the countless lives he touched through his generosity, leadership, and commitment to making Eildon and the world a better place.

Syd will be deeply missed and fondly remembered by many across Eildon and the surrounding district.

Our community is richer for Syd's contribution and service. Vale Syd

7.7 Mayor, Cr Damien Gallagher

There could be no more fitting place for a final tribute for a community servant like Syd, than the community asset he helped establish in the Eildon Lions Park. Vale, Syd Savage.

I'm pleased to offer a brief outline of activities since our last meeting reflecting Council's continuing commitment to environmental stewardship, economic development, community wellbeing, and community connection across the Shire. All while sharing the Murrindindi story and a need for ongoing support.

Environmental sustainability remains a key priority for our community. During the month, I participated in National Tree Day activities, supporting local efforts to enhance biodiversity, strengthen environmental awareness, and encourage community participation in caring for our natural environment. Firstly, by attending a presentation on pollinators, and then hands-on, on Station St beside UT Creek in Alexandra. I thank Council's Environment Assessment Officer for leading these contributions to the long-term environmental resilience and liveability of the Shire.

Supporting economic development and local employment opportunities continued to be a significant focus during the month. I had the privilege of attending the Millbuilt factory in Toolangi and to see firsthand the beautiful homes being developed right here in Murrindindi for Key Worker Housing in Eildon. It has been very exciting for Council to be recognised as a finalist for the Municipal Association of Victoria's MAVLabs Innovation Awards for its Key Worker Housing initiative.

I also participated in the Taungurung Land and Water Council – Local Government Forum, providing an opportunity to discuss regional economic challenges, opportunities, and collaborative approaches to shared priorities for supporting communities.

At the August Yea Saleyards store sale, a Farm Safety event highlighted the importance of workplace health and safety within the agricultural sector and provided an opportunity to engage with colleagues and industry representatives on issues affecting local producers. And it was another strong yarding.

As always, it's a pleasure to participate in the Student Immersion program facilitated by the Lake Eildon Houseboat Industry Association members for Yea High School students with the support of the Central Ranges Local Learning and Employment Network. I acknowledge the work of Mike Dalmau to bring the event together. It was a pleasure to help instil pride in the young Yea students, as they contemplate their future in our beautiful part of the world with opportunities for careers in world-class industries and trade.

Social and important service milestones were commemorated too, starting with the Kinglake Rotary Changeover Dinner, recognising the valuable contribution Rotary volunteers make to community wellbeing and local projects. Carol Westworth and Nina Lunde will guide the club gain in 2026-7 as Co-Presidents.

Across Australia, including in Leckie Park, Alexandra, people of all ages came together on 18 August to commemorate the selflessness of those who served our country in the Vietnam War conflict. A powerful service was convened by the Alexandra RSL with the Ode to the Fallen read by Alexandra Secondary College student, Riley Cole.

The Emeritus Professor Gillian Triggs AC was in Murrindindi Shire this month reflecting upon her time as President of the Australian Human Rights Commission, 25 years to the day after the Tampa affair. She recognised the contribution of refugees to the richness of our community, and explained that, invariably, humanitarian work – across the globe – starts with action locally. Thanks to Rural Australians for Refugee members in Murrindindi Shire for your local advocacy and action.

Sharing the achievements and challenges of Murrindindi Shire, remained a core responsibility throughout August.

Council participated in meetings of the Hume Region Local Government Network, working collaboratively with regional councils on shared challenges and opportunities affecting local government and regional communities including challenges engaging new members of the Victorian Government Ministry, financial support impacting the pace of emergency recovery, and curious election policies that would undermine municipal autonomy to set municipal waste policies.

Earlier today I attended the weekly Coffee Connections gathering led by Churches of Alexandra, providing an opportunity to strengthen relationships and discuss matters of community interest. There were several Christmas in July celebrations held throughout the Shire, including events in Flowerdale, Kinglake, Highlands and Yarck. And many attended Comedy and Conversations recovery events in Molesworth and Highlands. All of these opportunities brought community members together in a relaxed and engaging environment to supporting social connection.

It's generosity, resilience and optimism that define our communities. Whether planting trees for future generations, supporting local businesses and young people, commemorating distinguished service, advocating for our region, or simply coming together to share conversation and companionship, Murrindindi showed up.

The true measure of a community is not found in its buildings, roads or infrastructure, but in the people who step forward to volunteer, to lead, to care for one another, and to contribute to a shared sense of belonging.

It is a privilege to serve, and I look forward to continuing to support Council. Together, we are creating communities that are not only resilient in the face of challenges, but confident in our future, proud of our identity, and committed to leaving a positive legacy for generations to come.

7.8 Chief Executive Report

Grant Street Streetscape Plan and Maroondah Hwy Safety Improvements

Community engagement on the Grant Street Safety and Streetscape Plan remains open until 6 September, providing an opportunity for residents, businesses and road users to help shape future improvements for Alexandra's town centre.

In addition, the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) will host a community pop-up session at the Alexandra Shire Hall from 10.00 am to 1.00 pm on 2 September in relation to the intersection of the Maroondah and Goulburn Highways which is part of the state road network and managed by the State agency. DTP staff will be available to discuss the safety intersection review and hear feedback from the community.

I encourage interested community members to participate in both engagement opportunities and help inform the future of this important precinct.

R U OK? Community Events

With R U OK? Day approaching, Council will be hosting a number of Movies, Meals and Meaningful Connections events across the Shire.

Living in rural communities can be incredibly rewarding, but it can also bring challenges including isolation, distance and seasonal pressures. These events provide an opportunity for people to come together, connect and check in on one another.

Residents can book online through Council's website for events being held in Kinglake, Alexandra and Yea starting this Friday 28 August, through to Friday 11 September. I encourage people to attend and, most importantly, take the opportunity to check in on friends, neighbours, family members and colleagues.

Bushfire Recovery

Tomorrow, Council will release the Draft Murrindindi Municipal Recovery Plan for the January 2026 Bushfires for community feedback. The plan has been shaped by the experiences and priorities shared by our communities over the past seven months and will help guide recovery in the years ahead. We are seeking feedback on the proposed goals and actions, and I encourage everyone to have their say. Consultation will close on 17 September

Fire recovery on the ground continues to progress. Since January, Council has incurred more than \$15 million in recovery expenditure, mainly tree cleanup and emergency repairs, with significant more funding yet to be secured to support ongoing recovery works, infrastructure restoration and community support. The State-supported property clean-up program is now well advanced for those who have registered and were deemed eligible. Homes Victoria is progressing temporary accommodation solutions for eligible residents.

Currently there are no delays within Council's planning, building or environmental health functions for bushfire-related approvals.

The firewood program continues to provide practical benefits for residents while supporting recovery works, with thousands of cubic metres of timber processed and made available to the community. We have also completed the majority of roadside tree works identified following the fires, improving safety across the road network and contributing timber to the firewood program.

Finally, recovery is about rebuilding infrastructure and also about supporting people and community wellbeing. I welcome the rollout of Wellways' mental health support for fire-affected residents and communities. It is encouraging to see these services now available in person locally, providing practical, face-to-face support as people continue their recovery journey.

Yea Saleyards

The Yea Saleyards continue to perform strongly, with cattle throughput almost doubling compared with the same period last year highlighting the importance of the facility to the regional economy and agricultural sector.

Several improvement projects are planned over the coming months, including a roof extension, livestock handling upgrades and a new solar installation. The Saleyards will also host a number of industry and community events, including the VFF Stock Sense program this Friday 28 August, and the Rotary Garden Expo on 19 and 20 September.

Kinglake Ward By-Election

Following the resignation of Councillor Jodi Adams, an extraordinary vacancy now exists in Kinglake Ward. As Kinglake is a single-councillor ward, the vacancy will be filled through a by-election conducted by the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC). Council is working closely with the VEC to support the process and keep the community informed. Key election dates have now been released, with voting to occur on 5 December. We encourage anyone considering standing for Council to engage with the information available through the VEC and Council websites.

8. RECORD OF COUNCIL BRIEFING SESSION

Purpose

For noting

Executive Summary

This report presents the record of Council Briefing Sessions for

RESOLUTION

Cr A Carr / Cr E Lording

That Council:

Receive and note the records of Council Briefing Sessions for 22 July 2026 – 19 August 2026

CARRIED

Meeting name / type	Council Pre-Meet
Meeting date:	22 July 2026
Matters discussed	1. Fees and Charges 2026/27 2. CONT25-21 Plant1613 Motor Grader 3. CONT25-30 Plant3120 Landfill Waste Compactor 4. Multi Branded Fuel Card (Procurement Australia)
Councillor attendees	Cr D Gallagher, Cr A Carr, Cr S Carpenter, Cr P Hildebrand, Cr S McAulay, Cr E Lording,
Council Officer attendees	M Chesworth, B Harnwell, K O'Connor, D O'Keeffe, A Vogt
Conflict of interest disclosed?	No

Meeting name / type	Briefing Session
Meeting date:	12 August 2026
Matters discussed	1. Murrindindi Shire Bushfire Recovery Plan – Consultation 2. Planning Scheme Review 3. Amendment C79 - Yea Structure Plan - Endorsement 4. Amendment C80 - Acheron Valley Flood Study 5. Grant & Sponsorship Quarterly Allocation 6. Grants and Sponsorship Program Financial Year Analysis 25-26 7. Capital Works - Quarter 4 Report 8. Growing Healthy Communities Project 2026-2028
Councillor attendees	Cr D Gallagher, Cr A Carr, Cr P Hildebrand, Cr S McAulay, Cr E Lording,

Council Officer attendees	L Bonazzi, M Chesworth, A Paxton, K O'Connor, B Harnwell, P Schier, S Coller, C Hedger, P Bain
Conflict of interest disclosed?	No

Meeting name / type	Briefing Session
Meeting date:	19 August 2026
Matters discussed	1. Industrial Futures: Murrindindi Manufacturing Strategy - Councillors Consultation 2. Planning Application - 6489 Melba Highway Yea - Smith Street Development Plan - 22 Lot Low Density Residential Development 3. Planning Application - 30 Malaraway Road Glenburn - Two Lot Subdivision, Construction and Use of Land for a Second Dwelling and Removal of Native Vegetation (Refusal) 4. Flat Lead Road Carbon / Biodiversity Offset Project 5. Aquatics Briefing 2025-26 Season 6. Healthy Foundations Murrindindi Update
Councillor attendees	Cr D Gallagher, Cr A Carr, Cr S Carpenter, Cr P Hildebrand, Cr S McAulay, Cr E Lording,
Council Officer attendees	L Bonazzi, M Chesworth, A Paxton, K O'Connor, B Harnwell, A Paix, N Stewart, C Fraser, B Chapman, J Rae, A Campbell
Conflict of interest disclosed?	No

9. SEALING REGISTER

RESOLUTION
Cr S Carpenter / Cr P Hildebrand That Council:

CARRIED

File Reference	Date Seal Affixed	Description of Documents	Signatures of Persons Sealing
MUREDOC-1515917226-18063	15 July 2026	CONT24/11 - Dry Hire Plant Panel Formal Instrument of Agreement between Murrindindi Shire Council and Rollers Australia Pty Ltd Plant Hire Panel – Dry Hire	Michael Chesworth (Acting CEO) Cr Damien Gallagher (Mayor)

MUREDOC- 1515917226-18061	15 July 2026	CONT24/11 - Dry Hire Plant Panel Formal Instrument of Agreement between Murrindindi Shire Council and Brooks Hire Services Pty Ltd Plant Hire Panel – Dry Hire	Michael Chesworth (Acting CEO) Cr Damien Gallagher (Mayor)
MUREDOC- 1515917226-18060	15 July 2026	CONT24/11 - Dry Hire Plant Panel Formal Instrument of Agreement between Murrindindi Shire Council and Coates Hire Operations Pty Ltd Plant Hire Panel – Dry Hire	Michael Chesworth (Acting CEO) Cr Damien Gallagher (Mayor)
MUREDOC- 1515917226-18059	15 July 2026	CONT24/11 - Dry Hire Plant Panel Formal Instrument of Agreement between Murrindindi Shire Council and Porter Excavations Pty Ltd Plant Hire Panel – Dry Hire	Michael Chesworth (Acting CEO) Cr Damien Gallagher (Mayor)

10. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

Nil