

AGENDA SCHEDULED MEETING

WARRNAMBOOL CITY COUNCIL – 5:45PM Monday 2 June 2025

VENUE:

Lighthouse Theatre, 185 Timor Street, Warrnambool

COUNCILLORS:

Cr. Ben Blain (Mayor)

Cr. Debbie Arnott

Cr. Willy Benter

Cr. Billy Edis

Cr. Vicki Jellie AM

Cr. Matthew Walsh

Cr. Richard Ziegeler

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Andrew Mason
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



WARRNAMBOOL
CITY COUNCIL

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Thank you all for coming – we really appreciate you being here. These meetings are the place where, we as Councillors, make decisions on a broad range of matters. These can vary greatly in subject, significance and the level of interest or involvement the community has. As part of making these decisions, we are presented with comprehensive information that helps us to form our position – you will find this in the agenda. It should also be remembered that the Council meeting is a “meeting of the Council that is open to the public”, not a “public meeting with the Council.” Each Council is required to have Governance Rules that pertains to meeting procedures. Warrnambool City Council has followed best practice in this regard and its Governance Rules provides regulations and procedures for the governing and conduct of Council meetings. Copies of the Conduct and Behaviour excerpt from Warrnambool City Council's Governance Rules can be obtained online at www.warrnambool.vic.gov.au. We thank you in anticipation of your co-operation in this matter.

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1. Opening Prayer & Original Custodians Statement

Almighty God
Grant to this Council
Wisdom, understanding and Sincerity of purpose
For the Good Governance of this City
Amen.

Original Custodians Statement

Council acknowledges the Peek Whurrong and Kirrae Whurrung Peoples of the Maar Nation, their land, waterways and skies within the Warrnambool municipality. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

2. Apologies

3. Confirmation Of Minutes

RECOMMENDATION

That the Minutes of the Scheduled Meeting of Council held on 5 May 2025 be confirmed.

4. Declaration By Councillors And Officers Of Any Conflict Of Interest In Any Item On The Agenda

Section 130 of the Local Government Act 2020 (Vic) (**the Act**) provides that a relevant person must disclose a conflict of interest in respect of a matter and exclude themselves from the decision making process in relation to that matter including any discussion or vote on the matter at any Council meeting or delegated committee meeting and any action in relation to that matter.

Section 126(2) of the Act sets out that a relevant person (Councillor, member of a delegated Committee or member of Council staff) has a conflict of interest if the relevant person has a **general conflict of interest** within the meaning of section 127 of the Act or a **material conflict of interest** within the meaning of section 128 of the Act.

A relevant person has a **general conflict of interest** in a matter if an impartial, fair minded person would consider that the person's private interests could result in that person acting in a manner that is contrary to their public duty.

A relevant person has a **material conflict of interest** in a matter if an affected person would gain a benefit or suffer a loss depending on the outcome of the matter.

A Councillor who has declared a conflict of interest, must leave the meeting and remain outside the room while the matter is being considered, or any vote is taken. Councillors are also encouraged to declare circumstances where there may be a perceived conflict of interest.

5. Mayoral Presentation

6. Public Question Time

7. Reports

7.1. South Warrnambool and Dennington Flood Investigation - Final Summary Report

DIRECTORATE : City Futures

Purpose:

This report confirms completion of the Final Summary Report and associated outputs from the South Warrnambool and Dennington Flood Investigation (the Investigation) and seeks authorisation to prepare an associated planning scheme amendment.

Executive Summary

The South Warrnambool and Dennington Flood Investigation model is complete and has been independently peer reviewed by an expert consultancy in the field.

All other project outputs are now complete including:

- Flood mapping and animations
- Flood damages estimate
- Pre-feasibility mitigation options analysis
- Emergency management information (inundation tables and flood intelligence/action cards)
- Flood warning assessment

The Investigation confirms that there are flood risks in the study area beyond what was identified in the 2007 studies which currently inform the Warrnambool Planning Scheme. Consequently, the study recommends as a key risk mitigation measure to modify existing planning controls via a Planning Scheme Amendment so that development is not permitted in flood impacted locations. A flood-related Planning Scheme Amendment must be accompanied by a Flood Investigation.

By Council resolution, additional consultation was requested to give community members and interested parties adequate time to review the Investigation, including the final summary report. This consultation has now occurred and a number of additional submissions have been received and reviewed. While a range of relevant questions were posed, no new information has been presented that has led the project team to change the content of the summary report, other than typographic errors and some mislabeling of maps.

While several of the submissions challenge the underlying assumptions of the model, officers believe that the original assumptions are justified, and that the appropriate forum for a full review would be at a Planning Panel hearing subject to the requirements of the planning scheme amendment process.

As the planning scheme amendment process can often take upwards of 12 months and there is an associated risk that development could be permitted in flood impacted locations during that intervening time, this report recommends seeking authorisation from the Planning Minister to implement interim planning controls to mitigate against that risk until the full amendment process is completed.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Notes the South Warrnambool and Dennington Flood Investigation.
2. Pursuant to Section 8A of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, request authorisation from the Minister for Planning to prepare a planning scheme amendment to introduce associated policy and material ordinance and mapping changes from the recommendations of the South Warrnambool and Dennington Flood Investigation into the Warrnambool Planning Scheme.
3. Following authorisation from the Minister for Planning in accordance with Section 9 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, prepare and exhibit an amendment to the Warrnambool Planning Scheme to introduce associated policy and material ordinance and mapping changes from the recommendations of the South Warrnambool and Dennington Flood Investigation into the Warrnambool Planning Scheme.
4. Request the Minister for Planning prepare an amendment under section 8 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, and to rely on section 20(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act* to exempt themselves from the notice requirements of section 17, 18, and 19 of the *Planning and Environment Act*, to apply flood planning controls on an interim basis to the land identified in the South Warrnambool and Dennington Floor Investigation as being subject to flooding which is not presently identified under the Warrnambool Planning Scheme as being subject to flooding.
5. Continue its advocacy to seek a commitment from the Minister for Planning to update State guidance on appropriate planning, to streamline associated planning processes, and to provide adequate funding for associated flood mitigation works, with specific reference to regional Victoria.

Background

Assisted by funding through the State Government Risk and Resilience Grant Program and in partnership with the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority (GHCMA), Council has completed the South Warrnambool and Dennington Flood Investigation. The study area for the project is shown in Figure 1. The study area was increased over the course of the project and now includes the entire catchment area between Stingray Bay and Caramut Road (Cassady's) bridge.

The project informs the implementation of flood related planning controls (zones and overlays) in accordance with current best-practice riverine and storm tide flood risk modelling. A planning scheme amendment is required to implement the most appropriate flood related planning controls within this part of the municipality based on that flood modelling.

The GHCMA currently calculates flood levels in South Warrnambool on a 2007 flood model, and existing flood related planning controls within the South Warrnambool Study area predate the 2007 flood modelling. For this reason, a substantial portion of the study area planning controls were not updated based on the 2007 model.

Venant Solutions Pty Ltd was procured as a specialist consultant to complete the current model, which has also been peer reviewed by an independent 3rd party expert. In response to input from all parties, appropriate adjustments have been made to the model, sensitivity testing has been conducted, and Council officers are confident that the model is robust. Flood mapping which will be used to define proposed flood zones and overlays has been produced from the model and been published for public use via Council's website.

Flooding and Local Government Responsibilities

Managing flood risk, particularly through the Planning Scheme, is an important local government responsibility. Flood mapping should be robust, correctly identify known flood risk, and provide clear guidance and transparency on potential constraints to land use. This is generally required via Clause 13.03-1S of the Warrnambool Planning Scheme, which identifies as a recommended strategy to "identify land affected by flooding, including land inundated by the 1 in 100 year flood event (1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability) or as determined by the floodplain management authority in planning schemes". The directive to conduct detailed flood studies and evaluate and communicate flood risks is then reinforced by the Victorian Floodplain Management Strategy, which points out that studies' "usefulness depends on their technical rigour". To support this technical rigour, local areas must account for the variety of flood inputs that are possible in their specific contexts. For example, coastal communities need to account for the effects of coastal inundation, including via the combination of storm surges and storm tides. As pointed out in the VFMS, "climate change will contribute to a progressive permanent increase in sea level that will increase the extent and duration of storm-induced coastal inundation". Therefore, the impacts of climate change including via sea level rise are an essential input into flood studies, and resultant mitigation strategies.

Sea Level Rise

The Victorian State Government's policy has been to plan for not less than 0.8 m of sea level rise (SLR) by the year 2100. The State Government has committed to revision of this policy via an action in the 2022 Marine and Coastal Strategy. An increase in the minimum amount of SLR to be planned for is anticipated by the general flood modelling and catchment management communities.

An important inclusion in the flood risk modelling has therefore been to account for up to 1.2 m of SLR, where this inclusion was supported by Council and the GHCMA, as well as the expert flood modelling consultants involved in the investigation.

The Minister for Planning has recently directed Moyne Shire Council to amend its planning scheme to account for the effect of up to 1.2 m of sea level rise on flood risk at Port Fairy, consistent with the Planning Scheme Amendment exhibited by Moyne in 2022. Relevant precedent to support planning for the effect of up to 1.2 m SLR in the South Warrnambool has therefore been established.

The project has modelled a 0.8 m SLR scenario for comparison purposes. The exercise has shown that for the majority of the study area, the difference in flood impact between the two scenarios is relatively insignificant (See Attachment).

Australian Rainfall and Runoff (AR&R) - Version 4.2 (August 2024)

AR&R is a national best practice guideline document used for the estimation of design flood characteristics in Australia. The latest AR&R guidance was followed in the modelling undertaken for the study area. AR&R has recently been revised (officially published 27 August 2024) in response to already measured increase in rainfall intensity and to account for projected further increase in rainfall intensity as a consequence of climate change. Due to project delivery time constraints, the draft version of this guidance was used as an original input for this project. This resulted in a substantial increase in rainfall intensity (41%) above the baseline value for the Merri River catchment.

Where flood modelling will be relied on at a Planning Panels Hearing to implement new planning controls into a scheme, it must have regard to Victoria's planning policies including Clause 13.01 of the Warrnambool Planning Scheme (WPS), as well as to account for any significant effects which the amendment might have on the environment as outlined in Section 2(2B) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (the Act).

Between consultation and final publication, there was a subtle difference between the final published version of AR&R and the draft version that was used in the model. The independent model reviewer was consulted regarding the difference and concluded that the difference does not have a material effect on the mapping. The mapping is therefore consistent with requirements to use current best practice guidance and to plan for climate change.

Zones and Overlays

Flood related planning scheme provisions that currently apply to parts of the South Warrnambool Flood Investigation area include the Urban Floodway Zone (UFZ), the Flood Overlay (FO) and the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO).

A purpose of the UFZ is, "To identify waterways, major flood paths, drainage depressions and high hazard areas within urban areas which have the greatest risk and frequency of being affected by flooding." The UFZ seeks to protect the natural function of floodplain land in safely storing and conveying floodwater and prohibits the construction of new dwellings. An application to subdivide or for building or works requires a flood risk report and is to be referred to the relevant catchment management authority (GHCMA) under section 55 of the Planning and Environment Act (the Act).

A purpose of the FO is, "To identify waterways, major flood paths, drainage depressions and high hazard areas which have the greatest risk and frequency of being affected by flooding". It is applied to areas where flood waters are deep and fast moving to the point where they are considered a significant safety risk, particularly for vulnerable individuals. An application to subdivide or for building or works requires a flood risk report and is to be referred to the relevant catchment management authority under section 55 of the Act.

A purpose of the LSIO is, "To identify flood prone land in a riverine or coastal area affected by the 1 in 100 (1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability) year flood or any other area determined by the floodplain management authority" (GHCMA). It is generally applied to areas where flood waters are relatively shallow and slow moving such that they are not considered a safety risk. An application to subdivide or for buildings and works within this overlay is required to be referred under section 55 of the Act to the relevant catchment authority.

In preparing planning scheme amendments relating to flood studies, Councils are generally guided by Planning Practice Note 12 (Applying the Flood Provisions in Planning Schemes, DTP June 2105). Here, the variety of 'tools' as described above are outlined, and the direction is for "the level of planning control in each provision [to be] commensurate with the potential flood risk". Additionally, planning controls are not designed to address the cause of flooding, or accommodate mitigation measures, but simply to describe the way future land use and development will impact or be impacted by flooding.

In addition to the above, the purpose of the LSIO and FO is to establish a trigger for consideration of the risks associated with development of flood-prone land, both in the property ownership transfer process (Section 32 disclosures) and in the statutory development approval process.

In some instances, development of a property creates risks to property occupants and/or emergency service personnel because it cannot be accessed safely during floods, rather than because it is inundated with flood water. Such land is commonly referred to as a "flood island". People trapped on flood islands are cut off from essential and emergency services. Research shows that the risks of death or injury (including to emergency service personnel) during floods is raised significantly when people are trapped in these circumstances. It is therefore appropriate to apply the LSIO to properties that may be high and dry during a flood but will be cut off from essential and emergency services. Application of an overlay in the planning scheme establishes the requirement to obtain a planning permit for development, which consequently ensures the risks posed by flooding of the accessways to a property are considered prior to a development being approved.

This assessment is assisted by the CMA following mandatory referral of the permit application. To be clear, not all land covered by a flood risk related overlay will necessarily be inundated during a flood. Such property falls under the "or any other area determined by the floodplain management authority" umbrella.

Flood control boundaries are generally defined by the extent of the 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) flood. This is a flood which has a 1% chance of occurring in any given year (equivalent to a 100 year average recurrence interval). The cutoff between LSIO and FO or UFZ is defined by the depth and velocity of flood water based on advice published in AR&R and given by the GHCMCA.

Issues

The South Warrnambool 1% AEP mapping suggests that some vacant lots in the study area may no longer be appropriate for development, or that the type of development needs to be limited in order to mitigate risk to life and property. For some of these lots, no formal planning mechanism currently exists to alert owners or potential purchasers of the flood risks and limitations associated with the land. Addressing this issue is therefore a high priority and this will be achieved by updating the planning controls (zones and overlays) informed by the new flood mapping.

A number of these vacant lots have been created by relatively recent subdivisions. These subdivisions were approved based on the best information available at the time of subdivision. Council is and will continue to work with GHCMCA, our expert flood modelling consultant, individual property owners and their designers, developers and other stakeholders to design solutions which may then enable homes to be constructed safely on these newly created lots. Again, the purpose of this report and its associated recommendations is not to deal with all future statutory planning applications, but only to recommend preparation of the associated planning scheme amendment as a next step after completion of the model.

The flood investigation has shown that there is a significant amount of residential land at risk of flooding which currently has no flood-related planning controls. For that land, there is no mechanism upon which an application for subdivision or development must be referred to the GHCMC for comment, nor is there a requirement that an assessment against flood risk be undertaken. To illustrate, refer to the yellow areas in Attachment 2 where there are no existing flood related planning controls within the 1% AEP flood boundary. There is therefore a risk that a landowner may obtain permission to develop in an area subject to potential flooding prior to the imposition of the appropriate flood-related planning controls. As it is likely to take upwards of 12 months to implement substantive changes into the WPS via a planning scheme amendment, in the meantime, Council must mitigate against this risk of unsafe development. Consequently, this report also recommends the implementation of an interim overlay to mitigate the risk of flood impacted development until the permanent controls are exhibited and confirmed.

Legal Framework

The 1% AEP flood mapping (Attachment 3) was published on Council's website and presented at a community meeting late last year. Once published, it is considered 'the best available' flood data, and GHCMC is directed by policy to use this data when assigning building floor levels and responding to flood-related referral enquiries. Specifically, Planning Practice Note 11 (Applying for a Planning Permit under the Flood Provisions) points out:

If accurate flood information is available, the level of flood risk should be reflected in the type of flood provisions that have been applied to the land. Where accurate flood information is not available, but the land is known to be subject to inundation, flood risk should still be considered in decision-making (p2).

As this is an identified risk, it is important to outline the current process and legal framework in Victoria, as there are many other Councils in similar positions with flood studies at various stages of completion, and associated risk to manage while information flows to respective planning schemes. The Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal has heard and decided on a number of recent matters involving flood studies, and generally relies on a landmark case from the 1980s which sets out the notion of a 'seriously entertained planning proposal' (*Lyndale & Black Pty Ltd v MMBW and Shire of Melton* (1983) 1 PABR 207). As a broad summary, there are a number of criteria or points of guidance to determine whether a particular document or background study is sufficiently advanced enough in a robust planning process for it to be given weight when deciding on planning matters.

As this is a broad philosophical concept used across planning law, it is not specifically designed to deal with flooding matters. Conversely, in a much more contemporary decision (*Laneway Developments Pty Ltd v Melbourne CC* [2024]), the Tribunal upheld a refusal where there weren't yet controls, but an "acknowledged existence of a known flood hazard". The finalised report now suggests that there is an acknowledged existence of known flood hazards in areas of Warrnambool that are not covered by any planning controls. Consequently, there is a risk exposure to Council as the relevant authority should an event occur. The next required step is therefore a planning scheme amendment to confirm the position. Often, as part of this process, there are submissions made to test the validity of the model and its outputs, as well as the proposed controls it seeks. The Minister will then have the benefit of the panel report in which to make a considered decision in the public interest.

While the various risks are identified in the appropriate section below, the purpose of this report is to recommend that due process continues, where the merits of the model can be appropriately tested and progressed to having clear status as a seriously entertained proposal.

Other Flood Investigation Project Outputs

Other important project outputs include flood damages estimation, pre-feasibility structural mitigation options analysis, emergency management information and flood warning analysis.

Structural mitigations are physical works constructed to mitigate flood risk; levies, flood gates and by-pass channels are some examples. In consultation with the community, three combinations of structural mitigation works were selected for pre-feasibility analysis. Each of these three mitigation options were input into the flood model to determine their impact on flood behaviour, and particularly how many dwellings the option would save from above floor flooding. Note that when you lessen flooding in one area there is always an increase in flooding somewhere else. Each option was therefore tested to make sure it was not worsening the flooding to any existing dwellings. A high-order construction cost has also been calculated for each option.

The costs of flood damage within the study area have been estimated for the 1% AEP flood, and for various other design floods using industry accepted methodology. The cost of damages if each mitigation option is implemented is calculated using the same methodology. The difference in the cost of damages before the option is implemented and the cost of damages after the option is implemented quantifies the benefit for that mitigation option. A benefit-cost ratio is then calculated as a way of judging the effectiveness of options and comparing options. Refer to the project summary report (see Attachment) for further details and the results from the analysis.

The project has produced a number of outputs for inclusion in the Municipal Flood Emergency Plan including flood intelligence cards, property inundation tables/maps and road inundation tables/maps. For each design flood event, these outputs advise emergency management personnel what actions to take at particular properties and roads when flood gauge levels reach particular triggers. These outputs therefore represent an important non-structural flood risk mitigation measure. Refer to the Attachment for further details.

Flood warning systems can represent very effective non-structural flood risk mitigation measures. They warn the community and emergency management personnel of an advancing flood peak so that decisions about defence of property and evacuation to preserve life can be made in time to be effective. However, these systems are not effective in all catchments. The lower Merri catchment has been analysed with reference to flood warning as part of this investigation. The analysis concluded that a flood warning system would be effective in South Warrnambool and Dennington. Refer to the Attachment.

Flood Mitigation Work in Progress but Outside Scope of Investigation

A web-based community flood information portal can display detailed information on various design floods relative to specific floor levels and referenced to real-time flood gauge measurements. This portal can:

- Allow people to make informed decisions with respect to flood risk about property purchases and about making the property they already own more flood resilient.
- Allow people to see a flood peak approaching on the portal and decide if they need to take action to defend their property, or to safely evacuate.
- Address far more flood enquiries than Council and emergency services staff could hope to address in an emergency. For example, a portal operating in the City of Greater Shepparton took more than 10,000 enquiries in a single day during a recent flood.

Since publishing the flood mapping, Council has an in-principal agreement with a provider to implement the updated model data into a fit-for-purpose portal. The GHCMAs have similarly agreed to use and contribute to the model, signaling its widespread adoption for all Councils in the catchment area.

There is a significant number of existing and proposed new homes which require safe access for emergency services, and for escape as a consequence of inundated roads. Since publishing the flood mapping, Council has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Warrnambool Golf Club for the establishment of an emergency access track which will be available to residents of Younger Street and O'Brien Street. Council is currently also investigating the use of the Foreshore Promenade as an emergency access route for properties in the Stanley Street area.

Additionally, Council has also commissioned additional modelling work to investigate the use of cut-fill balancing to enable homes to be constructed on either newly created properties, or subdivisions where planning applications were submitted before the publishing of the model.

All of these measures are being conducted outside of the scope of this specific project but outlined here for information purposes.

Future Mitigation Works

There are a number of other pieces of future work that can be employed to reduce risk. For example:

This Investigation has performed pre-feasibility analysis on the benefit/cost of three combinations of structural mitigation works. None of these three options produced a high benefit-cost ratio; however, social and other intangible benefits are not included in this calculation. It may still be worthwhile to perform detailed feasibility studies on one or more options, despite all three options involving significant excavation in areas of environmental and cultural heritage significance. These 'costs' have also not been included in the pre-feasibility analysis.

Even if the implementation of a full option is not feasible, certain components of options if analysed in isolation may display a meaningful benefit cost ratio, and lesser environmental, cultural, or social impacts than the whole option.

There will likely be other small-scale structural mitigation concepts not included in the three options analysed by this study which may also be worthy of further investigation. They may be shown to be cost effective in protecting small pockets of existing dwellings.

The Flood Warning Feasibility Assessment which was conducted as part of this investigation has made a number of prioritised recommendations which Council could implement over the coming years (see Attachment). These actions are all non-structural measures which would reduce risk to life and property by providing the community with better flood warning services.

Property Values and Insurance Implications

Through submissions Council has been made aware of various levels of worry from landowners about the impact of the Investigation on their property value and on their ability to obtain affordable and suitable insurance. These concerns are not confined to this municipality, with many Australian LGA's grappling with the financial implications of flood-related climate change impacts. As such, the Insurance Council of Australia (ICA), in collaboration with Floodplain Management Australia (FMA) have produced a series of factsheets to assist with community enquiries.

To quote one of these factsheets:

Many factors affect the property market and the individual choice of buyers, including interest rates, the health of the economy and the desire to live in a particular location. Studies on the value of properties in flood-affected areas here and overseas show some consistent patterns:

- *There is already a discount built into the market for properties that are known to flood*
- *Even in known flood areas, other factors such as aspect, views, and direct water frontage are strong drivers of value*
- *In some particular cases prices may drop after a major flood or other disaster (typically five to 10 per cent) but generally recover after one or two years (Source: <https://www.floods.asn.au/site/flood-insurance-fact-sheets>)*

Undoubtedly, as climate change increases the probability of flooding the overall costs of insuring against flood risk will also increase where that cost will be borne by the aggregate number of insurance holders. Presumably, some financial impacts may relate only properties known to be at particularly elevated levels of risk; insurance companies may also refuse to ensure properties they assess as having an excessive level of risk.

Interestingly, flood insurance has only been widely available in Australia since about 2009. Prior to that, information about flood hazards in Australia was considered so poor that most insurers were unwilling to provide insurance.

Modern insurers now use data from a variety of sources including historical flood measurements, Federal, State and Local government studies, the Insurance Council of Australia's (ICA) National Flood Information Database and through their own research. If councils are able to provide insurers with clear, up to date information they can be more accurate in their risk assessment.

Again, the purpose of this report is confined to the recommendation to adopt the model, where the basis for that recommendation is set out in earlier sections. While these ancillary impacts are noted for reference, property values and insurance rates are not matters which should impact the creation and reliance on accurate flood investigations.

Moyne Shire Participation

Referencing Figure 1 and the mapping in the report attachments, the Study Area extends well beyond the Warrnambool City Council boundary and west into Moyne Shire. Moyne strategic planning staff have been included on the Project Reference Group for the Investigation and have been kept abreast of project progress from inception.

When Council prepares its application to amend the WPS to align with the Investigation, Council can offer Moyne Shire the opportunity to amend their Planning Scheme as part of the same application. Whether or not Moyne Shire Council participates in future processes will not represent any barrier or delay to Warrnambool City Council's application.

Financial Impact

The South Warrnambool Flood Investigation has been funded by the Risk and Resilience Grants Program which is administered by Emergency Management Victoria (Department of Justice and Community Safety). A portion of this grant funding was provided by the Australian Government under the National Partnership Agreement for Disaster Risk Reduction.

As the flood model was being built and refined, there have been some additional costs associated with incorporating the AR&R climate change revisions into the model and with extending the model boundary upstream of the Dennington Bridge. These costs have been absorbed within the contingency amount in the original project budget, and within the City Strategy & Development operational budget.

After the model was completed, some additional work was required to produce the comparison of the 0.8 m and 1.2 m SLR scenarios. Additional work is also underway to investigate the use of cut-fill balancing to enable homes to be safely and practically constructed on some of the newly developed residential lots. While Council is devoting time and officer resources to this cause, it is not anticipated that Council will fund individual development works.

There is no immediate financial impact as a consequence of the information contained in this report. There is, however, a risk of future financial impact to Council. See Legal Risk / Impact section below.

The Planning Scheme Amendment which will flow directly from the Investigation, including the implementation of interim flood controls will require additional funding. Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) have confirmed that they have allocated funds to Warrnambool City Council in their FY24/25 funding allocation for this work through their Regional Flood-Related Amendments Program. Should progress not be made before the end of FY24/25, Council can seek alternate avenues of funding.

Legislation / Policy / Council Plan Context

4 A connected, inclusive place

4.1 Effective planning: Council will ensure its planning acknowledges the unique character and attributes of local places and that that supports social connection, equitable access, appropriate housing and sustainable population growth.

5 An effective Council

5.6 Risk mitigation: Council will mitigate and manage organisational risks through sound management systems and processes.

Timing

The application process for interim or permanent flood-related planning controls requires that the Investigation has been formally adopted by Council. It is anticipated that should the Investigation be adopted by Council it may take several months before the interim flood controls will be implemented, at the discretion of the Minister for Planning.

Simultaneously, Council Officers will prepare the application documentation required to implement a permanent amendment to the Warrnambool Planning Scheme. The amendment process will include:

- Exhibition and the acceptance and consideration of submissions,
- a resolutions component,
- consideration of unresolved submissions by either a Planning Panel or Standing Advisory Committee (both involve an independent group of relevantly experienced practitioners appointed by the Planning Minister).

For a complex amendment such as this one, this process often takes in excess of 12 months. Concurrently, with the implementation of the planning controls Council will continue to investigate and implement other structural and non-structural measures to mitigate against the flood risks identified by the Investigation.

The Flood Related Amendments Standing Advisory Committee (SAC) was appointed by the Minister for Planning in 2023. The committee has been asked to provide advice to the Minister, councils and catchment management authorities on specific matters referred to it regarding the implementation of flood studies and any associated draft planning scheme amendments. The committee is intended to enable quicker and more consistent decisions for the implementation of flood-study-related planning scheme amendments. The initiative is designed to complement the Victorian Government's flood-recovery response to the devastating effect of recent floods.

It is at the discretion of individual LGA's to choose to use the SAC or a conventional Planning Panel, where while it is Officers' recommendation to pursue the SAC pathway the recommendation to follow the traditional pathway has been included for simplicity and consistency.

Community Impact / Consultation

Engagement with the community and stakeholders in order to understand their experiences of flooding has been an important aspect of the Investigation. Data collected from the community and stakeholders has been used to calibrate and verify the flood model.



The investigation commenced in November of 2022 with an on-line community survey and a 'listening post' drop-in session to gather historical flood information to use as a foundation for initial modelling.

In June of 2023 the draft model was complete. At this point an open community meeting was conducted to explain the modelling process, present the draft mapping and gather further historical information and feedback from the community. Important additional information was provided by community members at, and after, that meeting which was used to further refine the model.

In November of 2023, a further open community meeting was held to present mapping based on the revised model. An important focus of this meeting was to discuss and obtain community feedback on various options for structural flood mitigation works. Based on community input from this meeting a number of options were identified for further pre-feasibility cost-benefit analysis.

For each of these engagement activities, letters were sent to the owners and occupiers of properties which could potentially be affected by flooding within the study area (including properties in Moyne Shire). The letters provided details on how to participate in each part of the community engagement process. In addition to the letters, notices were placed in the Standard, on Council's website and on social media.

In July of 2024, after it was decided to extend the model boundary upstream to better understand flood risk in Illowa and North Dennington, property owners and occupiers in the model extension area were notified via letter and invited to provide flood history information, and to ask questions about the investigation. As a result, further information about past flooding was gathered to validate the model in the extended area.

When the flood mapping was complete, it was published on Council's website and another community meeting was held in December of last year. Community members were notified of the publication and meeting in the same manner as for previous meetings, with over 1800 letters being posted for this meeting. The focus of the December meeting was the presentation of the 1% AEP mapping, as well as the results of the pre-feasibility analysis of the mitigation options. The meeting, including questions and answers, was recorded with the recording posted on Council's website. Subsequent to the December community meeting City Strategy staff have been responding to calls, correspondence, and meeting requests from various community members. Common issues raised include:

- Doubts about the viability of constructing dwellings, and concerns about delays in obtaining planning and building permission, on recently subdivided vacant lots,
- Loss of land value, and insurance viability concerns,
- Use of 1.2 m SLR before State Policy has been officially confirmed,
- Use of climate change to the year 2100,
- Loss of development potential and impact on developer contributions,
- The significant difference in the current modelling when compared to the 2007 modelling.

Staff have approached these interactions with the objective of understanding the various concerns the Investigation has raised for community members, explaining how those concerns are being addressed where appropriate, and developing ideas for how they might be addressed in future. These interactions are not part of a formal consultation process.

As indicated previously in this report formal engagement will occur as part of Exhibition during the Planning Scheme amendment process, and will involve public review, the acceptance and assessment of submissions, and resolution of objections in accordance with the Planning and Environment Act.

At the 3 March meeting a report was presented to Council recommending the adoption of the South Warrnambool and Dennington Flood Investigation. At that meeting Council resolved to:

1. Defer this decision to the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 2 June 2025.
2. Place the final South Warrnambool and Dennington Flood Investigation on public display and undertake an additional round of community consultation on the final flood investigation for a period of no less than 4 weeks.

Council officers then sent a letter to the addresses of 1772 property owners and occupiers in the study area dated 13 March. The letter invited owners and occupiers to view the South Warrnambool and Dennington Flood Investigation Summary Report and provide feedback. The deadline for feedback specified was 11 April.

Since sending the letter, approximately 50 submissions have been received. These submissions were combined with written submissions received between the announcement of the December Community Meeting and the March Council Meeting, and are now provided in a summary table in the appendix. While the summary necessarily involves the interpretation of comments into an altered format, officers have adopted the same approach as taken in statutory planning applications as guided by VCAT precedent under *Leigh v Banyule CC* [2000] VCAT 2081. Here, officers are guided to summarise “in a manner that neither diminishes [the argument] nor exaggerates it”, in an effort to present to Council an adequate representation of the original. As it is simultaneously acknowledged that the degree to which the officer interprets the original in order to produce what is thought to be an adequate representation can be criticised, all the submissions in their original form have equally been made available to Councillors.

In addition to the broad consultation discussed above, Council also requested officers convene a meeting of the Project Reference Group so that Councillors could discuss various issues with them. This meeting occurred on 14 March. It was attended by Councillors, and Council officers, representatives of Moyne Shire, the CMA, SES, EMAC, BOM as well as the two community representatives who have attended all previous PRG meetings.

As discussed above, the Planning Scheme amendment process will involve further community engagement in accordance with the Planning and Environment Act.

Legal Risk / Impact

Managing flood risk, particularly through the Planning Scheme, is an important local government responsibility, and legislated through the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*. Flood mapping should be robust, correctly identify known flood risk, and provide clear guidance and transparency on potential constraints to land use.

The South Warrnambool Flood Investigation has been prepared in line with relevant floodplain legislation and requirements, the Warrnambool Planning Scheme and the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, including all relevant Directions and Practice Notes. The mapping is fully “climate ready” according to the current state of knowledge, as is required prior to a planning scheme amendment. Council has a number of legislative responsibilities outlined in the various related pieces of legislation as it relates to climate change, as follows:

1. Section 8 of the *Local Government Act 2020* defines the role and powers of a Council. Section 8(c) specifies “the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks” as an overarching governance principle that should be promoted.
2. Section 17 of the *Climate Action Act 2017* (formerly Climate Change Act 2017) confirms that decision makers must have regard to climate change. Simplistically, Section 17(2)(a) outlines the basic requirement for decision makers to have regard to “the potential impacts of climate change, relevant to the decision or action”. Section 17(3) then specifies relevant considerations as including biophysical impacts, as well as potential long and short-term economic, environmental, health and other social impacts. This Act does not place limitations of consideration to frame only negative aspects. Conversely, an integrated decision making process is recommended whereby “any measures adopted as a result of the decision, policy, program or process are cost effective and in proportion to the problems relating to climate change that are relevant to the decision” (Section 24(c)).
3. Section 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* presents the overarching objectives of planning in Victoria. Section 4(2)(da) then confirms that the objectives of the planning framework established by the Act are to (among other things) “provide for explicit consideration of the policies and obligations of the State relating to climate change, including ... the need to increase resilience to climate change, when decisions are made about the use and development of land”.

Section 12 then provides specific duties and powers of planning authorities. Under Section 12(2A)(b), when preparing a planning scheme amendment, a planning authority must have regard to “any significant risk to any use or development envisaged by the scheme or amendment that arises from, or is likely to arise from, the impacts of climate change”.

Council’s Statutory Planning Unit has been fully briefed on the proposed new overlays. Therefore, until the planning scheme amendment is gazetted, applications for planning permits for sites which are known to be at risk of inundation will be referred to the CMA under Clause 52 of the Warrnambool Planning Scheme unless any relevant exemptions apply. In other words, when flooding concerns are allowed to be assessed in the Warrnambool Planning Scheme, the model is in effect already operating. The CMA in these instances will be able to provide an opinion as to if a permit should be granted, and if so what special flood resilience conditions should be placed on the permit.

However, there may be developments on land which currently has no LSIO or FO but which are now known to be flood-prone, that do not trigger a planning permit. There is no means to control these developments until an interim flood control is implemented.

The law relating to the liability of public authorities for negligence is complex, where it becomes impossible to outline the likely risk profile of making a specific decision in a specific context. There are undoubtedly potential risks including exposure to liability, damage to reputation, and the possibility of litigation if either decision is taken. However, Council is now in receipt of this information, and should an event now occur Council has a duty of care as the responsible authority.

Officers' Declaration of Interest

Nil.

Collaborative Procurement

Not applicable.

Conclusion

The South Warrnambool and Dennington Flood Investigation has been completed in fulfillment of Council's obligations with regard to responsible development planning, emergency management, risk management and climate change resilience. The Investigation has been conducted by an expert in the field under the supervision of GHCM and Council and in accordance with the most up-to-date, best practice technical guidance available. The resultant flood model has been subjected to a rigorous peer review process by an independent third-party expert in the field.

It is recommended that Council proceed with implementing flood-related planning controls to ensure that the Warrnambool Planning Scheme operates with the best available, climate-ready information.

ATTACHMENTS

1. South Warrnambool and Dennington Flood Investigation - Appendices [7.1.1 - 3 pages]
2. R. M 00407.005.02 Summary Optimized (3) [7.1.2 - 144 pages]
3. Appendix 2 - Summary of Issues [7.1.3 - 15 pages]
4. 20250516 WC C_ SWFI submission May 25 Final (002)_ Redacted [7.1.4 - 5 pages]

7.2. Warrnambool City Council: Council Plan 2025-2029

DIRECTORATE : Corporate Strategies

Purpose:

For Council to discuss and consider adopting the Council Plan 2025-2029 and the Annual Action Plan 2025-2026.

Executive Summary

Council is required under Section 90 of the *Local Government Act 2020* to prepare and approve a Council Plan by 31 October following a general election.

The Council Plan, reviewed every four years, is the feature document in Council's suite of strategic planning documents. It is formulated to guide the work of Council over the next four years.

In December last year Council began community consultation to help inform a new Council Plan. Community consultation and engagement with Council staff continued in January, February and March 2025 and at the May Council meeting Council voted to release the draft Council Plan for community feedback.

Feedback from these activities has shaped the draft Council Plan 2025-2029.

The final draft of the Council Plan has a strong emphasis on asset renewal, housing matters and advocacy along with commitments to maintain services the community has come to expect of Council such as home support, facilitation of events, cultural and recreational facilities and business support. Among the proposed new strategies is the use of AI (artificial intelligence) to help deliver efficiencies in Council operations.

Council has prepared a new vision for the next four years, which is:

We are a thriving regional leader, rich in opportunities and committed to fostering a sustainable and inclusive lifestyle.

The Council Plan proposes a range of strategies under five key strategic pillars as follows.

- **City Futures** – activating a vibrant, liveable and safe city through enhancing outcomes for all.
- **City Infrastructure** – renewal and maintenance of Council's infrastructure while balancing the needs of our growing city with sound asset management.
- **City Sustainability** – caring for our natural environment by promoting energy efficiency, best practice circular economy and embracing new technology.
- **City Wellbeing** – working to enable everyone at every stage of life to participate in welcoming and inclusive environments which foster learning, connection, health and wellbeing.
- **City Leadership** – we will advocate for our community and region, operate efficiently, maintain sound governance, care for our team and embrace a rapidly changing technological landscape.

The four-year Council Plan is accompanied by an Annual Action Plan covering the 2025-2026 financial year. A new Action Plan will be developed for each year of the life of the Council Plan.

Action Plan highlights include:

- Completing designs for shelters over a selection of seats in Liebig Street;
- Staging the popular Solstice Search Party;
- Planning and advocacy for safer traffic movement at Allansford;
- Complete the Active Warrnambool Strategy;
- Facilitate the planting of up to 5,000 trees across the municipality;
- Continuing to deliver the Designated Area Migration Agreement and,
- Making the Civic Centre more accessible.

Council received one submission on the Council Plan and Annual Action Plan which came from Regional Arts Victoria.

Council is now in a position to consider adoption of the Warrnambool City Council: Council Plan 2025-2029 and the Annual Action Plan 2025-2026.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council adopt the attached Warrnambool City Council: Council Plan 2025-2029.
 2. That Council adopt the attached Warrnambool City Council: Annual Action Plan 2025-2026.
-

Background

To meet the requirements of the *Local Government Act (2020)*, Council must prepare a new four-year Council Plan following a general election.

Council is required to engage with the community in developing the Plan, which must be adopted by 31 October in the year following Council general elections.

Typically, a Council Plan is developed in concert with the Council Budget because the Plan strongly influences the allocation of resources as described in the Budget.

Council has prepared a new vision for the next four years, which is:

We are a thriving regional leader, rich in opportunities and committed to fostering a sustainable and inclusive lifestyle.

The Council Plan proposes a range of strategies under five key strategic pillars as follows.

- **City Futures** – activating a vibrant, liveable and safe city through enhancing outcomes for all.
- **City Infrastructure** – renewal and maintenance of Council's infrastructure while balancing the needs of our growing city with sound asset management.
- **City Sustainability** – caring for our natural environment by promoting energy efficiency, best practice circular economy and embracing new technology.
- **City Wellbeing** – working to enable everyone at every stage of life to participate in welcoming and inclusive environments which foster learning, connection, health and wellbeing.
- **City Leadership** – we will advocate for our community and region, operate efficiently, maintain sound governance, care for our team and embrace a rapidly changing technological landscape.

Issues

The perennial challenge facing Councils as they develop their Council Plans is to balance the aspirations of the community with the resources available.

Financial Impact

The strategies and actions identified in the Council Plan and Action Plan are resourced via the Council Budget. In some instances, external funding may be required to implement some actions.

Legislation / Policy / Council Plan Context

5 An effective Council

5.1 Leadership and governance: Council will be a high-functioning team committed to respectful relationships, collaboration and ongoing engagement. It will provide strong, effective leadership, sound governance and informed decision-making

5.3 Customer-focused services: Council will continue to develop a program of Council services that are delivered to the community's satisfaction.

Timing

Councils typically finalise their Council Plans before 30 June, in line with the annual Budget cycle.

Community Impact / Consultation

Council was required to undertake a deliberative community consultation process in the development of the Council Plan and Budget.

This involves providing people with sufficient information and time to develop informed views and a range of options to present their views to Council.

In developing the Plan and Budget, Council has provided a range of opportunities for the community to have a say including:

- A drop-in session at the Civic Centre on 16 December 2025.
- Listening posts in a range of locations across the municipality including:
 - Lake Pertobe, 10 January;
 - Dennington Shopping Centre, 14 January;
 - Woodford, 15 January;
 - Allansford, 16 January;
 - Liebig Street, 17 January; and,
 - West Warrnambool, 21 January.
- An online option at www.yoursaywarrnambool.com.au

Councillors considered the Council Plan at a workshop in November 2024 and at informal Council meetings on 24 March, 14 April and 22 April 2025. Council Managers and Directors considered the draft Council Plan at a workshop on 28 March ahead of a review by the Executive Management Team on 8 April.

At its May open meeting Council endorsed the release of the draft Council Plan and Annual Action Plan for community feedback. One submission was received, which came from Regional Arts Victoria: South West.

The submission endorsed the alignment of the plan with cultural and creative industry strategies at local, regional and state levels; advocacy for a new art gallery; and the commitments to activate and promote local culture art and to diversity, inclusion and access.

The submission proposed acknowledging the Regional Creative Industries Strategy developed by Regional Arts Victoria in the Annual Action Plan. This request is effectively covered in the Warrnambool City Council Creative Strategy (in draft form) which contains commitments to partnering with Regional Arts Victoria and Creative Victoria and to aligning with the South West Creative Industries Strategy.

Legal Risk / Impact

The Council Plan was reviewed through a Gender Impact Assessment. The Plan accommodates gender and inclusion issues through the commitment to review the Gender Equality Action Plan and through commitments to being a diverse and inclusive City that is welcoming to all. The assessment noted that other plans and policies to be created under the Annual Action Plan should be reviewed using Council's Gender Impact Assessment app.

Officers' Declaration of Interest

Nil.

Collaborative Procurement

N/A.

Conclusion

With the development of the Council Plan having included Councillor workshops and reviews, community engagement and Council staff involvement, Council is now able to consider the adoption of the Warrnambool City Council: Council Plan 2025-2029 and the accompanying Annual Action Plan 2025-2026.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Warrnambool City Council: Council Plan 2025-2029 [7.2.1 - 12 pages]
2. Warrnambool City Council Annual Action Plan 2025-2026 [7.2.2 - 13 pages]
3. Feedback from Regional Arts Victoria [7.2.3 - 2 pages]

7.3. Warrnambool City Council: Budget 2025-2026

DIRECTORATE : Corporate Strategies

Purpose:

This report presents the proposed Budget 2025-2026 to Council for adoption.

Executive Summary

Council's Budget 2025-2026 has a focus on reducing the asset renewal gap - this means Council is investing in and looking after our existing Council buildings, bridges, roads and paths which are valued in excess of \$850 million.

As with other sectors, pricing pressure is driving costs in local government including in the renewal and replacement of assets, which puts pressure on our underlying financial position. Council is responding to this challenge and will invest \$9.25 million in existing assets, including:

- \$200,000 for capital works at the holiday parks;
- \$800,000 for a replacement and upgrade of the roof at AquaZone;
- \$800,000 towards making the Civic Centre more accessible; and,
- \$200,000 for renewing and upgrading the outdoor netball courts surfaces at Caramut Road.

This is a financially responsible Budget that forecasts a small operating surplus and builds on Council's long-term sustainability, while continuing to deliver on initiatives that fulfill the objectives of our Council Plan.

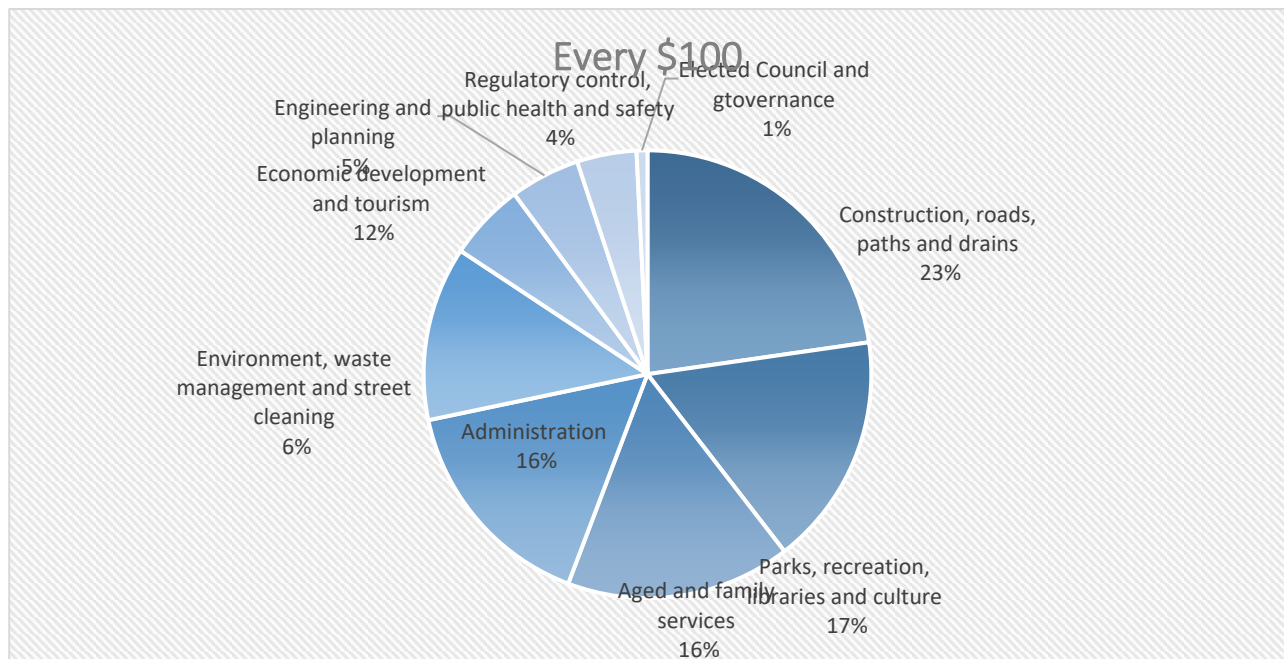
The capital works budget of \$28.9 million includes:

- \$5.2 million for an innovative key worker accommodation project at Shipwreck Bay Holiday Park;
- \$7.2 million for completion of work at Wollaston Road including the relocation of high voltage powerlines;
- \$534,000 for new footpaths in the industrial precinct that ensure safe linkages to our residential areas;

Council will also continue to invest in our Warrnambool Library with \$177,000 in new books. The library opened in late 2022 and has attracted thousands of members and visitors each year. We believe the library has the largest membership of any single organisation in Warrnambool.

Three years ago, Council introduced a new winter event – Solstice Search Party – that instantly struck a chord with many in the community and region. We have committed to staging this event once again and we encourage local businesses to leverage this family friendly celebration opportunity at a traditionally quiet time for tourism in Warrnambool.

We have set aside funding to create a precinct plan for the former saleyards site in Caramut Road. This is an important parcel of land with enormous potential, and we will make sure it is developed in a way that delivers the best possible outcome for our city.



The budget forecasts Rates of \$36.5 million, a municipal charge of \$5.9 million, and a waste charge of \$7.8 million, providing Council with a tax income of circa \$50.4 million. The remaining forecast \$58 million of revenue is sourced predominantly from user fees and grants.

Council continues to use your rates and charges efficiently to deliver important services and community infrastructure.

It is important to note the State and Federal governments collect about 95% of the taxes paid by Australians.

As part of this year's renewal program Council will also complete works on Alveston House that accommodates a number of vulnerable and disadvantaged Warrnambool residents. The investment in this property ensures it meets contemporary expectations.

The rate increase is in line with the Victorian Government's rate cap of three per cent, with the average impact of the increase on homeowners to be \$1.36 a week.

This Budget has been prepared for adoption by Council in line with Section 94 of the Local Government Act (2020) which requires Council to adopt an annual budget by June 30 of each year.

The Budget was developed concurrently with the new Council Plan and both documents were informed by a community engagement process that began in late 2024.

In May, Council endorsed the release of the Budget to the community for feedback and received seven submissions, which are discussed below.

Amendments to the draft exhibited budget were limited to minor typographical amendments.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Adopt the Warrnambool City Council 2025-2026 Budget as presented in Attachment 1, Sections 1- 6, to this report.
2. Approve the 2025-2026 Fees and Charges as set out in Attachment 1, Section 7, to this report.
3. Note the public submissions as presented in this report.
4. Declares the amount of rates and charges to be raised as follows:

Property category	Cents in the dollar (CIV)	Amount raised \$'000
Other land (including residential)	0.28951	26,304
Farm	0.15904	496
Commercial	0.57630	5,895
Industrial	0.50698	2,157
Vacant land	0.45375	1,604
Recreational land category 1	0.88673	25
Recreational land category 2	0.22450	54
Total raised by general rates		\$36,535

Charges	Amount raised \$'000	Charge per property
Municipal charge	\$5,908	\$311.80
Waste charge	\$7,826	\$433.45
Total	\$13,734	

5. Declares that rates, rating differentials and charges for 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026 align with Council's Revenue and Rating Plan and will be applied as outlined in section 4.1 of the budget.
6. Notes that rates and charges must be paid by four instalments made on or before the following dates:
 - a. Instalment 1 – 30 September 2025
 - b. Instalment 2 – 30 November 2025
 - c. Instalment 3 – 28 February 2026
 - d. Instalment 4 – 31 May 2026
7. Requires that any person pays interest on any amounts of rates and charges which:
 - a. That person is liable to pay; and
 - b. Have not been paid by the dates specified for their payment; and
 - c. Are not specifically waived as part of Council's Hardship Provisions.
8. Authorise the Manager Financial Services to levy and recover the rates and charges in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*.

9. That Cultural and recreational Land be levied in accordance with section 4(1)(3) of the *Cultural and Recreational Lands Act 1963*, the amounts payable in respect of recreational lands under this act shall be in accordance with the attached budget document.
10. That no incentives be offered or declared for early payment of rates or charges.

Background

At the Scheduled Meeting of Council held on 5 May 2025, Council resolved to give public notice of the draft 2025-2026 Budget and call for written submissions in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy.

Following the public meeting, a public notice was published on Council's website and in the Warrnambool Standard. The draft Budget was also posted on Council's community engagement website and copies made available at the Civic Centre front counter.

The Budget allocates resources on an annual basis to support the delivery of the objectives of the Council Plan including the provision of high quality services to all sections of our community. The *Local Government Act 2020* and the Regulations prescribe the information and format of the Budget, now commonly referred to as the "Model Budget".

The Model Budget 2025-2026 includes a range of information including:

- Financial Statements,
- Services and initiatives funded in the budget,
- Fees and charges,
- Rating and borrowing details, and
- Financial performance indicators.

The Warrnambool City Council 2025-2026 Budget is the first in this term of Council.

At the May meeting of Council the draft Budget was released for public comment and as a result seven submissions were received. Those providing feedback were invited to address Council in support of their submissions, but all declined.

Submission	Council Response
Why is there no apparent road infrastructure support received from land developers, in particular case being the Wollaston Road upgrade. Surely developers should contribute largely towards this upgrade more so than rate payers? Also, with their being many caravan owners in the city, many caravan retailers and repair businesses, there is nowhere for caravan owners to empty their toilet cassettes. A public dump point is not available. Is there a chance for one to be installed with clear signage indicating it's location?	Land developers do contribute to new developments of city infrastructure through developer contributions programs. However, the section of the Wollaston Road project outlined is Council's component of responsibility. Council's Annual Action Plan – a component of the Council Plan 2025-2029 includes feasibility work around a new suitable public dump site that may be provided in addition to the public dump site currently available at the Surfside caravan park.

Submission	Council Response
<p>Atrocious but unsurprising. In a cost of living crisis, residents have been forced to be fiscal with spending; to the point of almost entirely eliminating any discretionary expenditure to be able to afford bills, rates and groceries. The council however, are proposing yet another rate increase (to keep our rates amongst the highest in the country). Alternatively, how about drafting a budget that involves decreased council expenditure at no additional cost to the community or - better yet - have some compassion and deliver a small rate reduction. Ridiculous. And \$800,000 for a roof upgrade? How exorbitant.</p>	<p>Council has contained the rate increase in line with the cap set by the Victorian Government.</p> <p>Council also faces increased costs including road building materials. Overall, through consultation both through this process and across many community consultation pieces, the community has indicated to Council it does not want services and standards to be diminished.</p> <p>The roof at Aquazone is a very substantial piece of infrastructure.</p>
<p>\$534,000 for footpaths in the industrial precinct is concerning, these footpaths need to be constructed in residential areas! Let midfields pay for their own footpaths!</p>	<p>Council believes that pedestrian links for people in the industrial precinct are important. Footpaths and access to employment is identified as a key factor in the Principal Pedestrian Network (3.5.12 Access to Major Employment).</p>
<p>budget allowance for Personal Safety and Upgrade requirements Brierly Reserve Area and set up "/Friends User Group Brierly Reserve"</p>	<p>A community hub at Brierly Reserve is identified as one of Council's advocacy priorities. As the development continues the community and relevant stakeholders will continue to be engaged in the project.</p>
<p>Calculations on Page 9 need to be reviewed as everything showing as deficit even if calculated to a surplus. Stopped trusting any figures after that. MHC Infant enrolments / Notifications of infant births in the MHC show at 100% enrolment, are there figures for Child Care enrolments / Child Care positions sort? I have been on the list for a council Child Care Facility for 2 years now and feel it would be transparent to the community to supply this information.</p>	<p>This was an oversight created through a software modification and late changes to the previous draft and has since been corrected.</p>
<p>There is not enough money for drainage. Drainage. Drainage. Drainage. Drainage. Drainage.</p>	<p>Council has a strategy in the new Council Plan to plan and improve the municipal drainage network to cope with the changing environment. The actions from this will include mitigation responses to flood studies and developing an implementation plan for Integrated Water Management Plans. Council has allocated \$877,000 specifically for drainage in the Budget.</p>
<p>Hello can there an extension on this budget draft. We have had no time to review. Can you close drafts on Sunday evenings as opposed to Friday at 5?</p>	<p>Over the past six months Council provided several opportunities for the community to have input into the Budget but ultimately, we do have to establish a "cut off" date and time in order have enough time to revise the Budget and ensure that it is ready for adoption at the June Council meeting. We will take this comment into consideration in the preparation of the 2026-2027 budget timetable.</p>

Financial Impact

The 2025-2026 Budget describes the allocation of resources required to deliver on the activities and initiatives contained in the Council Plan. Council has elected to implement a 3 per cent rate increase in the 2025-2026 Budget. This is in line with the rate cap announced by the Victorian Government.

Rates in the Dollar

In enabling Council's differential rating plan, the Rates in the Dollar (RID) for each property type have been largely driven by maintaining the differential ratios in close alignment to recent percentages and strategic outcomes outlined in the revenue and rating plan.

Valuations

Variations in the percentage movements to RID's have also occurred in line with variable shifts in property values across the different land categories and property movements within categories.

Type or class of land	2024-25	2025-26	Change	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	%
General Residential land	9,190,313	9,085,800	-104,513	-1.14%
Farm land	308,230	312,060	3,830	1.24%
Commercial land	1,038,694	1,022,949	-15,745	-1.52%
Industrial land	408,302	425,532	17,230	4.22%
Vacant land	381,308	353,442	-27,866	-7.31%
Recreational land category 1 properties	2,970	2,780	-190	-6.40%
Recreational land category 2 properties	23,357	23,932	575	2.46%
Total value of land	11,353,174	11,226,495	-126,679	-1.12%

This is largely seen through the drop in overall land values in general residential and vacant land, inflating the movement in Rates in the Dollar within the other property types. Rates in the dollar are adjusted to maintain the strategic objectives set out in the rating and revenue plan.

Financial Sustainability

The significant increases in construction costs and by extension the replacement value for assets, as the main driver for increased asset valuations has an impact on Councils annual depreciation expense. Depreciation is used as an indicator for financial performance in assessing renewal gaps and in underlying performance.

The significant increase in depreciation from \$13.4m in 2023 to \$22.7m in 2024, and the forecast \$20m+ per year across the budget period, is now highlighting stress in Councils underlying operating position.

Indicator	Measure	Notes	Actual 2023/24	Forecast 2024/25	Budget 2025/26	Projections 2026/27 2027/28 2028/29			Trend +/-
Operating position									
Adjusted underlying result (an adjusted underlying surplus is generated in the ordinary course of business)	Adjusted underlying surplus (or deficit) Adjusted underlying surplus (deficit) / Adjusted underlying revenue	1	-10.31%	-7.75%	-3.00%	-5.50%	-5.47%	-5.14%	+

With concentrated efforts towards asset renewal as outlined in the budget objectives, and financial sustainability actions identified within the Council Plan, this indicator should return to a more positive position as actions take effect.

Legislation / Policy / Council Plan Context

The Warrnambool City Council 2025-2026 Budget was prepared in line with Section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020*. The budget must be adopted by Council by 30 June 2025.

Community Impact / Consultation

Council undertook an extensive community engagement effort as part of the development of the four-year Council Plan and annual Budget.

In developing the Council Plan and Budget, Council has provided a range of opportunities for the community to have a say including:

- A drop-in session at the Civic Centre on 16 December 2025.
- Listening posts in a range of locations across the municipality including:
 - Lake Pertobe, 10 January;
 - Dennington Shopping Centre, 14 January;
 - Woodford, 15 January;
 - Allansford, 16 January;
 - Liebig Street, 17 January; and,
 - West Warrnambool, 21 January.
- An online option at www.yoursaywarrnambool.com.au

Councillors considered the implications of the Council Plan on the Budget at a workshop in November 2024 and at informal Council meetings on 24 March, 14 April and 22 April 2025.

Council Managers and Directors considered the draft Council Plan and resourcing requirements impacting the Budget at a workshop on 28 March 2025 ahead of a review by the Executive Management Team on 18 April 2025.

At the Scheduled Meeting of Council in May this year Council endorsed the release of the draft Budget for community feedback.

Council welcomed feedback from the community about its draft budget and thanks all those that made a submission. Feedback will be provided to all submitters following adoption of the budget.

Legal Risk / Impact

Section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020* states that:

- (2) A Council must prepare and adopt a budget for each financial year and the subsequent 3 financial years by
 - a. 30 June each year; or
 - b. any other date fixed by the Minister by notice published in the Government Gazette.
- (3) A Council must ensure that the budget gives effect to the Council Plan and contains the following:
 - a. Financial statements in the form and containing the information required by the regulations;
 - b. A general description of the services and initiatives to be funded in the budget;
 - c. Major initiatives identified by the Council as priorities in the Council Plan, to be undertaken during each financial year;

- d. For services to be funded in the budget, the prescribed indicators and measures of service performance that are required to be reported against by this Act;
- e. The total amount that the Council intends to raise by rates and charges;
- f. A statement as to whether the rates will be raised by the application of a uniform rate or a differential rate;
- g. A description of any fixed component of the rates, if applicable;
- h. If the Council proposes to declare a uniform rate, the matters specified in section 160 of the *Local Government Act 1989*;
- i. If the Council proposes to declare a differential rate for any land, the matters specified in section 161(2) of the *Local Government Act 1989*;
- j. Any other information prescribed by the regulations.

Section 96 of the *Local Government Act 2020* states that:

- (1). A Council must develop the budget and any revised budget in accordance with
 - a. The financial management principles; and
 - b. Its community engagement policy.

Section 11 (m) Power of Delegation of the *Local Government Act 2020* states that:

Subject to section 181H(1)(b) of the *Local Government Act 1989*, the power to declare general rates, municipal charges, service rates and charges and special rates and charges.

Section 158 (1) of the *Local Government Act 1989* states that:

A Council must at least once in respect of each financial year declare by 30 June the following for that year—

- (a) the amount which the Council intends to raise by general rates, municipal charges, service rates and service charges;
- (b) whether the general rates will be raised by the application of—
 - i. a uniform rate; or
 - ii. differential rates (if the Council is permitted to raise such rates under section 161(1)); or
 - iii. urban farm rates, farm rates or residential use rates (if the Council is permitted to raise such rates under section 161A).

Officers' Declaration of Interest

No conflict of interest has been declared.

Conclusion

The Warrnambool City Council 2025-26 Budget is presented to Council for consideration. It has been prepared in line with the *Local Government Act 2020*.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1. Warrnambool City Council Budget 2025-2026 (including Fees and Charges) [7.3.1 - 82 pages]

7.4. Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-2029

DIRECTORATE: Corporate Strategies

Purpose:

This report is to consider Council's proposed Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-2029 for adoption.

Executive Summary

- Section 93 of the Local Government Act 2020 requires a Council to prepare and adopt a Revenue and Rating Plan by the next 30 June after a general election for a period of at least the next 4 financial years.
- The purpose of the Revenue and Rating Plan is to determine the most appropriate and affordable revenue and rating approach for the Warrnambool City Council which in conjunction with other income sources will adequately finance the objectives in the council plan.
- Council resolved to put the Plan out for community consultation at a Scheduled Meeting of Council on 5 May and received no submissions from the community.
- It is proposed that Council adopt the Revenue and Rating Plan at the Scheduled Council meeting on 2 June 2025.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopt the Revenue and Rating Plan 2025–2029.

Background

Section 93 of the Local Government Act 2020 requires Council to prepare and adopt a Revenue and Rating Plan (the Plan) for a period of at least the next four financial years by 30 June after a general election. The Plan forms part of the new Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework and must be prepared in accordance with the strategic planning principles outlined in section 89 of the Act and the financial management principles in section 101 of the Act.

The strategic planning principles in section 89 include the following requirements:

- An integrated approach to planning, monitoring and performance reporting.
- The Community Vision must be addressed.
- Resources needed for effective implementation must be taken into account.
- Risks to effective implementation must be identified and addressed.
- Ongoing monitoring of progress and regular reviews to identify and address changing circumstances.

The financial management principles in section 101 of the Act requires that the Revenue and Rating Plan must seek to provide stability and predictability in the financial impact on the municipal community.

There were no submissions from the community.

It is proposed that the Revenue and Rating Plan will be presented for adoption at the Scheduled Council Meeting on 2 June 2025.

Issues

The Revenue and Rating Plan provides a medium-term plan for how Council will generate income to deliver on the activities from the Council Plan, services and capital works commitments over the next four years. It outlines the relevant assumptions, policies and decisions of Council with respect to each budgeted revenue source and provides transparency on these decisions to the community.

The Plan includes a broad pricing policy section, which outlines Council's approach to each major income source including rates, fees and charges, grants, contributions and other income. It provides an overview of the different factors that are considered when setting Council fees and charges and highlights that Council actively seeks to obtain grant funding and grow its own-sourced revenue to reduce the burden on ratepayers.

The Plan also includes the Council's rating strategy providing further information about the differential rating and valuation principles that are currently applied.

The Plan will be reviewed annually and updated when required to reflect any changes to the Council's pricing policy or rating strategy that may arise.

The Plan has been prepared with reference to the industry's Better Practice Guide and supplementary guidance issued by Local Government Victoria.

Financial Impact

The Revenue and Rating Plan outlines Council's assumptions, policies and decisions with respect to revenue streams which will fund the activities in the Council Plan.

Legislation / Policy / Council Plan Context

- Local Government Act 1989
- Local Government Act 2020
- Valuation of Land Act 1960
- Cultural and Recreational Lands Act 1963
- Penalty Interest Rates Act 1983
- Council Plan 2025-2029
- Council Annual Budget
- Council Hardship Policy

Timing

Under the Act, the Revenue and Rating Plan must be adopted by the 30 June after a general election year. Council placed the draft plan on public exhibition on 5 May with a closing date for written submissions to the draft plan on 18 May 2025 it indicated that it would seek to adopt the plan with or with changes at the 2 June 2025 – Council meeting following consideration of any submissions.

No submissions were received.

Community Impact / Consultation

Community consultation has been undertaken via a two-week submissions period called for in writing or online

Concurrent to the exhibition of this draft Rating and Revenue plan was the exhibition of the Council draft Annual Budget 2025 and the Council Plan 2025-2029 which was also available for exhibition and submission. This suite of documents ensured a comprehensive and integrated suite of documents available to the public that demonstrates the strategic objectives Council has for its community and the way these objectives were resourced.

Legal Risk / Impact

The Council is required by legislation to have a Rating and Revenue Plan in place for the next four years.

This draft plan provides the appropriate strategic reasoning associated with the Council's intent around differential rates and explores the relative equity of the distribution process.

This plan is intended to be in place for a 4-year period. The plan is able to be reviewed annually and is set to provide certainty and stability to rate payers about the distribution of the rate burden.

Officers' Declaration of Interest

Nil.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-2029 [7.4.1 - 28 pages]

7.5. Community Engagement Policy 2025-2029

DIRECTORATE : Corporate Strategies

Purpose:

This report is for Council to consider adoption of the revised Community Engagement Policy.

Executive Summary

Under the *Local Government Act 2020*, all Victorian Councils must have a Community Engagement Policy. The Policy describes when and how the Council will engage with the community on key processes including the development of the Council Plan, Community Vision (plan), annual Budget, Financial Plan and Asset Plan.

Council's existing Community Engagement Policy was reviewed earlier this year with the most significant change to the policy being the addition of the influence of the *Gender Equality Act* and how consultations must address any obligations under this Act.

An internal community engagement template to help guide staff in delivering consultations has also been prepared.

In April Council voted to release the draft policy for community review. One submission was received.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopt the Community Engagement Policy 2025-2029.

Background

A Community Engagement Policy is required under the *Local Government Act 2020* and represents a commitment to engaging with the community on important issues.

The Act states the policy must:

- (a) be developed in consultation with the municipal community;
- (b) give effect to the community engagement principles;
- (c) be capable of being applied to the making of the Council's local laws;
- (d) be capable of being applied in relation to the Council's budget and policy development;
- (e) describe the type and form of community engagement proposed, having regard to the significance and complexity of the matter and the level of resourcing required; and
- (f) specify a process for informing the municipal community of the outcome of the community engagement;
- (g) include deliberative engagement practices which must include and address any matters prescribed by the regulations for the purposes of this paragraph and be capable of being applied to the development of the Community Vision, Council Plan, Financial Plan and Asset Plan and Annual Budget; and,
- (h) include any other matters prescribed by the regulations.

The draft policy continues to be guided by the International Association for Public Participation's (IAP2) "spectrum of public participation".

Council's Community Engagement Policy was scheduled for review this year.

The final draft policy now acknowledges the *Gender Equality Act 2020*. The Act requires Councils to promote gender equality in policies, programs and services.

In April Council sought feedback from the community on the policy. One submission was received which simply stated "sounds good". With the policy having also been reviewed by Councillors and Council staff, it is ready to be considered for adoption.

Issues

Nil.

Financial Impact

Depending on the issue or project, the process of community engagement will have a financial impact on Council for expenses such as advertising, printing and venue hiring.

Legislation / Policy / Council Plan Context

5 An effective Council

5.2 Engaged and informed community: Council will ensure ongoing community engagement to identify changing needs and priorities when developing and delivering services and programs.

5.3 Customer-focused services: Council will continue to develop a program of Council services that are delivered to the community's satisfaction.

Timing

The Community Engagement Policy was due for review this year.

Community Impact / Consultation

The Act requires Council to consult with the community during the development of a Community Engagement Policy. This was completed in April and May this year.

Legal Risk / Impact

A Gender Impact Assessment was undertaken for the draft Community Engagement Policy 2025-2029.

Officers' Declaration of Interest

Nil.

Collaborative Procurement

This policy was developed internally by Council staff.

Conclusion

Council is in a position to consider adopting the proposed Community Engagement Policy 2025-2029.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Community Engagement Policy 2025-2029 [7.5.1 - 11 pages]

7.6. Draft Creative Warrnambool Strategy 2025-2029

DIRECTORATE : City Wellbeing

Purpose:

This report provides information on the draft Creative Warrnambool Strategy 2025 – 2029 and seeks to endorse the Strategy for public release and community feedback.

Executive Summary

The Creative Warrnambool Strategy is the city's first creative strategic plan. It is designed to support the growth of Warrnambool's creative enterprise and prioritise initiatives that foster a diverse and vibrant creative sector. This foundational strategy aims to establish a solid base for growth, with the expectation that future versions will build upon its activities and vision.

The projects outlined in the strategy represent an achievable and measurable plan for Council to contribute to the city's cultural development over the next four years.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council endorses the draft Creative Warrnambool Strategy 2025-2029 for public release and community feedback.

Background

Warrnambool and South West Victoria has a rich history of creative innovation, rooted in the artistic traditions of the Maar Nation peoples, who have lived and cared for the land for 65,000 years. The Gunditjmara people, for example, created the world's first aqueducts at Budj Bim over 6,000 years ago. More recently, Warrnambool has seen the creation of Australia's oldest musical recording, the composition of "Waltzing Matilda," and iconic contributions from artists like Shane Howard and Archie Roach.

Today, the city continues to foster global talent, with musicians like Airborne performing worldwide. Warrnambool is home to outstanding performers, designers, filmmakers, and artists, including Albert Namatjira, who was taught to paint by local artists, and Paul Jennings, who immortalized the city in children's books and Lisa Gorman who established the women's fashion label Gorman.

Our creatives contribute to global stages in gaming, television, and film.

While creativity plays a major role in the Australian workforce, making up 7% of jobs nationally, Warrnambool creatives represent only 3.1% of local employment.

Issues

The Arts and Culture industry is a constantly evolving and dynamic space supporting artists to challenge, explore and investigate societal, cultural and artistic issues for the benefit and enjoyment of the greater community.

The Creative Warrnambool Strategy 2025-2029 aims to create more opportunities, spaces, and pathways for future generations. The Vision is proposed to be:

Warrnambool inspires innovation and creativity and thrives on curiosity and critical conversations.

Council's role in the development of creativity, arts and culture is as:

- **champion** – partner, supporter and promoter;
- **connector** - brokering networks and partnerships;
- **capacity builder** – through research, policy, professional development;
- **host** - providing places and opportunities; and
- **custodian** - conserving, collecting, holding.

There are 5 objectives of the Creative Warrnambool Strategy:

1. Invite the Peek Whurrong, Maar Nation and the Aboriginal community for feedback on all strategic objectives.
2. Champion the vital role that arts & culture plays in the wellbeing of our community and liveability of our City.
3. Warrnambool City is a regional centre for Arts and Culture and a cultivator of creative industries.
4. Capitalise on our City's cultural heritage as a source of pride for our residents and to create a sense of place and identity.
5. Build the capacity of our creatives and develop an environment in which creativity, arts & culture are able to thrive.

Each objective has a series of key actions that will be delivered over the four years from 2025 – 2029. Some of the priority actions are:

- Building on relationships with Traditional owners.
- Promoting Council's programs and support.
- Complete an Arts and Culture Audit of the City to clearly identify its strengths and opportunities.
- Explore opportunities for young people to develop creative capacity.
- Identify and provide connections for local multicultural organisations.
- Develop and activate a Creative Warrnambool online portal for upskilling, networking and promotion of the creative community.
- Identify spaces available for creatives to work, perform, rehearse and gather.
- Facilitate networking activities.

Actions will be measured by:

- Having a good understanding of the existing creative sector to measure growth against.
- The sector will attract increased funding and provide increased employment.
- The sector will be better connected and feel supported and valued.
- Our diverse communities will be included and represented in local creative outcomes.
- Key actions will be completed.

The strategies and key actions are attached.

Financial Impact

There has been no cost to Council for the development of this Strategy apart from Council staff time.

This Strategy has been developed in-house by Council officers as key subject matter experts.

Legislation / Policy / Council Plan Context

1 A healthy community

1.1 Be a welcoming and inclusive city: Warrnambool will be a city that is more welcoming to all and which fosters diversity.

1.2 Engage with the Aboriginal community: Council will pursue improved partnerships and meaningful engagement with Aboriginal people to grow opportunities and better outcomes for Aboriginal people.

1.3 Health and wellbeing : Council will take action to improve health, wellbeing and safety outcomes for Warrnambool's community.

1.5 Recreation, arts, culture and heritage: Council will support opportunities to participate in a wide range of recreational, arts and cultural programs that promote activity, wellbeing, diversity heritage and which increase community connectedness.

1.6 Community learning pathways: Council will support and encourage lifelong learning that helps build community resilience and preparedness for change.

3 A strong economy

3.2 Emerging industries: Council will encourage emerging industry sectors that contribute to Warrnambool's economic growth and diversity.

3.3 Visitor growth: Council will facilitate Warrnambool's visitor growth and year-round visitation through industry development, effective destination management and promotion of attractions, experiences and by leveraging key events.

4 A connected, inclusive place

4.3 Stronger neighbourhoods: Council will foster neighbourhood connections and capacity building including the development of inclusive recreational and cultural opportunities.

5 An effective Council

5.8 Regional role and relationships: Council will acknowledge Warrnambool's capability as the regional centre of southwest Victoria through appropriate leadership, advocacy and partnerships that enable greater opportunity for the region

Timing

- 3 June 2025 – Community consultation on draft strategy opens.
- 24 June 2025 – Community consultation on draft strategy closes.
- 4 August 2025 – Final Creative Warrnambool Strategy presented to Council.

Community Impact / Consultation

Over the past eight years, Warrnambool's creative community and residents have contributed ideas and feedback through several consultation processes:

- **2017-2018:** The community vision, *Warrnambool 2040*, was created through extensive engagement, resulting in key infrastructure projects like the \$10.7 million Reid Oval redevelopment and the \$22.8 million Learning and Library Hub.
- **2019:** The Warrnambool Art Gallery conducted strategic planning workshops.
- **2020:** Regional Arts Victoria launched the *Creative Industries Strategy 2020 - 2024* for South West Victoria, a plan that influenced strategic plans across five LGAs, aligning with this Creative Strategy.
- **2021:** The community contributed to the development of the *Council Plan 2021-2025*, which was formally adopted, and participated in the *PlaceScore Liveability Survey*.
- **2023:** - Interim evaluation of the *Creative Industries Strategy 2020 - 2024*
- **2025:** South West Creative Industries 2025 - 2029 Strategy joint consultation

This draft Warrnambool Creative Strategy 2025-2029 is based on the feedback from these consultations and ongoing conversations with arts practitioners and consumers.

Consultation on the draft strategy will take place from 3 June until 24 June and will seek feedback via these channels:

- Have Your Say survey available on Council website.
- Direct invitation for comment via email to arts groups, stakeholders and industry bodies.
- Social media promotion on Council Facebook and Instagram.
- Community survey available at the Council delivered event Solstice Search Party on Saturday 21 June 2025.

Legal Risk / Impact

N/A.

Officers' Declaration of Interest

Nil.

Collaborative Procurement

N/A.

Conclusion

Warrnambool has a proud legacy of creativity, from the enduring cultural innovations of the Guditjmarra people to modern-day contributions across music, literature, fashion, and the arts. Despite this rich history, creative industries remain underrepresented in local employment. The Creative Warrnambool Strategy 2025–2029 addresses this gap by setting clear objectives and actions to nurture local talent, celebrate cultural heritage, and position Warrnambool as a vibrant regional hub for arts and culture. Through collaboration, investment, and inclusive growth, the city will build a stronger, more connected creative future.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Creative Warrnambool Strategy 2025-2029 [7.6.1 - 11 pages]

7.7. Pathways Asset Management Plan and Stormwater Drainage Asset Management Plan

DIRECTORATE : City Infrastructure & Environment

Purpose:

This report provides information on the updated Pathways Asset Management Plan and Stormwater Drainage Asset Management Plan, which are presented for adoption.

Executive Summary

The current Pathways Asset Management Plan was adopted by the Council in 2017 and was due for review. Similarly, the Stormwater Drainage Asset Management Plan requires updating to reflect updated information since the last plan dated May 2020.

The Asset Management Plans (AMPs) detail information about infrastructure assets with actions required to provide an agreed level of service in the most cost-effective manner while outlining associated risks. The plans define the services to be provided, how the services are provided, and what funds are required over a 10-year planning period.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council adopt the Pathways Asset Management Plan.
 2. That Council adopt the Stormwater Drainage Asset Management Plan.
-

Background

Asset Management Plans are strategic documents guiding the management of Council's infrastructure to ensure assets deliver the expected level of service. They inform long-term financial planning and ensure sustainable decision-making. These plans also serve as communication tools within the organisation and with the community about service levels, costs, and risks.

The Pathways network comprises both sealed (i.e. asphalt, concrete, brick pavers, etc.) and unsealed pathways (i.e. gravel), and has been developed over time to provide suitable pedestrian access around the city.

Council's stormwater drainage network comprises underground pipes, drainage tunnels, drainage pits and various other assets such as gross pollutant traps, pumps, basins, floodwalls, etc. These stormwater assets represent a significant investment and are of vital importance to protect people, property and public health by collecting, transporting, and disposing of stormwater runoff.

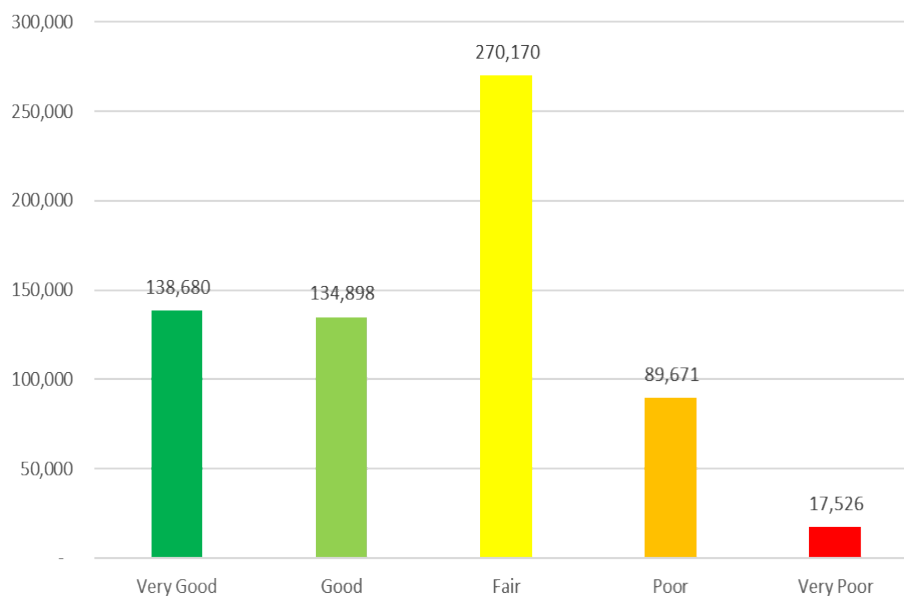
Both AMPs present a strategic approach to the planning, maintenance, renewal, and operation of Council's Pathway and Stormwater Drainage infrastructure, aligning with broader strategic goals and financial planning frameworks. Given the time lapse since the last review of these plans, and because of updated information, they have been reviewed and updated accordingly to aid Council operations.

Issues

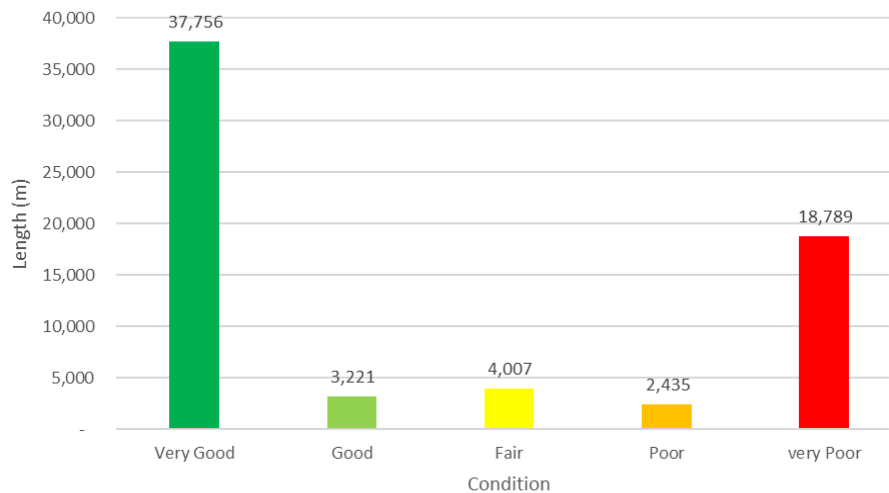
Both AMP's are outdated, and condition data and service performance metrics have since been updated. Given the changing social, environmental and economic conditions, these operational documents require review at regular intervals to ensure Council continues to manage infrastructure assets in an effective manner. Both AMPs now include improved lifecycle costing, updated renewal modelling, and improvement plans.

Implementing these plans will require ongoing data collection and condition assessments and indicate a projected underfunding of renewal across both asset classes. This renewal gap needs to be managed over time to ensure Council can maintain current service levels. A new Long Term Financial Plan is currently under development, and information gained through reviews of these Asset Management Plans have been provided to assist with the development of the Plan.

Council completes network wide condition assessments on a scheduled basis, typically every four years. The last audit of pathways was completed in 2022 with the use of all-terrain vehicles equipped with cameras. The following chart shows the current condition of Council's pathways by area.



Council has an annual program of CCTV inspections of its underground stormwater drainage network. The current budget allows for approximately 3% of the network to be inspected each year. To date, around 66km of the underground pipe network has been inspected for structural condition and serviceability. This represents around 22% of the overall drainage system. The following chart shows the current condition of Council's pipe condition by length.



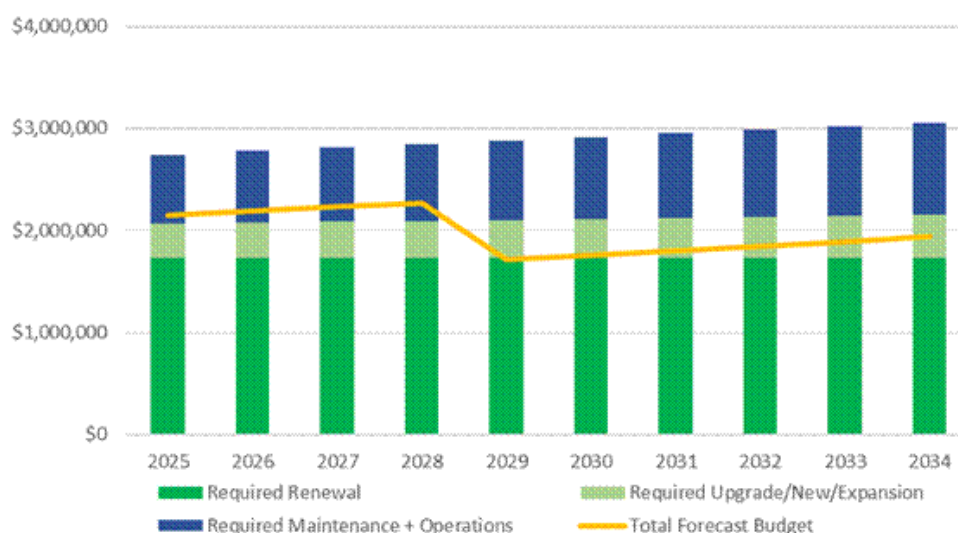
Financial Impact

The AMPs integrate whole-of-life costing and establish long-term financial forecasts for both asset classes. They define the services to be provided, how the services are provided and what funds are required over a 10-year planning period, which helps to inform the Long-Term Financial Plan.

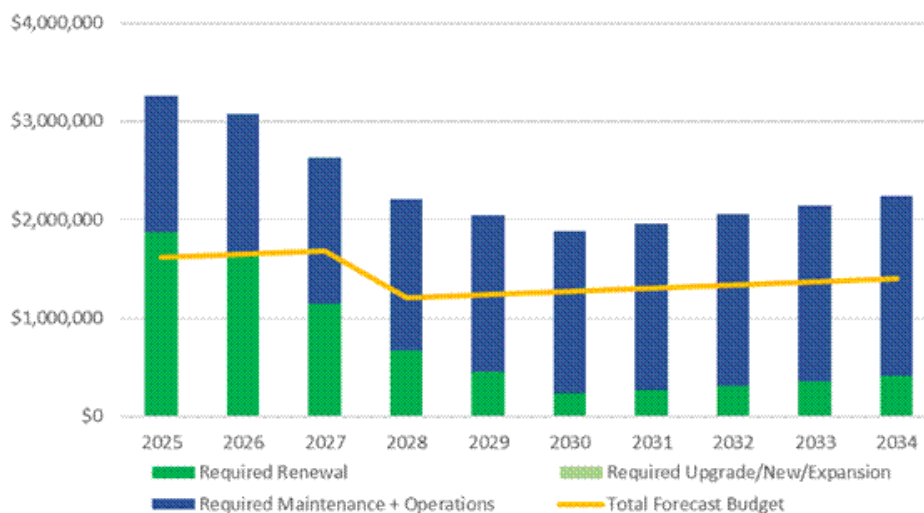
The forecast lifecycle costs necessary to provide the services covered by the AM Plans includes operation, maintenance, renewal, acquisition, and disposal of assets. Although the AM Plan may be prepared for a range of time periods, it typically informs a Long-Term Financial Planning period of 10 years. Therefore, a summary output from the AM Plan is the forecast of 10-year total outlays, which for the Council's pathways is estimated to be \$28.9 million or \$2.9 million on average per year. For Council's drainage assets it is estimated as \$23.5 million or \$2.35 million on average per year. This excludes contributed assets and works delivered through the Council's Development Contributions Plan.

Estimated available funding for the 10-year period is \$19.8 million or \$1.98 million on average per year for Pathways and \$14.1 million or \$1.41 million on average per year for Drainage as per the Long-Term Financial plan or Planned Budget. This is 68% and 60% respectively of the cost to sustain the current level of service at the lowest lifecycle cost.

Forecast Lifecycle Costs and Planned Budgets Pathways



Forecast Lifecycle Costs and Planned Budgets Drainage



Legislation/Policy/Council Plan Context

5 An effective Council

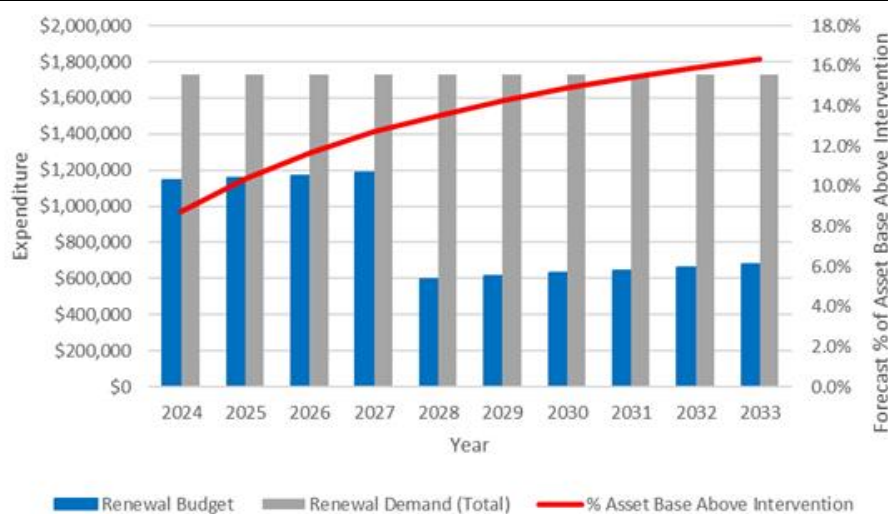
5.5 Organisational and financial sustainability: Council will ensure organisational and financial sustainability through the effective and efficient use of Council's resources and assets.

5.6 Risk mitigation: Council will mitigate and manage organisational risks through sound management systems and processes.

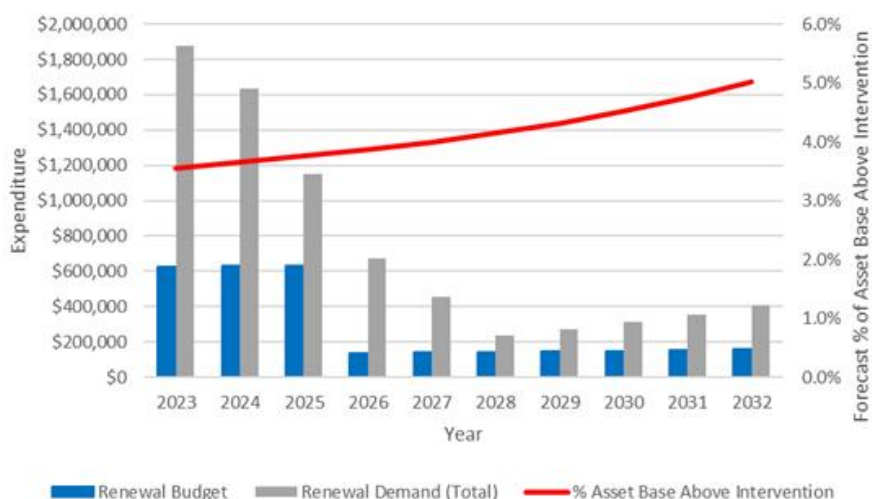
Timing

The updated AMP's are being provided now as they include updated information in relation to Pathways and Stormwater Drainage assets which has been reviewed in conjunction with the State of the Assets report which focused on renewal costs. The Forecast renewal costs for Pathways and Drainage are shown below.

Forecast Renewal Costs Pathways



Forecast Renewal Costs Drainage



Community Impact / Consultation

As an operational document, consultation with internal stakeholders assisted in the development of the AMP's which will be publicly available and promoted via Council's website.

Consultation on Council's approach to asset management will be undertaken as part of the development of the Asset Plan which is due later this year.

While service standards are expected to remain within tolerable limits under the current funding regime for Pathways, it will be important for Council to continue to regularly monitor the performance of the pathway network, including community satisfaction. Budget adjustments may need to be made to address possible trends in asset degradation, appetite for increased levels of service, or to manage risk appropriately.

Council's present funding levels for drainage are insufficient to continue to provide existing services at current levels in the medium term. If funding levels are reduced this would impact on Council's ability to maintain current levels of service and performance.

The main service consequences would result in:

- Reduced levels of service leading to a decrease in overall performance of the drainage network.
- Increased risk of flooding and property impact.
- Increased risk of public hazards due to failure of critical drainage infrastructure.

Legal Risk / Impact

Without AMPs, we may fail to identify or mitigate asset deterioration, increasing the risk of infrastructure failure (e.g., failed drainage systems, unsafe walkways) which carries some legal risk. These updated AMP's also help inform Council's 10-year Asset Plan which must be adopted by Council under the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Officers' Declaration of Interest

Nil.

Collaborative Procurement

N/A.

Conclusion

The updated Pathways and Stormwater Asset Management Plans provide an evidence-based framework for managing these critical infrastructure assets. Adoption of these plans ensures the Council is better equipped to plan for growth, manage risk, and deliver sustainable infrastructure services aligned to community expectations and the Council Plan.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Pathways Asset Management Plan Final [7.7.1 - 43 pages]
2. Stormwater Drainage Asset Management Plan Final [7.7.2 - 45 pages]

7.8. Quarterly Financial Report - March 2025

DIRECTORATE : Corporate Strategies

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to present the January to March 2025 Quarterly Financial Report to Council.

Executive Summary

The Quarterly Financial Report compares actual financial results to budget and forecast for the three months from 1 January 2025 to 31 March 2025 (refer attachment).

The report sets out the financial results for Council's recurrent (day-to-day) operations, projects, capital works, rates, and borrowings.

An updated forecast was last prepared in December and remaining budgets rephased in March, as deemed appropriate, per end of year operating expectations.

The net cash result for the financial year is a forecast surplus to budget of \$0.077m. This is the net impact across operations, projects and capital budgets.

The report meets the requirements of section 97 of the Local Government Act 2020 to present a quarterly financial report to Council at a public meeting that compares actual results against budget.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Quarterly Financial Report attached, ending March 2025, be received.

Background

Section 97 of the *Local Government Act 2020* stipulates:

1. As soon as practicable after the end of each quarter of the financial year, the Chief Executive Officer must ensure that a quarterly budget report is presented to the Council at a Council meeting which is open to the public.
2. A quarterly budget report must include—
 - a. comparison of the actual and budgeted results to date; and
 - b. an explanation of any material variations; and
 - c. any other matters prescribed by the regulations.
3. In addition, the second quarterly report of a financial year must include a statement by the Chief Executive Officer as to whether a revised budget is, or may be, required. *(Not required for Q3).*

The March 2025 Quarterly Financial Report has been prepared and meets the requirements of the act.

The March 2025 Quarterly Financial Report shows a small favourable result for the year to date cash position of \$0.077 million. This is mainly visible in recurrent operations resulting from higher cash balances linked to the timing of Capital works projects, increasing interest income over budget, and additional recoveries received by Council during the year.

Council's net surplus of \$0.087m in the Comprehensive Income Statement is in line with the forecast year to date. The Income statement is prepared in line with Australian Accounting Standards (as required by the Act), and, per the standards, include some non-cash items (such as asset contributions, amortisation, provision movements, etc), whilst excluding some cash items (such as capital works).

Council's cash position remains sound, with \$49.0m held in investments at the end of the quarter. These funds are held for the delivery of Council's Infrastructure program, delivery of services, Development Contribution Plans and statutory requirements and does not represent discretionary holdings. Council generally receives a large portion of its income at the start of the financial year, and again for calendar year programs in January (such as grants), and will use these funds throughout the rest of the year as it delivers services and projects.

Further details addressing key budget variances are contained within the monthly report.

Issues

The March financial report recognises the organisational realignment announced at the beginning of 2025. Business units that have moved between directorates are reported, where required, under the new structure.

Financial Impact

Council's forecast financial position against the 2025 budget remains generally in line with budget expectations.

Legislation / Policy / Council Plan Context

5 An Effective Council

5.5 Organisational and Financial Stability: Council will ensure organisation and financial stability through the effective and efficient use of Council's resources and assets.

Timing

This quarterly report is provided in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2020.

Community Impact / Consultation

This report is provided to inform Council and the community on the organisation's financial position as required by the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Officers' Declaration of Interest

Nil.

Conclusion

The Quarterly Financial Report ending 31 March 2025 is presented to Council in line with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*. Council currently remains in a sound financial position.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Quarterly Finance Report - March 2025 - Council [7.8.1 - 14 pages]

7.9. Tender 2025017 - Unified Communications (Telephone System Replacement)

DIRECTORATE : Corporate Strategies

Purpose:

This report recommends Council enter into a three-year contract/agreement with Ericom to provide a modern cloud based unified communications (UC) system to replace Councils current on-premises legacy telecommunications Platform.

Executive Summary

An open market tender process has been undertaken for the replacement of Councils Current Legacy Communications platform. Tender 2025017 - Unified Communications Telephone system replacement.

22 submissions from suppliers for the tender were received by Council.

A final consideration of tenders was then evaluated by a group of nine (9) Council Staff, with the subsequent selection of Ericom (also the best value for money assessment) as the preferred tenderer.

Total Solution costs over three (3) years.	\$615.190.00
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RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Enters into a Proof of Concept trial period for the demonstration of Ericom's telephony platform and systems to assess suitability for ongoing use at a cost of \$19,420.00 ex GST.
2. Delegate to the Chief Executive Officer the authority to enter into the contract 23025017 for a unified communications system from Ericom at the cost of \$595,770.00 ex GST for a three-year term, at the Chief Executive Officer's discretion, subject to a successful Proof of Concept trial period.
3. Accept the schedule of rates offered within the Ericom bid to undertake any extra works over and above the lump sum price if required, provided that additional works can be accommodated within the project budget.
4. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to sign, seal and vary the contract as required.

Background

Council's current telecommunications system consists of a hybrid configuration built around two outdated and unsupported platforms: the Alcatel Lucent PBX system and the Grandstream PBX system. While the Grandstream system is used primarily to support ancillary and cordless devices, both systems are considered legacy technologies and are increasingly inadequate for meeting the demands of a modern local government telephony environment.

The software platform on which these systems operate has reached the end of its lifecycle, meaning that it is no longer supported by the vendor. This constitutes a significant risk to our telecommunications systems. Additionally, Council faces significant limitations in making changes, additions, or updates, leaving the system inflexible and vulnerable to potential failures and security issues.

Issues

Council's current telecommunications platform is significantly outdated, creating serious technical and operational challenges. The system is built around two unsupported PBX platforms—Alcatel Lucent (15 years old) and Grandstream (7 years old). These legacy systems are no longer supported by vendors, and their underlying software has reached end-of-life, meaning no further updates, patches, or support are available.

A critical concern is the lack of availability of new replacement hardware and handsets. As components are no longer manufactured, any replacements must be sourced from secondary markets such as eBay or through refurbished units—without any assurance of quality, functionality, or warranty. This presents substantial operational risk and severely limits Council's ability to maintain a consistent and reliable communications infrastructure.

The existing platform lacks the functionality required to support modern service delivery and a responsive customer service environment. It does not integrate with key digital tools such as Microsoft Teams, social media platforms, or customer relationship management (CRM) systems. Additionally, it fails to support essential features like live web chat, social messaging, or omnichannel call centre operations—functions that are now standard in local government communication.

These technical constraints translate into significant performance limitations. Frequent outages, system instability, and functional issues often require manual restarts to restore basic operations, affecting productivity and undermining service delivery.

The system also lacks built-in resiliency, meaning staff cannot access telephony services on mobile devices or while working remotely—an increasingly critical need in a post-pandemic, hybrid work environment.

Furthermore, the system is entirely hosted on-premises, requiring ongoing investment in physical infrastructure, power, cooling, and maintenance. This consumes valuable IT resources and restricts flexibility, while offering no path to future scalability or cost efficiency.

Council is also hindered by limited self-management capabilities. Internal teams cannot independently modify call flows, adjust service settings, or access performance metrics in real time.

There is no functionality for call tracking, agent performance monitoring, or customer engagement reporting—significantly restricting the ability to manage service quality, identify issues, and implement data-driven improvements.

To address these challenges, Council must transition to a modern, cloud-based Unified Communications and Call Centre platform, the solution proposed would offer substantial strategic and operational benefits that extend well beyond resolving existing issues. It would lay the foundation for a responsive, resilient, and future-ready communications environment.

A key advantage of a modern platform is its ability to provide enhanced call flow management. With real-time tracking, comprehensive analytics, and intuitive dashboard interfaces, Council would gain complete visibility into telephony operations. This transparency would enable more proactive management of inbound and outbound calls, facilitate the early identification of bottlenecks or service delays, and support data-driven decision-making to continually improve performance.

The system would also support omnichannel communication, allowing customers to engage with Council through their preferred digital channels. Integration with tools such as web chat, SMS, email, Microsoft Teams, and popular social media platforms would provide a seamless, connected customer experience. This approach aligns with modern service expectations and allows Council to respond more effectively to community needs across multiple touchpoints.

Built-in compliance features would ensure that call recording and privacy obligations are met automatically, without the need for third-party add-ons. This simplifies operations while helping Council maintain strict adherence to legal and regulatory requirements.

Another significant benefit is vendor independence. The platform would support a wide range of handsets from various manufacturers, eliminating the current reliance on specific legacy devices. This flexibility would allow Council to select hardware that meets both operational needs and budgetary constraints, while reducing procurement risks.

Because the solution is cloud-based, it introduces a high level of operational resilience. Staff would be able to make and receive calls from any internet-enabled device, including smartphones, tablets, and laptops. This mobility supports hybrid and remote working arrangements and ensures continuity of service during disruptions, office closures, or infrastructure failures.

The shift to a cloud-based system would also reduce infrastructure costs. By decommissioning on-premises PBX hardware, Council could eliminate the associated expenses of power, space, cooling, and physical maintenance—freeing up resources for more strategic investments.

The platform would come equipped with robust self-management tools, empowering internal teams to manage call flows, configure settings, and administer the call centre without relying on external vendors or support delays. This agility would allow Council to quickly adapt to changing service requirements or operational needs.

Integration with Microsoft Teams would enable more streamlined internal communication and collaboration. With real-time presence awareness, staff and managers could see who is available, improving coordination and reducing wait times for internal escalations or customer responses.

Additionally, the platform could deliver advanced capabilities such as AI-powered virtual agents, automated call triage, and predictive analytics. These features would help manage high call volumes, provide quick responses to routine enquiries, and anticipate service issues before they escalate—further improving operational efficiency and customer satisfaction.

Seamless integration with Technology One and other Council CRM platforms would allow for a unified view of customer interactions. This would enhance record-keeping, support workflow automation, and enable more personalised, informed service delivery across departments.

Most importantly, the new platform would be inherently future-proof. Delivered as a managed cloud service, it would continuously evolve through vendor-led improvements and security enhancements. Council would always have access to the latest innovations without the need for disruptive system upgrades or major reinvestments—ensuring long-term value and adaptability in a fast-changing digital landscape.

The above issues were summarised and developed into a comprehensive tender assessment matrix which was applied to the tenderers. Of the initial 22 tenderers, 4 were shortlisted to provide functional demonstrations, with Ericom emerging as the preferred tenderer.

Financial Impact

The council was presented with the full tender assessment briefing notes, tender analysis and associated assessment matrix information for consideration at a confidential briefing on Monday 26 May 2025.

The cost of the Unified Communications Telephone system by Ericom will be \$615,190 over a three-year term this includes call costs to National/Mobile/Local Numbers – (Calls to premium and international numbers are billable). The proposal from Ericom was also the best Value for Money ratio of the evaluated offerings tendered.

Legislation / Policy / Council Plan Context

5 An effective Council

5.5 Organizational and financial sustainability: Council will ensure organizational and financial sustainability through the effective and efficient use of Council's resources and assets.

5.6 Risk mitigation: Council will mitigate and manage organizational risks through sound management systems and processes

Timing

It is anticipated that a Proof of Concept will be undertaken as soon as possible with the full contract being signed subject to a successful Proof of Concept (3-4 Weeks).

Community Impact / Consultation

Demonstrations by the four (4) shortlisted bidders were carried out via Teams meetings commencing the week of 4 April 2025, a subsequent survey was completed by nine (9) of those that attended the demonstrations, collated and responses combined to show Ericom as a clear leader.

Legal Risk / Impact

Council currently lacks the ability to deliver effective, modern telecommunications, which significantly compromises our capacity to support staff and serve the community—particularly in the event of a disaster or service disruption. The existing system does not support remote communication, meaning staff are unable to make or receive calls from alternative locations, posing a serious risk to business continuity.

Operating on an unsupported communications platform also presents a growing legal and cybersecurity risk. The absence of vendor support, combined with the limited availability of replacement hardware and software updates, leaves the system vulnerable to failure and potential security breaches. Continuing to rely on this outdated infrastructure exposes Council to compliance issues and operational liabilities that could have serious consequences for service delivery and data protection.

Officers' Declaration of Interest

Nil.

Collaborative Procurement

As part of the tender process, the document entailed that the shared services project – Coastal Connect was being undertaken by the inclusion of the following; “To provide a modern unified communications and call centre platform that is highly available, reliable and with strong integration into Microsoft Teams. Warrnambool City Council, Moyne Shire Council and Corangamite Shire Council have entered into a shared services arrangement to provide a single ERP along with a shared IT Strategy. With this arrangement the councils will be working closely, all councils will be using Microsoft Teams, the chosen platform should be able to at least share presence and contacts.”

This was also looked at by the evaluation panel and was a point of discussion in the evaluation/demonstrations that were presented.

Conclusion

Replacing Warrnambool City Council's current telecommunications platform with a modern Unified Communications and Call Centre solution, such as the one offered by Ericom, represents a critical step toward modernising our communications infrastructure and supporting long-term operational resilience.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

7.10. Tender 2025036 - Supply And Delivery Of Meals

DIRECTORATE : City Wellbeing

Purpose:

To award tenderer for Tender 2025036 - Supply and Delivery of Meals for the Meals on Wheels Service for the period 1 July 2025 – 30 June 2027.

Executive Summary

Council has undertaken a tender process for the supply and delivery of meals suitable for the Meals on Wheels program. Three tenders were received and after evaluation, South West Healthcare has been selected as the preferred provider.

The quoted price per meal has increased from \$12.98 per unit to \$17.27, a 33% increase which will require a review of the fees charged for this service.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council award Tender 2025036 - Supply and Delivery of Meals to South West Healthcare, Warrnambool for the period 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2027.

Background

The Meals on Wheels Service provides delivered meals five days a week to Community Care clients supported through the Commonwealth Home Support Program, the state government's HACC-PYP scheme and sub-contracted Home Care Packages. Recipients of these meals are deemed, through an external assessment process, to be at nutritional risk and require assistance with meals.

Individual meals are prepared off-site and transported to the Archie Graham Community Centre where they are collected and delivered by a team of 80 volunteer drivers.

Approximately 15,000 meals were delivered last financial year, with 9,500 going to CHSP clients, 5,300 to Home Care Package clients and 200 to HACC-PYP clients. There has been a reduction in meals delivered from the 2023/24 financial year, down from 21,000 meals, due to greater choice in the ready-to-eat meals market and cost of living pressures. The Commonwealth government has committed to increasing the subsidy for delivered meals from \$8.54 to \$12.00 for the 2025/26 financial year to assist with the financial pressure clients are experiencing.

The supply of delivered meals is currently undertaken by Southwest Healthcare which commenced in June 2019 and will expire on 30 June 2025.

Issues

Council invited tenders from suitably qualified and experienced organisations for the supply and delivery of meals to its distribution centre (Archie Graham Community Centre) from 1 July 2025 through to 30 June 2027.

Tender 2025036 was uploaded to eProcure on 13 March 2025 and submissions closed on 17 April 2025.

Three tenders were received.

Tenderers were required to submit an annualised cost for meals based on the delivery targets outlined in the CHSP and HACC-PYP service agreements and expected delivery outputs for subcontracted meals. Based on delivery of 25,000 meals p.a. the costs submitted were:

Supplier	Total meal price (Year 1)	Unit price (Year 1)	Total meal price (Year 2)	Unit price (Year 2)
Tenderer 1	\$514,500	\$20.58	\$530,640	\$21.22
Tenderer 2	\$613,200	\$24.53	\$631,596	\$25.26
South West Healthcare	\$431,750	\$17.27	\$444,950	\$17.80

a) Evaluation Process

An assessment of the tender was undertaken by each member of the Tender Evaluation Committee, based on the tender assessment criteria. Weightings for the criteria were agreed prior to the evaluation commencing. A detailed financial analysis of the documentation contained in the tender was conducted.

The membership of the Tender Evaluation Committee was:

- Brooke Love – Director City Wellbeing
- Peter Russell - Manager Community Strengthening
- Cecily Lindsey – Coordinator Meals on Wheels

The assessment of the tender was undertaken independently by each committee member, according to the criteria, to avoid the potential for one committee member to significantly influence another member.

The tender was discussed and evaluated at a meeting held on 13 May 2025.

b) Detailed Assessment

A detailed assessment was undertaken in accordance with criteria outlined in the tender specifications. The Technical Evaluation Report is attached.

The preferred tender is South West Healthcare.

Financial Impact

The preferred tenderer's submitted unit price is \$17.27, which is an increase of \$4.29 or 33% over the current price.

The estimated expenditure for 2025/26 is \$259,050 and \$267,000 in 2026/27, based on 15,000 meals p.a., if South West Healthcare's tender is accepted. Client fees have been revised based on updated unit costs to \$14.50 for a full meal and \$13.00 for a 2-course meal. This provides a gross margin of \$229,200 from which operating costs are extracted, resulting in a \$31,600 surplus for the program.

Cost structure – Meals on Wheels (25/26)

Units delivered 15,000 p.a.

Revenue	\$434,700
Material Cost	\$205,500
Gross Margin	\$229,200
On Costs (wages)	\$144,100
Overheads	\$ 53,500
Surplus / Deficit	+\$ 31,600

Legislation / Policy / Council Plan Context

1 A healthy community

1.3 Health and wellbeing: Council will take action to improve health, wellbeing and safety outcomes for Warrnambool's community.

Timing

The current Meals on Wheels supply contract expires on 30 June 2025. Council officers seek to have tender approved and service agreements in place by 1 July 2025.

Community Impact / Consultation

The Meals on Wheels Service provides home delivered meals to vulnerable people as part of the Warrnambool City Council's Community Care program. This program supports frail older people, people with disabilities and their carers. Recipients have been independently identified as needing support to live independently at home or at risk of premature or inappropriate admission to long term residential care.

Clients are surveyed annually regarding the quality of the service and provide comments on areas in which we can improve. Results of this survey and feedback directly from clients inform our decision making in the selection of service providers.

The service provided approximately 15,000 meals to 215 people in Warrnambool last financial year and is supported by 80 volunteers.

Legal Risk / Impact

Clients of Warrnambool City Council's Community Care program, who are elderly or experience disadvantage, require nutritious food produced in Class 1 registered premises, demonstrating Good Manufacturing Practice and quality assurance systems based upon the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) system. The preferred tenderer meets the requirements of current food safety legislation and Council's Service Agreement informed by the CHSP program manual.

Officers' Declaration of Interest

Nil.

Collaborative Procurement

Due to the nature of this contract collaborative procurement was not seen as a way of achieving either a discounted price or distributing costs at this point in time.

Conclusion

Council's Community Care department is contracted, through its current service agreement with the Department of Health and Aged Care, to provide meals under the Commonwealth Home Support Program. To continue to deliver this service, Council sought and received submissions from three suppliers to provide suitable meals.

South West Healthcare have been determined to be the preferred supplier.

The tendered price for the meals is 33% higher than the current price which has resulted in a review of the fees for this service. Revised fees have been incorporated in the proposed Budget 2025/2026.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

7.11. King Street Drainage Project - Variation

DIRECTORATE : City Infrastructure & Environment

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to seek approval from Council for the Chief Executive Officer to be delegated with financial authority to approve amendments to Purchase Orders to cover project Variations to the King Street Drainage project due to encountering large volumes of rock.

Executive Summary

The King Street Drainage project consists of carrying out works to improve the Council's stormwater drainage system in King Street to reduce flood risks within the area.

A tender process was undertaken through January and February 2025 in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy, with a contract awarded to CivilNow for the project cost of \$351,542.00 ex GST.

Due to the project encountering significant volumes of rock, a variation to the contract is required to complete the project. This is likely to push the total cost of the project above the Chief Executive Officer's financial delegation of \$400,000.00.

This report seeks Council's approval to delegate financial authority to the Chief Executive Officer to approve contract costs above over and above his delegated limit of \$400,000.00.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council delegate financial authority to the Chief Executive Officer to approve contract costs above \$400,000.00 up to a limit of \$450,000.00 on Contract 2025023 – King Street Drainage Works.

Background

The drainage network along King Street is aging and no longer fit for purpose in rain events, failing to adequately move water away which can result in localised flooding.

As outlined in the 2018 Warrnambool Drainage Study Investigation, the King Street drainage catchment currently has 14 properties prone to flooding, with increasing occurrence.

The King Street Drainage Project is renewing drainage pits and pipes along King Street, improving volume within the network which will ensure water is contained as best possible throughout rainfall events and removed from the area when capacity permits.

The works on the existing drainage network, particularly the north-south drainage line connecting ultimately to Russells Creek, will significantly mitigate these issues.

Works commenced in early and is expected to be completed in July 2025.

Issues

Drainage works can be challenging to accurately plan and cost due to unknowns under the ground. Higher contingencies, of around 10-20% on drainage projects, are often required to manage these unknowns.

The King Street Project has been designed to be completed in stages to minimise interruptions to traffic and to maintain the active drainage network throughout the project. Because of this, it was unknown during early stages of the project, how much rock may be encountered during delivery of each of the stages of the project.

As the project has progressed, increasing volumes of rock have been hit. This is resulting in time and cost implications for the project.

Within the contract for the King Street project, a provisional allowance for 150m³ for removal and disposal of rock was made. However, this volume will be exceeded. Under the terms of the contract, payment is made per cubic meter of rock removed in line with the provisional sum agreed to within the contract.

This, therefore, means that the Chief Executive Officer will only need to approve costs above the current contract amount where rock has been removed above the 150m³ provision sum allowed for.

The total cost of this is not yet known due to there being four stages of the project still to be commenced, therefore final volumes of rock that will need to be removed aren't yet known.

Financial Impact

The contract was awarded for a value of \$351,542.00 ex GST.

A 20% contingency on this amount would result in a cost of up to \$421.850.40

The exact cost associated with the additional rock is not yet known.

As it is based on a per cubic meter rate, Council will only pay for the rock that is removed in order to deliver this project in line with project design. This figure in its entirety will only be known at the completion of the project due to the project being completed in stages and some stages not yet having been commenced.

The additional costs associated with the removal of rock is not expected to exceed \$62,000.00

Legislation / Policy / Council Plan Context

N/A.

Timing

This project is currently underway. Delays due to encountering more rock than anticipated will result in an extension of time required to complete the project.

Community Impact / Consultation

Council will communicate project delays caused by hitting rock to the community.

Officers' Declaration of Interest

Nil.

Conclusion

The King Street Drainage Project will improve the Council's stormwater drainage system in King Street and reduce flood risks. The project is currently underway, but due to hitting additional rock whilst undertaking the project, the contract cost is expected to exceed the Chief Executive Officer's financial delegation. This report is seeking the Council's approval to delegate financial authority to the Chief Executive Officer to allow this project to be completed.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

7.12. Councils Future Electricity Contracts from 1 July 2025

DIRECTORATE : City Infrastructure & Environment

Purpose:

This report provides information to Council regarding the future energy contract for small market electricity accounts from 1 July 2025 onwards and seeks authorisation to commence the transition of these accounts to the Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) contract.

Executive Summary

- Council has currently committed 70% of its electricity load to the Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) until 31 December 2030.
- The remaining 30% of Council's electricity procurement is with the State Government contract for small sites. Council's procurement contract with the State Government expires on 30 June 2025.
- Council has committed to strive for net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2026. The remaining 30% of electricity if moved across to the Power Purchase Agreement (PPA), will assist in meeting this target.
- While Council has previously committed to procure its small electricity market through the State Government contract, recent comparisons with PPA prices have demonstrated that the remaining 30% of electricity under the State Government Contract, does not represent the best price for electricity.
- The risk of exposure to the electricity market by transferring from 70% to 100% electricity with the PPA is low. The PPA contract allows for a low electricity market price due to a market price cap of \$56.44 until 31 December 2030.
- The risk of electricity failure from 100% electricity being with one provider is also low. The PPA has safeguards in place if accounts are impacted by current retailer failure.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Approve the transition from the State Government contract to the PPA contract for all small electricity accounts.
 2. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to sign, seal and vary the contract as required.
-

Background

Council's current electricity procurement methods are outlined below:

Table 1. Council Energy Contracts Summary

Load	Procurement Agent	Expiration Date
70% Electricity	Power Purchase Agreement	31 December 2030
30% Electricity	State Government	30 June 2025
Unmetered electricity	Origin Energy	No contract

Due to Council's contract ending with AGL through the State Government contract on 30 June 2025, it is recommended that Council takes this opportunity to move the remaining 30% of electricity load that is within this contract, to the PPA.

Additionally, Council has unmetered electricity accounts with Origin Energy which do not require a contract as Origin Energy is the default retailer and is uncontestable for unmetered sites.

The PPA is showing the best prices for electricity from these two options, based on a comparison of current invoice prices between AGL and Red Energy. The price comparison provides a 29.2% cost saving by moving to the PPA.

Additionally, this transfer to 100% renewable energy through the PPA for all council electricity accounts excluding unmetered electricity, will align with Council's targets to achieve zero net greenhouse gas emissions by 2026.

Issues

If Council enters into a new State Government contract or alternative contract from 1 July 2025, which does not provide 100% renewable energy for Council's small electricity market, Council will significantly reduce its ability to meet net zero energy targets by 2026.

Previously, Council's electricity procurement went from 40% to 70% with the PPA in 2023. It was highlighted at the time Council would not go to 100%, as it did not need to reach carbon neutral status until 2026, so there was flexibility to trial new technologies like virtual power plants in the near future. It is now unlikely new technology will be trialed or implemented by 2026 to achieve net zero emissions for Council's electricity markets. Moving Council's electricity load to 100% PPA will show the Warrnambool community, Council has a strong commitment to achieving its 2026 carbon neutrality goals.

Financial Impact

Current prices for the PPA are shown to be much lower than current prices under the State Government contract. It has also been confirmed by the PPA's retailer Snowy Hydro that due to the contracted price cap, future prices will never be higher than current prices up to the end of the contract on 31 December 2030. This will allow for greater electricity savings by moving the remaining 30% of electricity from the State Government contract to the PPA.

Table 2 shows a current market price comparison between invoices from the electricity accounts that remain with the State Government contract versus if these accounts had been with the PPA. These prices show that based on the annual total from **April 2024 – April 2025**, moving the remaining electricity to the PPA has an annual saving of \$106,896.41. See attachment for individual NMI information.

State Government Contract Total	PPA Annual Total	Difference	Savings
\$366,153.57	\$259,257.16	- \$106,896.41	29.2%

Table 3 shows comparison broken down by the tariffs between State Government contract invoices through AGL and PPA prices for **the past 12 months from April 2024 to April 2025**. Across all tariffs PPA shows cost savings.

Tariff	State Government Contract Total	Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) Total	Difference	Savings
Non-Residential Time of Use	\$58,807.50	\$41,779.10	-\$17,028.40	29.0%
Single rate non-residential	\$240,865.12	\$169,764.47	-\$71,100.65	29.5%
Medium Business Demand	\$55,270.49	\$39,719.88	-\$15,550.61	28.1%
Single rate residential	\$8,889.00	\$6,279.13	-\$2,609.87	29.4%
Solar Premium Feed-in Tariff	\$2,321.46	\$1,714.59	-\$606.87	26.1%

Legislation / Policy / Council Plan Context

2 A Sustainable environment

2.3 Environmental impact and a changing climate: Council will encourage innovation and initiatives that minimise Warrnambool's environmental impact.

5 An effective Council

5.5 Organisational and financial sustainability: Council will ensure organisational and financial sustainability through the effective and efficient use of Council's resources and assets.

Timing

Council's contract with the State Government for small market electricity ends on the 30 June 2025. The State Government's contract with AGL ends 31 December 2025, implying uncertainty over future pricing by remaining with this contract. Based on current price comparisons, it is assumed the PPA will remain the more cost-efficient option and provide increased savings.

Switching the remaining 30% of electricity to the PPA can be done at any time. For a seamless switch from when the State Government contract ends, the remaining electricity can be rolled into the PPA from 1 July 2025, these accounts will then be part of the PPA contract which expires 31 December 2030. Notice to roll-in Council's small-market electricity should be given by 6 June to allow for the retailer to prepare this additional electricity load.

Community Impact / Consultation

- By procuring 100% of Council's electricity through the PPA the significant savings to Council can be spent on Council services.
- No community consultation was undertaken due to the proposal being for Council buildings only.

Legal Risk / Impact

Procuring 100% of electricity through the PPA would be low risk. Currently the PPA provides lower prices than the State Government contract and is unlikely to be negatively impacted by the electricity market. The PPA contract has both a price cap of \$56.44 and a price reset mechanism to allow for prices to remain market reflective until the end of the contract on 31 December 2030. Due to this, the economic benefits of committing to 100% electricity load through the PPA are guaranteed to provide one of the lowest price options in the electricity market for Council except if there is extreme price decline through market volatility. This is unlikely to occur within the contract time frame.

There is also a low risk of retailer failure, as the PPA retailer Snowy Hydro is Commonwealth Government owned. Additionally, safeguards are in place to transfer electricity to sites if retailer failure does occur.

There would be minimal to no environmental risk to changing to 100% electricity with the PPA as this change to 100% net zero electricity procured will have a positive environmental impact by reducing emissions from Council's electricity consumption to net zero.

Officers' Declaration of Interest

Nil.

Collaborative Procurement

By taking part in the PPA, this is a collaborative procurement with other Victorian councils through the Victorian Energy Collaboration (VECO). This collaboration has allowed for lower electricity prices to be provided contractually by the retailer.

Conclusion

Council has been using the State Government contract for procurement of 30% of the electricity load, however when compared with PPA prices for the past 12 months, it demonstrates a high economic benefit in switching to 100% of the electricity load with PPA. The PPA currently provides 70% of Council's electricity load.

The State Government contract will end on 30 June 2025, which would allow for a seamless transition to move the remaining 30% of the electricity load to the PPA contract. This would allow for cost savings as the contracted price cap means future prices up to 2030 will never be higher than current prices under the PPA and it will assist Council in meeting its target of zero net greenhouse gas emissions by 2026.

From 1 July 2025 until 31 December 2030, Council's electricity portfolio provider will look like:

- All electricity market accounts and street lighting through the PPA.
- All unmetered electricity remains through Origin Energy with no contract.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Warranambool SME Price Comparison [7.12.1 - 145 pages]

7.13. Community Development Fund 2024-2025 Round 2

DIRECTORATE : City Wellbeing

Purpose:

This report provides information on the Community Development Fund 2024/2025 Round 2 applications and recommended allocation of grants for approval.

Executive Summary

- Council received eighteen (18) applications for the Community Development Fund 2024/2025 Round 2 program.
- Of the eighteen (18) applications, four (4) applicants were ineligible, and one (1) application was adjusted to meet the category funding amount.
- This report recommends \$61,098 be allocated to fourteen (14) eligible community clubs and organisations under the Community Development Fund 2024/2025 Round 2 program.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council

1. Approve funding of \$61,098 to fourteen community clubs and organisations under the Community Development Fund 2024/25 Round 2 Program as follows:

Applicant	Total CDF Allocated
Warrnambool Camera Club	\$4,969
Find Your Voice Collective	\$4,500
Warrnambool Organ Festival	\$4,669
Warrnambool Symphony Orchestra	\$4,430
Warrnambool Community Garden	\$5,000
Russell Creek Landcare Group	\$4,900
Warrnambool Springers Gymnastics	\$5,000
Mens Shed Warrnambool	\$5,000
Warrnambool Dog Training School	\$4,181
Breakwater Barbell	\$5,000
City of Warrnambool Rowing Club	\$5,000
Kiwanis Club of Warrnambool	\$5,000
South C Dragons	\$2,518
Warrnambool Masters Swimming Club	\$931

2. Advise all applicants of the outcome of the assessment process and where applicable, Council guidelines associated with the grant.
3. Approve the roll-over of unspent funds from Round 1 and Round 2 of the 2024/2025 Community Development Fund being \$43,902, to the 2025/2026 budget allocation for Community Development Fund.

Background

Council's Community Development Fund aims to support the development and capacity of Warrnambool clubs and associations. Funding is available for projects, equipment and activities which meet the grant program eligibility and criteria and contribute to participation, club capacity and sustainability, and the livability of the City.

Under the guidelines, eligible community groups and clubs can submit applications for grants of up to \$5,000.

\$105,000 has been allocated for the 2024/2025 Community Development Fund Round 2, following allocation of \$90,792 in Round 1. The round opened on 24 March 2025 and closed on 4 May 2025.

The program was advertised through:

- Council's website and social media platforms,
- CONNECT Warrnambool Facebook posts (7.9K followers) and email to website subscribers which is now linked to 253 local groups,
- Direct email to sport and recreation and the arts and culture databases and sustainability environmental groups and previous recipients of CDF funding.

Applications were submitted and managed through the online platform Smartygrants.

Applications were evaluated by a panel of Council officers that represent each of the grant categories; Sport and Recreation, Arts and Culture, and Environment and Sustainability. All panel members assessed all applications. Each assessment criteria is scored (5 = excellent, 4 = good, 3 = satisfactory, 2 = weak and 1 = unsatisfactory) so that a weighted score can be calculated to rank applications.

Based on the total funding pool available (\$105,000), the following allocations were aligned to each category, noting that the Event Category is managed as a separate grant round. In the instance that the total pool of the funding in each category was not expended, then any remaining funds could be redirected to other categories where applications exceeded the funding pool. The funding pools for each were:

- Sport and Recreation \$45,000.
- Culture and Arts \$35,000.
- Environment & Sustainability \$20,000.

Applicants had to demonstrate an alignment with one of the listed grant categories and criteria and were assessed based on weighted criteria within the category - **refer 2024/25 CDF Guidelines – Round 2 Attachment 1**.

Successful applicants from Round 1 were ineligible for consideration in Round 2. Applicants were also required to submit an audited financial statement or current bank statement to help determine their capacity to complete the project and their need for assistance.

Grant Categories

Category	Stream	Stream Detail
Sport and Recreation		
	Access & Inclusion	Projects that create opportunities for participation for women & girls and people with a disability
	Increase Participation	Innovative projects that increase participation and raise awareness of club activity
	Capacity Building	Training and/or development opportunities that improve the governance or culture of the club
	Equipment Purchase	Purchase of items that contribute to the capacity of a club to deliver programs (must have a participation outcome)
Arts and Culture		
	Access & Inclusion	Projects that increase access to creative activities for people with a disability or young people.
	Increase Participation	Innovative projects that encourage community participation in creative activities.
	Capacity Building	Not for profit development opportunities open to community that expand knowledge, improve skill or introduce new techniques, methods or opportunities for creative expression, or increases the strength and capacity of the club or organisation
	Exhibition/Performance	Venue hire and/or purchase of items that contribute to the capacity of an artist or group to deliver performances/exhibitions or programs
Environment & Sustainability		
	Green Warrnambool	Development and delivery of environmental or sustainability projects or programs within the municipality, including equipment purchase of assets that contribute to the capacity of a club or organisation to deliver environmental or sustainability programs
	Zero Warrnambool	Renewable energy, water efficiency & sustainability improvements to community buildings and facilities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and/or save water
	Adaptable Warrnambool	Activities or programs that support and prepare the club or organisation for climate change adaption
	Wise Warrnambool	Development and delivery of activities or programs that support a closed loop or circular economy and/or seek to conserve, avoid, reduce, re-use or recycle waste and resources
	Naturally Warrnambool	Projects that undertake revegetation, including maintenance and infill planting of previous revegetation sites and/or weed control or pest animal activities
	Blue Warrnambool	Projects and programs that save water and protect waterways, coastal areas and the marine environment

Assessment Summary

This funding round closed for submissions at midnight on Sunday 4 May 2025. Eighteen (18) applications were received requesting \$81,125.

All eligible applications were assessed against the CDF weighted criteria.

Under the program guidelines, the assessment panel identified four applications that were ineligible to apply for funding, and one application was adjusted to meet the funding category as they requested more than the category amount.

The four applications who were supported in Round 1 were deemed ineligible for Round 2; Beach Patrol Inc, Southwest Strength Sports Inc, Warrnambool Coastcare Landcare Network and Warrnambool Wolves FC. The application adjusted to meet the funding category amount was from the Warrnambool Men's Shed.

Fourteen applications are recommended to be fully funded.

Fund Budget

\$100,000 is allocated for the 2024/2025 Community Development Fund Round 2. There is \$5,000 remaining from Round 1 program.

Eighteen applications requesting \$81,125 were submitted in this round.

Four applications were deemed ineligible after receiving funding in Round 1. The remaining fourteen applications were assessed against the CDF criteria. Based on the project merit and balance of funds available, \$61,098 is recommended to be funded.

Allocation summary:

- Sport and Recreation \$32,630 (from \$45,000).
- Culture and Arts \$18,568 (from \$35,000).
- Environment and Sustainability \$9,900 (from \$20,000).

The following organisations and projects are recommended to be funded.

Applicant	Project Title	Funding Category	Total CDF Allocated
Warrnambool Camera Club	Improving and Increasing Engagement	Culture and Arts (access & inclusion)	\$4,969
Find Your Voice Collective	Studio Arts Program	Culture and Arts (capacity building)	\$4,500
Warrnambool Organ Festival	Warrnambool's Last Night of the Proms	Culture and Arts (exhibition/performance)	\$4,669
Warrnambool Symphony Orchestra	Annual Children's Concert	Culture and Arts (exhibition/performance)	\$4,430
Warrnambool Community Garden	Connecting health, creativity and community at the Community Garden Market	Environment and Sustainability (green)	\$5,000
Russell Creek Landcare Group	Inspiring volunteers through revegetation works to enhance Russell Creek habitat	Environment and Sustainability (naturally)	\$4,900
Warrnambool Springers Gymnastics	Gymnastic flooring upgrade	Sport and Recreation (access & inclusion)	\$5,000
Mens Shed Warrnambool	Upgrade to Community Facilities	Sport and Recreation (increase participation)	\$5,000
Warrnambool Dog Training School	Signage for Visibility and Community Engagement	Sport and Recreation (increase participation)	\$4,181
Breakwater Barbell	Purchase of training equipment	Sport and Recreation (equipment purchase)	\$5,000

Applicant	Project Title	Funding Category	Total CDF Allocated
City of Warrnambool Rowing Club	Oarswomen Training and Competition Equipment	Sport and Recreation (equipment purchase)	\$5,000
Kiwanis Club of Warrnambool	Barbeque Trailer upgrade	Sport and Recreation (equipment purchase)	\$5,000
South C Dragons	Community Connection Through Modern Technology	Sport and Recreation (equipment purchase)	\$2,518
Warrnambool Masters Swimming Club	Swim Training Equipment	Sport and Recreation (equipment purchase)	\$931

Financial Impact

All allocations have been made within existing budgets. A total of \$105,000 was available for Round 2 of the Community Development Fund. Total allocations are \$61,098.

The \$5,000 uncommitted from Round 1 and remaining unallocated from Round 2 (\$38,902) is proposed to be rolled over into the 2025/2026 financial year. This surplus will benefit the overall program and submissions, especially with the new minor capital works category offering grants of up to \$10,000. The additional funds will enable more eligible minor capital works applications to be supported.

Legislation / Policy / Council Plan Context

1 A healthy community

1.3 Health and wellbeing : Council will take action to improve health, wellbeing and safety outcomes for Warrnambool's community.

1.5 Recreation, arts, culture and heritage: Council will support opportunities to participate in a wide range of recreational, arts and cultural programs that promote activity, wellbeing, diversity heritage and which increase community connectedness.

2 A Sustainable environment

2.6 Awareness and celebration: Council will foster community awareness and recognition of the benefits of positive outcomes for Warrnambool's environment

Timing

Upon endorsement by Council of the recommendations, all applicants will be notified by email of the outcome of their application on 3 June. The next round of the Community Development Fund will be in 2025/26 with the program opening on 3 June 2025.

Community Impact / Consultation

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application by email on 3 June 2025.

Legal Risk/Impact

N/A.

Officers' Declaration of Interest

Nil.

Collaborative Procurement

N/A.

Conclusion

Eighteen applications requesting \$81,125 were submitted in this funding round. Four applications were deemed ineligible after receiving funding in Round 1. The remaining fourteen applications were assessed against the CDF criteria. Based on the project merit and balance of funds available, \$61,098 is recommended to be funded.

Subject to Council endorsement of this report's recommendations, all applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Community Development Fund 2024/25 Round 2 Guidelines [7.13.1 - 7 pages]
2. Assessment Report Round 2, 2025 Report [7.13.2 - 1 page]

7.14. Advisory Committee & Reference Group Reports

DIRECTORATE : City Infrastructure & Environment

Purpose:

This report contains the record of the Cycling Reference Group Committee meeting, occurring on Wednesday 7 May 2025.

Executive Summary

This report relates to the Cycling Reference Group meeting, held Wednesday 7 May 2025, with a range of items discussed.

Key items from the meeting include discussion on the endorsed work plan, Council strategy tie-in and the review of upcoming capital projects.

RECOMMENDATION

That the record of the Cycling Reference Group meeting held on 7 May 2025, be received.

Background

The Cycling Reference Group (CRG) was formed in 2016. The CRG includes members of the community who are active members of the local cycling community, be that recreational; road racing; road biking; mountain biking; commuter; and/or cycling with children, youth, or older people.

Issues

The recent adoption of the Work Plan has highlighted key issues for the group to target over the next two years.

Items of interest include;

- Infrastructure additions and improvements (Pump Track, Off-road Cycling Circuit, Deakin Link).
- The review of capital projects proposed for the municipality.
- Rail Trail behavior change.
- East Warrnambool Traffic Management.
- Review of cycling maps in line with Principal Bicycle Network (PBN) development.
- Bike lanes and wayfinding.
- General cycling advocacy.

Financial Impact

There will be no direct financial cost to Council, however, there is a small commitment of officer resources both as members of and to support the activities of the CRG.

Legislation / Policy / Council Plan Context

1 A healthy community

1.3 Health and wellbeing : Council will take action to improve health, wellbeing and safety outcomes for Warrnambool's community.

1.4 An accessible city: Council will improve physical and social accessibility to community services, facilities, places and precincts.

Timing

The current CRG membership term for community members runs from December 2023 through to November 2025.

Community Impact / Consultation

The CRG report outlines the outcomes the group has achieved during the three years, providing a cyclists' perspective to community road safety messaging and education, new infrastructure, and strategic projects.

Legal Risk / Impact

The CRG is a reference group only and holds no decision-making power. The CRG can propose recommendations to Council based on their knowledge and experience as members of the local cycling community. In addition to this the role of the group is to provide information to Council to support informed decision making in matters that relate to cycling in the community.

Officers' Declaration of Interest

No officer declared an interest in the Cycling Reference Group.

Conclusion

This report relates to the Cycling Reference Group meeting, held Wednesday 7 May 2025, with a range of items discussed.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Cycling Reference Group Meeting Minutes - Wednesday 7 May 2025 [7.14.1 - 8 pages]
2. Warrnambool Cycling Reference Group Works Plan 2023 - 2025 [7.14.2 - 11 pages]

7.15. Informal Meetings of Council Reports

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with copies of Informal Meetings of Council (previously known as "Assembly of Councillor Records") as previously required under section 80A(2) of the Local Government Act 1989.

Background

Section 80A(2) of the *Local Government Act 1989* required the record of an Assembly of Councillors to be reported at an ordinary Council meeting.

Assembly of Councillor Records are no longer a requirement in the *Local Government Act 2020* as of 24 October 2020. However, under Council's Governance Rules, a summary of the matters discussed at the meeting are required to be tabled at the next convenient Council meeting and recorded in the minutes of that Council meeting.

Report

The record of the following Informal Meetings of Council are enclosed:

1. Monday 5 May 2025.
2. Monday 12 May 2025.
3. Monday 26 May 2025.

RECOMMENDATION

That the record of the Informal Meetings of Council held on 5, 12 and 26 May 2025 be received.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Assembly of Councillors Record 12 May 2025 [7.15.1 - 1 page]
2. Assembly of Councillors Record 19 May 2025 [7.15.2 - 1 page]
3. Assembly of Councillors Record 26 May 2025 [7.15.3 - 2 pages]

7.16. Mayoral & Chief Executive Officer Council Activities - Summary Report

Purpose

This report summarises Mayoral and Chief Executive Officer Council activities since the last Scheduled Meeting of Council which particularly relate to key social, economic and environmental issues of direct relevance to the Warrnambool community.

Report

Date	Location	Function
6 May 2025	Virtual	Deputy Mayor – Attended the Municipal Association of Victoria Delegates Welcome and Induction.
8 May 2025	Warrnambool	Mayor – Attended the Warrnambool Men’s Probus Club.
	Warrnambool	Chief Executive Officer – Attended the dKin Difference, Launch of Roots of Resilience: A Celebration of Deakin Warrnambool’s History.
9 May 2025	Warrnambool	Mayor – Attended the 2025 Warrnibald Portrait & Art Event Opening Night.
15 May 2025	Virtual	Chief Executive Officer – Attended the Regional Cities Victoria CEOs Meeting.
16 May 2025	Warrnambool	Mayor – Attended the IDAHOBIT Day Flag Raising Ceremony.
	Warrnambool	Mayor – Attended the Community Radio Endeavour Warrnambool (CREW Inc) Studio Opening.
	Melbourne	Deputy Mayor and Chief Executive Officer – Attended the Municipal Association of Victoria State Council Meeting.
20 May 2025	Warrnambool	Mayor – Attended the Miura International Association Members Lunch.
	Warrnambool	Chief Executive Officer – Attended National Volunteers Week event.
22 May 2025	Virtual	Mayor and Chief Executive Officer – Met with Nick Staikos MP, Minister Local Government.
30 May 2025	Warrnambool	Mayor – Attended the 3AW Breakfast Radio Broadcast from Flagstaff Hill Maritime Museum.
	Warrnambool	Mayor – Attended the Yoorrook Justice Commission Walk for Truth.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Mayoral and Chief Executive Officer Council Activities – Summary Report be received.

8. Notice of Motion - No. 2159

Cr. Vicki Jellie

Notice is given that at the Scheduled Meeting of Council to be held on Monday 2 June 2025, I propose to move that:

“Warrnambool City Council

1. *Acknowledges that state legislation in relation to the Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund levy legally forces Council to –
 - a. *Collect the levy on behalf of the Victorian Government;*
 - b. *Not issue a separate rate notice for the levy; and*
 - c. *Proportionally allocate a payment to the State Government to pay for the levy in the event that a ratepayer pays less than the total amount of Council Rates and the levy.**
2. *While acknowledging its legal obligation to comply, strongly objects to the imposition of this responsibility, which shifts a state taxation collection burden onto local government and potentially impacts the relationship between Council and our community.*
3. *Direct the Chief Executive Officer to write to the Victorian Premier, Treasurer and local members of Parliament to express Council’s concern about the Emergency Services and Volunteers Levy which will unfairly impact on rural and regional communities and to encourage the State Government to do more to support drought affected communities of South-West Victoria.*
4. *Direct the Chief Executive Officer to write to the Federal Minister for Emergency Management and Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories to encourage the Federal Government to do more to support drought affected communities of South-West Victoria.”*

9. General Business

10. Urgent Business

11. Close of Meeting