

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

Community Vision:

By 2035, Indigo Shire will be home to strong, resilient communities that embrace sustainable practices, foster meaningful connections, and honour our rich heritage. Residents across all ages and life stages will experience a deep sense of belonging through balanced growth, responsible environmental stewardship, improved infrastructure and enhanced wellbeing.

TO BE HELD: Tuesday 24 February 2026 at 6:30 pm

LOCATION: Council Chambers, 2 Kurrajong Way, Beechworth, and live streamed on Council's website

ATTENDEES:	NAME	TITLE
	Cr Sophie Price	Mayor
	Cr Jane Dowsley	Deputy Mayor
	Cr Greg Bourke	Councillor
	Cr John Harvey	Councillor
	Cr Roberta Horne	Councillor
	Cr Scott Landells	Councillor
	Cr Diane Shephard	Councillor
	Trevor Ierino	Chief Executive Officer
	Ian Ellett	Director Infrastructure Services
	Greg Pinkerton	Director Planning & Corporate Services
	Sally Rice	Director Community & Economic Development
	Annabel Harding	Governance Coordinator

APOLOGIES:

Council meetings are live streamed and recorded. The voices and images of those participating in the meeting, and in the gallery, may be captured as part of this recording.

Acknowledgement of Country

Indigo Shire Council acknowledges the original custodians of these lands. The people of the rivers and the hills have walked these lands for thousands of years as well as today, and we pay respect to the elders of the past and present.

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- 1 WELCOME**
- 2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE TRADITIONAL OWNERS OF THE LAND**
- 3 APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE**
- 4 DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**
- 5 OPEN FORUM**

Responses given by Councillors and Council Staff during Open Forum are the opinion of the individual responders, and accurate at the time of response, to the best of their knowledge.

- 6 COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL ACHIEVEMENTS**
- 7 CONDOLENCES**
- 8 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING(S)**

RECOMMENDATION

That the following minutes be confirmed:

1. Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 16 December 2025 as published on Council's website; and
2. Confidential Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 16 December 2025, as provided to Councillors under separate cover.

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9 BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

- At the Confidential Council Meeting on 25 November 2025, Council endorsed the recommendations from the Indigo Shire Community Grants and Awards Advisory Committee to present the following recipients with an Indigo Shire Australia Day Awards for 2026:

Award category	Recipient
Indigo Shire Citizen of the Year	Mrs Gwena Gray
Young Citizen of the Year	Amy Schilling
Indigo Shire Community Organisation of the Year	Kiewa Cricket Club
Chiltern & District Certificate of Achievement	Shayne Prater
Kergunyah & District Certificate of Achievement	Rowan Wallace
Yackandandah & District Certificate of Achievement	David Pinder
Rutherglen & District Certificate of Achievement	Carol Fursdon
Emma George Junior Sporting Scholarship	Liana France

- At the Confidential Council Meeting on 16 December 2025, Council made the following appointments:
 - Ross Kearney was appointed as Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee for a further 11 months term until 16 October 2026; and
 - Russell James was appointed as a member of the Indigo Environment Advisory Committee.

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10 PETITIONS

Nil reports

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11 PLANNING AND CORPORATE SERVICES

11.1 JANUARY 2026 FINANCE REPORT

Phil Garoni - Finance Manager
Planning and Corporate Services

For Decision

RECOMMENDATION

That Council Accepts the January 2026 Finance Report noting the progress against the Council's Q1 Forecast.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the financial position for the 2025/26 financial year to 31 January 2026.

BACKGROUND

Each month Council reports the year to date (YTD) financial result. The year-to-date figures contained within this report and attachments compare the January result against the YTD adopted Q1 forecast.

DISCUSSION

The income statement shows that Council is \$1.069m favourable on a year-to-date basis compared to the 2025/26 adopted Q1 forecast. This is spread across various categories. Noting some variances are a result of timing variances that will be reduced as the year progresses.

YTD Financial Position

This monthly report for the 2025/26 financial year provides Council with the following reports and its financial position as at 31st January 2026 including comparison to 2025/26 adopted Q1 forecast with regards to:

- Income Statement
- Treasury (cash management)
- Borrowings Table
- Capital Works

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January 2026 -Income Statement

Account Group	Year to Date (YTD)				2025/26 Annual Budget	2025/26 Q1 forecast	January YTD 2024/25 Actual
	YTD actuals	YTD Qtr1 forecast	YTD Variance \$	YTD Variance %			
Income							
Contributions - Developer	72,500	72,500	0	0%	100,600	100,600	123,750
Contributions - Operating	18,600	18,542	58	0%	36,076	36,076	116,018
Operating Grants	5,416,707	3,889,470	1,527,237	39%	8,514,005	6,013,983	8,536,616
Interest Income	246,293	223,389	22,904	10%	358,479	358,479	243,653
Other Revenue	1,425,397	1,344,094	81,303	6%	2,685,284	2,685,284	1,268,552
Rates & charges	20,968,810	20,922,175	46,635	0%	20,922,175	20,922,175	20,112,451
Reimbursements	120,786	34,198	86,588	253%	112,504	112,504	157,707
Statutory Fees & Fines	701,798	609,860	91,938	15%	1,430,660	1,430,660	608,054
User Charges	2,879,144	2,821,562	57,582	2%	4,481,784	4,481,784	2,689,210
Total Income	31,850,034	29,935,790	1,914,245	6%	38,641,567	36,141,545	33,856,012
Expense							
Borrowing Costs	43,197	49,515	6,318	13%	164,182	164,182	68,738
Contract Payments	4,756,725	3,833,878	(922,847)	(24%)	8,294,502	8,723,077	4,291,924
Depreciation	5,443,166	5,442,926	(240)	(0%)	8,570,113	8,578,113	4,587,602
Employee Costs	9,305,827	9,596,683	290,856	3%	16,285,812	16,287,812	9,020,602
Materials & Consumables	3,957,689	4,148,751	191,062	5%	6,136,235	6,136,235	3,983,495
Other Expenses	2,142,284	1,721,107	(421,177)	(24%)	3,275,921	3,275,921	2,037,202
Utilities	299,531	309,904	10,373	3%	573,791	573,791	262,444
Total Expense	25,948,420	25,102,764	(845,656)	(3%)	43,300,556	43,739,131	24,252,007
Surplus / (Deficit)*	5,901,615	4,833,026	1,068,589	22%	(4,658,989)	(7,597,586)	9,604,004
* For both actual and budget a positive net result means a favourable contribution to Council, which is referred to as a Surplus and a negative net result means a unfavourable contribution to Council, which is referred to as a Deficit.							
(Red variance) is unfavourable							
Black variance is favourable							

Income

Operating Grants

YTD favourable variance of **\$1.528m** is mainly within the following:

- \$1.477m natural disaster funding which will be offset by corresponding expenditure.
- \$20.8k weather station funding which will be offset by corresponding expenditure. lower than expected.
- \$18k of Freeza funding which will be offset by corresponding expenditure.
- \$15k L2P funding which will be offset by corresponding expenditure.

Other Revenue

YTD favourable variance of **\$81k** due to quarry sales higher than expected.

Reimbursements

YTD favourable variance of **\$86.5k** is mainly within the following across various service areas:

- \$45k relating to Workcover claims
- \$30k for insurance claims
- \$9k around other external reimbursements

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Statutory Fees and Fines

YTD favourable variance of **\$91.9k** is mainly within the following across various service areas:

- \$50k relating to subdivision fees.
- \$34k for infringements received than expected

User Charges

YTD favourable variance of **\$57.5k** is mainly within the following across various service areas:

- \$44k in Buller Gas sales higher than expected which will be partially offset by increase in cost of gas purchased.
- \$8.9k in Buildings and Property relating to rental and lease income.
- \$7.8k relating to bike hire received in the Visitor Information Centres.

Expenditure

Contract Payments

YTD unfavourable variance of **(\$922.8k)** is mainly within natural disaster works.

Employee costs

YTD favourable variance of \$290.8k due to vacant positions and delayed Enterprise Bargaining increases. This budget will move towards budget as the year progresses.

Material and Consumables

YTD favourable variance of **\$191k** is mainly due to timing of the public liability insurance.

Other Expenses

YTD unfavourable variance of **(\$421k)** is mainly within the following across various service areas:

- (\$199k) in legal expenses mainly across Building & Property and Planning service areas.
- (\$198.5k) in usage of plant and fleet vehicles across Drainage, Pathways, Parks and Gardens, Roads & Bridge Maintenance and Tree Services.
- (\$20.8k) in bank charges for availability and usage of access to overdraft facility.

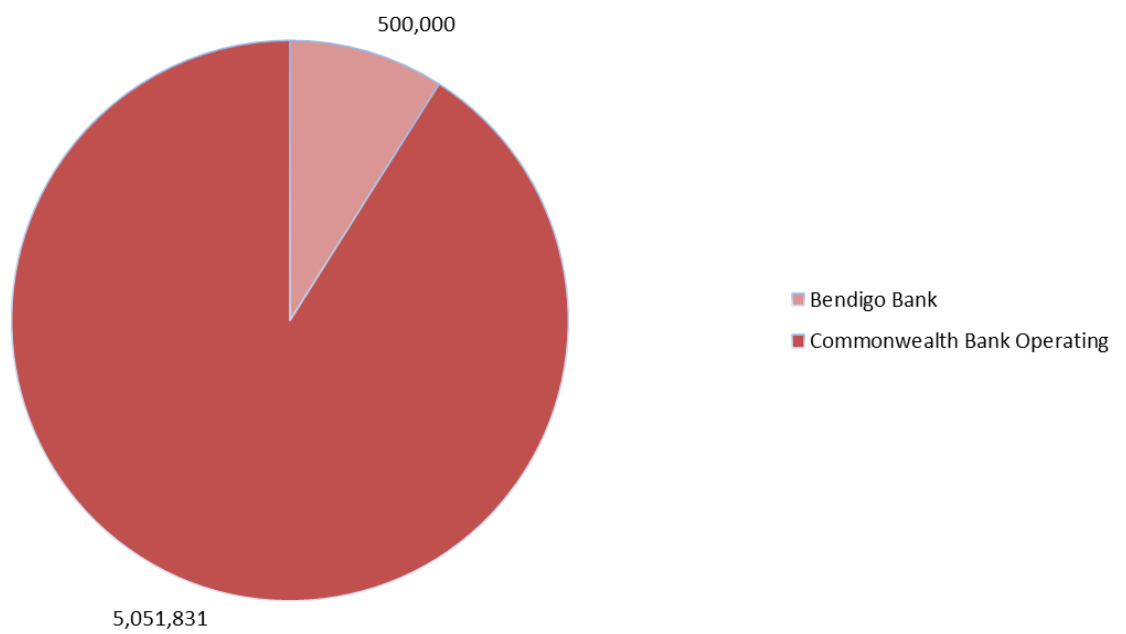
Treasury

Cash Position

Council's Cash position at the end of January was \$5.55 million. Compared to the same time last year's position of \$1.57 million. Main reason for increased position compared to last year is timing of funding received and works expended on natural disaster. Along with timing of capital works being at 31.5% of expenditure.

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Cash & Investments as at 31 January 2026



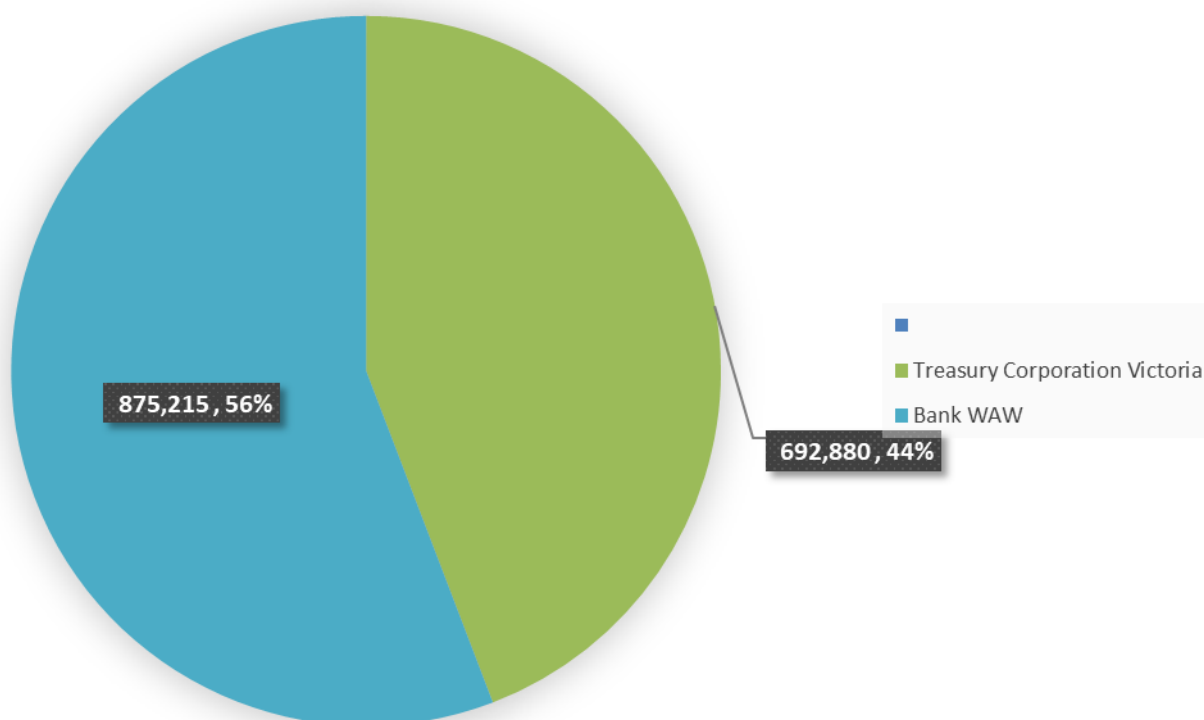
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Borrowings

Below is a summary of all Council's borrowings. The table shows original borrowed loans, terms of loans, rates and maturity with outstanding balances at the end of January 2026 of \$1,568,095.

Indigo Shire Council - Borrowing Report as at 31 January 2026						
Bank	Term - Years	Rate %	Date of Maturity	Original loan amount		Balance owed
TCV	10	4.15	1/06/2032	1,000,000		692,880
Bank WAW	10	2.08	27/06/2034	1,000,000		875,215
Total of All Borrowings				2,000,000		1,568,095

Borrowings as at 31 January 2026



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Capital Works

The combined YTD project expenditure as at the end of January, across both the Capital Works and Non ISC projects was \$4,214,444 at the end of January. This total is comprised of \$4,051,655 in capital projects and \$162,789 against Non ISC assets. This represents 31.5% of the capital works adopted Q1 forecast program.

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Summary Capital Works Income & Expenditure As at 31 January 2026

	Income	Expenditure	Annual Budget Net 2025-2026	Quarter 1 Forecast Net 2025-2026
Property				
Land	-		2,500	
Land improvements	-	-	-	
Total land	-	-	2,500	-
Buildings	75,534	630,646	561,470	
Heritage buildings	165,341	192,876	390,000	
Total buildings	240,875	823,522	951,470	-
Total property	240,875	823,522	953,970	-
Plant and equipment				
Plant, machinery and equipment and fleet	-	113,730	1,458,569	
Fixtures, fittings and furniture	2,500	16,429	45,000	
Computers and telecommunications		393,418	1,207,314	
Library books	72,975	34,548	-	
Total plant and equipment	75,475	558,125	2,710,883	-
Infrastructure				
Roads	2,587,485	1,683,386	871,065	
Bridges	572,991	119,213	440,246	
Footpaths and cycleways		63,183	255,000	
Drainage		31,204	469,918	
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	41,854	738,564	1,844,806	
Parks, open space and streetscapes	25,000	34,458	29,199	
Total infrastructure	3,227,330	2,670,008	3,910,234	-
Total Capital Works	3,543,680	4,051,655	7,575,087	-

Summary NON ISC Income & Expenditure As at 31 January 2026

	Income	Expenditure	Annual Budget Net 2025-2026	Quarter 1 Forecast Net 2025-2026
Yackandandah Golf Club Facility	25,000	-	-	-
Carlyle Cemetery - Drainage Works		102	-	8,955
Chiltern Recreation Reserve	2,425			(2,425)
Barkly Park Upgrade Female Change Room		15,591	274,091	295,609
Butson Park Yack Changerooms	500,000		22,500	(128,000)
Barnawartha Recreation Reserve Lighting Upgrade	223,549	129,603	30,000	(150,544)
Barnawartha Recreation Reserve - Playground	93,289	2,831	-	(94,229)
Allans Flat Warehole Enhancements	57,498	14,662	-	14,969
Wahgunyah Recreation Reserve - Lighting Upgrade	55,566	-	-	-
Total Projects	957,327	162,789	326,591	(55,665)
Total NON ISC Owned Assets	957,327	162,789	326,591	(55,665)

*** The above statement of Capital Works & NON ISC Owned Assets should be read in conjunction with the Capital

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STRATEGIC CONTEXT

COUNCIL PLAN 2025 – 2029	
Theme	4. Governance and Financial Sustainability
Strategic Objective	4.1 Financial sustainability and strategic resource management - Ensure Council's long-term financial viability through prudent asset management, collaborative service delivery, and proactive planning that balances current needs with future sustainability.

SOCIAL/COMMUNITY IMPLICATIONS

This report provides details of Council's performance across a range of services, works and programs that support and enhance the wellbeing of residents and visitors to Indigo Shire.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

In May 2017 Council adopted the following resolution.

That Council:

1. *divests its investments (when they become due) to financial institutions that do not invest in the fossil fuel industry.*
2. *divests future long-term borrowings when they fall due, to financial institutions that do not invest in the fossil fuel industry.*
3. *notes that Council will retain the current (non-divested) transactional banking provider at this time, however Council will advise this bank the intention to move to a divested provider in the future if they continue to support the fossil fuel industry; and*
4. *writes to Council's current banking providers to advise them of Council's stance on fossil-free financial institutions*

In accordance with this resolution:

- All investments are held with financial institutions that have divested their interests away from fossil fuel companies.
- Transactional banking has not been reassessed since the resolution and remains with a non-divested bank.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Addressed throughout the report.

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

The Local Government Act requires Council to report financial information quarterly. Indigo Shire Council report financials monthly, as well as a more comprehensive Report at completion of each quarter.

All financial reporting is compliant with the Australian Accounting Standards and audited annually by the Victorian Auditor General Office.

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RISK & OPPORTUNITY MANAGEMENT

Description	Likelihood	Consequence	Current Risk Rating	Controls
Poor performance against budget	Possible	Moderate	Medium	Regular monitoring and reporting of financial position

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Engagement undertaken

Nil

Engagement outcomes

Nil

Engagement proposed

Each month Council reports on financial performance in the public Council Meeting. This is part of the annual performance planning and reporting cycle that also includes annual budgets (operating and capital), monthly reports, and annual financial and performance reporting.

CONCLUSION

In summary, over half the year is showing a favorable result compared with Council's YTD Q1 forecast. Noting a Quarter 2 forecast adoption is being taken to Council in February.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Under section 130(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Governance Rule 24, the following officers declare that they have no interests to disclose in providing this report:

- Greg Pinkerton - Director Planning and Corporate Services
- Phil Garoni - Finance Manager

Attachments

1. Jan 26 - Service Plan Statement - original [11.1.1 - 1 page]

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January 2026- Service plan area statement							
Note: For both actual and budget a positive net result means a postive net contribution to Council and a negative net result means a net cost to Council.							
(Red variance) is unfavourable							
Black variance is favourable							
	Year to Date (YTD)						
Service Plan Area	YTD actuals	YTD forecast	YTD variance \$	YTD variance %	2025/26 Annual Budget	2025/26 Q1 forecast	January YTD 2024/25 Actual
Community & econonmic development services							
Community Development	9,679	19,001	(9,322)	(49%)	(576,074)	(280,320)	96,226
Creative Communities	(584,708)	(560,386)	(24,322)	(4%)	(1,051,883)	(1,017,609)	(557,041)
Early Years	(74,500)	(43,309)	(31,190)	(72%)	(297,115)	(283,410)	(10,480)
Economic Development	(95,147)	(118,639)	23,492	20%	(313,350)	(349,350)	(113,702)
Recreation	(537,254)	(536,801)	(453)	(0%)	(981,721)	(981,721)	(486,870)
Tourism Development	(449,489)	(482,447)	32,958	7%	(764,809)	(699,809)	(386,807)
Visitor Experience and Museums	(740,094)	(797,641)	57,547	7%	(1,390,739)	(1,390,739)	(791,335)
Young People	(16,377)	931	(17,308)	(1,859%)	(127,098)	(63,989)	81,526
Surplus / (deficit) community & econonmic development services	(2,487,891)	(2,519,292)	31,401	1%	(5,502,789)	(5,066,948)	(2,168,481)
Infrastructure services							
Asset management	(180,391)	(171,290)	(9,101)	(5%)	(316,227)	(316,227)	(177,973)
Buildings & property	(505,074)	(507,227)	2,153	0%	(1,072,482)	(1,072,482)	(503,555)
Buller gas	481,537	461,116	20,421	4%	663,008	663,008	578,482
Capital works - Management	(223,887)	(215,122)	(8,765)	(4%)	(366,647)	(366,647)	(155,936)
DevelopmentEngineering	(51,462)	(76,502)	25,040	33%	(93,342)	(93,342)	(62,477)
Drainage	(71,841)	(27,718)	(44,123)	(159%)	(46,671)	(46,671)	(34,510)
Emergency Management	1,217,101	815,207	401,894	49%	744,298	744,298	313,613
Environment & sustainability	(103,525)	(181,601)	78,076	43%	(389,565)	(389,565)	(165,175)
Parks & gardens	(614,830)	(601,341)	(13,489)	(2%)	(1,034,486)	(1,034,486)	(662,746)
Pathways	(159,092)	(118,216)	(40,876)	(35%)	(297,179)	(297,179)	(77,858)
Plant equipment & fleet	(173,479)	(216,297)	42,818	20%	(69,033)	(69,033)	(17,847)
Quarries	225,244	113,454	111,790	99%	31,840	31,840	(5,303)
Roads & bridge maintenance	(1,028,478)	(851,828)	(176,650)	(21%)	(1,592,482)	(1,592,482)	448,695
Tree Services	(454,913)	(304,400)	(150,513)	(49%)	(716,605)	(716,605)	(287,065)
Waste Management	1,340,185	1,092,234	247,951	23%	(763,668)	(763,668)	2,018,840
Surplus / (deficit) infrastructure services	(302,903)	(789,531)	486,628	62%	(5,319,241)	(5,319,241)	1,209,184
Office of the CEO							
Carlyle Cemetery	24,486	5,823	18,663	321%	0	0	14,377
Communications	(197,099)	(223,418)	26,319	12%	(400,851)	(400,851)	(213,815)
Customer Experience	(331,662)	(363,908)	32,246	9%	(623,113)	(623,113)	(250,568)
Executive management	(1,025,171)	(1,104,440)	79,269	7%	(1,939,431)	(1,939,431)	(996,256)
Governance	(90,812)	(92,612)	1,800	2%	(177,815)	(177,815)	(99,847)
Information management	(126,108)	(112,743)	(13,365)	(12%)	(194,146)	(194,146)	(95,764)
People and culture	(436,328)	(464,717)	28,389	6%	(858,553)	(858,553)	(459,395)
Risk management	(664,999)	(870,707)	205,708	24%	(1,001,107)	(1,001,107)	(825,902)
Surplus / (deficit) office of the CEO	(2,847,693)	(3,226,722)	379,029	12%	(5,195,016)	(5,195,016)	(2,927,170)
Planning & corporate services							
Asset depreciation	(5,132,027)	(5,132,483)	456	0%	(8,007,249)	(8,007,249)	(4,301,899)
Building control services	(171,816)	(175,851)	4,035	2%	(199,027)	(199,027)	(213,434)
Environmental health services	66,777	(24,820)	91,596	369%	(107,166)	(107,166)	19,196
Financial services	799,750	822,855	(23,105)	(3%)	1,528,533	1,528,533	3,526,673
Information technology	(1,117,995)	(1,101,010)	(16,985)	(2%)	(1,707,554)	(1,707,554)	(1,245,621)
Local laws & animals	(144,502)	(174,266)	29,764	17%	(88,230)	(88,230)	(157,091)
Planning	(525,997)	(570,859)	44,862	8%	(1,090,446)	(1,090,446)	(416,047)
Rates & property services	17,765,914	17,725,004	40,910	0%	17,654,757	17,654,757	16,278,694
Surplus / (deficit) planning & corporate services	11,540,102	11,368,570	171,532	2%	7,983,618	7,983,618	13,490,471
Surplus / (deficit)	5,901,615	4,833,026	1,068,590	22%	(8,033,428)	(7,597,586)	9,604,004

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11.2 QUARTER 2 2025/26 FINANCE REPORT

Phil Garoni - Finance Manager
Planning and Corporate Services

For Decision

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Adopts the Quarter 2 2025/26 forecast for both operating (as shown in the operating statement below) and capital (as shown in the attached Capital Works Monitor); and
2. Directs the Chief Executive Officer to report against these forecast figures for the remainder of the financial year.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to present Council with the Quarter 2 2025/26 (Q2) financial forecast for adoption.

BACKGROUND

The midpoint of the financial year is when Council re-forecasts the expected EOFY financial position. This re-forecast reviews the financial performance of the first half of the year and then adjusts the projections based on up-to-date information.

The Q2 forecast does not over-write the annual budget. Instead, it provides the Council and community with a more accurate estimate of the full year result. If adopted, the future monthly finance reports will compare actual results with the Q2 forecast. Importantly, the original annual budget will still be included on the monthly reports to ensure transparency.

The quarter 2 forecast is traditionally the main forecast for the financial year and gives a strong indication of the financial projections for the full financial year.

The process required for the Q2 forecast is an extensive one in which budget managers review all expenses in their budgets and adjust for any savings, changes in plans, or new projects. The revised forecast is then reviewed by the Finance Committee on the way to being presented to a Council meeting for consideration.

Because the process is lengthy, and occurs over the Christmas/New Year period, the “first half” of the financial year is considered to be from July to the end of November (5 months) and the “second half” of the financial year is December to the end of June.

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DISCUSSION

To assist with readability, the discussion of the Q2 forecast is divided into three sections. The first section (1. Operating Budget) focusses on the operating forecast without the capital forecast. This part of council's financials relates to the income and expense of providing services to the community and operating the council.

The first section goes on to explain the main reasons for this favourable forecast.

The second part of this report (2. Capital Works) provides commentary on the capital works program (including major projects that are not Indigo Shire assets). The details of the capital program can be found in the attached Capital Works Monitor (CWM).

Throughout the attached CWM a number of projects have been the subject of small changes. This is a reflection of the changes that happen through the year as tender responses are received and works progress. Section 2 contains a commentary on the key Q2 changes.

The third part of this analysis (3. Overall Position) will combine the operating and capital results to provide an organisational total.

1. Operating Budget

Council's proposed Q2 operating forecast shows a full year result of \$6.980 million deficit compared to a Q1 forecast of \$7.597 million. This \$617k improvement in the EOFY result is a combination of \$1.259 million of additional income (from \$36.142 million to \$37.4 million) outpacing a \$642k increase in expenses (from \$43.738 million to \$44.38 million).

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2025/26 Quarter 2 - Income Statement

Account Group	Quarter 2 Forecast	Quarter 1 Forecast	Variance	Variance %	2025/26 Annual Budget	2024-25 Actuals
Income						
Contributions - Developer	93,100	100,600	(7,500)	(7.5%)	100,600	146,000
Contributions - Operating	35,977	36,076	(99)	(0.3%)	36,076	118,496
Operating Grants	7,260,611	6,013,983	1,246,629	20.7%	8,514,005	12,383,690
Interest Income	440,628	358,479	82,149	22.9%	358,479	415,891
Other Revenue	2,613,675	2,685,284	(71,609)	(2.7%)	2,685,284	2,368,447
Rates & charges	20,982,351	20,922,175	60,176	0.3%	20,922,175	20,120,659
Reimbursements	174,226	112,504	61,722	54.9%	112,504	384,235
Statutory Fees & Fines	1,370,714	1,430,660	(59,946)	(4.2%)	1,430,660	1,270,536
User Fees	4,428,998	4,481,784	(52,786)	(1.2%)	4,481,784	3,774,357
Total Income	37,400,281	36,141,545	1,258,736	3.5%	38,641,567	40,982,311
Expense						
Borrowing Costs	162,907	164,182	1,275	0.8%	164,182	137,440
Contract Payments	8,683,968	8,722,222	38,254	0.4%	8,294,502	7,959,982
Depreciation	9,161,540	8,578,113	(583,427)	(0.1)	8,570,113	12,602,307
EOY Loss on Disposals						309,169
Employee Costs	16,272,089	16,287,812	15,723	0.1%	16,285,812	16,018,907
Materials & Consumables	5,847,646	6,136,235	288,589	4.7%	6,136,235	5,920,310
Other Expenses	3,648,756	3,275,921	(372,835)	(0.1)	3,275,921	4,015,503
Utilities	603,325	573,791	(29,534)	(0.1)	573,791	672,901
Total Expense	44,380,231	43,738,276	(641,955)	(0.0)	43,300,556	47,636,519
Surplus / (Deficit)*	(6,979,950)	(7,596,731)	616,782	-8.1%	(4,658,989)	(6,654,207)

* For both actual and budget a positive net result means a favourable contribution to Council, which is referred to as a Surplus and a negative net result means a unfavourable contribution to Council, which is referred to as a Deficit.

(Red variance) is unfavourable

Black variance is favourable

Details of the main variance results +/- \$50k are shown below:

Income

- Operating Grants (\$1.247 million favourable)
 - \$1.477 million favourable in state government grants. This is a natural disaster grant for the continued remediation of the flood 2022 and storm events. \$696k of this is reimbursement for work that has already been performed, and \$781,290 is an advanced payment for work currently being completed. This completes almost all the work required to repair the damage caused in 2022. Further grant funding will be sought to fully finalise this project, and it is expected that all work will be completed by 30 June 2026.
- Interest Income (\$82k favourable)
 - Readjusted to respond to the early payment of the Financial Assistance Grant.

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- Other Revenue (\$72k unfavourable)
 - Internal plant hire (\$81k unfavourable) due to lower plant usage than forecast. This is an internal income (transfer between cost centres) and is matched by reduced expenses.
- Rates and Charges (\$60k favourable)
 - Higher supplementary rates compared to budget and previous years.
- Reimbursements (\$62k favourable)
 - One insurance claim (\$30k) and some Workcover reimbursements (\$34k). There are not usually budgeted.
- Statutory Fees and Fines (\$60k unfavourable)
 - Spread across statutory services (\$15k in Public Health, \$45k in Local Laws, and \$28k in Planning) due to lower levels of activity in these services, and some delays in following up on outstanding invoices.
- User Fees (\$53k unfavourable)
 - \$81k unfavourable at the Beechworth transfer station due to a lower-than-expected activity. The forecast is now in line with past years.

This analysis shows that the main permanent income favourability is the \$696k of flood reimbursements, and the \$60k from additional supplementary rates. The other favourable variances are matched by additional expenses.

Expense

- Depreciation (\$583k unfavourable)
 - Adjustment to depreciation forecast following 2024/25 EOFY audit adjustments.
- Materials and Consumables \$289k favourable relating to the timing of the public liability insurance.
- Other Expenses (\$373k unfavourable) spread across many services. The notable variances are;
 - Additional tree Maintenance (\$75k).
 - \$69k in Planning for additional legal expenses arising from VCAT cases.
 - \$61k in Finance due to additional bank charges because of the availability and usage of an overdraft facility.
 - \$44k additional building maintenance across a range of council properties. Overall, the expenditure is higher than originally budgeted, but in line with previous years

2. Capital Budget

The Q2 Capital Forecast adjustments, have been developed using currently available information to make either timing or budget variations for each project within the capital program. This report and the Capital Works Monitor (CWM) attached, provides details in relation to the forecasts for the end of the 2025/26 financial year.

Summary

The combined forecast expenditure for Capital Works, across both ISC and Non-ISC assets, is projected to be \$8,130,954 (\$7.67 million Capital and \$0.46 million Non-ISC).

The 'Q2 Forecast' Expenditure and Income columns are the projected end of year position. Where the Q2 Forecast is different to the 2025/26 Available Budget, it is noted as either a Budget Variance or a

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Timing Variance. If it is a budget variance, the resulting either positive or negative result is carried to the bottom line, having an impact on this year's budget position. If it is identified only as a timing variance, it is included in the Proposed Carry Forward column. The Budget Variance column shows actual cost variances (project savings or additional budget requirements) and the Timing Variance column is indicative simply of a movement between financial years (no increase or decrease in budget).

Notable Budget Variations

When the capital budget is developed, individual projects are scoped and costed using the best available information. During the delivery of the capital works program, and the development of the project specifics and construction details, the estimated project cost may increase or decrease across the life of the project as risks or variables are realised. The following projects have a proposed budgetary adjustment that will have an impact on the overall capital budget, with a bottom-line impact of an overspend of \$246,659.

- Yackandandah High Street Public Toilet Renewal (+\$47,290)

This project was unsuccessful in its application for grant funding. Consequently, \$47,290 of project expenditure will not be incurred, with this flowing through as a budgetary saving. This saving is also then linked with the receipt of \$37,290 less income than was budgeted for.

- Beechworth Bowling Club Roof Renewal (-\$30,662)

This project was forecast last year to be able to be delivered with \$30k in savings, which was put through to the bottom line. However, in finalising the project, a number of project contingencies were unexpectedly required, and the project has required the full initial budget allocation to complete the works.

- Chiltern Athenaeum (-\$7,778)

The long-running restoration of this heritage listed building has now been completed. Budget over expenditure (\$22,152) due to additional works has been offset by savings of \$4,638 from heritage painting funds and savings of \$9,736 in the athenaeum solar installation. These adjustments have resulted in an overspend of \$7,778.

- Burke Museum Temporary Storage (-\$36,744)

The establishment of a suitable medium-term temporary storage facility has required a number of additional scope items to make the facility appropriate for use. This additional expenditure has in the short term been offset by \$30,000 reallocated from the Burke roof repairs budget, whilst the design is being finalised.

- Additional Purchases – Plant & Fleet Replacement (-\$242,734)

The Q2 forecast contains provision for two additional pieces of plant (small excavator and mini roller trailer) as well as two utilities, totaling \$243k.

The plant items are to replace similar plant items not owned by Council, but which have been hired in over recent years and funded by the operational budget. Annual hire costs for these two items have been in excess of \$60,000.

The two utilities are similar, but with one currently being hired and the other a new acquisition. Collectively they are also estimated to cost around \$60k p.a. Hence, the total costs associated with the four items amount to \$120k p.a.

In each case, the cost of ownership and subsequent running costs is significantly less than the ongoing cost of continuous hire or lease. In accordance with the Plant & Fleet Management Procedure, the acquisition method is signed off by the Manager Finance following a suitable assessment of costs. Hence, the items are proposed to be purchased, and this is reflected in the increased forecast.

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As a result, reductions are being made in future Operational budgets (Roads & Bridge Maintenance) to recognise the reduced plant hire costs and to fund the capital purchases.

The 243k variance will be funded from the 2026/27 Capital Plant and Fleet replacement budget.

- Computer & Telecommunications (\$0)

The Q2 forecast contains a number of overs and unders across the project lines. The overall cost centre budget is being managed to a \$0 variance, with funding priorities being adjusted to reflect the IT Roadmap, under the supervision and governance of the IT Steering Group.

- Bridge Renewal – Boorhaman East Rd (\$35,361)

With the completion of this project, there have been savings of \$35,361 returned to the program, with unused provisional sums and contingencies reducing the contracted expenditure.

- Community & Tourism Projects (\$62,034)

These funds have been used to fund the council contribution requirements for three unbudgeted community grants (shown in red in the attached Capital Works Monitor).

- Wahgunyah Recreation Reserve lighting upgrade
- Rutherglen MCH Building Toilet upgrade
- Cricket wicket upgrades, Stanley and Beechworth

- Beechworth Railway Precinct (-\$16,916)

With the project concluded at the Beechworth railway Precinct, there have been a number of costs incurred that Tourism North East have been unable to fully fund. This has required council to contribute a small amount to the overall project.

- Baarmutha Park Cricket Nets (-\$22,810)

The forecast expenditure for the completion of this project has exceeded the budget by around 3.5%. During the early stages of the works, the contractor had a latent condition claim for soft subgrade materials approved. This, along with satisfying the water supply requirements for the fire services, has resulted in the project being higher than budgeted.

Notable Timing Variations

The Q2 Forecast estimates the level of capital works expected to be completed by the end of the financial year. Project delivery often spans multiple financial years, so when a funded project cannot be completed in one financial year, the funding is carried forward to the next, to allow the project to continue uninterrupted. With the nature of many of our capital projects, uncertainty and risk can often disrupt the original plans for scope, time, or cost. The attached CWM identifies the projected carry forward amounts for the 2025/26 financial year. These figures will be included and shown as carry forward capital works in the development of the 2026/27 budget to the value of \$7,563,092

(\$5,379,971 Capital and \$2,183,121 non-ISC).

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The key projects listed below have varied from their initially intended delivery and will be carried forward to be finalised next financial year. A full list can be viewed in the attached CWM.

- Beechworth Early Years Centre Roof (\$150,000)
- Beechworth Maternal Child Health Building Improvements (\$35,000)
- Rutherglen Maternal Child Health Building Accessible Toilet (\$50,375)
- Heritage Building Renewal – Beechworth Town Hall (\$498,940)
- Burke Museum Roof Repairs (\$100,000)
- Key Security System Renewal & Compliance (\$49,127)
- Plant Replacement (\$694,237)
- Computers & Telecommunications (\$169,973)
- Bridge Replacement – McFeeters Rd (\$750,000)
- Footpath Main Street Rutherglen (\$45,600)
- Beechworth to Yack Rail Trail (\$50,000)
- Sealed Pavement Rehabilitation (\$222,000)
- Safe Local Roads & Streets (\$850,000)
- Barnawartha School Crossing Upgrade (\$68,050)
- Barnawartha Streetscape Improvements (\$40,300)
- Urban Drainage (\$102,473)
- Rutherglen Caravan Park Development (\$1,009,639)
- Yackandandah Pump Track (\$245,000)
- Barnawartha Rec Reserve Oval Lighting (\$77,692)
- Butson Park, Yackandandah Changerooms Upgrade (\$1,066,500)
- Barkly Park - Female change rooms (\$960, 609)
- Wahgunyah Rec Reserve Lighting Upgrade (\$78,320)

In summary, the capital works program is progressing and adapting to the new and changed project conditions. There are a number of changes and additions that have required an adjustment in timing and/or budget. This is not unexpected for a varied capital program.

The attached CWM shows that the Q2 Capital (including non-indigo assets) forecast for 2025/26 is \$8,130,954 with a proposed carry forward to the next financial year of \$7,563,092 and an unfavorable budget variance of (\$246,659).

Importantly, the additional \$242,734 that is forecast in “Motor Vehicle and Plant” will be balanced by a corresponding reduction in the 2026/27 capital budget and therefore should be thought of as a timing variance (vehicles and equipment purchased early rather than next year), rather than an unfavorable result. When adjusted for this timing variance, the ‘underlying’ unfavorable variance in the capital program is \$3,925 (0.03% of the total capital works budget).

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3. Overall Position

The combination of the operating budget favourability (\$616,782) and the capital works result (\$246,659 unfavourable) is a favourable re-forecast of \$370,123. However, when the timing variance of the Motor Vehicles and Plant timing variance is accounted for, the underlying result is \$612,857 favourable.

Whilst pleasing to report a favourable position at mid-year, a large favourability should be expected due to the reimbursement of \$696k of previously spent flood and storm works, combined with the savings in employee costs due to late payment of the enterprise agreement backpay.

It is recommended that this favourability be adopted in the Q2 forecast.

OPTIONS

Council is not required to choose a forecast. The available options are as follows:

1. Adopt the Q2 forecast (recommended): This choice offers the most up-to-date and accurate information for evaluating the council's financial performance.
2. Maintain the current Q1 forecast (not recommended): This forecast is now outdated and does not reflect the latest details.
3. Use the original adopted budget for financial comparison (not recommended): Since the budget was first approved, several significant changes have occurred. Comparing future performance to this budget will make it challenging to produce clear, informative reports that transparently show financial variances. Note that the original budget will still be included in the future monthly reports.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

COUNCIL PLAN 2025 – 2029	
Theme	4. Governance and Financial Sustainability
Strategic Objective	<p>4.1 Financial sustainability and strategic resource management - Ensure Council's long-term financial viability through prudent asset management, collaborative service delivery, and proactive planning that balances current needs with future sustainability.</p> <p>4.5 Governance and Transparent Decision Making - Uphold the highest standards of integrity, transparency, and accountability in Council operations and decision-making processes through robust governance frameworks and an engaged, responsible workforce culture.</p>
Key Strategy	<p>4.1.3 Ensure our planning is future focused and aligns with workforce capability needs, risk management, and workplace compliance to enhance long term sustainability.</p> <p>4.2.1 Proactive and early communication on decisions and planning.</p> <p>4.3.5 Continue to regularly conduct reviews of all services with a focus on appropriateness, efficiency and effectiveness.</p> <p>4.5.1 Ensure council decisions are well considered, transparent and in the best interests of the whole community.</p> <p>4.5.2 Embed a culture of good governance through ongoing development, clear frameworks, and shared accountability across Council and the organisation.</p>

SOCIAL/COMMUNITY IMPLICATIONS

Council's financial performance directly influences the resources available for future service delivery and community projects.

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ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATION

N/A

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

As described in the report.

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

N/A

RISK & OPPORTUNITY MANAGEMENT

Description	Likelihood	Consequence	Current Risk Rating	Controls
The Q2 forecast contains an error or miscalculation	Rare	Minor	Low	Internal review and verification

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Engagement proposed

As an internal financial forecast the appropriate IP2 level is “Inform”. Accordingly, the Q2 forecast forms part of the publicly available Council meeting agenda and minutes.

CONCLUSION

Quarter 2 is an important part of the annual financial reporting program and allows Council to adjust reporting expectations to remove some of the abnormal financial events, and therefore better focus on management control of the budget. It is therefore recommended that Council adopt the Q2 forecast and direct the CEO to report against these forecast figures for the remainder of the financial year.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Under section 130(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Governance Rule 24, the following officers declare that they have no interests to disclose in providing this report:

- Greg Pinkerton - Director Planning and Corporate Services
- Phil Garoni - Finance Manager

Attachments

1. 2025-2026 Quarter 2 Service Plan Statement [11.2.1 - 1 page]
2. January 2026 - Capital Works Monitor [11.2.2 - 8 pages]

2025-26 Quarter2 Forecast - Service plan area statement

Service Plan Area	Quarter 2 Forecast	Quarter 1 Forecast	YTD Variance \$	YTD Variance %	Annual Budget	2024/25 Actuals
Community & econonmic development services						
Community development	(236,125)	(280,320)	44,196	16%	(576,074)	(727,770)
Creative Communities	(1,023,946)	(1,017,609)	(6,337)	(1%)	(1,051,883)	(1,026,668)
Early years	(232,500)	(283,410)	50,910	18%	(297,115)	(208,043)
Economic development	(288,028)	(349,350)	61,322	18%	(313,350)	(204,603)
Recreation	(921,676)	(981,721)	60,045	6%	(981,721)	(920,913)
Tourism	(774,519)	(699,809)	(74,710)	(11%)	(764,809)	(656,536)
Visitor Experience & Museums	(1,411,113)	(1,390,739)	(20,374)	(1%)	(1,390,739)	(1,313,034)
Young people	(59,735)	(63,989)	4,254	7%	(127,098)	(21,847)
Surplus / (deficit) community & econonmic development services	(4,947,644)	(5,066,948)	119,304	2%	(5,502,789)	(5,079,415)
Infrastructure services						
Asset management	(354,556)	(316,227)	(38,329)	0%	(316,227)	(613,335)
Buildings & property	(1,111,107)	(1,072,482)	(38,625)	(4%)	(1,072,482)	(1,172,269)
Buller gas	632,119	663,008	(30,889)	(5%)	663,008	517,893
Capital works - management	(390,188)	(366,647)	(23,541)	(6%)	(366,647)	(380,694)
Development engineering	(83,719)	(93,342)	9,623	10%	(93,342)	(139,924)
Drainage	(60,767)	(46,671)	(14,096)	(30%)	(46,671)	(77,321)
Emergency Management Works	1,722,209	744,298	977,911	131%	744,298	674,176
Environment & sustainability	(387,446)	(389,565)	2,119	1%	(389,565)	(324,237)
Parks & gardens	(1,102,317)	(1,034,486)	(67,831)	(7%)	(1,034,486)	(1,170,601)
Pathways	(312,796)	(297,179)	(15,617)	(5%)	(297,179)	(231,658)
Plant equipment & fleet	(135,753)	(69,033)	(66,720)	(97%)	(69,033)	(208,594)
Quarries	166,926	31,840	135,086	424%	31,840	42,343
Roads & bridge maintenance	(1,671,450)	(1,592,482)	(78,968)	(5%)	(448,503)	546,012
Tree services	(704,600)	(716,605)	12,005	2%	(716,605)	(746,609)
Waste management	(812,084)	(762,813)	(49,271)	(6%)	(762,813)	527,408
Surplus / (deficit) infrastructure services	(4,605,530)	(5,318,386)	712,856	13%	(4,174,407)	(2,757,408)
Office of the CEO						
Carlyle Cemetery	-	-	-	-	0	-
Communications	(359,998)	(400,851)	40,853	10%	(378,847)	(378,205)
Customer service and administration	(582,539)	(623,113)	40,574	7%	(623,113)	(489,245)
Executive management	(1,876,417)	(1,939,431)	63,014	3%	(1,939,431)	(1,793,539)
Governance	(179,475)	(177,815)	(1,660)	(1%)	(177,815)	(363,870)
Information Management	(200,479)	(194,146)	(6,333)	(3%)	(194,146)	(181,755)
People and culture	(832,182)	(858,553)	26,371	3%	(843,553)	(785,022)
Risk management	(797,809)	(1,001,107)	203,298	20%	(1,001,107)	(1,294,232)
Surplus / (deficit) office of the CEO	(4,828,900)	(5,195,016)	366,116	7%	(5,158,012)	(5,285,868)
Planning & corporate services						
Asset depreciation	(8,593,073)	(8,007,249)	(585,824)	(7%)	(7,999,249)	(11,986,335)
Building control services	(181,070)	(199,027)	17,957	9%	(199,027)	(362,306)
Environmental health services	(64,634)	(107,166)	42,532	40%	(156,892)	(56,273)
Financial services	1,301,835	1,528,534	(226,699)	(15%)	3,765,021	5,816,099
Information technology	(1,732,053)	(1,707,554)	(24,498)	(1%)	(1,707,084)	(1,880,043)
Local laws & animals	(123,865)	(88,230)	(35,635)	(40%)	(86,230)	(124,148)
Planning	(954,545)	(1,090,446)	135,901	12%	(1,095,077)	(1,119,806)
Rates & property services	17,749,528	17,654,757	94,771	1%	17,654,757	16,181,295
Surplus / (deficit) planning & corporate services	7,402,123	7,983,619	(581,495)	(7%)	10,176,219	6,468,484
Surplus / (deficit)	(6,979,950)	(7,596,731)	616,781	8%	(4,658,989)	(6,654,207)

Note: For both actual and budget a positive net result means a postive net contribution to Council and a negative net result means a net cost to Council.

(Red variance) is unfavourable

Black variance is favourable

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Last Update 13/02/26

Last Update 13/02/26		EXPENDITURE								INCOME								
Jan-26		** Note - Carry Overs are subject to adoption by Council								** Note - Carry forwards are subject to adoption by Council								
Project Name	Project Description / Scope / Value	2025/26 Adopted Budget	** Proposed Carry Over Amounts from 2024/25	New Projects and amendments	** Available 2025/26 Budget (inc Carry Overs)	Q2 Forecast	Savings/Overrun (Budget Variance)	Proposed Carry Forwards to 26/27 (Timing Variance)	YTD Actuals	2025/26 Adopted Income Budget	** Proposed Carry Over Amounts from 2024/25	New Projects and amendments	** Available 2025/26 Income Budget (inc Carry Overs)	Q2 Forecast	Budget Variance	Proposed Carry Forwards to 26/27 (Timing Variance)	YTD Actuals	Current Stage
Land																		
Tangambalanga Industrial Estate - Stage 2	Design and document Stage 2 of the Tangambalanga Industrial estate. This work will progress the estate to "shovel ready" status for future development. Project TEC \$50,000	2,500	-2,500	0	0	28	-28		28								-	Completed
SUBTOTAL Land		2,500	-2,500	0	0	28	-28	0	28									
Land Improvements																		
		0		0	0	0			0	-							-	
SUBTOTAL Land Improvements		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0									
Community Facilities																		
Tangam Public Toilet Construction	Provision of a new public toilet at the Tangambalanga Active Park Project TEC \$220,000	0	184,876	0	184,876	185,504	-628	0	185,503								-	Construction Underway
Yackandandah High St Public Toilet renewal	Refurbishment of the High St Toilets Tiny Towns Grant submission by Yack Chamber of Commerce Subject to successful grant application Grant \$34,090 ISC initial budget amount \$10,000 Contribution \$3,200	47,290	0	0	47,290	0	47,290	0	0	(37,290)			(37,290)	-	(37,290)			On Hold
Beechworth Bowling Club Roof	Replacement of existing iron roof, that is at end of life. Project TEC \$130,000	0	20,516	0	20,516	51,178	-30,662	0	51,178								-	Completed
Beechworth Early Years Centre Roof	Roof reconfiguration and improvements to address leaking issues	180,000	0	0	180,000	30,000	0	150,000	7,078									planning
Changing Places, Chiltern	Construction of a stand-alone CP facility	31,230	-31,230		0	1,504	-1,504	0	1,304	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Completed
Beechworth Maternal Child Health Building Improvements	Creation of a separate waiting room, and soundproofing improvements to the consultation room Project \$45,000 Grant \$15,000 Council \$30,000	45,000	0	0	45,000	10,000	0	35,000	2,211	(15,000)	-	-	(15,000)	(40,000)	25,000		(40,000)	planning
Rutherglen Maternal Child Health Building Accessible Toilet	Improvements to the toilet facilities at the MCH project \$60,375 grant \$40,944 (Tiny Towns) council cash \$19,431 (from Com & Tourism Projects budget)	0	0	60,375	60,375	10,000	0	50,375	2,391	-	-	(40,944)	(40,944)	(20,000)		(20,944)	-	planning
Air condition / Heating system renewals	Ongoing program of renewal / replacement of air conditioning systems, from priority audit report.	5,300	20,102	0	25,402	15,000		10,402	0								-	Implementation Underway
SUBTOTAL Community Facilities		308,820	194,264	60,375	563,459	303,186	14,496	245,777	249,665	-52,290	0	-40,944	-93,234	-60,000	-12,290	-20,944	-40,000	
Museums & Historical Sites																		
Chiltern Athenaeum - Solar installation	Installation of a new 5.25kW solar system to museum	0	9,736	0	9,736	0	9,736	0	0				-				-	Construction Underway
Chiltern Goods Shed Solar	Installation of roof mounted solar to the Chiltern Goods Shed	0	0	20,000	20,000	20,000	0	0	6,650			(20,000)	(20,000)	(20,000)	-		(20,000)	Implementation Underway
Painting of Historic Buildings	Internal and External Painting on priority Buildings following the condition reports, including internal painting for Chiltern Athenaeum	0	4,638	0	4,638	0	4,638	0	0								-	Construction Underway

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Beechworth Burke Museum Temp Storage	The supply, installation, and fit out of a temporary, temperature controlled storage facility for the Burke Museum. Storage is required, as a result of frequent water ingress due to building condition defects.	0	49,937		49,937	86,681	-36,744	0	80,489									Construction Underway
Chiltern Athenaeum	Restoration works largely external to the athenaeum based on a heritage expert builder's report and approved by Heritage Victoria, Council's heritage advisor and in accordance with the funding agreement scope.	0	-15,566	50,000	34,434	56,586	-22,152	0	56,586	-		(50,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)	-	-	(50,000)	Construction Underway
Beechworth Railway Station toilet modifications	Modifications to the existing station toilet, to provide entry through the internal building only.	10,000	0	0	10,000	10,000	0	0										Planning
Heritage Building Renewal - Beechworth Town Hall	Renewal works to Beechworth Town Hall roof and associated leak damage Project initial TEC \$125,000 (all ISC), revised March 25 \$625,000 Grant Agreement amount \$400,000 ISC initial budgeted amount \$125,000 ISC additional grant budget amount \$100,000	600,000	-1,060	0	598,940	100,000	0	498,940	33,310	(400,000)	26,060		(373,940)	(95,341)		(278,599)	(95,341)	Implementation Underway
Burke Museum Roof repairs	Repair and remediate leaking roof and protect against larger storm events	180,000	0		180,000	50,000	30,000	100,000	14,336									Implementation Underway
SUBTOTAL Museums & Historical Sites		790,000	47,685	70,000	907,685	323,267	-14,522	598,940	191,371	-400,000	26,060	-70,000	-443,940	-165,341	0	-278,599	-165,341	
Public Halls																		
Yackandandah Public Hall	Refurbishment and repairs of Roof over foyer area	40,000	5,000	0	45,000	45,000	0	0	2,317								-	Planning
Rutherglen Memorial Town Hall Roof	Roof replacement	77,177	296,093	0	373,270	373,270	0	0	358,309								-	Construction Underway
SUBTOTAL Public Halls		117,177	301,093	0	418,270	418,270	0	0	360,626									
Swimming Pool Facilities																		
Swimming Pool Renewal Works	Refurbishment and renewal of major pool plant and equipment, based on condition assessments.	113,077	19,529		132,606	82,606	0	50,000	41,284								-	Implementation Underway
SUBTOTAL Swimming Pool Facilities		113,077	19,529	0	132,606	82,606	0	50,000	41,284									
Municipal Offices																		
Key Security System Renewal & Compliance	Replace existing, non-compliant master key system and upgrading building security systems - all shire buildings	39,127	20,000	0	59,127	10,000	0	49,127	0								-	Procurement underway
External Building Lock Replacement	Replacement of external locks and swipe readers due to old cards no longer being supported.	5,000	0	0	5,000	5,000	0	0	0									On Hold
Yackandandah Office - Lower Level Storage	Provide lining and fit out for downstairs at Yackandandah Office to improve storage and office space, include lighting and external cladding	26,491	-26,491	0	0	0	0	0	0								-	Completed
Energy Efficiency Improvements Program	Energy Efficiency Improvements	46,000	0	0	46,000	20,000	0	26,000	0	(23,000)	-	-	(23,000)	(15,313)		(7,687)	(15,313)	On Hold
EV Charging - Beechworth	Electric vehicle charging station to support additions to the Evfleet	10,000	0	0	10,000	0		10,000										On Hold
Pines Office Refit	Refit of Pines Office, scope to be confirmed	30,000	5,237	0	35,237	15,000	0	20,237	0								-	Planning

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Rutherglen Depot Shed Doors	Replacement of doors on the depot shed, to address OH&S risks	25,000	0	0	25,000	25,000	0	0	14,330								-	Construction Underway
SUBTOTAL Municipal Offices		181,618	-1,254	0	180,364	75,000	0	105,364	14,330	-23,000	0	0	-23,000	-15,313	0	-7,687	-15,313	
Motor Vehicles & Plant																		
Fleet Replacement	New vehicles in accordance with forward replacement program 2 x Operations Utes 1 x Library Van 1 x Pool Vehicle 1 x Capital Works Vehicle	280,000	0		280,000	394,734	-114,734		0	(50,000)	(3,075)	-	(53,075)	(56,925)	3,850		-	Procurement Underway
Plant Replacement	New Plant and Equipment in accordance with forward replacement program 1 x Backhoe 2 x Operations trucks	1,390,569	23,668		1,414,237	848,000	-128,000	694,237	108,270	(192,000)	-	-	(192,000)	(82,000)		(110,000)	-	Procurement Underway
Minor Plant	Renewal of small plant & equipment (chainsaws, blowers, etc)	30,000	0	0	30,000	30,000	0	0	5,460					-			-	Procurement Underway
SUBTOTAL Motor Vehicles & Plant		1,700,569	23,668	0	1,724,237	1,272,734	-242,734	694,237	113,730	-242,000	-3,075	0	-245,075	-138,925	3,850	-110,000		
Furniture & Equipment																		
Street & Park Furniture - Renewal	Renewal of priority street and park furniture	20,000	0	0	20,000	20,000	0	0	10,519								(2,500)	Implementation Underway
Play Equipment Replacement	Renewal of priority playground assets, including accessibility improvements, shade sails, informed by the Play Space Review and Strategy	25,000	0	0	25,000	10,000	0	15,000	5,910								-	Implementation Underway
SUBTOTAL Furniture & Equipment		45,000	0	0	45,000	30,000	0	15,000	16,429								(2,500)	
Computers & Telecommunications																		
IT Renewal Priorities	Annual replacement of server and network hardware	351,000	-40,384	0	310,616	198,244	29,852	82,520	3,874								-	Implementation Underway
Computer Replacement Program	Annual renewal of IT hardware	50,000	-31,267	0	18,733	43,663	-24,930	0	28,664								-	Implementation Underway
Implementation of HR Info System	Implementation of HR Info System	0		0	0	44,021	-44,022		27,353									Implementation Underway
IT refresh for Finance Systems	Implementation of new finance IT System	185,000	-52,742	0	132,258	485,675	-353,417	0	302,396								-	Implementation Underway
Project Management Online	New Project Management software	26,771	11,532	0	38,303	30,850	0	7,453	30,851								-	Implementation Underway
Bin management database upgrade	Upgrade or new implementation of Bin Management database	0	7,352	0	7,352	0	7,352	0	0								-	Implementation Underway
Datascape	Completion of Datascape IT project	140,000	-3,750	0	136,250	0	136,250		0								-	Implementation Underway
IT Cyber Uplift	Upgrade of Cyber Security Capabilities	25,000	0	0	25,000	10,000	15,000	0	0								-	Implementation Underway
Electronic Timesheets	New Timesheet Management platform	134,600	15,089	0	149,689	0	149,689		0								-	Implementation Underway
GIS System Replacement	Replacement of existing GIS system that has become unfit for purpose	180,000	14,226	0	194,226	100,000	14,226	80,000	0								-	Planning
Trim Upgrade	Upgrade of the records management system (Trim) to ensure security and compliance with statutory requirements	80,000	0	0	80,000	80,000		0										Planning
Other IT priorities	IT priorities to be carried forward into next years budget build.	35,000	5,000	30,000	70,000	0	70,000	0	0								-	Implementation Underway
SUBTOTAL IT Projects		1,207,371	-74,944	30,000	1,162,427	992,453	0	169,973	393,138									
Library Services																		
Library Stock Items	Replacement of old library books and associated materials.	65,000	0	0	65,000	65,000	0	0	33,448	(65,000)			(65,000)	(70,000)	5,000	-	(66,375)	Procurement Underway
Premier's Reading Challenge	Premier's Reading Challenge stock purchase	6,601	0	0	6,601	6,601	0	0	1,100	(6,601)			(6,601)	(6,601)	-	-	(6,601)	Procurement Underway
SUBTOTAL Library Services		71,601	0	0	71,601	71,601	0	0	34,548	-71,601			-71,601	-76,601	5,000	0	-72,976	

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Bridges																		
Guard Rail Renewal Works	Install Bridge Guard Rail at high priority bridges as identified in Level 2 Bridge assessments	25,000	-3,500	0	21,500	21,500	0	0	0								-	Planning
Bridge Renewal Works	Boorhaman East Road Bridge Replacement Total Project Budget \$604,143 \$735,000 Grant funds \$483,224 \$588,000 Council funds \$120,919 \$147,000	104,143	-104,143	40,352	40,352	4,991	35,361		4,991	(83,000)			(83,000)	(324,508)	241,508		(324,508)	Completed
Bridge Replacement - McFeeters Rd	McFeeters Road Beechworth - Bridge Replacement Total Project Budget \$750,000 Grant funds \$600,000 Council funds \$150,000	750,000	0	0	750,000	0	0	750,000	0	(600,000)			(600,000)	-			(600,000)	Planning
Bridge Renewal Works	Reconstruction, and component renewal at key bridges, as per priorities in Level 2 & 3 Bridge Assessments - potential to be supported by Bridges Renewal Program grants.	244,417	-16,519	0	227,898	200,000	0	27,898	114,221				-				-	Implementation Underway
SUBTOTAL Bridges		1,123,560	-124,162	40,352	1,039,750	226,491	35,361	777,898	119,212	-683,000	0	0	-683,000	-324,508	241,508	-600,000	-324,508	
Footpaths & Cycleway																		
Rutherglen Wine Walk Cycle Trail	Creation of a ~48km riding, walking trail through the Rutherglen and Wahgunyah wine region connecting wineries and areas of significant environmental and historic value.	0	25,000	0	25,000	25,000	0	0	16,682	-			-		-	-	-	Completed
Footpath Renewals	Replacement of priority sections of footpath (Shire wide) based on asset condition data and inspections	65,000	0	0	65,000	65,000	0	0	20,792								-	Planning
Main Street, Rutherglen	New footpath, to complete a link from the new aged care facility, along Main St to Fortune St	90,000	0	0	90,000	44,400		45,600	10,396								-	Planning
SUBTOTAL Footpaths & Bikepaths		155,000	25,000	0	180,000	134,400	0	45,600	47,870	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	
Beechworth to Yackandandah Rail Trail																		
All earlier sections	All earlier sections and stages	0	0	0	0				0								-	Completed
SECTION 7 - Kibell Lane	Approximately 4.9km of new trail within the Kibell Lane road / rail reserve	100,000	0	0	100,000	0	50,000	50,000	0								-	Completed
Rail Trail Wayfinding & Signage	Supply and installation of wayfinding and signage	0	0	0	0				0								-	Completed
Rail Trail - Project Management	Staff and contractor time directly relating to Project Management costs across all sections of the Beechworth to Yackandandah Rail Trail.	0	0	0	0	50,000	-50,000	0	14,932								-	Implementation Underway
SUBTOTAL AND OVERALL BUDGET LINE - RAIL TRAIL		100,000	0	0	100,000	50,000	0	50,000	14,932				-	0			-	
SUBTOTAL all Footpaths & Bikepaths		255,000	25,000	0	280,000	184,400	0	95,600	62,802				0	0	0	0	0	
Kerb & Channel																		
Havelock Street Barnawartha	New kerb and channel and drainage works including general tidy up of Havelock Street and town entrance. Project Budget \$80,000 (fully grant funded)	72,782	4,397	0	77,179	77,179	0	0	0								-	Implementation Underway
New Kerb and channel	New kerb and channel in priority locations	20,000	0	0	20,000	20,000	0	0	0								-	Planning
Kerb and channel replacement	Continue with priorities based on condition assessments	40,000	23,128	0	63,128	63,128	0	0	0								-	Planning

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SUBTOTAL Kerb & Channel		132,782	27,525	0	160,307	160,307	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Rural Roads																		
Final Seals Program	Final sealing of priority roads and trails.	60,000	0	0	60,000	60,077	-77	0	60,077								-	Procurement Completed - awaiting construction
Roads Major Patching	Patching of priority roads.	220,000	0	0	220,000	220,000	0	0	131,938								-	Construction Underway
Resealing Program	Sealing of priority roads	630,000	-5,812	0	624,188	624,188	0	0	623,670								-	Procurement Completed - awaiting construction
Mahon Lane, Osbornes Flat, Stage 1, sealing	Sealing of Mahon Lane, from Racecourse Road to Sanatorium Road, Stage 1 to be fully completed in 3 stages	90,000	0	0	90,000	90,000	0	0	423									Planning
Road design and planning	Design development of future capital projects - individual project values vary annually.	103,000	-20,251	0	82,749	62,749	0	20,000	48,324								-	Implementation Underway
Resheeting program - Western	Resheeting of priority roads across the Western sector of the Shire	350,000	0	0	350,000	410,000	-60,000	0	406,226								-	Planning
Resheeting program - Eastern	Resheeting of priority roads across the Eastern sector of the Shire	350,000	0	0	350,000	290,000	60,000	0	259,081								-	Planning
Sealed Pavement Rehabilitation	Pavement rehabilitation works to priority sealed roads.	516,967	38,698	0	555,665	333,665	0	222,000	132,336								-	Planning
Safe Local Roads and Streets	TAC funding for road safety works to reduce the likelihood and severity of crashes. (\$2m over two years 25/26 & 26/27)	1,000,000	0	0	1,000,000	150,000	0	850,000	12,131	(1,000,000)			(1,000,000)	(100,000)		(900,000)		Planning
Roads to recovery income	Income tracking only								0	(1,709,685)	-	-	(1,709,685)	(1,709,685)		-	(1,223,036)	
LRCIP Round 1 Income	Income tracking only										(106,855)		(106,855)	(106,855)		-	(106,855)	
LRCIP Round 2 Income	Income tracking only										(115,138)		(115,138)	(115,138)		-	(115,138)	
LRCIP Round 3 Income	Income tracking only								0		(297,792)		(297,792)	(297,792)			(297,792)	
LRCIP Round 4A Income	Income tracking only										(1,010,947)		(1,010,947)	(1,010,947)		-	(842,456)	
LRCIP Round 4B Income	Income tracking only								0				-	-		-	-	
SUBTOTAL Rural Roads		3,319,967	12,635	0	3,332,602	2,240,679	-77	1,092,000	1,674,206	-2,709,685	-1,530,732	0	-4,240,417	-3,340,417	0	-900,000	-2,585,277	
Urban Roads																		
Polmear Road, Beechworth, sealing	Sealing of Polmear Rd, from Buckland Gap Rd to Fletcher Rd	50,000	0	0	50,000	50,000			0								-	planning
Moffat Road, Chiltern, sealing	Sealing of Moffat Road, Stage 1, Skerry Street to Soule St	40,500	0	0	40,500	40,500			0								-	planning
Barnawartha School Crossing upgrade	Construction of a safer, raised pedestrian crossing at the Barnwartha School	68,050	10,000	0	78,050	10,000		68,050	5,118	(34,000)	(8,305)		(42,305)	(12,458)	-	(29,847)	-	planning
High St Rutherglen, design of showgrounds entrance	Design of an improved entrance for the Rutherglen showgrounds site, making it safer for entering and exiting vehicles, and pedestrian movements.	20,656	15,000	0	35,656	23,575		12,081	1,464	(17,000)		(18,656)	(35,656)	(17,000)	-	(18,656)	-	planning
SUBTOTAL Urban Roads		179,206	25,000	0	204,206	124,075	0	80,131	6,582	-51,000	-8,305	-18,656	-77,961	-29,458	0	-48,503	0	
Steetscape Works																	-	

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Barnawartha Streetscape improvments	Landscape works, to improve the amenity at the main intersection in Barnawartha project \$60,300 grant \$45,125 (tiny Towns) council \$15,175	0	0	60,300	60,300	20,000		40,300				(45,125)	(45,125)	(25,000)		(20,125)	(25,000)	planning
Tangambalanga Streetscape Development	Planning , engagement, design and development of plans for streetscape refurbishment of Tangambalanga Kiewa East Road. Design Project TEC \$80,000	23,000	-5,931	0	17,069	6,500	0	10,569	5,391		-	-	-				-	Implementation Underway
SUBTOTAL Streetscape Works		23,000	-5,931	0	77,369	26,500	0	50,869	5,391	0	0	-45,125	-45,125	-25,000	0	-20,125	-25,000	
Drainage																	-	
Rural Road Drainage	Upgrading of rural drainage infrastructure (Shire wide), including road culverts, roadside table drain construction	99,156	15,902	0	115,058	115,058		0	21,505								-	planning
Heritage drain rehabilitation	Repair and rehabilitation of heritage granite drains in various locations in Beechworth.	16,909	-11,360	0	5,549	5,549	0	0	595								-	planning
Urban Drainage	Shire wide urban drainage upgrade identified through recent flood events	353,853	-101,380	0	252,473	150,000	0	102,473	9,102								-	planning
SUBTOTAL Drainage		469,918	-96,838	0	373,080	270,607	0	102,473	31,202	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Flood Damage Events - DRFA																	-	
Gooramadda Rd Major Culvert Replacement - FE22													-	-	-	-	-	Completed
Indigo Ck Rd Major Culvert Failure & Bridge Replacement - FE22													-	-	-	-	-	Completed
SUBTOTAL Flood Damage Events - DRFA		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Parks, Openspace & Streetscape																		
Water Bubblers	Supply and installation of water bubblers in priority locations across the Shire.	21,994	5,952	0	27,946	20,000	0	7,946	14,716								-	planning
Kiewa River Land	Planning and minor site works to facilitate safe public access to the Kiewa river. Total Project Value \$180,000 Grant funds \$90,000 Council funds \$90,000	14,410	11,516	0	25,926	15,000	0	10,926	10,772	(7,000)			(7,000)	(7,000)		-	-	Construction Underway
SUBTOTAL Parks, Openspace & Streetscape		36,404	17,468	0	53,872	35,000	0	18,872	25,488	-7,000	0	0	-7,000	-7,000	0	0	0	
Recreation Reserves							0										-	
Caravan Park Renewal	Priority asset renewals at Caravan Parks	26,343	11,855	0	38,198	20,000	0	18,198	0							-	-	Planning
Caravan Parks	Contribution to the implementation of the Rutherglen Caravan Park Masterplan	65,000	9,639	0	74,639	60,000	0	14,639	52,248							-	-	Implementation Underway
Caravan Parks	Redevelopment of the Rutherglen Caravan Park	1,000,000	0	0	1,000,000	5,000	0	995,000	4,009									Implementation Underway
Yack Sports Park - Access lift	Replacement of the existing access lift at the Yackandandah Sports Park stadium	25,000	0	0	25,000	15,000	0	10,000	121									Planning
Cricket Wicket Upgrades - Stanley & Mayday Hills	Widening of the existing cricket wicket, and replacement of the synthetic turf at two ovals Project budget \$30,000 \$35,000 Grant \$10,000 Club \$5,000 Council cash \$20,000 (from Com & Tourism Projects budget)	0	0	35,000	35,000	35,000	0	0	1,586	-	-	(15,000)	(15,000)	(15,000)			(10,000)	Procurement Completed - awaiting construction

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

Last Update 13/02/26

Jan-26		EXPENDITURE								INCOME								
		** Note - Carry Overs are subject to adoption by Council								** Note - Carry forwards are subject to adoption by Council								
Project Name	Project Description / Scope / Value	2025/26 Adopted Budget	** Proposed Carry Over Amounts from 2024/25	New Projects and amendments	** Available 2025/26 Budget (inc Carry Overs)	Q2 Forecast	Savings/Overrun (Budget Variance)	Proposed Carry Forwards to 26/27 (Timing Variance)	YTD Actuals	2025/26 Adopted Income Budget	** Proposed Carry Over Amounts from 2024/25	New Projects and amendments	** Available 2025/26 Income Budget (inc Carry Overs)	Q2 Forecast	Budget Variance	Proposed Carry Forwards to 26/27 (Timing Variance)	YTD Actuals	Current Stage
Community & Tourism Projects	Funding to support project development of community & tourism projects & grant applications	108,326	-6,714	-38,777	62,835	801	62,034	0	801	(62,770)			(62,770)	-	(62,770)	-	-	Implementation Underway
Recreation Projects	Funding to support Recreation Plan project development & grant applications	15,829	0	-15,829	0	16,463	-16,463	0	16,463	-			-			-	-	Completed
Yackandandah Pump Track	Design and construction of a beginners level pump track at the yack Sports Park State Gov 2025 budget commitment \$250k	250,000	0	0	250,000	5,000		245,000	1,937	(250,000)			(250,000)	(5,000)		(245,000)	-	Implementation Underway
Beechworth - Railway Precinct Enhancement	Development of Railway Precinct public space and childrens playground. TNE funded Project Project TEC \$1,500,000 ISC funds \$0 ISC managing \$350,000 of the scope.	0	0	50,000	50,000	66,916	-16,916	0	67,551	-		(50,000)	(50,000)	(33,672)	(16,328)	-	(33,672)	Completed
Baarmutha Park Cricket Nets	Replacement of Baarmutha Cricket nets (Stage 1) & Stage 2 including roof, associated services, and road works. Total Project Budget \$275,000 \$602,000 Grant \$100,000 DJPR Grant \$30,000 (Cricket Vic) Contribution \$20,000 \$40,000 Grant \$150,000 Beechworth bank Council Funds \$225,000 \$282,000	298,243	239,624	0	537,867	560,677	-22,810	0	527,827	-	64,131	(170,000)	(105,869)	(105,869)		-	1,818	Construction Underway
Baarmutha Park Lighting	Installation of four floodlight poles, with new compliant 150 LUX LED floodlighting , at the sports field at Baarmutha Park, Beechworth Project Budget \$293,750 \$366,606.48 \$378,893 Grant Funding \$220,313 (SRV) Contribution (BFNC \$10k & BCC \$5k) \$15,000 Additional Contribution (BFNC) \$22,778.50 Council Funds \$58,437 + \$22,778.50(50:50 with BFNC) + \$39,587	3,363	0	0	3,363	3,363		0	0	-			-	-		-	-	Completed
SUBTOTAL Recreation Reserves		1,792,104	254,404	30,394	2,076,902	788,220	5,845	1,282,837	672,543	-312,770	64,131	-235,000	-483,639	-159,541	-79,098	-245,000	-41,854	
Non - ISC Assets																		
Carlyle Cemetery	Drainage improvement works within the cemetery. Project TEC \$45,000 Reduced to \$26,000	0	8,955	0	8,955	8,955	0	0	102				-	-		-	-	Construction Underway
Barnawartha Recreation Reserve Oval Lighting	Installation of four light poles, with new 100 LUX LED floodlighting Project Budget \$349,474 Grant Funding \$250,000 (SRV) Contribution BFC \$25,000 Council Funds \$74,474 + \$44,474 (from 24/25)	305,000	-1,469	44,474	348,005	270,313	0	77,692	129,603	(250,000)	26,451	-	(223,549)	(248,549)	25,000	-	(223,549)	Procurement Completed - awaiting construction
Barnawartha Recreation Reserve Playground	New playground at Recreation Reserve Project TEC \$100,000 Grant agreement funds \$100,000 ISC funds \$0	95,000	-940	0	94,060	94,060	0	0	2,832	(95,000)	940		(94,060)	(93,289)	(771)	-	(93,289)	Procurement underway
Allans Flat Waterhole Reserve Enhancements	Upgrades to existing seating, and a new shelter Total Project Budget \$65,000 \$63,547 as per Agreement Grant funds \$50,000 \$48,578 Council funds \$15,000 \$14,969	0	58,202	0	58,202	58,202	0	0	14,662	-			-	-	-	-	(57,498)	Procurement Completed - awaiting construction
Butson Park, Yackandandah Changerooms Upgrade	New netball change rooms. Stage 1 of multi year project Project Budget \$1,250,000 \$1,274,000 Grant funding \$1,000,000 Council funds \$225,000 Committee funds \$25,000 \$49,000	125,000	0	946,500	1,071,500	5,000	0	1,066,500	0	(102,500)		(946,500)	(1,049,000)	(500,000)		(549,000)	(500,000)	Planning
Barkly Park - Female change rooms	Upgrade of female friendly facilities at Barkly Park, Rutherglen. Project TEC \$1,400,000 Grant funding \$1,000,000 Council funds \$400,000 \$350k budgeted in 2023/24 \$350k Budgeted in 2024/25	959,319	21,290	0	980,609	20,000	0	960,609	15,590	(750,000)			(750,000)	(500,000)		(250,000)	-	Planning

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Last Update 13/02/26

Jan-26		EXPENDITURE								INCOME								Current Stage
		** Note - Carry Overs are subject to adoption by Council								** Note - Carry forwards are subject to adoption by Council								
Project Name	Project Description / Scope / Value	2025/26 Adopted Budget	** Proposed Carry Over Amounts from 2024/25	New Projects and amendments	** Available 2025/26 Budget (inc Carry Overs)	Q2 Forecast	Savings/Overrun (Budget Variance)	Proposed Carry Forwards to 26/27 (Timing Variance)	YTD Actuals	2025/26 Adopted Income Budget	** Proposed Carry Over Amounts from 2024/25	New Projects and amendments	** Available 2025/26 Income Budget (inc Carry Overs)	Q2 Forecast	Budget Variance	Proposed Carry Forwards to 26/27 (Timing Variance)	YTD Actuals	
Wahgunyah Rec Reserve Lighting Upgrade	Upgrade of existing lighting , to 50 LUX LED floodlighting Project Budget \$82,320 Grant Funding \$61,740 (SRV) as per funding letter Contribution WFC \$0 Council Funds \$20,580 (from Com & Tourism Projects budget)	0	0	82,320	82,320	4,000	0	78,320			-	(61,740)	(61,740)	(55,566)		(6,174)	(55,566)	Planning
																	(25,000)	
																	(2,425)	
SUBTOTAL Non-ISC Assets		1,484,319	86,038	1,073,294	2,643,651	460,530	0	2,183,121	162,789	-1,197,500	27,391	-1,008,240	-2,178,349	-1,397,404	24,229	-805,174	-957,327	
	Expenditure & Income incurred across other accounts to be redistributed to available budgets.					45000	-45000		38,797				0		0	0	(268,704)	
	Combined Total for Capital Works and Non-Indigo Assets	13,353,993	728,680	1,364,715	15,447,388	8,130,954	-246,659	7,563,092	4,214,161	(5,749,846)	(1,424,530)	(1,417,965)	(8,592,341)	(5,739,508)	183,199	(3,036,032)	(4,498,800)	
	Total for Capital Works	11,869,674	642,642	291,421	12,803,737	7,670,424	-246,659	5,379,971	4,051,372	(4,552,346)	(1,451,921)	(409,725)	(6,413,992)	(4,342,104)	158,970	(2,230,858)	(3,541,473)	
	Total for Non-ISC Assets	1,484,319	86,038	1,073,294	2,643,651	460,530	0	2,183,121	162,789	(1,197,500)	27,391	(1,008,240)	(2,178,349)	(1,397,404)	24,229	(805,174)	(957,327)	

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

11.3 ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE DESIGN POLICY 2026

James Turner - Manager Planning & Statutory Services
Planning and Corporate Services

For Decision

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopts the Environmentally Sustainable Design Policy 2026.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider the Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) Policy 2026. The Policy aims to promote ESD in new developments and ensure that Indigo Shire Council is using a consistent approach to assessing ESD in planning permit applications. The Policy will introduce Council-level thresholds for requiring ESD elements in new subdivision and development applications, which will put Indigo Shire Council on par with other regional councils in this space. The Policy emphasises Council's expectations around minimising environmental impacts, reducing water use and energy use, and promoting shading and green spaces in new development.

Council endorsed the draft ESD Policy at the Scheduled Council Meeting held on 16 December 2025 and released it for public exhibition for six weeks. Two submissions were received by Council that are summarised in the discussion section of this report. It is now recommended that Council adopts ESD Policy.

BACKGROUND

Indigo Shire has a long history of interest in promoting climate adaptation, climate resilience and sustainable design, and the Council declared a climate emergency in 2019.

The Indigo Shire Council Plan 2025-2029 includes Strategic Objective 1.6.3 "Encourage environmentally sustainable housing design that supports climate resilience and reduces cost of living."

Council's interest in Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) is further underpinned by various key documents, including:

- Indigo Planning Scheme;
- Indigo Urban Tree Canopy Strategy;
- Indigo Shire Sustainable Council Building Policy (currently being prepared);
- Climate Change Policy 2024;
- Environment Strategy 2019;
- Climate Emergency Strategic Action Plan 2020; and
- Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan 2017-2021.

The Council Alliance for a Sustainable Built Environment (CASBE) is an association of Victorian councils committed to ensuring future generations can enjoy a sustainable built environment. Indigo Shire is a member of CASBE and has supported numerous CASBE projects in sustainable building and subdivision

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

design in recent years. A key role of CASBE has been supporting councils to elevate ESD consideration in the assessment of planning applications across the state. This has included assisting councils to implement ESD Policy into planning schemes and also promoting the Sustainable Subdivisions Framework (SSF).

Indigo Shire is also a member of the Goulburn Murray Climate Alliance (GMCA), a network of 15 committed partners across the Goulburn and Upper Murray regions responding and adapting to climate change through innovative projects and research. Indigo Shire Council has, once again, joined forces with seven Councils across the GMCA to push for more sustainable development outcomes in greenfield subdivisions, by employing a Sustainable Subdivisions Advisor to work across the Councils.

Participating Councils include Alpine Shire, Greater Shepparton, Indigo Shire, Mitchell Shire, Murrindindi Shire, Strathbogie Shire, Towong Shire and Rural City of Wangaratta.

The dedicated shared Sustainable Subdivisions Advisor resource will support planning staff for a 12-month period, assessing subdivision applications to utilise the Sustainable Subdivisions Framework (SSF) resources and assisting developers to increase sustainable development outcomes. Applicant kits and SSF templates are available for applicants to access, along with information and instructions relevant to subdivision applications.

The SSF identifies seven categories that can assist in creating sustainable subdivisions:

- Site Layout and Liveability
- Streets and Public Realm
- Energy
- Ecology
- Integrated Water Management
- Urban Heat
- Circular Economy

There are 28 councils that now have a local ESD policy in their planning scheme, which provides provisions above and beyond what is currently required in the State policy. In addition, Ballarat City Council has commenced the process to embed ESD policy into their planning scheme, with an interim solution already in place as an adopted Council Policy while a planning scheme amendment is prepared and implemented. These policies apply when a planning permit is required, but do not create a trigger for a planning permit. This means that, although they require additional information to be provided and assessed through the planning permit process, they do not increase the number of planning permit applications required.

Indigo Shire currently does not have a local ESD Policy in the Indigo Planning Scheme and is effectively being left behind when it comes to progress in achieving greater climate resilience through planning policy. Council is working towards including an ESD Policy in the Indigo Planning Scheme to better align with other rural councils and take the important steps towards elevating ESD requirements in buildings and subdivisions.

It should be noted that Council is also working towards the preparation of a Sustainable Council Building Policy. This will ensure Council can lead by example and continue taking critical steps towards greater climate resilience and adaptation into the future.

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DISCUSSION

In the absence of an ESD policy in the Indigo Planning Scheme, developers and permit applicants have been encouraged to embed ESD in their applications. However, developers that do not wish to engage in the ESD and SSF journey, have not been not required to do so.

The planning team is preparing an amendment to the Indigo Planning Scheme to bring local policy in that will require ESD consideration in planning permit applications for certain application types, including residential subdivisions. A planning scheme amendment can take 18-24 months to finalise and, as such, a Council Policy is an interim step to achieve elevated ESD outcomes without the lag time of a planning scheme amendment.

A local policy at Clause 15.01-2L Environmentally Sustainable Design is under preparation. This policy will apply to residential and non-residential applications for planning permits, as well as subdivision applications, in accordance with the below thresholds. These thresholds have been determined through benchmarking against other comparable councils, as well as consideration of the scale and frequency of planning applications that we receive.

Threshold	Requirement
Two or more dwellings on a lot	A Sustainable Design Assessment, including an integrated water management assessment, using an industry-appropriate tool (e.g. BESS, GreenStar, STORM, MUSIC).
A building used for accommodation, other than a dwelling, with a gross floor area greater than 100 square metres	A Sustainable Design Assessment, including an integrated water management assessment, using an industry-appropriate tool (e.g. BESS, GreenStar, STORM, MUSIC).
A non-residential building with a gross floor area greater than 300 square metres	A Sustainable Design Assessment, including an integrated water management assessment, using an industry-appropriate tool (e.g. BESS, GreenStar, STORM, MUSIC).
An extension to a non-residential building creating a total gross floor area of greater than 300 square metres	A Sustainable Design Assessment, including an integrated water management assessment, using an industry-appropriate tool (e.g. BESS, GreenStar, STORM, MUSIC).
Residential subdivisions of more than two lots	A Sustainable Design Assessment, including an integrated water management assessment, using an industry-appropriate tool (e.g. BESS, GreenStar, STORM, MUSIC).

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Council endorsed the draft ESD Policy at the Scheduled Council Meeting held on 16 December 2025 and released it for public exhibition for six weeks, from 17 December 2025. Two submissions were received by Council, and are summarised below.

- Submission 1 raised issues related to environmental, waste and stormwater management with particular regard to shortfalls in current infrastructure. The submission did not object to the draft policy, but raised concerns regarding Council's ability to ensure decision making is based on current science and up to date background documents and information.

In response to the submission, the ESD Policy 2026 has been amended to ensure current and up to date documents are referenced. Concerns regarding existing infrastructure issues will be addressed separately outside of this ESD Policy 2026.

- Submission 2 raised concerns regarding overlap between the Draft ESD Policy and current planning scheme requirements. The submission stated that the actions sought in the Draft ESD Policy are already embedded in existing legislative and regulatory frameworks, and proposed an alternative way to achieve improved ESD outcomes in development.

The submission clearly supports the intended outcomes of the Draft ESD Policy, and states that it is difficult to argue with the premise that we should be doing more to achieve Best Practice ESD outcomes. It is noted that there is some overlap with existing planning and building legislation and the ESD Policy for some application types. However, the ESD Policy seeks a greater level of ESD consideration across all affected applications through the provision of stronger strategies and policy requirements. Further, while State Planning Policy and National Building Legislation can change overtime outside of Council's control, the ESD Policy clearly states Council's expectations for development and subdivision at the local level.

OPTIONS

- The ESD Policy 2026 aims to promote ESD in new developments and ensure that Indigo Shire Council is using a consistent approach to assessing ESD in planning permit applications. **It is recommended that Council adopts the ESD Policy 2026.**
- Not adopting the ESD Policy 2026 will result in Council effectively being left behind when it comes to progress in achieving greater climate resilience through planning policy.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

COUNCIL PLAN 2025 – 2029	
Theme	1. Places and Communities
Strategic Objective	1.6 Residential Housing and Liveability - Facilitate diverse, sustainable, and inclusive housing options that enhance neighbourhood connectivity and support residents' changing needs throughout all life stages.
Key Strategy	1.6.3 Encourage environmentally sustainable housing design that supports climate resilience and reduces cost of living.

SOCIAL/COMMUNITY IMPLICATIONS

The recommendation will result in positive social outcomes for the community. Well-designed subdivisions and buildings with ESD elements provide an improved social outcome for residents of Indigo Shire. The ESD Policy 2026 is an important step to ensure that Indigo Shire continues towards a more climate resilient future.

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ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The recommendation will provide a positive environmental outcome as it will enhance and improve sustainability outcomes in new developments and subdivisions, which will assist Council in addressing climate change issues and responding to the climate emergency. The ESD Policy will ensure that Indigo Shire continues to achieve progress in this space.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The ESD policy may result in increased cost and resource burden to Council, as planning officers will be required to include additional ESD work in their planning permit assessments. In the short term, this requirement will be fulfilled by the GMCA shared services officer. This will lead to upskilling staff and will create net community benefit by providing better environmental outcomes to the community.

The ESD Policy will assist in taking steps towards reducing household bills by making buildings more energy efficient, providing a healthier and more comfortable environment for building occupants and better managing water quality, use and collection. These outcomes effectively offset the increased up-front cost of ESD in development by providing whole of life cost benefits, which provides a positive economic outcome for the community.

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

It is acknowledged that the Council Policy, which will sit outside of the Indigo Planning Scheme in the interim, will not form part of legislative planning requirements. There will be no negative legislative implications resulting from this recommendation.

A planning scheme amendment is being prepared to bring ESD Policy into the Indigo Planning Scheme. This amendment will be subject to exhibition in accordance with the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

RISK & OPPORTUNITY MANAGEMENT

There are no unmanaged risks to Council resulting from this recommendation.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Engagement undertaken

The draft ESD Policy was tabled at the Indigo Environmental Advisory Committee (IEAC) meeting on 3 December 2025.

At the Scheduled Council Meeting on 16 December 2025, Council endorsed the draft ESD Policy and released it for public exhibition for six weeks, from 17 December 2025 to 28 January 2026.

Engagement outcomes

The IEAC is supportive the steps being taken to achieve greater ESD consideration in planning and provided feedback around current ESD shortfalls and opportunities in development. The IEAC supported the recommendation that Council endorse the draft ESD Policy for public exhibition.

During the six week public exhibition period, the draft ESD Policy was available on the Engaged Indigo website. Two submissions were received by Council (attached). These submissions did not object to the intent of the Draft ESD Policy, but raised issues related to environmental, waste and stormwater management, shortfalls in current infrastructure, overlap between existing legislation and the proposed requirements of the Draft ESD Policy.

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It is noted that the ESD Policy seeks a greater level of ESD consideration through the provision of specific and tailored strategies and policy requirements. The ESD Policy 2026 strengthens Council's policy position regarding ESD in development and subdivision at the local level.

In response to these submissions, the draft Policy has been amended to ensure current and up to date documents are referenced. Concerns regarding existing infrastructure issues will be addressed separately outside of this ESD Policy.

Initial conversations have commenced with the development community. No developers have raised any major concerns at this stage regarding the importance of ESD in subdivision and building design.

Engagement proposed

No further engagement is required relevant to the recommendation.

A planning scheme amendment is being prepared to bring ESD Policy 2026 into the Indigo Planning Scheme. This amendment will be subject to exhibition in accordance with the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

CONCLUSION

It is recommended that Council adopts the ESD Policy 2026. The Policy aims to promote ESD in new developments and ensure that Indigo Shire Council is using a consistent approach to assessing ESD in planning permit applications.

It should be acknowledged that there is an additional upcoming process to include the policy in the Indigo Planning Scheme, through a planning scheme amendment in accordance with the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Under section 130(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Governance Rule 24, the following officers declare that they have no interests to disclose in providing this report:

- {custom-field-executive}
- {custom-field-manager}
- {custom-field-council-officer}

Attachments

1. Environmentally Sustainable Development Policy 2026 [11.3.1 - 4 pages]
2. Submission 1 - Draft ESD Policy [11.3.2 - 1 page]
3. Submission 2 - Draft ESD Policy [11.3.3 - 1 page]

POLICY



Environmentally Sustainable Development Policy 2026 for Planning Applications

Version No:	1.0
Trim File No:	T2/59
Approval Date:	"To be completed after Policy is adopted"
Approved By:	"To be completed after Policy is adopted"
Department:	Planning and Corporate Services
Service Plan Area:	Planning and Statutory Services
Responsible Officer:	Strategic Planner
Next Review Date:	To be reviewed no more than ten years after adoption, with more frequent review where required by legislation or best practice
Reliansys Obligation No:	"To be completed after Policy is adopted"
Circulation	All staff

PURPOSE

To provide Indigo Shire with a policy to work towards achieving best practice in Environmentally Sustainable Development (ESD) in subdivisions and development. The policy will facilitate development that minimises environmental impacts and encourages environmentally sustainable developments.

SCOPE

The policy applies to planning permit applications for residential and non-residential development, and residential subdivisions of more than two lots, in accordance with the thresholds detailed in this policy. The policy does not create a planning permit trigger where one does not already exist, and is only utilised where a planning permit is already required. This policy should be utilised in conjunction with existing planning policy in the Indigo Planning Scheme.

POLICY BACKGROUND

Indigo Shire has a long history of interest in promoting climate adaptation, climate resilience and sustainable design, and Council declared a climate emergency in 2019. The Council Alliance for a Sustainable Built Environment (CASBE) is an association of Victorian councils committed to ensuring future generations can enjoy a sustainable built environment. Indigo Shire is a member of CASBE and has supported numerous CASBE projects in sustainable building and subdivision design in recent years. A key role of CASBE has been supporting councils to elevate ESD consideration in the assessment of planning applications across the state. This has included assisting councils to implement ESD Policy into planning schemes, and also promoting the Sustainable Subdivisions Framework (SSF).

There are 28 Victorian councils that now have a local ESD Policy in their planning scheme, which provides provisions above and beyond what is currently required in the State Policy. These policies apply when a planning permit is required, but do not create a trigger for a planning permit. This means that, although they require additional information to be provided and assessed through the planning permit process, they do not increase the number of planning permit applications required.

Environmentally Sustainable Development Policy 2026 for Planning Applications



Indigo Shire currently does not have a local ESD policy in the Indigo Planning Scheme, and is now working towards this outcome.

POLICY OBJECTIVE

To achieve best practice in Environmentally Sustainable Development from the design stage through to construction and operation.

POLICY STRATEGIES

- Facilitate development that minimises environmental impacts.
- Encourage environmentally sustainable development that is consistent with the type and scale of the development, responds to site opportunities and constraints, and provides whole of life benefits.
- Reduce energy use through considered design measures such as building orientation, landscaping, shading and glazing of surfaces.
- Reduce water use through appropriate design measures such as water efficient fixtures, appliances, equipment, irrigation and landscaping and encourage the appropriate use of alternative water sources.
- Incorporate water sensitive urban design to improve the quality of stormwater runoff and reduce impacts on water systems and water bodies.
- Achieve a healthy indoor environment quality, including thermal comfort and access to fresh air and daylight, prioritising passive design over mechanical heating, ventilation, cooling and lighting.
- Reduce indoor air pollutants by encouraging use of low-toxicity materials.
- Design development to promote the use of walking, cycling and public transport, in that order; and minimise car dependency.
- Promote the use of low emissions vehicle technologies and supporting infrastructure.
- Promote waste avoidance, reuse and recycling during the design, construction and operation stages of development.
- Encourage use of durable and reuseable fire-retardant building materials.
- Ensure sufficient space is allocated for future change in waste management needs, including (where composting and green waste facilities).
- Protect and enhance biodiversity by incorporating natural habitats and planting indigenous vegetation.
- Promote the use of fire-tolerant native vegetation species in both the public and private realm.
- Reduce urban heat island effects through building design, landscape design, water sensitive urban design and the retention and provision of canopy and significant trees.

POLICY REQUIREMENTS

- The following development applications must provide a Sustainable Design Assessment, including an integrated water management assessment, that responds to the Strategies and Objective of this Policy, using an industry-appropriate tool (e.g. BESS, GreenStar, STORM, MUSIC):
 - Two or more dwellings on a lot;
 - A building used for accommodation (other than a dwelling) with a gross floor area of 100 square metres or more;
 - A non-residential building with a gross floor area of 300 square metres or more; or
 - An extension to a non-residential building creating a total gross floor area of 300 square metres or more.

Environmentally Sustainable Development Policy 2026 for Planning Applications



- Residential subdivision applications of more than two lots must provide a Sustainable Subdivisions Framework Assessment (or BESS Subdivisions equivalent, or other method that achieves the Objective and Strategies of this Policy).
- Development and subdivision applications as listed above are required to demonstrate the following:
 - How the proposal adds to, and enhances, the communities and natural environments that this area is known for;
 - Consideration of future-proofing, including responses to the current and future impacts of climate change;
 - Efficient use of water in building design, construction processes and landscaping, and details on how water reduction and reuse is provided through the proposal;
 - Consideration of solar orientation and provision of space for future energy efficient technology;
 - Alignment with Council policies and strategies that respond to environmental challenges and assist in building greater climate resilience.

RELATED LEGISLATION AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

- Indigo Shire Council Plan 2025-2029;
- Indigo Planning Scheme;
- Indigo Shire Sustainable Council Building Policy (currently being prepared);
- Indigo Urban Tree Canopy Strategy;
- Climate Change Policy 2024;
- Environment Strategy 2019;
- Climate Emergency Strategic Action Plan 2020;
- Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan 2017-2021;
- Climate Change and Planning in Victoria 2021;
- Goulburn Murray Climate Alliance Strategic Plan 2022-26; and
- Planning Advisory Note 75, Amendment VC154 - Stormwater management.

REVIEW

This Policy shall be reviewed at least every ten (10) years to ensure consistency with other Council policies and other relevant legislation.

COMMUNICATION

Following adoption, this Policy will be uploaded on the Council website. It will be made available for all staff and external stakeholders.

VERSION CONTROL

Date	Review Details	Action
27 October 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• First draft circulated to relevant internal departments	Presented to ELT 24/11/2025 Presented to Councillor briefing 2/12/2025 Presented to Indigo Environmental Advisory Committee 3/12/25 Tabled at Scheduled Council Meeting 16 December 2025.

Environmentally Sustainable Development Policy 2026 for Planning Applications



17 December 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Draft ESD Policy released for public exhibition for six weeks	Two submissions received – minor amendments to related documents section.
29 December 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Final ESD Policy prepared	Tabled at Scheduled Council Meeting 24 February 2026.

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

To Whom It May Concern

29th January 2026

Submission - Draft Environmentally Sustainable Development Policy - Response

Dear Sir/Madam,

Please find below our submission with regard to the Draft Environmentally Sustainable Development Policy as published recently on the Indigo Shire website – Engaged Indigo link.

We have been engaged with the Indigo Shire, Planning and Asset Management officers / departments since June of 2023. This contact has been driven by our attempts to highlight current deficiencies and potential remedial opportunities with regard to a proposed subdivision development at [REDACTED]. The issues we have raised relate to environmental, waste and storm water management.

Our experience

Whilst we are of the opinion that our contact with Indigo Shire Officers has been professional we have found no acknowledgement of current deficiencies' or stated commitment to resolve identified and existing environmental issues.

Draft Document Review - Environmentally Sustainability Development Policy for Planning Applications

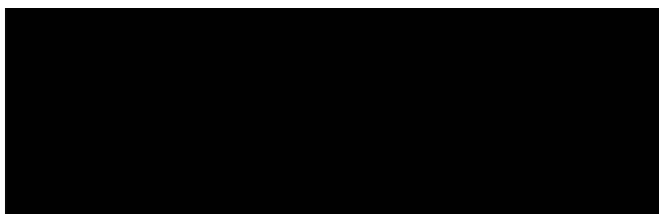
Related Legislation and other documents

Policy Context

This draft policy appears to reference for its existence the documents below which in the main appear to be past their validity/review dates. If the draft policy document is to be a representative, covering or interpretive document for the plans, then how relevant is such policy if drawing on dated information and potentially science in the plans?

- Climate Change Policy 2024; • Environment Strategy 2019; • Climate Emergency Strategic Action Plan 2020; and • Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan 2017-2021.

In the event that you may require additional information please do not hesitate to contact.



SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

Sarah Cleverley

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 30 January 2026 3:17 PM
To: Grace Perry
Cc: Indigo Shire
Subject: Environmentally Sustainable Development Policy

Good Afternoon Grace,

In respect of the above draft Policy currently out for consultation I would like to submit the following observations;

- It is difficult to argue with the premise that we should be doing more to achieve Best Practice ESD outcomes, however almost all of the strategies listed are already explicitly required to be addressed by Clauses 55 & 56 of the Planning Ordinance. Why have these things presumably not previously been addressed as required by the Ordinance?
- Building materials and energy use, reduction of indoor air pollutants, healthy indoor environment quality and comfort, glazing standards, water efficient appliances and fixtures, low emissions vehicle technologies, etc, etc are all already subject to National (NCC) and State legislation and regulation as they should be
- As mentioned above the Sustainable Subdivisions Framework Assessment (BESS Subdivisions) requirements, are almost completely covered by the existing Clause 56 requirements
- Development and Subdivision applications are required to DEMONSTRATE
 - how the proposal adds to and enhances the communities and natural environment that this area is known for (Presumably the proposal is on a site that has been explicitly zoned by the Planning Authority for that purpose)

It is ridiculous that each individual developer has to spend time and money preparing a tickbox report that justifies and/or reiterates things they are already required to do or alternatively have no control over. This would seem to be little more than window dressing. As for justifying a Planning Authority's zoning decisions?

All the actions sought in the proposed policy are already embedded in existing legislative and regulatory frameworks. A more useful way to facilitate appropriate development outcomes while minimising the Shire's long term maintenance costs is to develop local Deemed to Comply design standards for water sensitive urban design, passive irrigation of street trees, verge widths to facilitate street trees that achieve canopy closure, appropriate species selection specified, onsite stormwater reuse requirements to reduce consumption and urban desertification, etc. This would provide standardised solutions that are more easily understood and maintained into the future. The performance path would still be available in a Planning Application, but I am reasonably certain most developers will accept the Deemed to Comply option instead of re-inventing the wheel over and over.

regards

[REDACTED]

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

12 COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

12.1 DRAFT DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN 2036

**Susannah Doyle - Manager Tourism
Community and Economic Development**

For Decision

RECOMMENDATION

That Council endorses the Draft Indigo Destination Management Plan 2036 release for Public Exhibition for a period of 4 weeks.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report accompanies the attached full draft of the Indigo Destination Management Plan 2036 (DMP36) and is the third of four progress reports coming to Council Briefing between June 2025 and January 2026. The report presents the Draft DMP36 for release for Public Exhibition, following consideration by Council at the February 2026 Council Meeting.

BACKGROUND

Following the completion of Council's 2018-2023 Destination Game Changer Tourism Strategy and evaluation of performance, the tourism team has undertaken rapid knowledge acquisition initiatives and extensive community and stakeholder engagement.

During 2024/2025 the team have engaged with community, industry, stakeholders and global leaders in destination management who have provided knowledge, insights, forecasts, sentiment, perceptions and feedback. The information gathered has been collated, reviewed, themed and has informed the development of the Draft DMP36 attached.

The scope of the draft DMP36 centres around a triple-bottom line of:

- Economic sustainability
- Community sustainability (socio/cultural value and social licence)
- Environmental sustainability

The DMP36 strategic direction takes sustainability as a foundation and delivers a vision and strategies to develop a groundswell of regenerative tourism initiatives and investment, positioning Indigo as a regenerative tourism leader in Australia.

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

Subject Matter Expert Review

The draft has been reviewed by three subject matter expert consultants. Feedback workshops with the subject matter expert teams and Council's tourism team were conducted with insights incorporated in the Draft DMP36 attached.

The Subject Matter Experts are:

- Destination Think Sustainable/Regenerative Tourism
- Urban Enterprise Visitor Economy
- Hirst Projects Cultural Heritage

Peer Review

In addition, the attached Draft DMP36 has undergone a Peer Review Process from global leader destination executives. Three global destination management executives were selected to review the Draft DMP36, with feedback workshops conducted in Q2 of 2025/26. These peer reviews involved:

- Queenstown NZ Focus Sustainable Tourism (Net Zero by 2030)
- Tofino Vancouver Island Canada Focus Stewardship / Reconciliation
- Noosa, Queensland Focus Social Licence and Community

Traditional Owner Review

The Draft DMP36 has been circulated to all Traditional Owner (TO) groups with an open invitation to engage with Council in a self-determined format and timeframe. TO guidance and insights are not restricted to Council timeframes, with an invitation to engage and guide the DMP36 action planning throughout the life of the strategy, which will be proactively followed up at regular intervals.

Importantly, Council has direction from the National Agreement on Closing the Gap 2020, the Victorian Treaty, Victorian First Peoples Tourism Plan 2025-2035 and the Federal Government's Australian First Nations Visitor Economy Partnership.

Locally, Council follows direction from the Indigo Shire Council Reconciliation Action Plan process and ongoing TO engagement and relationship building.

IndiGrow Review

IndiGrow received a presentation of the Draft DMP36 key directions in December 2026. Feedback, questions and inputs from this meeting informed edits to the Draft DMP36 to clarify vision and measurable outcomes.

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

Next Steps

- **Pre-Public Exhibition**
Council Briefing on 3 February 2026
- **Public Exhibition Release**
Draft DMP36 to Council Meeting on 24 February 2026 – consider release for Public Exhibition
- **Public Exhibition Period**
March 2026 – 4 weeks
- **Council Advisory Committees**
Final review – March/April 2026 (concurrent with Public Exhibition)
- **Final Changes/Edits**
April 2026 - DMP36 document finalisation informed by all feedback/inputs from Public Exhibition
- **Subject Matter Experts**
April 2026 - Final review and final changes/edits
- **Present Public Exhibition feedback and final document**
ELT 13 April 2026
Council Briefing 21 April 2026
- **Adoption**
19 May 2026 - Council Meeting for consideration to adopt DMP36

DISCUSSION

The draft DMP36 represents a significant evolution from our previous tourism strategy.

This new strategy builds on the solid foundation established during the 2018-2023 Tourism Strategy, which delivered game changer infrastructure and planning projects and a foundation of layered contemporary experiences. The new strategy is the logical next phase, responding to contemporary tourism trends, community expectations, and global best practices in sustainable and regenerative destination management., shifting from traditional growth-focused metrics to a holistic approach that balances economic, environmental, social and cultural outcomes.

The Vision is ambitious, but achievable. It is designed to challenge and engage community and stakeholders and emphasise the regenerative imperative of the DMP36.

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

VISION

GREEN GOLD RUSH

Australia's first regenerative gold rush.

In 2036 Indigo will be a recognised global benchmark for the regenerative power of tourism.

- Indigo's Visitor Economy will total \$2.5B between 2026 and 2036
- Tourism will be the catalyst for economic, environmental and socio/cultural regenerative transformation, driven by Indigo's Visitor Economy and \$150M of targeted public and private investment in regenerative initiatives.

MISSION

The DMP36 redefines tourism in Indigo Shire and flips the script on the traditional definition of gold rush.

The new **Green Gold Rush** is one of regeneration, not extraction.

2027 will mark the 175-year anniversary of the start of the gold rush, where gold seekers came to take riches from the land. By 2036, restoration seekers will come to give back.

OPTIONS

- Consider the Draft DMP36 and support its release for Public Exhibition.
Recommended.
- Consider the Draft DMP36 and not support its release for Public Exhibition.
Not Recommended.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

COUNCIL PLAN 2025 – 2029	
Theme	2. Economic Resilience and Opportunity
Strategic Objective	2.3 Sustainable Tourism Development - Create a balanced tourism economy that benefits the community while preserving our natural environment and enhancing our cultural assets. 3.5 Heritage Preservation - Preserve and activate our unique heritage assets through integrated approaches that balance conservation with accessibility, ensuring their value for future generations.

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

COUNCIL PLAN 2025 – 2029	
Key Strategy	<p>2.3.1 Balance visitation growth with residential amenity.</p> <p>2.3.2 Focus on optimal tourism, curating the quality and managing the quantity for sustainable community benefit.</p> <p>2.3.3 Enhance all tourism product pillars, including food/drink, nature/walk, cycle, with an elevated focus on heritage, arts and culture.</p> <p>2.3.4 Optimise the potential of World Heritage Listing to enhance community benefit, heritage outcomes and a vibrant economy.</p> <p>2.3.5 Develop visitor dispersal strategies and initiatives that distribute economic yield across the Shire, extend visitation throughout the calendar year, and transform the region from a short-break destination to a true holiday destination.</p> <p>2.3.6 Deliver future-fit product and experience development to attract visitors who share and support community values.</p> <p>2.3.7 Strategically develop and manage tourism infrastructure assets, including caravan parks, to enhance visitor experiences, extend length of stay, and maximise sustainable returns to the community while preserving local character and environmental values.</p> <p>2.3.8 Identify opportunities to enhance community return on investment and economic return on investment from existing walking, gravel and cycle trails for a more connected community.</p> <p>2.4.1 Support sustainable business growth and innovation initiatives.</p> <p>2.4.5 Capitalise on proximity to the Hume Freeway and rail network to grow opportunities in Chiltern and Barnawartha.</p> <p>3.5.1 Develop an integrated approach to heritage preservation that balances conservation, accessibility, activation, and future functionality.</p> <p>3.5.2 Support self-determined Traditional Owner cultural heritage interpretation, enriching established colonial and gold rush histories and supporting equity.</p> <p>3.5.3 Develop and maintain appropriate amenities and facilities that complement heritage assets, enhance accessibility, and improve visitor experience while preserving the authenticity and historical significance of heritage sites.</p> <p>3.5.4 Advance the Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Listing bid through coordinated planning, stakeholder engagement, and resource allocation.</p>

SOCIAL/COMMUNITY IMPLICATIONS

Social and community implications are embedded within and are fundamental to the draft DMP36.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Environmental implications are embedded within and are fundamental to the draft DMP36.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no immediate and direct financial implications with progressing the DMP36 to a public consultation phase.

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

N/A

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

RISK & OPPORTUNITY MANAGEMENT

Description	Likelihood	Consequence	Current Risk Rating	Controls
Community support and participation in destination management initiatives is an important outcome, and the Vision/Mission may not align with all community sentiment.	Possible	Moderate	Medium	Ongoing engagement in the development of Action Plans (Tactics) in the 3 x 3-year action planning process.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Engagement undertaken

Robust community engagement has been undertaken, including 480 touch points across 6 months:

- Council Plan Survey – all community
- Community Vision Survey – all community
- Tourism Survey – all community
- 1:1 deep dive conversations
- Destination Round Tables
- Community Groups/Associations
- Industry Groups/Associations
- Council Advisory Committees
- Council inter-departmental meetings
- Moira Shire
- Federation Shire
- Corowa Business Chamber
- Subject Matter Expert reviews
- Peer Review
- Traditional Owner Review

Engagement outcomes

The community engagement revealed strong support for sustainable tourism development, with residents recognising significant potential benefits across economic, environmental, and community dimensions. Key advantages identified include job creation, support for local businesses, attraction of environmentally conscious visitors, and building economic resilience through diversification.

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Environmentally, there is enthusiasm for protecting natural landscapes, conserving biodiversity, and preserving the region's authentic character while encouraging better resource management. The community also sees sustainable tourism as a mechanism to create more vibrant, connected communities that attract younger residents and "tree-changers" while improving quality of life and positioning the region as a forward-thinking destination.

Significant challenges and concerns were also highlighted through the engagement, particularly around implementation costs, infrastructure needs, and managing tourism impacts. Financial barriers emerged as a major concern, with high initial costs for businesses transitioning to sustainable practices and substantial infrastructure investment requirements.

Over-tourism concerns dominate current issues, with parking problems being the most frequently mentioned challenge, alongside insufficient public amenities, traffic management issues, and environmental impacts from increased visitation. Additional implementation challenges include resistance to change from some community members, leadership and knowledge gaps around sustainability concepts, and the complex balance required between heritage preservation, modernisation, and maintaining authentic experiences while managing visitor impacts effectively.

Engagement proposed

Public Exhibition, Advisory Committee Final Review, Ongoing Traditional Owner Review, Subject Matter Experts Final review.

Pending adoption of the DMP36, further engagement will be required for the three x three-year action plans that will implement the DMP36.

CONCLUSION

Tourism plays a pivotal role in driving economic prosperity and community vibrancy across Indigo Shire. The draft DMP36 represents a strategic evolution that positions our tourism sector to deliver sustainable growth, while maintaining the authentic character and environmental integrity that makes our destinations special. Regeneration, not extraction is the key imperative and performance outcome of the Draft DMP36.

The Draft DMP36 establishes a comprehensive framework for managing tourism as a force for good - one that regenerates the land, honours First Peoples, uplifts local identity, and delivers lasting benefits for generations to come. Through its focus on optimal tourism principles, the strategy ensures that visitor growth enhances, rather than compromises community wellbeing and residential amenity.

The extensive community engagement undertaken in developing this strategy has revealed strong support for sustainable tourism development, while also highlighting the need for careful management of tourism impacts. The Draft DMP36 addresses these community priorities through its holistic approach to measuring success across economic, environmental, social and cultural outcomes.

This strategy will guide our tourism development priorities over the next decade, providing a clear roadmap for achieving the Vision of catalysing regenerative tourism using the \$2.5B visitor economy and targeted public and private investment of \$150M to delivery incremental regenerative change, building over the 10-year strategy to deliver transformational change/

The plan's emphasis on collaboration, innovation, and continuous improvement ensures the DMP and Council remains responsive to changing community needs and domestic and international tourism trends.

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Under section 130(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Governance Rule 24, the following officers declare that they have no interests to disclose in providing this report:

- Sally Rice - Director Community and Economic Development
- Susannah Doyle - Manager Tourism

Attachments

1. DM P 36- V 12- Public Exhibition [**12.1.1** - 52 pages]

Destination Management Plan 2036

GREEN GOLD RUSH

DRAFT



We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters across Indigo Shire. We honour their deep and enduring connection to Country – cared for over countless generations and still today.

Tourism in Indigo Shire takes place on Country. We recognise that every journey through this landscape is through a living cultural place, shaped by the knowledge, custodianship and continuing presence of First Peoples.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present, and we commit to walking alongside Traditional Owners in shaping a future that respects culture, celebrates truth, and enables true self-determination.

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Mayor's Message

I am pleased to share with you the 10-year Indigo Destination Management Plan 2026–2036 (DMP36).

Tourism is a vital part of life in Indigo Shire, sustaining local businesses, supporting jobs and celebrating the stories of our towns, landscapes and people.

Council needs to focus on the bigger picture, making decisions that serve our community today and ensuring we leave a strong legacy for future generations.

This plan reflects Indigo's unique strengths: our people, our products, and our places, which combined offer visitors a distinct and deeply local experience. It also signals a new direction, with a focus on sustainable, regenerative tourism, an approach that goes beyond economics.

DMP36 is a pathway for dialogue with Traditional Owners and First Peoples across Indigo Shire. We reaffirm Council's commitment to supporting National, State and First Peoples-led strategy, including but not limited to: Closing the Gap, Statewide Treaty (First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria and Victorian State Government) and the First Peoples Tourism Plan for Victoria 2025–2030

Tourism must enrich the lives of our residents, strengthen our diverse communities, and play a positive role in caring for the environment, culture and heritage. We want to welcome visitors who share our values and seek meaningful connections with our communities.

Most importantly, this plan has been shaped by you, our community.

After a year of consultation and conversations across the Shire, we are confident that the priorities within reflect the voices and aspirations of community. Success will rely on strong collaboration and partnerships across all levels of government and community, working together to guide the sustainable growth and regenerative evolution of Indigo Shire.

I invite you to explore this plan, see your ideas brought to life, and join us in building a tourism future that strengthens our economy, supports the environment and enriches our culture and way of life.



Cr. Sophie Price
Mayor, Indigo Shire Council



Reflection – A Turning Point

Across Indigo Shire, tourism has long featured colonial and gold rush histories. These stories, while significant, represent only a fraction of this region's past. For more than 60,000 years, First Peoples have lived in deep relationship with Country – caring for its rivers, mountains, and plains, and shaping a cultural landscape that endures today.

Colonisation brought profound disruption: dispossession, violence, and the fracturing of communities. Landscapes were altered, languages suppressed, and cultural knowledge pushed to the margins. These legacies continue to shape the present, alongside the growing challenges of climate change, economic uncertainty, and the need for inclusive and regenerative practises.

Tourism done well can be a catalyst for a better future. It can support truth-telling, promote First Peoples' voices, and create meaningful economic and cultural opportunities. It can model respectful partnerships and shared leadership.

Our commitments are guided by established frameworks. At National and State government levels, we align with and support Closing the Gap, Statewide Treaty (First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria and Victorian State Government), and the First Peoples Tourism Plan for Victoria 2025–2030. Locally, Indigo Shire Council's Reconciliation Action Plan commits us to ongoing relationship building with Traditional Owners and seeking their guidance.

The First Peoples Tourism Plan recognises significant opportunity: achieving positive tourism outcomes that support economic parity for First Peoples, fostering equity and inclusion in Victoria's tourism landscape, aligned with the Victorian Government and First Peoples Yuma Yirramboi Strategy.

DMP36 is a pathway for ongoing dialogue with Traditional Owners and First Peoples across Indigo Shire. We commit to self-determination principles and will be guided by Traditional Owners on if, how, and when their voices, stories, and priorities are reflected in the region's narrative. We commit to protecting and respecting the cultural intellectual property of Traditional Owners.

We are building genuine partnerships with a number of First Nations people, corporations, organisations and local Traditional Owner groups. Walking this path with humility and respect, we work towards tourism that honours the past, celebrates the present, and builds a more equitable future together

Language statement:

- The DMP36 refers to Traditional Owners to include all First Peoples with connection to Country known as Indigo Shire.
- The DMP36 refers to First Peoples to encompass all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, here and across Australia.

“[Treaty] is not about dwelling in the past, nor laying blame. It is about acknowledging that the past happened, it still shapes the present, and we're choosing to do better from here.”

– Statewide Treaty, First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria Ltd and The State of Victoria

Vision

GREEN GOLD RUSH

Australia's first regenerative gold rush

The new Green Gold Rush is one of regeneration, not extraction. The 19th century Gold Rush brought wealth and development to Victoria, as well as environmental degradation and cultural devastation. The Destination Management Plan 2036 flips the script on traditional definitions of gold rush and redefines the future of tourism in Indigo Shire.

By 2036 Indigo will be a recognised global benchmark for the regenerative power of tourism.

Indigo's Visitor Economy will amount to \$2.5B between 2026 and 2036

Tourism will be the catalyst for economic, environmental and socio-cultural regenerative transformation, driven by Indigo's Visitor Economy and **\$150M** of targeted public and private investment in regenerative initiatives



Mission

Tourism will drive regenerative transformation in Indigo.

Regenerative transformation is a process. Small, incremental steps lead to transformation change over time.

Regenerative tourism moves beyond sustainability; restoring ecosystems, uplifting communities and creating economic value without extraction. The focus evolves from growth alone, to fostering environmental stewardship, social connection, and cultural protection as core measures of success. Tourism will underpin resilient local economies, while creating deeper connections between visitors and the places they explore.

By focusing on regeneration, tourism in Indigo will create a legacy of renewal, not depletion. Indigo will amplify the rich history and culture of place, while building relevance through regenerative change and community vibrancy.

This strategic direction for tourism drives healing and restoration of the natural and built environment, with renewable energy solutions powering the future of our destinations.

This Destination Management Plan is a commitment to building regenerative destinations, where local communities flourish economically and culturally, ensuring social and environmental net benefit for current and future generations.

Tourism in Indigo will champion inclusion, partnerships, and community empowerment, while keeping economic benefits circulating within the local communities.

Layers of exceptional visitor experiences will draw visitors who share and build local aspirations.

Strategic capacity building in smaller townships will harness the momentum of increased visitation to major destinations, creating interconnected networks that encourage visitor exploration across Indigo.

From 1852 millions of ounces of gold were extracted from the goldfields of Indigo. Landscapes were degraded and peoples displaced. Deep scars are still felt by families, communities and Country to this day.

2027 will mark the 175-year anniversary of the start of the gold rush, where **gold seekers** came to extract riches from the land.

By 2036, **restoration seekers** will come, driving a \$2.5B visitor economy, inspired by regenerative initiatives, sharing the community culture of stewardship, giving back and leaving a place better than they found it.

Here, tourism gives back and is a driver for local benefit, positive change, and future resilience.

We Heard What You Said

Over the course of a year, community shared thoughts, ideas and feedback through more than 500 individual interactions. These insights were instrumental in shaping the 2036 vision and informed every element of this strategic plan.

Community feedback emphasised the importance of these five themes:

97%

survey respondents ranked **sustainability** as important or very important.

96%

survey respondents ranked tourism as important or very important in delivering benefits to the local **communities**.

80%

survey respondents ranked our **built heritage** assets and their preservation as important or very important.

77%

survey respondents ranked tourism as an important or very important **economic driver**.

71%

survey respondents said yes, tourism provides an opportunity to progress **reconciliation**.

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Plan on a Page

	VISION Green Gold Rush			MISSION Tourism will drive regenerative transformation in Indigo		
GUIDING PRINCIPLES	Future Fitness	Regeneration	Partnerships	Inclusion	Leadership	Alignment
OBJECTIVES	1 Provide exceptional visitor experiences while delivering net benefit to the community .	2 Maximise visitor value to cultivate a thriving and resilient local economy .		3 Protect and regenerate the natural environment by embedding sustainable tourism practices.		4 Champion the full tapestry of culture and heritage , including First Peoples' cultural heritage, built heritage and the diverse communities who have shaped our story.
STRATEGIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create alignment and shared commitment to <i>Green Gold Rush</i> with all stakeholders • Improve Council collaboration enabling improved infrastructure, physical links and community wellbeing • Establish optimal tourism and visitor capacity limits for each destination • Protect regional village character through planning and regulation • Seek investment for best-in-class industry development • Support tourism businesses to embed accessibility and inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the circular economy, understanding the contributing factors and opportunities to influence • Support and deliver tourism experiences exemplified by People - Product - Place principles to attract target audiences • Increase destination awareness to support mid-week and off-season accommodation occupancy • Advocate for public investment that supports regenerative tourism • Support aligned private investment in tourism product and experiences • Enhance cross-departmental collaboration within Council 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grow Council's regenerative tourism leadership to attract like-minded visitors and investors • Encourage slower, active tourism • Progress cross-shire sustainable transport solutions • Foster partnerships guided by Traditional Owners to help progress conservation priorities • Partner with community and external stakeholders on land conservation actions and projects • Support access to investment to help businesses reduce their environmental footprint • Establish tourism-specific climate targets • Increase number of tourism businesses actively participating in, or contributing to, environmental or sustainability initiatives 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximise World Heritage listing opportunities • Establish Indigo Shire as the must-visit destination on the Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Listing • Foster deeper connections with Traditional Owners based on listening and learning • Develop genuine and meaningful partnerships based on the principles of self-determination • Align with Reconciliation Action Plan objectives • Honour diverse experiences in telling our shared history • Develop Cultural Heritage Strategy to protect and conserve built heritage assets • Embed cultural and heritage stories in nature, food and arts experiences
TARGETS	Indigo Shire will have the highest resident sentiment towards tourism in Australia	Indigo Shire will have an annual visitor economy value of \$265M by 2036		Indigo Shire will achieve carbon dioxide equivalents (CO ₂ e) per visitor in line with United Nations targets		Indigo Shire will achieve a 20% increase in the total number of visitor experiences that tell a cultural or heritage story
ACTION PLAN						

WHERE WE ARE



1.1 Foreword

The previous 5-year tourism strategy ([Indigo Destination Game Changer 2017–2023](#)) was significant in delivering foundational product development projects that repositioned Indigo Shire as a contemporary destination. It supported strong growth in the visitor economy and helped attract both public and private investment at an aspirational scale.

While the pandemic was a significant disruptor, performance outcomes were particularly strong. This was underpinned by crisis recovery funding, sustained public and private investment, and buoyant consumer demand throughout 2023/24.

Having established this strong foundation, the focus must now shift from growth alone to optimising experiences around these new products. The priority is to manage and sustain growth in a way that ensures tourism actively gives back to the community. This shift in focus has informed the new direction toward regenerative tourism.

Reflecting the post-pandemic tourism sector and major shifts in global and national tourism trends, Council invested in rapid knowledge acquisition at local, regional, state, national and international level, to gain insights in social licence, sustainable and regenerative tourism, global trends, innovation and best practice in destination management, with access to real world case studies of innovation and locally relevant future fit strategy.

In conjunction with the Council Plan 2025–2029, tourism-specific community engagement was conducted between November 2024 and November 2025.

Engagement will continue during the implementation, evaluation and development of three, three-year action plans, to be delivered during the 10 year life of this new strategy.

This new tourism strategy, the Indigo Destination Management Plan 2036 (DMP36), uses updated knowledge to build long-term resilience in Indigo destinations. The DMP36 outlines a strategic approach to fostering regenerative and sustainable tourism, while strengthening Council's role as a leader in comprehensive destination stewardship. The direction is guided by four core objectives that reflect this community's hopes for long-term wellbeing across economy, community, environment, culture and heritage.

DMP36 serves as a roadmap for understanding and participating in Indigo's tourism future. It outlines what Council can and cannot deliver, helping to identify where public and private investment and community initiative are needed. The plan is designed to inspire the collective local community, industry and external investors to innovate, collaborate, and align their offerings with emerging visitor expectations, while building on our region's unique strengths.

As you read through this strategy, consider your role in the bigger picture – whether you're a business owner, community member, or other stakeholder – and how you can contribute to the goals and initiatives outlined.

This plan doesn't just detail Council's responsibility; it's a call to action for everyone who has a stake in Indigo's tourism success, to take ownership of the vision and help prioritise holistic, regenerative outcomes for the community, visitors, and future generations alike.

1.2 Guiding Principles

These are the fundamental values and beliefs that guide decision-making and strategy:

Future Fitness

We prioritise long-term benefits over short-term gain through intergenerational planning and responsibility. We understand it is essential to actively seek and embrace new ways of thinking, technology, opportunities and challenges, while maintaining strong connections to what makes our destination and community authentic. This DMP spans 10 years, but we envision 100 – investing in responsible and purposeful planning to build healthy, regenerative communities for generations to come.

Regeneration

We will leave our destination better than we found it. Tourism must contribute more than it consumes – restoring natural environments, strengthening culture and heritage, and building community resilience. Regeneration encompasses not just the physical environment, but also social, cultural, and economic renewal that strengthens the entire fabric of our communities. Every visitor experience will be designed to regenerate rather than deplete, creating a positive cycle where tourism becomes a force for environmental and cultural renewal.

Partnerships

Strong partnerships sit at the heart of successful destination management. Collaboration between all levels of government, industry and community will ensure every initiative delivers shared value for residents, visitors and the environment. Council's approach to First Peoples partnerships is grounded in respect, recognition, and reconciliation – supporting self-determination and protecting cultural intellectual property to foster genuine and meaningful partnerships with Traditional Owner groups.

Inclusion

Equity, diversity, and inclusion are fundamental to building vibrant and sustainable communities. We will create destinations and experiences that are accessible, welcoming and enriching – supporting inclusivity for all residents and visitors. Inclusion is an important economic growth opportunity that aligns with community values.

Leadership

We will be leaders in regenerative destination management, demonstrating how tourism can pioneer transformative, holistic outcomes beyond economic returns alone. We will be clear in our vision, bold in our decisions, and collaborative in our approach to bring all tourism stakeholders on this journey to inspire collective action.

Alignment

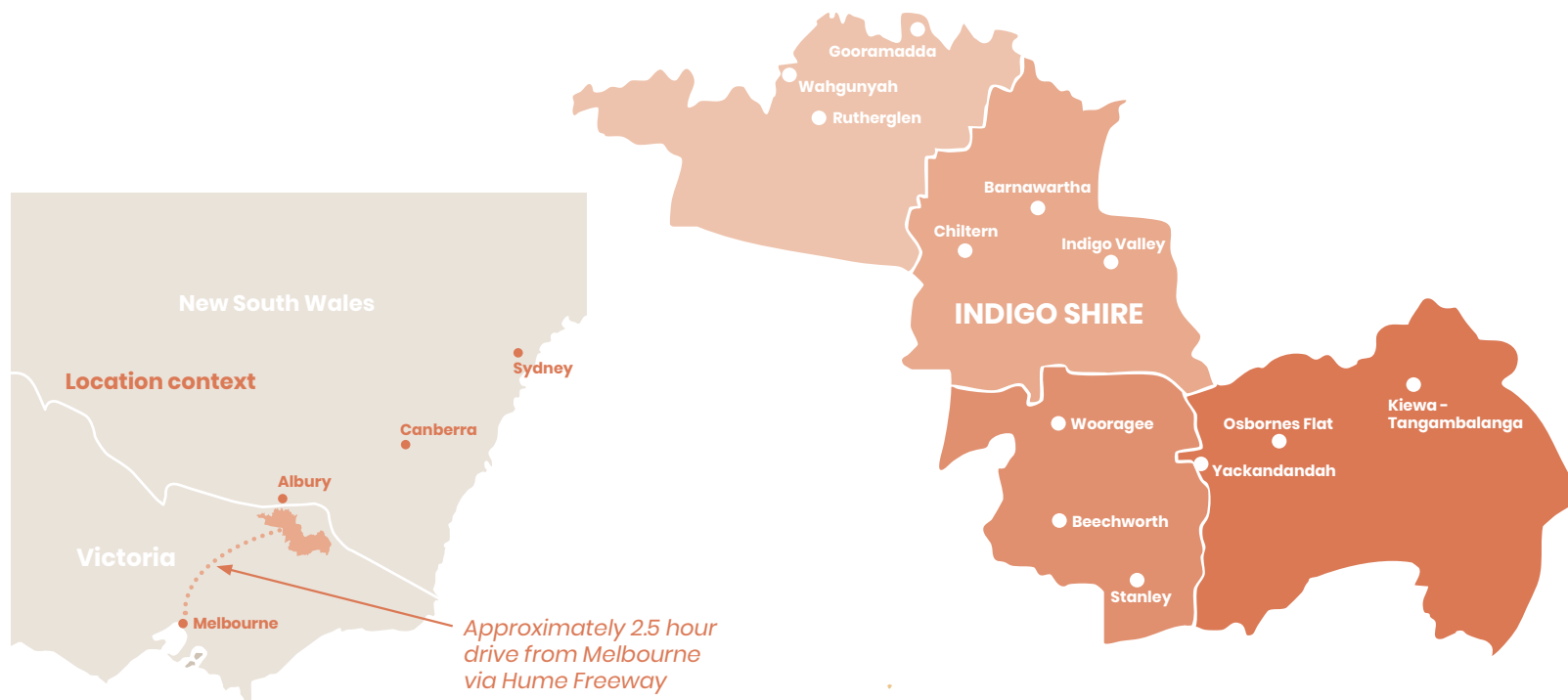
We achieve more together than we can alone. Strategic alignment extends our impact and reach beyond what any single organisation could accomplish. We seek alignment with National ([THRIVE 2030](#)), State ([Experience Victoria 2033](#)) and Regional ([Victorias High Country Destination Management Plan 2033](#)) priorities where they reinforce Indigo Shire's own destination vision and unique local identity.

1.3 Destination Background

Destinations

Indigo Shire encompasses four distinct regions, each representing a unique destination with established townships, surrounding communities and diverse natural landscapes:

-  **Beechworth area** (including Stanley & Wooragee)
-  **Chiltern area** (including Indigo Valley & Barnawartha)
-  **Rutherglen area** (including Wahgunyah & Gooramadda)
-  **Yackandandah area** (including Kiewa, Tangambalanga & Osbornes Flat)



Beechworth Area

The Beechworth Area attracts nearly half of the shire's total visitation, anchored by Beechworth township's premier built heritage assets. The National Heritage Listed Historic Precinct, including the Old Beechworth Gaol and Historic Courthouse, showcases some of Australia's best-preserved gold rush administrative buildings, sitting within the iconic streetscape.

The destination offers layered visitor experiences including stunning natural landscapes, the Beechworth Wine Region, recreational and mountain bike cycling opportunities, gravel cycling routes, and an established food, distilling, and craft brewing scene.

Key opportunities

- Maximising the Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Listing bid in progress to attract the Lifestyle Leader audience
- Investment in new and evolving contemporary retail, accommodation, food and beverage, nature and walks
- International visitation and wellness audiences present significant growth opportunities

Priority investments

- Motivating large-scale accommodation (40+ rooms) underpinned by regenerative principles
- Beechworth Historic Precinct Masterplan Project including conservation, interpretation, education and research
- Indigo Gold Trail 2.0 - Reimagine the network of gold rush, cultural and heritage sites across Indigo Shire to motivate visitor dispersal via walk, cycle and drive experiences
- Main street conservation, activation and beautification





Rutherglen Area

As a renowned wine region, Rutherglen currently boasts 20 established wineries supported by a thriving food scene and growing recreational cycling visitation. The destination connects visitors to Lake Moodemere and the Murray River through expanding walk and cycling networks, creating integrated tourism experiences across the region's natural assets.

The Yorta Yorta Whole of Country Plan identifies the very high cultural values of the Moodemere Nature Conservation Reserve and that it is a high priority for action. Indigo Shire Council will be guided by Yorta Yorta Nation as a partnership is progressed and will assist the progression of Yorta Yorta conservation priorities on Country.

Key opportunities

- Brand strengthening
- Integrated and optimised nature-tourism experiences
- Wellness products and experiences
- Foster Yorta Yorta Nation partnership and support Moodemere Conservation Reserve actions as determined by Yorta Yorta Nation
- Port of Wahgunyah business case and concept development project

Priority investments

- Rutherglen Precinct and Community Hub project (Arts, Cycle, Culture and Events)
- Rutherglen Wine Experience Centre Revitalisation Project
- Motivating large-scale accommodation (40+ rooms) underpinned by regenerative principles
- Vineyard and brand-leading accommodation (e.g. Winemakers of Rutherglen Eco-Pods project)
- Main street safety and greening

Yackandandah Area

The Yackandandah Area embodies sustainability values and community creativity through community leadership in renewable energy initiatives and established cycling infrastructure. There is a thriving makers' culture with two distilleries and a strong artisan presence.

The area features heritage landscapes and Stanley State Forest access, appealing to visitors seeking authentic, environmentally conscious experiences.

Key opportunities

- Increase visitation by leveraging Beechworth, Rutherglen, Bright and Albury/ Wodonga traffic
- Further develop sustainability credentials to attract conscious travellers
- Further investment in product development with a focus on 'People Product Place' principles

Priority investments

- Cycle optimisation including a bike hub and e-bike charging
- Food and beverage optimisation
- Main street activation and beautification
- Small scale events, more frequently





Chiltern Area

Strategically positioned adjacent to the Hume Freeway and lying between Rutherglen and Beechworth, the Chiltern Area features National Trust properties and Chiltern Mount Pilot National Park.

The destination offers bird conservation and watching opportunities, walking trails, Yeddonba Aboriginal Rock Art site at Mount Pilot, gravel cycling connections to Rutherglen, and railway access via the Melbourne-Albury-Sydney line.

Key opportunities

- Make the most of strategic location between Rutherglen and Beechworth, Hume Freeway and rail corridor to attract in-transit and Lifestyle Leader audience
- Position Chiltern as a distinctive destination by optimising cycling, walking and nature experiences, and highlighting heritage and arts strengths such as birdwatching and literary history
- A destination pub and wellness products and experiences

Priority investments

- Chiltern Destination Playspace Precinct Project
- Retail, food and beverage optimisation and cycle amenity and infrastructure
- Small scale events, more frequently
- Commercial businesses in commercial buildings

Experience Layers



Culture & Heritage

Victoria's First Peoples Tourism Plan identifies untapped potential for authentic, self-determined cultural experiences. First Peoples tourism, led by First Peoples and grounded in cultural authority, offers visitors genuine connections that deepen understanding, promote truth-telling, and contribute to cultural and economic regeneration. Tourism presents substantial opportunity to strengthen cultural pride and community understanding of connection to Country. Fostering genuine partnerships built on trust and respect is essential, as without this, tourism risks causing cultural harm rather than healing.

Architecture from the first gold rush makes Indigo Shire unique, encompassing the exceptionally preserved administrative precinct, goldfields landscapes, and bushranger history, complemented by a vibrant wine sector. Strategic investment is needed to maximise the pending Victorian Goldfields UNESCO World Heritage opportunity.

Vibrant creative communities underpin compelling visitor experiences. Strategic investment in arts, immersive creative experiences, and curated events programming could position Indigo Shire as a cultural destination. By elevating arts from a secondary attraction to a central drawcard, these experiences can reposition culture as a primary motivator for choosing Indigo as a destination.



Attachment 12.1.1

Experience Layers



Nature & Landscapes

Indigo's rich assortment of natural assets include Chiltern Mount Pilot National Park and Stanley State Forest, Lake Moodemere, the Murray River and many diverse landscapes and waterways in between, offering endless opportunities for walking, cycling, recreation, and cultural engagement. Walking is a priority experience across the region, serving as a powerful way to connect people with Country, history, and culture.

Country is not just land; it is a living relationship between people and place, where care, respect, and reciprocity for the environment has sustained life for millennia. Recognising and honouring this depth of connection enriches how people experience the landscapes we walk on. To unlock the full potential of these experiences, meaningful partnerships and investment is needed to improve accessibility and create integrated journeys that weave together the stories of culture, Country, and community.



Cycling

Building on North East Victoria's growing reputation as a premier cycling destination and the strength of the Ride High Country brand, Indigo Shire boasts a diverse and growing network of cycling infrastructure. This includes the iconic Murray to Mountains Rail Trail, the Indigo Epic mountain bike trail, Yack Tracks, Beechworth Mountain Bike Park, the Rutherglen Loops trail network, and extensive gravel routes across the region. Together, these assets form a critical mass of cycling experiences that attract visitors and present significant opportunities to maximise economic and social benefits. By enhancing inter-destination connectivity through active transport networks, Indigo can position itself as a leader in regenerative tourism, regional mobility, and outdoor recreation.



Food, Beverage & Produce

The region's wine and beverage offerings vary across township areas, from Rutherglen's renowned, established and innovative wineries and cellar doors to the boutique and artisanal producers of the Beechworth Wine Region. These experiences are complemented by emerging cellar doors, established craft breweries, a growing distillery sector, and a diverse array of cafes, restaurants, and accommodation options. To remain competitive and deepen visitor engagement, the sector requires ongoing investment in contemporary, place-based experiences. One key opportunity lies in local produce-based offerings, connecting people with food, and the places where it's grown or made.



Experience Layers

The Bigger Picture

Indigo Shire's tourism strengths don't exist in isolation. Layered experiences resonate with visitors on multiple levels creating a unified and compelling destination. A cycling journey through the region might seamlessly blend wine tasting, heritage exploration, artistic encounters, and connection to Country.

Likewise, engaging with culture and heritage can naturally lead to farmgate visits, nature walks, boutique retail, and contemporary arts experiences.

Nature &
Landscapes



Cycling



Culture & Heritage



Food, Beverage
& Produce

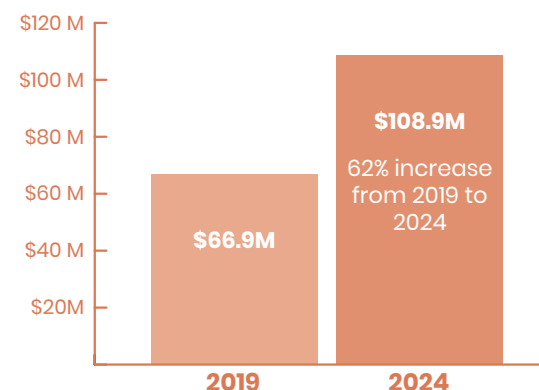
1.4 Current Visitor Economy Status

Situation

Indigo's visitor economy performance has weathered the impact of pandemic, bushfire and floods between 2020 and 2024, with visitation and expenditure data showing strong recovery and resilience.

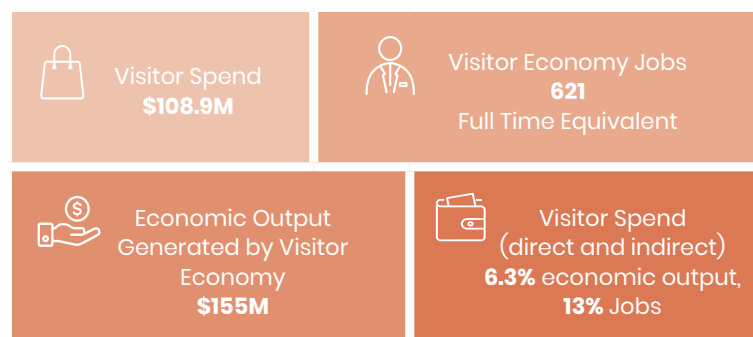
In 2025, domestic high cost of living pressures, and international economic and political uncertainty, is impacting tourism across the sector. Workforce skill shortages, availability of appropriate housing and the increasing cost of doing business, are current and significant pressures facing regional, small and medium size business operators.

Visitor Spend Growth



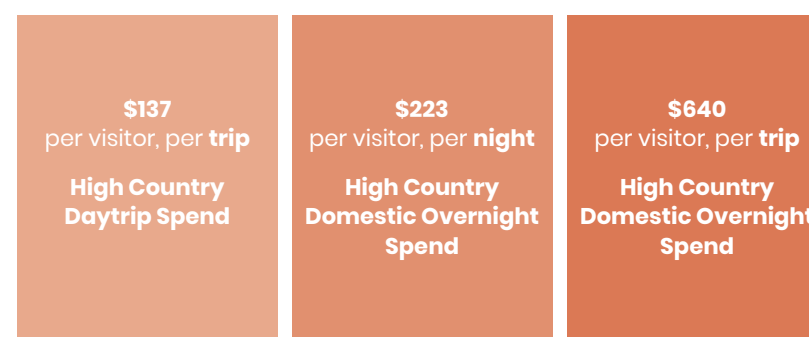
Source: Spendmapp by Geografia, 2025

Visitor Economy 2024



Source: Spendmapp by Geografia, 2025 and Urban Enterprise, 2025

Regional Average Visitor Spend



Source: Urban Enterprise, 2025








1.4 Current Visitor Economy Status

Visitor Measurement

The measurement systems and available data sets for tracking visitation in Indigo Shire have evolved. Tourism Research Australia (TRA) no longer reports visitation at the regional destination level, instead focusing on Local Government Area (Council) data. As a result, this Destination Management Plan (DMP) will adopt a new methodology for measuring visitation, meaning baseline data will differ from that used during the previous Destination Gamechanger strategic period.

To provide a more accurate and granular understanding of visitation patterns, we will draw on both TRA's Council-level data and Spendmapp (bank transaction data). This combined approach will allow for the estimation of visitation percentages across individual destinations within Indigo, enabling the tracking of growth and trends both locally and across the region as a whole.

Indigo Visitation 2024

 Total visitor trips 623,500	 Daytrips 325,000	 Overnight trips 298,500	 Total visitor nights 771,000
 International overnight 4,500	 Overnight percentage 47% of visitor trips stay one night or more		 Average length of stay 2.6 nights

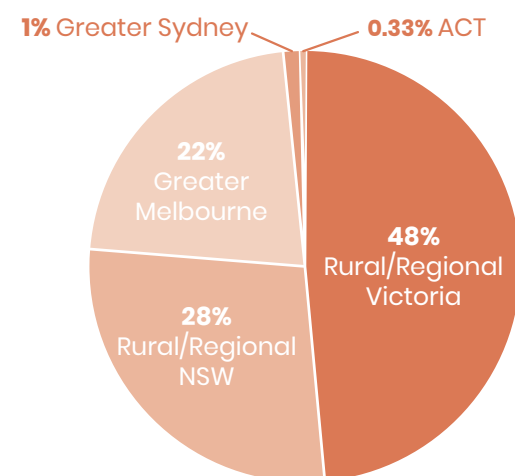
Source: Urban Enterprise, 2025

Investment 2018–2024

 Public Investment \$17M +	 Private Investment \$40M +
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Source: Indigo Shire Council, 2025

Geographic Source of Visitor Spend 2024



Source: Spendmapp by Geografia, 2025

WHAT WE DID



2.1 How We Engaged

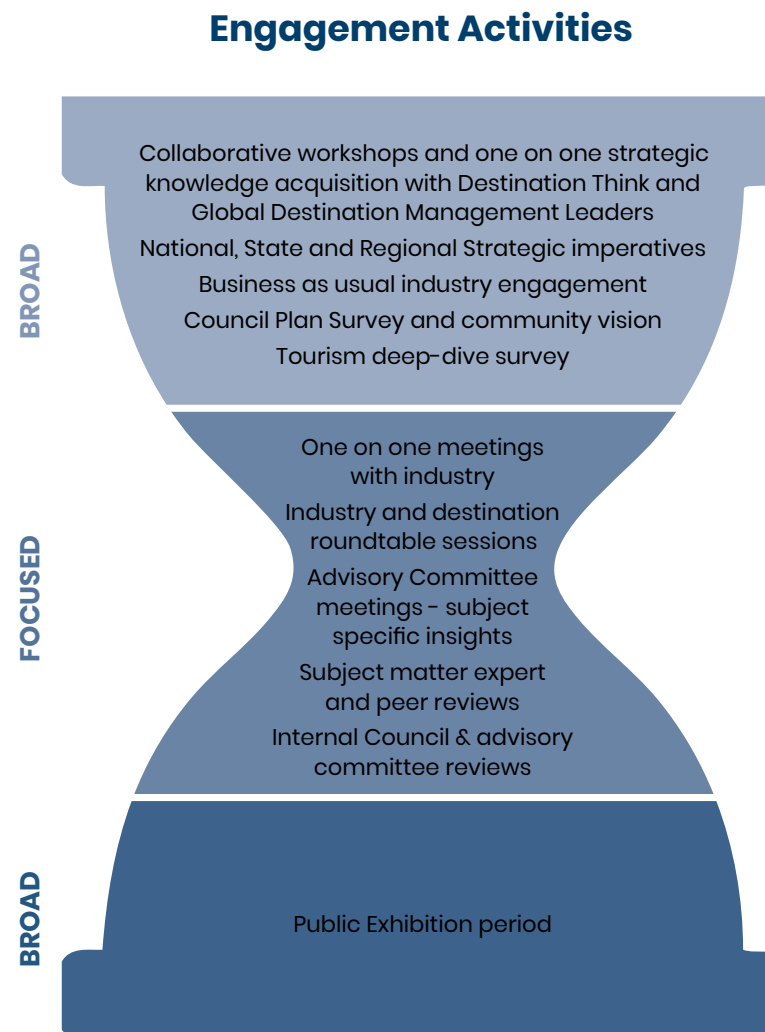
This plan was developed through comprehensive consultation with community, businesses, key stakeholders and global leaders in destination management. The knowledge acquisition and engagement process drew on international destination management expertise, while integrating national, state, regional and local strategic priorities alongside community aspirations and imperatives.

Following an hourglass methodology, the engagement was designed to maximise both breadth of input and depth of analysis.

What We Heard

Through a variety of consultation formats, from broad-based community surveys to in-depth discussions with businesses, operators, and residents, clear themes and priorities consistently emerged. This robust engagement process enabled us to pinpoint the strengths we can leverage, the challenges we must confront, the opportunities worth pursuing, and the strategic considerations that will shape our path forward.

The outcome reflects a shared ambition across industry and community, while remaining firmly aligned with regenerative destination management imperatives and strategic planning frameworks.





2.2 Situational Analysis

Strengths

- Indigo Shire is recognised for charm, community warmth and connected townships with distinctive destinations
- Strong existing "People-Product-Place" identity through local makers, producers, and artisans, with room for strengthening and expansion
- Exceptional National and State recognised heritage assets across four gold rush townships with some of Australia's best-preserved Victorian architecture
- Forward thinking, innovative and progressive community members
- Growth was recorded across each of the four destinations from 2018–2024, most notably in Rutherglen
- Established wineries throughout shire, with strong brand recognition in Rutherglen for fortified wines and Muscat and Chardonnay leading the way for Beechworth
- Strategic location: 3-hour Melbourne access, convenient Hume Freeway positioning, active train station at Chiltern
- Quality cycling infrastructure supporting North East Victoria's premier cycling reputation
- Beautiful and accessible natural environments – including national, state and regional parks, wildlife, lakes and waterways
- Emerging reputation for sustainability, most notably in Yackandandah and Rutherglen Wine Region
- Strong habitual visitor audience with established destination relationships

Challenges

- Workforce and worker accommodation shortages
- Critical investment in electricity, water and sewerage infrastructure is required to service new developments
- Poor digital connectivity including frequent outages affecting business as usual operations
- Ongoing rate-capping and budgetary pressures are intensifying service delivery challenges. Long-term financial sustainability planning is critical
- Aging infrastructure contributes to ongoing maintenance challenges, while limited financial resources restrict timely remediation
- Congestion and parking/traffic pressure as visitation grows
- Inadequate accommodation capacity relative to increasing visitor demand, with notable limitations in facilities suited to large group bookings and events
- Housing shortages and affordability issues act as barriers to population growth and workforce development
- Balancing visitor growth with resident quality of life and village amenity
- Access to government grants for tourism projects is increasingly at risk due to tightening fiscal conditions and shifting public funding priorities
- Digital integration and contemporary storytelling require resources for development
- Disconnection between community groups and destination management bodies limit strategic cohesion, creating need for greater collaboration to foster trust and social licence
- Limited high-impact flagship events reduces interstate visitor appeal
- Built heritage interpretation and conservation require targeted investment, especially in key historic attractions
- Food and beverage quality and availability varies significantly across townships and seasons
- Declining volunteer participation undermines community-led tourism initiatives
- Limited public transport creates missed opportunities and sub-optimal visitor experiences
- Some community scepticism around climate and sustainability initiatives slows adoption
- Council red tape and administrative barriers are creating friction for tourism investment, limiting and discouraging private sector engagement
- Local spending is increasingly flowing outside the region, limiting the economic returns for Indigo Shire businesses and communities



Opportunities

- Build momentum for development of contemporary, inclusive, and regenerative tourism experiences to appeal to the socially and environmentally conscious traveller
- Foster meaningful partnerships with First Peoples built on trust, respect and the principles of self-determination and benefit flow
- Support capacity building and the creation of economic opportunities for existing and emerging tourism operators
- Investment in brand leading, strategically aligned small, medium and flagship events, creative programming, and activated public spaces is key to dispersing visitors and enriching sustainable township experiences
- Secure public investment to support regenerative initiatives and catalyse private investment
- Facilitate public and private investment partnerships
- Improve awareness of Indigo Shire's strategic location on the Hume Freeway and train line between Melbourne, Canberra and Sydney
- Investment in motivating product and experience development and optimisation, with a particular focus on wellness, arts, culture, food and beverage, nature, walking and cycle
- Destination brand evolution and digital innovation (including sustainable AI applications) present significant opportunities to grow visitor awareness
- Invest in the growth of agri-tourism and uplift the quality and consistency of food and beverage offerings to position Indigo Shire as a premier regional culinary destination
- Ongoing investment in contemporary, sustainable accommodation has the potential to reshape overnight visitation, meet target market expectations and unlock longer, higher-value stays
- Lifestyle Leader attraction represents largest domestic growth opportunity
- World Heritage nomination presents critical opportunity for destination awareness, dispersal and growth across whole of region
- Grow Beechworth Historic Precinct's education sector opportunities with school groups and tertiary partnership programs leveraging National Heritage Place status and World Heritage nomination
- International market offers sustainable long-term visitor dispersal and growth potential



Attachment 12.1.1

Strategic Considerations

- Seasonality remains key vulnerability: long weekends overwhelm infrastructure, off-peak generates minimal activity
- Climate Change including extreme weather events impacting visitor confidence in regional destinations
- Need to establish a sustainable transport solution for cross-shire and regional exploration
- Isolated or unaligned tourism ecosystems (internal and external) risk diluting strategic direction
- In Beechworth and Rutherglen, concerns about tourism growth impacts on residential amenity and town character require a balanced, community-first approach
- Conversely, developing destinations such as Chiltern and Yackandandah are still seeking to grow their visitor base
- Without proactive investment, visitor growth stagnation risks emerge as competing regions advance
- Digital fragmentation requires constant investment and agility
- Limited staff resources and budgets restrict marketing, events, and industry support capacity
- Heritage preservation and optimisation requires investment beyond Council's current capacity
- Community education around the value of tourism to the community is needed to build social licence
- Current economic environment and high entry costs are a barrier to new investment
- Strengthening community and industry understanding of regenerative tourism objectives is essential for effective DMP delivery



WHERE WE ARE GOING

3

3.0 Objectives

By 2036, Indigo Shire will:

1. Provide exceptional visitor experiences while delivering net benefit to the **community**
2. Maximise visitor value to cultivate a thriving and resilient local **economy**
3. Protect and regenerate the natural **environment** by embedding sustainable tourism practices
4. Champion the full tapestry of **culture and heritage**, including First Peoples' cultural heritage, built heritage and the diverse communities who have shaped our story

Vision

Green Gold Rush

Australia's first regenerative gold rush



SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

3.1 Objective 1

Provide exceptional visitor experiences while delivering net benefit to the community.

Tourism must deliver tangible benefits beyond economic returns, enhancing rather than compromising residents' quality of life and connection to place.

When managed thoughtfully, tourism becomes a powerful driver for building social license, creating shared value that unites communities, rather than divides them.

Today's conscious visitors seek meaningful connections and authentic experiences, wanting opportunities to contribute positively to destinations they visit. This creates an opportunity where exceptional visitor experiences and enhanced community outcomes become mutually reinforcing.

We call this 'Optimal Tourism' - the sweet spot where tourism simultaneously benefits residents, visitors and the environment while respecting our community's socio-cultural authenticity. This is what we set out to define in Indigo Shire. Tourism will help visitors genuinely connect with our places and people, enhancing local life and enriching visitor experiences.

Striking a delicate balance between community wellbeing and sustainable growth is fundamental to our approach. We will progress considered infrastructure improvements, create logical connections, address service gaps, and evolve our offerings while respecting our village character - inspiring visitors to return and stay longer, while strengthening our community identity.



Objective 1

Strategies

- **Create alignment and shared commitment to the Vision**, within Council, community and external stakeholders through education, collaboration and advocacy
- **Improve inter-departmental collaboration** within Council to develop amenities, infrastructure and physical links that enhance community wellbeing and visitor experience
- **Define optimal visitation**, including current and future capacity of each destination to define optimal sustainable economic, social and environmental outcomes
- **Safeguard the character, environment and amenity of our places** that residents love and visitors want to share through community-led planning, capacity building, regulatory frameworks, environmental protection measures and essential infrastructure improvement
- **Seek public and private investment** to support and deliver best-in-class industry and product development at regional and local level
- **Enable tourism businesses to embed accessibility and inclusion** principles into all experiences, products, and services through industry development and planning support

How we will measure

- Undertake a Resident Sentiment Survey at the start, middle and end of the strategic period
- Undertake a comprehensive destination capacity audit to assess current visitation level, infrastructure capacity, projected growth and future upgrade requirements

TARGET BY 2036

Indigo Shire will have the highest resident sentiment towards tourism in Australia

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

Objective 1

Case Studies

LOCAL: Totally Renewable Yackandandah (TRY) – Yackandandah, Victoria

Totally Renewable Yackandandah (TRY) demonstrates how a small town can significantly reduce its environmental footprint through coordinated, community-driven action. Since 2014, TRY has facilitated more than \$2 million in local investment in solar panels, batteries, microgrids and a 210-property virtual power plant, with about 65 percent of rooftops now hosting solar systems and most community buildings also powered by renewables. This transition cuts emissions, builds energy resilience and embeds environmental stewardship within the community.

INTERNATIONAL: Headwaters Eco Lodge – Glenorchy, New Zealand

Headwaters Eco Lodge provides a strong case study in regenerative tourism through its deliberate design as both a visitor lodge, and a resilient, community-focused hub, particularly in times of need. Designed and certified to the rigorous Living Building Challenge, the lodge generates net-positive energy, saves hundreds of thousands of litres of water and composts waste through a community facility. Local labour, materials and profits are reinvested through the Glenorchy Community Trust, funding resilience projects and strengthening social cohesion. Its gardens, native plantings and educational programs deepen visitor and community connection to place, demonstrating how tourism can actively give back to support community wellbeing.





3.2 Objective 2

Maximise visitor value to cultivate a thriving and resilient local economy.

Our visitor economy is poised for strategic evolution – one that delivers long-term regenerative sustainability, resilience and measurable benefits aligned with community priorities.

We will balance manageable growth with genuine community value by targeting increased visitation, extended seasonal activity, job creation, longer stays and greater overall yield. Retaining more money in Indigo Shire will ensure the economic benefits reinvested in local communities and businesses. Working with our businesses to strengthen their capacity, as well as the capacity of emerging destinations, will allow them to maximise value from increased visitor activity.

Food and drink experiences, along with motivating accommodation, are a primary driver of visitation, connecting people to place while celebrating local produce and hospitality. Strategic investment in these experiences and other unique offerings will attract high-value, culturally aligned visitors and stimulate further private investment in these sectors. Through compelling new products and experiences, targeted audience development, and strategic visitor timing, we will optimise dispersal, capacity utilisation and return on investment, while advancing regenerative tourism principles as a defining feature of Indigo's visitor economy.

A systematic review of current investment needs, infrastructure gaps and policy frameworks will ensure tourism effectively supports both industry growth and community prosperity.

Objective 2

Strategies

- **Strengthen the circular economy**, understanding the contributing factors and opportunities to influence, including economic leakage and escape spend
- Deliver, and support the development of, contemporary tourism products and experiences that **exemplify People Product Place principles** to attract growth audiences, increase average length of stay and enhance visitor yield
- **Increase destination awareness and conversion** to grow accommodation occupancy mid-week and in off-peak season through industry support and strategic, target marketing at local, regional and state level
- **Strengthen food and drink offerings** as signature experiences that drive visitation, economic value, and encourage further investment in the region
- Advocate for and enable **strategic investment that supports regenerative tourism development**, and business resilience, through industry capacity building, education and development
- **Support local accommodation and business investment** that enriches brand and experience and is aligned with community and regenerative ethos
- **Enhance cross-departmental collaboration** and external strategic partnerships to progress and deliver key priorities and collectively develop solutions to common challenges

How we will measure

- Use visitor data and spend metrics to track changes in overnight visitors, total visitor nights and visitor spend
- Utilise data to track accommodation occupancy changes mid-week
- Improved business confidence in Tourism from sentiment measured in the annual Economic Development survey
- Number of new business and product developments exemplifying People Product Place principles

TARGET BY 2036

Indigo Shire will have an annual visitor economy value of \$265M by 2036

Objective 2

Case Studies

LOCAL: Beechworth Honey – Beechworth, Victoria

Beechworth Honey's *The Art of Pollination* initiative highlights how a regional business can use philanthropy, creativity and storytelling to deliver shared economic, environmental and community outcomes. Through a limited-release series of artistic honey jars, Beechworth Honey directs 100 percent of proceeds to the Wheen Bee Foundation, funding bee education kits for primary schools across Australia. The initiative supports premium local products and reinvests revenue into pollination education, biodiversity awareness and long-term community and environmental benefit.

INTERNATIONAL: CopenPay – Copenhagen, Denmark

Launched in 2024, CopenPay reframes the visitor economy by inviting people to actively participate in caring for the places they visit. The summer initiative encourages simple, everyday actions such as choosing active transport, eating organic or collecting litter, and recognises these choices through discounts, experiences and services from participating local businesses. Collect rubbish and receive a discounted lunch. Cycle to a business and enjoy a free coffee. Visitors arriving by train or staying four nights are rewarded with free bike hire. CopenPay encourages positive choices which support local economies, deepen community connection and shape more responsible visitor behaviour.



Attachment 12.1.1

3.3 Objective 3

Protect and regenerate the natural environment by embedding sustainable tourism practices.

Indigo Shire's diverse landscapes of national parks, forests, and waterways, combined with exceptional dark skies for stargazing, create unique natural experiences that require careful protection. Nature-based tourism, including cycling and walking, allows visitors to connect with these landscapes in low-impact ways, deepening appreciation for Country while supporting local economies.

However, tourism has been extractive by nature. We must adopt a regenerative approach to tourism growth that preserves, repairs, and actively improves Country and environmental health.

Council has declared a climate emergency, and the time for action is now. Understanding that our tourism sector comprises mainly small businesses with unique sustainability challenges, we will provide coordinated support to overcome barriers, encourage greener actions and transition to low-carbon operations – no matter where a business might be in the journey.

As a predominantly self-drive destination, we face the challenge of managing visitor concentration and environmental impacts from greenhouse gas emissions, resource depletion and pollution. Developing sustainable transport solutions, and promoting cycling, walking and other nature-based experiences, will encourage broader regional exploration, distribute tourism value, and reduce environmental harm. Every action contributes to making the sector more resilient and ensuring the long-term prosperity of both our tourism industry and our planet.

When tourism thrives sustainably, we can all thrive.



Objective 3

Strategies

- **Attract visitors and investors who share this ethos** by highlighting Indigo Shire's leadership in regenerative tourism through strategic marketing, communications, projects and public forums
- **Encourage slower, active travel** by showcasing Indigo Shire's natural landscapes through walks, cycling, waterways and conservation experiences
- Identify, collaborate and advocate for public or private **investment in sustainable cross-shire transport solutions**
- **Foster meaningful partnerships and offer support** as guided by Traditional Owners in the progression of climate action and cultural conservation priorities on Country, starting with those outlined in the Yorta Yorta Whole of Country Plan
- Partner with community and external stakeholders, including land managers, to **protect and regenerate the natural environment** through conservation-based projects, activation and interpretation, visitor education and incentive programs. Leverage Regional tourism Environmental Social Governance work
- **Champion and support the tourism industry to access and apply public investment** (such as green bonds) to reduce its environmental impact through renewable energy solutions, targeted education, removal of implementation barriers and practical sustainability support
- **Establish tourism-specific climate targets** within the Council's Climate Action Plan (Kausal) to ensure alignment and accountability
- Increase number of tourism businesses **actively participating in, or contributing to, environmental or sustainability initiatives** (such as eco-certification) by 30%

How we will measure

- Partner with Council's Environment and Sustainability team to undertake benchmarking of current carbon emissions from visitor economy in 2026, to establish realistic 2036 emissions reductions goal
- Monitoring sustainability reporting in businesses including number of regenerative or eco-accredited tourism experiences
- Monitor national and state visitor survey reporting on sustainable travel preferences

TARGET BY 2036

Indigo Shire will achieve carbon dioxide equivalents (CO₂e) per visitor in line with United Nations targets

Objective 3

Case Studies

LOCAL: Lake Moodemere Estate – Rutherglen, Victoria

Lake Moodemere Estate is North East Victoria's first certified sustainable vineyard (2021) and achieved Climate Active Carbon Neutral Certification in 2025, one of only six wine businesses in Australia to do so. The Chambers family integrates seven generations of wine and lamb production, eliminating pesticides, herbicides and synthetic fertilisers through cell grazing, cover crops and organic fertiliser. Mulching, waterway protection, native regeneration and wetland creation enhance biodiversity and reduce water use. Additional initiatives include solar power, lightweight bottles, extensive worm farming, "zero food miles" dining and full water self-sufficiency, positioning the estate as a leader in regenerative, low impact wine production.

INTERNATIONAL: Electric Cherries – Central Otago, New Zealand

Electric Cherries and Forest Orchard Lodge is redefining what sustainable agriculture can look like. Their story is one of experimentation and regeneration, using renewable energy and sustainable tech to grow responsibly, not just efficiently. They have become the first fully electric cherry farm in the world (including New Zealand's first electric tractor). Beyond delicious produce, the farm also generates excess electricity through its solar array, which is sold back into the local network. It's a reminder that growth doesn't have to come at the planet's expense.





3.4 Objective 4

Champion the full tapestry of culture and heritage, including First Peoples' cultural heritage, built heritage and the diverse communities who have shaped our story.

Indigo is entering an era of heritage revival – one that honours the past, redefines the future, and acknowledges that history is being made as we speak.

To truly represent Indigo Shire's destinations and landscapes to the world, we must deepen our understanding and acknowledge Country's whole story.

In Victoria, the opportunity is significant: to embed self-determination into tourism and ensure First Peoples lead how their culture and histories are shared. But this must be coupled with vigilance to guard against harm—through careful governance, ongoing benefit-sharing, and respect for cultural authority and intellectual property.

We seek to build meaningful partnerships with Traditional Owners. When approached with respect, reciprocity, and cultural authority, First Peoples' tourism experiences can deliver benefits that extend beyond economics.

Indigo Shire's built heritage is among the best preserved in Australia, exemplified by the National Heritage Listed Gold Rush Administration Precinct in Beechworth and the renowned Burke Museum.

We will continue to honour and protect these irreplaceable assets, including our buildings, sites, settings and landscapes, while embracing the opportunities presented by the pending Victorian Goldfields UNESCO World Heritage Listing to share the depth and diversity of our heritage offerings with the world.

Objective 4

Strategies

- **Optimise the opportunities presented by Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Place** status to enhance cultural heritage awareness and celebrate the unique stories and identity of Indigo Shire
- **Establish Indigo Shire as the must-visit destination** on the Victorian Goldfields serial UNESCO World Heritage Listing
- Foster deeper connections with Traditional Owners by **prioritising continuous listening, learning, and collaboration**
- **Identify opportunities to form meaningful partnerships** with Traditional Owners ensuring respect for self-determination, cultural authority, cultural intellectual property and benefit flow
- Ensure all relevant tourism projects **align with and support progression of Reconciliation Action Plan** aspirations and objectives
- **Draw on the expertise of storytellers**, cultural custodians, historians, and heritage professionals to enrich visitor experiences through inclusive and interactive interpretation that reflects the diverse voices and histories of our community
- **Develop a Cultural Heritage Strategy** to strengthen the protection, conservation and activation of natural and built heritage assets, ensuring interpretation is engaging, respectful, inclusive and accessible
- **Unlock the heritage potential woven into Indigo Shire's natural landscapes**, culinary traditions, and arts and cultural experiences through targeted product development and innovation

How we will measure

- Define what success looks like in partnership with Traditional Owner groups
- Monitor number of heritage assets activated for tourism (buildings, sites, landscapes)
- Visitor and resident satisfaction with cultural heritage experiences through sentiment survey data

TARGET BY 2036

Indigo Shire will achieve a 20% increase in the total number of visitor experiences that tell a cultural or heritage story

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

Objective 4

Case Studies

LOCAL: People of Beechworth Exhibition – Beechworth, Victoria

The People of Beechworth exhibition at the Burke Museum reimagines heritage as a living, contemporary expression of community identity. By showcasing photographic portraits and stories of contemporary community members alongside historic artefacts, the exhibition highlights Beechworth's cultural diversity, resilience, and evolution. Themes such as volunteering, food, sport, gender equality and Chinese heritage reflect the town's layered social fabric. The project demonstrates strong alignment with community objectives by embedding participation, inclusion and local storytelling. It strengthens connection to place, modernises heritage interpretation and positions culture as an active driver of community pride.

INTERNATIONAL: Shotover Jet – Queenstown, New Zealand

The Shotover Jet in Tāhuna (Queenstown) blends deep cultural heritage with economic, environmental and community value. Proudly owned and operated by Ngāi Tahu, the experience shares the iwi's ancestral connection to the Kīmiākau (Shotover River) while bringing visitors into the spectacular canyon landscape. Since 1965 it has become a New Zealand icon of adventure tourism, supporting local jobs and visitor spend. In 2025, Shotover Jet advanced environmental leadership by introducing a fully electric jet boat prototype, reducing emissions and demonstrating commitment to sustainable tourism that benefits community, culture and natural environments alike.



WHAT WE WILL DO



Attachment 12.1.1

4.1 The Role of Council

Community and Council share a vision for the future.

Success will rely on strong collaboration across all levels – government, businesses and community – working together to guide the sustainable growth and regenerative evolution of Indigo Shire.

Where Council does not have a direct role in delivery, we will actively seek to inspire investment, partner with, or advocate to, the appropriate stakeholders or level of government to support the plan's objectives.

Council's destination management role includes:

Advocate

We advocate for streamlined administrative requirements, application processes and barrier removal to support sustainable and aligned development. We raise awareness with State and Federal Governments and key industry stakeholders about the needs and opportunities within the visitor economy, while supporting or initiating campaigns that enhance sustainable tourism and benefit both residents and visitors.

Partner

We build strategic relationships with tourism operators, regional bodies, government agencies, and community groups to collaborate on shared goals that strengthen Indigo Shire's visitor economy.

Deliver

We deliver visitor services, marketing campaigns, experiences and infrastructure that enhance the visitor experience while supporting community wellbeing and activating community-owned assets.

Fund

We offer grants, funding, or subsidies to tourism initiatives that align with our objectives and support the growth of the local visitor economy.

Educate

We share tourism insights, data, and best practices to build awareness, foster sustainable visitor behaviour, and strengthen local understanding of the value and impact of the visitor economy.

Plan

We plan for tourism infrastructure and destination development that respond to current and future visitor needs, while ensuring alignment with community values and sustainability principles.

Measure

We measure strategic success across economic, social and environmental metrics – outcomes, not just outputs.

4.2 Delivery Roadmap

The implementation of the DMP36 will be an evolving process that requires consistent, ongoing collaboration across community, government, stakeholders, residents and visitors, with shared commitment and agility as we learn, adapt and grow.

The delivery approach includes:

- **Three 3-year action plans:** With regular measurement, review, reporting and adjustment between each plan
- **First priority:** Developing the 2027–2029 Action Plan using insights from the DMP36 consultation process
- **Business as usual integration:** Tourism Development, Visitor Servicing, and Historic Precinct/ Museums teams will embed strategies, tactics and objectives into daily operations
- **Adaptive improvement:** We will embrace new data and metrics to sharpen our approach and better measure our impact
- **Implementation and reporting:** The establishment of a Regenerative Destination Management Framework (see next page for details) will guide all future investment, policy, and strategic decisions through a three-dimensional assessment matrix. Reporting will be measured holistically across environmental, socio-cultural, and economic regenerative outcomes, ensuring transparent accountability to the community and stakeholders

Many strategies and targets will require further evolution and refinement, including clear roles for individual businesses and stakeholders in delivering these shared goals. The final 3-year action plan (2033 – 2035) will measure and evaluate the learnings and outcomes from the full decade of implementation, and begin planning for the next strategic period.

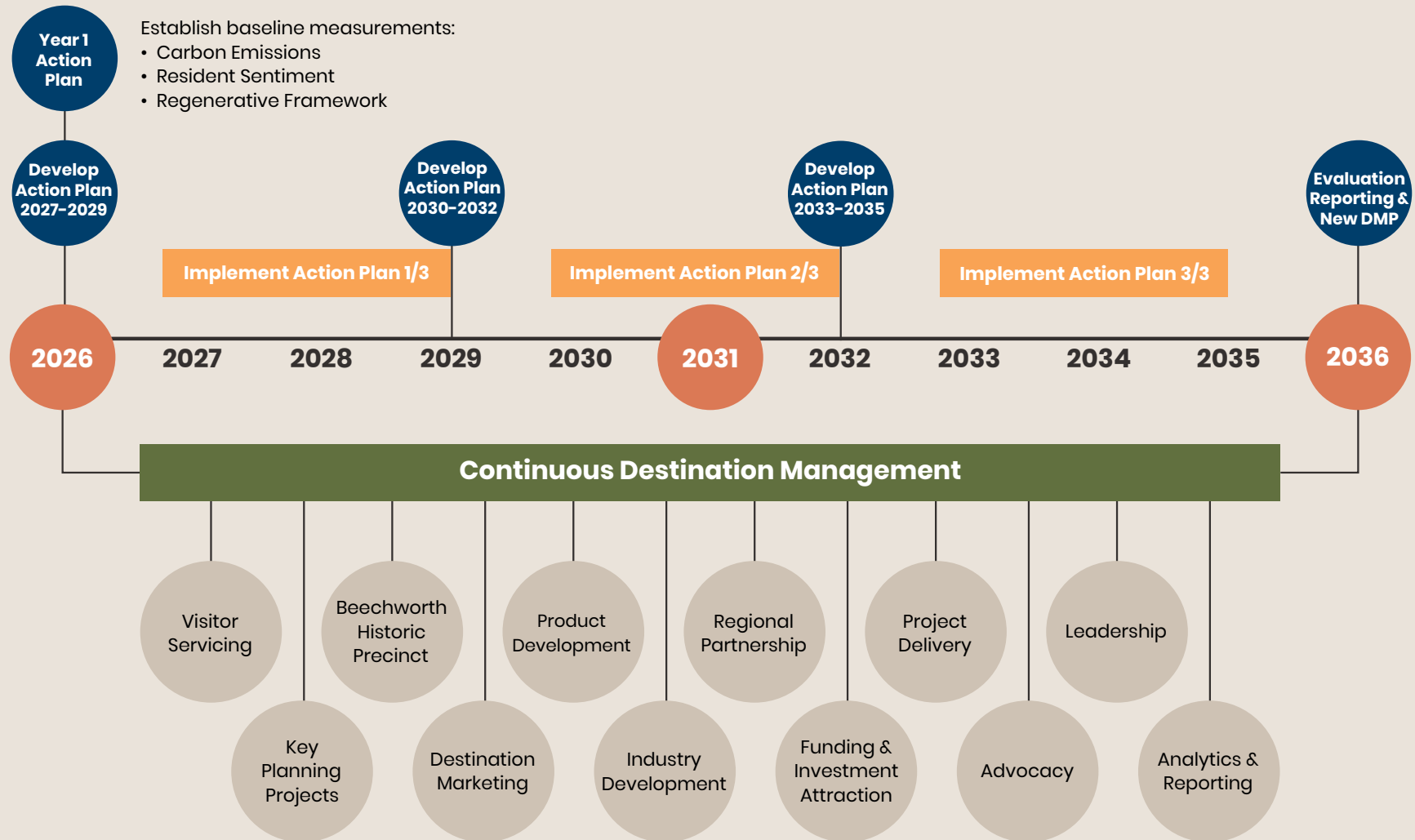
This is a whole-of-destination plan. Together, we step into a new era of purpose and regenerative action. DMP36 is a living framework, and our strategies, targets, measures and actions will expand as we progress.

We don't have all the answers, but we know where we need to go – and this plan is our guide.

Critical Year 1 Actions Include:

- Establish first 3-year Strategic Action Plan: 2027 – 2029
- Establish baseline Resident Sentiment measurement
- Establish baseline Carbon Emissions measurement from Visitor Economy
- Develop meaningful partnerships with Traditional Owners
- Establish a Regenerative Framework, and embed it into Council Climate Action Plan 'Kausal'

4.3 Delivery Timeline



4.4 Future-framework Overview

Regenerative Destination Management Framework

We are committed to moving beyond traditional sustainability approaches to actively restore, heal, and enhance destination's environmental, socio-cultural, and economic systems.

Our Commitment: In year one, we will develop a comprehensive Regenerative Impact Assessment to serve as the foundational decision-making tool for all destination management initiatives over the next decade. This represents a transformational shift in how we approach destination development and management.

Development Pathway: The following page demonstrates some of the early considerations that will inform the final regenerative impact matrix.

Impact Assessment: All projects, initiatives, and decisions must demonstrate positive regenerative impact across three interconnected dimensions, delivering measurable improvement to destination and community wellbeing. Where one dimension shows limited regenerative potential, compensatory measures will be required to ensure overall positive outcomes.



Regenerative Impact Assessment

Preliminary considerations for the development of the Regenerative Impact Assessment in year one:

	Environmental Dimension	Social/Community Dimension	Economic Dimension
Guiding Question	<i>Does the initiative actively improve ecosystem health and environmental outcomes?</i>	<i>Does the initiative enhance community wellbeing, equity, and connection to place?</i>	<i>Does the initiative foster long-term economic resilience and community prosperity?</i>
Evaluation Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserves and enhances biodiversity and habitat restoration • Prioritises nature-based solutions • Reduces greenhouse gas emissions or achieves carbon negativity • Improves water quality and conservation • Supports native species and ecosystem resilience • Minimises waste and promotes circular resource use • Contributes to climate adaptation and mitigation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthens community cohesion and social capital • Promotes equity and inclusion • Preserves and celebrates cultural heritage and identity • Enhances quality of life for residents • Supports Indigenous-led and/or community-driven initiatives • Improves access to essential services or opportunities for participation • Fosters intergenerational knowledge transfer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds local economic resilience and diversification • Keeps money circulating within the community • Creates meaningful, sustainable and local employment opportunities or partnerships • Supports local entrepreneurship and innovation • Develops or invests in workforce skills, education and/or capacity building • Generates revenue without resource depletion • Promotes cooperative and locally-owned enterprises
Success Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measurable improvements in ecosystem health • Net positive environmental outcomes • Enhanced natural capital and ecosystem services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased community well-being indices • Greater social cohesion and cultural vitality • Enhanced sense of place and community pride 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved local economic resilience and business confidence • Increased locally owned and operated businesses • Sustainable local job creation and workforce development

References

Local Strategies

- [Indigo Destination Game Changer Tourism Strategy 2018 – 2023](#)
- [Indigo Shire Council Plan 2021-2025](#)
- [Indigo Shire Council Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan 2022](#)
- [Rutherglen Destination Management Plan 2027](#)
- [Rutherglen Place Plan](#)
- [Indigo Climate Action Plan](#)
- [Creative Indigo Arts & Culture Strategy 2023 – 2027](#)
- [Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan](#)
- [Ride it, Walk it Indigo Plan 2021](#)
- [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy 2024](#)
- [Active Indigo Recreation Strategy 2018 – 2026](#)
- [People, Place, Prosperity 2025–2035 Economic Development Strategy](#)

Indigo Masterplans

- [Rutherglen Silo Art Precinct Business Case and Concept Design](#)
- [Beechworth Historic Precinct Masterplan](#)
- [Chiltern Destination Playspace Concept Design](#)
- [Caravan Park Masterplans](#)

Regional

- [Tourism North East Destination Management Plan 2023 – 2033](#)
- [Hume Regional Growth Plan](#)
- [Regional Development Victoria – Economic Development Strategy \(REDS\)](#)
- [Yorta Yorta Whole of Country Plan 2021– 2030](#)

State

- [Experience Victoria 2033](#)
- [Transforming Lives, The Visitor Economy, And Growing Jobs: The Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Master Plan, Arup 2024](#)
- [First Peoples Tourism Plan for Victoria 2025 – 2030](#)
- [Visit Victoria 2025 – 2030 Strategy](#)
- [Yuma Yirramboi – Victorian Aboriginal Employment and Economic Strategy](#)
- [Statewide Treaty \(Pending Assent\)](#)

National

- [THRIVE 2030 Strategy](#)
- [Growing Our Heritage Future – South Australia](#)
- [National Agreement on Closing the Gap](#)

International

- [Aspen Destination Management Plan 2022 – 2027](#)
- [Banff and Lake Louise Destination Management Plan 2032 – Lead Tourism for Good](#)
- [Bay of Plenty Destination Management Plan – The Love of Tourism](#)
- [Queenstown Lakes Destination Management Plan 2030 – Travel to a Thriving Future](#)
- [Copenhagen Destination Management Plan 2030 – Tourism for Good](#)

Global Strategy

Indigo Shire Council is committed to building a tourism industry that supports and benefits everyone in local communities while protecting the planet and creating a resilient economy. We have joined forces with destinations around the world to accelerate implementation and promote solutions for sustainable and regenerative tourism. The Destination Think Collective is enabling places to learn from one another and accelerate the adoption of sustainable solutions to environmental, social, and economic challenges.

Glossary

Community

The population that Indigo Shire Council serves – the residents, businesses, and organisations within the shire boundaries.

Extraction

Refers to the removal of resources, materials, or value from natural or social systems, often without replenishing what was taken. Extraction typically focuses on short-term gain while burdening future individuals, communities or generations with the long-term consequences and costs.

Habitual

The Habitual audience are repeat visitors with an established connection to a destination, often returning to the same places with the same group. They are guided by friends and family members' recommendations, seek value for money, and enjoy familiarity.

Indigo Shire

The geographical area of Indigo Shire Council, including the major destination townships of Beechworth, Rutherglen, Chiltern, Yackandandah, and everywhere in between.

Indigo Shire Council or 'Council'

Refers to the organisation, the Councillors and the staff.

Industry

Throughout this plan, industry refers to the specific sector of businesses that provide related services to visitors.

Lifestyle Leader

The Lifestyle Leader audience consists of progressive, educated professionals who value new experiences, lead active social lives, and influence their networks. They typically have higher-than-average affluence, driving frequent travel and elevated spending.

Net zero

A state in which the greenhouse gas emissions produced by human activity are balanced by the emissions removed from the atmosphere. Within the visitor economy, this includes emissions produced by transportation, accommodation, hospitality and visitor attractions.

People Product Place

The unique combination of local culture and residents (people), distinctive local goods and experiences (product), and the area's physical character and environment (place). Together, these elements create a community's distinctive identity and appeal to visitors.

Regeneration

Regenerative initiatives are those that move beyond sustainability. Regeneration is more than repairing or maintaining what exists; it actively rebuilds, renews, and improves economic, social, environmental, or physical conditions to a healthier state, creating positive, lasting change.

Resilience

The ability to prepare for, adapt to, respond and recover positively from threats, challenges or disruptions. It involves both proactively planning for potential challenges and the capacity to respond effectively when they occur; often emerging stronger or more capable as a result.

Social License

Exists when an organisation has established a level of trust and credibility within the community and with stakeholders, where its projects and activities have ongoing approval and broader social acceptance.

Glossary

Stakeholders

Any person, group, or organisation that has an interest in or is affected by a project, decision, strategy, or activity.

Stewardship

The responsible and careful management of resources, environments, or assets on behalf of others or future generations. It involves acting as a guardian or caretaker, making management decisions that protect and sustain, rather than using assets for short-term benefit.

Sustainability

The ability to maintain processes, systems, or ways of life over the long-term without depleting resources or causing harm that would compromise future generations' ability to meet their own needs. It requires balancing economic, social, and environmental factors as interconnected elements to ensure a healthy planet and thriving society for everyone, now and in the future.

Truth-telling

The process of acknowledging and sharing the full, honest, and often difficult history of colonisation and its ongoing impacts on Traditional Owners.

Visitor economy

The economic activity generated by people travelling to, and money in places away from their usual home or workplace. It encompasses the money spent by visitors on accommodation, food, attractions, transport, and shopping, plus all the businesses and jobs that directly and indirectly benefit from these visitors.

Green Gold Rush





SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

13 INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

13.1 MONTHLY CAPITAL WORKS REPORT - JANUARY 2026

Nathan Mullane - Manager Capital Works and Waste Infrastructure Services

For Decision

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the January 2026 Capital Works report and year to date progress in the delivery of the Capital Works Program.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to update Council on the progress of the 2025/26 Capital Works Program, to flag any current or upcoming issues, and to provide a summary of any highlights or specific details on key individual projects.

The January Capital Works Monitor is attached to the Quarter 2 Finance Report earlier in this agenda.

BACKGROUND

At the June Council meeting, Council adopted the 2025/26 annual budget and capital works program.

	Budgeted Expenditure			Budgeted Income		
	Capital	Non-ISC	Combined	Capital	Non-ISC	Combined
2025/26 Adopted Budget	11,869,183	1,484,319	13,353,502	(4,552,346)	(1,197,500)	(5,749,846)

At the October meeting, Council adopted the revised 2025/26 Q1 Available Budget, with changes being made only to the Forecast expenditure budget due to known carry-overs, as shown in the table below.

	Q1 Budgeted Expenditure			Q1 Budgeted Income		
	Capital	Non-ISC	Combined	Capital	Non-ISC	Combined
2025/26 Q1 Available Budget	12,803,737	2,643,651	15,447,388	(4,552,346)	(1,197,500)	(5,749,846)

The year to date (YTD) expenditure and income as at the end of January is shown in the table below.

	YTD Expenditure			YTD Income		
	Capital	Non-ISC	Combined	Capital	Non-ISC	Combined
January 2026 YTD Actuals	4,051,372	162,789	4,214,161	(3,541,473)	(957,327)	(4,498,800)

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CAPITAL WORKS ACTIVITIES OF NOTE SINCE LAST REPORT

Note the dollar figures in brackets represent the expenditure incurred since the previous monthly capital works report in November.

Tangambalanga Public Toilet (\$64k)

The new toilet facility at Tangambalanga Active Park has been completed and opened to the public. The prefabricated building was installed onsite in rapid time, without issue. Combined with the finishing touches at the Active Park – paths, landscaping, BBQ, seating and shelter – the area is now a key community asset.

Rutherglen Memorial Town Hall Roof (\$107k)

The renewal of the galvanised roof at the Town Hall is now complete. Works on this important heritage building have been completed following heritage advice, with custom rain heads, downpipes, and ridge cappings used.

IT Projects (\$237k)

Work on the council Finance System upgrade is nearing completion, with the phase testing conducted in January. The System will be rolled out in early 2026.

Bridge Renewal Works (\$61k)

Ongoing and regular renewal work is required on Councils 155 bridge structures to keep them in a serviceable condition, and to get the most out of their service life that we can. The footbridge in Main Street Chiltern underwent a significant renewal with the beams, deck, and handrail replaced.

Road Patching and Rehabilitation (\$150k)

The major patching and rehabilitation works are well progressed, with the patching contract completed, repairing sites right across the shire. A significant rehabilitation of a section of Alma Road, is soon to commence.

Road Resealing (\$640k)

Our annual resealing contract has been completed with our contractor making excellent progress with their schedule. This year we have sealed over 110,000 m², across almost 16km's of our sealed road network.

Gravel Road Resheeting (\$665k)

The annual gravel road resheeting works are almost complete, with our Operations team setting up a dedicated works crew to complete over 30km's of resheeting, with the majority of the gravel material that was used, coming from Council's Horseshoe Road quarry.

Baarmutha Park Cricket Nets (\$167k)

Sports fans in the district should be rejoicing, with the Baarmutha Park Covered Cricket Nets and Sports Facility project wrapping up. This project has delivered an outstanding multipurpose, all-weather facility.

Barnawartha Recreation Reserve Oval Lighting (\$76k)

Works are underway on site in Barnawartha, for the installation of upgraded oval lighting. The 100LUX LED lighting will deliver significantly improved training conditions for the football club, with the club also providing funding for the project.

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CAPITAL WORKS COMMENTARY

Program Delivery

The 2025/26 Capital Works Program has had a good couple of months with key works coming to completion, along with several significant projects getting underway. Expenditure levels have increased with 31.6% of the adopted budget having been delivered, although overall the forecast is down on what was originally planned, with a number of larger projects unlikely to progress much this year due to a variety of reasons.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

COUNCIL PLAN 2025 – 2029	
Theme	1. Places and Communities
Strategic Objective	1.1 Community Infrastructure and Facilities - Develop and maintain inclusive, accessible infrastructure and facilities that enhance liveability, encourage physical activity, and strengthen community connections.

There is no specific reference in the Council Plan about the broader capital works program, however many of the individual projects and programs are referred to.

SOCIAL/COMMUNITY IMPLICATIONS

Capital works projects often have a direct positive impact on the community. Project staff engage closely with the community and stakeholders to identify the project scope and ensure that external expectations align with the project deliverables.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Project staff continue to consider potential environmental impacts in all aspects of their works and to adopted works practices to minimise the impact.

Each discrete project's environmental impact is assessed by project officers during the planning and implementation of the project. When required an Environmental Management Plan (EMP) is developed to control and minimise the potential impacts.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Details of expenditure and income are set out in the Capital Works Monitor attached to the Quarter 2 Finance report earlier in this agenda. This report details the progress of the capital works program.

That report includes details of the forecast position for the capital program for the 2025/26 year.

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Council is required to responsibly manage and report on the budget at least quarterly including capital works. The procurement requirements of the Local Government Act and Council's Procurement Policy are adhered to with all expenditure.

RISK & OPPORTUNITY MANAGEMENT

Every project has unique risks and opportunities. Risk management is conducted at the project level and is embedded as part of the project delivery methodology.

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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community and other stakeholder engagement is done on a project level and varies according to the project deliverables and impacts on the community.

CONCLUSION

The 2025/26 Capital Works program as at January has already delivered a number of important projects for our communities, with tangible value being realised.

A number of projects remain stubbornly slow to progress, with planning and design now becoming drawn out. This has had an impact on the Quarter 2 budget adjustments and forecasting has needed to carefully consider how likely projects are to progress towards completion.

The Capital Works program is vitally important in ensuring facilities and assets offer benefit to Indigo communities, and officers strive to deliver these projects in a timely and efficient manner.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Under section 130(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Governance Rule 24, the following officers declare that they have no interests to disclose in providing this report:

- Ian Ellett - Director Infrastructure Services
- Nathan Mullane - Manager Capital Works

Attachments

Nil

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

14 OFFICE OF THE CEO

14.1 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY 2025-2029

Melinda Collis - Executive Manager Customer Experience & Engagement
Office of the CEO

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopts the Community Engagement Strategy 2025-2029

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report presents the final updated Community Engagement Strategy 2025-2029.

The strategy replaces the previous 2022-2025 version and has been revised to align with the recently adopted Community Engagement Policy 2025, and to incorporate evolving best practices community engagement for small rural councils.

BACKGROUND

The Community Engagement Policy, adopted at the September 2025 Council meeting, establishes the principles and framework for how Council engages with its community. The policy gives effect to the community engagement principles outlined in Section 56 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and demonstrates Council's commitment to engagement that is defined, informed, representative, supported, and democratic.

The Community Engagement Strategy is the operational document that translates the policy principles into practice. While the policy articulates the '*why*' of engagement, the strategy provides the '*how, what, and when*', giving staff, councillors, and the community practical guidance on how engagement will be planned, delivered, and evaluated.

The previous strategy (2022-2025) has served Council well, supporting the development of engagement capabilities and establishing foundational frameworks. This updated strategy builds on that foundation while addressing gaps identified through practice and strengthening alignment with the new policy.

A draft version of the updated strategy was endorsed by Council for public exhibition at its December meeting. The exhibition period closed on 30 January and there was one submission received. As a result of that submission a minor word change has been made to the document being presented to Council.

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The submission suggestions are included in the table below.

Page #	Submitter suggestion	Officer response
Page 12: Community engagement should be undertaken when Council is considering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service changes - introducing, discontinuing, or significantly modifying a service 	The use of the word significantly leaves room to be interpreted by council officer's personal opinion who may have little knowledge of the issue or its effects – All change/s should be communicated in a standard and structured format	The word significantly has been removed from the final document.
Page 13 – Timing and engagement - Allow adequate time – minimum engagement period (2 Weeks) – as specified in our community engagement policy	My experience of this aspiration is that – 2 weeks is just not enough when council/proponents/applicants have spent many months in preparing their submissions. It is just not possible to research/construct reasoned alternative proposal or response. This should be a minimum of 4 weeks with a link as to how stakeholders would be notified.	The minimum two weeks is contained in the adopted Community Engagement Policy. This can be reviewed when the Policy is next updated.
Page 13 – timing and engagement - Consider seasonal factors – avoiding Christmas/New year holiday periods.	Access considerations where documents are made available for access at council remote sites (service center/libraries) these have variable hours/days of opening therefore restricting access to potential respondents in viewing/researching documents.	In addition to documents being available for inspection they can be viewed/downloaded from Council's website at any stage during the engagement period. No changes to the final document.

DISCUSSION

The strategy includes several key enhancements:

1. Policy Alignment

The strategy now explicitly references and gives effect to all policy commitments, ensuring consistent interpretation and application across the organisation. It clearly delineates the distinction between policy principles (the 'why') and strategic implementation (the 'how'), creating a coherent framework that staff can confidently apply.

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2. Traditional Owner Engagement

A significant addition is the inclusion of specific guidance on Traditional Owner engagement. The strategy acknowledges that engagement on matters affecting Country, cultural heritage, or Traditional Owner interests requires different approaches, appropriate timeframes, and culturally safe practices. This reflects Council's commitment to respectful and meaningful engagement with Traditional Owner groups.

3. Strengthened Inclusivity and Accessibility

The strategy acknowledges the practical limitations of a small rural council while maintaining a strong commitment to inclusive engagement. It provides realistic guidance on how to prioritise engagement efforts based on project impact, available methods, and practical accessibility considerations. The strategy recognises that reaching all community segments for every project requires strategic choices about where to focus resources.

4. Refined Engagement Impact Matrix

The community interests and impact matrix has been refined to provide clearer guidance on when different levels of engagement (from Inform through to Empower on the IAP2 spectrum) are appropriate. This helps staff determine the right engagement approach based on factors including community impact, level of interest, scope for influence, and complexity.

5. Enhanced 'Closing the Loop'

The reporting back to community section has been significantly strengthened to emphasise the importance of 'closing the loop' - demonstrating how community input influenced decisions. The strategy now provides detailed guidance on what to report back and through which channels, building community trust and confidence in engagement processes.

OPTIONS

- Option 1: Adopt Community Engagement Strategy 2025-2029 as presented. (Recommended)
- Option 2: Request amendments to the strategy before endorsement.
- Option 3: Do not endorse the strategy and provide direction on alternative approaches.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

COUNCIL PLAN 2025 – 2029	
Theme	4. Governance and Financial Sustainability
Strategic Objective	4.2 Community engagement - Foster meaningful community participation in Council decision-making through diverse engagement approaches, transparent communication, and demonstrating how community input shapes outcomes.

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COUNCIL PLAN 2025 – 2029	
Key Strategy	<p>4.2.1 Proactive and early communication on decisions and planning.</p> <p>4.2.2 Implement an efficient balance of digital and face-to-face engagement opportunities.</p> <p>4.2.3 Close the feedback loop by demonstrating how community input influences final decisions.</p> <p>4.2.4 Establish community working groups, where appropriate, for significant projects and initiatives to ensure diverse community perspectives are incorporated.</p> <p>4.2.5 Build Council's engagement capability through staff training, techniques, and embedding engagement principles in project management processes.</p> <p>4.2.6 Actively involve existing advisory committees in community engagement opportunities.</p>

This strategy directly supports the Council Plan 2025-2029, particularly the strategic priorities of:

- Engaged and connected communities - by providing clear pathways for community participation in decision-making.
- Excellence in local government - through transparent, accountable engagement processes that build community trust.

It also gives effect to Council's obligations under Section 56 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, demonstrating how Council will implement the community engagement principles in practice.

SOCIAL/COMMUNITY IMPLICATIONS

The strategy has positive implications for our community by:

- Providing clearer pathways for community members to participate in decisions that affect them.
- Building community trust through transparent processes and demonstrable influence on decisions.
- Establishing appropriate protocols for Traditional Owner engagement that respect cultural practices.
- Improving accessibility through consideration of timing, methods, and communication channels.

The strategy also manages community expectations by being transparent about Council's capacity as a small rural council and clearly articulating when and how different levels of engagement will be applied.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

N/A

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Implementation of the strategy will be managed within existing operational budgets. The strategy acknowledges Council's resource constraints as a small rural council and provides guidance on scaling engagement approaches appropriately.

Where major strategic projects require deliberative engagement processes (such as the Community Vision or Council Plan development), appropriate budgets will be allocated as part of project planning. For most day-to-day engagement activities, the strategy leverages existing communication channels, online platforms, and staff capacity.

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

This strategy gives practical effect to Council's Community Engagement Policy, which was adopted to meet the requirements of Section 56 of the *Local Government Act 2020*. The Act requires councils to adopt and maintain a community engagement policy that gives effect to the community engagement principles.

The strategy also recognises that certain council decisions have specific consultation requirements under various legislation and provides guidance on integrating these statutory requirements with Council's broader engagement approach.

RISK & OPPORTUNITY MANAGEMENT

Description	Likelihood	Consequence	Current Risk Rating	Controls
Capacity constraints: Risk that staff capacity limitations impact delivery of engagement activities.	Possible	Minor	Low	Mitigated through clear prioritisation framework and realistic scoping of engagement approaches.
Consultation fatigue: Risk of over-engaging the community, particularly the same active participants	Possible	Minor	Low	Mitigated through strategic coordination of engagement activities
Unmet expectations: Risk that community expects more influence than is possible.	Possible	Minor	Low	Mitigated through clear communication about level of influence at the start of each engagement process.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Improved decision-making: Better-informed decisions through integration of community knowledge and lived experience.
- Increased trust: Building community confidence in Council through transparent, accountable engagement processes.
- Staff capability development: Embedding engagement capability across the organisation through clear frameworks and tools.
- Enhanced relationships: Strengthening relationships with diverse community groups, Traditional Owners, and key stakeholders.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Engagement undertaken

The strategy was developed through:

- A review of the existing strategy (2022-2025) and identification of areas for improvement.
- Analysis of engagement activities delivered over the past few years to identify what worked well and what could be enhanced.
- Feedback from the development of the Council Plan, specific to community consultation and engagement.
- Public exhibition of the draft strategy from 3 December 2025 to 30 January 2026.

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

CONCLUSION

The Community Engagement Strategy 2025-2029 provides a comprehensive framework for how Council will engage the community over the next four years. It gives practical effect to the Community Engagement Policy 2025 and incorporates significant enhancements including Traditional Owner engagement protocols, strengthened inclusivity commitments, refined decision-making frameworks, and enhanced reporting mechanisms.

The strategy balances Council's strong commitment to meaningful engagement with the practical realities of operating as a small rural council with limited resources. It provides clear guidance for staff, clear expectations for the community, and clear pathways for genuine participation in decisions that affect our Shire.

Implementation of this strategy will strengthen community trust, improve decision-making, and build Council's organisational capability in community engagement.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Under section 130(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Governance Rule 24, the following officers declare that they have no interests to disclose in providing this report:

- Melinda Collis - Executive Manager Customer Experience & Engagement

Attachments

1. Indigo Shire Community Engagement Strategy 2025-2029 FINAL [14.1.1 - 24 pages]

Indigo Shire Community Engagement Strategy 2025-2029



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the original custodians of these lands. The people of the rivers and the hills have walked these lands for thousands of years as well as today, and we pay respect to the elders of the past, present and emerging.



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PO Box 28 Beechworth, Victoria 3747

Introduction

Indigo Shire Council is committed to strengthening relationships with its diverse community to create a more cohesive, inclusive approach to the growth, liveability and sustainability of the Shire.

We recognise that meaningful community participation in democratic processes is fundamental to good governance. An empowered community is one that contributes to and actively participates in decisions that affect their lives, bringing valuable lived experience and local knowledge to Council's decision-making.

This strategy gives effect to our Community Engagement Policy (adopted in 2025) and demonstrates our commitment to engagement that is defined, informed, representative, supported, and democratic.

We are committed to facilitating open, transparent, two-way discussions with all community members and stakeholders, including those who may face barriers to participation, to build trusted, respectful relationships. We will provide genuine opportunities for our community to influence Council's decisions, policies, and plans through meaningful participation in engagement processes that value their experiences and expertise.

The Community Engagement Strategy 2025-2029 describes the principles, methods, and commitments we use to ensure our engagement activities are purposeful, relevant, accessible, inclusive, and responsive to community needs.

We use the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) framework to determine the most appropriate level of participation for each engagement project, considering stakeholder groups, expected community interest, potential impact, and opportunities for meaningful influence on outcomes.

Different circumstances require different approaches: some may only require informing the community, while others demand deeper engagement with greater community influence. Many projects involve multiple engagement levels at different stages, always ensuring the community understands their level of influence and how their input will be used.

Our engagement approach is supported by internal guidelines, engagement planning templates, and a commitment to continuous improvement based on community feedback and evolving best practices.



Key objectives

This engagement strategy delivers on four key objectives that align with our policy commitments and legislative requirements:

- 1.** Build capacity and culture – Work collaboratively with community members, stakeholders, and staff to create an organisational culture of genuine, meaningful engagement that values diverse perspectives and builds community confidence in democratic participation.
- 2.** Inform, involve, and include – Create and actively promote accessible participation opportunities that reach all segments of our community, particularly those who may face barriers to engagement, while ensuring our community is well-informed with objective, relevant, and timely information.
- 3.** Accountable and transparent decision-making – Clearly demonstrate how community and stakeholder participation influences Council decisions through robust feedback mechanisms, transparent reporting, and “closing the loop” to show how input was considered and incorporated.
- 4.** Continuous improvement and responsiveness – Implement systematic evaluation and improvement processes that reflect evolving best practices, changing community needs, legislative requirements, and lessons learned from engagement activities.

What is Community Engagement?

Community engagement is a deliberate process that facilitates communication, interaction, involvement, and exchange between Council and the community. It encompasses how we connect with community members to inform, consult, involve, collaborate, and sometimes empower them in the development of plans, projects, policies, and decisions that affect their lives.

True community engagement ensures that diverse perspectives are not only heard but genuinely considered and reflected in Council's decision-making processes.

Community engagement goes beyond simple consultation, it's about building ongoing relationships, creating genuine opportunities for influence, and ensuring that engagement processes are accessible to all community members.

The benefits of Strategic Community Engagement

A coordinated and strategic approach to community engagement enables Council to:

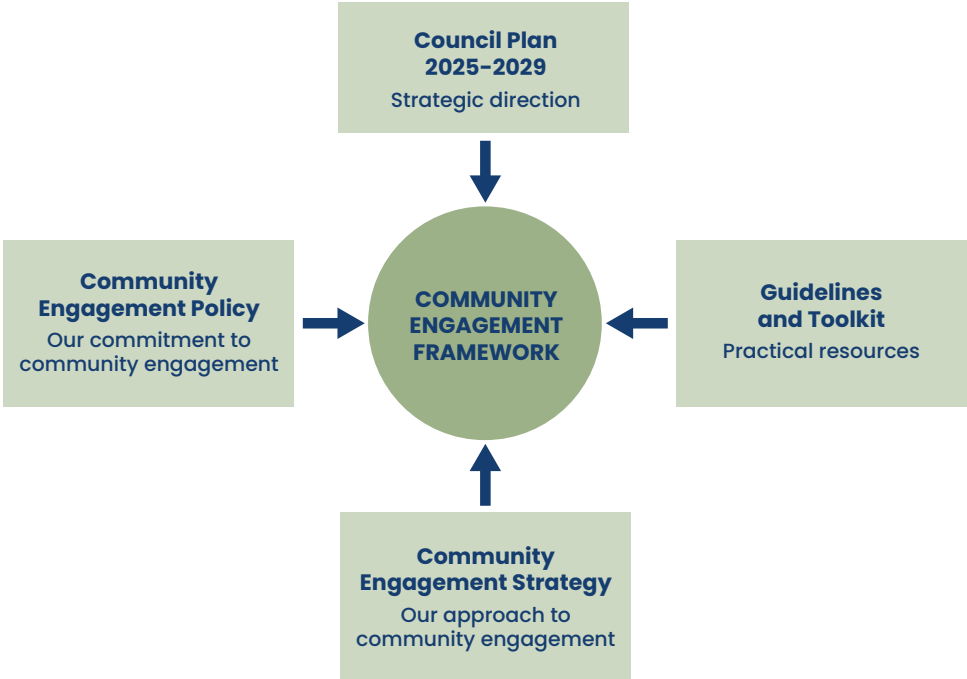
- Keep the community informed
- Build a strong evidence base for informing Council decision making
- Listen to diverse points of view prior to making decisions
- Strengthen community confidence and trust in Council
- Increase transparency in the decision-making process
- Provide a greater understanding of, and commitment to, council projects and initiatives
- Identify and prevent or minimise potential risks

Effective community engagement improves both the quality and legitimacy of Council decisions by ensuring we are fully informed about community needs, concerns, and aspirations. It creates a feedback loop where Council's understanding of local issues is enriched by community expertise and lived experience, while community understanding of local government functions, constraints, and opportunities is enhanced.

Importantly, community engagement is most effective when it occurs early in planning process, allows sufficient time for meaningful participation, and includes clear communication about how the community's level of influence varies depending on the type of decision being made.

The ultimate goal is creating a partnership approach where community knowledge and Council expertise combine to deliver better outcomes for our Shire, outcomes that are more responsive to community needs, more likely to succeed, and more broadly supported by those they affect.

Our Community Engagement Framework



Our Guiding Principles

Our community engagement is guided by the five principles set out the Local Government Act 2020 and detailed in our Community Engagement Policy:

1. Clearly defined – processes have clear objectives and scope
2. Informed participation – access to objective, relevant, and timely information
3. Representative participation – involving affected persons and groups
4. Supported participation – reasonable support for meaningful engagement
5. Transparent influence – clear communication about how input influences decisions

These principles inform every stage of our engagement process, from initial planning through to evaluation and reporting back to the community.

For detailed commitments under each principle, refer to our Community Engagement Policy.

Influence and participation

We use the IAP2 framework to help determine the level of influence and participation that is required based on the purpose of the engagement. Generally, the more complex a decision, the higher the level of participation.

	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Public participation goal	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure concerns and aspirations are understood and considered	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of a preferred solution	To place the final decision making in the hands of the public
Promise to the public	We will keep you informed	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible	We will implement what you decide
The role of our community	Receive information	Contribute opinions and ideas	Participate in making plans and decisions	Actively partner for an agreed outcome	Carry out a community-led initiative

Choosing the right level of engagement

The appropriate level of engagement depends on several factors:

- Community impact – how significantly the decision affects people's lives
- Decision scope – what aspects are open to community influence
- Legislative requirements – what the law requires or permits
- Available alternatives – whether genuine options exist
- Implementation complexity – technical, financial, or regulatory constraints

Practical applications

Most Council decisions involve Inform or Consult levels, with higher levels used for:

- **Involve:** Strategic planning processes, major service reviews, significant policy development
- **Collaborate:** Community vision development, complex local issues requiring shared solutions
- **Empower:** Specific community-led initiatives where Council can commit to implementing community decisions

Combined approaches

Many projects require different engagement levels at different stages:

- **Early planning:** Collaborate to identify options
- **Development phase:** Involve in detailed design
- **Final consultation:** Consult on preferred approach
- **Implementation:** Inform about progress

Decision-making boundaries

While we strive for meaningful influence, some decisions have fixed parameters due to:

- Legislative requirements or compliance obligations
- Existing contractual commitments
- Health and safety imperatives
- Budget constraints or funding conditions

We always communicate these boundaries clearly at the start of any engagement process.

Who do we engage with?

Issues or projects affect different people in different ways, residents, community groups, sporting clubs, businesses, visitors, and those who may face barriers to participation. In our rural context, many people belong to multiple communities and wear different hats depending on the issue.

When planning engagement, we identify stakeholders by considering:

- Geographic communities – towns, localities, rural areas
- Interest communities – sporting clubs, business groups, special interest organisations
- Identity communities – age groups, cultural communities, accessibility needs
- Affected parties – direct service users, neighbours to projects, economic beneficiaries

Engaging within our capacity

While we're committed to inclusive engagement, as a small rural council we're limited to how extensively we can reach every community segment for every project. We therefore prioritise our efforts based on:

- Project impact – who is most directly affected
- Available methods – using approaches that work within our capacity
- Community networks – leveraging existing groups and communication channels
- Practical accessibility – removing barriers where feasible within project constraints

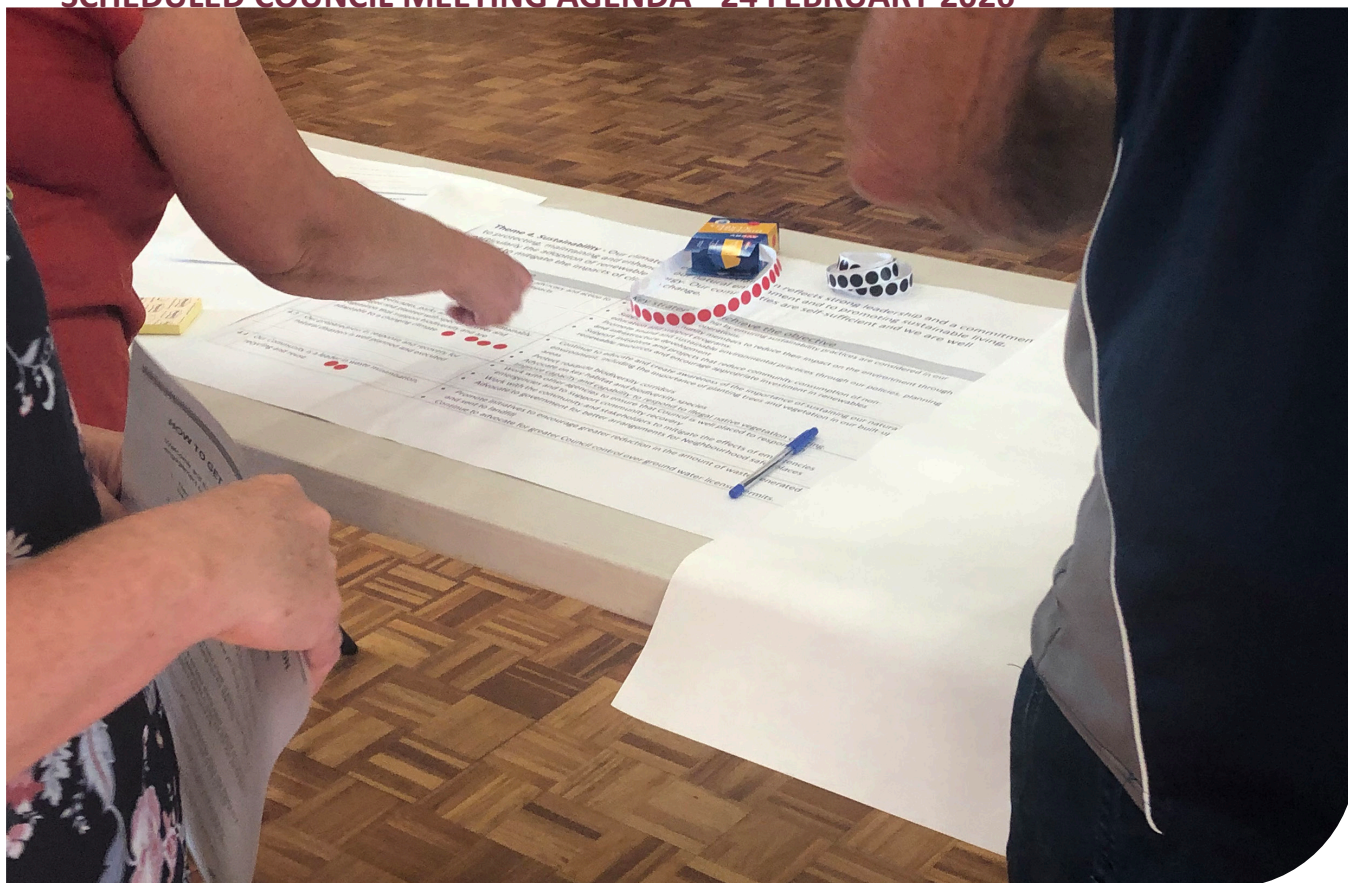
Community Reference Groups and Advisory Committees

Depending on the project and level of engagement, we may establish project-specific reference groups through expressions of interest or targeted invitations. These groups leverage local knowledge and existing community networks, recognising that in smaller communities, the same committed individuals often contribute across multiple initiatives.

We also have established ongoing advisory committees comprising highly invested community members and industry leaders who bring valuable lived experience, professional expertise, and specialised knowledge to inform Council decision-making.

These committees provide strategic advice in key areas including:

- Cultural Heritage – preserving and celebrating our Shire's history and cultural significance
- Accessibility – ensuring Council services and facilities meet diverse community needs
- Environment – guiding sustainable practices and environmental stewardship
- Economy – supporting local economic development and business growth



Traditional Owner Engagement

When engaging on matters affecting Country, cultural heritage, or Traditional Owner interests, Council will:

- Seek early engagement with Traditional Owner groups
- Respect cultural protocols and provide culturally safe opportunities
- Allow appropriate timeframes for consultation and decision-making
- Recognise that different engagement approaches may be required
- Work collaboratively with Traditional Owner representatives

When undertaking Traditional Owner engagement, staff are encouraged to liaise with our internal subject matter experts in Community Development, who can offer guidance and support.

The role of Mayor, Councillors, and Staff

The Mayor and Councillors provide valuable engagement channels, often receiving direct community feedback through their regular interactions. This input is integrated with formal engagement processes and given equal weight in decision-making.

Our engagement approach is delivered by both the central engagement team and officers across all departments. Staff are supported with tools, templates, and guidance to conduct appropriate engagement for their projects, with the engagement team providing specialist support for complex or high-impact initiatives.

External support

For highly complex, controversial, or specialised engagement processes, we may engage external consultants to provide additional capacity or independent facilitation.

When we engage

Council considers several factors when deciding when and whether it needs to undertake community engagement. These include:

- Community impact – how significantly the decision affects residents, businesses, or visitors
- Level of interest – anticipated community concern or interest in the outcome
- Scope for influence – whether genuine alternatives exist and community input can meaningfully shape decisions
- Scale and complexity – size of the project and number of people affected
- Available resources – matching engagement scope to our capacity as a small rural council
- Timing constraints – legislative deadlines, seasonal factors, or operational requirements

Circumstances requiring engagement

Community engagement should be undertaken when Council is considering:

- Service changes – introducing, discontinuing, or modifying a service
- Infrastructure projects – major capital works, new facilities, or changes to existing infrastructure
- Policy and planning – new strategies, policy reviews, or planning documents that affect service delivery
- Public space changes – modifications to parks, community facilities, or public areas
- Sensitive issues – controversial topics or divisive community matters requiring council response
- Legislative requirements – where community engagement is mandated by law
- Significant community impact – decisions affecting health, wellbeing, environment, lifestyle, amenity, accessibility, or local economy



Timing and early engagement

Community engagement is most effective when it occurs early in the planning process, before options are narrowed or significant resources committed. However, we balance this with the need to:

- Provide sufficient information – ensuring the community has enough detail to provide meaningful input
- Allow adequate time – minimum engagement period (2 weeks) as specified in our Community Engagement Policy
- Consider seasonal factors – avoiding school holidays and Christmas/New Year holiday period
- Respect legislative deadlines – while ensuring compliance doesn't compromise meaningful participation

We also need to be strategic when planning engagement opportunities to optimise participation, such as:

- Coordinate related projects – combining engagement where appropriate to avoid consultation fatigue
- Leverage existing forums – using established committees and community meetings where suitable
- Scale methods appropriately – matching engagement intensity to project significance and available resources



How we engage

We use two main approaches to community engagement, selected based on the complexity of the issue, level of community impact, and our available resources.

Deliberative Engagement

Deliberative engagement involves thorough, in-depth consideration of evidence, impacts, and diverse viewpoints before reaching decisions. This approach occurs at the highest three levels of the IAP2 spectrum: Involve, Collaborate, and Empower.

Characteristics of deliberative engagement include:

- Authentic interaction – genuine dialogue with the community
- Representative participation – ensuring diverse community voices are included
- Transparent process – clearly showing how all views are considered
- Accessible information – providing comprehensive, understandable information about the decision-making process and level of influence

However, given our limitations, deliberative engagement is typically reserved for:

- Strategic planning – Community Vision, Council Plan, 10-Year Financial Plan
- Significant service changes – major alterations to how we deliver services
- Complex community issues – matters with far-reaching implications or significant community division
- Legislative requirements – where the Local Government Act 2020 mandates deliberative engagement

Participatory Engagement

Participatory engagement generally occurs at the Inform and Consult levels, involving information sharing and feedback collection. This is our most common engagement approach and includes:

- Surveys and feedback – gathering input on specific proposals or draft documents
- Information sessions – explaining decisions or upcoming changes
- Advisory Committee consultation – leveraging existing expertise and networks
- Public Exhibition – for draft documents developed through earlier consultation

When we “Inform” only

Sometimes our approach is to inform the community without seeking input. This typically occurs when:

- No scope for influence – decisions are already determined by legal, safety, or contractual requirements
- Immediate action required – emergency responses or urgent safety measures
- Internal processes – administrative changes that don't directly affect service delivery
- Commercial sensitivity – matters involving confidential business information
- Resource constraints – when meaningful engagement isn't feasible within available capacity and timelines

Community interests and impact

Understanding the level of community interest and impact as well as the opportunity to influence the outcome are the keys to determining whether to undertake community engagement.

To ensure consistency, we have developed an engagement impact matrix (guide only). Generally speaking, the higher the risk, and/or the more significant the impact and level of community interest, the greater the extent of community engagement.

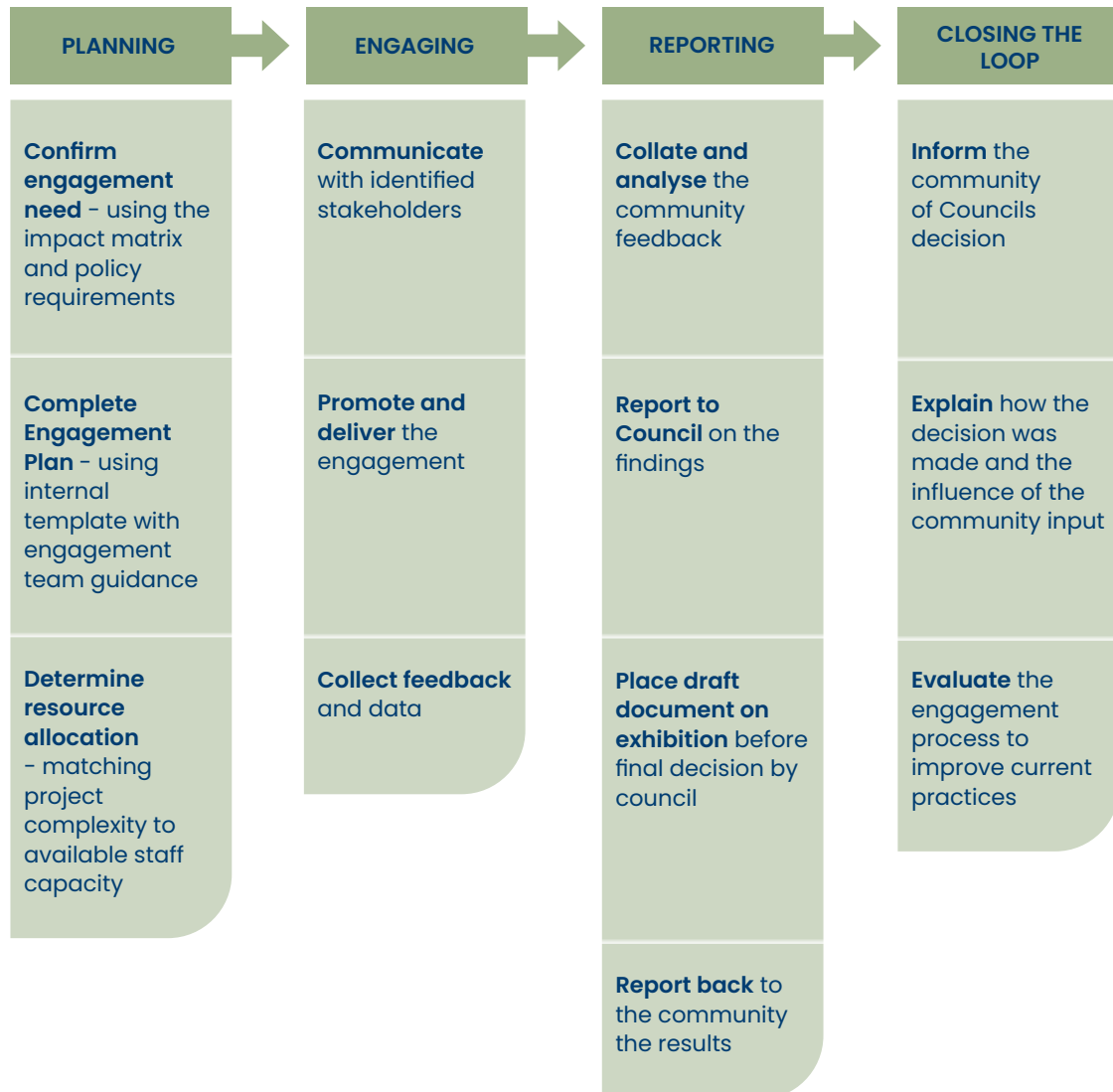
Level of community impact/interest	Description	Project Examples	Level of engagement (IAP2)				
			Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Low	Low level of impact for community Low level of risk Little risk of controversy Little interest likely from the community or media Outcome may reflect a small change to service or activity	like-for-like replacement of local playground Shire-wide road/footpath maintenance that doesn't require road closure Changes in time and venue to a local community activity – for example maternal and child health sessions, pool openings/closures, library opening times	✓	✓			
Medium	Reasonable level of impact for the community Medium level of complexity Likely to raise interest, debate and varying views from the community Outcome is likely to reflect some change or reduction to a service or activity	Community facility upgrades Service delivery changes Draft master plans and strategic plans Policy review updates Road closures	✓	✓	✓		

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Level of community impact/ interest	Description	Project Examples	Level of engagement (IAP2)				
			Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
High	Potential for significant level of impact for community	Proposed change or discontinuation of a council service/ activity					
	High level of interest from the community and media	Major infrastructure project					
	More likely risk of controversy or conflict	Annual budget					
	Outcome will reflect change or loss of a service or activity	Significant Council policies/ strategies/ plans or local law	✓	✓	✓	✓	
		Major changes to Shire-wide services, for example waste management					
Very High		Provision, removal or major changes to a regional facility or infrastructure					
	Highly controversial or divisive community issues requiring Council resolution	Council Plan					
	Legislative requirements for deliberative engagement (Local Government Act 2020)	Community Vision					
	Complex issues requiring extensive community input and potentially controversial outcomes	Major strategic plans and frameworks					
	High level of community interest and media attention anticipated	Significant rate and revenue decisions					
	Outcome will have far-reaching implications for Council's role, services, or community wellbeing	Major service delivery model changes	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Our Engagement process

We use a systematic four-stage process to ensure consistent, well-planned engagement that maximises community input while making efficient use of our resources.



Engagement methods and techniques

As a small rural council, we select engagement methods based on project scope, target audience, available resources, and practical considerations like geography and technology access. The following table provides our toolkit of methods, organised by IAP2 level.

Inform	Consult	Involve/Collaborate	Empower
Website updates	ENGAGED INDIGO surveys	Workshops (face-to-face & virtual)	Community reference groups with decision-making authority
Social media posts	Social media polls	Focus groups	Citizen juries
YOUR INDIGO	Email feedback requests	Planning/design sessions	Planning/design sessions
Targeted email newsletters	Hard copy surveys	Working/reference groups	
ENGAGED INDIGO platform	Feedback forms	Community panels	
Newspaper advertising	Public meetings	Digital mapping tools	
Media releases	Drop-in sessions	Co-design sessions	
Fact sheets/flyers	Written submissions	ENGAGED INDIGO collaboration	
Posters	Farmers/community markets	Pop-up sessions at events	
Local newspaper editorial	Letters/emails to affected residents	Advisory Committee involvement	
Word-of-mouth networks			
Advisory Committee updates			
Internal staff newsletter – CEO Message			
Mayor & Councillors			

Reporting back to the community

“Closing the loop” is a critical final step in our engagement process that builds community trust and demonstrates how their participation influences council decisions. This feedback to participants and the broader community shows we value their input and helps build confidence in future engagement opportunities.

What we report back

When we report on engagement outcomes, we include:

- Participation summary – how many people participated and through which methods
- Key themes and feedback – main issues, concerns, and suggestions raised
- Decision rationale – how community input influenced the final decision
- Implementation timeline – what happens next and when
- What we couldn't incorporate – respectful explanation of suggestions we couldn't implement and why
- Unexpected insights – valuable perspectives we hadn't previously considered
- Thank you and recognition – acknowledgment of time and expertise contributed

How We Close the Loop

We use multiple communication channels, selecting the most appropriate based on the project scale and participant preferences:

Direct to participants:

- Email updates – to registered participants and stakeholder database
- ENGAGED INDIGO notifications – for platform users
- Letters – for formal submission authors

Broader community:

- Website updates – project pages with outcome summaries
- Social media posts – key highlights and links to detailed reports
- YOUR INDIGO newsletter – regular updates on major projects
- Media releases – for significant decisions or community interest
- Council meeting reports – formal documentation in public records
- Advisory Committee briefings – leveraging committee networks

Ways to get involved in Council decision-making

There are many ways to participate in council decision-making, from formal committees to casual conversations. We encourage community members to engage in ways that suit their interests, availability, and preferred communication style.

Ongoing Engagement Opportunities

- Join ENGAGED INDIGO – our online engagement platform for project updates and participation opportunities
- Subscribe to YOUR INDIGO – Council’s weekly e-newsletter with engagement opportunities and updates
- Follow Council’s social media – Facebook, Instagram, and other channels for news and quick feedback opportunities
- Join an Advisory Committee – ongoing commitment to provide expertise in areas like cultural heritage, accessibility, environment, or economy

Project-specific participation

- Participate in “Have Your Say” opportunities – via ENGAGED INDIGO
- Join project reference groups – temporary groups for specific initiatives
- Attend community forums and information sessions – learn about projects and provide input
- Attend drop-in sessions – informal opportunities to discuss projects with staff
- Make formal submissions – written responses to proposals, policies, or plans on public exhibition

Direct Communication

- Contact Councillors or staff – phone calls, emails, or letters about specific issues
- Visit Customer Service Centres – speak directly with staff
- Visit our libraries – access information and speak with staff
- Attend Council meetings – Open forum and observing decision-making
- Connect through Advisory Committee members – community representatives can raise broader issues



Evaluation and continuous improvement

We will measure the effectiveness of our engagement through:

- Participation metrics – tracking who participates and through which methods
- Community satisfaction – annual survey on satisfaction with engagement
- Decision influence – documenting how community input shapes outcomes
- Process effectiveness – evaluating what methods work best for different situations

Action Plan

(to be reviewed and updated annually)

KEY OBJECTIVE 1 – Build capacity and culture			
Work collaboratively with community members, stakeholders, and staff to create an organisational culture of genuine, meaningful engagement			
Action/initiative	Lead	Partners	Due
Build the capacity of staff to ensure genuine engagement is culturally embedded across the organisation	ELT	All Directorates	Ongoing
Provide training on engagement guidelines and templates to all project staff	E&CT	All staff	Ongoing
Identify emerging methods, channels, tools and technologies to support engagement with our communities, business and stakeholders	E&CT	All Directorates	Ongoing
Encourage cross-departmental working groups to collaborate on engagement activities that are rated as high impact	E&CT	All staff	Ongoing
Prepare an annual calendar of engagement activities, endorsed by ELT to prevent overlap and engagement fatigue	E&CT	EMT	Ongoing
Establish Traditional Owner engagement protocols and staff guidance	Comm Dev	All staff, Traditional Owner Groups	2026

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KEY OBJECTIVE 2 – Inform, Involve, and Include			
Create and actively promote accessible participation opportunities that reach all segments of our community			
Action/initiative	Lead	Partners	Due
Promote and recruit community members to register on Engaged Indigo	E&CT	All staff	Ongoing
Clearly communicate and promote engagement opportunities	E&CT	All staff	Ongoing
Tailor engagement activities to reach all sections of the community in particular hard to reach groups	E&CT	Project officers	Ongoing
Ensure engagement materials are written in plain language and easy to understand	E&CT	Project officers	Ongoing

KEY OBJECTIVE 3 – Accountable and Transparent Decision-Making			
Clearly demonstrate how community participation influences Council decisions through robust feedback and transparent reporting			
Action/initiative	Lead	Partners	Due
Deliver ongoing analysis and reporting to the community on the outcomes of engagement with a focus on how feedback was considered – close the loop	E&CT	All Directorates	Ongoing
Develop a new template for explaining how community input influenced decisions	E&CT	All staff	Ongoing



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14.2 APPOINTMENT OF ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Trevor Ierino - Chief Executive Officer
Office of the CEO

For Decision

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Rescinds the resolution from the 16 December 2025 Council Meeting (item 14.6) to appoint the Director of Planning and Corporate Services, Greg Pinkerton, as Acting Chief Executive Officer for the period 25 February to 10 March 2026 inclusive;
2. Appoints the Director of Community & Economic Development, Sally Rice, as Acting Chief Executive Officer for the period 25 February to 10 March 2026 inclusive;
3. Authorises Sally Rice to exercise all powers and authorities reposed in the position of Chief Executive Officer for the period of the appointment as Acting Chief Executive Officer; and
4. Notes that should the Chief Executive Officer be unable to undertake the leave within this period, or otherwise resumes duties during this period, he will automatically resume all delegations and powers.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is for Council to rescind a previous resolution to appoint Greg Pinkerton as Acting Chief Executive Officer, and to instead appoint Sally Rice, Director of Community & Economic Development for the period 25 February to 10 March 2026 inclusive while the CEO is on leave from Council.

BACKGROUND

On 16 December 2025, Council resolved to appoint Greg Pinkerton, Director Planning & Corporate Services as Acting Chief Executive Officer from 25 February 2026. Since the resolution was made, unforeseen circumstances have arisen that will result in Mr Pinkerton being absent from work for part of the period. As it is preferable for a single individual to undertake the role for the full duration, it is recommended that the appointment be amended. Accordingly, Sally Rice, Director of Community & Economic Development, is proposed to undertake the role of Acting CEO, as she will be available to perform the duties of the position for the entire period.

The CEO, Trevor Ierino, will be on leave from the Council for the period from 25 February to 10 March 2026 inclusive.

The CEO has various powers and authorities reposed by virtue of the position. These powers and authorities arise from legislative provisions as well as authorities delegated by Council. For these powers and authorities to be exercised by an acting CEO, an officer needs to be formally appointed to the position by Council.

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DISCUSSION

Nil

OPTIONS

1. Do not appoint anyone. This is not recommended as the Council is required to have a CEO in position at all times.
2. Do not rescind the previous resolution to appoint Greg Pinkerton – not recommended as Mr Pinkerton will be absent for part of the period.
3. Appoints Sally Rice for the period 25 February to 10 March 2026, as recommended in this report.
4. Appoint a different officer. The convention of the appointment of an Acting CEO is to rotate the position among the directors.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

COUNCIL PLAN 2025 – 2029	
Theme	4. Governance and Financial Sustainability
Strategic Objective	4.5 Governance and Transparent Decision Making - Uphold the highest standards of integrity, transparency, and accountability in Council operations and decision-making processes through robust governance frameworks and an engaged, responsible workforce culture.
Key Strategy	N/A

The appointment will ensure continuity of decision-making during Mr Ierino's absence.

SOCIAL/COMMUNITY IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

The *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) requires the Council to appoint a person as CEO. It is normal practice to appoint an acting CEO during periods of prolonged absence. Section 11(3) of the Act allows for the Council to delegate this power when the acting period is no longer than 28 days, however Council has not to date delegated this power.

The process outlined in this report is consistent with the Act.

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RISK & OPPORTUNITY MANAGEMENT

Description	Likelihood	Consequence	Current Risk Rating	Controls
An acting CEO is not appointed, leading to gaps in executive management and decision-making	Unlikely	Moderate	Medium	Appoint an acting CEO.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Engagement undertaken

This matter has been discussed amongst the executive staff, and the proposed appointment is consistent with the approach of rotation amongst the directors and developing the leadership qualities of the executive team.

Engagement proposed

Nil.

CONCLUSION

The appointment of an acting CEO ensures continuity of decision making and senior management oversight of the organisation.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Under section 130(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Governance Rule 24, the following officers declare that they have no interests to disclose in providing this report:

- Trevor Ierino - Chief Executive Officer
- Debra Fankhauser - Executive Manager People & Governance
- Annabel Harding - Governance Coordinator

Attachments

Nil

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

14.3 INSTRUMENT OF DELEGATION UNDER THE PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT ACT 1987 (S6A)

Debra Fankhauser - Executive Manager People & Governance
Office of the CEO

For Decision

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopts the attached Instrument of Delegation under the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (S6A).

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents a new Instrument of Delegation to Staff, recommending new provisions under the *Planning and Environment Act (1987)*.

BACKGROUND

Council's full set of delegations were last reviewed in July 2025. Since that review, a new Instrument of Delegation has been created for the *Planning and Environment Act (1987)*. The provisions on this Instrument must be delegated to Council officers to allow for the related work to continue – if they are not formalised now, this work cannot be undertaken by officers. It is therefore considered important to make these delegations now, rather than wait for the next organisation wide review later in 2026.

The attached document is based on legal advice and a template provided by Maddocks Lawyers Delegations Service. Council subscribes to this service annually.

DISCUSSION

In December 2025, Maddocks Delegations & Authorisations Service notified Council of a new Instrument of Delegation, using the RelianSys delegation's module. It includes 21 new provisions from the Planning and Environment Act 1987. The new provisions come from legislative changes adopted by the Victorian Parliament in November 2025.

New Council powers

The amendments to the Act include a revised mechanism in relation to preparing amendments to the planning scheme, which will generally require authorisation from the Minister as set out in the new Division 1AA of Part 3.

Other changes relate to the abandoning of amendments, and the ability of the Minister to continue with the amendment despite the abandonment.

Repealed Council powers

Some provisions of the Act have been repealed which previously set out delegable powers and functions of Council. Those powers have largely been replaced by the new powers in Division 1AA of Part 3.

The attached document shows that all the provisions are recommended to be delegated to members of the Planning team.

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OPTIONS

- Adopt the new Instrument of Delegation under the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (S6A), as attached to this report - **recommended**.
- Do nothing – this is not recommended as new legislation requires these delegations to be made in order for planning officers to complete their duties.
- Wait for the next full review of the delegations – this is not recommended as new legislation requires these delegations to be made in order for planning officers to complete their duties.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

COUNCIL PLAN 2025 – 2029	
Theme	4. Governance and Financial Sustainability
Strategic Objective	4.5 Governance and Transparent Decision Making - Uphold the highest standards of integrity, transparency, and accountability in Council operations and decision-making processes through robust governance frameworks and an engaged, responsible workforce culture.
Key Strategy	4.5.1 Ensure council decisions are well considered, transparent and in the best interests of the whole community.

This delegations update will assist with the achievement of the key strategic objective 4.5 “Governance and Transparent Decision Making - Uphold the highest standards of integrity, transparency, and accountability in Council operations and decision-making processes through robust governance frameworks and an engaged, responsible workforce culture..”, as set out in the Council Plan 2025-2029, by supporting Council decision-making and ensuring that decisions are well considered, transparent and in the best interests of the whole community.

SOCIAL/COMMUNITY IMPLICATIONS

The review of instruments of delegation assures the community that Council executes its decision-making processes in line with legislative requirements and within the appropriate roles. The provision of the instrument via this report enables the community to have full information on the roles that are responsible for the execution of powers, duties and functions under various legislation.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no environmental implications with this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The management of Council’s delegations involves two annual subscription, including the Maddocks Delegations Service and the RelianSys Delegations module (web-based software which assists with the allocation and approval of delegations), both of which are funded within the budget.

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

The Planning and Environment Act 1987, section 188 allows councils to delegate their powers to members of council staff.

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

RISK & OPPORTUNITY MANAGEMENT

Description	Likelihood	Consequence	Current Risk Rating	Controls
If delegations are not updated the legality of a decision or an action purportedly made on behalf of the council could be questioned.	Possible	Minor	Low	Adopt the new instrument. Continue subscription to the Maddocks update service.
If the attached instrument is not adopted, some functions of Council's Planning team will be impacted until it is adopted.	Likely	Minor	Medium	Make delegations to the new provisions as recommended in this report.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The instruments have been reviewed by the appropriate internal stakeholders. As an administrative function it is not suggested that further consultation is required.

CONCLUSION

In accordance with requirements under the *Local Government Act 2020* the attached instrument has been developed to allow for the effective operation of the planning team and the wider organisation.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Under section 130(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Governance Rule 24, the following officers declare that they have no interests to disclose in providing this report:

- Debra Fankhauser - Executive Manager People & Governance
- Annabel Harding - Governance Coordinator
- Cassandra Horne - Governance Officer

Attachments

1. S 6 A Instrument of Delegation under the Planning and Environment Act [14.3.1 - 12 pages]



Instrument of Delegation
under the
Planning and Environment Act 1987
(s6A)

Version No:	V 1.0
Trim File No:	To be added post adoption
Approval Date:	To be added post adoption
Approved By:	Council
Department:	People and Governance
Responsible Officer:	Governance Officer
Next Review Date:	May 2027
RelianSys Obligation No:	2186
Circulation	All Staff



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Preamble

In exercise of the power conferred by the legislation referred to in the attached Schedule, the Council:

1. delegates each duty and/or function and/or power described in column 1 of the Schedule (and summarised in column 2 of the Schedule) to the member of Council staff holding, acting in or performing the duties of the office or position described opposite each such duty and/or function and/or power in column 3 of the Schedule;
2. declares that:
 - 2.1. this Instrument of Delegation is authorised by a resolution of Council passed on 24 February 2026; and
 - 2.2. the delegation:
 - 2.2.1. comes into force immediately upon resolution of Council;
 - 2.2.2. remains in force until varied or revoked;
 - 2.2.3. is subject to any conditions and limitations set out in sub-paragraph 3.3, and the Schedule; and
 - 2.2.4. must be exercised in accordance with any guidelines or policies which Council from time to time adopts; and
 - 2.3. the delegate must not determine the issue, take the action or do the act or thing:
 - 2.3.1. if the issue, action, act or thing is an issue, action or thing which Council has previously designated as an issue, action, act or thing which must be the subject of a Resolution of Council; or
 - 2.3.2. if the determining of the issue, taking of the action or doing of the act or thing would or would be likely to involve a decision which is inconsistent with a
 - (a) policy; or
 - (b) strategy adopted by Council; or
 - 2.3.3. if the determining of the issue, the taking of the action or the doing of the act or thing cannot be the subject of a lawful delegation; or
 - 2.3.4. the determining of the issue, the taking of the action or the doing of the act or thing is already the subject of an exclusive delegation to another member of Council staff or delegated committee.

Schedule

Planning and Environment Act 1987			
Provision	Power and Functions Delegated	Delegate	Conditions and Limitations
158F	Power to make submissions in response to a directions panel	Coordinator Planning, Director Planning & Corporate Services, Manager Planning & Statutory Services, Strategic Planner	
96Z	Duty to keep levy certificates and levy exemption certificates given to it under ss 47 or 96A for no less than 5 years from receipt of the certificate	Manager Planning & Statutory Services	

Instrument of Delegation under the Planning and Environment Act 1987(s6A) 4

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026



Planning and Environment Act 1987			
Provision	Power and Functions Delegated	Delegate	Conditions and Limitations
96A(2)	Power to agree to consider an application for permit concurrently with preparation of proposed amendment	Coordinator Planning, Manager Planning & Statutory Services, Senior Statutory Planner	The request to prepare the amendment must be made under section 16A. Delegate must not agree to consider the application for the permit concurrently with the preparation of the proposed amendment unless it has made a decision under section 16B(a) to apply to the Minister for authorisation to prepare the amendment, with or without changes, under section 16F.

Instrument of Delegation under the Planning and Environment Act 1987(s6A) 5

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026



Planning and Environment Act 1987			
Provision	Power and Functions Delegated	Delegate	Conditions and Limitations
48C	Power to refund a fee paid for an application which is void and of no effect under section 48B(1)	Coordinator Planning, Manager Planning & Statutory Services, Planning & Statutory Services Assistant, Planning & Statutory Services Support Officer	Where Council is the responsible authority
48A	Power to notify an applicant that the application is incomplete Note: The notice must set out any required fees or information, the date for payment or production, and the effect of non-compliance set out in section 48B(1).	Coordinator Planning, Manager Planning & Statutory Services, Planning & Statutory Services Assistant, Planning & Statutory Services Support Officer	Where Council is the responsible authority
28C	Duty to comply with directions of the Minister after abandoning the amendment with respect to: - providing relevant documentation; and - providing assistance with steps to be taken for the amendment.	Director Planning & Corporate Services, Manager Planning & Statutory Services	

Instrument of Delegation under the Planning and Environment Act 1987(s6A) 6

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026



Planning and Environment Act 1987			
Provision	Power and Functions Delegated	Delegate	Conditions and Limitations
28(1)	Duty to notify the Minister if abandoning an amendment, with a copy of any submission considered, and a statement of reasons for the decision.	Director Planning & Corporate Services, Manager Planning & Statutory Services	Note: the power to make a decision to abandon an amendment cannot be delegated
23A(2)	Power to: - change the amendment in the manner requested; - not change the amendment in the manner requested; or - abandon the amendment or part of the amendment.	Director Planning & Corporate Services, Manager Planning & Statutory Services	Where Council is the planning authority. After considering a submission which requests a change to a 'low-impact' amendment (as described in section 16N).
16I	Power to prepare amendment to the planning scheme applying to an area adjoining Council's municipal district where the Minister has authorised Council to do so under section 16I. Note: see also sections 16D, 16G and 16J.	Director Planning & Corporate Services, Manager Planning & Statutory Services	

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SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026



Planning and Environment Act 1987			
Provision	Power and Functions Delegated	Delegate	Conditions and Limitations
16I	Power to apply to the Minister for authorisation to prepare an amendment to any part of the State standard provisions and local provisions of a planning scheme applying to an area adjoining its municipal district.	Director Planning & Corporate Services, Manager Planning & Statutory Services	
16H	Power to prepare an amendment specified in an application without the Minister's authorisation if no response received after 10 business days Note: see also section 16K.	Director Planning & Corporate Services, Manager Planning & Statutory Services	Does not apply in relation to an application for the preparation of an amendment that will apply to land to which a Suburban Rail Loop planning area declaration applies.
16F	Power to prepare an amendment to the planning scheme where the Minister has authorised Council to do so under section 16F	Director Planning & Corporate Services, Manager Planning & Statutory Services	

Instrument of Delegation under the Planning and Environment Act 1987(s6A) 8

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026



Planning and Environment Act 1987			
Provision	Power and Functions Delegated	Delegate	Conditions and Limitations
16F	Power to apply to the Minister for authorisation to prepare an amendment to the State standard provisions or the local provisions of a planning scheme in force in the municipal district. Note: see also sections 16G and 16K.	Director Planning & Corporate Services, Manager Planning & Statutory Services	
16C(4)	Duty to give a copy of the request and the notice under subsection 16C(1) to the Minister.	Director Planning & Corporate Services, Manager Planning & Statutory Services	
16C(1)	Duty to give written notice of its decision under section 16B to the person who made the request within 10 business days of making the decision. Note: The notice must contain prescribed information, and reasons if it is a refusal.	Director Planning & Corporate Services, Manager Planning & Statutory Services	

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Planning and Environment Act 1987			
Provision	Power and Functions Delegated	Delegate	Conditions and Limitations
16B	Duty (upon receiving a request to prepare an amendment to the planning scheme) to decide: - to apply to the Minister for authorisation to prepare the amendment, with or without changes, under section 16F, or - to refuse the request. Note: see also sections 16A, 16D, 16E and 16K.	Director Planning & Corporate Services, Manager Planning & Statutory Services	
s 8B(2)	Power to apply to the Minister for authorisation to prepare an amendment to the planning scheme of an adjoining municipal district	Director Planning & Corporate Services, Manager Planning & Statutory Services	This provision has been repealed, as of 25 November 2025, and should not be exercised. Refer to section 231 for treatment of amendments on foot before the repeal of this section.

Instrument of Delegation under the Planning and Environment Act 1987(s6A) 10

Planning and Environment Act 1987			
Provision	Power and Functions Delegated	Delegate	Conditions and Limitations
s 8A(7)	Power to prepare the amendment specified in the application without the Minister's authorisation if no response received after 10 business days	Director Planning & Corporate Services, Manager Planning & Statutory Services	This provision has been repealed, as of 25 November 2025, and should not be exercised. Refer to section 231 for treatment of amendments on foot before the repeal of this section.
s 8A(5)	Function of receiving notice of the Minister's decision	Director Planning & Corporate Services, Manager Planning & Statutory Services	This provision has been repealed, as of 25 November 2025, and should not be exercised. Refer to section 231 for treatment of amendments on foot before the repeal of this section.

Instrument of Delegation under the Planning and Environment Act 1987(s6A) 11

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026



Planning and Environment Act 1987			
Provision	Power and Functions Delegated	Delegate	Conditions and Limitations
s 8A(3)	Power to apply to Minister to prepare an amendment to the planning scheme	Director Planning & Corporate Services, Manager Planning & Statutory Services	This provision has been repealed, as of 25 November 2025, and should not be exercised. Refer to section 231 for treatment of amendments on foot before the repeal of this section.
s 8A(2)	Power to prepare amendment to the planning scheme where the Minister has given consent under s 8A	Director Planning & Corporate Services, Manager Planning & Statutory Services	This provision has been repealed, as of 25 November 2025, and should not be exercised. Refer to section 231 for treatment of amendments on foot before the repeal of this section.

Instrument of Delegation under the Planning and Environment Act 1987(s6A) 12

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

14.4 COUNCIL ACTION PLAN 2025/26 - QUARTER 2 PROGRESS REPORT

Trevor Ierino - Chief Executive Officer
Office of the CEO

For Decision

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the Quarter 2 2025/26 Council Action Plan progress report.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to present the Quarter 2 2025/26 Council Action Plan progress report.

BACKGROUND

The report provides detailed reporting on the performance against the Council Plan actions.

The provision of this report is in accordance with the council's legislative responsibilities under *section 97 of the Local Government Act 2020*.

The information included in the quarterly report allows for an assessment of the Council's performance across a range of indices, concluding at the end of the year with the annual report.

The four-year Council Plan is reviewed each financial year and a one-year action plan created to ensure that Council is achieving the priorities identified.

In Quarter 2 of 2025/26:

- 1 action (2.2%) is completed.
- 42 actions (91.3%) are on track.
- 2 actions (4.3%) are on hold.
- 1 action (2.2%) is behind schedule.

Action behind schedule:

Theme 4 - Governance and Financial Sustainability

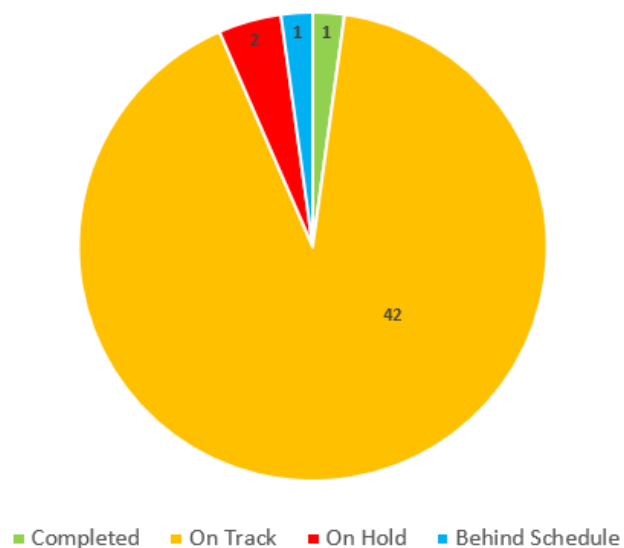
Council Action Plan - Implement Council's Risk Framework Activities.

2025/26 Action: Strategic Risk Register completed on the new Council Plan. Embed the risk tools through risk training to staff.

This action is expected to be completed this year, as planned.

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

Council Plan Actions 2025/26 - Quarter 2 Performance



The attached spreadsheet provides details of the 2025/26 actions and the Quarter 2 status of these actions.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Under section 130(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Governance Rule 24, the following officers declare that they have no interests to disclose in providing this report:

- Trevor Ierino - Chief Executive Officer
- Kathryn Baldock - Executive Assistant - CEO & Councillors

Attachments

1. Council Action Plan 2025-26 - Quarter 2 Progress [14.4.1 - 4 pages]

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026



COUNCIL ACTION PLAN

Council Action Plan / Description	Council Plan Years				Directorate	Service Area	Responsible Officer	2025/26 Action	Status	2025/26 - Q2 Update
	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29						
Theme 1: Places and Communities										
Develop and implement the "Innovate" Reconciliation Action Plan. <i>Description: Work with Traditional Owners and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to develop the next phase of our reconciliation journey.</i>		X	X		Community and Economic Development	Community Development	Creative Communities Coordinator	Not Applicable - 25/26 FY.		N/A
Undertake asset audits and prepare a feasibility report for Councils aquatic facilities. <i>Description: Assess the condition of and future feasibility of Council's five owned and managed swimming pools.</i>	X				Community and Economic Development	Recreation	Active Indigo Officer	Engage an aquatic services contractor to complete an audit and condition report for Council's five swimming pools.	On Track	Asset audit completed by the consultant in mid December. Meeting with the consultant in early February to review the draft condition report.
Develop and implement an Aquatics Strategy. <i>Description: Develop a strategic approach to the future management and maintenance of Council owned and managed swimming pool facilities.</i>	X	X			Community and Economic Development	Recreation	Active Indigo Officer	Engage a contractor to complete an aquatic strategy to guide Council's future investment in aquatic services.	On Track	Feasibility Study and Aquatic Strategy will commence on completion of the Asset Audit and Condition Report as this is a pre requisite to complete the subsequent stages.
Implement key priorities from existing Place Plans. <i>Description: Implement high-priority projects from township Place Plans that enhance public spaces, improve connectivity, and strengthen township identity in Rutherglen, Tangambalanga, Yackandandah, and Chiltern.</i>	X	X	X	X	Community and Economic Development	Community Development	Manager Community Development	Identify and support priority projects in consultation with internal departments and community stakeholders.	On Track	Place plans have been reviewed internally and priority project identified. Project scoping is underway to deliver actions within the plans using Council funding (\$40,000) Continue to seek grants and work with the community to implement actions identified within township Place Plans.
Implement priority actions from the Stanley and Barnawartha Community Resilience Plans. <i>Description: Deliver community-identified projects that enhance township resilience, emergency preparedness, and community safety in Stanley and Barnawartha to build climate-ready communities.</i>	X	X	X	X	Community and Economic Development	Community Development	Manager Community Development	Explore grant opportunities to fund priority projects in the Stanley and Barnawartha Community Resilience Plans.	On Track	Continue to work with State and Federal Government to apply for grants to implement projects identified within the Stanley and Barnawartha Community Resilience Plans.
Determine the next priority place planning or community resilience plans. <i>Description: Identify and prioritise additional townships for place planning and community resilience planning based on need, risk assessment, and community input.</i>		X	X		Community and Economic Development	Community Development	Manager Community Development	Not Applicable - 25/26 FY.		N/A
Conduct a facilities utilisation audit. <i>Description: Analyse Council facility usage patterns, and seek to maximise community access, ensure efficient resource allocation, and identify activation opportunities.</i>			X		Community and Economic Development	Community Development	Creative Communities Coordinator	Not Applicable - 25/26 FY.		N/A
Conduct a community infrastructure needs assessment. <i>Description: Identify the resources needed to support a community's growth, focusing on well-being, social capital, and resilience and evaluate the adequacy of current and projected infrastructure against population-driven demand and usage.</i>			X		Community and Economic Development	Community Development	Community Development Coordinator	Not Applicable - 25/26 FY.		N/A
Implement the key priorities from the Urban Tree Canopy Strategy. <i>Description: Implement actions to increase tree canopy coverage in townships and develop a tree inventory to improve management of risks and overall tree health.</i>	X	X	X	X	Infrastructure Services	Operations	Manager Operations	Complete the Urban Tree Canopy Strategy.	On Track	To be progressed during quarter three.
Implement all-abilities access audits and improvements plan. <i>Description: Enhance accessibility to heritage buildings, community facilities, and public spaces.</i>	X	X	X	X	Infrastructure Services	Assets & Property	Assets Manager	Complete access audit on priority heritage buildings.	On Track	To be progressed during quarter three.
Create a Hireable Event Spaces framework and services upgrade plan. <i>Description: Develop a suite of defined, hireable event spaces to provide community and event organisers with event location options and supporting services .</i>	X				Community and Economic Development	Community Development	Manager Community Development	Develop an event framework partner with Assets and Capital Works to develop a service upgrade plan.	On Track	Consultants report has been completed. Planning has commenced on events framework and process improvements to address operational efficiency and risk management.
Finalise and implement the Life Stages Plan. <i>Description: Facilitate opportunities for connection through all life stages to strengthen community bonds.</i>	X	X	X	X	Community and Economic Development	Community Development	Manager Community Development	Finalise and implement the Life Stages Plan.	On Track	A number of workshops to assist in the development of the Life Stages Plan were undertaken in late 2025. A draft Life Stages Plan has been provided by the consultant for Council officers review and additional input.
Complete Stanley township planning project. <i>Description: Finalise the Stanley township project to support broader land uses in town while balancing bushfire risk.</i>	X	X	X		Planning and Corporate Services	Planning	Manager Planning & Statutory Services	Clarification on the zoning and footprint in preparation for a re-zoning application.	On Track	In progress.
Review the Indigo Shire Planning Scheme. <i>Description: Identify opportunities to strengthen controls that protect township character, support appropriate development, and incorporate sustainable design principles.</i>	X	X			Planning and Corporate Services	Planning	Manager Planning & Statutory Services	Clarify shared objectives and develop guidelines for developers. Include into Settlement Strategy project.	On Track	Environmentally Sustainable Development (ESD) policy prepared and consulted on which will assist this work's progress.
Undertake a street beautification and activation program. <i>Description: Improve the visual amenity of our main streets</i>	X				Community and Economic Development	Economic Development	Economic Development & Investment Coordinator	Refresh town CBD's to make more appealing.	On Track	Street audits have taken place and a findings report has been developed. Costings of improvements is underway.
Continue Creative Indigo Strategy implementation. <i>Description: Enhance cultural expression across the Shire through arts and cultural initiatives.</i>	X	X	X	X	Community and Economic Development	Community Development	Creative Communities Coordinator	Implement the Creative Indigo Strategy.	On Track	Creating on Country Project is progressing.
Implement priority recommendations from the Public Toilet Strategy. <i>Description: Carry out improvement works, replacements and provide new toilets to improve the offering of public toilets across the shire.</i>		X	X	X	Infrastructure Services	Capital Works	Manager Capital Works	Not Applicable - 25/26 FY.		N/A
Implement priorities from existing recreation master plans. <i>Description: Continue to seek funding opportunities to deliver key priorities from existing master plans.</i>	X	X	X	X	Community and Economic Development	Recreation	Community Development Coordinator	Explore grant opportunities to fund priority projects in the Recreation Reserve Masterplans.	On Track	Continue to work with State and Federal Government to apply for grants to improve recreation infrastructure across the Shire. Funding recently secured to upgrade sports lighting at Wahgunyah and Barnawartha Recreation Reserves, projects which were both identified as priorities in Master Plans. Awaiting announcements on funding applications submitted to upgrade sports lighting at Chiltern Recreation Reserve.
Explore ways to improve access to and reliability of public transport. <i>Description: Advocate for improved public transport access, frequency, and reliability to enhance connectivity between townships and support residents with limited mobility.</i>	X	X	X	X	Community and Economic Development	Community Development	Manager Community Development	Identify suitable platforms to advocate for improvements to local public transport.	On Track	Continue to advocate on behalf of community groups and lobby state Government for local public transport opportunities.

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026



COUNCIL ACTION PLAN

Council Action Plan / Description	Council Plan Years				Directorate	Service Area	Responsible Officer	2025/26 Action	Status	2025/26 - Q2 Update
	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29						
Develop a new Disability Action Plan and progress key priorities. <i>Description: Support the Shires most vulnerable residents through planning and services in consultation with the Indigo Community Access Committee.</i>	X	X	X	X	Community and Economic Development	Community Development	Manager Community Development	In consultation with Indigo Community Access Committee, develop a new Disability Action Plan.	On Track	Disability Action Plan has been reviewed by the Indigo Community Access Committee. A bridging plan will be developed in house to align with the State Government Plan.
Foster safety and inclusion for LGBTQI+ residents. <i>Description: Implement inclusive programs and support networks for LGBTQI+ residents while commemorating significant days and raising community awareness.</i>	X	X	X	X	Community and Economic Development	Community Development	Manager Community Development	Collaborate with Alpine and Towong Shire Council's to deliver initiatives that support LGBTQI+.	On Track	PRIDE picnic event was held in November 2025. Further planning is underway to delivery a creative program in May 2026.
Finalise and implement the key priorities from the Library Strategy. <i>Description: Deliver priority initiatives from the Library Strategy to enhance community access to library services, promote literacy and lifelong learning, expand digital resources, and strengthen libraries as inclusive community hubs across the Shire.</i>	X	X	X	X	Community and Economic Development	Community Development	Creative Communities Coordinator	Develop a new Library Strategy and implement ongoing actions from the PLV Strategic Framework 2030 with a focus on infrastructure renewal and upgrades.	On Track	Library Strategy development is progressing to public exhibition in Q3. Funding application submitted to the Living Libraries program for upgrades to the Rutherglen Library. Application was unsuccessful. Further planning works underway to resubmit to the next round of funding.
Theme 2: Economic Resilience and Opportunity										
Secure funding to further develop Council owned land in Chiltern. <i>Description: Prepare funding applications and advocacy to enable the development of Council owned land in Chiltern.</i>	X	X	X	X	Community and Economic Development	Economic Development	Economic Development & Investment Coordinator	Progress the development of the Council owned land in Chiltern.	On Track	Further consultation and planning required to develop plans to be shovel-ready for funding opportunities.
Finalise and implement Shire-wide Settlement Strategy. <i>Description: Create a comprehensive plan to guide residential growth while preserving township character and meeting state housing targets.</i>	X	X			Planning and Corporate Services	Planning	Manager Planning & Statutory Services	Progress the Settlement Strategy (multi-year project). Engage contractor to assist with delivery. Set project milestones and communicate with Councillors.	On Track	First round of consultation completed.
Finalise and implement new 10-year Tourism Strategy (Destination Management Plan 2036). <i>Description: Develop a strategic framework to optimise the visitor economy, equity in tourism, environmental sustainability and net value to community and township amenity.</i>	X	X	X	X	Community and Economic Development	Tourism	Manager Tourism	Progress new Tourism Strategy (DMP) through broad and detailed consultation to Council adoption.	On Track	Finalise drafting of Destination Management Plan 36, invite further engagement with key stakeholders, Traditional Owners and Subject Matter Experts in Q2. Q3 DMP36 to Public Exhibition. Adoption Q4.
Finalise and implement Economic Development Strategy. <i>Description: Establish a framework to support business investment, growth and innovation.</i>	X	X	X	X	Community and Economic Development	Economic Development	Economic Development & Investment Coordinator	Progress the People Place Prosperity Strategy and deliver short to medium term actions.	On Track	People Place Prosperity 35 adopted at the November 2025 Council meeting.
Continue to implement priorities from caravan park master plans as leases expire. <i>Description: Strategically implement key infrastructure improvements identified in caravan park master plans to enhance visitor experience, increase revenue opportunities, and ensure sustainable operations as existing lease arrangements conclude.</i>	X	X	X	X	Infrastructure Services	Assets & Property	Assets Manager		On Track	Council officers are continuing to work toward the implementation of the Master Plans. This includes issuing of Expressions of Interest (EOIs) for potential operators across the various parks.
Develop World Heritage readiness plan. <i>Description: Create a strategy to prepare community, businesses, and infrastructure for potential World Heritage status, including visitor management, interpretation, and preservation protocols.</i>	X	X	X	X	Community and Economic Development	Tourism	Director Community & Economic Development	Establish a project working group and identify and commence implementing priority tasks.	On Track	Australian Heritage Fund 2026 grant application lodged and pending.
Progress visitor dispersal solutions to optimise World Heritage Listing benefits. <i>Description: Progress Indigo Gold Trail 2.0 project, Sustainable Transport Solutions plan and World Heritage Listing associated experiences and products, including audio tours and heritage walks.</i>	X	X	X	X	Community and Economic Development	Tourism	Manager Tourism	Deliver Beechworth Historic Precinct Audio Tour pilot. Seek funding for Indigo Gold Trail 2.0 project scoping. Complete Sustainable Transport Solutions project brief.	On Track	Investment Logic Mapping (ILM) Phase 1 for Indigo Gold Trail 2.0 scheduled for Q1 2026/27 FY. Women in Law exhibition addition under curation for Courthouse Exhibition.
Upgrade township brand awareness, first impression, visitor and community awareness, information access and wayfinding. <i>Description: Invest in town entry beautification, consolidation of signage proliferation, including town entry signage and events signage solutions.</i>		X	X	X	Office of the CEO	Customer Experience & Engagement	Executive Manager Customer Experience & Engagement	Not Applicable - 25/26 FY.		N/A
Activation of inland waterways and connections. <i>Description: Investigate opportunities to strengthen cross-border investment value (Murray River Adventure Trail – Rutherglen Loops, Corowa foreshore development/Wahgunyah). Support appropriate amenity upgrades, linkages and activation of township lakes and waterways.</i>	X	X	X	X	Community and Economic Development	Community Development	Manager Community Development	Explore grant opportunities to support priority projects in the Lakes and Waterways Strategy.	On Track	To continue to liaise with Department of Environment, Energy and Climate Action (DEECA), North East Catchment Management Authority (NECMA) and neighbouring councils to identify opportunities, with consultation required with the community and Landcare groups, to identify suitable projects to enhance our waterways.
Develop a Trails Optimisation Plan. <i>Description: Identify opportunities to improve economic and community returns from existing walking, gravel road and cycle trails and link trail investment in Northwest to investment in Southeast via optimising existing gravel trail networks.</i>	X	X	X	X	Community and Economic Development	Tourism	Manager Tourism	Project Brief to be developed and funding sought.	On Track	Awaiting State Funding rounds to be announced.
Theme 3: Environment and Heritage										
Develop a new Environment Strategy and implement key recommendations. <i>Description: Develop a new Environment Strategy that addresses climate challenges biodiversity protection, and sustainable resource management.</i>			X	X	Infrastructure Services	Environment & Sustainability	Coordinator Environment & Sustainability	Not Applicable - 25/26 FY.		N/A
Implement Climate Action priorities. <i>Description: Implement priority climate initiatives from the Climate Emergency Action Plan to reduce emissions and adapt to a changing climate.</i>	X	X	X	X	Infrastructure Services	Environment & Sustainability	Coordinator Environment & Sustainability	Review progress in achieving the goals of key environmental strategies and plans including the Environment Strategy, Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan, Climate Emergency Strategic Action Plan and Emissions Reduction Plan, to ensure Council's climate initiatives remain relevant and timely. Continue to refine our carbon accounting process to ensure emissions data is current.	On Track	The Indigo Environmental Advisory Committee (IEAC) continue to review the Environment Strategy, which underpins many of the other strategies and plans. With the recruitment of a Climate Change & Environment Officer, other key strategies and plans are being assessed. A suitable contractor has been identified to assist with getting our Scope 3 emissions data up to date.
Develop an Emissions Reduction Strategy. <i>Description: Map out the actions and milestones required to active Councils net zero by 2025 target.</i>			X	X	Infrastructure Services	Environment & Sustainability	Coordinator Environment & Sustainability	Not Applicable - 25/26 FY.		N/A
Work with community to support climate action. <i>Description: Support community-led initiatives to reduce emissions and build climate resilience.</i>	X	X	X	X	Infrastructure Services	Environment & Sustainability	Coordinator Environment & Sustainability	Support Community Sustainability Grant recipients to successfully deliver their projects; Continue to promote the Goulburn Murray Solar Savers program across the Shire to provide community with access to free advice and quotes for energy upgrades ; Support community organisations promoting climate action initiatives.	On Track	Further Solar Savers advertising has been initiated through our comms team. E&S continue to investigate ways to engage more with the community about Solar Savers and other climate action initiatives e.g. through climate cafes. Council Officers continue to liaise with community climate action groups to provide support for their initiatives.

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026



COUNCIL ACTION PLAN

Council Action Plan / Description	Council Plan Years				Directorate	Service Area	Responsible Officer	2025/26 Action	Status	2025/26 - Q2 Update
	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29						
Continue to implement biodiversity protection program. <i>Description: Strengthen protection for native vegetation and wildlife habitats on Council managed land and strongly encourage the protection of native vegetation on private land.</i>	X	X	X	X	Infrastructure Services	Environment & Sustainability	Coordinator Environment & Sustainability	Implement the 2025/26 Weed & Pest Control program in Council's roadsides and reserves; Promote biodiverse habitat plantings where possible on Council managed land.	On Track	Contracts for the 2025/26 are progressing. Council Officers continue to further develop relationships with Landcare groups throughout the Shire, who assist Council greatly in achieving positive biodiversity outcomes in our roadsides and reserves, and in pest management.
Develop a new waste management strategy and implement key recommendations. <i>Description: Develop a new waste management strategy that reduces waste to landfill increases resource recovery, and aligns with the State Government's legislative reform.</i>	X	X			Infrastructure Services	Waste Services	Coordinator Waste	Complete review of current strategy outcomes, and engage community on their feedback.	On Hold	Review of Strategy on hold due to: The Victorian Government is introducing mandatory, standardised household waste and recycling services through new Regulations and a Household Waste and Recycling Service Standard, which are still not yet finalised. These changes will significantly impact how, when and what waste services councils must provide, including the rollout of a four-stream system (general waste, mixed recycling, glass, and FOGO). The State's preferred option is a 1 July 2027 commencement with services provided where reasonably practicable, allowing councils some discretion to tailor services to local conditions. Proceeding with Council's Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy before the Service Standard is finalised risks the strategy becoming non-compliant, outdated, or requiring rework. Pausing the strategy avoids premature financial and contractual commitments, particularly around long-term waste contracts and capital investment. Holding the strategy demonstrates responsible governance, alignment with State policy, and prudent use of community funds. Council will resume strategy development once the State framework is confirmed, ensuring the final strategy is compliant, future-proofed and locally appropriate.
Update emergency management plans. <i>Description: Review and enhance plans for climate-related emergencies.</i>	X	X			Community and Economic Development	Community Development	Emergency Management Officer	Review MEMP annually and collaboratively with Alpine and Towong Shire Council's.	On Track	Municipal Emergency Management Plan has been reviewed. Council officer have been actively supporting Alpine and Towong Shires through the North East Collaboration Project. Projects completed include Emergency management training (CEOC exercise and MEMO/MRM roles). Emergency management trained officers have also supported Towong Shire in response, relief and recovery during the Walwa fires.
Preservation and conservation of National Heritage listed buildings, sites and museum collections. <i>Description:</i> <i>* Prepare and implement a strategic plan to guide and balance precinct preservation, conservation, equity and activation, leveraging and optimising value from National and future World Heritage status.</i> <i>* Progress best practice Collections Management cataloguing and digitisation programs.</i> <i>* Gorge Walk conservation, interpretation and accessibility.</i>	X	X			Community and Economic Development	Burke Museum and Historic Precinct	Manager Burke Museum & Cultural Heritage	Progress funding for and development of Conservation Management Plan (CMP) for Beechworth Historic Precinct. Progress Collections Management cataloguing and digitisation programs.	On Track	Australian Heritage Grant 2026 funding application lodged to progress comprehensive Conservation/Heritage Management Plan for the Beechworth Historic Precinct. RPPP funding application still pending to progress Beechworth Historic Precinct Masterplan Phase 3. Inaugural Deakin Tertiary Partnership Field Studies program completed.
Complete and implement the Beechworth Historic Precinct Master Plan. <i>Description: Prepare funding applications and progress Master Plan recommendations, including contemporary best practice activation of each precinct buildings and sites, acquisition of laneway town connection, 'academic in-residence' residence and detailed design for Research and Education Centre and Tertiary Partnership extensions.</i>	X	X	X	X	Community and Economic Development	Burke Museum and Historic Precinct	Manager Tourism	Prepare funding applications and progress Master Plan recommendations, including contemporary best practice activation of each precinct buildings and sites, acquisition of laneway town connection, 'academic in-residence' residence and detailed design for Research and Education Centre and Tertiary Partnership extensions.	On Track	Regional Precinct Partnership Program Federal Funding application still pending.
Repatriation of Aboriginal Collection/s. <i>Description: Progress Museum Voluntary Repatriation program.</i>	X	X	X	X	Community and Economic Development	Burke Museum and Historic Precinct	Collections Manager	Ongoing First Nations liaison and research.	On Hold	Collections Management Crisis Response priority work in Q2, including relocation of 20,000 artefacts to temporary storage facility. Repatriation engagement to recommence Q4.
Strengthen community succession planning in local museums, athenaeums and societies. <i>Description: Progress the Oral Histories Program in cross Shire support programming and conduct a comprehensive building, collections and assets audit to support succession planning.</i>	X	X	X	X	Community and Economic Development	Burke Museum and Historic Precinct	Manager Burke Museum & Cultural Heritage	Progress cross-shire programs.	On Track	Rutherglen Historical Society support project commenced Q2. Committee identifying priorities for second half of support program Q3/Q4.
Complete the Heritage Citation Review. <i>Description: Implement Stage 1 and complete Stage 2 of the Heritage Citation Review to strengthen protection of significant heritage assets and inform planning controls.</i>	X	X			Planning and Corporate Services	Strategic Planner	Manager Planning & Statutory Services	Finalise stage 1 research and prepare Planning Scheme amendment. Progress Stage 2 research ready for PS amendment.	On Track	Stage 1 complete. Stage 2 in progress.
Theme 4: Governance and Financial Sustainability										
Develop and implement a Financial Sustainability Strategy. <i>Description: Create a comprehensive framework to guide Council's long-term financial planning and resource allocation.</i>	X	X			Office of the CEO	Office of the CEO	Chief Executive Officer	Commence development of the Financial Sustainability Strategy.	On Track	Foundation work in progress.
Establish shared services framework. <i>Description: Identify and implement opportunities for collaboration with neighbouring councils to achieve cost efficiencies.</i>	X	X	X	X	Planning and Corporate Services	Planning & Corporate Services	Director Planning & Corporate Services	Finalise Pinnacle project reports and the RCTP grant. Re-negotiate the Building shared service MoU.	On Track	Pinnacle Project completed. Draft MoU complete and in discussions to finalise the terms
Develop a structured advocacy plan. <i>Description: Create a clear framework for Council advocacy based on Shire priorities.</i>	X	X	X	X	Office of the CEO	Customer Experience & Engagement	Executive Manager Customer Experience & Engagement	Develop a new Advocacy Action Plan to align with new Council Plan as well as a customisable two page elevator pitch document for high priority advocacy issues.	Completed	New Advocacy Action Plan 2025-2029 adopted by Council in October 2025.
Provide continuous governance training. <i>Description: Deliver ongoing induction and training to councillors and staff on matters of good governance and organisational integrity.</i>	X	X	X	X	Office of the CEO	People & Governance	Governance Coordinator	Actions include formalising the Councillor Professional Development Policy and Program.	On Track	The Policy and 2025 Program were adopted on 30 September 2025. The 2026 Program is currently in development.
Finalise and implement the project management framework. <i>Description: Implement an internal framework that standardises project management methodologies, improves governance, clarifies roles and responsibilities, and establishes effective evaluation processes for all Council projects to enhance delivery outcomes and resource efficiency.</i>	X	X	X	X	Infrastructure Services	Capital Works	Manager Capital Works	Complete Project Management framework, and governance structure.	On Track	Documentation and framework process has been reviewed. Commencing user testing workshops with key staff, to refine the arrangements prior to wider release, at around July.
Conduct ongoing service review program. <i>Description: Systematically assess all Council services for alignment with community priorities and financial sustainability.</i>	X	X	X	X	Office of the CEO	Office of the CEO	Chief Executive Officer	Deliver a rolling program of service reviews with 20% of services to be reviewed each year.	On Track	On track.
Monitor staff experience and workplace culture to guide improvement actions. <i>Description: Conduct biennial staff engagement survey.</i>	X		X		Office of the CEO	People & Governance	Executive Manager People & Governance	Data has been communicated to staff and teams. Action plans for the organisation and teams developed and committed to across the organisation.	On Track	Action plans are being implemented across each directorate. The Executive Team and Senior Management Team are now finalising the organisational actions and preparing to communicate these with all staff.

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026



COUNCIL ACTION PLAN

Council Action Plan / Description	Council Plan Years				Directorate	Service Area	Responsible Officer	2025/26 Action	Status	2025/26 - Q2 Update
	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29						
Implement workforce strategies to strengthen our internal capability and capacity. <i>Description: Deliver integrated workforce strategies that build capability and ensure Council is future ready to meet community needs.</i>	X	X	X	X	Office of the CEO	People & Governance	Executive Manager People & Governance	Complete the approved Strategic Workforce Plan.	On Track	The draft Workforce plan is near complete and is in review by the Executive Manager People and Governance, before presenting to the Executive Leadership Team for feedback and to finalise.
Develop and implement Gender Equality Action Plan. <i>Description: Co-design and implement a Gender Equality Action Plan that not only meets legislative obligations but also actively advances an inclusive, respectful and equitable workplace for all.</i>	X	X	X	X	Office of the CEO	People & Governance	People, Culture & Risk Coordinator	Complete the approved Gender Equality Action Plan.	On Track	Staff consultation completed. The consultation report will inform on the next steps, the creation of the GEAP strategies.
Implement Council's Risk Framework activities. <i>Description: Strengthen Council's risk maturity by embedding risk awareness into planning and decision-making, supported by a robust risk framework, ongoing training and proactive risk management practices.</i>	X	X	X	X	Office of the CEO	People & Governance	Risk & Safety Advisor	Strategic Risk Register completed on the new Council Plan. Embed the Risk tools through risk training to staff.	Behind Schedule	December strategic risk workshops not held. Workshops to be recommenced in Q3. Risk maturity survey completed and report presented to Audit and Risk Committee. Staff to be provided with results and staff training to commence in Q3.

Completed	1	2.2%
On Track	42	91.3%
On Hold	2	4.3%
Behind Schedule	1	2.2%
Total	46	100%

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

14.5 ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Debra Fankhauser - Executive Manager People & Governance
Office of the CEO

For Decision

RECOMMENDATION

That Council accepts the attached unconfirmed meeting minutes for the following Advisory Committees:

1. IndiGrow

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report provides the minutes, recommendations and accompanying officer comments from Council's advisory committees for Council noting and endorsement of Management Recommended Actions.

BACKGROUND

Council currently has seven advisory committees. The role of an advisory committee is to provide information and advice on issues relating to the committee's specific area of expertise (i.e., the Environment Committee provides advice on environmental issues).

Each advisory committee meets regularly (the frequency of which depends on the committee) and records minutes and resolutions for Council decision. Each resolution reported to this month's meeting is highlighted in the table below and has an accompanying officer comment.

COMMITTEE	DATE OF MEETING	RECOMMENDATION	MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDED ACTION
IndiGrow	5 December 2025	Nil Recommendations	N/A

OPTIONS

The recommended action is to receive the attached minutes and endorse any accompanying management recommended actions.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

COUNCIL PLAN 2021 – 2025	
Theme	5. Accountability
Strategic Objective	5.5 Our Councillors and organisation are committed to the highest level of governance practices and conduct.
Strategic Action	N/A

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

The provision of advisory committee minutes and resolutions to Council at the monthly meeting ensures that Council considers the advice of the committees. This allows transparent decision-making and highest level of governance practices and conduct.

SOCIAL/COMMUNITY IMPLICATIONS

The community are assured that Council committees are operating in alignment with their Terms of References by viewing Committee minutes.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no environmental implications with this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications with this report.

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Council's advisory committees are established by Council but do not have any delegated decision-making powers. Instead, they work under terms of reference and provide advice to Council. The advice occurs in a variety of forms, including advice to relevant Council departments, as well as advice contained within resolutions that are reported to Council.

Some advisory committee meetings are open to the public and some are closed, however all minutes are reported to Council (apart from the Audit & Risk Committee - these meetings are held 'in camera' and the minutes are not available to the public – reporting to Council occurs as per the requirements under the Local Government Act 2020).

RISK & OPPORTUNITY MANAGEMENT

Description	Likelihood	Consequence	Current Risk Rating	Controls
That advisory committee minutes and recommendations are not duly reported to Council, and the utility and confidence of the committees are undermined.	Unlikely	Insignificant	Low	Governance team follow up with officer secretariats to ensure that all meetings are reported to Council as soon as practicable.

CONCLUSION

The advisory committee minutes included in this report are presented to Council for noting.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Under section 130(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Governance Rule 24, the following officers declare that they have no interests to disclose in providing this report:

- Debra Fankhauser - Executive Manager People & Governance
- Annabel Harding - Governance Coordinator
- Cassandra Horne - Governance Officer

Attachments

1. Indigrow Minutes 5 December 2025 [14.5.1 - 2 pages]

MINUTES - ADVISORY COMMITTEE



INDIGROW

Our Vision:

By 2025, Indigo Shire will be home to strong, resilient communities that embrace sustainable practices, foster meaningful connections, and honour our rich heritage. Residents across all ages and life stages will experience a deep; sense of belonging through balanced growth, responsible environmental stewardship, improved infrastructure and enhanced wellbeing.

HELD: 5th December 2025

LOCATION: Council office, Yackandandah

OPEN TO PUBLIC: Yes

CHAIR: Cr. Dowsley

ATTENDEES:

Cr. Bourke	Cr. Dowsley	Cr. Horne
Alistair Clay	Nerida Kerr	Rob Hawkings
	Steve Vandenberg	

NUMBER OF PUBLIC ATTENDEES: nil

1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**2. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

No declarations

3. APOLOGIES

Lisa Turner, Mervyn Rae, Neil Funston, Sally McDonald (leave)
Quorum achieved.

4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES FROM LAST MEETING

That the committee confirm the Minutes of previous meeting on Friday 5th September.

Moved: Nerida Kerr Seconded: Rob Hawkings

5. BUSINESS FROM LAST MEETING

The review of the Indigrow Terms of Reference was carried over to a future meeting given that Council's governance team is conducting a review of all Advisory Committees.

Advocacy opportunities were put to Council at the November meeting and were adopted.

6. DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN 2026-2036

Jess O'Brien Church from the tourism team presented a summarised plan on a page of the overarching direction of the Plan. The Green Gold Rush focuses on regenerative tourism, it seeks to identify and achieve optimal visitation, champion the full tapestry of culture and heritage including First Peoples' and cultivate a thriving and resilient local economy.

Discussion lead to Bright and its many challenges including over visitation, increased accommodation and house prices, poor connectivity.

7. AFFORDABLE HOUSING – DISCUSSION & FORUM PLANNING

Grace Perry, Council's Strategic Planner kindly joined for this discussion.

Discussion around:

Affordable housing versus housing affordability and Council's sphere of influence.

Farming succession planning and second dwellings in farming zone.

Frustration around Indigo Shire having one farming zone and the same rules applying to large farms and

MINUTES - ADVISORY COMMITTEE



small intensive farms.

The Settlement Plan project is underway and a survey is open to hear from residents. Members have been invited to provide input. It was suggested that focusing on residential is too narrow, missing out on farm zone and addressing this housing shortage.

Approximately 100 new houses/dwellings are built each year in Indigo Shire. To reach the 3,100 housing target for Indigo by 2050, we need to increase this to approximately 130 houses per year.

Water and sewer infrastructure limitations are stalling housing developments in Indigo Shire.

Housing is a large topic with many facets. Decided to narrow our focus and have discussions with industry experts to guide a housing forum.

8. INDIGROW TERMS OF REFERENCE

Carried to a future meeting.

9. GENERAL BUSINESS

Cr. Horne raised 2 items.

- Small business are paying \$600 to advertise job vacancies on SEEK. An expensive option. Is there some way to support them, i.e. Council library or website? It was suggested that more affordable advertising packages are available through SEEK. Other options, such as library notice board, or Council website may be more affordable, but don't have the traffic. SEEK is expensive, but an effective and known platform used by job seekers.
- Signage by town entrances to advertise businesses and or events. Ongoing maintenance and keeping details current was raised as a concern. Greater interest in a what's coming up events display sign.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL

Nil

Meeting Concluded:

2:15pm

Next Meeting:

Thursday 12th March

12:30-2:30pm

Venue: Chiltern tbc

Informal meeting of Councillors (required for meetings that are closed to the public and have at least one Councillor in attendance) – Content Manager Reference

SUMMARY OF RESOLUTIONS

Resolution	Moved	Seconded
That the committee confirm the Minutes of the previous meeting on 5th September 2025	Nerida Kerr	Rob Hawkings

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

14.6 INFORMAL MEETING OF COUNCILLORS RECORD

Debra Fankhauser - Executive Manager People & Governance
Office of the CEO

For Decision

RECOMMENDATION

That Council accepts the attached Informal Meetings of Councillors records.

This report tables the Informal Meetings of Councillors as required under Council's governance rules. Informal Meetings of Councillors Records are only required for meetings closed to the public.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents Informal Meetings of Councillors records to Council for recording in the minutes in accordance with Governance Rule 72(b)(iii).

BACKGROUND

Governance Rule 70 defines an Informal Meeting of Councillors as:

1. a meeting of an advisory committee of Council, if at least one Councillor is present, or
2. a planned or scheduled meeting of at least half the Councillors and one member of Council staff which considers matters that are intended or likely to be:
 - a. the subject of a decision of the Council; or
 - b. subject to the exercise of a function, duty or power of the Council that has been delegated to a person or a committee.

The Governance Rules specifically excludes the following meetings:

- Council Meetings
- Delegated Committee Meetings
- Community Asset Committee Meetings

Informal meetings of Councillors do not include meetings which are open to the public.

DISCUSSION

Under Governance Rule 72(b)(iii), the CEO is required to provide a summary of matters discussed at Informal meetings of Councillors, which is to be tabled at the next Scheduled Council meeting and is to be recorded in the minutes.

The attached Informal Meetings of Councillors records are presented to Council for acceptance as summarised in the following table.

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

MEETING	DATE
Planning Site Visit – Fletcher Road	18 November 2025
Council Briefing	2 December 2025
Council Briefing	9 December 2025
Council Briefing	16 December 2025
Council Briefing	3 February 2026
Council Briefing	10 February 2026

NOTE:

The timing of the agenda distribution will sometimes make it difficult to provide a complete month. Please note that any items not included will carry forward to the following month.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

COUNCIL PLAN 2021 – 2025	
Theme	5. Accountability
Strategic Objective	5.5 Our Councillors and organisation are committed to the highest level of governance practices and conduct.
Strategic Action	N/A

An Informal Meeting of Councillors record is a mechanism for Councillors and officers to openly declare and report any conflicts that may have arisen during a defined informal meeting of Councillors. This demonstrates to Council and the community that the meetings are conducted with transparency and good governance.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications with this report.

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Informal Meetings of Councillors are dealt with under the Governance Rules.

RISK & OPPORTUNITY MANAGEMENT

Description	Likelihood	Consequence	Current Risk Rating	Controls
That a defined Informal Meeting of Councillors is not reported to Council, and public confidence in transparency is undermined.	Likely	Insignificant	Medium	Regular reminders to officers about the requirement to report defined meetings. Follow up of missing records for known meetings.

CONCLUSION

The Informal Meetings of Councillors records attached to this report are a true and accurate record of all defined meetings reported since the last report to Council.

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Under section 130(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Governance Rule 24, the following officers declare that they have no interests to disclose in providing this report:

- Debra Fankhauser - Executive Manager People & Governance
- Annabel Harding - Governance Coordinator
- Cassandra Horne – Governance Officer

Attachments

1. Informal Meeting of Councillors Record Planning Site Visit Fletcher Road 18 [**14.6.1** - 2 pages]
2. Informal Meeting of Councillors Record - Council Briefing - 2 December 2025 [**14.6.2** - 2 pages]
3. Informal Meeting of Councillors Record - Council Briefing - 9 December 2025 [**14.6.3** - 2 pages]
4. Informal Meeting of Councillors Record - Council Briefing - 16 December 2025 [**14.6.4** - 2 pages]
5. Informal Meeting of Councillors Record - Council Briefing - 3 February 2026 [**14.6.5** - 3 pages]
6. Informal Meeting of Councillors Record - Council Briefing - 10 February 2026 [**14.6.6** - 2 pages]

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026



INFORMAL MEETING OF COUNCILLORS RECORD

At the commencement of an applicable meeting, Council staff are required to identify that this is an Informal Meeting of Councillors as defined in Council's Governance Rules, and call for any Conflicts of Interest (Sections 126 - 131 *Local Government Act 2020*).

For additional information please refer to TRIM reference: INTERNAL20/7700

NOTE:

This Form MUST :

- a) be completed by the attending Council Officer
- b) TRIMmed to INFORMATION MANAGEMENT – Registers – Informal Meeting of Councillors (relevant year)
- c) completed record forwarded to the Governance Officer for inclusion in the next Meeting of Council and incorporated in the minutes.

MEETING DETAILS:

Meeting	Site Visit PA250001 – 3 Fletcher Road, Beechworth
Date:	18 November 2025
Time:	2.30pm – 3.00pm
Meeting Location:	As above

IN ATTENDANCE: (circle / delete as appropriate)

	Name	Title
Councillors:	J Dowsley	
	R Horne	
	S Price	
	D Shepherd	
Officers:	Greg Pinkerton	Director Planning & Corporate Services
	James Turner	Manager Planning & Statutory Services
	Joshua Bellette	Planning Officer

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026



MATTER/S DISCUSSED/CONSIDERED AT THE MEETING:

(Note: Conflicts of Interest must be disclosed and the person leave the assembly before discussion of the conflict matter (Sections 126 – 131 of the *Local Government Act 2020*))

Planning application to be considered at a future Council Meeting

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES:

ITEM:

None

Councillor	Time of departure	Time of re-entry
Officer	Time of departure	Time of re-entry

Record Author: James Turner

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026



INFORMAL MEETING OF COUNCILLORS RECORD

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For additional information please refer to TRIM reference: INTERNAL20/7700

NOTE:

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MEETING DETAILS:

Meeting	Council Briefing
Date:	Tuesday 2 December 2025
Time:	9.00am
Meeting Location:	Small Meeting Room, Grand Oaks Resort, 22 Oak Avenue, Beechworth

IN ATTENDANCE: (circle/delete as appropriate)

Councillors:	Cr Sophie Price	Mayor
	Cr Jane Dowsley	Deputy Mayor
	Cr Greg Bourke	Councillor
	Cr John Harvey	Councillor
	Cr Roberta Horne	Councillor
	Cr Scott Landells	Councillor (by Teams)
	Cr Diane Shephard	Councillor
	Officers:	Trevor Ierino
Greg Pinkerton		Director Planning & Corporate Services
Ian Ellett		Director Infrastructure Services

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026



Sally Rice	Director Community and Economic Development
Mel Collis	Executive Manager Customer Experience & Engagement
Nicky Jarvis	Acting Executive Manager People & Governance
Annabel Harding	Governance Coordinator

MATTER/S DISCUSSED/CONSIDERED AT THE MEETING:

(Note: Conflicts of Interest must be disclosed and the person leave the assembly before discussion of the conflict matter (Sections 126 – 131 of the *Local Government Act 2020*))

BRIEFING NOTES

- 4.1 Environmentally Sustainable Design Policy
- 4.2 Indigo Atauro Island Friendship Incorporated Annual Update
- 4.3 Draft Community Engagement Strategy 2025-2029
- 4.4 Councillor Professional Development - Working Together (with Leanne Mulcahy)
- 4.5 Round 3 Tiny Towns Funding Applications
- 4.6 Planning Update
- 5 GENERAL BUSINESS

Councillor	Time of departure	Time of re-entry
Nil		
Officer	Time of departure	Time of re-entry

Record Author: Annabel Harding – Governance Coordinator

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026



INFORMAL MEETING OF COUNCILLORS RECORD

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For additional information please refer to TRIM reference: INTERNAL20/7700

NOTE:

This Form MUST :

- a) be completed by the attending Council Officer
- b) TRIMmed to INFORMATION MANAGEMENT – Registers – Informal Meeting of Councillors (relevant year)
- c) completed record forwarded to the Governance Officer for inclusion in the next Meeting of Council and incorporated in the minutes.

MEETING DETAILS:

Meeting	Council Briefing
Date:	Tuesday 9 December 2025
Time:	9.00am
Meeting Location:	Beechworth Chambers

IN ATTENDANCE: (circle/delete as appropriate)

Councillors:	Cr Sophie Price	Mayor
	Cr Jane Dowsley	Deputy Mayor
	Cr Greg Bourke	Councillor
	Cr John Harvey	Councillor
	Cr Roberta Horne	Councillor
	Cr Scott Landells	Councillor
	Cr Diane Shephard	Councillor
Officers:	Trevor Ierino	Chief Executive Officer
	Greg Pinkerton	Director Planning & Corporate Services
	Ian Ellett	Director Infrastructure Services

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026



Sally Rice	Director Community and Economic Development
Mel Collis	Executive Manager Customer Experience & Engagement
Nicky Jarvis	Acting Executive Manager People & Governance

MATTER/S DISCUSSED/CONSIDERED AT THE MEETING:

(Note: Conflicts of Interest must be disclosed and the person leave the assembly before discussion of the conflict matter (Sections 126 – 131 of the *Local Government Act 2020*))

4 BRIEFING NOTES

- 4.1 PLANNING UPDATE
- 4.2 DECEMBER COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA REVIEW

5 GENERAL BUSINESS

- 5.1 COUNCILLOR COMMITTEE REPORTS
- 5.2 UPCOMING SCHEDULES - BRIEFING AND COUNCIL MEETINGS
- 5.3 ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

6 COUNCILLORS AND CEO SESSION

- 7.1 CEO EMPLOYMENT & REMUNERATION - KPIS
-

Councillor	Time of departure	Time of re-entry
Nil		
Officer	Time of departure	Time of re-entry

Record Author: Annabel Harding – Governance Coordinator

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026



INFORMAL MEETING OF COUNCILLORS RECORD

At the commencement of an applicable meeting, Council staff are required to identify that this is an Informal Meeting of Councillors as defined in Council's Governance Rules, and call for any Conflicts of Interest (Sections 126 - 131 *Local Government Act 2020*).

For additional information please refer to TRIM reference: INTERNAL20/7700

NOTE:

This Form MUST :

- a) be completed by the attending Council Officer
- b) TRIMmed to INFORMATION MANAGEMENT – Registers – Informal Meeting of Councillors (relevant year)
- c) completed record forwarded to the Governance Officer for inclusion in the next Meeting of Council and incorporated in the minutes.

MEETING DETAILS:

Meeting	Council Briefing
Date:	Tuesday 16 December 2025
Time:	4.00pm
Meeting Location:	Beechworth Chambers

IN ATTENDANCE: (circle/delete as appropriate)

Councillors:	Cr Sophie Price	Mayor
	Cr Jane Dowsley	Deputy Mayor
	Cr Greg Bourke	Councillor
	Cr John Harvey	Councillor
	Cr Roberta Horne	Councillor
	Cr Scott Landells	Councillor
	Cr Diane Shephard	Councillor
	Officers:	Trevor Ierino
Greg Pinkerton		Director Planning & Corporate Services
Ian Ellett		Director Infrastructure Services

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026



Sally Rice	Director Community and Economic Development
Mel Collis	Executive Manager Customer Experience & Engagement
Deb Fankhauser	Executive Manager People & Governance
Nicky Jarvis	Acting Executive Manager People & Governance

MATTER/S DISCUSSED/CONSIDERED AT THE MEETING:

(Note: Conflicts of Interest must be disclosed and the person leave the assembly before discussion of the conflict matter (Sections 126 – 131 of the *Local Government Act 2020*))

-
- 4 BRIEFING NOTES
 - 4.1 Review of December Council Meeting Agenda
 - 5 GENERAL BUSINESS
 - 5.1 Councillor Committee Reports
 - 5.2 Actions from Previous Meetings
 - 6 COUNCILLORS AND CEO SESSION
-

Councillor	Time of departure	Time of re-entry
Nil		
Officer	Time of departure	Time of re-entry

Record Author: Annabel Harding – Governance Coordinator

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026



INFORMAL MEETING OF COUNCILLORS RECORD

At the commencement of an applicable meeting, Council staff are required to identify that this is an Informal Meeting of Councillors as defined in Council's Governance Rules, and call for any Conflicts of Interest (Sections 126 - 131 *Local Government Act 2020*).

For additional information please refer to TRIM reference: INTERNAL20/7700

NOTE:

This Form MUST :

- a) be completed by the attending Council Officer
- b) TRIMmed to INFORMATION MANAGEMENT – Registers – Informal Meeting of Councillors (relevant year)
- c) completed record forwarded to the Governance Officer for inclusion in the next Meeting of Council and incorporated in the minutes.

MEETING DETAILS:

Meeting	Council Briefing
Date:	Tuesday 3 February 2026
Time:	9.00am
Meeting Location:	Beechworth Chambers

IN ATTENDANCE: (circle/delete as appropriate)

Councillors:	Cr Sophie Price	Mayor
	Cr Jane Dowsley	Deputy Mayor
	Cr Greg Bourke	Councillor
	Cr John Harvey	Councillor
	Cr Roberta Horne	Councillor
	Cr Scott Landells	Councillor
	Cr Diane Shephard	Councillor
Officers:	Trevor Ierino	Chief Executive Officer
	Greg Pinkerton	Director Planning & Corporate Services
	Ian Ellett	Director Infrastructure Services

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026



Sally Rice	Director Community and Economic Development
Mel Collis	Executive Manager Customer Experience & Engagement
Deb Fankhauser	Executive Manager People & Governance
James Turner	Manager Planning & Statutory Services
Annabel Harding	Governance Coordinator

MATTER/S DISCUSSED/CONSIDERED AT THE MEETING:

(Note: Conflicts of Interest must be disclosed and the person leave the assembly before discussion of the conflict matter (Sections 126 – 131 of the *Local Government Act 2020*))

4 BRIEFING NOTES

- 4.1 PRE-AGENDA DISCUSSION
- 4.2 BURKE MUSEUM COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT - CRISIS RESPONSE UPDATE
- 4.3 DRAFT DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN 2036
- 4.4 NATIONAL TRUST CARRIAGES - ACQUISITION REVIEW
- 4.6 UPDATE ON BARKLY PARK, RUTHERGLEN
- 4.5 COUNCILLOR PLANNING WORKSHOP - FOLLOW UP TO DECEMBER 2025 LEANNE MULCAHY SESSION

5 GENERAL BUSINESS

- 5.1 COUNCILLOR COMMITTEE REPORTS
- 5.2 UPCOMING SCHEDULES - BRIEFING AND COUNCIL MEETINGS

6 COUNCILLORS AND CEO SESSION

- 6.1 COUNCILLORS AND CEO UPDATE

Councillor	Time of departure	Time of re-entry
Cr Landells	12.27pm	12.28pm
Officer	Time of departure	Time of re-entry

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026



Record Author: Annabel Harding – Governance Coordinator

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026



INFORMAL MEETING OF COUNCILLORS RECORD

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MEETING DETAILS:

Meeting	Council Briefing
Date:	Tuesday 10 February 2026
Time:	12.45pm
Meeting Location:	Beechworth Chambers

IN ATTENDANCE: (circle/delete as appropriate)

Councillors:	Cr Sophie Price	Mayor
	Cr Jane Dowsley	Deputy Mayor
	Cr Greg Bourke	Councillor
	Cr John Harvey	Councillor
	Cr Roberta Horne	Councillor
	Cr Scott Landells	Councillor
	Cr Diane Shephard	Councillor
Officers:	Trevor Ierino	Chief Executive Officer
	Greg Pinkerton	Director Planning & Corporate Services
	Ian Ellett	Director Infrastructure Services

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026



Sally Rice	Director Community and Economic Development
Mel Collis	Executive Manager Customer Experience & Engagement
Deb Fankhauser	Executive Manager People & Governance

MATTER/S DISCUSSED/CONSIDERED AT THE MEETING:

(Note: Conflicts of Interest must be disclosed and the person leave the assembly before discussion of the conflict matter (Sections 126 – 131 of the *Local Government Act 2020*))

4 BRIEFING NOTES

4.1 PRE-AGENDA DISCUSSION

5 GENERAL BUSINESS

5.1 COUNCILLOR COMMITTEE REPORTS

5.2 UPCOMING SCHEDULES - BRIEFING AND COUNCIL MEETINGS

5.3 GOVERNANCE CALENDAR

5.4 ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

6 COUNCILLORS ONLY SESSION

Councillor	Time of departure	Time of re-entry
Nil		
Officer	Time of departure	Time of re-entry

Record Author: Annabel Harding – Governance Coordinator

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

15 NOTICES OF MOTION

Nil reports

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

16 COUNCILLOR REPORT

16.1 COUNCILLOR REPORTS

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

16.2 MAYOR'S DIARY

Trevor Ierino
Office of the CEO

For Information

Mayor Price attended the following functions/events/meetings in December 2025 and January 2026:

DATE	TIME	FUNCTION / EVENT / MEETING	LOCATION
1 December	10.00am	Meeting with CEO and Deputy Mayor	Beechworth
1 December	1.15pm	Councillor Workshop	Beechworth
2 December	9.00am	Council Briefing	Beechworth
5 December	1.00pm	Awards Presentations - Osborne Flat Primary School	Osbornes Flat
8 December	10.00am	Meeting with CEO and Deputy Mayor	Beechworth
8 December	11.30am	Meeting with Indigo Shire CEO and General Manager, Beechworth Correctional Centre	Beechworth
9 December	9.00am	Council Briefing	Beechworth
9 December	2.30pm	Site Visit - 1305 Beechworth-Wodonga Road, Wooragee	Wooragee
11 December	8.00am	End of Year Staff Celebration and Breakfast	Yackandandah
11 December	12.00pm	Awards Presentation – St Joseph's Primary School	Chiltern
12 December	11.30am	Meeting with Indigo Shire CEO and CEO V/Line	Online
12 December	1.30pm	Meeting with Mayor of Albury and Border Mail	Albury
16 December	2.00pm	Councillor Workshop	Beechworth
16 December	4.00pm	Council Briefing	Beechworth
16 December	6.30pm	Council Meeting	Beechworth
18 December	9.30am	Albury Wodonga Regional Local Government Health Alliance Meeting	Wodonga
19 January	10.00am	Meeting with CEO and Deputy Mayor	Beechworth
19 January	11.00am	Councillor Workshop Debrief with CEO, Executive Manager People & Governance and Workshop Consultant	Beechworth
22 January	2.00pm	Rural Councils Victoria Committee Meeting	Online
26 January	8.00am	Australia Day Event – Community BBQ	Barnawartha

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

DATE	TIME	FUNCTION / EVENT / MEETING	LOCATION
26 January	9.45am	Australia Day Event – Community Morning Tea/BBQ	Chiltern
27 January	9.30am	Catch up with Councillors	Rutherglen
29 January	1.30pm	Citizenship Ceremony to mark Australia Day	Beechworth

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

17 DECISIONS REGISTER

Trevor Ierino
Office of the CEO

For Information

The report outlines actions from Council Resolutions as at 16 December 2025, including those not previously listed as completed, but not including resolutions to note a report.

Meeting date	Item	Name	Resolution	Status
28 Oct 2025	12.4	Draft Indigo Shire Libraries Collections Policy	That Council: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Endorses the Draft Indigo Shire Council Library Collection Policy for the purposes of public exhibition, inviting community feedback in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy for a period of 21 days; Notes that if no submissions are received during the public exhibition period, the Policy is adopted from 19 November 2025; Notes that if submissions are received during the public exhibition period, the Policy will be brought to a future Council meeting for adoption; and Advocate to State Government for increased funding in Indigo Shire Libraries through the annual Public Libraries Funding Program. 	Incomplete
28 Oct 2025	15.1	Notice Of Motion - Capital Delivery Program	That Indigo Shire Council instructs the CEO to deliver a detailed four-year capital delivery program, in addition to existing budget documents, commencing 2026/27.	Incomplete
28 Oct 2025	15.2	Notice Of Motion - Grants Program Review	That Indigo Shire Council instructs the CEO to undertake a review of Indigo Shire Council's Grants Program and present findings and recommendations to Council for consideration prior to adoption of the 2026/27 Budget.	Incomplete
16 December 2025	8	Confirmation Of Minutes From Previous Meeting	That the following minutes be confirmed: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Minutes of the Additional Meeting (Statutory) held on 25 November 2025 as published on Council's website; and 	Completed

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 25 November 2025 as published on Council's website; and Confidential Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 25 November 2025, as provided to Councillors under separate cover. 	
16 December 2025	11.1	Procurement Policy 2025	That Council adopts the Procurement Policy 2025.	Completed
16 December 2025	11.2	Environmentally Sustainable Design Policy	That Council endorses the draft Environmentally Sustainable Design policy and places the document on public exhibition for a period of six weeks, commencing on the 17 December 2025.	Completed
16 December 2025	12.1	Round 3 Tiny Towns Funding Applications	<p>That Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Endorses the following projects for a funding application to the Round 3 Tiny Towns Fund: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Old Chiltern Library Refurbishment; Rutherglen Maternal and Child Health client amenity upgrades; and Notes that if the funding applications are successful, Council's financial contribution will be \$15,000 per project (totalling a maximum \$30,000), to be included in the 2026/27 and/or 2027/28 budget. 	Completed
16 December 2025	12.2	Review Of Council Response On A Catastrophic Fire Danger Day Policy	<p>That Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Revokes the current Council's Response on a Catastrophic Fire Danger Day Policy, and; Notes the CEO Directive – Provision of Council Services on a Catastrophic Fire Danger Day which has been prepared to immediately replace the policy upon its revocation. 	Completed
16 December 2025	13.1	Proposed Lane Closure Between Conness Street And Greens Lane - Chiltern	<p>That Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Approves the closure of the northern part of the laneway from Conness Street (between Nos. 52 and 54) and Greens Lane Chiltern to vehicular traffic as outlined in Figure 2 in this report; 	Completed

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Notes that officers will now commence the statutory process required to allow barriers to be placed on a road; and Notes that the laneway will remain open to pedestrians, cyclists, and other foot traffic. 	
16 December 2025	13.2	Road Naming - Subdivision Off Meehan Street, Rutherglen	That Council adopts the name of Bulleid Court for the road shown on the attached plan opposite 37 Meehan Street Rutherglen.	Completed
16 December 2025	14.1	Draft Community Engagement Strategy 2025-2029	That Council endorses the Draft Community Engagement Strategy 2025-2029 and places it on public exhibition for an extended period (due to Christmas and New Year closures) and invites community feedback via submission.	Completed
16 December 2025	14.2	Audit And Risk Committee Charter - 2025 Review	That the Council adopts the revised Audit and Risk Committee Charter.	Completed
16 December 2025	14.3	Audit And Risk Committee - Biannual Report - October 2025	That Council: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Receives the Biannual Report of the Audit and Risk Committee; and Thanks the Committee for its work. 	Completed
16 December 2025	14.4	Audit And Risk Committee - Performance Survey 2024/2025	That the receives the results of the 2024/2025 Audit and Risk Committee performance survey.	Completed
16 December 2025	14.5	Instrument Of Delegation - Members Of Staff (S6)	That Council adopts the attached variation to the Instrument of Delegation – Members of Staff (S6).	Completed
16 December 2025	14.6	Appointment Of Acting Chief Executive Officer	That Council: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Appoints the Director of Planning and Corporate Services, Greg Pinkerton, as Acting Chief Executive Officer for the period 25 February to 10 March 2026 inclusive; Authorises Greg Pinkerton to exercise all powers and authorities reposed in the position of Chief Executive Officer for their respective periods of the appointment as Acting Chief Executive Officer; and Notes that should the Chief Executive Officer be unable to undertake the leave 	Completed

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

			within this period, or otherwise resumes duties during this period, he will automatically resume all delegations and powers.	
16 December 2025	14.7	Advisory Committee Minutes	That Council accepts the attached unconfirmed meeting minutes for the following Advisory Committees and endorses the officer recommended actions: 1. Indigo Environment Advisory Committee: a) 1 October 2025; b) 3 December 2025; and 2. Indigo Community Access Committee.	Completed
16 December 2025	14.8	Informal Meeting of Councillors Record	That Council accepts the attached Informal Meetings of Councillors records.	Completed
16 December 2025	19.2	Audit & Risk Committee - Appointment Of Chair	That Council: 1. Increases the term of Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee from one year to no more than two years; 2. Formally re-appoints Ross Kearney as the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee for a further 11-month period beginning 16 December 2025 and ending 16 October 2026; and 3. Maintains confidentiality until the appointee is notified, following which the appointment will be made public.	Completed
16 December 2025	19.3	Indigo Environment Advisory Committee - New Member	That Council: 1. Endorses the appointment of Russell James to the Indigo Environment Advisory Committee; and Maintains confidentiality until the appointee is notified, following which the appointment will be made public.	Completed

Attachments

Nil

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

18 GENERAL BUSINESS

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

19 MEETING CLOSURE

Next Meeting: Tuesday 31 March 2026 at 6:30pm

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

		CONSEQUENCE				
		INSIGNIFICANT (1)	MINOR (2)	MODERATE(3)	MAJOR (4)	CATASTROPHIC (5)
Guidance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use this matrix for all risk management (this includes decision-making at all levels, projects and planning activities) • For further guidance or assistance with your risk management activities, please contact Council's Risk & Governance Team <p>When considering risks, here are some idea's to get your started:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial losses • Breaches of legislation/regulations • Damage to the environment • Reduction in service quality or loss of a service • Damage to Council assets or private property • Inefficiencies and/or wasted resources • Litigation • Loss of reputation / Community dissatisfaction • Inability to attract/retain qualified staff/volunteer 	Strategy & Service Delivery	Negligible effect on business processes and service delivery.	Some less critical strategic objectives will not be achieved in the period outlined in the Organisation Plan.	Some key strategic objectives will not be achieved in the period outlined in the Organisation Plan.	The majority of strategic objectives will not be achieved in the period outlined in the Organisation Plan.	No Organisation Plan strategic objectives will be achieved. Very high risk of State Government intervention
			Some minor interruptions (< 3 days) to the operations or service delivery	Interruptions occur to some critical functions of up to 5 days	Critical services and operations cannot be delivered for a period of greater than 1 week.	Widespread and long term degradation of critical operations and services

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

	Financial	Up to \$10k financial loss Or 1% of service expense budget	Between \$10K and \$150K Or 2.5% of service expense budget	Between \$150K up to \$500K Or 5% of service expense budget	Between \$500K and \$1M Or 10% of service expense budget	Greater than \$1M Or 25% of service expense budget
	People & Safety	Some isolated staff/volunteer dissatisfaction	General staff/volunteer morale problems and increase in turnover.	Widespread staff/volunteer morale problems and high turnover including key organisation roles.	High turnover of experienced/key staff/volunteer; Organisation not perceived as employer of choice.	Key positions unable to be filled.
		Short term reversible injury which requires no first aid.	Reversible injury or disability which requires first aid intervention.	Serious reversible injury or disability requiring ongoing medical treatment, hospitalisation or lost time.	Serious Injury or multiple irreversible disabilities.	Single fatality or multiple significant irreversible disabilities
	Reputation / Credibility	No impact to reputation or brand name, e.g. customer complaint, resolved in day-to-day management.	Minor local community concern manageable through good public relations.	Moderate customer sensitivity and damage to brand impacting noticeably on business activities and profitability.	State media and public concern / exposure with adverse attention and long-term loss of support from Indigo Shire residents.	Loss of State Government support with scathing criticism and removal of the Organisation.
						National media exposure.
	Environment	Negligible effect on biological or physical environment.	Minor short term environmental damage which does not result in long term impact to ecosystem.	Moderate impact on the environment; no long term or irreversible damage.	Severe, long term or widespread resulting in impairment of the ecosystem and requiring significant remedial action	Widespread and irreversible environmental damage
	Governance / Compliance	Negligible regulatory breaches that are detected early and rectified, does not require reporting. Insignificant legal issues or non-compliance.	Minor regulatory or contract breaches with potential minor fines which does not require reporting to regulators.	Regulatory or contract breaches causing investigation / report to authority and prosecution and moderate fines.	Major regulatory or contract breaches and litigation.	Regulatory or contract breaches causing very serious litigation, including major class action.
						Significant prosecution / fines for Organisation

SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA - 24 FEBRUARY 2026

									Board/ Managers
LIKELIHOOD	Timeframes & Corporate Memory			RISK RATING					
	Time frame	Has it happened at your organisation in the last 5 years?	Has it happened at other organisations in the last 5 years?						
ALMOST CERTAIN (5)	The event has occurred or is expected to occur multiple times per year	Regularly	Regularly or MULTIPLE times at other organisations	MEDIUM	HIGH	HIGH	EXTREME	EXTREME	
LIKELY (4)	The event may probably occur once every year.	Several times	Once at MULTIPLE organisations	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	HIGH	HIGH	EXTREME	
POSSIBLE (3)	The event may occur once every 3 years.	A few times	MULTIPLE times at ONE other organisation	LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	HIGH	EXTREME	
UNLIKELY (2)	The event may occur once in 10 years.	Once	ONCE at ONE other organisation	LOW	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH	HIGH	
RARE (1)	The event may only occur once in 10 years or greater	Never	Never	LOW	LOW	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH	