

M(9) – 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

# Ordinary Council Meeting

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Minutes

Notice is hereby given that the next **Ordinary Council Meeting** of the **Alpine Shire Council** was held in the Bright Council Chambers, 2 Churchill Avenue, Bright on **30 September 2025** commencing at **5:00 pm**.

## **PRESENT**

### **COUNCILLORS**

Cr Sarah Nicholas - Mayor

Cr Peter Smith - Deputy Mayor

Cr John Andersen

Cr Dave Byrne

Cr Gareth Graham

Cr Jean-Pierre Ronco

Cr Noah Tanzen

### **OFFICERS**

Will Jeremy - Chief Executive Officer

Sarah Buckley - Director Assets

Nathalie Cooke – Director Corporate and Community

# Minutes

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# 1 Recording and livestreaming of Council meetings

*The CEO read the following statement:*

All council meetings are filmed with both video and audio being recorded.

Video is focused on a specific area however audio from the entire room is captured.

In common with all narrative during Council meetings, verbal responses to congratulations, obituaries and question time will not be recorded in the written minutes. By submitting a question, you consent to your question being read aloud at the meeting.

The reasoning behind recording council meetings is to hold us more accountable and improve transparency of Council's decision-making to our community.

The full meeting is being streamed live on Council's YouTube channel which is "Alpine Shire Council" and will also be available on the YouTube channel shortly after this meeting.

# 2 Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians and recognition of all people

*All to stand, the Mayor read the following statement:*

Alpine Shire Council acknowledges the Taungurung peoples as the Traditional Owners of the lands on which we are meeting today. Council also acknowledges all of the Traditional Owners of the wider lands of the area known as the Alpine Shire.

We also acknowledge those people who have contributed to the rich fabric of our community and strive to make wise decisions that will improve the quality of life for all.

# 3 Confirmation of minutes

## 3.1 ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING M(8) HELD ON 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Cr Smith

Cr Tanzen

*That the minutes of M(8) 9 September 2025 as circulated be confirmed.*

Carried Unanimously

# 4 Apologies

# 5 Obituaries / Congratulations

Refer to Alpine Shire Council's website [www.alpineshire.vic.gov.au](http://www.alpineshire.vic.gov.au); for its YouTube live-streaming recording for responses to obituaries and congratulations.

# 6 Declarations by Councillors of Conflict of Interest

Nil

## 7 Public Questions

Public Question time will be held in accordance with the following provisions of Council's Governance Rules:

### G5 Public Question Time

GS3. Questions submitted to Council may be:

Submitted as a "Question on Notice" to the Chief Executive Officer in writing by 5pm on the day prior to the Council meeting, stating the name and contact details of the person submitting the question; or

During meetings held wholly in-person, at the Chairperson's discretion, asked directly by a member of the public gallery at the Council meeting during public question time.

GS4. No person may submit or ask more than two questions at any one meeting.

GS7. Questions should be limited to items of public interest, and are not intended to replace Council's ordinary Customer Request process. A question may be disallowed by the Chairperson if the Chairperson determines that it:

- is not related to an item on the agenda;
- relates to a matter outside the duties, functions and powers of Council;
- is defamatory, indecent, abusive, offensive, irrelevant, trivial or objectionable in language or substance;
- deals with a subject matter already answered;
- is aimed at embarrassing a Councillor or a member of Council staff;
- relates to confidential information as defined in s3 of the Act;
- relates to the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer; or
- relates to any other matter which the Council considers would prejudice the Council or any person.

Refer to Alpine Shire Council's website [www.alpineshire.vic.gov.au](http://www.alpineshire.vic.gov.au); for its YouTube live-streaming recording for responses to questions.

8 Presentation of reports by officers

8.1 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER - WILL JEREMY

8.1.1 Contracts approved under delegation by the CEO

Cr Byrne

Cr Smith

*That the Capital Project Contracts approved under delegation by the CEO be noted.*

Carried Unanimously

|                                |  |                                                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|----------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <i>Contract No: CT26160</i>    |  | <i>Process: RFQ</i>                                            |  |
| <i>Title:</i>                  |  | <i>Grading Dargo, Abbeyards, Buckland and Rose River Roads</i> |  |
| <i>Tenderer:</i>               |  | <i>REM - Richardson Earthworks &amp; Maintenance</i>           |  |
| <i>Budget (\$ excl GST):</i>   |  | <i>\$190,000.00</i>                                            |  |
| <i>Contract (\$ excl GST):</i> |  | <i>\$196,290.00</i>                                            |  |

## 8.2 DIRECTOR ASSETS - SARAH BUCKLEY

### 8.2.1 Adoption of Amendment C56alpi to the Alpine Planning Scheme

#### INTRODUCTION

The report summarises the outcomes of the exhibition phase associated with Amendment C56alpi to the Alpine Planning Scheme and recommends that Council adopts the amendment prior to submitting it to the Minister for Planning for approval.

Cr Ronco

Cr Andersen

*That Council:*

1. *Notes that Amendment C56alpi to the Alpine Planning Scheme received eight submissions;*
2. *Notes the Delegate's Report for Amendment C56alpi, which outlines Council officers' responses to the matters raised in submissions (Attachment 1);*
3. *Adopts Amendment C56alpi (Attachment 2) to the Alpine Planning Scheme in accordance with Section 29 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987; and*
4. *Submits Amendment C56alpi to the Alpine Planning Scheme to the Minister for Planning for approval in accordance with Section 31 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.*

Carried Unanimously

#### BACKGROUND

Amendment C56alpi to the Alpine Planning Scheme is required to implement the findings of the 'Great Alpine Road (western gateway), Bright: Landscape and Heritage Detailed Assessment Methodology Report July 2024' (heritage assessment) prepared by GML Heritage Victoria Pty Ltd (GML Heritage). The heritage assessment recommends the inclusion of the avenue planting of Pin Oak, Dutch Elm and Scarlet Oak (the avenue), along the Great Alpine Road to west of Bright in the Heritage Overlay as an individually significant heritage place.

At the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 30 July 2024, Council adopted the heritage assessment and resolved to prepare and exhibit a planning scheme amendment to apply the Heritage Overlay to the avenue.

The amendment proposes to:

1. Overlay Maps
  - Amend the Planning Scheme Map Nos. 07HO and 09HO to apply the Heritage Overlay (HO215) to the avenue.
2. Planning Scheme Ordinance

- Amend the Schedule to Clause 43.01 (Heritage Overlay) to apply the Heritage Overlay to the avenue.
- Amend the Schedule to Clause 72.04 (Incorporated Documents) to introduce the 'Avenue Planting, Great Alpine Road (western gateway), Bright: statement of significance' (GML Heritage, July 2024) as an incorporated document.
- Amend the Schedule to Clause 72.08 (Background Documents) to introduce the 'Avenue Planting, Great Alpine Road (western gateway), Bright: citation' (GML Heritage, July 2024) as a background document.



Figure 1: Extent of the proposed Heritage Overlay outlined in red.

Amendment C56alpi was exhibited in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

## ISSUES

The amendment received eight submissions during the exhibition period. This included submissions from:

- Three individual residents;
- North East Catchment Management Authority;
- Goulburn-Murray Water;
- Human Habitats Pty Ltd, on behalf of Buffalo Valley Pty Ltd;
- North East Water; and
- Department of Transport and Planning on behalf of Head, Transport for Victoria.

Submissions either supported or did not object to the amendment. Council officers have corresponded with all submitters regarding any matters raised, and no changes to the amendment have been requested.

A detailed summary of the submissions and Council officers' responses are outlined in Attachment 1 'Amendment C56alpi - Delegate's Report - Consideration of Submissions.'

Given that no submissions objected to, or requested changes to the amendment, and that Council officers have resolved all outstanding matters raised in submissions, the amendment does not need to be heard by an independent planning panel.

Should Council resolve to adopt Amendment C56alpi, the amendment can be submitted to the Minister for Planning for approval and gazettal in the Alpine Planning Scheme.

## **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The recommendation is in accordance with the following Priorities of the Council Plan 2025-2029

- 2.2 We plan for future risks like bushfire, flooding, landslip, and erosion, while improving planning certainty and sensitively managing township growth to protect local character, amenity, and identity.

## **FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

The Planning and Environment (Fees) Regulations 2016 sets the statutory fees for the preparation, exhibition, and adoption of planning scheme amendments. All costs of the proposed amendment must be met by Council.

A fee of \$546.30 must be paid for the Minister for Planning to consider a request to approve an amendment. The costs for this amendment are accommodated within the adopted 2025/2026 budget.

The resolution of submissions has avoided the need for an independent planning panel that would create a significant cost and resource impost on Council.

It is not expected that the Heritage Overlay will have any significant impact on the resource and administrative costs on Council.

## RISK MANAGEMENT

| Risk                                                                                                                                                        | Likelihood | Impact        | Mitigation Action / Control                                                                                             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Operating outside legislative / regulatory / statutory / policy obligations - not meeting timeframes associated with the Planning Scheme Amendment Process. | Unlikely   | Insignificant | If Council adopts Amendment C56alpi, Council will have met its obligations under the Planning and Environment Act 1987. |

## CONSULTATION

Exhibition of the proposed amendment was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Environment Act 1987. Notice included:

- Letters to adjacent landowners and occupiers of land, referral authorities (including to the Head, Transport for Victoria), and prescribed ministers.
- A public notice in the Alpine Observer and Myrtleford Times on the 28 May 2025.
- A public notice in the Victoria Government Gazette on 29 May 2025.
- A media release distributed on 30 May 2025.
- Setting up a webpage on Engage Alpine, which allowed people to view the amendment documentation and write a submission.
- Social media posts on Facebook.

Council officers believe that appropriate consultation has occurred, and the matter is ready for Council consideration.

## CONCLUSION

Council officers recommend that Council adopts Amendment C56alpi to the Alpine Planning Scheme and submits the amendment to the Minister for Planning for approval.

## DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

In accordance with section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Chapter 7 section A6 of Council's Governance Rules, the following officers declare that they have no interests to disclose in providing this report.

- Director Assets
- Manager Growth and Future
- Senior Strategic Planner

## ATTACHMENT(S)

1. **8.2.1.1** Amendment C56alpi - Delegate's Report Consideration of Submissions
2. **8.2.1.2** Amendment C56alpi - Amendment Documentation

## 8.2.2 Mount Beauty Recreation Reserve and Les Peart Oval Community Asset Committee

### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to recommend the formation of a community asset committee (CAC) for the management of the Mount Beauty Recreation Reserve and Les Peart Oval in Mount Beauty, and the adoption of an instrument of delegation to outline the roles and responsibilities of Alpine Shire Council and any CAC for these important community spaces.

Cr Tanzen

Cr Smith

*That Council:*

1. *Exercises the power conferred by Section 65 of the Local Government Act 2020, so that:*
  - a. *The Mount Beauty Recreation Reserve and Les Peart Oval Community Asset Committee (the Committee) be formed to reflect current community needs for the management of the Mount Beauty Recreation Reserve and Les Peart Oval;*
  - b. *Membership of the Committee shall consist of:*

|                                                          |                          |
|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>Alpine Shire Council</i>                              | <i>1 Representative</i>  |
| <i>Dederang / Mount Beauty Football and Netball Club</i> | <i>1 Representative</i>  |
| <i>Mount Beauty Cricket Club</i>                         | <i>1 Representative</i>  |
| <i>Mount Beauty Junior Football Club</i>                 | <i>1 Representative</i>  |
| <i>General Public</i>                                    | <i>2 Representatives</i> |

- c. *A quorum of the Committee is a whole number that is an absolute majority, which is greater than half the total number of members of the Committee; and*
  - d. *All members of the Committee have voting rights.*
2. *Notes that in accordance with Section 47(1)b of the Local Government Act 2020, the Instrument of Sub-Delegation to the Committee will be updated by the Chief Executive Officer, following the formation of the Committee by Council.*

Carried Unanimously

### BACKGROUND

The Mount Beauty Recreation Reserve and Les Peart Oval (reserve and oval) are located on Council land. The Mount Beauty Recreation Reserve Committee of Management was previously established as a special committee of management under Section 86 of the *Local Government Act 1989* to manage the reserve and oval. Elements of this act have since been replaced by the *Local Government Act 2020* and Section 86 committees no longer exist.

Given this, Council officers recently met with user groups of the MBRR to discuss future management options. It was agreed that a community asset committee (CAC) would be the best model to manage the reserve and oval and should be formed by Council.

The CAC would need to comprise:

- One representative nominated by Council;
- One representative nominated by Dederang/Mount Beauty Football and Netball Club;
- One representative nominated by Mount Beauty Cricket Club;
- One representative nominated by Mount Beauty Junior Football Club; and
- Two representatives from the general public.

The role of the CAC would be to:

- manage, operate and maintain the reserve and oval for the community in an efficient, effective and practical manner, without involving Council in the day-to-day management of the facility; and
- encourage, promote and provide use of the reserve and oval.

## ISSUES

CACs are established by Council under Section 65 of the Local Government Act 2020. A council may consider the membership of a committee and allocate as many members to it as it considers necessary to achieve the purpose of managing a community asset.

Without an approved committee, responsibility for the management of the reserve and oval will return to Council.

Once the formation and membership structure of the Committee is endorsed by Council, the instrument of sub-delegation to members of the Committee can be approved by the Chief Executive Officer, in accordance with Section 47(1)(b) of the Local Government Act 2020.

## POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The recommendation is in accordance with the following Priorities of the Council Plan 2025-2029:

- 3.6 We support local community groups, programs, events, and initiatives that activate and celebrate Alpine Shire, build stronger, inclusive, more connected, and resilient communities, and enrich the lives of our diverse community members.

## FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Preparation of the Instrument of Sub-Delegation is complete. Council officers will call for nominations following signing of the document.

Council contribution to the Committee is determined by the Building Facility Maintenance Policy (56), which is currently under review.

A Council officer will attend Committee meetings, which will be within standard working hours and, once the Committee has matured, meetings are expected to be held quarterly.

There is currently no change to the financial impact to Council and attendance at these meetings can be accommodated within existing resources.

## RISK MANAGEMENT

| Risk                                                                                             | Likelihood | Impact | Mitigation Action / Control                                            |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|--------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Unplanned adverse impact on establishment and maintenance of Committee - no nominations received | Unlikely   | Minor  | Mount Beauty Recreation Reserve is returned to Council for management. |

## CONSULTATION

Council officers have been consulting with user groups of the reserve and oval to determine their preferred management structure going forward.

All user groups were offered representation on the Committee.

## CONCLUSION

The proposed delegation ensures the Committee can continue to be managed on behalf of Council into the future.

## DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

In accordance with section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Chapter 7 section A6 of Council's Governance Rules, the following officers declare that they have no interests to disclose in providing this report.

- Director Assets
- Manager Growth and Future
- Property and Contracts Coordinator

## ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

## 8.2.3 Landfill Monitoring 2025-27

File Number: CT26176

### INTRODUCTION

This report relates to the award of a contract for an Environmental Monitoring Program across former landfill sites within the Alpine Shire for the next two years.

**Cr Andersen**

**Cr Ronco**

*That Council:*

- 1. Awards Contract No. CT26176 'Landfill Monitoring 2025-27' to DBD Environmental Pty Ltd (T/A Ennovo) for a two year term, with a year one lump sum price of \$131,670 (GST Exclusive) and an estimated total cost of \$267,290 (GST Exclusive); and*
- 2. Delegates authority to the Chief Executive Officer to sign and seal the contract at the appropriate time.*

Carried Unanimously

### BACKGROUND

Council currently undertakes monitoring at five closed landfill sites to meet its obligations under the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) Closed Landfill Guidelines. The monitoring includes field testing, laboratory analysis and reporting of ground water, surface water, leachate and gas emissions according to different schedules at the following sites:

- Mount Beauty
- Myrtleford Landfill
- Old Myrtleford Landfill
- Old Harrietville
- Porepunkah Landfill

The previous contract for delivering these services ended in 2023 and a short-term contract was utilised for monitoring during 2024. A tender was recently undertaken to procure the monitoring services over the next two years, with the scope expanded to also cover the Old Bright Landfill bringing the total scope for monitoring activities to six sites. The tender specifications were prepared in accordance with current approved Environmental Monitoring Programs at Porepunkah and Myrtleford Landfills.

As a result of the tender process a contract has been prepared for the monitoring services commencing 6 October 2025 for a period of two years. The tender was released in August 2025 and closed on 5 September 2025. The Tender was advertised on Tenders.net and the Alpine Shire Council website.

## **EVALUATION**

A total of thirty six prospective organisations downloaded the document and fourteen submissions were received.

The key selection criteria listed in the Invitation to Tender were:

1. Price
2. Qualifications and previous performance
3. Delivery
4. Social
5. Environmental sustainability

Two of the fourteen submissions were deemed to be non-conforming and following the initial assessment of the offers, further clarification was sought from some tenderers regarding their proposed methodology and submitted pricing. The evaluation was undertaken by the Manager Assets and Waste and reviewed by Council Officers as well as the Director Assets.

It was determined that the tender from DBD Environmental Pty Ltd (trading as Ennovo) best met the requirements of the selection criteria.

## **ISSUES**

The monitoring being undertaken across the closed landfill sites is to be conducted in accordance with the EPA directions and approved Environmental Management Plans. Compliance to approved methodology and reporting regimes is critical and the demonstrated capacity for the submitting tenderers to meet these obligations was required through the tender submission.

Results from the regular monitoring activities are reviewed annually and form the basis for the scope of investigation in subsequent monitoring years. As such, changes to the required monitoring program may occur during the period of the contract. All tenderers provided evidence of an approved methodology and experience in undertaking the monitoring as required along with suitable references. Further to this, evidence of ISO certification for Quality, Occupational Health and Safety and Environmental Management practices was a key part of the consideration.

## **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The recommendation is in accordance with the following Priorities of the Council Plan 2025-2029:

- 2.6 We take action on climate change and its impacts on our communities, biodiversity, and the environment, while supporting circular economy initiatives that help reduce waste and improve recycling.

## FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The budget allocation for landfill monitoring in the 2025/26 financial year is \$167,000.

Year one costs based upon the minimum prescribed monitoring frequency and specifications are \$131,670 (excl. GST).

Year two will be subject to an increase in line with CPI and this will be factored into a future budget allocation. The total estimated value over the two years is \$267,290 (Excl GST).

There is sufficient allocation within Council's Waste Reserve to fund the two-year monitoring program under the proposed contract.

## RISK MANAGEMENT

| Risk                                                                                                                                 | Likelihood | Impact   | Mitigation Action / Control                                                                                                            |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mandatory reporting obligation not met - breaches in exceedance levels not reported to EPA or reported outside specified timeframes. | Possible   | Minor    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Close collaboration between ASC, service provider and EPA</li> </ul>                            |
| Operating outside legislative / regulatory / statutory / policy obligations - EPA issues a Pollution Abatement Notice (PAC)          | Unlikely   | Moderate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procedures in place in order to deal in a timely manner with any EPA recommendations</li> </ul> |

## CONSULTATION

Following a review of submitted tenders, a number of tenderers were contacted to seek further clarification on their submissions.

## CONCLUSION

Following a tender evaluation assessment and reference checks, the tender from DBD Environmental Pty Ltd (trading as Ennovo) is considered the best option for Council due to their price, experience, and knowledge of landfill monitoring and assessment.

## DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

In accordance with section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, and Chapter 7 section A6 of Council's Governance Rules, the following officers declare that they have no interests to disclose in providing this report.

- Director Assets
- Manager Assets and Waste

## ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

## 8.3 DIRECTOR CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY - NATHALIE COOKE

### 8.3.1 Finance Committee Charter Revocation

#### INTRODUCTION

Council currently operates a Finance Committee through a Council-approved Charter. With the introduction of other monitoring mechanisms, revocation of the Finance Committee Charter is sought, effectively dissolves the Finance Committee.

Cr Byrne

Cr Smith

*That Council:*

- 1. Revokes the Finance Committee Charter (V3); and*
- 2. Notes the functions and responsibilities of the Finance Committee Charter are addressed through other mechanisms.*

Carried Unanimously

#### BACKGROUND

Council approved a Finance Committee Charter on 5 July 2016, with the most recent review and update occurring on 6 July 2021.

The Finance Committee was established as an advisory committee with the aim of reviewing:

- Quarterly budget reports, prepared in accordance with section 97 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (LGA 2020);
- Interim and annual financial statements, prepared in accordance with sections 98-99 of the LGA 2020;
- Financial policies, prepared in accordance with section 102 of the LGA 2020.

As the Finance Committee Charter is scheduled for review, the function and operation of the Finance Committee has been examined.

#### ISSUES

The *LGA 2020* requires Council to establish an Audit and Risk Committee under section 53. The Finance Committee (the Committee) is established as an advisory committee and has no legislative status under the *LGA 2020*.

The Committee consists of two nominated Councillors (via Council resolution in November of each year), who are supported by the Chief Executive Officer, Director Corporate & Community, Manager Corporate and the organisation's Accountant.

Councillors Smith and Byrne are currently appointed as Councillor representatives on the Committee. Councillors Smith and Byrne are also the nominated Councillor representatives on the Audit and Risk Committee.

The functions and responsibilities of the Finance Committee include reviewing:

- Quarterly budget reports, prepared in accordance with section 97 of the Act;
- Interim and annual financial statements, prepared in accordance with sections 98-99 of the Act; and
- Financial policies in accordance with section 102 of the Act.

The CEO has a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) to deliver against the adopted 2025/26 Budget and to brief Council on the quarterly financial performance no later than one month following the quarterly cut-off (Q1, Q2 and Q3). In addition, a Q4 report will be instigated, consistent with the reports delivered in the previous quarters. To date the annual financial statement process has taken the place of this report.

Robust governance and sound decision-making are essential pillars of financial sustainability. Council must ensure that financial decisions are informed, strategic, and aligned with long-term priorities.

Considering the focus on financial control and reporting mechanisms, and the timing of reporting above, the operation and function of the Committee has been reviewed and it has been determined that a focus on providing timely and accurate financial information through the established mechanisms of Councillor briefing, Audit and Risk Committee, and Council Meetings provides for robust financial management.

#### Quarterly Budget Report

The quarterly budget report is prepared in the month following the end of each quarter, with input from departments across Council. The draft report is presented to Council Executive for review and comment. Subsequently the report will be presented to a Council briefing and the Audit and Risk Committee for review and comment, before being tabled at an Ordinary Council Meeting, where the report becomes a public document. A new Q4 report will be instigated and delivered at the same Council meeting as the draft Financial and Performance Statements.

#### Financial Statements

The financial statements are prepared by Council Officers with oversight by external auditors. The draft Financial and Performance statements are prepared and presented to the Audit and Risk Committee, usually in September, prior to being presented to Council for approval-in-principle before being submitted to the Auditor for sign off.

#### Financial Policies

Council has a number of internal and external financial policies that require regular review. All financial policies follow an established process of review and require presentation to the Executive, the Audit and Risk Committee or Councillor briefing for review and comment prior to finalisation either through being presented at a Council Meeting for approval, or for approval by the CEO.

## POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The recommendation is in accordance with the following Priorities of the Council Plan 2025-2029:

- 2.8 We achieve long-term financial resilience to meet community needs now and into the future.

## FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications related to implementation of this recommendation. The revocation of the Committee and the reduced requirement to prepare reports for this Committee will enable more time to be directed to preparing reports for Audit and Risk Committee and Council.

## RISK MANAGEMENT

| Risk                                                                         | Likelihood | Impact   | Mitigation Action / Control                                                                                                                                                                      |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Financial management of Council is undertaken without appropriate oversight. | Possible   | Moderate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The operation of a stable and well-informed Audit and Risk Committee</li> <li>Briefing and reporting to Council through formal public meetings</li> </ul> |

## CONSULTATION

The proposal was discussed at the August 2025 Audit and Risk Committee meeting. No feedback was received.

## CONCLUSION

It is recommended that Council revokes the Finance Committee charter, effectively dissolving the Committee. Appropriate governance and control is in place to address the functions and responsibilities of the Finance Committee.

## DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

In accordance with section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, and Chapter 7 section A6 of Council's Governance Rules, the following officers declare that they have no interests to disclose in providing this report.

- Director Corporate and Community
- Manager Corporate

## ATTACHMENT(S)

1. **8.3.1.1** Finance Committee Charter V 3 - adopted 20210706

## 8.3.2 Audit and Risk Committee - Minutes of Meeting No.2025/26-1, 15 August 2025

### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the report is to present the (unconfirmed) minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting No. 2025/26-1 held on 15 August 2025 and seek appointment of the Committee Chair for the 2025/26 financial year.

Cr Ronco

Cr Smith

*That Council:*

- 1. Receives and notes the (unconfirmed) minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting No.2025/26-1, held on 15 August 2025; and*
- 2. Receives the Audit and Risk Committee's nomination and recommendation, and appoints independent member Julie Guest to Chair the Committee for 2025/26.*

Carried Unanimously

### BACKGROUND

Section 5.2 of the Audit and Risk Committee Charter requires that the minutes of meetings of the Audit and Risk Committee (the Committee), and a report summarising the meeting content, be reported to a meeting of Council within two months of the Committee meeting.

The last meeting of the Committee was on Friday 15 August 2025 and as the Committee is yet to confirm the minutes, they are presented to Council for noting as unconfirmed.

### ISSUES

At its August 2025 meeting, the Committee considered several items including regular quarterly reports and standing items and nominated and recommended its Chair for 2025/26. Key agenda items are summarised below.

#### *Nomination of Committee Chair*

The Alpine Shire Council Audit and Risk Committee Charter, V5.0 March 2025, sets out the requirements for the appointment of the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee.

Section 3.8 of the Charter stipulates that:

*"The Chair of the Committee must be an independent member (Local Government Act 2020 section 53(4)).*

*The Committee will nominate and recommend a Chair to Council each year.*

*Council will formally appoint the Committee Chair".*

The Committee nominated, and recommends to Council for appointment, independent member Julie Guest as Chair of the Committee for 2025/26 financial year.

### ***Committee Annual Work Program***

Section 54(3) of the *Local Government Act 2020* states that “an Audit and Risk Committee must adopt an annual work program”. The annual work program was reviewed with minor wording updates to reflect the updated Committee Charter adopted in March 2025 and the LGA 2020. The timing of the nomination of Chair, the Committee performance review, and reporting requirements was changed to a financial year cycle rather than calendar year. The Committee adopted its updated Annual Work Program for 2025/26.

### ***Internal Audit Service***

Council's recently appointed Internal Auditor briefed the Committee on the assurance mapping exercise it undertook during July to inform a proposed Strategic Internal Audit Plan. The Committee expressed its appreciation to Council that an internal auditor and program had been acknowledged and implemented. The proposed internal audit plan for 2025/26 includes three planned audits on procurement, contract management and fraud control.

### ***External Audit***

The Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO) appointed external auditor to Council briefed the Committee on the findings of the interim audit undertaken in late April 2025, and the upcoming final audit in late August. The Committee discussed Council's preparedness for the year-end audit, noting process improvements which were implemented in response to the feedback on the 2023/24 year-end audit.

### ***Legislated Documents Required Post-Election***

As a result of the 2024 Local Government Election, several strategic documents are required by legislation to be delivered by Council within legislated timeframes. The Committee received a report on the status of these documents noting that:

- Instruments of delegation, the Revenue and Rating Plan, and Road Management Plan have all been completed.
- The Community Vision, Council Plan, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, Financial Plan and Asset plan are all on track to be completed within their respective timeframes.

### ***ICT and Cyber Security Progress Update***

Council has received several recommendations from VAGO since 2021 relating to improvements in ICT operations across Council. The Committee monitors implementation of these external audit findings as required by section 6.6(h) of its Charter and noted at this meeting the progress made and engagement of external specialist support in addressing the outstanding ICT matters.

### ***Policy Review Progress Update***

VAGO recommends that Council reviews the appropriateness and currency of all policies and key documents. Council maintains a Policy and Critical Documents Register to track review dates and provides a quarterly status report to ensure the regular monitoring and focus on maintaining the currency of these documents. A report was provided to the Committee at this meeting noting the current status of policies overdue for review, and the commitment of Council to have all reviews finalised by 30 June 2026.

### ***Asbestos Management Update***

The Committee received a report on Council's compliance with its obligations in relation to asbestos risk management. Council has engaged external expertise to inspect assets and maintain asbestos registers. The Committee discussed Council's commitment to ensuring a compliant, safe, and proactive approach to asbestos risk management.

### ***Asset Management Steering Group Report Update***

The regular report was provided to the Committee detailing the current focus of the Asset Management Steering group on a range of asset matters.

## **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The recommendation is in accordance with the following Priorities of the Council Plan 2025-2029:

- 2.10 We systematically identify and manage risks to support informed decision-making and organisational resilience.
- 2.11 We prioritise effective governance to ensure transparent oversight of our operations.

## **FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

The 2025/26 Budget contains an allocation for audit management, which includes:

- Committee membership remuneration
- Committee administration
- Internal audits
- External audit of financial and performance statements.

**RISK MANAGEMENT**

| Risk                                                                        | Likelihood | Impact | Mitigation Action / Control                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|--------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Operating outside legislative / regulatory / statutory / policy obligations | Unlikely   | Minor  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Committee Charter (s5.2) requires meeting minutes to be prepared and circulated within two weeks of Committee meeting and tabled at an Ordinary Council Meeting within two months.</li> <li>Committee meeting administrative support provided by Risk Management Officer (s5.4 of Charter, position description and annual work plan).</li> </ul> |

**CONSULTATION**

The unconfirmed minutes from the meeting are distributed to the Audit and Risk Committee members and presented formally at the following Ordinary Council Meeting for ratification.

**CONCLUSION**

The (unconfirmed) minutes of Audit and Risk Committee Meeting No.2025/26-1, held on Friday 15 August 2025, are presented to Council for noting. The Audit and Risk Committee seeks Council's support for the Committee's nominated and recommended Chair for the 2025/26 financial year, independent member Julie Guest.

## DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

In accordance with section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, and Chapter 7 section A6 of Council's Governance Rules, the following officers declare that they have no interests to disclose in providing this report.

- Director Corporate and Community
- Manager Corporate
- Risk Management Officer

## ATTACHMENT(S)

1. **8.3.2.1** Audit and Risk Committee Minutes of Meeting No.2025-26-01  
UNCONFIRMED

### 8.3.3 Approval in Principle - 2025/26 Financial Statements and Performance Statement

#### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to present the Financial Statements (Draft) and Performance Statement (Draft) for the year ended 30 June 2025 for review and to seek approval in principle.

Cr Byrne

Cr Smith

*That Council:*

- 1. Approves in principle the Financial Statements and the Performance Statement for the year ended 30 June 2025; and*
- 2. Authorises Cr Smith and Cr Byrne to certify the Financial Statements and Performance Statement for the year ended 30 June 2025 on behalf of Council, subject to any material amendment(s) required by the external auditor being ratified by the Audit and Risk Committee, and once any amendments or changes are made as requested by the Victorian Auditor General.*

Carried Unanimously

#### BACKGROUND

Section 98 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires Council to prepare an Annual Report for each financial year that contains a report on the operations of the Council, an audited performance statement, and audited financial statements.

Section 99 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires Council to pass a resolution giving its approval in principle to the Financial Statements (Draft) and Performance Statement (Draft) prior to submitting the statements to the auditor so that they may prepare their reports.

This report provides an overview of the results in Council's Financial Statements (Draft) and Performance Statement (Draft) which are provided in full in the attachments.

Once approval in principle has been provided and Council has incorporated any changes recommended or agreed by the auditor, the Financial Statements and Performance Statement must be certified by two Councillors authorised by Council prior to the auditors signing their report.

#### ISSUES

##### *Audit Progress*

Review of the Financial Statements (Draft) and Performance Statement (Draft) by the external auditors has been undertaken and feedback provided which has been considered and incorporated into the Financial Statements (Draft) and Performance Statement (Draft).

Once the external auditors are satisfied with both statements, the Victorian Auditor General's Office will undertake their validation work.

### ***Financial Statements***

The Financial Statements show Council's financial performance, financial position, and cash flow against the previous year.

In summary, Council ended the 2024/25 financial year with an operating surplus of \$7.82m, which was \$1.43m higher than the \$6.39m surplus in the 2024/25 financial year. The 2024/25 Annual Budget (the Budget) projected a surplus of \$8.59m, \$0.77m higher than the actual result.

The lower than budgeted result was impacted by:

- Higher expenditure related to losses associated with disposal of assets (\$2.90m) largely due to the write-off of \$1.71m as works on a childcare centre which had previously been recorded as a Council asset, and the write-off of over \$0.32m of intangible assets.
- Higher Landfill rehabilitation expenses of \$0.79m, after the discovery of an uncontrolled landfill site at Myrtleford Transfer Station.
- Higher material and services expenses associated with projects previously identified as capital, such as information technology improvements

The impact of these increased expenses was offset by higher operating grants revenue primarily driven by receipt of 50% of the 2025/26 Financial Assistance Grant received in the last week of the 2024/25 financial year and higher than budgeted capital grants revenue due to recognition of revenue associated with several projects where Council has undertaken the work however not received the grant revenue into the bank.

The total comprehensive result for the 2024/25 financial year is \$26.30m and includes an asset revaluation increment of \$18.47m. During the 2024/25 financial year, Council formally revalued bridges, playgrounds and sporting infrastructure.

### **1. Income**

Council received \$51.83m in income which was \$4.91m favourable to the Budget projection of \$46.91m. Key variances to budget were as follows:

#### ***1.1 Grants - operating***

Council received 50% of the 2025/26 Financial Assistance Grant in the last week of 2024/25 (25 June 2025), which equated to \$2.54m.

#### ***1.2 Grants - capital***

Council recorded total capital grant income of \$13.77m being \$1.66m higher than the budget of \$12.82m. This result was largely due to recognition of Local Roads and Community Infrastructure program funding of \$0.64m and recognition of grants revenue to be received for the Tronoh Dredge Hole project of \$0.65m.

### ***1.3 Contribution - non-monetary***

Council budgeted for non-monetary contributions of \$1.07m. Council has received non-monetary contributions of \$0.17m. The difference was caused by delays in the delivery of a development by a third party, relative to our expectations, and resulting delays in the transfer of non-monetary assets to Council. These non-monetary contributions have been budgeted in future years.

## **2. Expenses**

Overall expenses were \$44.00m which was \$5.68m higher than Budget of \$38.32m. Notable expense variances were as follows:

### ***2.1 Employee costs***

Employee costs were \$13.53m being a \$0.30m unfavourable variance to Budget of \$13.22m, and a \$1.36m increase on 2023/24 expenses.

Employee costs have increased since 2023/24 due to achieving lower vacancy rates for the budgeted positions through 2024/25 than in the previous year, increased costs associated with the Enterprise Agreement, and the increase in superannuation guarantee payments from 11.5% to 12.0%.

Employee costs exceeded budget in 2024/25 due to the Workcover insurance premium being budgeted as a materials and services expense, however more appropriately accounted in the financial statements as an employee cost, and additional roles which were fully-funded through non-recurrent grant funding received throughout the year.

### ***2.2 Materials and services***

Materials and Services were \$18.26m being a \$1.55m unfavourable variance to Budget of \$16.71m, and a \$2.63m increase on 2023/24 expenses. Materials and Services have increased due to items previously categorised as capital being expensed.

### ***2.3 Depreciation***

Depreciation was \$7.29m which was \$0.14m favourable to Budget of \$7.43m., however a \$1.96m increase on 2023/24 expense, resulting from a review of asset classes and useful life assessment.

### ***2.4 Net loss on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment***

Net loss on disposal was \$2.90m against a Budget of \$0.03m (Council budgeted to make a profit on disposal of assets), creating a \$2.93m variance. Compared to 2023/24 of \$0.22m this was an increase in loss on disposal of \$2.71m. Net losses on disposals was significantly higher due to previously recorded assets being expensed (as they were identified as not being Council assets, funding was received by Council to manage the work) and the expensing of software in accordance with accounting principles, previously being capitalised (intangible assets).

### ***Performance Statement***

The Performance Statement provides an overview of Council progress against key performance indicators. The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) provides the basis for these indicators to enable a uniform Performance Statement across all Victorian councils.

An overview of movement in results is provided below:

- Utilisation of aquatic facilities increased in 2024/25, continuing a trend from the previous year, and surpassing Council's target result. Visitation at outdoor pools increased slightly due to a hot summer season and a streamlined marketing program. The greatest driver of change was a 30% increase in visitation at the Bright Sports Centre following the installation of new gymnasium equipment.
- Community satisfaction with Council's community consultation and engagement remained constant compared to the previous year, however performance remains significantly lower than the Small Rural Council average and is lower than Council's target result. Work will continue in 2025/26 to improve community perceptions of Council's performance.
- Statutory planning applications decided within timeframes improved slightly compared to the previous year, but remains below the target set for this measure. Almost half of all planning applications were made in the four months March – June 2025, which aligned with Council rebuilding the Statutory Planning team after a period of resourcing challenges and the implementation of a suite of process improvements.
- The proportion of kerbside waste diverted from landfill continued to improve after the introduction of Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) collection in the previous year, albeit at a much slower rate. Council's participation in the soft plastics recycling trial has also contributed to the improvement in waste diverted from landfill.

Percentage of permanent staff turnover has fallen below 15% for the first time since before COVID-19 impacted on the way people work. This reflects a stabilising of the workforce, including fewer vacant positions at the end of the year.

### **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

Council has prepared Financial Statements (Draft) and Performance Statement (Draft) for Council approval in principle, in line with the requirements of Sections 98 and 99 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.

Authorised Councillors are required to certify the Financial Statements (Final) and Performance Statement (Final) after any amendments or changes requested by the Victorian Auditor General have been made, and prior to adoption by Council.

Section 100 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires the Mayor to report on the implementation of the Council Plan by presenting the Annual Report (incorporating the

Annual Financial and Performance Statements) at a Council meeting open to the public, no later than 31 October 2025.

The recommendation is in accordance with the following Priorities of the Council Plan 2025-2029:

- 2.8 We achieve long-term financial resilience to meet community needs now and into the future.

## FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The Financial Statements (Draft) and Performance Statement (Draft) for the year ended 30 June 2025 show that Council has delivered an operating surplus and that Council services are being delivered within expected parameters.

However, Council delivered an adjusted underlying deficit in 2024/25 and is forecasting through the Performance Statement an ongoing adjusted underlying deficit for the next 4 years. This is consistent with the position reflected in the draft Financial Plan, where an adjusted underlying deficit is forecast for each year of the 10-year plan. This trajectory is not sustainable for Council, and action is required to return Council to a financially sustainable trajectory.

A Financial Sustainability Strategy and associated Action Plan is being developed which will outline the work which is planned to address the ongoing adjusted underlying deficit and return Council to a financially sustainable position.

## RISK MANAGEMENT

| Risk                                                                                                                                               | Likelihood | Impact   | Mitigation Action / Control                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Incorrect, incomplete, ineffective and/or untimely information - inability to accurately plan and manage finances due to inaccurate financial data | Unlikely   | Moderate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial Plan</li> <li>Annual Budget</li> <li>Regular reporting</li> <li>Year-end controls and reconciliations</li> <li>End of year checklist</li> <li>Early commencement of activities, considering resource constraints</li> </ul> |

| Risk                                                                                                                                            | Likelihood | Impact | Mitigation Action / Control                                                                                                                     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|--------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Operating outside legislative /regulatory / statutory / policy obligations - failure to address changes in accounting standards and legislation | Rare       | Minor  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaison with auditors</li> <li>• Industry updates</li> <li>• Staff professional development</li> </ul> |

## CONSULTATION

Consistent with Audit and Risk Committee Charter obligations, the Audit and Risk Committee reviewed the Financial Statements (Draft) and Performance Statement (Draft) at a meeting on 24 September 2025. External Auditors, Johnsons MME presented to the Committee.

The Committee endorsed the Financial Statements (Draft) and Performance Statement (Draft) in principle for the year ended 30 June 2025 for Council approval, noting the minor amendments outlined verbally by the External Auditor in the meeting and subject to:

- The Committee being consulted on any significant changes (other than those raised and discussed with the External Auditors in the meeting) to the draft Financial Statements or Performance Statement.
- Any changes required by VAGO.
- A copy of the updated Financial Statements and Performance Statement being circulated to the Committee.

## CONCLUSION

Council ended the 2024/25 year with an operating surplus of \$7.82m, which is slightly lower than forecast in the 2024/25 annual Budget. The variance between the operating surplus result compared to the budget is largely attributed to recognition of operating and capital grants, and higher interest income from term deposits, offset by a write-off of capital works in prior years.

## DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

In accordance with section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, and Chapter 7 section A6 of Council's Governance Rules, the following officers declare that they have no interests to disclose in providing this report.

- Director Corporate and Community
- Manager Corporate

## ATTACHMENT(S)

1. **8.3.3.1** Draft - 2024/25 Annual Financial Statements 25 Sep 2025
2. **8.3.3.2** Draft - 2024/25 Performance Statement 25 Sep 2025

# 9 Informal Meetings of Councillors

## INTRODUCTION

In accordance with Chapter 8, section A1 of Council's Governance Rules, if there is a meeting of three or more Councillors that:

- is scheduled or planned for the purpose of discussing the business of Council or briefing Councillors;
- is attended by at least one member of Council staff; and
- is not a Council meeting, Delegated Committee meeting, or Community Asset Committee meeting.

The Chief Executive Officer must ensure that a summary of the matters discussed at the meeting are tabled at the next convenient Council meeting, and are recorded in the minutes of that Council meeting.

Cr Andersen

Cr Graham

*That the summary of informal meetings of Councillors for August/September 2025 be received.*

Carried Unanimously

## BACKGROUND

The written records of the informal meetings of Councillors held during the previous month are summarised below. Detailed records can be found attached to this report.

| Date                 | Meeting              |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| Tuesday 26 August    | Briefing Session     |
| Tuesday 2 September  | Tri Council Workshop |
| Tuesday 9 September  | Briefing Session     |
| Tuesday 16 September | Briefing Session     |
| Tuesday 23 September | Briefing Session     |

## ATTACHMENT(S)

1. 9.1.1 Informal Meeting of Councillors 20250826
2. 9.1.2 Informal Meeting of Councillors 20250902
3. 9.1.3 Informal Meeting of Councillors 20250909
4. 9.1.4 Informal Meeting of Councillors 20250916
5. 9.1.5 Informal Meeting of Councillors 20250923

**10 Presentation of reports by delegates**

**11 General business**

**12 Motions for which notice has previously been given**

**13 Reception and reading of petitions**

**14 Documents for signing and sealing**

Nil

**15 Confidential reports**

**16 Closure of meeting**

There being no further business the Chairperson declared the meeting closed at 6:27pm