

M(10) – 28 OCTOBER 2025

Ordinary Council Meeting

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 **28 October 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

OFFICERS

Will Jeremy - Chief Executive Officer

Alan Rees - Director Assets

Nathalie Cooke - Director Corporate and Community

APOLOGIES

Cr Tanzen

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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(9) HELD ON 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

Cr Graham

Cr Byrne

That the minutes of M(9) 30 September 2025 as circulated be confirmed.

Carried Unanimously

4 Apologies

Cr Tanzen

5 Obituaries / Congratulations

Refer to Alpine Shire Council's website 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; for its YouTube live-streaming recording for responses to questions.

8 Mayor's Report

8.1 ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to present Council's 2024/25 Annual Report.

Cr Ronco

Cr Graham

That Council:

1. *In accordance with section 100 of the Local Government Act 2020, receives and notes the Annual Report 2024/25; and*
2. *Delegates to the Chief Executive Officer the authority to correct any typographical errors.*

Carried Unanimously

BACKGROUND

Section 98 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (LGA 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.

Council approved the in-principle Financial and Performance Statements at the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 30 September 2025.

The Independent Auditor's Reports from the Victorian Auditor General's Office (VAGO) for the Financial Statements and Performance Statement for 2024/25 have been included in the Annual Report (attachment 1).

Section 100 of the LGA 2020 requires the Mayor to report on the implementation of the Council Plan by presenting the Annual Report at a Council Meeting open to the public within four months of the end of financial year.

The Annual Report contains all information required by the LGA 2020, and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.

ISSUES

Report of Operations

This section of the Annual Report provides an overview of progress in delivering the Strategies contained in the Council Plan 2021-2025, and the Major Initiatives in the Budget 2024/25. A summary of key achievements in 2024/25 include:

1. For those who live and visit

- Council's Resilient Alpine Youth Squad (RAYS) was nominated for and won the "Outstanding youth participation in community-based disaster resilience" at the biennial Youth Affairs Council Victoria (YACVic) Rural Youth Awards presented in September 2024.
- The 2024/25 Community Grants program supported delivery of 14 community projects (\$77,000 funding), and the Kiewa Valley Flood and Landslip Grants Program (\$50,000 funding) supported delivery of nine community projects in the Kiewa Valley.

2. For a thriving economy

- Mount Beauty and surrounds was recognised as a finalist in the 2025 Victorian Top Tourism Town Awards (Small Tourism Town category) in June 2025, and was announced as the winner in late July 2025.
- 2024 was the largest tourism year on record for Alpine Shire, including both visitation and the estimated \$35m spend.
- 123 permits for festivals and events across the Shire were issued during the year, including multiple events that have shown considerable growth.
- The 2024/25 Event Funding program provided a total of more than \$180,000 support across 45 different events across the Shire.

3. For the bold protection of our future

- The Alpine Shire Climate Action Plan 2025-2029 was adopted by Council in May 2025, and a scoping study for the development of a Community Climate Action Plan for each major township in the Shire was commenced.
- The "Alpine Tip Shop" was opened at the Myrtleford Transfer Station in March 2025, providing a space for the community to donate and purchase items otherwise destined for landfill.

4. For the enjoyment and opportunities of our lifestyle

- Delivery of 100% of the adopted budget of \$17m of Capital Works, the largest in Council's history.
- Strategic Planning progressed a number of key guidance documents for Council, including preliminary work on a Neighbourhood Character Study, and translation of the Land Development Strategy into a Planning Scheme amendment. Work will continue on these key documents into 2025/26.
- Revised versions of both the Road Management Plan and Asset Management Plan were developed, in preparation for adoption in early 2025/26, providing improved guidance for the management of Council's key community assets.

5. For strong and informed leadership

- Deliberative engagement was a strong driver in the development of the new Council Plan 2025-2029, including a 14 member Community Panel and Council's Resilient Alpine Youth Squad (RAYS).
- Council's online engagement platform attracted nearly 30,000 visits across 13 projects open for engagement throughout the year. Pop-up events at markets across the Shire continued to provide opportunities for the community to engage directly with Councillors and staff.

- A Workplace Cultural Transformation project commenced, focussing on embedding a strong, values-driven culture to strengthen leadership capability, building trust and accountability, and enhancing systems and clarity. Work will continue over the next two financial years to ensure long term success.

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, recategorised as expenditure.

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.

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 largely due to items previously categorised as capital now 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 application determinations 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 welcome stabilising of the workforce, including fewer vacant positions at the end of the year.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The Annual Report must be presented to a Council meeting open to the public within four months of the end of financial year (31 October 2025).

The recommendation is in accordance with the following Strategic Objectives of the Council Plan 2021-2025:

5.2 A responsible, transparent and responsive organisation.

The Annual Report 2024/25 is the final report against the 2021-2025 Council Plan, and concludes all committed deliverables for the term of that Council Plan. The new Council Plan 2025-2029 provides direction for the next four years, and will form the basis of future quarterly and annual reports.

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The Financial Statements and Performance Statement for the year ended 30 June 2025 show that Council delivered an operating surplus and that Council services were 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. 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
Inability to accurately plan and manage finances due to inaccurate financial data	Unlikely	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial Plan Annual Budget Regular reporting Year-end controls and reconciliations Audit processes
Failure to address changes in accounting standards and legislation	Rare	Minor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaison with auditors Industry updates Staff professional development

CONSULTATION

The Audit and Risk Committee Charter states that the Committee is required to review the Annual Financial Report and consider whether it is complete, consistent with information known to Audit and Risk Committee members and reflects appropriate accounting principles.

The Audit and Risk Committee was presented with the in-principle Financial Statements and Performance Statement and received a briefing from Council's auditors following their review of these documents on 24 September 2025.

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.

- Chief Executive Officer
- Governance Officer

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. **8.1.1** Alpine Shire Council Annual Report 2024-25

9 Presentation of reports by officers

9.1 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER - WILL JEREMY

9.1.1 Contracts approved under delegation by the CEO

Cr Graham

Cr Andersen

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

Carried Unanimously

<i>Contract No: CT26156</i>		<i>Process: RFQ</i>
<i>Title:</i>	<i>Road Stabilisation and Patching 2025-2026</i>	
<i>Tenderer:</i>	<i>Central Vic Stabilising</i>	
<i>Budget (\$ excl GST):</i>	<i>\$205,000.00</i>	
<i>Contract (\$ excl GST):</i>	<i>\$153,611.88</i>	

<i>Contract No: CQ26179</i>		<i>Process: RFQ</i>
<i>Title:</i>	<i>Alpine Shire Seasonal Pools Painting</i>	
<i>Tenderer:</i>	<i>Rhino Linings</i>	
<i>Budget (\$ excl GST):</i>	<i>\$100,000.00</i>	
<i>Contract (\$ excl GST):</i>	<i>\$93,260.00</i>	

<i>Contract No: 26124</i>		<i>Process: RFQ</i>
<i>Title:</i>	<i>Bright Skate Park Upgrade & Repair</i>	
<i>Tenderer:</i>	<i>Unearth</i>	
<i>Budget (\$ excl GST):</i>	<i>Unbudgeted in 2025/26 Grant funding of \$164,522.00 secured from State Government</i>	
<i>Contract (\$ excl GST):</i>	<i>\$128,980.60</i>	

9.1.2 Albury-Wodonga Hospital Redevelopment

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the report is to provide an update on advocacy relating to the development of a single-site greenfield hospital for to service the catchment of Albury-Wodonga Health.

Cr Byrne
Cr Ronco

That Council:

- 1. Affirms its support for the development of a new single-site hospital to service the catchment of Albury-Wodonga Health; and*
- 2. Notes the commitment of \$8,263 towards continued advocacy for a 'New Albury Wodonga Regional Hospital' that has been made under the Chief Executive Officer's delegation.*

Carried Unanimously

BACKGROUND

At the February 2025 Ordinary Council Meeting, Council affirmed its support for the development of a single-site hospital in Albury-Wodonga and acknowledged the critical healthcare infrastructure needs in the catchment of Albury-Wodonga Health.

In early September 2025, Council participated in a 'tri-council briefing' during which Councillors of the Alpine, Indigo and Towong Shire Councils were provided an update on the status of the hospital redevelopment status, and had the opportunity to hear feedback from advocates in support of a single-site greenfield hospital.

Subsequent to this tri-council briefing, a request was received from the Albury Wodonga Regional Health Alliance for Alpine Shire Council to commit funds towards the cost of securing the services of a professional lobbyist to further the aims of the Alliance in advocating for a single-site hospital.

ISSUES

The quality of regional health services has a direct impact on the liveability, health and wellbeing of the residents of the Alpine Shire.

The catchment of Albury-Wodonga Health includes the Alpine Shire municipality. The proposed development of the hospital based in Albury is of great importance to the residents of our municipality, and particularly residents of the Kiewa Valley.

Whilst there has been a great deal of discussion by major stakeholders about the hospital development, there is significant concern that the needs of our rural communities have not been taken into consideration in determining the future form and function of the health service.

It is crucially important that our rural communities are well represented, and our rural

voice is heard, in order to ensure the provision of a health service which meets the current and future needs of the communities of the Alpine Shire.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

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

- 1.4 Our continued engagement will promote community understanding and contribution to decisions that bring positive change across Alpine Shire

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Council notes the one-off financial commitment of \$8,263 towards continued advocacy.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
Inability of residents to access health care that meets the current and future needs of the Alpine Shire communities	Very likely	Major	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for the development of healthcare infrastructure and provision of healthcare services which meet the current a future needs of our communities.

CONSULTATION

Alpine Shire Council is represented on the Albury Wodonga Regional Health Alliance.

CONCLUSION

The development of a new single-site hospital on a greenfield location presents the most effective solution to address the critical healthcare infrastructure needs in the Albury-Wodonga region.

This approach will ensure modern, efficient, and high-quality healthcare services that can meet current and future demands for decades to come.

It is recommended that Council notes the allocation of funds towards continued advocacy in support of this outcome.

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.

- Chief Executive Officer

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

9.2 DIRECTOR ASSETS - SARAH BUCKLEY

9.2.1 Asset Plan 2025-2035

INTRODUCTION

The Asset Plan 2025-2035 (Version 2) has been developed and, following public exhibition, can be considered for adoption by Council.

Cr Byrne

Cr Smith

That Council:

- 1. Notes that following the release of the draft Asset Plan for public exhibition, six external submissions were received which did not impact the intent of the Plan;*
- 2. Revokes the Asset Plan 2022-2032 (Version 1);*
- 3. Adopts the Asset Plan 2025-2035 (Version 2); and*
- 4. Signs and seals the Asset Plan 2025-2035 (Version 2) at the appropriate stage of this meeting.*

Carried Unanimously

BACKGROUND

The Asset Plan is a legislated requirement introduced in the Local Government Act 2020 that requires all Victorian councils to develop, adopt and keep in force an Asset Plan. It must be adopted by the 31 October following a general election. The Asset Plan is a strategic document that informs the community about how Council's infrastructure assets will be managed and maintained to support achieving the Community Vision and Council Plan objectives.

The Plan must cover a minimum period of at least the next 10 financial years, and include information about maintenance, renewal, acquisition, disposal and decommissioning in relation to each class of infrastructure asset under the control of the Council.

These asset classes include:

- Roads and car parks
- Buildings
- Pathways
- Open space
- Drainage
- Bridges.

In June 2022, Council adopted its first Asset Plan.

The Plan outlines how Alpine Shire Council will manage its assets responsibly to support community service delivery, now and into the future. It aims to:

- Demonstrate how assets will be maintained in a cost-effective and sustainable way.
- Define the services provided, the standards expected, and how performance will be measured.
- Summarise forecasted operating and capital investment needs.
- Ensure alignment between asset planning, the Council Plan, Financial Plan, and Budget.
- Align asset management practices with relevant local, regional, and state strategies and policies.
- Ensure compliance with legislative requirements.

ISSUES

Asset Plan Review

Council's current Asset Plan has been reviewed against the following documents:

- Valuation Report 2023-2024
- Asset condition assessments
- Customer Satisfaction Survey
- Community and stakeholder engagement
- Council Plan
- Financial Plan.

The review has been completed to meet the requirements of Section 92 of the Local Government Act 2020. The Victorian Local Government Act 2020 states that the Asset Plan must:

- Include information about maintenance, renewal, acquisition, expansion, upgrade, disposal and decommissioning in relation to each class of infrastructure asset under the control of Council, and
- Be developed, adopted and kept in force in accordance with the Council's deliberative engagement practices.

The review of the Asset Plan ensures the continued sustainable management of Council's Assets and informs investment decisions that balance cost, risk and performance across the asset lifecycle. As a result of the review an Asset Plan has been completed with updates to reflect the most accurate asset data and retain consistency with Council's strategic goals and objectives.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Council's Asset Plan has been prepared to meet the requirements of the Local Government Act 2020.

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

- 1.3 We use our resources responsibly to deliver efficient, evidence-based services, facilities, and projects that benefit our communities and meet our customer commitments.
- 4.1 New capital projects and works will be strategically aligned and planned to support long-term sustainability.

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The Asset Plan was developed in conjunction with the draft Financial Plan. As such, it provides a long-term view of the resources that are planned to be available, and how these will be allocated and prioritised, over the next ten years. The Financial Plan is also recommended to be adopted at the October Ordinary Council Meeting.

Council's position on asset management will remain sustainable in the short to medium term and Council will continue to monitor and react to longer term issues in advance of any change requirements. Continued focus on lifecycle costs of infrastructure and alignment to services will assist in understanding the long-term implications of investment decisions.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
Local, national, and global trends can all influence the future of our Shire.	Possible	Moderate	Understand these trends, adapt to challenges, and embrace opportunities that support our health, vibrancy, and long-term sustainability.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
Aging assets: increasingly prone to failure, require more frequent and costly maintenance, and may no longer meet contemporary standards for safety, accessibility, or functionality.	Possible	Moderate	Requires optimised asset spending and proactive renewal programs to prevent service disruption and asset failure.
Tourism is a key industry for the Alpine Shire, and growth in regional and domestic tourism can increase the seasonal and ongoing strain on local infrastructure, especially in areas with iconic natural or cultural attractions.	Possible	Moderate	Asset management systems must plan for peak loads, prioritise resilience, and ensure timely maintenance. Service delivery must focus on enhancing visitor experience while protecting local amenity and environmental sustainability.
Community expectations continue to evolve, with greater emphasis on quality of life, inclusion, and accessible public services.	Possible	Moderate	Investment in technology, modern amenities, and sustainability features. Agile and responsive service models. Development of strategic alliances with service delivery partners.
Climate - related asset stress.	Possible	Moderate	Assess vulnerabilities and adapt maintenance and renewal schedules to account for environmental stressors.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
Compliance and Regulatory changes at state and federal levels can influence funding allocations and asset compliance requirements.	Possible	Moderate	Asset planning remains flexible and responsive to government priorities. Review of asset strategies, service delivery models and funding frameworks to align with current policy settings and maintain funding eligibility.

CONSULTATION

In accordance with the requirements of the LGA 2020, the Asset Plan must be adopted in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy. The content is closely aligned with that of the Financial Plan, supports delivery of the Strategic Objectives of the Council Plan 2025-2029, and supports progress towards achieving the Community Vision 2040.

The Asset Plan was prepared with significant community engagement, including a deliberative engagement process as part of the development of the Council Plan 2025-29. Relevant Council Officers have been consulted and provided feedback which has been incorporated into the updated plan. The Asset Plan was released for a 14-day public exhibition period following the September 2025 Council Meeting, and submissions closed on 24 September 2025.

Six submissions were received regarding the Asset Plan 2025-2035. The submissions and responses are summarised in the table below. The submissions did not change the intent of the Asset Plan.

Submitter #	Summary	Comments
1	<p>How will you spend more than \$120m over 10 years to fix poor assets whilst your financial plan says you don't have the money to do this?</p> <p>It is understood that work is clearly needed, because many assets are already in average or poor condition and will only get worse without investment, but the financial plan says this is not possible.</p> <p>You need to make some hard choices,</p>	<p>Council has undertaken to develop a financial sustainability strategy to address the adjusted underlying deficit and build a financially sustainable Council.</p> <p>Further to this, the asset plan was built on available asset condition data that is continuously being updated as a result of annual maintenance and renewal projects, which is expected to</p>

Submitter #	Summary	Comments
	<p>it's a wish list with no plan to back it up. You are promising to maintain assets you cannot afford to fund.</p>	<p>result in downward pressure on future funding requirements.</p> <p>Regarding the need for hard choices and decisions, there has been a significant reduction of investment between the draft and final asset plan and Council is already working on a Community Infrastructure Needs Assessment to align future investments with the community's needs. The submitter is invited to make a submission during the community consultation process.</p>
2	<p>I would like to discuss flood mitigation channel and Standish Street bridge in Myrtleford area.</p> <p>I also wish to discuss the rezoning of land corner of Valley Avenue and Damms Road Mt Beauty.</p>	<p>The customer will be contacted to further understand the feedback and have a discussion around the Standish Street bridge and flood mitigation.</p> <p>Rezoning land is a complicated process and sufficient strategic justification and supporting reports are required to commence a process to rezone any land. The Strategic Planning team will now identify the lot and the proposed zone prior to providing the resident with a detailed response regarding the feasibility of the request.</p>
3	<p>Consideration should be given to linking the Kiewa River Trail through to Damms Rd., especially as the Shire has already completed a grant application to put an offroad track along Damms Rd.</p> <p>Existing track surfaces need to be upgraded and maintained to a higher standard - the tracks in the Kiewa do not have a smooth hot mix surface and fall into a poor state very quickly.</p>	<p>Council has commenced a tracks and trails assessment that will identify priority gaps in the trail network across Alpine Shire. The Kiewa River Trail to Damms Road has been identified as an early output of this gap analysis. Council will consult with the local community regarding the findings of this draft assessment towards the end of 2025 or early in 2026. The submitter is invited to make a submission during this community consultation process.</p>

Submitter #	Summary	Comments
4	<p>I wish to respond to the section under Pathways.</p> <p>I have been involved in helping with creating most of the trails in the upper Kiewa Valley, some on Shire land and some in the Park and on DEECA land. I am really keen to see those assets in the Shire maintained and if possible expanded.</p> <p>The assets I wish to comment on are those who the Shire now own, and maintain, in the Upper Kiewa Valley.</p> <p>The tracks that need immediate attention are.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The track on and around the regulating pondage wall in Mt Beauty badly needs widening and the surrounding area built up, so there are no drop offs. This track is the most used one in the valley and not up to the task, as it is far too narrow, at 1500 wide, with dangerous edges, especially at the library end. All the other bike tracks in the Shire are between 2000 cm and 2100 wide. As it is now 2 bikes cannot safely pass each other, especially going in the opposite directions. 2. Those tracks that encircle the basketball court and playground near the library. They are in an awful state, as are the parts of the track at the back of the high school that have been impacted by tree roots. 3. The West Kiewa River trail extension was built when conditions were far from ideal, and the track was unable to be rolled smoothly before sealing, resulting in a very rough surface, especially noticeable on a bike. Only a 	<p>Council has commenced a tracks and trails assessment that will identify priority gaps in the trails network across Alpine Shire. Council will consult with the local community regarding the findings of this draft assessment towards the end of 2025 or early in 2026. The submitter is invited to make a submission during this community consultation process.</p> <p>In relation to the existing paths and highlighted maintenance issues, these have been noted to Council's Engineering and Maintenance team for inspection and consideration for improvements.</p>

Submitter #	Summary	Comments
	<p>hot mix topping will level out the surface.</p> <p>4. The first 150 metres of the Survey Track needs grading and a new topcoat of gravel that will set. Locals with prams use this track (with great difficulty) Slivers of rock from the tunnel boring machine at Bogong were used as a topping and they have proved not a good idea.</p> <p>5. The Fisherman's Walk needs a lot of the vegetation along the water's edge removed so you can view the river, and cast a line in.</p> <p>6. The Bridge at the Gorge needs new stronger stringers along the bottom of the fence, so the netting can be firmly attached, so it can't catch the ankles of people crossing the bridge.</p> <p>7. Since the bank of the river on the Kiewa River Walk has recently been stabilized, can we have the seat near the large gums returned to its original spot. It would also be great if all the fallen debris, pushed into the bush each side of the track, was removed and burnt. (AGL have a burn pile beside the Tail Race Channel.)</p> <p>8. What is sadly missing in this valley are family friendly bike tracks and at present we have a total of 5.1 Km, with 3Km of that only 1500 wide. The trail from Tawonga to Mt Beauty beside the highway is certainly not family friendly as it entails a huge amount of climbing and crosses countless no of driveways. In comparison the Ovens Valley has 66km of very family friendly wide trails.</p>	

Submitter #	Summary	Comments
	In the near future, we hope to see the Kiewa River trail extended out to Damms Rd and beyond (One stage at a time.) Our original plan was to take the existing Pebble Beach track to Tawonga.	
5	<p>I was looking at the Shire's Draft Asset plan.</p> <p>Could you help me understand where the two airfields - Mount Beauty and Porepunkah - fit within the plan?</p> <p>More predominantly Mount Beauty, which has a lot more ongoing infrastructure and maintenance requirements.</p>	The assets which collectively constitute the airfields in Porepunkah and Mount Beauty are individually captured within their relevant asset categories. For example, runways are captured in Council's road asset category, Council owned facilities are captured in the building asset category, and drainage is captured in drainage asset category.
6	Can council look at the building condition report for the Myrtleford SES shed and make recommendations on the suggested renewals?	<p>Council leases this building to Myrtleford SES. Updated condition data for this building has recently been prepared and these costings have been included in the 10-year asset plan for this building, subject to approval through Council's annual budget process.</p> <p>The Myrtleford SES can make a submission during the community consultation process associated with the preparation of the budget.</p>

CONCLUSION

Council is legislated under LGA 2020 to develop and adopt an Asset Plan which includes information about maintenance, renewal, acquisition, expansion, upgrade, disposal, and decommissioning in relation to each class of infrastructure asset under the control of the Council.

Council's Asset Plan has been developed in line with this legislation, and it is recommended that this review of the Alpine Shire Asset Plan 2025-2035 (Version 2) is now complete and the revised plan presented to Council for adoption.

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
- Asset Management Coordinator

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. **9.2.1.1** ASC Asset Plan 2025 - 2035

9.2.2 Draft Alpine Shire Community Infrastructure Needs Assessment 2025

INTRODUCTION

The draft Alpine Shire Community Infrastructure Needs Assessment 2025 provides an evidence-based framework to guide future planning, investment, and decision-making for community infrastructure across the Alpine Shire.

This report recommends that Council endorses an engagement process for community consultation. Once consultation is complete, Council will review any feedback received ahead of considering a final Alpine Shire Community Infrastructure Needs Assessment.

That Council:

- 1. Endorses an engagement process to seek community feedback on the draft Alpine Shire Community Infrastructure Needs Assessment 2025 (Attachment A) for a period of four weeks; and*
- 2. Notes that Council officers will consider community feedback and report back to Council at a future ordinary council meeting.*

Motion Lapsed.

Alternate Motion

Cr Byrne
Cr Ronco

That Council:

- 1. Endorses an engagement process to seek community feedback on the draft Alpine Shire Community Infrastructure Needs Assessment 2025 (Attachment A) for a period of eight weeks; and*
- 2. Notes that Council officers will consider community feedback and report back to Council at a future ordinary council meeting.*

Carried Unanimously

BACKGROUND

The draft Alpine Shire Community Infrastructure Needs Assessment 2025 (the draft CINA) is an evaluation process aimed at identifying and analysing the current state of community, social and related infrastructure within the community.

It involves gathering data, engaging stakeholders, and evaluating various aspects of infrastructure such as early year facilities, health services, education facilities, cultural amenities and recreation spaces.

The draft CINA aims to identify strengths, weaknesses, gaps and opportunities for improvement in the community and social infrastructure. By aligning infrastructure planning with Council's strategic goals, the draft CINA ensures that future investment delivers maximum community benefit, supports wellbeing, and strengthens resilience against future environmental and social pressures.

Based on the findings, recommendations are provided to guide future planning and investment decisions to address the community's evolving needs and promote its overall wellbeing and development.

ISSUES

The draft CINA identifies several interrelated issues and challenges that will shape Council's

future planning and decision-making:

- infrastructure upgrades/renewal - considers contemporary accessibility standards, safety codes, or community expectations, adaptability and flexibility;
- infrastructure provision - considers access to community facilities for smaller towns and capacity issues for larger centres;
- demographic need across a range of users and age groups;
- climate resilience - design and locate to withstand risks associated with fire, flood and heat. Facilities can also play a role in emergencies, providing relief and recovery spaces for local communities;
- financial sustainability - without a clear prioritisation framework, investment risks being ad hoc and opportunistic, reducing long-term value; and
- community expectation - there is increasing expectation that facilities be modern, digitally enabled, accessible for all abilities and reflective of cultural diversity.

It is proposed to consult with the community and seek feedback on the draft CINA. This will give officers the ability to engage with the community on the issues raised in the initial pre-draft consultation, consider feedback, and update the document prior to Council considering a final Alpine Shire Community Infrastructure Needs Assessment.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

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

- 2.1 New capital projects and works will be strategically aligned and planned to support long-term sustainability
- 3.3 We support our communities to access our services and facilities regardless of age, ability, sexuality, gender, ethnicity, or background
- 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

The draft CINA does not allocate capital costs to specific projects but provides a

framework that will guide future investment decisions and external funding advocacy in community and social infrastructure.

By providing a clear evidence base and township-level priorities, the draft CINA strengthens Council's capacity to plan efficiently, advocate effectively and secure external funding. The financial sustainability of Council's community and social infrastructure depends on the adoption of this evidence-based approach.

Delivering major infrastructure projects will be contingent on external funding from the Australian and Victorian governments. Programs such as the Australian Government's Growing Regions Program, and the Victorian Government's Regional Community Sports Infrastructure Fund and Building Blocks grants (for early years) will be essential in the future implementation of Council's community and social infrastructure planning.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
Lack of community feedback on the draft Alpine Shire Community Infrastructure Needs Assessment 2025.	Possible	Moderate	Create an engagement plan with appropriate tools for the community to provide feedback.
Community opposition to the draft Alpine Shire Community Infrastructure Needs Assessment 2025.	Possible	Minor	Manage community expectations during the engagement process in accordance with the engagement plan. Council officers will consider all feedback received.

CONSULTATION

Internal Consultation

Council officers across multiple departments participated in one-on-one workshops to test and validate the draft CINA framework.

Targeted Stakeholder Consultation (October 2025)

Targeted stakeholder consultation was held on 21 and 22 October 2025, and the next step is to present the draft CINA to the wider Alpine Shire community for review and feedback prior to finalisation.

Broader Community Engagement

Subject to Council's endorsement, the draft CINA will be released for broader draft community consultation, online engagement and surveys.

This process will allow residents to validate findings, prioritise needs and contribute local insights before final adoption.

CONCLUSION

The draft CINA provides Council with a comprehensive evidence base to guide future investment decisions, and external funding advocacy in community and social infrastructure. It addresses gaps in planning by taking a municipal-wide approach that considers demographic change, equity of access, financial sustainability and community needs.

Broad community engagement will strengthen the recommendations of a final Alpine Shire Community Infrastructure Needs Assessment 2025, enable Council to prioritise effectively, and provide a strong platform for advocacy and external funding.

It is recommended that Council endorses the draft Alpine Shire Community Infrastructure Needs Assessment 2025 and supports proceeding to community consultation.

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
- Project Officer (Strategic Planning)

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. **9.2.2.1** Draft Alpine Shire Community Infrastructure Needs Assessment 2025

9.2.3 Draft Alpine Shire Tracks and Trails Master Plan 2025

INTRODUCTION

The draft Alpine Shire Tracks and Trails Master Plan 2025 (draft Plan) presents a strategic framework for the sustainable planning, development and maintenance of walking, cycling, hiking, and shared-use trails across the municipality.

The draft Plan will provide long-term guidance for Council, land managers and community stakeholders, and enable informed decisions around future investment, funding opportunities, and trail stewardship.

This report recommends that Council endorses an engagement process for community consultation. Once consultation is complete, Council will review any feedback received ahead of considering a final Alpine Shire Tracks and Trails Master Plan.

Cr Smith

Cr Andersen

That Council:

- 1. Endorses an engagement process to seek community feedback on the draft Alpine Shire Tracks and Trails Master Plan for a period of four weeks; and*
- 2. Notes that Council officers will consider community feedback and report back to Council at a future ordinary council meeting.*

Amended motion

Cr Graham

Cr Ronco

That Council:

- 1. Endorses an engagement process to seek community feedback on the draft Alpine Shire Tracks and Trails Master Plan for a period of eight weeks; and*
- 3. Notes that Council officers will consider community feedback and report back to Council at a future ordinary council meeting.*

Amendment: Carried unanimously

Original motion, with amendment.

Carried Unanimously

BACKGROUND

Alpine Shire is recognised as one of Victoria's premier nature-based recreation destinations. Trails are central to the region's identity, lifestyle, and visitor economy, and offer wide-ranging benefits across health, tourism, transport, environmental stewardship, and community connectedness.

The Shire is a year-round destination for walking, cycling, hiking, mountain biking, and outdoor recreation, with high participation rates among residents and a growing domestic and international visitor base. Over 1.7 million domestic visitor nights were recorded in 2023. There is increasing demand for high-quality trail-based experiences that are safe, sustainable, and accessible for a wide range of users.

Recognising the need for a more coordinated and strategic approach to the development, enhancement, and management of trails, Council commissioned the development of the Alpine Shire Tracks and Trails Master Plan (draft Plan) in 2024.

The objectives of the draft Plan are to:

- identify and address existing infrastructure gaps;
- enhance connectivity between communities and destinations;
- improve trail quality, user safety and access equity;
- strengthen environmental and cultural heritage protection;
- support tourism and economic development in a coordinated, sustainable way; and
- ensure Council is well-positioned to attract external funding and partner support.

The draft Plan outlines an integrated approach to improving the quality, connectivity, safety, and sustainability of walking, hiking, cycling, and multi-use trails across Alpine Shire. It provides a framework to guide prioritisation of investment, leverage funding opportunities, and support long-term planning aligned with community and tourism needs.

Key components of the draft Plan included:

- mapping of all existing formalised trails (walking, hiking, cycling, mountain biking, gravel, shared use, etc.);
- initial pre-draft consultation with community members, user groups, land managers, and agencies;
- identification of network gaps and priority linkages, particularly in smaller townships;
- development of concept designs for key locations; and
- creation of a prioritised Action Plan with recommendations for governance, infrastructure, signage, marketing, and environmental management.

ISSUES

The draft Plan identifies a range of actions and priorities that can contribute to an increase in functionality, safety, equity of access, wayfinding and network cohesion.

It is proposed to consult with the community and seek feedback on the draft Plan. This will give officers the ability to engage with the community on the issues raised in the initial pre-draft consultation, consider feedback, and update the document prior to Council considering a final Alpine Shire Tracks and Trails Master Plan.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

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

- 3.2 We support healthy lifestyles, including movement and access to healthy food
- 3.5 We recognise the importance of high quality facilities, outdoor spaces, and connected footpaths, tracks, and trails to provide access to key services and support the wellbeing of our communities

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The draft Plan does not commit Council to any immediate expenditure but provides a prioritised action framework that will guide future investment decisions and external funding advocacy.

Key financial considerations include:

- the draft Plan identifies actions across 15 priority towns and townships, which vary in scope, complexity, and cost;
- implementation is intended to be staged, leveraging a combination of Council capital works budgets, Australian and Victorian government grants, and partner contributions (e.g. Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action, Department of Transport and Planning, Parks Victoria, Tourism North East, tourism operators, etc.).

Some high-impact trail links will require significant multi-agency collaboration and co-funding.

Any project arising from a final Alpine Shire Tracks and Trails Master Plan will be subject to a separate business case, consultation and Council resolution prior to commencement.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
Lack of community feedback on the draft Alpine Shire Tracks and Trails Master Plan 2025.	Possible	Moderate	Create an engagement plan with appropriate tools for the community to provide feedback.
Community opposition to the draft Alpine Shire Tracks and Trails Master Plan 2025.	Possible	Minor	Manage community expectations during the engagement process in accordance with the engagement plan. Council officers will consider all feedback received.

CONSULTATION

The draft Plan has been informed by extensive stakeholder and community engagement. The initial consultation included:

- a Shire-wide open survey that received hundreds of responses from residents and visitors;
- targeted feedback from user groups, tourism operators, trail associations, schools, and land managers; and
- mapping and assessment workshops with Council staff and community leaders.

Online survey results via Engage Alpine showed that Council had 1,003 page views, 880 visits to the website and 221 contributions.

A wide range of trail types and users are represented in the draft Plan, from local walkers and runners, to international mountain bike visitors, highlighting the diverse expectations and shared values regarding sustainable outdoor recreation in the Alpine Shire.

CONCLUSION

The draft Plan is the product of extensive internal and external community engagement, technical analysis, and engagement with local land managers. It includes township-specific priorities and an implementation roadmap to guide Council's long-term planning.

Releasing the draft Plan for broader community consultation will ensure that local knowledge, values, and aspirations continue to shape the final document. Community input will also provide critical validation for future funding applications and project planning.

It is recommended that Council endorses the draft Alpine Shire Tracks and Trails Master Plan 2025 and supports proceeding to community consultation.

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
- Project Officer (Strategic Planning)

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. **9.2.3.1** Draft Alpine Shire Tracks and Trails Master Plan 2025

9.2.4 Draft Alpine Shire Aquatics and Indoor Stadium Feasibility Study 2025

INTRODUCTION

The draft Alpine Shire Aquatics and Indoor Stadium Feasibility Study 2025 (the draft Study) provides a comprehensive evaluation of Alpine Shire's aquatic and indoor stadium infrastructure.

This report recommends that Council endorses an engagement process for community consultation. Once consultation is complete, Council will review any feedback received ahead of considering a final Alpine Shire Aquatics and Indoor Stadium Feasibility Study.

Cr Andersen

Cr Byrne

That Council:

- 1. Endorses an engagement process to seek community feedback on the draft Alpine Shire Aquatics and Indoor Stadium Feasibility Study 2025 for a period of eight weeks; and*
- 2. Notes that Council officers will consider community feedback and report back to Council at a future ordinary council meeting.*

Carried Unanimously

BACKGROUND

Council operates and maintains three outdoor aquatic facilities in Bright, Mount Beauty and Myrtleford, as well as two stadiums located within Council-owned facilities at Mount Beauty and Myrtleford (with limited access to the stadium at the Bright P-12 College). These assets play an important role in supporting active lifestyles, participation in structured and unstructured recreation, and community health and wellbeing.

The need for a comprehensive feasibility study was identified in the Alpine Shire Sport and Active Recreation Plan 2022, which recommended further investigation into the future of aquatics infrastructure. Concurrently, Council identified the two indoor stadiums as requiring condition and functionality assessments to investigate performance limitations and usage pressures.

To respond to these drivers, Council engaged Solucio Pty Ltd to undertake a feasibility study in 2023–24. This work has included site investigations, condition and compliance assessments, user and stakeholder engagement, participation analysis, benchmarking, cost estimation, and strategic infrastructure planning.

ISSUES

The draft Study provides a comprehensive evaluation of Alpine Shire's aquatic and indoor stadium infrastructure, including functionality, capacity and condition. It finds that while most facilities are functional, they are ageing with a likely increase in maintenance demands. There is a need for more year-round access, especially for swimming, rehabilitation and sport participation, as well as a lack of available training and

competition space across indoor stadiums.

The draft Study outlines community demand for both aquatics and indoor sport facilities at or near capacity, and increasing limitations due to infrastructure age. The report highlights cost estimates, asset renewal forecasts, and proposed staged investment recommendations. It also reinforces the alignment of the draft Study with Council's broader infrastructure planning and outlines a clear path toward funding advocacy, asset planning updates and community consultation.

With targeted investment, the Shire's existing pools have approximately 20 years of useful life remaining. This gives Council sufficient opportunity to plan and deliver upgrades after the 20 year period in a financially sustainable and phased approach. It is proposed to consult with the community and seek feedback on the draft Study. This will give officers the opportunity to engage with the community on the issues raised in the initial pre-draft consultation, consider feedback, and update the document prior to Council considering a final Alpine Shire Aquatics and Indoor Stadium Feasibility Study.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

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

- 3.2 We support healthy lifestyles, including movement and access to healthy food
- 3.5 We recognise the importance of high-quality facilities, outdoor spaces, and connected footpaths, tracks, and trails to provide access to key services and support the wellbeing of our communities

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The draft Study identifies a range of capital and renewal costs associated with the ongoing maintenance, upgrade and potential redevelopment of facilities across Alpine Shire. The draft Study highlights the remaining useful life of current facilities and provides estimates for minor renewals, upgrades, and compliance rectification works, as well as redevelopments and new builds.

While no direct capital funding has been allocated at this stage, the findings of a final Alpine Shire Aquatics and Indoor Stadium Feasibility Study will inform Council's strategic approach to future infrastructure planning and investment. Identified works can be incorporated into Council's future asset management plans. This will assist with prioritisation, lifecycle planning, and budget forecasting in line with broader service and community infrastructure planning.

Council received funding from Sport and Recreation Victoria that covered the total contract cost of \$78,000 for the preparation and finalisation of the Alpine Shire Aquatics and Indoor Stadium Feasibility Study. No consultant costs will be incurred in the 25/26 financial year.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
Lack of community feedback on the draft Alpine Shire Aquatics and Indoor Stadium Feasibility Study 2025.	Possible	Moderate	Create an engagement plan with appropriate tools for the community to provide feedback.
Misalignment between community needs and expectations, and the future capacity of Council to fund recommended upgrades.	Possible	Moderate	Manage community expectations during the engagement process and highlight that this document provides direction for extending the useful life of existing assets and planning for beyond the 20-year period.

CONSULTATION

The draft Study was informed by comprehensive pre-draft stakeholder and community engagement. This process was designed to capture the needs, priorities, and usage patterns of both local residents and user groups across the Alpine Shire.

A total of 232 community survey responses were received, offering insight into current community use and aspirations. Responses highlighted demand for increased access to aquatics facilities throughout the year, particularly for lap swimming, rehabilitation and learn-to-swim programs. Respondents expressed concerns about the ageing infrastructure of existing pools and limitations in availability during off-peak seasons.

Targeted stakeholder interviews were conducted with user groups and key facility stakeholders. These interviews reinforced the community feedback and provided deeper insight into operational issues, infrastructure constraints and opportunities for future facility upgrades.

To further refine the assessment of infrastructure needs, three Council officer workshops were held. These internal sessions explored potential design options, reviewed operational considerations, and evaluated alignment with broader Council strategies and asset planning.

This engagement process has provided Council with a strong evidence base to guide future investment, planning and advocacy regarding both aquatics and indoor sports infrastructure. The consultation outcomes have informed the findings and recommendations within the draft Study.

The last stage of the consultation is to further engage with the community on these findings and recommendations, and to seek feedback on the draft Study, prior to Council considering a final Alpine Shire Aquatics and Indoor Stadium Feasibility Study.

CONCLUSION

The draft Study has provided a comprehensive evidence-based assessment of the Shire's aquatic and indoor stadium infrastructure.

The draft Study's findings offer an evidence base for future capital investment, funding advocacy, and long-term asset planning. Once adopted, the outcomes can inform updates to Council's asset management plan and strengthen applications to the Australian and Victorian governments' funding programs. This work would be subject to a prioritisation process, future decisions of Council, and budget availability.

It is recommended that Council endorses the draft Aquatics and Indoor Stadium Feasibility Study and supports proceeding to community consultation.

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
- Project Officer (Strategic Planning)

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. **9.2.4.1** Draft Alpine Shire Aquatics and Indoor Stadium Feasibility Study 2025 - Executive Summary
2. **9.2.4.2** Draft Alpine Shire Aquatics and Indoor Stadium Feasibility Study 2025

9.2.5 Mount Beauty Transfer Station Site Office

INTRODUCTION

This report relates to the award of a Contract for 'Demountable Site Office at Mount Beauty Transfer Station'.

Cr Byrne

Cr Andersen

That Council:

- 1. Awards Contract No. 26147 Demountable Site Office at Mount Beauty Transfer Station to Rendine Construction Pty Ltd for the lump sum price of \$212,114 (GST exclusive);*
- 2. Delegates authority to the Chief Executive Officer to sign and seal the contract at the appropriate time; and*
- 3. Delegates authority to the Chief Executive Officer to sign variations up to the adopted 25/26 budget amount of \$240,000.*

Carried Unanimously

BACKGROUND

The existing site office at Mount Beauty Transfer Station does not meet current Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) standards. The facility is notably undersized and relies on portaloos amenities, which significantly limits its functionality and environmental health standards for staff and operations. In addition, the office lacks adequate protection from environmental elements, leaving it exposed to adverse weather conditions. These deficiencies highlight the immediate need to replace the current structure with a compliant and suitable demountable office and amenities to ensure the well-being and safety of personnel working at the transfer station.

EVALUATION

The Tender was placed on Tenders.net from 15 August 2025 to 5 September 2025. The tender document was viewed by 21 companies and downloaded by 16 companies. However, only two companies submitted a document. The tenders were assessed according to the criteria specified in the Invitation to Tender, as outlined below:

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

Following the assessment of the tenders, it was determined that the tender from Rendine Construction Pty Ltd best met the requirements of the selection criteria.

ISSUES

The current Mount Beauty Transfer Station Office is inadequate for the purpose of running a Transfer Station and has issues with the adequacy of size, provision of amenities and weather protection and as a result, does not comply with current OHS standards. The new Site Office will address all of these issues to ensure a facility that meets the relevant standards.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

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

- 3.8 We support compliance with regulations to help our community enjoy lifestyles and spaces that are safe and welcoming for all

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There is sufficient allocation within the adopted 2025/2026 FY budget of \$240,000 to award the construction and installation of the demountable office at the Mount Beauty Transfer Station.

The works are programmed to be completed over the 2025/2026 financial year.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Key risks of the project are as follows:

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
Timing Constraints: the office is not installed with all functioning services across 5 business days and would prevent the transfer station from opening on the weekend	Unlikely	Minor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Officers will prepare communication (i.e facebook and community radio) in advance in the instance the transfer station is required to close.

CONSULTATION

All aspects of the project have been communicated with the following:

- Waste Attendants
- Waste Operations Officer
- Director Assets
- Manager Assets and Waste
- Alpine Shire Council Building Surveyor

CONCLUSION

Following a tender evaluation assessment, site visits and reference checks, the tender from Rendine Construction Pty Ltd is considered the best option for Council as their submission best met the key selection criteria.

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
- Project Manager

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

9.2.6 Resealing 25-26

INTRODUCTION

This report relates to the award of a contract for the Resealing Program for 2025/26.

Cr Ronco

Cr Andersen

That Council:

- 1. Awards Contract No. 2615701 for Resealing 2025/2026 to Rich River Asphalt for a lump sum cost of \$381,001.48 (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 is responsible for approximately \$375 million worth of infrastructure assets on behalf of its community. These assets range from significant structures such as roads and buildings through to park furniture and play equipment and are fundamental in supporting the delivery of our services.

A significant portion of Council's investment into asset management is across its road asset class. The effective management of local roads is a core function of local government. Council seeks to maintain road infrastructure in a condition that optimises its useful life and meets community needs over the long-term.

Council's Road renewal program is part of the annual capital works program that restores, rehabilitates and renews an existing road asset to its original service potential.

The Resealing Program is part of Council's road renewal program and is carried out annually across the Lower Ovens, Upper Ovens and Kiewa Valley.

The 2025/2026 Resealing Program is scheduled to be carried out on various road segments within the Upper Ovens region.

Works will include the renewal of 8.9km (57,200m²) of bitumen spray seal, and the renewal of associated road line markings at an average cost of \$6.66 per/m². This is a 2% decrease in cost compared to the 2024/25 program average of \$6.83 per/m².

Council carries out road condition inspections to identify road segments for consideration in the Resealing Program.

EVALUATION

The 2025/2026 Resealing Program was placed on public tender and advertised on Tenders.net on 15 August 2025 and on Council's website.

The tender documents were downloaded by 12 prospective tenderers and five responses were received by the closing date.

The tenders were evaluated according to the key selection criteria listed in the Invitation to tender:

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

Following the assessment of the tenders, it was determined that the tender from Rich River Asphalt best met the requirements of the selection criteria.

ISSUES

The works involve a large crew and intense heavy vehicle and plant movements at multiple locations; therefore, a high standard of contract management, traffic and pedestrian management and site safety is required by the contractor.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The recommendation is in accordance with the following Priorities of the Council Plan 2025-29:

- 1.3 We use our resources responsibly to deliver efficient, evidence-based services, facilities, and projects that benefit our communities and meet our customer commitments.

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The total budget of \$555,000 has been allocated for the 2025/26 Resealing Program. The total contract value for the 2025/26 Resealing Program is \$381,001.48 (GST exclusive).

A budget allocation for the remainder will be utilised to carry out road patching, shoulder cleaning, drainage maintenance, and tree works required prior to the resealing of roads.

Council's Engineering and Maintenance Team will be carrying out part of these pre-works for the 2025/26 program further reducing the total budget spend.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
Resealing may be disruptive to the busy township of Bright.	Unlikely	Moderate	Ensure contractor completes works at the most suitable 'low peak' times.

CONSULTATION

Consultation has been undertaken with Councils Engineering and Maintenance Department to finalise the scope of the contract. Notification of the works will be advertised in the local paper and Council's Facebook page. The contractor will inform impacted residents and businesses prior to works commencing.

CONCLUSION

Following a comprehensive assessment, the tender from Rich River Asphalt is considered to present the best value option for Council.

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
- Project Manager Project Officer

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

9.2.7 Capital Works Performance Report October 2025

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the status of the 2025/26 Capital Works Program.

Cr Byrne
Cr Ronco

That Council notes the content of this report, which provides an update on the status of the 2025/26 Capital Works Program.

Carried Unanimously

BACKGROUND

As part of continual risk management, the status of the Capital Works Program will be summarised in a Council Report in October and April each financial year to ensure any risks are identified early and solutions for mitigation discussed and implemented.

The 2025/2026 capital works program presently comprises of 41 key projects including (12) new builds, (25) renewals and (4) upgrades.

ISSUES

As opposed to the previous FY where over \$18M in capital works projects was delivered including seven projects with budgets exceeding \$1M, there is only one project with such a budget in this FY and the majority are smaller projects that still require similar amounts of resourcing to successfully deliver. This has been the main driver for the slower start to the 2025-26 program and due to ongoing recruitment of a project manager position.

Budget Status

Budget	Committed/Awarding	Expended
\$8,835,000	\$3,238,010	\$1,019,083

**The figures above do include plant and fleet which for the purposes of this report are not Capital Works Projects.*

As at mid-October 2025 almost 37% of Council's Capital Works Project budget has been committed through purchase orders to contractors. The program is running slightly behind forecast on both planning and procurement with the objective of getting all tenders published by the end of December 2025. Besides this objective the team will be fully staffed by the start of November with a two year temporary project manager in the final stages of recruitment.

A total of 12% of the Capital Works Project budget has been expended which is lower than the forecast of 23% that was profiled at the beginning of the 2025/26 FY. These figures are tracked monthly both at Manager and Executive level through monthly

briefings and is currently of low concern as it is still reflective of an S-curve expenditure that is expected across a capital works project delivery. Typically, the level of capital expenditure in a project's beginning stages is low, as mobilisation commences. Expenditure gradually increases over time and then tails off as the project nears completion.

The most recent monthly analysis highlights the lower-than-forecast expenditure as well as the status of project delivery highlighting any project at risk of not being delivered by June 2025 (Table 1).

Table 1.

Land				
Project Description	Adopted Annual Budget	Committed	Actual Expenditure	De
Mount Beauty Airfield Government Land	22,000	19,426	19,426	
Actual Land Total	22,000	19,426	19,426	
Buildings				
Project Description	Adopted Annual Budget	Committed		
Public Amenities Upgrades - Annual Program (Tawonga Pioneer Park)	100,000	0		
Disability Action Plan Annual Program	50,000	0		
Pebble Beach Amenity Block	140,000	123,0		
Building Renewal Program	250,000	1		
Bright Outdoor Fitness Equipment	180,000			
Bright Pioneer Park Timekeepers Box	50,000			
Mount Beauty Transfer Station Office	240,000			
Council Office Solar Upgrade	50			
Tawonga South Municipal Precinct Design				
Climate Action Initiatives - Annual Program				
Bright United Football and Netball Club Storage Upgrade				
Myrtleford Memorial Hall Renewal				
Actual Buildings Total				
Roads				
Project Description	Adopted Annual Budget	Committed	Actual Expenditure	De
Road Stabilisation and Patching				
Resealing				
Asphalt Overlays				
Kerb and Channel Renew				
Line Marking				
Gravel Road Reco				
Road Upgrad				
State Roa				
Counc				
Ac				

Bridges				
Project Description	Adopted Annual Budget	Committed	Actual Expenditure	Delivery Risk
Bridge Renewal	255,000	0	0	
Nimmo Pedestrian Bridge	550,000	524,426	0	
Level 2 Bridge Repairs	0	111,250	0	
Actual Bridge Total	805,000	635,676	0	
Footpaths				
Project Description	Adopted Annual Budget	Committed	Actual Expenditure	Delivery Risk
Footpaths/Trails/Cycleways New Program	250,000	0	0	
Footpaths/Trails/Cycleways Renewal Program	250,000	4,600	4,600	
Actual Footpath Total	500,000	4,600	4,600	
Drainage				
Project Description	Adopted Annual Budget	Committed	Actual Expenditure	Delivery Risk
Drainage Renewal Program	200,000	0	0	
Actual Drainage Total	200,000	0	0	
Recreational, Leisure and Community Facilities				
Project Description	Adopted Annual Budget	Committed	Actual Expenditure	Delivery Risk
Recreation and Open Space Renewal Program	280,000	165,095	0	
Oaks Lawn Detailed Electrical Design	30,000	0	0	
Tawonga Pioneer Park Multi-Purpose Court Resurfacing	60,000	0	0	
Tawonga Pioneer Park Fence Renewal	50,000	0	0	
Tawonga Pioneer Park Picnic Table Area Upgrade	50,000	0	0	
Dinner Plain Tennis Court Resurfacing	60,000	53,910	0	
Bright Skate Park Upgrade	0	128,981	0	
Jumping Platform Fencing	0	0	0	
Mount Beauty Rec Reserve Cricket Nets	0	0	0	
Actual Rec, Leisure & Comm Total	530,000	347,986	0	
Waste				
Project Description	Adopted Annual Budget	Committed	Actual Expenditure	Delivery Risk
Kerbside Bins Renewal And Upgrade	80,000	9,845	9,845	
Public Bins Renewal	60,000	0	0	
Old Landfill Rehabilitation Investigation	170,000	0	0	
Landfill Capping Stage 3 Design	100,000	75,458	32,378	
Borehole Renewal Program	60,000	0	0	
Myrtleford Landfill Rehabilitation Cell 1 & 2	1,300,000	725,466	60,148	
Actual Waste Total	1,770,000	810,769	102,371	
Plant and Fleet				
Project Description	Adopted Annual Budget	Committed	Actual Expenditure	Delivery Risk
Large Plant Renewal	495,000	0	0	
Small Plant and Equipment Renewal	30,000	1,266	1,266	
Actual Plant and Fleet Total	525,000	1,266	1,266	

	Delivery by June 2026 at high risk
	Delivery by June 2026 behind schedule
	Delivery by June 2026 on schedule

The Capital Works analysis also includes a summary of all projects within each delivery status and the reasons for any that are behind or at high risk (Table 2).

Table 2.

Status	Number of Projects	Notes
Ontrack	40	Four projects are already finished with a 5th the Myrtleford Memorial Hall scheduled for opening by end of October. A large proportion of the remaining projects are still in planning or design phase (18) whilst the remainder have progressed through procurement such that the project officers have either already awarded contracts and building works have commenced (7) or, RFQs and tenders are being published and will be open for submission prior to the end of the 25 CY (9).
Behind	1	Nimmo Bridge – location of the bridge was required to be moved again due to DTP feedback and it will now require a LUUA to be negotiated.
High Risk	0	

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

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

Sustainable and Resilient Alpine

1.1 New capital projects and works will be strategically aligned and planned to support long-term sustainability

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

A total budget of \$8.83m was adopted for Capital Works Projects 2025/2026 FY made up of \$5.59m in renewals, \$1.87m in upgrades and \$1.37m in new.

Since the adoption of the 2025/2026 Budget, Council is also delivering another \$466,230 of capital projects made up of the following:

- Bridge Renewal Defects - \$111,250 carry forward from the 2024/25 FY of identified works that were unable to be completed by end June 2025.
- Bright Skate Park - \$164,522 fully funded by the Victorian Governments Regional Community Sports Infrastructure Fund awarded to Council after the adoption of the budget.
- Mount Beauty Cricket Nets - \$194,980, consisting of \$175,000 funded by the Victorian Government's Community Sport and Recreation Projects, \$15,000 funded by Albury Wodonga Cricket and \$5,000 funded by Mount Beauty Cricket Club. Funding was awarded to Council after the adoption of the budget.

The number of projects required to be delivered (41) provides an ambitious target for the Capital Works team with 6.8 projects per project officer. This may present a challenge for the delivery of 100% of the Capital Works Program however this will be monitored closely over the coming months.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Detail the key risks of the matter being addressed by the report and mitigation action / control.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
Capital Works Program Delayed Delivery	Possible	Major	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council has an effective project governance process that is utilised by Assets and Waste for the delivery of Capital works programs. This is utilised across the planning, designing, procurement, delivery phases of the project. • Annual process exists to develop a detailed Capital Works Plan that aligns with the Financial Plan and existing resources.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
Grant Funding Withheld Due to Delayed Delivery	Unlikely	Major	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant variations requested to funding bodies and milestone reports providing clear information on project delays.

CONCLUSION

Local Government Authorities are the custodians of significant public funds, and it is important that the public has assurance that this expenditure is effectively planned, budgeted and managed so that it meets community needs both now and into the future.

This report provides an update on the status of the 2025/26 Capital Works Program for noting by Council.

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 & Waste

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

9.3 DIRECTOR CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY - NATHALIE COOKE

9.3.1 Financial Plan 2025 - 2035

INTRODUCTION

Council is required to adopt a Financial Plan by 31 October in the year after a general election.

Cr Ronco

Cr Byrne

That Council:

- 1. Considers written submissions received pursuant to Council's Community Engagement Policy, in relation to the draft Financial Plan 2025-2035;*
- 2. Notifies in writing each person who made a submission to the draft Financial Plan 2025-2035 setting out how that submission was considered in the finalisation of the Financial Plan 2025-2035;*
- 3. Revokes the Financial Plan 2021/22 to 2030/31;*
- 4. Adopts the Financial Plan 2025-2035; and*
- 5. Signs and seals the Financial Plan 2025-2035 at the appropriate stage of this meeting.*

Choose an item.

Amendment Motion

Cr Smith

Cr Byrne

That Council:

- 1. Considers written submissions received pursuant to Council's Community Engagement Policy, in relation to the draft Financial Plan 2025-2035;*
- 2. Notifies in writing each person who made a submission to the draft Financial Plan 2025-2035 setting out how that submission was considered in the finalisation of the Financial Plan 2025-2035;*
- 3. Revokes the Financial Plan 2021/22 to 2030/31;*
- 4. Adopts the Financial Plan 2025-2035; and*
- 5. Signs and seals the Financial Plan 2025-2035 at the appropriate stage of this meeting.*
- 6. Directs the CEO to identify recurring annual operating cost savings of \$1.5 million for the 2026/27 financial year compared to the Financial Plan 2025 – 2035, and to reflect these cost savings in the draft 2026/27 Budget. Cost savings are to be achieved through reductions in employee costs, material and services expenditure, or otherwise as determined by the CEO, and will*

form a foundation to support Council's future financial sustainability.

Carried Unanimously

BACKGROUND

The *Local Government Act 2020, s91(4)* states that a:

"A Council must develop or review the Financial Plan in accordance with its deliberative engagement practices and adopt the Financial Plan by 31 October in the year following a general election."

LGA 2020 s91(2) states that the "scope of a Financial Plan is a period of at least the next 10 financial years."

Council developed a draft Financial Plan 2025-2035 and released the plan for community consultation at a Council meeting held on 9 September 2025.

ISSUES

The Financial Plan 2025-2035 (the Financial Plan) provides a financial projection to effectively support implementation of the Council Plan, and to achieve the Community Vision. These strategic documents were adopted by Council at the Ordinary Council meeting held on 9 September 2025.

The Financial Plan outlines the assumptions, policy and decisions of Council used to determine the allocation and management of Council resources over the next 10 years.

There are a number of dynamic variables that may influence the outcomes expressed in the Financial Plan. They include:

- Rating levels and supplementary rate income;
- Government grant revenue received (both recurrent and non-recurrent, including capital grants);
- New and upgrade of assets;
- Renewal of assets to maintain infrastructure;
- Asset revaluations (major impact on fixed asset value, depreciation, and future renewal costs);
- Asset sale; and
- Level of assumed growth experienced on expenditure items, as well as the budgeted expenditure.

Integration with the Asset Plan is a key principle of Council's strategic financial planning principles. The purpose of this integration is designed to ensure that future funding is allocated in a manner that supports service delivery and the effective management of Council's assets into the future.

The Asset Plan is designed to inform the Financial Plan by identifying the amount of operating and maintenance, capital renewal, upgrades and new funding that is required over the life of each asset category. The level of funding allocated will incorporate knowledge of asset condition, risk assessment, as well as the impact of reviewing and setting intervention and service levels for each asset class.

Integration with the Revenue and Rating Plan is a key principle of Council's strategic

financial principles. The purpose of this integration is to ensure that Council's revenue is raised from the community in a manner that supports Council's longer term financial plans and broader strategic goals as set out in the Council Vision.

Submissions Received

One written submission was made to the draft Financial Plan 2025-2035. The submitter questions the financial sustainability of Council given the published draft and financial indicators.

The Financial Plan demonstrates improved financial indicators from the draft document for the reasons outlined in the next section. In addition, a new Financial Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan sets out a series of actions which will be undertaken to address the adjusted underlying deficit position and return Council to a financially sustainable position in the long term. This is subject to a separate agenda report being presented at this meeting.

Changes made to finalise the Financial Plan 2025-2035

The Financial Plan shows an ongoing adjusted underlying deficit for Council over the term of the plan, however this has been reduced between the draft Financial Plan 2025-2035 exhibition and the finalisation of the Plan, with the projected cash deficit position moving from the 2027/28 financial year to the 2031/32 financial year.

Changes made between the draft and final Financial Plan include:

- Updating the forecast end of year financial position for 2024/25 to the audited end of year financial result for 2024/25. For further information on changes between

forecast 2024/25 and actual 2024/25 please refer to the September Ordinary Council Meeting Report titled *Approval in Principle 2025/26 Financial Statements and Performance Statement*.

- Increase in expenditure in capital works upgrades to match historical spend and assessed requirements of asset users;
- Decrease to the asset renewal investment profile based on updated condition assessments and data refining;
- Amendment to the net gain (or loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment to reflect a higher anticipated income due to increased disposal;
- Amendment to the Statement of Capital Works to better reflect capital expenditure against asset class;
- Human Resource expenditure increase to reflect 100% occupancy across all teams, and to correct an error identified in the capitalisation of wages for 2026/27; and
- Minor adjustments where improvement was identified.

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

The Financial Plan will support Council in meeting its obligations in accordance with Section 91 of *Local Government Act 2020*. Once adopted, the Financial Plan will be used to guide the development of future budgets of Council, in conjunction with a Financial Sustainability Strategy and Asset Management Plans with a view to ensure Council's sustainability and ongoing financial viability.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
Council operates outside its legislative obligation to deliver a Financial Plan.	Rare	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan delivery of project against legislative requirements, considering Council meeting cycles and planning community engagement.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
Significant adverse impact on Council's financial sustainability.	Rare	Major	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Financial Sustainability Strategy (FSS) and Action Plan to address underlying deficit. • Regular budget reporting to monitor actual expenditure against budget. • Regular reporting on impact of the implementation of the FSS - Action Plan. • Annual review of Financial Plan assumptions and assessment of impact to assumption, or external environment, changes.

CONSULTATION

The Financial Plan was informed through a deliberative engagement process which was used to support development of the Council Plan 2025-2029. It was informed by an external review and expertise.

The Financial Plan was placed on public exhibition in September 2025. One submission was received and considered in the finalisation of the Plan.

CONCLUSION

The Financial Plan 2025-2035 provides a financial projection to effectively support implementation of the Council Plan, and to achieve the Community Vision.

The Financial Plan outlines the assumptions, policy and decisions of Council used to determine the allocation and management of Council resources over the next 10 years.

The Financial Plan shows an ongoing adjusted underlying deficit for Council for the term of the plan, and strategic work is being undertaken to ensure an ongoing financially sustainable position, which is subject to a separate Council report being presented at this Ordinary Council Meeting.

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

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. **9.3.1.1** Financial Plan 2025-2035

9.3.2 Financial Sustainability Strategy 2025 - 2029

INTRODUCTION

A core responsibility of Council is to remain financially sustainable, ensuring public funds are managed responsibly and that our assets are maintained for current and future generations. By doing so, we aim to minimise undue financial pressure on future ratepayers and support the ongoing wellbeing of our community.

The Financial Sustainability Strategy (the Strategy) has been developed to reflect the Alpine Shire Council's commitment to long-term planning and sound financial stewardship. It builds on our Community Vision and aims to equip Council to meet future challenges and opportunities.

Cr Ronco

Cr Andersen

That Council:

- 1. Adopts the Financial Sustainability Strategy 2025 - 2029; and*
- 2. Signs and seals the Financial Sustainability Strategy 2025 - 2029 at the appropriate stage of this meeting.*

Carried Unanimously

Cr Smith left the room at 7.18pm and returned at 7.20pm.

BACKGROUND

The *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) sets out clear objectives for councils to uphold sound financial management, long-term planning, and effective risk oversight to ensure sustainable outcomes for current and future communities.

In addition, Council has an integrated approach to planning, monitoring and performance reporting with a number of core legislated elements of an integrated strategic planning and reporting framework and outcomes. The Financial Sustainability Strategy will underpin all elements within this framework.

The Strategy outlines actions proposed to strengthen Council's financial position and support the priorities of plans such as the Financial Plan, Asset Plan, and Workforce Plan. It aligns with best practice, and supports the financial management principles in Section 101 of the Act, including:

- Managing finances in line with policies and strategic plans;
- Monitoring and managing financial risk;
- Ensuring predictable financial impacts on the community; and
- Maintaining accurate financial records.

ISSUES

Council's Financial Plan 2025-2035 (Financial Plan) provides a financial projection to

effectively support implementation of the Council Plan, and to achieve the Community Vision and outlines the assumptions, policy and decisions of Council used to determine the allocation and management of Council resources over the next 10 years.

The Financial Plan shows an ongoing adjusted underlying deficit for Council for the term of the plan, and this strategic work has been undertaken to ensure an ongoing financially sustainable position.

Financial sustainability is defined as Council's ability to manage its financial resources in a responsible and efficient manner over the long term to ensure that revenue sources are sufficient to cover operating expenses, fund essential services, and to have adequate surplus to effectively manage and invest in assets.

Being financial sustainable also includes planning and budgeting for future requirements, such as new, upgrade and maintenance of infrastructure to respond to community needs and growth, while considering the potential impacts of economic fluctuations and changing demographics.

The following external influences are identified as key impacts to Council's financial sustainability.

- Cost-shifting, where responsibilities are passed on to local government from other levels of government without adequate or additional funding provided.
- Declining grants from higher levels of government as these governments address their own budget deficits.
- The compounding effect of a rate cap that has been consistently set below the level of cost increase experienced by local government.
- Increasing costs to Council to deliver services and capital projects.

An assessment of Alpine Shire Council's historical financial performance, and the Financial Plan, highlight several underlying trends and emerging risks that have implications for Council's long-term financial sustainability. This analysis provides essential context for interpreting the drivers of the current financial position and informs scenario modelling and future strategies.

The Strategy seeks to address these challenges through a series of strategic and operational actions taken over the current Council cycle and outlines seven (7) Strategic Levers and a suite of associated actions to deliver Council to a sustainable long-term position.

The success of the Strategy will be measured by Council's progress toward meeting financial sustainability indicators and this progress will be reported using the following mechanisms:

- Each year as part of the annual budget development process consideration will be given to the impact of actions undertaken, and assumptions made in the formation of the Strategy and the assumptions underpinning the financial modelling to provide updated modelling that reflects the cumulative impact on actions undertaken.
- Reserve amounts will be reviewed each time the budget is developed.
- Council's Annual Report will report on Council's financial and service performance.
- Progress against the Financial Sustainability Strategy Action Plan will be reported in the organisations quarterly financial reporting.

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

Granular financial data can be found in Council’s audited financial and performance statements in the *Annual Report 2024/25*, and the forward financial projections in the *Financial Plan 2025-2035*, both of which are subject to separate reports at this meeting.

The Financial Sustainability Strategy details a series of strategic and operational actions to be taken over the current Council cycle, these actions are largely reliant on internal resourcing and would form a part of the organisation's work planning processes.

Where budget allocation is required to deliver an action, this allocation is subject to Council's annual budgeting approvals.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
A shift in Council’s priorities or direction could impact the ongoing commitment to financial sustainability.	Possible	Major	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The success of the Strategy will be measured by Council’s progress toward meeting financial sustainability indicators and this progress will be reported publicly.
Resistance to change within the organisation may impede the successful delivery of the Strategy.	Unlikely	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Executive Leadership Team provides strategic oversight, champions a culture of change, and sets priorities for actions and resource allocation.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
Without strong accountability and governance structures, it may be difficult to effectively track progress and evaluate Strategy outcomes.	Possible	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsibilities have been assigned to departments or teams for delivery of actions. Clear monitoring and review processes have been determined and documented within the Strategy.
Changes in economic conditions or unexpected shifts in local priorities could result in the Strategy becoming misaligned with actual needs, potentially leading to inaccurate revenue forecasts, budget shortfalls, overspending, or inefficient allocation of resources.	Possible	Major	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Strategy will be reviewed in response to a material change in the internal or external environment to ensure it remains fit for purpose and aligned with meeting organisational objectives.

CONSULTATION

The Financial Sustainability Strategy has been developed to support the objectives of the Financial Plan 2025- 2035 and informed by the Community Vision and Council Plan 2025-2029, which were subject to deliberative engagement processes.

Internal engagement has been undertaken to develop the suite of actions that underpin the delivery of the Strategy.

Individual actions, should they be assessed as potentially impact on service delivery or the customer experience, will be subject to community consultation at that time and in line with the principles of Council's Community Engagement Policy.

CONCLUSION

A core responsibility of Council is to remain financially sustainable, ensuring public funds are managed responsibly and that our assets are maintained for current and future generations.

The Financial Sustainability Strategy has been developed to reflect the Alpine Shire Council's commitment to long-term planning and sound financial stewardship. It seeks to address our financial sustainability challenge through a series of strategic and operational actions taken over the current Council cycle, and outlines seven (7) Strategic Levers and a suite of associated actions to deliver Council to a sustainable long-term position.

The success of the Strategy will be measured by Council's progress toward meeting financial sustainability indicators and regularly reported on using established mechanisms.

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

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. 9.3.2.1 Financial Sustainability Strategy 2025-2029

9.3.3 Municipal Bushfire Place of Last Resort Plan 2025 - 2029

INTRODUCTION

This report relates to the adoption of Council's Municipal Bushfire Place of Last Resort Plan 2025-2029 ('BPLR Plan') and review of Council's Bushfire Places of Last Resort.

Cr Byrne

Cr Ronco

That Council:

- 1. Adopts the Municipal Bushfire Place of Last Resort Plan 2025-2029 (Version 1.0).*
- 2. Endorses decommissioning of three Bushfire Places of Last Resort;*
 - a. Dederang Memorial Hall*
 - b. Mount Beauty Stadium*
 - c. Porepunkah Hall*
- 3. Endorses commissioning of two Bushfire Places of Last Resort;*
 - a. Dederang Recreation Reserve Netball Courts*
 - b. Les Peart Oval, Mount Beauty*
- 4. Signs and seals the Municipal Bushfire Place of Last Resort Plan 2025-2029 (Version 1.0) at the appropriate stage of this meeting.*

Carried Unanimously

BACKGROUND

In its Interim Report, the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission recommended that 'Neighbourhood Safer Places' (NSP) be identified and established to provide persons in bushfire affected areas with a place of last resort during a bushfire.

In 2015, Emergency Management Victoria added the use of the terminology 'Bushfire Place of Last Resort' (BPLR). Alpine Shire Council has chosen to use the term BPLR as the term better reflects how these sites are to be used.

The responsibility for identifying and maintaining BPLRs is established under the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*, which states that councils are responsible for designating, establishing, and maintaining BPLRs within their municipal area.

The Municipal Bushfire Place of Last Resort Plan ('BPLR Plan') is an operational plan of Council; it is a complementary plan to the Alpine Shire Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) and the Northern Alpine Fire Management Plan (NAFMP).

The BPLR Plan provides clear guidance for designation, maintenance and de-commissioning of BPLRs and gives clarity on the obligations and risk management requirements of Council.

ISSUES

BPLRs may provide last resort shelter during the passage of a bushfire when all other survival plans have failed. A BPLR is a location that may provide some protection from direct flame and heat from a fire, but they do not guarantee safety.

A BPLR may provide protection to people from lethal levels of radiant heat through an appropriate separation distance between the bushfire hazard (vegetation) and the outer edge of the BPLR. The determination of acceptable distances from the hazardous vegetation producing the radiant heat is based on a specific fire design.

BPLRs are often simply a clearing that provides separation distance from a bushfire hazard and should not be confused with a Community Fire Refuge, Relief Centre, Recovery Centre or Assembly Area, each of which has a different and specific purpose.

Council officers identify potential sites and undertake initial assessments of potential BPLRs within the Alpine Shire to determine their suitability based on location, accessibility, and safety considerations. Proposed sites are then referred to the CFA for assessment against the Neighbourhood Safer Place – Bushfire Place of Last Resort Assessment Guideline (2020).

Council has prioritised nominating open areas such as ovals or sporting grounds as BPLRs, rather than buildings. An assessment has led to the recommendation to decommission sites where Council cannot guarantee access to buildings and community members and visitors may be directed to potentially locked facilities during an emergency situation.

It is important to note that not every town or location will have a site assessed as suitable for designation as a BPLR. It is essential that individuals develop a bushfire emergency plan that does not rely solely on the availability of a BPLR for bushfire emergencies. In all circumstances, community members are encouraged to maintain their individual bushfire plan, monitor the situation at the time, and evacuate as directed by emergency services.

If evacuation during a bushfire is no longer a viable option, then individual risk assessment must be undertaken, as sheltering in place may be as safe, or safer, than attempting to reach a designated BPLR. Travelling to and using a place of last resort is dangerous and can lead to mental trauma, serious injury or death. Traffic congestion, fire activity, accidents or fallen trees may block the route.

CFA or other emergency services may not be present at a BPLR, there is no provision for support services (e.g. food, drinks, toilets, medical services), and may not adequately cater for animals. A BPLR may have limited capacity to accommodate vehicles and all people seeking to access the site and are not an appropriate destination when leaving the area early.

BPLRs are places of absolute last resort. The safest place to be is out of high-risk bushfire areas.

A key issue for Council and CFA is ensuring the community and visitors understand the purpose of BPLRs.

Location of BPLRs can be found on Country Fire Authority (CFA) and Council websites. A summary of current and proposed BPLRs for the 2025/26 season is provided below.

Town	BPLR	Status
Bright & Wandiligong	Pioneer Park Oval, Bright	Current
Dederang	Dederang Recreation Reserve Netball Courts	Proposed
Mount Beauty	Les Peart Oval, Mount Beauty	Proposed
Myrtleford	RC McNamara Reserve Oval	Current
Porepunkah	Porepunkah Oval	Current

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This BPLR Plan has been endorsed by the NAFMC and the MEMPC to support the general requirements of the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958* section 50F to section 50O.

Once this Plan has been adopted, Council must make it, and any documents incorporated into it, available on Council's website and at the Council's municipal offices for public inspection during normal office hours free of charge under section 50F of the CFA Act.

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

- 2.7 Our communities will be resilient and well prepared to withstand natural disasters and economic changes

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

It is essential for community safety and resilience during bushfire events that Council incorporates BPLR responsibilities into its emergency management planning.

As all BPLRs are on established sites, general maintenance is undertaken as part of a regular schedule.

There is no additional cost or resourcing impact for Council which is associated with the adoption of the BPLR Plan as recommended.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
Operating outside legislative / regulatory / statutory / policy obligations - BPLR not accessible to community when it is required	Possible	Major	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not designate a BPLR which cannot have guaranteed access during times of need Support provision of education to community about preparing for bushfires including having a bushfire plan
BPLRs are not fit for purpose	Unlikely	Major	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council undertakes an annual program of maintenance and assessments as stated in BPLR Plan BPLRs are assessed by CFA against Neighbourhood Safer Place-Bushfire Place of Last Resort Assessment Guideline (2020) Council adopts BPLR Plan to guide operational requirements of BPLRs

CONSULTATION

The BPLR Plan has been reviewed by NAFMC and MEMPC.

All BPLR sites undertake a risk assessment by Council officers, have been endorsed by MEMPC and assessed by CFA for compliance with relevant guidelines.

CONCLUSION

Council holds the responsibility for designating and maintaining appropriate BPLRs to support community safety during bushfire emergencies. It is important to note that a BPLR is intended to be a last resort option when all other plans have failed or are no

longer safe. Not all towns or localities will be suitable for a BPLR due to site limitations or risk factors. Community members should be actively encouraged to develop comprehensive bushfire survival plans that do not rely on the presence of a BPLR, ensuring preparedness and resilience in the absence of such facilities.

It is essential that Council adopts a BPLR Plan to provide clear operational guidance on the assessment, designation, and ongoing maintenance of BPLR sites.

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 Regulatory Services

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. **9.3.3.1** Municipal Bushfire Place of Last Resort Plan 2025 - 2029 (Version 1.0)

9.3.4 Audit and Risk Committee - Minutes of Meeting No.2025/26-2, 24 September 2025

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the report is to present the (unconfirmed) minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting No. 2025/26-2 held on 24 September 2025. This meeting considered the draft annual Financial Statements and Performance Statement for the year ending 30 June 2025 and Council officers sought the Committee's endorsement of the statements for subsequent approval by Council.

Cr Andersen

Cr Byrne

That Council receives and notes the (unconfirmed) minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting No.2025/26-2, held on 24 September 2025.

Carried Unanimously

BACKGROUND

Minutes of Audit and Risk Committee Meetings

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 Wednesday 24 September 2025 and as the Committee is yet to confirm the minutes, they are presented to Council for noting as unconfirmed.

Financial Statements

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

Performance Statement

The Performance Statement provides an overview of Council's 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.

ISSUES

The External Auditor appointed by the Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO) to Council briefed the Committee on:

- the program of work undertaken as part of the audit;
- the findings of the audit undertaken in August 2025;
- the Draft Closing Report and Management Letter supplied to Council on the 23

September; and

- areas that it felt required additional work by Council prior to finalisation of the statements.

The Auditor noted that the audit process and preparedness of Council for the audit in August had improved from the previous year.

The Committee endorsed the draft Financial Statements and Performance Statement in principle and subject to the amendments outlined by the Auditor at the Committee meeting.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

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

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 the 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"> • 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. • Committee meeting administrative support provided by Risk Management Officer (s5.4 of Charter, position description and annual work plan).

CONSULTATION

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

CONCLUSION

The (unconfirmed) minutes of Audit and Risk Committee Meeting No.2025/26-2, held on Wednesday 24 September 2025, are presented to Council for noting. The Audit and Risk Committee endorsed in principle the draft Financial Statements and Performance Statement for the year ending 30 June 2025 for Council approval subject to the amendments outlined by the External Auditor.

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
- Risk Management Officer

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. **9.3.4.1** ARC Meeting No.2025-26-02 20250924 MINUTES UNCONFIRMED

9.3.5 Statutory Planning Service Delivery Update

INTRODUCTION

This report updates Council on progress since the June 2025 Council meeting, on the implementation of a program of works undertaken to improve the delivery of statutory planning services to the community.

Cr Smith

Cr Graham

That Council notes the progress report and further actions being undertaken by the Statutory Planning team to improve statutory planning service delivery and the customer experience.

Carried Unanimously

BACKGROUND

Council received a report at its June Ordinary Council Meeting regarding reforms now being undertaken to improve the organisation's statutory planning service delivery. This report provides a progress update on the implementation of those reforms and improvements already observed in service delivery. This first phase of work has focused on building the foundations necessary to allow the service to function more effectively and efficiently, as well as improving the customer experience and to support sound decision-making.

As outlined in the June report, Council's statutory planning service fulfils a range of legal obligations Council holds, and plays a vital role in fostering the vibrancy, environment and character of the Alpine Shire and the attributes that make the municipality a special place.

Work being done within the team from May 2025 has facilitated a sharp increase in the number of permit applications determined each month and the team's ability to address community queries. A further update is scheduled to be provided to Council in April 2026 as progress on implementing reforms continues.

ISSUES

Resourcing and Budget

Since the June report, two roles within the team have successfully been filled, with a Senior Statutory Planner and a Planning Assistant both being appointed. These roles mean that all budgeted roles in the team are now filled following a period of significant staff turnover, allowing for services to be delivered in-house.

Maintaining an appropriate number of suitably qualified and experienced staff is key to maintaining consistency in assessments, organisational knowledge and the quality of community service. This has already been reflected in the number of permit applications Council has been able to process in the period from May 2025, as set out below:

	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept
New applications received during month	8	11	13	14	13	19	15
Applications processed during month	8	8	25	25	39	30	26
Total number of live applications	184	187	175	164	138	127	116
Total number of historic applications (lodged pre-1 January 2024)*	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	14	12

*These applications are also included in the total number of live applications

	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept
New business-related applications received during month	2	2	1	3	3	1	0
Business applications determined in month	0	0	1	3	8	1	3

Customer Service Priorities

The Statutory Planning team continues to receive a large number of queries each week, many of which are complex and take time to investigate. In May 2025, it was identified that the first priority in improving customer experience was to set up foundations to support better service delivery. This work has involved improved systems to allocate and monitor queries, and to streamline the number of channels through which customer enquiries are sent. A series of actions were foreshadowed in the June Ordinary Council Meeting to improve customer contact, many of which have been successfully implemented and will now be expanded following initial review:

- A planner on call roster has been successfully implemented to provide a designated planner as a main point of contact for general enquiries received through Customer Service;
- Triage protocols have successfully been implemented to allocate and address queries received through group email addresses and Council's online planning system. The appointment of new staff will allow for the expansion and review of this system in the next two months to deploy additional resources; and
- A peer review system has been instituted for responses to complex queries and for initial assessments of planning permit applications across the team.

With recent recruitment complete, Council will now work towards setting up monthly planner-in-residence sessions in Myrtleford and Mount Beauty to allow residents to meet with a planner in these locations for pre-application meetings or general queries, noting that pre-application meetings are generally available via phone or online. Once these monthly sessions are confirmed, the planning team will work on communicating them publicly through Council's regular channels.

In 2026, Council will start conducting customer surveys in order to provide further data on the effectiveness of customer service reforms. Council will also schedule biannual developer and consultant forums to develop relationships with regular stakeholders.

Service Delivery and Process Priorities

A central area of focus has been the review and development of standardised service delivery and process priorities. The need for internal protocols, processes and systems was recognised as a prerequisite to improving service delivery.

The following have been successfully implemented and will be refined through 2025:

- The establishment of staff portfolios to provide specialised expertise in areas where Council receives frequent enquiries. This includes a dedicated planner for business and tourism related applications, which is streamlining business-related applications;
- Streamlining of application allocation to help frontload the assessment of applications, ensuring any potential issues in permit applications are identified as efficiently as possible. This has been integral in reducing application processing times;
- The progressive development of an internal process handbook to provide for more consistent and efficient delivery of services and assessment of applications. Work on this is continuing as a living document so that Council processes can adapt to statewide planning reforms, and iterative process improvement can be documented;
- A continued focus on aged and complex applications (greater than 12 months) to facilitate resolution and incorporate learnings into continuous improvement efforts. This has already resulted in a series of complex applications being resolved, and directions being set for applications where further proponent action is required to facilitate resolution; and
- Staff have developed new processes for the management of Section 173 agreements that are more reflective of good practice in the local government sector. Staff are currently working through a backlog of agreements awaiting review and execution;

and implementing new processes to allow new agreements to be processed more efficiently.

System Development and Improvement

Council’s Greenlight planning portal is the main application interface for both Statutory Planning and Building Services. Council is continuing to work with the vendor to address implementation issues, with work currently underway regarding in-depth system testing and change management processes to address software issues, and to maximise the potential of the system to deliver efficiencies. To this end, Council staff are:

- Continuing to liaise with the vendor on incremental system improvements while conducting user testing;
 - Setting up training and process improvement protocols in business-critical systems; and
 - Developing guidance documentation to assist customers in navigating the system.
- In 2026, Council will also seek feedback from regular external users to assess the effectiveness of the system and improvement measures undertaken.

Performance Monitoring and Reporting

Regular performance monitoring is being put in place to monitor the effectiveness of strategies implemented. Reporting currently requires a mix of system data extraction and manual manipulation and tracking. This process is expected to become more streamlined following completion of development work on the Greenlight planning system.

Following the June report, a new series of key performance indicators has been established to monitor improvements in service delivery. Due to system issues and need for manual counting, actual measures have been completed for August and September 2025, however these measures will be tracked going forward.

KPI	Intent of measurement	2024/25 (actuals)	2025/26 (target)	August-September 2025 (actuals)
Percentage of applications determined within statutory timeframes	Timelines for determination of permit applications (outcome)	27.4%	60%	55%

KPI	Intent of measurement	2024/25 (actuals)	2025/26 (target)	August-September 2025 (actuals)
Average number of days to determine planning applications (<i>noting that finalisation of historic applications will distort figures for 2024/25 and 2025/26</i>).	Timelines for determination of permit applications (outcome)	117 days	60 days	124 days
Average number of days to determine planning applications received in 2025/26.	Timelines for determination of permit applications outside historic applications (outcome)	N/A	60 days	56 days
Resolution of historic permit applications	Addressing legacy matters to allow for more efficient allocation of resources and provide certainty to applicants	N/A	Pre-2024 applications resolved, or with clear guidance for applicants on any action required, before 31 January 2026	14 applications August 2025; 12 applications September 2025
Number of live applications and "general enquiries" sitting with any planner at any one time	Monitoring staff workloads to facilitate sound decision making	20-50	15-25	15-30

Monthly reporting to Councillors and Executive will continue, along with biannual reporting to Council at the ordinary April and October meetings.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The recommendation is in accordance with the following Strategic Objective of the Council Plan 2021-2025:

4.2 Planning and development that reflects the aspirations of the community

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The measures foreshadowed in this report are already achieving more efficient processing of planning permit applications using current staff resources. Over the next six months, the ongoing volume and processing of applications will continue to be monitored to ensure resources are deployed effectively, and specialist technical support can be engaged where required.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
Council is unable to deliver on its responsibilities under the <i>Planning and Environment Act 1988</i>	Possible	Major	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Near term service improvements around processes, customer responsiveness and systems/technology are put in place. Staff at all levels are involved in service improvements to help shape the team and support retention.
Inconsistency around processes undermines efficiency and decision-making	Possible	Major	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Process reviews and development of documentation is prioritised.

CONSULTATION

Actions outlined in this report have been based on customer feedback and internal review. Ongoing consultation with key stakeholders and the community will be undertaken to inform continuous improvement processes.

CONCLUSION

The first phase of service improvements in Council's statutory planning team has been completed, with results visible in the improved processing of permit applications. A second phase of work will continue into 2026, as outlined in the report, with the adoption of KPIs to measure processes and outcomes.

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 Regulatory Services
- Statutory Planning Coordinator

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

9.3.6 Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation - Planning and Environment Act 1987

INTRODUCTION

Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation are an important means of Council ensuring that its officers are appropriately authorised under the relevant Acts that Council administers. This report provides for a new appointment to Council's Statutory Planning Team.

Cr Andersen

Cr Byrne

That Council exercises the powers conferred by section 147(4) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, so that:

- 1. The following member of Council staff referred to in attachment 1: "S11A – Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation – Planning & Environment Act 1987" (the Instrument) be appointed and authorised as set out in the Instrument;*
 - a. Senior Statutory Planning Officer*
- 2. The Instrument comes into force immediately the common seal of Council is affixed to the Instrument, and remain in force until Council determines to vary or revoke it;*
- 3. On the coming into force of the Instrument, the previous "S11A – Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation – Planning and Environment Act 1987" for the following member of Council staff, as dated, be revoked;*
 - a. Senior Statutory Planning Officer, dated 30 May 2023*
- 4. The Instruments be signed and sealed at the appropriate stage of this meeting.*

Carried Unanimously

BACKGROUND

Council officers require current and accurate authorisations to fulfil their duties. The appointment of a new member of Council's Statutory Planning team means that new authorisations under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* are required. The departure of other members of staff also means that their previous authorisations should be revoked.

ISSUES

Authorised officers have statutory powers under relevant legislation. In the case of Council's staff with planning responsibilities, the attached Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* mean that they are authorised officers for the purposes of that Act.

While Council may delegate its powers, duties or functions to staff, so that a delegate

acts on behalf of the Council, staff appointed as authorised officers have their own statutory powers under the relevant Act.

Planning and Environment Act 1987

Section 188(1)(b) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* specifies that “a planning authority ... may by instrument delegate any of its powers, discretions or functions under this Act to an officer of the authority”. However, Section 188(2)(c) specifically prevents an officer from further sub-delegating any duty, function or power. Therefore, as the responsible authority, Council must authorise staff directly using the “S11A – Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation – Planning and Environment Act 1987”, rather than via the Chief Executive Officer.

The authorisation of staff with planning responsibilities is a routine process presented to a Council meeting, which occurs as required during the year. Changes in staff and position titles are the reason behind the regular presentation to Council.

Delegations and Authorisations Service

Council utilises a delegations and authorisations service, which provides templates to ensure that appropriate legislative authority is passed on to Council staff. All of the relevant legislation affecting local government, including Acts and regulations and the sections that relate to the powers, duties and functions of Council are outlined within the template and the relevant officer is allocated accordingly.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Ensuring authorisations are kept up to date ensures that Council's planning staff can undertake their statutory roles.

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

2.11 We prioritise effective governance to ensure transparent oversight of our operations

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Council has an annual subscription to the delegation and authorisation service that is provided for in Council's annual budget. There are no other financial implications associated with these instruments of appointment and authorisation.

Appropriate authorisations allow Council and Council staff to operate effectively and within legislative frameworks.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
Authorisations are not in place or are out of date	Possible	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that all Council officers have up-to-date authorisations to ensure that they can undertake their duties.

CONSULTATION

The relevant staff have been consulted during the preparation of the Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation. There is no requirement to consult the community in the preparation of these instruments.

CONCLUSION

The appropriate appointment of authorised officers to enforce the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* is required to ensure that Council officers can undertake their statutory roles.

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
- Governance Officer

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. **9.3.6.1** S11 Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation (Planning and Environment Act 1987) - Senior Statutory Planning Officer

9.3.7 Instruments of Delegation

INTRODUCTION

Instruments of Delegation are an important means of Council ensuring its officers hold the appropriate legislative powers for the various Acts and Regulations that Council administers. This report refreshes delegations to members of Council staff, following the introduction of a new member of the Statutory Planning team.

Cr Ronco

Cr Andersen

That Council:

- 1. Exercises the powers conferred by the legislation referred to in attachment "S6 - Instrument of Delegation from Council to Members of Council Staff" (instrument S6), so that:*
 - a. There be delegated to the members of Council staff holding, acting in or performing the duties of the offices or positions referred to in instrument S6, the powers, duties and functions set out in that instrument, subject to the conditions and limitations specified in that Instrument;*
 - b. Instrument S6 be signed and sealed at the appropriate stage of this meeting;*
 - c. Instrument S6 comes into force immediately the common seal of Council is affixed to the instrument;*
 - d. On the coming into force of instrument S6, the previous version of instrument S6 dated 9 September 2025 be revoked; and*
 - e. The duties and functions set out in instrument S6 must be performed, and the powers set out in the instruments must be executed, in accordance with any guidelines or policies of Council that it may from time to time adopt.*

Carried Unanimously

BACKGROUND

Council operates under more than 110 different pieces of legislation, each of which provides specific powers, duties or functions either to Council as the governing body, or directly to the Chief Executive Officer. To enable Council as an organisation to run smoothly, and to avoid the need for every legislative decision to be presented to a Council meeting, many of these powers, duties and functions are passed on by Instruments of Delegation from Council to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and members of Council staff.

The delegation of Council's powers, duties, and functions is a routine process presented to a Council meeting, which was most recently presented to the Ordinary Council meeting held in early September 2025. Changes in legislation and staff titles are key reasons that Instruments of Delegation must be kept up to date. In this instance, a new member of staff with a new title has commenced, where that title was not previously included in the S6 Instrument of Delegation.

Legislative powers, duties, and functions

Some legislation does not allow sub-delegation via the CEO, so Council must delegate these powers directly to staff using the S6 Instrument of Delegation to Council Staff.

ISSUES

Legislative updates

S6 Instrument of Delegation to members of Council staff

There have been no legislative updates made to the S6 Instrument of Delegation since it was last adopted in early September 2025.

Staff members with delegated duties

A new member of staff commencing in the Statutory Planning team, where the position title did not previously have delegated duties, is the reason the S6 Instrument of Delegation is being presented so soon after it was adopted in early September 2025. Officers were not aware of the new title at the time the Instrument was last updated.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

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

2.11 We prioritise effective governance to ensure transparent oversight of our operations

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Council allows for a delegations and authorisations template service in the annual Budget to ensure that all relevant legislative provisions are included in Council's Instruments. Council officers are responsible for ensuring that the appropriate members of staff are provided with delegations and authorisations to undertake their duties.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
Delegations are not in place or are out of date	Possible	Moderate	Ensure that all Council approved delegations are up-to-date to ensure that staff can undertake their statutory duties.

CONSULTATION

No external consultation is required. Delegations have been discussed with the relevant officers.

CONCLUSION

A review and update of the S6 Instrument of Delegation to members of Council staff will ensure that Council officers can undertake the legislative powers, duties and functions related to their role.

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
- Governance Officer

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. 9.3.7.1 S6 Instrument of Delegation - Council to Staff

10 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 September/October 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 30 September	Briefing Session
Tuesday 7 October	Briefing Session
Tuesday 14 October	Leadership Development Session & Myrtleford Site Tour
Tuesday 21 October	Briefing Session

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. **10.1.1** Informal Meeting of Councillors 20250930
2. **10.1.2** Informal Meeting of Councillors 20251007
3. **10.1.3** Informal Meeting of Councillors 20251014
4. **10.1.4** Informal Meeting of Councillors 20251021

11 Presentation of reports by delegates

12 General business

13 Motions for which notice has previously been given

14 Reception and reading of petitions

15 Documents for signing and sealing

Cr Smith

Cr Byrne

That the following documents be signed and sealed:

- 1. Asset Plan 2025 - 2035;*
- 2. Financial Plan 2025 - 2035;*
- 3. Financial Sustainability Strategy 2025 - 2029;*
- 4. Municipal Bushfire Place of Last Resort Plan 2025 - 2029;*
- 5. S11A Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation (Planning and Environment Act 1987) - Senior Statutory Planning Officer;*
- 6. S6 Instrument of Delegation from Council to Members of Staff.*

Carried Unanimously

16 Confidential reports

17 Closure of meeting

There being no further business the Chairperson declared the meeting closed at 7.57pm