

M(4) – 28 APRIL 2026

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 April 2026** commencing at **5:00 pm**.

PRESENT

COUNCILLORS

Cr Sarah Nicholas - Mayor

Cr Peter Smith - Deputy Mayor

Cr John Andersen

Cr Dave Byrne

Cr Jean-Pierre Ronco

VIA ELECTRONIC MEANS

Cr Gareth Graham

OFFICERS

Will Jeremy - Chief Executive Officer

Sarah Buckley - Director Assets

Nathalie Cooke - Director Corporate and Community

APOLOGIES

Cr Noah Tanzen

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1 Recording and livestreaming of Council meetings

The CEO will 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 will 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(3) HELD ON 31 MARCH 2026

RESOLUTION

Cr Byrne

Cr Andersen

That the minutes of M(3) 31 March 2026 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

Will Jeremy – Chief Executive Officer

(Item 8.3.7 – Independent Member CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee)

Cr John Andersen

(Item 8.2.4 – Alpine Shire Council Animal Pound - General Conflict)

7 Public Questions

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

GS 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 Presentation of reports by officers

8.1 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER - WILL JEREMY

8.1.1 Contracts approved under delegation by the CEO

RESOLUTION

Cr Smith

Cr Andersen

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

Carried Unanimously

Contract No: Q26209		Process: RFQ
Title:	Wide Area Mower	
Tenderer:	AgPower and Transport - Lilydale, Victoria	
Budget (\$ excl GST):	\$150,000.00	
Contract (\$ excl GST):	\$145,450.00	

Contract No: Q26210		Process: RFQ
Title:	Trailer Mounted Drain Cleaning Unit	
Tenderer:	Enviroline Group Pty. Ltd. - St. Mary's, New South Wales	
Budget (\$ excl GST):	\$150,000.00	
Contract (\$ excl GST):	\$132,332.32	

8.1.2 Formal Advocacy Position for the 2026 State Election

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's endorsement of a suite of key priority projects and initiatives, to guide Council's advocacy campaign leading into the 2026 State Government election.

RESOLUTION

Cr Byrne

Cr Ronco

That Council:

1. Acknowledges the importance of strong, coordinated advocacy in fulfilling Council's role as a representative of, and advocate for, the Alpine Shire municipal community;
2. Endorses the key advocacy priorities for the 2026 State Government election, as detailed in this report and summarised as follows:
 - a. 'Connecting the Upper Kiewa' - Funding to construct active transport links for the community and visitors.
 - b. 'Celebrating Wandiligong's Heritage' - Funding to design and construct trail links through the historic township and landscapes.
 - c. 'Myrtleford Community Sports Hub' - Funding for planning and design.
 - d. 'Future Ready Bright Masterplan' - Funding for planning.
 - e. Increased Municipal Emergency Management Program (MERP) funding.
 - f. Improved community access to primary mental healthcare.
 - g. Appropriate maintenance funding for State-managed roads; and
3. With the support of the Executive Team, prioritises its advocacy efforts over the coming six months through proactive engagement with the Government, the Opposition, and candidates at the upcoming election.

Carried Unanimously

BACKGROUND

The importance of advocacy is recognised through the Council Plan 2025-2029 Strategic Directions where it is stated:

We have a strong and informed advocacy position to influence outcomes that are outside our direct control and are important for our communities, economy and environment.

The 2026 State Government election provides an important opportunity for Council to deliver a focussed advocacy campaign, based on the highest priorities of the Alpine Shire community.

To be effective, Council's advocacy must be strong, targeted, and aligned with clearly defined priorities, including the pursuit of funding for projects and initiatives that are scoped and ready for implementation.

Council officers are preparing a suite of one page advocacy summary reports to address individual advocacy priorities. After adoption of the advocacy priorities, information packs will be collated for distribution, and a media campaign will be developed to deliver key messaging.

To deliver the advocacy priorities and ensure Council represents its community, over the next six months it will:

- Seek meetings with representatives of the Government, the Opposition and candidates at the upcoming election to outline our requests.
- Share details of our advocacy initiatives with our local members of parliament and opposition.
- Support advocacy campaigns of representing agencies align with our priorities, such as Rural Councils Victoria and the Municipal Association of Victoria.
- Respond, where appropriate, to organisations that seek our support for their advocacy.
- Keep advocating for money to support delivery of shovel ready local projects as electioneering commences.
- Invite the Premier and Opposition Leader to the Alpine Shire.

ADVOCACY PRIORITIES

The following projects and initiatives have been identified as the highest advocacy priorities for the Alpine Shire Council, taking into consideration the key functions delivered and funded by the State Government. These priorities have been established giving consideration to adopted Council strategies and plans, including the Council Plan 2025/2029 and the prioritised capital works pipeline.

Advocacy Priorities

Priority:

'Connecting the Upper Kiewa' - Funding to deliver active transport links for the community and visitors

Type:

Construction

What we need:

A \$3.0 million one-off State Government funding commitment

What this will mean for our community:

A connected active transport network that supports safe, inclusive travel and outdoor recreation across the Kiewa Valley, improving everyday movement for residents while enhancing the visitor experience.

The project will support:

- Realignment of the Tawonga–Tawonga South shared trail to address existing safety issues and create a more direct, family-friendly route
- Easier and safer walking and cycling for children, older residents and less-experienced riders between key Kiewa Valley towns
- Completion of the remaining missing link in the Kiewa River Trail loop, creating a continuous, high-quality riverside trail
- Improved on-foot and bicycle access to the Kiewa River Trail from Tawonga South and Mount Beauty

Together, these projects will remove long-standing gaps in the active transport network, supporting everyday movement, outdoor recreation and social connection. They will encourage visitors to explore the valley without a car, stay longer and spend locally—strengthening local businesses and reinforcing the Upper Kiewa's role as a premier outdoor destination.

Advocacy Priorities

Priority:

'Celebrating Wandiligong's Heritage' - Funding to design and deliver trail links through the historic township and landscapes.

Type:

Design and Construct

What we need:

A \$4.0 million one-off State Government funding commitment

What this will mean for our community:

A safer off-road shared trail connecting Wandiligong township through the historic Diggings, improving everyday walking and cycling access while respecting the area's heritage and landscape character.

The project will support:

- Delivery of an off-road shared trail through the historic Diggings, providing an alternative to narrow local roads
- Improved safety and comfort for walkers and cyclists, supporting everyday local movement
- An onward shared trail connection to Bright, linking Wandiligong into the region's wider trail network
- Better access for visitors travelling by bicycle, supporting local cafés, producers and accommodation
- Trail alignment and design that respects heritage values, landscape character and the scale of the village

Complementing the shared trail, the project will also support:

- Pursuing options to address a broken link along the Wandi Walk
- Re-establishing continuity of pedestrian connection alongside Morses Creek, subject to design development and community engagement
- Eliminating the need for an out-and-back walking experience while maintaining a strong connection to the creek environment

Together, these outcomes will strengthen access, connectivity and amenity within and beyond Wandiligong, supporting everyday movement and visitor experiences without fundamentally changing the village's character. Through careful alignment, design and community engagement, the project can balance safety, access and heritage protection—enhancing connection while preserving what makes Wandiligong special.

Advocacy Priorities

Priority:

'Myrtleford Community Sports Hub' - Funding for planning and design

Type:

Planning and Design

What we need:

A \$1.0 million one-off State Government funding commitment.

What this will mean for our community:

Funding will enable comprehensive planning and design to progress the Myrtleford Community Sports Hub, establishing a clear and coordinated pathway toward a high-quality, multi-use community sporting precinct serving Myrtleford and surrounding communities.

The funding will support:

- Refinement of early concept work through technical investigations
- Staged community and stakeholder engagement to test needs and priorities
- Exploration of how multiple sporting codes can be accommodated within a shared precinct
- Improvements to functionality, access and shared use of existing sporting land
- Planning that protects landscape values while allowing for future growth in participation

At the conclusion of the planning and design phase, Council and the community will have:

- A community-informed masterplan for the Myrtleford Community Sports Hub
- A clearly defined scope of facilities and shared-use outcomes
- A staged delivery pathway identifying priorities and sequencing
- High-level cost estimates to support future funding applications
- Landowner agreements established in principle and approval pathways clarified, providing confidence that the project is feasible and ready to progress

Completing this work will position Council to confidently pursue future capital funding and deliver a sporting precinct that strengthens participation, supports community wellbeing and provides lasting value for Myrtleford into the future.

Advocacy Priorities

Priority:

'Future Ready Bright Masterplan' - Funding for planning

Type:

Planning

What we need:

A \$2.0 million one-off State Government funding commitment

What this will mean for our community:

A clear and coordinated masterplan to support Bright as it continues to grow and change over time. As a designated Service Town, Bright plays a central role in accommodating residential, commercial and employment growth across the Shire, and this role will continue into the future.

The Future Ready Bright Masterplan will bring together land-use planning, infrastructure, servicing and growth considerations into a single, coordinated framework to support informed decision-making. It will guide the timing and prioritisation of infrastructure investment, support local services and employment, and help ensure growth is managed in a way that maintains liveability.

At the conclusion of this planning phase, Council and the community will have:

- A shared long-term vision for Bright's growth and development
- A consolidated framework linking land use, infrastructure and servicing
- Clear priorities and sequencing for future infrastructure investment
- A clear basis for planning decisions and future funding advocacy

By setting out a shared long-term direction, the masterplan will support economic resilience while protecting the character, amenity and sense of place that are highly valued by the Bright community.

Advocacy Priorities

Priority:

Increased Municipal Emergency Management Program (MERP) funding

Type:

Ongoing funding

What we need:

A commitment to a minimum level of MERP funding of \$120,000 per year, indexed into the future.

What this will mean for our community:

Stronger community resilience in an environment where natural hazards are an ongoing reality. Increased, indexed and ongoing MERP funding will enable Council to build and maintain increased emergency management capacity, strengthening planning, preparedness, and recovery outcomes for the community.

Increased MERP funding will deliver community benefit through:

- Recruitment and retention of additional dedicated emergency management resources within Council
- Increased support to emergency management planning and coordination across agencies
- Improved risk reduction and preparedness initiatives tailored to local hazards
- Greater capacity to support communities during prolonged or complex emergency events
- More consistent coordination of relief and recovery activities following emergencies

In a high-risk alpine environment, sustained investment in emergency management capability is critical to protecting lives, property and critical infrastructure. Ongoing MERP funding at an increased level will ensure that Council has the in-house capacity required to support communities to prepare for, withstand and recover from future emergencies.

Advocacy Priorities

Priority:

Improved community access to primary mental healthcare

Type:

Advocacy

What we need:

A commitment to closing the rural funding gap to ensure face-to-face primary mental healthcare services can be sustainably and viably delivered in small rural communities.

What this will mean for our community:

Accessing face-to-face primary mental health care remains a significant challenge in small rural and alpine communities. Long travel distances, limited public transport and the need to travel to larger regional centres create practical and financial barriers for many residents—particularly those who need consistent, in-person support.

Improved local mental health funding will support:

- Greater access to face-to-face primary mental health care delivered locally and sustainably
- Reduced reliance on long-distance travel to larger centres, where limited transport options can make appointments difficult or impossible
- More timely and appropriate support for people at greatest risk, including young people, older residents and those experiencing disadvantage
- Closing the rural funding gap so cost, distance and service availability are not barriers to care

In small alpine communities, geographic isolation, limited service availability and seasonal pressures can compound mental health challenges. These conditions can make it especially difficult for young people at critical developmental stages, older residents with more complex needs, and individuals who struggle to engage with digital or remote services to access care when they need it.

Sustainable funding will help build continuity of care through trusted local providers, stronger referral pathways and services that understand the community context. By supporting local, face-to-face mental health services, investment will strengthen wellbeing, connection and resilience across the whole community—ensuring people can access the right support, in the right place, at the right time.

Advocacy Priorities

Priority:

Appropriate maintenance funding for State-managed roads

Type:

Advocacy

What we need:

A commitment to sustained, multi-year maintenance funding for state-managed roads, informed by asset condition and lifecycle requirements, and recognising the higher cost, complexity, and risk associated with regional and alpine road networks.

What this will mean for our community:

Greater confidence that state-managed roads are being maintained to a safe and reliable standard for everyday use. Sustained, multi-year maintenance funding will support a more consistent and responsive approach to maintaining the roads local residents rely on most—helping people feel safer and more assured when travelling for work, school, healthcare and daily life.

In alpine and regional areas, state road networks face harsher conditions and more complex maintenance demands. Funding informed by asset condition and lifecycle requirements will enable timely, planned maintenance and improved responsiveness to emerging issues—reducing deterioration, improving safety outcomes and restoring confidence that these critical routes are being actively and appropriately managed for the conditions they operate in.

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

There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Resourcing to support Council's increased focus on advocacy over the coming months can be accommodated from within existing organisational resourcing and budgets.

It is anticipated that there will be no material impact on the 2026/2027 Budget. The implications on Council's Long Term Financial Plan will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, based on the commitment of funding support which is received through successful advocacy.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
Without an endorsed position, Council risks a weakened advocacy position relative to other municipalities.	Very likely	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council endorsement of its key advocacy priorities, as outlined in this report.

CONSULTATION

The advocacy priorities listed in this report are aligned with the Council Plan 2025-2029, which was informed through significant deliberative engagement with the community, as well as other key plans and strategies adopted by Council. In achieving this alignment, these reflect the key priorities which have been shared by the community. Where relevant they have been checked for consistency with the prioritised capital works project pipeline.

There are no immediate community or stakeholder engagement implications arising from this report. Engagement requirements will be assessed as individual projects and initiatives advance to implementation. Endorsement of key advocacy priorities will facilitate the delivery of targeted communication and advocacy with key stakeholders, including current and prospective candidates in the lead-up to the forthcoming elections.

CONCLUSION

Advocacy remains a central theme of the Council Plan, and its effectiveness relies on a strong, targeted, and well-aligned approach. By focusing on clearly defined priorities and pursuing funding for projects and strategies that are ready for implementation, Council will be well-positioned to maximise its influence and deliver meaningful outcomes for the community.

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
- Executive Assistant (CEO)

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

8.2 DIRECTOR ASSETS - SARAH BUCKLEY

8.2.1 Alpine Shire Tracks and Trails Master Plan 2025-2034

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to present the final Alpine Shire Tracks and Trails Master Plan 2025–2034 (the Plan) for consideration by Council.

The Plan establishes a shire-wide strategic framework to guide the sustainable planning, development and management of walking, cycling, hiking and shared-use trails across Alpine Shire.

RESOLUTION

Cr Andersen

Cr Byrne

That Council:

1. Receives and notes the draft Alpine Shire Tracks and Trails Master Plan 2025–2034: Engagement Summary Report March 2026 (Attachment 1);
2. Adopts the Alpine Shire Tracks and Trails Master Plan 2025–2034 (Attachment 2); and
3. Notes that implementation of the Plan will be subject to securing external funding and will be delivered through a staged approach, with individual projects subject to future Council consideration, business cases and assessment of ongoing operational and maintenance costs.

Carried

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—offering wide-ranging benefits across health, tourism, transport, environmental stewardship, and community connectedness.

The shire attracts significant visitation for nature-based activities including walking, hiking, cycling, mountain biking and trail running. In 2023, the region recorded more than 1.7 million domestic visitor nights, with trail-based recreation identified as one of the key motivations for visitation.

Recognising the importance of trails to the shire’s economy, health outcomes and community wellbeing, Council commissioned the development of the Alpine Shire Tracks and Trails Master Plan in 2024.

The Plan provides a coordinated strategic approach to improving the quality, connectivity, safety and sustainability of trails across the municipality.

Key components of the project included:

- Mapping of formally recognised trails across the shire
- Assessment of existing trail condition and classification
- Consultation with community members, user groups and land managers
- Identification of network gaps and priority linkages
- Development of concept designs for priority projects
- Preparation of a prioritised Action Plan.

The Plan provides a strategic framework to guide trail planning, infrastructure investment, and collaboration with partner agencies such as the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), Parks Victoria and Tourism North East.

The Plan aims to:

- improve connectivity between towns and key recreation destinations
- enhance trail quality, safety and accessibility
- strengthen environmental and cultural heritage protection
- support tourism and economic development
- position Council to leverage external funding opportunities.

ISSUES

The development of the Plan identified a number of challenges across the existing trail network.

Inconsistent trail quality

Variations in trail surfacing, signage, accessibility and maintenance affect usability across the network.

Missing links and fragmented connections

Gaps between towns and key trail networks limit opportunities for safe, continuous travel and recreational use.

Safety concerns

Road crossings, drainage issues and steep gradients present safety challenges in some locations.

Poor wayfinding and information

Inconsistent signage and limited mapping can reduce user confidence and visitor experience.

Capacity pressures

Popular destinations are experiencing increased visitation, which places pressure on existing trail infrastructure.

The Plan provides a strategic framework to address these issues over time through improved planning, prioritisation and coordination with partner agencies.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The recommendation is in accordance with the 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 Plan provides a strategic framework to guide future investment in trail infrastructure, but does not commit Council to immediate expenditure.

The Plan identifies actions across multiple townships that vary significantly in scope and cost.

Implementation will require:

- staged delivery over time
- securing external funding opportunities
- collaboration with partner agencies
- future Council consideration of individual projects and expenditure
- consideration of long term operational and maintenance costs.

Any projects arising from the Plan will be subject to separate business cases, consultation and Council approval prior to delivery.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
Funding constraints: inability to secure funding for priority trail projects.	Possible	Moderate	Stage delivery over time; advocate for Australian and Victorian Government grants; align with broader strategies (e.g., tourism, health and wellbeing).
Stakeholder / land manager issues: conflicting priorities among land managers, clubs, and community.	Possible	Moderate	Ongoing engagement; shared planning (project control group formation); early collaboration with DEECA, Parks Victoria, landholders, etc.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
Environmental and cultural impacts: new trail development may impact sensitive ecological or cultural heritage areas.	Low	Moderate	Require environmental assessments and cultural heritage management plans for major works.
Safety issues: injuries or incidents on poorly maintained or unsafe trails.	Possible	Moderate	Prioritise upgrades to high-risk locations; clear risk management frameworks; signage and user education.

CONSULTATION

The Plan has been informed by extensive community and stakeholder engagement.

Initial Community Consultation (Stage 1)

Engagement included:

- 232 community survey responses
- seven stakeholder interviews
- three Council officer workshops
- site visits and technical assessments.

Key themes identified included:

- need for improved connectivity between towns
- increased demand for nature-based recreation
- importance of trail maintenance and safety
- opportunities to support tourism and community wellbeing.

Community Consultation on draft Plan (Stage 2)

Feedback included:

- protecting environmentally sensitive areas
- prioritising maintenance of existing trails
- improving wayfinding and trail standards
- strengthening connections between Mount Beauty, Tawonga South and Tawonga
- improving accessibility and trail facilities.

A summary of submissions is included in Attachment 2.

CONCLUSION

The Plan provides a long-term strategic framework to guide trail planning, investment and partnership opportunities while protecting the environmental and cultural values that underpin the region's appeal.

Adoption of the Plan will enable Council to:

- guide future infrastructure investment
- strengthen the Shire's visitor economy
- improve community health and recreation opportunities
- advocate for external funding
- support sustainable trail development across the region.

It is recommended the Council adopts the Alpine Shire Tracks and Trails Master Plan (2025-2034).

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. **8.2.1.1** Draft Alpine Shire Tracks and Trails Master Plan 2025–2034: Engagement Summary Report March 2026
2. **8.2.1.2** Alpine Shire Tracks and Trails Master Plan 2025-2034

8.2.2 Nimmo Pedestrian Bridge

INTRODUCTION

This report relates to an unbudgeted contract variation for the Nimmo Pedestrian Bridge.

RESOLUTION

Cr Byrne

Cr Andersen

That Council:

1. Approves a variation to Contract 2400801 Nimmo Pedestrian Bridge to North East Civil Construction Pty Ltd for \$214,466 (Excl. GST), resulting in unbudgeted spend of \$199,981 (Excl. GST); and
2. Delegates authority to the Chief Executive Officer to sign the contract variation at the appropriate time.

Carried Unanimously

BACKGROUND

After the 2019/20 bushfires, funding became available through Emergency Management Victoria for the Nimmo Pedestrian Bridge. With an adopted budget in 2023/24 of \$750,000 (\$478,675 from EMV and \$271,325 from Council) a design and construct contract was awarded to North East Civil Construction for \$540,850 at the March 2024 Ordinary Council Meeting. Given the awarded value, a total budget of \$550,000 was carried forward and adopted by Council in the 2025/26 financial year to complete the project.

During the design phase of the project, several different locations for the bridge were investigated to ensure the design criteria could be met without having a detrimental effect on the nearby road bridge. After these investigations, a location downstream of the road bridge was determined to be the best location and a detailed geotechnical report was produced to inform the foundation design. The final engineering design was completed in March 2026.

ISSUES

During the detailed design, the final loading criteria and poor geotechnical findings resulted in a heavier structure, on significantly deeper piles and larger footings. Also, due to the length of time between the award of the contract and the finalisation of the design, there was an escalation of material costs. As soon as the final design was available, repricing of the piling, foundations, steelwork and craneage was carried out, resulting in a cost increase of \$214,466.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

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

- 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

A summary of the financial implications is provided in the table below:

Item	Amount
Original Contract Award	\$540,850
Contract Variation	\$214,466
Other Costs to Date	\$11,089
Total Project Cost	\$766,405
24/25 FY Payments	-\$16,424
25/26 FY Adopted Budget	-\$550,000
Total Unbudgeted Expenditure Required 25/26 FY (shortfall)	\$199,981

The project has been funded by Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) to the value of \$478,675, with Council responsible for the additional co-contribution of \$287,730 to complete the project.

As shown in the table above, this variation requires an additional \$199,981 in funding beyond the adopted 2025/26 FY budget allocation of \$550,000.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
Final approvals from the Taungurung Land and Waters Council	Unlikely	Major	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All information for the traditional owner consent has been provided and accepted, including site inspections and shapefiles defining the subject area. We are still awaiting formal consent to proceed so that final consents can be issued.
Unable to complete project in time to meet funding Milestones	Almost Certain	Major	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EMV are up to date with the budget and timing issues and have granted conditional extension of time to 30/11/26.
Insufficient budget	Possible	Extreme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage available 25/26 FY budget to allow additional budget to be allocated from underspend across the rest of the budget
Budget request not approved by Council	Unlikely	Extreme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present achievable budget position to allow project to proceed

CONSULTATION

Initial consultation with the Myrtleford community identified the desire to have a safe pedestrian/cycle link over the river. Since then, consultation with other authorities has continued during the investigation of the various potential bridge locations. DEECA have been supportive of the project and a formal request from Council to become Committee of Management over the land on which the bridge and path will be built has been approved. NECMA has considered the different design options and issued a Works on Waterways permit for the approved design. The Taungurung Land and Waters Council

(TLaWC) has inspected the site and acknowledged the Land Use Activity Agreements (LUAA) notification for a Negotiation B Activity.

CONCLUSION

In order for the bridge construction to proceed, additional budget of \$199,981 is required to allow the approval of the \$214,466 contract variation.

In conjunction with this approval, an extension of time will be required from ERV to allow time for the budget approval and construction to take place.

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
- Capital Works Team Leader Team Leader Capital Works

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

8.2.3 Capital Works Performance Report April 2026

INTRODUCTION

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

RESOLUTION

Cr Byrne

Cr Andersen

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

Effective tracking and oversight of capital works is critical to ensuring strong governance, financial accountability, and the successful delivery of Council’s infrastructure objectives. Regular monitoring provides visibility over project progress, budgets, timeframes, and emerging risks, enabling informed decision-making and timely intervention where required. It also supports transparency and assurance to Council and the community that public funds are being managed responsibly and that priority projects remain aligned with strategic outcomes.

As part of the effective tracking and oversight the status of the Capital Works Program is 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 transparently.

ISSUES

Unlike the previous financial year, when over \$18 million in capital works was delivered—including seven projects each exceeding \$1 million—this year’s program comprises predominantly smaller-scope projects. Despite their size, these projects require a similar, and in some cases greater, level of resourcing to deliver successfully. The slower start to the 2025–26 program was primarily driven by delays in recruitment and staff absences; however, the team has worked proactively to address these constraints and ensure the program remains on track for delivery in the final quarter of the financial year.

Budget Status

Budget	Committed/Awarding	Expended
\$8,835,000	\$7,388,269	\$4,744,180

As of mid-April 2026, over 84% of Council's Capital Works Project budget has been committed through purchase orders to contractors. Commitments are running ahead of

forecast with multiple annual programs and projects reaching completion. The appointment of a temporary Project Officer to deliver capital works aligned with Council's Climate Action and Disability Action Plans has progressed several initiatives that were behind schedule, including the installation of solar panels at St Alban's Hall in early April and the fabrication of a new DDA-compliant access ramp for the Mount Beauty Stadium.

A total of 54% of the Capital Works Project budget has been expended, which is lower than the forecast of 81% 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 are reflective of an S-curve expenditure that is expected across a capital works project delivery.

However the sustained variance between actual and forecast expenditure is a material risk to delivery against budget and schedule, indicating potential delays in project progress and creating a risk of budget slippage if expenditure is not recovered in later stages; as such, this position requires heightened scrutiny and active management.

The most recent monthly analysis highlights the lower-than-forecast expenditure as well as the status of project delivery, identifying projects behind schedule or at risk of not being delivered by June 2026 (Table 1).

Table 1.

Land				
Project Description	Adopted Annual Budget	Committed	Actual Expenditure	Delivery Risk
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	Actual Expenditure	Delivery Risk
Public Amenities Upgrades - Annual (Tawonga Pioneer Park)	100,000	149,020	5,820	
Disability Action Plan Annual Program	50,000	22,266	7,376	
Pebble Beach Amenity Block	140,000	150,620	115,505	
Building Renewal Program	250,000	229,517	206,778	
Bright Outdoor Fitness Equipment	180,000	153,736	91,079	
Bright Pioneer Park Timekeepers Box	50,000	0	0	
Mount Beauty Transfer Station Office	240,000	212,114	0	
Council Office Solar Upgrade	50,000	31,837	3,813	
Tawonga South Municipal Precinct Design	150,000	18,220	15,039	
Climate Action Initiatives - Annual Program	100,000	118,163	3,813	
Bright United Football and Netball Club Storage Upgrade	23,000		0	
Myrtleford Memorial Hall Renewal	960,000	802,568	802,568	
St Albans Hall Solar Upgrade	0	30,945	1,125	
Dinner Plain Activation Phase 1 (Fencing and Scrubbers Hut)	0	198,918	71,387	
Actual Buildings Total	2,293,000	2,117,924	1,324,303	

Roads				
Project Description	Adopted Annual Budget	Committed	Actual Expenditure	Delivery Risk
Road Stabilisation and Patching	235,000	208,879	208,879	
Resealing	555,000	446,611	387,760	
Asphalt Overlays	150,000	120,943	120,943	
Kerb and Channel Renewal	150,000	149,352	6,800	
Line Marking	50,000	24,752	5,540	
Gravel Road Reconstruction and Resheeting Program	425,000	406,932	33	
Road Upgrade Program	300,000	234,943	173,257	
State Road Grading	205,000	226,504	226,506	
Council Office Carpark Upgrade	120,000	0	0	
Actual Roads Total	2,190,000	1,818,916	1,129,717	
Bridges				
Project Description	Adopted Annual Budget	Committed	Actual Expenditure	Delivery Risk
Bridge Renewal	255,000	170,375	170,375	
Nimmo Pedestrian Bridge	550,000	535,515	35,663	
Level 2 Bridge Repairs	0	139,350	139,350	
Actual Bridge Total	805,000	845,240	345,388	
Footpaths				
Project Description	Adopted Annual Budget	Committed	Actual Expenditure	Delivery Risk
Footpaths/Trails/Cycleways New Program	250,000	235,654	106,674	
Footpaths/Trails/Cycleways Renewal Program	250,000	242,455	4,600	
Actual Footpath Total	500,000	478,109	111,274	
Drainage				
Project Description	Adopted Annual Budget	Committed	Actual Expenditure	Delivery Risk
Drainage Renewal Program	200,000	18,770	0	
Actual Drainage Total	200,000	18,770	0	
Recreational, Leisure and Community Facilities				
Project Description	Adopted Annual Budget	Committed	Actual Expenditure	Delivery Risk
Recreation and Open Space Renewal Program	75,000	14,392	50	
Myrtleford McNamara Multipurpose Courts	185,000	187,786	2,185	
Oaks Lawn Detailed Electrical Design	30,000	26,694	2,407	
Tawonga Pioneer Park Multi-Purpose Court Resurfacing	60,000	0	0	
Tawonga Pioneer Park Fence Renewal	50,000	3,380	3,380	
Tawonga Pioneer Park Picnic Table Area Upgrade	50,000	19,518	418	
Dinner Plain Tennis Court Resurfacing	60,000	80,073	80,073	
Bright Skate Park Upgrade	0	127,104	114,631	
Jumping Platform Fencing	20,000	0	0	
Mount Beauty Rec Reserve Cricket Nets	0	195,020	195,020	
Actual Rec, Leisure & Comm Total	530,000	653,967	398,164	

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

Waste				
Project Description	Adopted Annual Budget	Committed	Actual Expenditure	Delivery Risk
Kerbside Bins Renewal And Upgrade	80,000	27,336	27,459	
Public Bins Renewal	60,000	0	632	
Old Landfill Rehabilitation Investigation	170,000	27,770	0	
Landfill Capping Stage 3 Design	100,000	75,458	78,878	
Borehole Renewal Program	60,000	0	0	
Myrtleford Landfill Rehabilitation Cell 1 & 2	1,300,000	1,286,005	1,286,006	
Actual Waste Total	1,770,000	1,416,569	1,392,975	
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	19,348	22,933	
Laptop Renewal (rollout)	0	105,000	0	
Actual Plant and Fleet Total	525,000	19,348	22,933	

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	41	<p>Construction works completed for Mummery Road footpath, Bridge (culvert) renewals, Bright Skate park, Kerb & Channel and Court 1-2 resurfacing at McNammarra recreation reserve.</p> <p>Gravel road resheeting, Outdoor Fitness installation and deployment of Solar upgrades ongoing.</p> <p>Pondage walk renewal being awarded along with Tawonga Pioneer Memorial Park toilet upgrades.</p>
Behind	4	<p>Disability Action Plan Annual Program – only fabrication of new Mount Beauty stadium ramp ongoing.</p> <p>Tawonga South Amenities, community engagement pending as well as final Design and Construction Plans</p> <p>Council Office Carpark Upgrade - project manager resources were focused on</p>

		<p>Council's road renewal program prior to this project.</p> <p>Jumping Platform Fencing - delayed awaiting the outcome of a Tiny Towns grant application</p>
High Risk	4	<p>Nimmo Bridge – Approvals from registered aboriginal party is still outstanding and cost escalations related to piling will require council approval of a variation.</p> <p>McNamarra MP courts 3-6 resurfacing weather delayed until spring.</p> <p>Tawonga Pioneer Memorial Park court resurfacing and fencing delayed due to weather and timing of contractor to complete works.</p>

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

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

Sustainable and Resilient Alpine

2.1 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.

Throughout the financial year, adjustments are made to the adopted budget. These movements typically reflect projects delivered under or over budget, as well as new projects that arise during the year and are funded through Council resources or external grants. Despite these changes, all projects remain fully accommodated within the total budget allocation of \$8.83 million. The total funding contributed through grants now amounts to \$3.10 million.

Following adoption of the 2025/26 Budget and the October Capital Works update, which added three projects valued at \$470,752, a further three projects totalling \$234,918 are now scheduled for delivery. These can be delivered within existing budgets through new external funding and savings from other Capital Works commitments. Details are provided below. Details of these additional projects are provided below.

Reported in October 2025:

- 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.

Reported in April 2026:

- Dinner Plain Activation Phase 1 - \$198,918 of which \$71,387 was funded by a Regional Development Victoria Grant to refurbish the amenities at Scrubbers hut and install fencing around the toboggan slope.
- St Albans Hall Solar Upgrade - \$36,000 fully externally funded by AGL to install 12kW solar PV and 22kWh battery storage.

The number of projects required to be delivered has increased to 49 with the additional scope being absorbed through the engagement of a temporary project officer.

RISK MANAGEMENT

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

Cr Andersen left the meeting at 6.08pm.

8.2.4 Alpine Shire Council Animal Pound

INTRODUCTION

This report relates to the construction of a new animal pound facility.

RESOLUTION

Cr Byrne

Cr Ronco

That Council:

1. Commits to unbudgeted expenditure of \$272,000 (Excl. GST) to deliver a new animal pound facility, of which \$50,000 (Excl. GST) will be expended in the 2025/26 financial year, and the balance of \$222,000 (Excl. GST) will be included in the draft 2026/27 Budget; and
2. Notes that individual contracts associated with the delivery of this project are anticipated to be awarded under the financial delegation of the CEO.

Carried

BACKGROUND

The existing Council animal pound facility is nearing the end of its useful life. Over the years and as animal welfare best practices and guidelines have evolved, Council officers have incrementally improved the existing facility to keep pace with these changes. However, as the facility has aged it has become increasingly challenging to maintain it in a condition which meets the appropriate Code of Practice and provides a safe workplace for staff.

Additionally, since the subdivision and development of the adjacent land as residential housing, Council's animal pound facility has impacted on the amenity of the neighbouring residents.

The following options have been assessed:

- Ceasing to operate an animal pound in the Alpine Shire and delivering Council's legislated obligations through the engagement of third-party service providers.
- Upgrading the existing pound facility to achieve compliance with current Code of Practice.
- Building a new, compliant animal pound facility.

Based on this assessment, it is recommended that a new pound facility be delivered in a new location with increased physical separation from the nearest residential properties.

Council officers across multiple teams have collaborated to design a compliant new facility which can be delivered in a cost-effective manner whilst meeting the current and future needs of our community as the animal population of the Alpine Shire continues to evolve. The proposed design makes use of a durable modular unit which meet stringent safety standards and regulatory requirements with in-built HVAC, safety mesh doors to

control access ensuring a safe and secure space for council staff when dealing with dogs, and a more modest shed with an internal fit out to accommodate a cattery, food preparation and storage area.

ISSUES

Planning for the redevelopment of the pound facility has been progressing over an extended period of time, with the team very conscious of the high cost of replacing the existing pound with a new-build facility. However, increasing challenges experienced by the team over recent months in rehoming noisy dogs, and in handling dangerous dogs, together with extreme heat conditions experienced over the summer months, have heightened the urgency of delivering a long-term solution instead of addressing issues through discrete upgrades to the existing facility. Hence the request for Council to commit to commencing this as an unbudgeted project in 2025/26, allowing completion at the earliest opportunity.

The proposed facility has been designed with sufficient futureproof capacity based on current and future population estimates across the Alpine Shire. It includes sufficient space for first aid, storage, food preparation, the rehoming of the existing cattery consisting of eight cages, capacity for up to four dogs and a fenced off dog run area.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The key legislation that governs Council's animal pound operations is the Domestic Animal Management Act 1994. Council's operations are required to comply with the Code of Practice for the Management of Dogs and Cats in Shelters and Pounds (Agriculture Victoria/Animal Welfare Victoria).

The recommendation is in accordance with the 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
- 2.1 New capital projects and works will be strategically aligned and planned to support long-term sustainability

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The estimated overall project capital cost is \$272,000, and expenditure will be split across the 2025/26 and 2026/27 financial years.

Funding in the 2026/27 financial year can be accommodated from within the 'new/upgrade' annual capital funding provision, based on the adopted Financial Plan 2025-2034.

A project manager from the capital works team will be assigned responsibility for delivering this project.

A breakdown of the estimated total project costs is provided in the table below:

Item	Amount
Slab	\$14,250.00
Modular Unit and installations	\$105,000.00
Shed kit and erection	\$40,000.00
Lining, Insulation and internal fit out (cattery, kitchen/first aid areas...)	\$41,737.00
Lighting and AC (shed)	\$5,000.00
External fencing	\$10,500.00
Service connections	\$15,000.00
Decommissioning of the existing animal pound	\$5,000.00
Contingency 15%	\$35,513.00
Total Unbudgeted Expenditure Required	\$272,000.00

The existing animal pound facility is expected to be decommissioned in the 2027/2028 financial year, given its limited future utility and the lack of justification for ongoing maintenance or renewal investment.

The new pound facility is expected to have a useful life of approximately 40 years, with ongoing lifecycle costs typically averaging around 3% of the original capital investment each year. For this facility, that equates to an estimated annual cost of \$8,400.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
Health & Safety risks to staff when handling dangerous animals	Very likely	Major	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dangerous dogs transported to suitable facility outside the Alpine Shire until a new facility is built. • Construction of a new propose built animal pound that is compliant with all health and safety requirements for dangerous dogs.
Insufficient budget	Unlikely	Major	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete comprehensive planning with all relevant stakeholders to ensure full compliance with applicable Acts and Codes, thereby confirming the scope is appropriate to support reliable budget estimation. •

CONSULTATION

Consultation has taken place with the local laws team regarding design and location of the new facility. Additionally, Council officers consulted with other rural councils regarding their operating models and confirmed that council-owned and operated animal pound facilities, meeting appropriate standards, are the most viable and cost-effective option.

CONCLUSION

Council's animal pound facility has reached the end of its useful life, and replacement with a new facility is recommended. Given the current challenges in complying with the relevant Code of Practice, it is recommended that Council approves unbudgeted expenditure to enable the project to commence immediately.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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

- Director Assets
- Manager Assets and Waste

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

Cr Andersen returned to the meeting at 6.14pm.

8.2.5 Glass Only Recycling Service - Community Consultation

INTRODUCTION

This report relates to the Victorian Government requirement for Alpine Shire Council (Council) to introduce a separate glass recycling service to residential land by 1 July 2027, through The Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) Act 2021.

RESOLUTION

Cr Ronco

Cr Graham

That Council:

1. Reaffirms its advocacy position resolved at the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 24 June 2025, updated to align with the collective advocacy position of the group of 34 Victorian councils, which is to request:
 - a. a delay in the implementation date for the mandatory glass service to allow for further evaluation and alignment with emerging national standards;
 - b. expansion of Victoria's Container Deposit Scheme to include wine and spirit bottles; and
 - c. finalisation of the Draft Household Waste and Recycling Service Standard 2024 (Draft Service Standard).
2. Endorses a community engagement process to determine a reasonably practicable glass-only service model for the Alpine Shire, including:
 - a. the method of collection that should be used in the Alpine Shire to achieve compliance (i.e., kerbside collection versus drop-off);
 - b. the volume of glass needing to be collected in a glass-only service, including the amount of glass not currently being taken out of the yellow bin through the use of Victoria's Container Deposit Scheme; and
3. Notes that Council officers will consider community feedback and report back to Council at a future Council meeting.

Carried Unanimously

BACKGROUND

The Victorian Government's circular economy policy (Recycling Victoria: a new economy), 2020, introduced a mandatory four stream waste and recycling system for all Victorian households. The Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) Act 2021 (the Act), under this policy, requires councils to provide a municipal glass recycling service as one of these four streams, to residential land (Section 60 (1) (c)). The requirements for this service are guided by the Household Waste and Recycling Draft Service Standard 2024 (the Draft Service Standard) that prescribe an implementation deadline of 1 July 2027. The policy aims to increase capture rates and quality of glass recyclables by reducing contamination and breakage through separating glass at the source, reported in the

Draft Service Standard and associated Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) to have a net financial benefit as well as an environmental benefit.

At the Ordinary Council Meeting held 24 June 2025, Council adopted an official advocacy position to the Victorian Government to delay the implementation date for the glass-only service, as well as officially establishing Council as a member of a state-wide Glass Advocacy Group.

Due to the lack of response from the Victorian Government to this advocacy position, Council should commence planning for the implementation of a glass-only service in the Alpine Shire that complies with the Draft Household Waste and Recycling Service Standard 2024 (effective regulations under the Act), to minimise the risk of potential penalties associated with non-compliance.

Details of draft services standards

The Draft Service Standard states councils and Alpine Resorts Victoria (ARV) must provide each of the four streams of waste as a kerbside collection service unless this is not 'reasonably practicable' (2.2.1):

A council or ARV may assess that it is not reasonably practicable to provide a service to a household or class of households as a kerbside collection service if:

- a household does not have appropriate onsite space for bin infrastructure, or
- a collection vehicle cannot access the kerbside of the household; or
- the area council or ARV has responsibility for has a geographically dispersed population.

If it is not reasonably practicable to provide a kerbside collection service for one or more of the four streams of waste and recycling services, those services must be provided as a drop off service.

From 1 July 2027, in accordance with these Draft Service Standards, glass of any kind will no longer be accepted in the comingled recycling (yellow) bin. General waste bins will accept glass items not accepted in the glass recycling service.

Council advocacy position

At the 24 June 2025 Ordinary Council Meeting, Council adopted an official advocacy position to the Victorian Government, both directly and as a member of a coalition of 34 Victorian councils with aligned concerns (the Glass Advocacy Group). This position was to delay the required implementation of a glass only recycling service and the removal of glass from comingled recycling, until the Victorian Government clearly demonstrates how the benefits of a new glass-only service (the 'purple bin') will outweigh the increased costs to be imposed on ratepayers. The Glass Advocacy Group has since further developed its advocacy position, summarised in the following points:

- a delay in the implementation date for the mandatory glass service, to allow for further evaluation and alignment with emerging national standards;

- expansion of Victoria's Container Deposit Scheme (CDS), to include wine and spirit bottles, as a more practical alternative to implementing a glass-only household service; and
- finalisation of the Draft Service Standard.

Council's advocacy position will be communicated through a state-wide five-week public campaign planned to commence in April 2026.

In 2024, Council determined that the economic and environmental costs of a separate glass-only kerbside service outweigh anticipated benefits. A 2024 Tonkin and Taylor Pty Ltd report found that implementation and ongoing costs were significantly underestimated in the RIS when compared with data from 22 Victorian councils.

Although the Victorian Government has committed \$129 million to recycling reform, research by the Glass Advocacy Group indicates this funding would cover less than 10% of glass service implementation costs per council, with most costs falling on ratepayers. Cost modelling showed that a separate glass service combined with the CDS is the highest-cost option for councils, while retaining commingled recycling with an optimised CDS is the lowest-cost option.

Environmental impacts include 2.7 million additional bins across Victoria (16,200 tonnes of plastic) and 158 additional trucks, generating an estimated 354 tonnes of CO₂-e emissions per four-weekly collection cycle.

Response from Recycling Victoria (RV)

Recycling Victoria's Draft Service Standard has been in draft form since 2024. There has been no formal response from the Victorian Government to either Council's or to the Glass Advocacy Group's advocacy positions to date. RV has most recently asserted that a lack of compliance with obligations set out under the Act and the Draft Service Standard will be subject to criminal prosecution and met with the full force of the law.

Options for glass-only service

Several factors distinguish Alpine Shire from other municipalities, most notably geography. Council's current kerbside collection contract, in place until 2030/2031, relies on a Material Recovery Facility (MRF) located in Albury, NSW. This facility operates under NSW Government regulations and is not subject to Victoria's four-stream household waste reforms. The MRF is configured to sort glass from the commingled stream and is unlikely to change, meaning any cost savings from removing glass are minimal, while the cost of a separate glass-only service would be high (see table below).

In addition, the Draft Service Standard applies only to households, not commercial properties. Due to Alpine Shire's small, dispersed population, single collection vehicles service entire townships, including both residential and commercial properties. Under the existing collection routes, it is not possible to prevent glass being collected in the same truck. As a result, even if a compliant four-stream service was introduced from 1 July 2027, commingled collection vehicles operating in Alpine Shire would still contain glass.

ISSUES

A summary of the key issues is outlined below:

1. our interstate (NSW) MRF does not offer a glass out service. The Alpine Shire will pay for glass to be separated unnecessarily.
2. the cost of implementing either a kerbside or drop off service to Alpine Shire residents is very high (refer to Financial and Resource Implications below) for very low financial, circular economy or environmental benefits.
3. the glass-only service is only mandated for residential properties, and does not include commercial properties. If Alpine Shire waste services complied with the Draft Service Standard, comingled collection trucks would still collect glass.
4. several rural councils with a kerbside service have reported very low presentation rates. With councils needing to pay for collection services regardless of the presentation rates, ratepayers face significant financial costs for little circular economy benefit.
5. expanding the CDS as an alternative to providing a glass-only service is predicted to result in greater glass recycling rates at net financial benefit to ratepayers.
6. Council must begin the process of implementing some form of glass-only service by the mandated date of 1 July 2027 to avoid potential prosecution. This includes determining through community consultation what model of service (kerbside or drop-off) is reasonably practicable for Alpine Shire's population.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Alpine Shire Community Vision and Council Plan 2025-2029

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

Local Government Act 2020

The recommendations are consistent with section 9(2) of the Local Government Act 2020, the overarching governance principles:

- (b) priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations;
- (c) Councils are required to promote the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks; and

- (g) The ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

As stated in the Draft Services Standards, glass-only collection services must be provided as a kerbside or a drop off service, with kerbside being preferred. Below are the predicted costs.

Implementation and first year service costs for glass-only service

IMPLEMENTATION	Number of tenements	Cost per tenement*	Cost
Bin supply and delivery	7000	\$46.70	\$326,899
Education material delivery	7000	\$1.06	\$7,385
Bin serial number recording	7000	\$1.79	\$12,554
TOTAL		\$49.55	\$346,838
FIRST YEAR OF SERVICE			
KERBSIDE	Rate/Household/Year	Tenements	Total Costs
Glass Collection	\$51.66	7000	\$361,643
Comingled Collection	-\$0.60	7000	-\$4,172
TOTAL	\$51.07	7000	\$357,471
DROP-OFF	Assumes up to 10 drop off locations deployed across Shire		
Est Tonnes/Year	190**		
Est Collections/Year	47.5		
Transfer Stations (3 Bins)	\$83,132		
Townships (7 Bins)	\$92,540		
All Drop-Off	\$175,672		

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
Financial risk if Council is required to deliver kerbside service by 1 July 2027	Almost certain	Moderate	Allow for costs in budget, including adding waste charges to residents

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
Financial penalty if Council is prosecuted by EPA for failure to implement glass-only service by 1 July 2027. Risk of penalties estimated to be up to \$250,000	Unlikely	Moderate	Council takes steps towards instating service by 1 July 2027, including community engagement to establish what service model is reasonably practicable
Reputational risk if Council does not continue to advocate for best waste management outcome for community and the environment	Very likely	Moderate	Council continues with advocacy position independently as well as part of the Glass Advocacy Group

CONSULTATION

This report recommends that consultation should be carried out with the municipal community as per the recommendation in this report.

CONCLUSION

The work done by the Glass Advocacy Group has established that the overall aims of the Victorian Government's circular economy policy and the Act are not likely to be met by the mandated requirements of the Draft Service Standard. The requirements financially disadvantage ratepayers and are not anticipated to yield environmental benefits. Continued advocacy by Council and the Glass Advocacy Group is required. Due to a lack of response to the advocacy carried out to date, Council should commence planning for the implementation of a glass-only service to minimise the risk of prosecution.

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
- Waste and Circular Economy Coordinator

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. **8.2.5.1** Mandatory Glass Service

8.3 DIRECTOR CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY - NATHALIE COOKE

8.3.1 Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026 - 2029

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the report is to present the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026-2029 for adoption by Council.

RESOLUTION

Cr Andersen

Cr Ronco

That Council:

1. Notes that submissions received as part of the exhibition of the draft Access and Inclusion Plan were considered in the review of the final Plan;
2. Adopts the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026-2029; and
3. Notes the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan Action Plan, which supports the implementation of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026-2029.

Carried Unanimously

BACKGROUND

Local Government has a legislative and social obligation to ensure all community members can participate fully and equitably in their day-to-day lives.

Under Section 38 of the Victorian Disability Act 2006, councils are required to prepare a Disability Action Plan identifying actions to remove barriers and increase inclusion for, and change attitudes and practices which discriminate against, people with disability.

Council has developed this Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026-2029 (the Plan), noting that members of the public who may have difficulty using services, including older citizens, parents with prams and people with short term injuries or health conditions may also benefit from the actions identified in a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan.

Implementation of a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan contributes to Council's obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006. It also supports the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Council adopted a Disability Action Plan in 2011 which was revised in 2014. Subsequently an Access and Inclusion Plan was adopted in 2021.

The Plan has been developed in consultation with key internal and external stakeholders alongside the development of the Council Plan and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025–2029. The draft Plan was endorsed for public exhibition for four (4)

weeks from 25 February 2026. Feedback from community has been received, considered, and where appropriate incorporated into the final Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026-2029.

The Plan aims to be both aspirational and achievable within the resources and budget of Council and recommends that access and inclusion be considered in all aspects of Council's work.

The Plan is an overarching strategic document which will be supported by a Disability Access and Inclusion Action Plan.

ISSUES

The 2021-2024 Access and Inclusion Plan was overly ambitious for the available resources resulting in slower progress across priority areas.

To improve delivery, a more achievable and staged Plan is proposed, supported by an Action Plan which sets realistic timeframes and clearer workload alignment. Biannual reporting will strengthen oversight, enable early identification of risks, and ensure actions remain achievable within available resources, leading to better outcomes for the community.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Under Section 38 of the Victorian Disability Act 2006, Council is required to adopt a Disability Action Plan.

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

- 2.5 We support our communities' mental health and wellbeing
- 3.2 We support healthy lifestyles, including movement and access to healthy food
- 3.3 We support our communities to access our services and facilities regardless of age, ability, sexuality, gender, ethnicity, or background
- 3.7 We support people of all ages and stages to thrive

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The 2025/26 Budget contains an allocation of \$50,000 for access and inclusion initiatives. The draft 2026/27 Budget includes an allocation of \$50,000 for access and inclusion initiatives.

Capital works projects which address outcomes of the Plan will be added to Council's Project Pipeline as appropriate and will be subject to future budget approval.

Minor works may be accommodated from within existing operational budgets.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
Council does not comply with legislative requirement to adopt a Disability Action Plan	Unlikely	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026-29 • Develop Action Plan to support implementation of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026-29
Council is unable to deliver outcomes of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 20226-29	Possible	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal stakeholder engagement to ensure Plan is achievable within current resourcing and budgetary constraints • Develop Action Plan for clarity of responsibility for delivery outcomes • Biannual reporting on Disability Access and Inclusion Plan and Action Plan.

CONSULTATION

Development of the draft Plan was informed through desktop review, consultation with residents, community organisations and service providers through community pop-up sessions, a community online survey, a staff online survey and engagement with internal stakeholders.

The draft Plan was endorsed by Council for public exhibition from 25 February 2026 to 26 March 2026 and was available online and in print at Council libraries, Visitor Information Centres and Council offices. Further consultation was also undertaken with internal and external stakeholders.

Feedback was received through multiple channels, including an online survey, email submissions, face-to-face meetings, and telephone enquiries. The online engagement platform recorded 54 individual views, with Council social media reaching 3,524 unique viewers.

A total of eight (8) responses were received from individuals and organisations during the engagement period. Three (3) responses related to suggested improvements to Council services, processes, or environments to enhance access and inclusion. These matters are operational in nature, falling outside the scope of the Plan and will be referred to the relevant Council teams for consideration. One (1) response provided a general comment.

Overall feedback on the draft Plan was positive. Four (4) submissions which raised matters directly relevant to the draft Plan have been reviewed, with updates incorporated where appropriate to reflect the feedback received.

No.	Submitter	Summary of Submission	Response
1	Individual	Suggest a shorter, easy to read version be made available.	Noted, this will be made available on Council's website.
2	Organisation 1	<p>Suggest change name of Plan to 'Disability Access and Inclusion Plan' for clarity and to better reflect intersectionality with disability.</p> <p>Suggest update 'Purpose of Plan' to reflect that diversity in the context of the Plan refers only to diversity within disability.</p> <p>Broaden reference 'relevant health services'.</p>	Plan has been updated to reflect this submission.

No.	Submitter	Summary of Submission	Response
3	Organisation 2	<p>Gender is not consistently embedded in the Plan. The Plan could be strengthened by more consistently integrating gender considerations across all action areas, rather than limiting this focus primarily to Priority 5.</p> <p>Greater recognition of women, girls, gender-diverse people, and carers could be embedded across safety, facilities, employment, and emergency-related actions.</p> <p>Safety actions could more explicitly address gendered risks, workforce actions could better recognise the gendered impacts of caring roles, and key outcomes could be reviewed with explicit attention to gender differences.</p>	<p>This submission is noted. Council will continue to review the impact of gender and intersectionality on all initiatives resulting from the Plan.</p>
4	Community Group	<p>Over-emphasis on physical access.</p> <p>Hidden disabilities not actioned as specific and measurable actions.</p> <p>Need for stronger Universal Design approach in Action Plan.</p> <p>Consultation identified the need for improved access to local allied health and specialist services, particularly autism-specific and neurodiversity-affirming services however, no concrete actions or advocacy commitments are included.</p> <p>Autistic community not explicitly recognised.</p> <p>There is an opportunity to strengthen outcomes by committing to lived-experience-led neurodiversity training for Council staff and the broader community.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Action Plan has been updated to reflect this feedback</p> <p>Plan has been updated to reflect this feedback</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Action Plan has been updated to reflect this feedback</p>

CONCLUSION

Council officers have reviewed and considered all feedback received during the public exhibition period, incorporating changes where appropriate. It is recommended that Council adopts the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026–2029 to meet Council's legislative and social obligations and notes the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan Action Plan 2026-29 which will support delivery of initiatives.

Officers will provide biannual reports to Council on actions and progress against the Action Plan in October and April each year for the life of the Plan.

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 Community Development
- Community Development Coordinator

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. **8.3.1.1** Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026-2029
2. **8.3.1.2** Disability Access and Inclusion Plan - Action Plan

8.3.2 Draft Surveillance Technology Policy for Community Engagement

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to present the draft Surveillance Technology Policy (Policy) to be placed on public exhibition to obtain community feedback for review and consideration for final Policy development. The draft Policy combines Council's surveillance activities into one document, which are currently considered separately in the CCTV Surveillance Cameras Policy and Body Worn Camera Policy.

RESOLUTION

Cr Byrne

Cr Andersen

That Council:

1. Endorses the draft Surveillance Technology Policy be placed on public exhibition for a period of four (4) weeks, in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy;
2. Invites public submissions regarding the draft Surveillance Technology Policy; and
3. Notes that submissions received as part of the exhibition of the draft Surveillance Technology Policy will be considered and the final Policy will be presented to be adopted at a future meeting of Council.

Carried Unanimously

BACKGROUND

The Surveillance Technology Policy is intended to replace Council's CCTV Surveillance Cameras Policy, approved in November 2021, and the Body Worn Camera Policy, approved in September 2020. These existing policies have been reviewed to consider changes required to ensure that Council is operating surveillance devices in accordance with legislation and best practice and to determine whether it is recommended that they should continue as separate policies or be replaced with an overarching policy which encompasses these processes.

The draft Policy considers Council's use of the following types of surveillance devices:

- Body worn cameras and personal duress alarms;
- Closed Circuit Television Cameras (CCTV);
- Tourism cameras and promotional video / photos;
- Location tracking devices and software;
- Asset inspection cameras including drones and vehicle mounted cameras; and
- Other recording devices such as traffic survey cameras.

The Surveillance Technology Policy details how Council will comply with the requirements of relevant legislation including the Surveillance Devices Act 1999 and the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014.

ISSUES

The review of Council's previous Body Worn Camera and CCTV Surveillance Cameras policies highlighted that there are a range of activities that Council undertakes that are, or could be categorised as, surveillance and which are not captured by the existing policies. In addition, while Council has processes and procedures in place to manage most aspects of surveillance activities, these are managed by different internal departments, potentially leading to varied approaches and a lack of coordination across the organisation.

Victorian Auditor-General's Office Report: Security and Privacy of Surveillance Technology in Public Places (VAGO, 2018)

The Victorian Auditor-General Office (VAGO) reviewed surveillance technology in public places at five Victorian councils in 2018. The report found there are two key requirements that councils need to meet for all surveillance activities:

- Management and oversight of surveillance activities
- Privacy and data security

The draft Policy addresses these two requirements.

Summary of Key Policy Changes

Council has decided to prepare an overarching policy to clearly delineate when an activity constitutes surveillance, whether intentionally or not, and to ensure that all surveillance activities are managed appropriately and comply with the relevant legislation around privacy and data protection.

The key changes are as follows:

- Inclusion of all Council activities that may constitute surveillance, such as tourism cameras, promotional videos / photos, asset inspection cameras and other types of image or audio recording devices;
- Creation of a Surveillance Oversight Committee (made up of senior Council officers) to oversee all surveillance activities undertaken by Council (noting Council retains approvals for public place CCTV cameras);
- Implementation of a procedure for assessing and approving requests for surveillance technology, using the Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner's seven principles for public place surveillance and a Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) assessment;
- Implementation of a centralised register for all surveillance devices and approved activities undertaken by Council;
- Provision of clear pathways for public complaints or enquiries about any of Council's surveillance activities.

The draft Policy ensures that Council officers have a clear understanding of what activities constitute surveillance and how to ensure they are conducted with appropriate safeguards and oversight.

The Policy does not allow the use of artificial intelligence or facial recognition technology as part of any surveillance activity.

Transition Period

It is proposed that there is a one-year transition period following the adoption of the Policy where existing Council surveillance devices are assessed and onboarded to the new Policy standard.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

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

The key resource implication for the introduction of the Policy will be the creation of a Surveillance Oversight Committee. This Committee is proposed to use existing staff time and will place additional demands on resourcing. It is expected that resourcing requirements will be highest in the first 12 months as existing surveillance devices and activities are assessed and onboarded to the Policy standard through the transition period noted above.

There are minimal financial or budgetary implications through the introduction of the Policy itself. However, any Department wishing to introduce, or undertake, surveillance activities will need to seek operational approval through the established budget processes. There will be minor costs associated with upgrading existing activities to meet the new Policy standard (e.g. installing new signage).

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surveillance Technology Policy is not adopted and Council continues uncoordinated approach to surveillance activities across the organisation. 	Possible	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft being presented for endorsement to proceed to community consultation at April Ordinary Council Meeting.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate oversight of surveillance technology results in breach of privacy or unlawful use of devices. 	Possible	Major	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surveillance Oversight Committee to oversee all surveillance activities across Council. Policy provides clear guidance on what constitutes surveillance and assessment / approval pathways.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate management of surveillance technology devices or data leads to data breach or compromise. 	Possible	Major	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Surveillance Oversight Committee is responsible to ensure processes and procedures are robust. The ICT team to constantly monitor and improve systems as needed to mitigate likely threats to data integrity.

CONSULTATION

The draft Surveillance Technology Policy was informed by feedback from Victoria Police and internal Council departments.

It is recommended that the Surveillance Technology Policy is placed on public exhibition for a period of four (4) weeks. The community engagement process provides an important opportunity to obtain the views of the community in relation to the content of the draft Policy.

On completion of the exhibition period, all feedback and submissions will be considered prior to the Policy being presented to Council for adoption.

CONCLUSION

The draft Surveillance Technology Policy will ensure Council manages all surveillance activities to a high standard and with regard to all relevant legislative and best practice requirements. Council recognises that surveillance has the potential to interfere with people's legitimate expectations of privacy, and robust policy and oversight is necessary to ensure that the aims of surveillance are appropriately balanced against privacy.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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

- Director Corporate and Community
- Manager Corporate

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. **8.3.2.1** Draft Surveillance Technology Policy

8.3.3 Information Privacy Policy

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to present the Information Privacy Policy (V4) to be considered for adoption by Council. The reviewed Policy updates the previous Information Privacy Policy (V3) with consideration of the Gender Equality Act and other minor changes.

RESOLUTION

Cr Byrne

Cr Andersen

That Council:

1. Notes that the Information Privacy Policy (V4) has been reviewed with minor amendments made to ensure legislative compliance;
2. Adopts the Information Privacy Policy (V4);
3. Revokes the previous Information Privacy Policy (V3); and
4. Signs and seals the Information Privacy Policy (V4) at the appropriate stage of this meeting.

Carried Unanimously

BACKGROUND

The Information Privacy Policy implements the requirements of the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 and Health Records Act 2001.

The ten Information Privacy Principles (IPP) are contained in Schedule 1 to the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014. IPPs govern the collection and handling of personal information by public sector organisations, including councils.

The eleven Health Privacy Principles (HPP) are contained in Schedule 1 to the Health Records Act 2001. HPPs govern the handling of health information by public and private sector organisations.

All personal and health information collected by Council must be managed in accordance with the IPPs and HPPs. These principles establish standards for the handling of personal, sensitive and health information including collection, use, disclosure, storage, security, accessibility and disposal.

ISSUES

Summary of Policy Changes

The key change relevant to the Information Privacy Policy is the introduction of the Gender Equality Act 2020 and its implementation across public sector organisations in Victoria. A Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) was conducted to inform the review of the policy, with key findings summarised below.

Other changes to the Policy include:

- Alignment with the Council Plan 2025-2029.
- Explanatory text detailing where the HPP and IPP come from (legislative context).

Gender Impact Assessment

A Gender Impact Assessment was undertaken and the findings used to inform the review of the Policy. The Gender Impact Assessment findings are summarised as follows:

- Personal information (including health information) can be used to target people for a range of purposes, including financial gain, control or to commit family violence offences. While these offences can occur against any person, the consequences of a data breach are often higher for women or gender diverse people.
- Health information may have greater sensitivity for women and may place women at greater risk if this information is compromised (for example information on reproductive health).
- The ability to remain anonymous where possible is an important consideration for some people in accessing Council services.
- Some people in the community, including some migrants, indigenous people and other culturally and linguistically diverse people have had negative experiences with governments' collection and use of data. Transparency and accountability are essential to build trust where the collection of personal information is necessary.

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

There are no known financial or budgetary implications of the Policy.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information Privacy Policy is not adopted and Council continues use of outdated policy. 	Possible	Minor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft being presented for adoption at April Ordinary Council Meeting. Internal communication and training will be undertaken to inform staff of the newly-adopted policy and support their understanding of the document.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal information is compromised through ICT issue / breach. 	Possible	Major	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing ICT systems monitoring, review and upgrade as needed to manage likely threats.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal information is compromised through procedural error of lack of oversight 	Possible	Major	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Departments undergo training on risk assessment and management to ensure that personal data protection is robust. Audit committee oversight of risk management practices to ensure holistic view of risk across organisation.

CONSULTATION

The Information Privacy Policy was informed by a review of the relevant legislation, Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner (OVIC) guidance, and other Victorian councils' policies.

A Gender Impact Assessment was conducted internally by Council.

It is recommended that the Information Privacy Policy is adopted without community consultation. This is consistent with the requirements of Council's Community Engagement Policy, given that the Policy:

- Implements Council's responsibilities under State Government legislation, and as such cannot be meaningfully changed through community engagement.
- Has undergone minimal change since the last version of the Policy.

CONCLUSION

The reviewed Information Privacy Policy will ensure Council appropriately implements the requirements of the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 and Health Records Act 2001. This review has minimal changes since the last version of the Policy, adding in considerations following a Gender Impact Assessment and the addition of explanatory text detailing the legislative context.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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

- Director Corporate and Community
- Manager Corporate

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. **8.3.3.1** Information Privacy Policy

8.3.4 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 the Chief Executive Officer, and to members of Council staff.

RESOLUTION

Cr Byrne

Cr Ronco

That Council:

1. Exercises the powers conferred by section 11(1)(b) of the Local Government Act 2020, so that:
 - a. There be delegated to the person holding the position, acting in or performing the duties of Chief Executive Officer the powers, duties and functions set out in attachment "S5 - Instrument of Delegation from Council to the Chief Executive Officer" (instrument S5), subject to the conditions and limitations specified in that instrument;
 - b. Instrument S5 be signed and sealed at the appropriate stage of this meeting;
 - c. Instrument S5 comes into force immediately the common seal of Council is affixed to the instrument;
 - d. On the coming into force of instrument S5, the previous version of instrument S5 dated 9 September 2025 be revoked; and
 - e. The duties and functions set out in instrument S5 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.
2. 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 28 October 2025 be revoked;

- e. On the coming into force of instrument S6, instrument S6A dated 27 January 2026 be revoked; and
 - f. 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.
3. Exercises the powers conferred by the legislation referred to in attachment "S18 - Instrument of Sub-Delegation from Council to Members of Council Staff (EPA 2017)" (instrument S18), 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 S18, the powers, duties and functions set out in that instrument, subject to the conditions and limitations specified in that Instrument
 - b. Instrument S18 be signed and sealed at the appropriate stage of this meeting
 - c. Instrument S18 comes into force immediately the common seal of Council is affixed to the Instrument
 - d. On the coming into force of instrument S18, the previous version of instrument S18 dated 9 September 2025 be revoked; and
 - e. The duties and functions set out in instrument S18 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. Changes in legislation and staff titles are key reasons that Instruments of Delegation must be kept up to date.

Legislative powers, duties, and functions

Council's S5 Instrument of Delegation to the CEO passes on Council's powers directly to the CEO. For instances where decisions are required that are not within the CEO's delegation, these must be presented directly to Council - for example, where a purchase exceeds the CEO's financial delegation.

Where legislation allows it, the CEO then sub-delegates specific legislative duties to staff, via a separate Instrument. 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.

The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) delegates several of its powers to Council, which must then be sub-delegated to Council staff. The S18 Instrument of Sub-Delegation to Members of Council Staff ensures this occurs.

ISSUES

Legislative updates

S5 Instrument of Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer

No changes have been made to the S5 Instrument. Best practice recommends that the S5 Instrument be updated at the same time as all other instruments, to ensure that the legislative powers available at the time are passed on from Council to the Chief Executive Officer.

S6 Instrument of Delegation to members of Council staff

There have been minor updates to the legislative powers, duties, and function in the S6 Instrument of Delegation since it was last adopted in October 2025, affecting the Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2003, and Planning and Environment Act 1987. These have been included in the document, with the appropriate members of Council staff delegated to those legislative provisions.

Council previously adopted an S6A Instrument in January 2026, which was a supplementary instrument to support changes to the Planning and Environment Act 1987 as a result of the Consumer and Planning Legislation Amendment (Housing Statement Reform) Act 2025. These changes have now been merged into the S6 Instrument, meaning the S6A Instrument can now be revoked.

S18 Instrument of Delegation to members of Council staff (EPA 2017)

There have been no legislative changes to the S18 Instrument, however the Instrument is being updated to ensure continuity with the entire delegations package.

Staff members with delegated duties

No changes to staff titles have been made in this update.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

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

5.2 A responsible, transparent and responsive organisation

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 Manager, Director, and CEO.

CONCLUSION

A review and update of the S5 Instrument of Delegation to the CEO, S6 Instrument of Delegation to members of Council staff, and S18 Instrument of Delegation to members of Council staff (EPA 2017) will ensure that the CEO and 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
- Manager Corporate
- Governance Officer

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. **8.3.4.1** S5 Instrument of Delegation - Council to CEO - April 2026
2. **8.3.4.2** S6 Instrument of Delegation - Council to members of Council staff - April 2026
3. **8.3.4.3** S18 Instrument of Delegation - Council to members of staff (EPA 2017) - April 2026

8.3.5 Community Engagement Informing Draft 2026/27 Budget

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to respond to the community feedback received by Council during the preparation of the draft 2026/27 Budget.

RESOLUTION

Cr Andersen

Cr Smith

That Council:

1. Considers written community feedback received during the preparation of the draft 2026/27 Budget; and
2. Provides a summary on Alpine Engage to inform community members of the impact their feedback has had on the development of the draft 2026/27 Budget.

Carried Unanimously

BACKGROUND

Council has prepared its annual draft 2026/27 Budget, which is being recommended to be placed on public exhibition at this Ordinary Council Meeting in a subsequent report.

In preparing for the draft 2026/27 Budget, Council undertook an online community survey on its Engage Alpine community engagement platform to better understand community priorities. Through this process 97 responses were received.

This engagement was a change in approach to previous year's budget development, where Council would seek submissions from the community for new projects and services to be considered for inclusion in the upcoming budget. This change in approach was made following significant community engagement recently undertaken to develop the Community Vision 2030, Council Plan 2025 - 2029, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and Council Plan Action Plan which will guide budget priorities for the subsequent four years.

This report summarises the feedback received during the community engagement campaign.

The full open text and quantitative engagement reports are provided in the attachments to this meeting agenda.

ISSUES

Community Consultation for the draft 2026/27 Budget

Comprehensive community engagement was undertaken in 2024 and 2025 during the preparation of the Community Vision 2030, Council Plan 2025 - 2029, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and Council Plan Action Plan.

In addition to broad community engagement, Council undertook a deliberative engagement process, which brought a representative group of community members from across Alpine Shire together with Councillors. This group met over a series of six workshops to review, consider, and provide direction on wider community feedback and respond to the key challenges facing Council.

The strategic suite of documents was adopted by Council in October 2025 and will be used to inform the development of each annual budget to 2028/29.

Due to this extensive engagement and resulting strategic documents, Council opted to change its engagement approach during the development of the draft 2026/27 Budget. The community was asked which services, facilities and infrastructure were most valuable to them, and where they believe Council should focus expenditure.

The results from this community engagement not only support the development of the draft 2026/27 Budget but will also enable Council to undertake future service reviews and understand community priorities and experiences with key Council projects, services and facilities.

Summary of community feedback gathered during development of the draft 2026/27 Budget

The draft 2026/27 Budget community survey was open from 17 December 2025 to 19 January 2026. Respondents were asked to identify which of Council's services should be considered highest priority, and to rank in order of priority the following key services:

- Roads and transport
- Community facilities
- Environmental services
- Community wellbeing
- Planning and development

The survey also asked respondents the following qualitative (open text) questions:

- Are there services not previously listed that are important to you?
- If Council had additional funding to invest, which three areas should be the highest priority?
- Please share additional priorities or improvements, such as community programs, events, projects or enhancements to local facilities.

A total of 97 responses were received. The open-text submissions have been summarised into themes, and responses to each submission are provided. The responses provided outline those items supported within the draft 2026/27 Budget document; projects and strategic pieces of work currently being delivered; items of community interest that are the responsibility of other agencies; and those projects not being considered within the current Council Plan period.

The full community engagement reports and responses are provided as an attachment to this agenda report.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Community engagement processes have been governed by Council's Community Engagement Policy.

The recommendations are in accordance with the following Strategic Objectives of the Council Plan 2025-2029:

- 1.1 Our highest priority is improving our communication – both listening and providing information and feedback
- 1.4 Our continued engagement will promote community understanding and contribution to decisions that bring positive change across Alpine Shire
- 2.8 We achieve long-term financial resilience to meet community needs now and into the future.

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There are no resourcing or cost implications associated with the recommendations in this report.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
Community feedback is not reflected in the final document, and the reasons for this are not clearly communicated.	Possible	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider all submissions received and ensure communication is clear and comprehensive.
Delivery of a project/program that is outside budget, not fit for purpose, of poor quality or does not meet community expectations.	Possible	Minor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the Council Plan and Council Plan Action Plan to guide future budgeting, and deliver projects and priorities already identified in these documents. • Work to balance the needs of the community with financial sustainability considerations.

CONSULTATION

The draft 2026/27 Budget community survey was open from 17 December 2025, to 19 January 2026. A total of 97 responses were received. Feedback received was considered in the preparation of the draft 2026/27 Budget.

CONCLUSION

All submissions have been considered by Council. This report reflects the Officers' recommendations to Council following a review of each submission. The draft 2026/27 Budget will be placed on public exhibition for further community feedback.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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

- Director Corporate and Community
- Manager Corporate

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. **8.3.5.1** Draft 2026-27 Budget Quantative Engagement Summary
2. **8.3.5.2** Draft 2026-27 Budget Open Text Engagement Summary

8.3.6 Draft 2026/27 Budget for Community Engagement

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to present Council's draft 2026/27 Budget for endorsement to be placed on public exhibition, prior to considering a recommendation to adopt the final Budget at the June 2026 Ordinary Council Meeting.

RESOLUTION

Cr Andersen

Cr Smith

That Council:

1. Notes the draft Alpine Shire Council 2026/27 Budget, featuring a 1.84% increase on rate dollars per Capital Improved Value (CIV). This is in line with the 2.75% State Government cap under the Fair Go Rates System, adjusted to fulfill a Council directive to address an unintentional rate cap non-compliance in 2025/26 to the value of \$168,713;
2. Invites public submissions on this document in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy, for a period of 28 days; and
3. Considers a recommendation to adopt the final 2026/27 Budget at the June 2026 Ordinary Council Meeting.

Carried Unanimously

BACKGROUND

Council is required under section 94(1) of the Local Government Act (2020) to prepare and adopt a budget for each financial year, and the subsequent three financial years of the Council Plan, by 30 June each year.

The Budget is a rolling four-year plan that outlines the financial and non-financial resources that Council requires to achieve the strategic objectives described in the Council Plan.

The Budget is informed by key components of the Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework (ISPRF), including Council's Financial Plan and Asset Plan. Both plans were adopted by Council on 28 October 2025. More information on this framework is available on page 7 of the Draft Budget document.

ISSUES

Council has prepared the draft 2026/27 Budget which is aligned with the Alpine Shire Council Plan 2025-2029.

In 2025 the Essential Services Commission identified through its annual rate cap reconciliation that Council was non-compliant to the rate cap for 2025/26. This was due to a systems error related to the cessation of the Dinner Plain Special Rate. This error resulted in a 3.96% average rate increase being applied for the 2025/26 financial year as

opposed to the 3.00% increase aligned with the rate cap for the financial year. This difference equated to Council raising \$168,713 in excess of the rate cap amount.

At its December Ordinary Council Meeting Council resolved to rectify the error by declaring rates and charges for the 2026/27 financial year at an amount that is no more than \$168,713 below the amount of the rates and charges which would have been raised if Council was to apply the full rate cap as permitted under the Fair Go Rates System and set by the Minister for Local Government.

The draft 2026/27 Budget projects an operating surplus of \$4.4 million, with an underlying deficit of \$209,000. The draft 2026/27 Budget is influenced by:

- A 1.84% increase on rate dollars per Capital Improved Value (CIV). This is in line with the 2.75% State Government cap under the Fair Go Rates System, adjusted to fulfill a Council directive to address an unintentional rate cap non-compliance in 2025/26 of \$168,713.
- A total Operating Expenditure of \$37.4 million.
- A total Capital Works Expenditure of \$10.1 million.

Major initiatives proposed to be delivered under the draft Budget have been aligned to year two Strategic Objectives of the Council Plan 2025 - 2029, being:

Customer Focused Alpine

- Deliver a public Alpine Shire Council Customer Charter that specifies our commitment to customer service, including response times and service expectations.
- Enhance systems and supporting processes to ensure efficient, consistent and timely service delivery and customer experience.
- Increase the level of service we provide to our communities by moving to an internally delivered, proactive model of maintenance.
- Strengthen engagement processes with our communities to increase involvement in key decisions or actions that impact them.

Sustainable and Resilient Alpine

- Implement the Alpine Shire Climate Action Plan 2025-2029.
- Update the Alpine Planning Scheme to address key risks to future development and improve planning certainty and decision making across Alpine Shire.
- Advocate for certainty and sustainability in funding for services specifically targeted as supporting the mental wellbeing of our communities.
- Improve our communities' preparedness for and recovery from future emergencies and support community resilience partnerships and activities.
- Identify and execute targeted strategies to enhance our financial sustainability over the long term.

Vibrant and Healthy Alpine

- Work with partner agencies to support and deliver initiatives that highlight the importance of gender equity and prevention of gender-based violence.
- Continue to improve the service delivery of our aquatic facilities and gym.

- Deliver community focused and family-friendly library services that contribute to the wellbeing of our communities.
- Deliver a rolling program of investment into new pedestrian footpaths and trails.
- Support community connectedness by providing meaningful opportunities to volunteer with our organisation.

Income

Council's total income is projected to be \$41.8 million, being an increase from 2025/26 forecasted income of \$37.2 million. This is largely due to an increase in recurrent operating grants and a predicted increase in non-monetary contributions.

Rates

Rates and charges are budgeted at \$24.3 million which includes a 1.84% increase on rate dollars per Capital Improved Value (CIV). This is in line with the 2.75% State Government cap under the Fair Go Rates System, adjusted to fulfill a Council directive to address an unintentional rate cap non-compliance in 2025/26 of \$168,713.

Fees and Charges

The fees and charges schedule included in the draft Budget 2026/27 provides a comprehensive list of charges applicable for the delivery of services to the community. Broadly fees and charges have increased in line with a proposed indexation of 2.75%, or increases have been based on a cost recovery calculation.

For those fees where the amount is based on a legislated unit fee amount, the unit fees for 2026/27 will be known after the State Budget is delivered in May 2026. Therefore, the details of the unit fee will be provided on Council's website once the final budget, incorporating the Fees and Charges Schedule, is adopted.

Expenditure

Operating Expenditure

At its October 2025 Ordinary General Meeting, Council directed 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 were to be achieved through reductions in employee costs, material and services expenditure, or otherwise as determined by the CEO, with the goal of forming a foundation to support Council's future financial sustainability.

In comparison to the Finance Plan, this budget presents a decrease in materials and services expenditure from \$16.20 million for 2026/27 to \$14.85 million, a total recurrent operational saving of \$1.35 million, reflecting the continued focus on streamlining operations and improving efficiency.

Additional cost savings have been found through reviewing and prioritisation the annual work program to be delivered, and the proposal that a number of projects be undertaken with in house resourcing with no additional budget allocation.

Capital Works Expenditure

Council plans to deliver a capital works program totalling \$10.1 million. This is an increase from the 2025/26 capital works budget of \$9.6 million. This budgeted amount includes \$230,000 of projected carry forwards from the 2025/26 financial year.

Highlights of the proposed capital works program include:

- \$1.8 million for road renewals, with a major focus on upgrades throughout the Kiewa Valley.
- \$1.0 million for building renewals, supporting the upkeep and longevity of key public buildings.
- \$888,000 for plant and equipment, including significant investment in large plant renewal, fleet updates, ICT upgrades, and library collection enhancements.
- \$530,000 for development of the Tawonga South municipal precinct including public amenities.
- \$534,000 for recreation and open space improvements, delivering renewed playing surfaces and upgrades to fencing, seating, and shade structures.
- \$1.6 million for footpaths, trails and cycleways, including new connections in Tawonga, Myrtleford and Bright.
- \$150,000 for building upgrades aligned with Council's Climate Action and Disability Action Plans.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The recommendation is in accordance with the 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

Council prepares its draft Budget with the objective of balancing long term financial sustainability and prioritised delivery against community needs. The draft Budget 2026/27 forecasts an operating surplus of \$4.4 million, with an underlying deficit of \$209,000. The draft Budget is developed in-house and utilises internal resourcing.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Budget is not adopted in line with legislated timeframes and requirements. 	Unlikely	Major	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget timeframes are reviewed and project managed. Sufficient time is provided for appropriate analysis, consultation and consideration to ensure a robust document aligned with legislative requirements.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Budget does not provide a financial framework for delivering year two of the Council Plan. 	Unlikely	Major	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The draft Budget has been aligned with the draft strategic work in train. The Budget is underpinned by individual account line items, and each account is reviewed and approved. Quarterly financial reporting monitors spend and income against budget and reports on variation. Reporting is provided to both the Audit and Risk Committee and Council for endorsement. Strategic work undertaken includes the development of the 10-year Financial Plan, and Council routinely updates its operational long term financial plan to test financial scenarios over the medium to long term.

CONSULTATION

Section 96(1) of the Local Government Act 2020 provides for Council to develop the Budget in accordance with the financial management principles and Council's Community Engagement Policy.

In preparing for the draft Budget 2026/27, Council undertook an online community survey on its Engage Alpine community engagement platform to better understand community priorities. Through this process 97 responses were collected.

This engagement was a change in approach to previous year's budget development, where Council would seek submissions from the community for new projects and services to be considered for inclusion in the upcoming budget. This change in approach was made following significant community engagement recently undertaken to develop the Community Vision 2030, Council Plan 2025 - 2029, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and Council Plan Action Plan which will guide budget priorities for the subsequent four years.

Once endorsed, the draft 2026/27 Budget will be placed on public exhibition for a period of four (4) weeks. Submissions received will be considered prior to the final Budget being presented to the June Ordinary Council Meeting for approval.

CONCLUSION

The draft 2026/27 Budget has been prepared in accordance with the Alpine Shire Council Plan 2025-2029 and the Local Government Act 2020. The draft 2026/27 Budget is presented for Council's endorsement to be placed on public exhibition.

The draft 2026/27 Budget presents a surplus operating position, with a negative adjusted underlying surplus result. Nevertheless, the draft 2026/27 Budget predicts a significantly improved financial position than was presented in the Financial Plan 2025-2035 reflecting the continued focus on streamlining operations and improving efficiency to ensure Council's future financial sustainability.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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

- Director Corporate and Community
- Manager Corporate
- Accountant Accountant

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. **8.3.6.1** Alpine Shire Council Draft Budget 2026/27

Chief Executive Officer – Will Jeremy – left the room at 7:04pm

8.3.7 Independent Member CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee

INTRODUCTION

Council is required to maintain a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Employment and Remuneration Policy in accordance with section 45 of the Local Government Act 2020. The reviewed and updated version of the Policy was adopted at the December 2025 Ordinary Council Meeting. The Policy provides for the appointment of an Independent Member to support the Committee and provide technical expertise.

RESOLUTION

Cr Andersen

Cr Graham

That Council:

1. Approves the appointment of Margaret Devlin from the Centre for Organisational Development as Independent Member on the Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Committee for a term of three-years (with a further one-year option) at a maximum four-year contract value of \$49,628 (plus GST);
2. Delegates the signing of Contract CQ26203 to the Director Corporate & Community.

Carried Unanimously

BACKGROUND

Council is committed to, and will ensure the application of good governance, transparency and fairness in all matters related to the employment, management, and remuneration of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Section 45 of the Local Government Act 2020 (LGA 2020) requires Council to keep in force a CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy (Policy). The Policy must:

- a. Provide for the Council to obtain independent professional advice in relation to the matters dealt with in the CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy; and
- b. Provide for the following:
 - i. The recruitment and appointment process;
 - ii. Provisions to be included in the contract of employment;
 - iii. Performance monitoring;
 - iv. An annual report; and
- c. Any other matters prescribed by the regulations.

ISSUES

CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee

The Policy establishes the requirement to establish a CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee (Committee) for the purpose of considering and making recommendations to Council with respect to the:

- Performance monitoring (and an annual review) of the CEO, including with respect to achievement of set KPIs;
- CEO Remuneration;
- Recruitment and appointment of a CEO, if required;
- Provisions to be included in the contract of employment from time to time;
- Appointment of an Acting CEO; and
- Implementation of the CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy.

The Mayor is the Chairperson of the Committee, and the Committee is supported by an Independent Member. In accordance with section 45(2)(a) of the LGA 2020, the role of the Independent Member is to provide independent professional advice in relation to the matters dealt with in the Policy.

The Committee is required to formally meet at least every twelve (12) months with a six-monthly informal check-in as required, and Special Meetings able to be called with 2 weeks' notice and provide a report to Council as required following meetings, or at least once per year, the report will outline any actions and recommendations from the committee.

Procurement of an Independent Member

Council appointed the current Independent Member for a four-year term at the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 1 March 2022. The term of the Independent Member was to commence no later than 21 March 2022 pending satisfactory completion of pre-appointment paperwork, with remuneration set at \$800 per meeting plus travel allowance.

A Request For Quotation (RFQ) for an Independent Member was released to the market on the 23rd February 2026 to see quotations from suitably qualified and experienced consultant(s) to provide professional advice in relation to the matters dealt with under the CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy in accordance with section 45(2)(a) of the Local Government Act 2020.

The RFQ was listed on Council's tender's website, and known consultants in the field were contacted and directed to the quotation scope and documentation.

The Independent Member must be able to demonstrate the following:

- knowledge and experience in human resources management, including executive recruitment, remuneration and oversight of employment contracts;
- experience in developing and facilitating executive performance reviews;
- senior business or government (including local government) experience;
- strong leadership and communication skills;

- an understanding of good governance and previous experience working with governance bodies or boards;
- the ability to work effectively with Councillors and the CEO; and
- knowledge and understanding of the issues affecting the Alpine Shire.

The Independent Member will be appointed for three (3) years from April 2026, with an extension of one (1) year exercisable at the council's discretion.

Six (6) quotations and proposals were received, and service providers were assessed on:

- Cost;
- Proposed approach;
- Knowledge and experience in executive human resources contract management and the development and facilitation of executive performance reviews;
- Government (including local government) or senior business experience;
- Provision of local employment opportunities; and
- Proposed approach to environmental sustainability impacts.

Three (3) consultants were shortlisted and interviewed for proposed approach and delivery methods and following a full evaluation assessment, and reference check process, Margaret Devlin from the Centre for Organisational Development is recommended for appointment.

Ms Devlin brings significant experience across multiple government sectors and understands the significance of local government and its responsibility for delivering a wide range of economic, environmental, infrastructure and human services. The support program is aimed at supporting and enhancing the critical roles of leadership and governance of local communities and will add perspective and value to Council.

Working with Councillors and Executives, requires a sensitive, respectful approach, which is culturally appropriate and outcome driven. The proposed methodology will enable full contribution and open discussion, while ensuring focus on the importance of the CEO performance review task. Ms Devlin is also able to draw on the experience and skill of a team to support this role if required.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The recommendation is in accordance with the 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 CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee is an advisory committee to Council, and will comprise at least three Councillors (including the Mayor and Deputy Mayor) and be supported by a suitably skilled Independent Member. The Mayor will act as Chair, with the Deputy Mayor acting in their absence. The Independent Member is responsible for providing independent professional advice in relation to the matters dealt with under the Policy, in accordance with section 45(2)(a) of the LGA 2020.

Council determines the term of appointment of the Independent Member; and the remuneration of the Independent Member.

The engagement is proposed to run from April 2026 through to March 2029, with an extension option to March 2030 excisable at Council's discretion.

Council provides for the CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee, and the employment of the CEO, in its annual Budget. The draft 2026/27 Budget will be adjusted prior to be presented for adoption, to ensure the appropriate allocation of funds for this purpose, noting that the 2026/27 maximum contract value is in excess of that currently contained in the draft 2026/27 Budget being a maximum of \$11,863 (plus GST) against a draft budget of \$4000 (plus GST).

The maximum total contract value has been calculated using a submitted annual fixed price component, plus an estimate of maximum travel costs per annum, and a disbursement estimate. A 3% annual increase has been included for years two, three and (optional) four of the contract.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
Council does not have a current CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy to guide performance monitoring and an annual review.	Unlikely	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council will ensure that the CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy is kept in accordance with section 45 of the Local Government Act 2020. Policy review requirements are regularly monitored and reported to our Audit and Risk Committee.
The appointed Independent Member does not have the skills and experience necessary to discharge the functions under the Act.	Unlikely	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A rigorous assessment process was undertaken, that included initial evaluation of submitters, interview of shortlisted submitters and reference checking of recommended submitter. Termination of support provisions are contained within the executed contract.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
The total contract value calculated in insufficient to support the Committee over the three-year plus one-year option term.	Possible	Minor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The maximum total contract value was calculated using the fixed price submitted, plus a travel cost estimate and disbursement estimate. 3% annual increases were included in estimates. Should additional out of scope items on the contract be required and necessitate additional \$/hour costs then these will be assessed and managed administratively at the time. The procurement mechanisms undertaken are in excess of those required for the threshold \$ amount in the Procurement Policy.

CONSULTATION

The CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy is considered to be operational in nature, guiding the way that Council will deal with the employment and recruitment of the CEO, and as such, the community has no ability to inform the decision-making at this time.

Regular review of the CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy is a requirement of the Local Government Act 2020. The Policy recognises Council's commitment to establishing a robust and transparent process for the management of the performance of the CEO, which includes utilising the support and expertise of an Independent Member.

CONCLUSION

Regular review of the CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy is a requirement of the Local Government Act 2020. The Policy recognises Council's commitment to establishing a robust and transparent process for the management of recruitment, appointment and performance of the CEO, which includes utilising the support and expertise of an Independent Member.

After a competitive request for quotation process, Margaret Devlin from the Centre for Organisational Development is recommended to be appointed to the role of Independent Member.

Ms Devlin brings significant experience and expertise within the sector, and across sectors, and we are excited to welcome her to work with 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 Corporate and Community

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

Chief Executive Officer – Will Jeremy – returned at 7:09pm

8.3.8 Financial Reserves and Restricted Cash Policy

INTRODUCTION

Strategic Lever 1 of the Alpine Shire Council Financial Sustainability Strategy states that to remain financially sustainable, Council must generate sufficient cash from operating activities to fund its planned capital works program and maintain adequate balances in cash reserves.

As part of this lever, an action was identified in the Strategy to develop a Financial Reserves and Restricted Cash Policy to set a level of unrestricted cash that would allow Council to respond to emerging risks, pressures and opportunities.

RESOLUTION

Cr Byrne

Cr Andersen

That Council:

1. Adopts the Financial Reserves and Restricted Cash Policy;
2. Approves the establishment of the following discretionary financial reserves:
 - a. Capital Works Carry-Over Reserve
 - b. Employee Entitlements Reserve
 - c. Advanced Federal Financial Assistance Grants Reserve
3. Signs and seals the Financial Reserves and Restricted Cash Policy at the appropriate stage of this meeting.

Carried Unanimously

BACKGROUND

A Financial Reserves and Restricted Cash Policy ("Policy") has been drafted to ensure a consistent and formalised process around financial reserves and to establish a target for unrestricted cash.

Developing a Financial Reserves and Restricted Cash Policy was identified as Action 1.1 of the Financial Sustainability Strategy and is due for completion in Year 1.

The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework has a definition of unrestricted cash, however this measure is being phased out of their reporting requirements. In order to provide an accurate representation of cash sustainability, Council should develop and report on its own definition of cash restrictions.

The Policy and proposed new reserves have been reviewed by external consultants, AEC, and assessed against FinPro and Victorian Auditor General Office (VAGO) advice.

As of 30 June 2025, Council had the following reserve balances:

- Dinner Plain Reserve: \$968k
- Waste Reserve: \$3,787k

- Subdivision Recreation Reserve: \$623k

ISSUES

Financial Reserves and Restricted Cash Policy

The Policy provides a framework for the governance of statutory and discretionary reserves. This includes guidance around the creation, maintenance, and closure of reserves. The Policy also includes the details of three new discretionary reserves to assist in capturing restricted funds.

The reserves to be established are:

- Capital Works Carry-Forward Reserve
- Employee Entitlements Reserve
- Advanced Federal Financial Assistance Grants Reserve

All new reserves are to be established at the date of Council approval; however, the initial funding of these reserves will happen on 30 June 2026 to accurately represent the year-end balance.

The Policy also defines "Unrestricted Cash" as cash and financial assets less:

- All Financial Reserves
- Trust funds and deposits
- Unspent conditional grants

A targeted level of unrestricted cash has been defined as equal to or greater than \$10m.

Details on reserves and unrestricted cash are to be reported to the Audit and Risk Committee quarterly, either as part of the Quarterly Budget Report or at the end of each financial year.

Capital Works Carry-Forward Reserve

The Capital Works Carry-Forward Reserve is established to ensure that funding is available to complete capital projects that were commenced but not finalised within the financial year.

At the end of each financial year, the net cost of the unfinished capital works program for the year will be transferred from accumulated surplus to fund delivery of the program in the following year.

The funds will be expended on the identified capital works that have been carried forward.

This reserve has no useful life and will be closed through Council resolution.

Employee Entitlements Reserve

The Employee Entitlements Reserve is established to provide financial capacity to meet employee leave obligations as they arise.

The balance of this reserve will be reviewed at the end of each financial year and adjusted to ensure it equals 25% of current employee entitlements payable at termination. Entitlements include:

- Annual Leave
- Current Long Service Leave
- Time in Lieu
- Rostered Days Off

This reserve has no useful life and will be closed through Council resolution.

Advanced Federal Financial Assistance Grants Reserve

This reserve is established to identify advance payment of the Federal Government Financial Assistance Grant. While the Federal Financial Assistance Grants are recognised as income when received, allocating advance payments to financial reserves at financial year end enables more accurate representation of Council's true unrestricted cash position.

At the end of each financial year, the amount of grant income received for a future year is transferred to the Advanced Federal Financial Assistance Grants Reserve. At the start of the next financial year, the amount transferred will be released back to accumulated surplus as it is no longer restricted.

This reserve has no useful life and will be closed through Council resolution.

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 main resource implication for the implementation and management of the Policy is the internal workload required by Council's Finance team to reconcile and review reserve balances and transactions, and report on unrestricted cash. Expected reserve movements will be included in the annual Budget. Actual reserve details will be included in the Annual Report.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adverse impact on Council's financial sustainability 	Possible	Major	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement and monitor the Financial Reserves and Restricted Cash Policy, report unrestricted cash levels quarterly to the Audit and Risk Committee, and adjust reserve transfers as required to maintain the \$10m minimum target.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If reserve balances do not accurately reflect capital carry-forward, employee entitlements, or advance grant payments, Council's financial position may be misstated, leading to poor decision-making and audit concerns. 	Possible	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake annual reviews of all reserve balances, ensure year-end adjustments are completed in line with the Policy, and maintain external oversight through FinPro guidance, and VAGO-aligned practices.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failure to establish or fund the new discretionary reserves by the intended timelines may compromise Council's ability to transparently track restricted funds and may reduce confidence in financial governance. 	Possible	Minor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt the Policy as recommended, establish the reserves upon Council approval, and ensure accurate funding allocations occur at 30 June 2026 with progress monitored through quarterly budget reporting.

CONSULTATION

The Financial Reserves and Restricted Cash Policy has been developed to support the objectives of the Financial Plan 2025-2035, which was subject to community engagement processes.

Internal engagement has been undertaken to ensure the Policy meets the needs of the organisation while recognising Council's resourcing and financial constraints.

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 Alpine Shire Council Financial Sustainability Strategy identified the need to develop a Financial Reserves and Restricted Cash Policy to set a level of unrestricted cash that would allow Council to respond to emerging risks, pressures and opportunities.

This Policy aims to ensure a consistent and formalised process around financial reserves and establish a target for unrestricted cash.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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

- Director Corporate and Community
- Manager Corporate
- Accountant

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. **8.3.8.1** Financial Reserves and Restricted Cash Policy

8.3.9 Statutory Planning Service Delivery April Update

INTRODUCTION

This report provides an update to Council on progress, since the October 2025 Ordinary Council Meeting, on the implementation of a program of works to improve the delivery of statutory planning services to the community.

RESOLUTION

Cr Byrne

Cr Smith

That Council notes this 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 noted a report at its June 2025 Ordinary Council Meeting regarding reforms being undertaken to improve the organisation's statutory planning service delivery. Biannual reporting on the implementation of this reform program is to be provided in October and April of each year.

This report provides the second biannual progress update and outlines the impact on service delivery since the October 2025 update. The first phase of work 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.

The second phase has been embedding new initiatives and facilitating more responsive customer service and application efficiencies.

A further update will be provided to Council in October 2026 as progress on implementing improvement continues.

ISSUES

Resourcing and Budget

The statutory planning team is now fully resourced with no reliance on external consultancy in the provision of core services. This continuity of resourcing supports a greater technical efficiency and knowledge building in the processing of applications.

Between May 2025 and September 2025 Council processed a high number of planning applications, and while this initial uplift has stabilised, the overall number of live applications has continued to reduce. The number of planning applications processed in the reporting period is set out below:

Table 1: Total number of planning applications processed in the reporting period.

Year	2025			2026		
Month	October	November	December	January	February	March
New applications received during month	16	12	12	12	7	16
Applications processed during month	46	13	14	15	8	20
Total number of live applications	86	85	83	80	79	75
Total number of historic applications (lodged pre-1 January 2024)*	11	11	10	10	8	3

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

Table 2: Total number of business related planning applications processed in the reporting period.

	October	November	December	January	February	March
New business-related applications received during month	1	0	0	0	0	1
Business applications determined in month	6	1	0	1	1	0
Total number of live business applications*	6	5	5	4	3	4

*These applications are also included in the total number of live planning permit applications in Table 1.

Customer Service Priorities

The Statutory Planning team continues to receive a large number of enquiries each week, many of which are complex and take time to investigate. Building on the changes implemented up until October 2025, the following has been established:

- A planner on call roster has been successfully implemented and is now operating from Monday to Friday.
- Council has commenced 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. A planner will be available in the following locations and times ongoing:
 - Myrtleford Library - First Tuesday of each month from 1.00pm to 4.30pm
 - Mount Beauty Library - First Wednesday of each month from 1.00pm to 4.30pm.
 - Pre application meetings will continue unchanged at the Bright office by appointment.

Between July and September 2026 Council will conduct customer surveys to provide further data on the effectiveness of implemented customer service reforms.

Developer and consultant forums, which were foreshadowed in the October 2025 report, are currently in planning. The purpose of these forums is to develop relationships and feedback mechanisms 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 continue to be refined:

- The progressive development of an internal process handbook to provide for consistent adherence to processes.
- A reduction of historic (pre-1 January 2024) unresolved applications which has decreased from 11 to 5 in the reporting period.
- The establishment of a process for the review of Section 173 agreements which has enabled a backlog to be cleared, and new agreements to be processed more efficiently.

The reduction in active applications has assisted in the identification of other operational inefficiencies which were not as visible prior to service improvements being implemented. The planning team will focus on working with referral agencies and

internal departments to streamline and improve the timeliness of their responses under s52 and s55 of the Act to enable statutory processing timeframes to be better achieved.

System Development and Improvement

Council's Greenlight planning portal is the main application interface for both Statutory Planning and Building Services. Council commenced a review of Greenlight to improve operability within current resourcing. This review has been suspended following the announcement of the impending state government legislative planning reforms which will make the current system structure redundant. Council will continue to liaise with the vendor in relation to updates which respond to the requirements of the Better Decisions Made Faster Bill.

Performance Monitoring and Reporting

The performance of the department is monitored and reported internal each month to monitor the effectiveness of strategies implemented. Current reporting continues to require manual data recording and analysis.

Following the June 2025 report, a new series of key performance indicators has been established to monitor improvements in service delivery. The measures as of February 2026 are as follows:

Table 3: Key Performance Indicators October 2025 - March 2026

KPI	Intent of measurement	2024/25 (actuals)	2025/26 (target)	October 2025 - March 2026 (actuals)
Percentage of applications determined within statutory timeframes	Timelines for determination of permit applications (outcome)	27.4%	60%	54%
Average number of days to determine planning applications (noting that finalisation of historic applications will distort figures for 2024/25 and 2025/26).	Timelines for determination of permit applications (outcome)	117 days	60 days	103 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	79 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	8 resolved in the reporting period
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, with the next report to be presented in October 2026.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

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

1.2 Our systems and processes are designed, implemented, and reviewed to support a customer focused culture

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 measures foreshadowed in this report are 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 Planning and Environment Act 1988	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 is undertaken to inform continuous improvement processes.

CONCLUSION

The second phase of service improvements in Council's statutory planning team has been completed, with results visible in the reduction of live planning applications, improved processing of permit applications, and greater accessibility and availability of planning officers to respond to general enquiries. A third phase of work will continue, as outlined in the report, in supporting referral agency response times and improving performance transparency of reporting.

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

8.3.10 Biannual Reporting of Community Engagement Campaigns and Outcomes

INTRODUCTION

Council has committed to biannual community engagement reporting as part of its focus on improving how it engages with the community, supporting the Customer Focused Alpine objective of the Council Plan 2025–2029.

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of all engagement activities undertaken between October 2025 and March 2026, focusing on participation and reach, including the number of projects delivered, people reached, submissions received and other key engagement statistics.

By regularly reporting on these measures, Council aims to build understanding of its engagement efforts and provide visibility of how the community is being invited to participate across a range of projects and topics.

RESOLUTION

Cr Byrne

Cr Andersen

That Council receives and notes the biannual community engagement results detailed in this report for the period ending 31 March 2026.

Carried Unanimously

BACKGROUND

Between October 2025 and March 2026, Council ran 15 community engagement opportunities, providing a range of ways for the community to have a say on key plans, strategies and projects. Of these, 12 engagement periods closed between October and March. Three projects - the Tourism and Events Strategy, Rural Directions Strategy, and Community Climate Action Plans - remain open for engagement and will be included in the next reporting period.

Engagement topics covered a broad cross-section of Council's work, including access and inclusion, strategic and statutory planning, sport and recreation facilities, asset and financial planning, environment and climate action, transport and road safety, community infrastructure, tourism and events, and urban design and place-based improvements.

All surveys, submission forms and feedback opportunities were made available online via Council's engagement platform, Engage Alpine, as well as in printed form through Council's Customer Service Centre in Bright and libraries in Bright, Mount Beauty and Myrtleford. This ensured community members could participate regardless of access to digital services.

Engagement was supported by a mix of market pop-ups, drop-in sessions, direct stakeholder engagement and targeted email campaigns, enabling participation in ways that suited different needs and preferences.

Engage Alpine currently has 1,838 registered users and provides reliable tracking and reporting of online participation. While this allows for consistent measurement of digital engagement, it is more challenging to quantify reach and informal interaction through in-person activities such as pop-ups, drop-in sessions and printed materials. As a result, figures included in this report primarily reflect online engagement activity.

HIGHLIGHTS

Between October 2025 and March 2026, Council delivered a diverse and active program of community engagement across 12 projects, demonstrating strong participation and interest across a wide range of topics.

- Growing interest in financial and budget matters was reflected in the Budget 2026/27 engagement, which received 97 submissions - the largest response to Council's annual pre-budget engagement since it was introduced four years ago.
- Environment and climate-related projects attracted consistent and broad interest, including the Carbon Offset Policy, Community Electric Vehicle Charging Opportunities, Street Tree Master Plan, and the Community Climate Action Plans, highlighting strong community engagement in sustainability, climate action and environmental planning.
- Face-to-face engagement added depth to participation, with drop-in sessions and pop-ups playing a key role for projects such as the Access and Inclusion Plan, Community Infrastructure Needs Assessment, Carbon Offset Policy, and the Street Tree Master Plan. Community Infrastructure drop-ins in Myrtleford and Mount Beauty were particularly well attended by local community group representatives.
- Across all projects, engagement activity generated thousands of website visits, strong social media reach and hundreds of contributions, reflecting a community that is actively engaging with Council on both local place-based issues and long-term strategic planning.

The table below summarises engagement statistics for key completed engagement campaigns. The total submissions figures include submissions received online, in writing and via email.

Project	Engagement Period	Page Visits	Unique Visitors	Social Media Reach	Campaign Recipients	Submissions
Access and Inclusion Plan	10 - 30 Nov 25	100	85	9,338	406	5

Project	Engagement Period	Page Visits	Unique Visitors	Social Media Reach	Campaign Recipients	Submissions
Access and Inclusion Plan Exhibition	25 Feb - 25 Mar 26	68	54	3,524	-	7
Amendment C65alpi to the Alpine Planning Scheme	18 Sep - 20 Oct 25	388	351	9,162	364	3
Aquatics and Indoor Sport Stadium Feasibility Study Exhibition	17 Nov 25 - 5 Jan 26	439	366	12,724	-	11
Budget 2026/27	17 Dec 25 - 19 Jan 26	247	213	4,469	-	97
Carbon Offset Policy	2 - 31 Mar 26	119	103	5,305	451	13
Community Electric Vehicle Charging Opportunities	13 Jan - 6 Feb 26	194	156	8,640	436	85
Community Infrastructure Needs Assessment	7 Nov 25 - 4 Jan 26	676	438	7,330	493	92
Library Services Plan	6 Jan - 8 Feb 26	174	135	3,213	-	106
Road Deviation and Land Exchange within Bright Valley Development	10 Sep - 7 Oct 25	285	252	5,763	406	4
Street Tree Master Plan	20 Feb - 31 Mar 26	371	291	10,825	538	41

Project	Engagement Period	Page Visits	Unique Visitors	Social Media Reach	Campaign Recipients	Submissions
Tracks and Trails Master Plan Exhibition	30 Oct 25 - 4 Jan 26	369	270	8,032	68	7

BROADER ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS

In addition to formal project engagement, Council supported community awareness and participation through broader communication activities.

During the reporting period, 78 media releases were published on Council's website and distributed to local media outlets to promote engagement opportunities, as well as share key news, updates and information.

Council also published 400 social media posts across Facebook and Instagram, achieving a total social media reach of 399,784 viewers. These communication channels complemented project-specific engagement by broadening reach and supporting community awareness across the Shire.

ISSUES

The review of engagement activities over this reporting period has highlighted several opportunities to strengthen Council's approach to community engagement.

In one instance, engagement undertaken as part of a consultant-led project did not involve a small number of key stakeholders early in the process, resulting in significant concern when the draft document was released.

This has reinforced the importance of Council maintaining clear expectations, oversight and quality assurance for engagement activities delivered by consultants, including early identification of stakeholders, alignment with Council's Community Engagement Policy, and clear roles and responsibilities for engagement design and delivery.

The reporting period also highlighted the challenge of engagement volume and timing. During February and March, Council was running up to six engagement opportunities concurrently, which may contribute to engagement fatigue for some community members.

While this reflects a high level of Council activity and opportunity to participate, it has highlighted the need to continue improving coordination, scheduling and staging of engagement where possible, to support meaningful participation and manage community capacity.

These learnings will inform future engagement planning and support continuous improvement in how Council engages with its community.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The engagement activity summarised in this report demonstrates strong alignment with Council’s Community Engagement Policy (2024) and the Customer Focused Alpine objectives of the Council Plan 2025–2029, including:

- 1.1 Our highest priority is improving our communication – both listening and providing information and feedback
- 1.4 Our continued engagement will promote community understanding and contribution to decisions that bring positive change across Alpine Shire

The report also reflects the Engagement Policy’s focus on accessible, inclusive and proportionate engagement, with opportunities offered across online and in-person channels and at different stages of project development.

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report, as it provides a summary of community engagement activity already undertaken within existing budgets and work programs.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
Reporting on engagement activity may be perceived as incomplete or misleading due to the difficulty of fully quantifying in-person engagement and informal interactions.	Possible	Minor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing explanation that figures primarily reflect online engagement data, where participation can be consistently tracked, and that in-person activities such as drop-in sessions and pop-ups are reported qualitatively.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
Perception that Council relies too heavily on digital engagement and does not engage sufficiently through in-person or alternative methods.	Possible	Minor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council delivers engagement through a mix of online and in-person methods, including drop-in sessions, pop-ups, stakeholder meetings and printed materials. This is clearly communicated to the community to ensure engagement opportunities are accessible and inclusive.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Action / Control
<p>The voices of underrepresented or harder-to-reach community members are not captured, resulting in decisions that do not fully reflect community diversity.</p>	<p>Possible</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council proactively seeks input from under-represented groups through targeted engagement, including working with community organisations, providing accessible formats, offering multiple ways to participate, and incorporating face-to-face engagement opportunities to complement online methods. • Council also includes voluntary demographic questions in many surveys (for example, asking whether participants identify with particular community groups) to better understand who is being reached through engagement activities and to identify any gaps in participation, informing future targeted engagement.

CONSULTATION

This report draws directly on engagement data and participation metrics recorded across all relevant projects during the reporting period. Community consultation was undertaken through a range of methods, including online feedback, written submissions and in-person engagement activities, ensuring opportunities were available for community members to participate in ways that suited their needs.

Preparation of this report has been informed by a whole-of-organisation approach, with engagement activities led and supported by multiple Council service areas. Internal collaboration has ensured engagement activities reflect a coordinated, organisation-wide approach consistent with Council's Community Engagement Policy and Council Plan objectives.

The report consolidates engagement undertaken across Council and provides a transparent summary of participation and reach, supporting informed decision-making and continuous improvement in engagement practice.

CONCLUSION

This biannual report demonstrates Council's ongoing commitment to transparent, accessible and consistent community engagement. By regularly reporting on participation and reach, Council strengthens communication, supports informed community contribution, and continues to embed engagement as a core part of decision-making across Alpine Shire.

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 Customer Experience
- Engagement and Communications Coordinator

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. **8.3.10.1** Community Engagement Summary Oct 25 - Mar 26

9 Informal Meetings of Councillors

INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

RESOLUTION

Cr Ronco

Cr Byrne

That the summary of informal meetings of Councillors for March and April 2026 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
31 March	Briefing Session
14 April	Briefing Session
21 April	Briefing Session

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. **9.1.1** Informal Meeting of Councillors 20260331
2. **9.1.2** Informal Meeting of Councillors 20260414
3. **9.1.3** Informal Meeting of Councillors 20260421

10 Presentation of reports by delegates

Nil

11 General business

Cr Ronco - Tourism and Events Strategy

Will Jeremy - Bright Fitness Equipment and Bright Skate Park

12 Motions for which notice has previously been given

Nil

13 Reception and reading of petitions

Nil

14 Documents for signing and sealing

RESOLUTION

Cr Andersen

Cr Byrne

That the following documents be signed and sealed.

1. Information Privacy Policy,
2. Instruments of Delegation; and
3. Financial Reserves and Restricted Cash Policy.

Carried Unanimously

15 Confidential reports

Nil

16 Closure of meeting

There being no further business the Chairperson declared the meeting closed at 7:42pm