

Minutes

Council Meeting
Wednesday 18 June 2025 at 7:00 PM
Gisborne Administration Centre
40 Robertson Street, Gisborne

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1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Macedon Ranges Shire Council acknowledges the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this land and waterways. Council recognises their living cultures and ongoing connection to Country and pays respect to their Elders past, and present.

Council also acknowledges local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents of Macedon Ranges for their ongoing contribution to the diverse culture of our community.

2 RECORDING OF LIVE STREAMING OF THIS COUNCIL MEETING

This meeting was recorded and streamed live on the internet in accordance with Council's 'Live Streaming and Publishing Recordings of Meetings Policy, which can be viewed on Council's website.

3 PRESENT

Cr Dominic Bonanno (Mayor), Cr Kate Kendall (Deputy Mayor), Cr Jennifer Anderson, Cr Cassy Borthwick, Cr Alison Joseph, Cr Janet Pearce, Cr Andrew Scanlon, Cr Christine Walker, Cr Daniel Young

IN ATTENDANCE

Bernie O'Sullivan (Chief Executive Officer), Adele Drago-Stevens (Director Corporate), Rebecca Stockfeld (Director Planning and Environment), Maria Weiss (Director Community), Dominic Testoni (Director Assets and Operations), Kylies Tatt (Acting Manager Governance and Performance), Lucy Olson (Senior Governance Officer - Council Business), Zoe Hardiman (Business Support Officer)

4 APOLOGIES

Nil

5 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Nil

6 PETITIONS**6.1 PETITION IN RELATION TO SPEED REDUCTION ON CABBAGE TREE LANE, GISBORNE SOUTH****Summary**

A petition has been received from Jane Brook in Gisborne South on behalf of 20 residents stating:

"Mayor and Councillors of the Macedon Ranges Shire Council, we the undersigned, petition Macedon Ranges Shire Council as of Wednesday 12th March to reduce the speed limit on Cabage Tree Lane, Gisborne South."

Resolution 2025/52

Moved: Cr Jennifer Anderson

Seconded: Cr Alison Joseph

That Council:

1. **Notes the petition from Jane Brook on the matter of a speed reduction for Cabbage Tree Lane, Gisborne South with 20 signatories;**
2. **Notes that the petition has been circulated to all Councillors confidentially as it contains personal information; and**
3. **Requests the CEO to prepare a report in response to this petition to be presented at the 23 July 2025 meeting of Council.**

CARRIED

7 DEPUTATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS TO COUNCIL

7.1 PUBLIC QUESTIONS - ROHAN KEMP

Questions

In the May 28 meeting, Council was expressly asked what percentage of the Shared Trail project had been delivered. Council's response inadvertently included sections of the trail with approvals in place, still under construction or sections where construction might commence shortly. Can you please advise the percentage of the Shared Trail that has been delivered to residents? To be clear, delivered means finished to a complete state only.

In the May 28 meeting, Council advised that the total length of the trail has been reduced. Given the reduced scope of the project, can you please advise how the tender value has been reduced to accommodate for the reduction in works required by the contracted party.

Answers

At present, approximately 1% of the Shared Trail project has been fully delivered to residents, with a completed 0.25km section in Woodend (Stage 1A). While additional sections are either under construction or approved for imminent delivery, these are not yet considered complete.

In relation to the reduced scope of the project, Council and the contractor are reviewing the contract to identify cost adjustments aligned with the revised trail length. This assessment will also consider construction cost increases since the original contract was awarded.

8 ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Resolution 2025/53

Moved: Cr Jennifer Anderson

Seconded: Cr Kate Kendall

That the minutes of Ordinary Meeting of the Macedon Ranges Shire Council held on Wednesday 28 May 2025 as circulated be confirmed.

CARRIED

9 MAYOR'S REPORT**9.1 MAYOR'S REPORT - MAY-JUNE 2025****Resolution 2025/54**

Moved: Cr Andrew Scanlon

Seconded: Cr Alison Joseph

That Council receives and notes the Mayor's report.**CARRIED**

10 RECORD OF MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS AND COUNCIL STAFF

10.1	RECORD OF MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS AND COUNCIL STAFF - MAY-JUNE 2025
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Summary

Rule 66 of Council's Governance Rules requires a written record of matters discussed at specified meetings of Councillors and Council staff to be reported to the next practicable scheduled Council Meeting and recorded in the minutes of that meeting. This report provides a summary of meetings of Councillors and Council staff held since the last Council Meeting.

Recommendation**That Council receives and notes the record of meetings of Councillors and Council staff, as outlined in this report.**

Cr Kate Kendall moved an amended officer recommendation.

Resolution 2025/55

Moved: Cr Kate Kendall

Seconded: Cr Alison Joseph

That Council receives and notes the record of meetings of Councillors and Council staff, as outlined in this report with the following addition:

- **That a general conflict of interest was declared by Bernie O'Sullivan (Chief Executive Officer) with the Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy in the Council Meeting June 2025 Preview Agenda Review, at the Council Briefing on 3 June and that he left the meeting whilst the item was discussed from 2:58pm till 2:59pm.**

CARRIED

11 DIRECTOR CORPORATE REPORTS**COR.1 REVENUE AND RATING PLAN****Summary**

The Revenue and Rating Plan is a requirement under section 93 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and must be reviewed and adopted following each general election. This updated four-year Plan outlines Council's approach to generating revenue through property rates, waste charges, fees, grants and other sources to support delivery of the Council Plan, services and capital works.

Targeted community consultation was undertaken in early 2025 as part of Council's Integrated Strategic Planning Framework process. This included a set of specific questions aimed at informing the development of the revised Plan and understanding community perspectives on rating equity and revenue priorities.

The updated Revenue and Rating Plan 2025–2029 has been developed with Councillors and feedback from the community and provides a clear and transparent framework for revenue decisions over the next four years.

This report recommends that Council formally adopts the Plan in accordance with legislative requirements.

Resolution 2025/56

Moved: Cr Christine Walker

Seconded: Cr Andrew Scanlon

That Council:

- 1. Adopts the Rating and Revenue Plan 2025-2029.**
- 2. Gives public notice of its decision to adopt the Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-2029.**
- 3. Makes the Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-2029 available to the public at Council Offices and Service Centres and on Council's website.**

CARRIED

COR.2 BUDGET 2025-26**Summary**

The draft Budget 2025-26 has been prepared consistent with the requirement of Section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (LGA) and forms part of the Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework developed as Part 4 of the LGA.

Council undertook a community engagement and consultation process in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and Council's *Community Engagement Policy* during November 2024. A further opportunity was provided to the community to allow feedback on a concise version of the draft Budget 2025-26 during May 2025.

Therefore, the purpose of this report is to (1) decide on the responses to community submissions, and (2) adopt the Budget, with or without amendment.

Recommendation**That Council:**

1. **Adopts the draft Budget 2025-26, prepared in accordance with section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020* as attached with this agenda, effective from 1 July 2025.**
2. **Approves new loan borrowings of up to \$750,000 in line with the proposed Budget, and authorises the Chief Executive Officer to:**
 - i. negotiate the loan;
 - ii. approve the successful tender;
 - iii. execute the loan documentation; and
 - iv. delegate to the Director Corporate and/or Manager Finance and Reporting to undertake the required process as outlined in points 2 (i), (ii) and (iii)
3. **Adopts the following rates:**

	Cents/\$CIV
General Rate for rateable residential properties – 100%	0.00196540
Agricultural land rate – 80%	0.00157232
Commercial/Industrial rate – 120%	0.00235848
Recreational land rate – 50%	0.00098270
Not-for-profit housing rate – 50%	0.00098270

4. **Gives public notice of its decision to adopt the Budget 2025-26 and the availability of the Budget 2025-26 to the public on Council's website and at Council offices and service centres.**
5. **Endorses officer responses to submissions in Attachment 2 to this report.**
6. **Responds to all submitters in accordance with Council's *Community Engagement Policy*.**

Cr Daniel Young moved an alternative motion.

Motion

Moved: Cr Daniel Young

Seconded: Cr Alison Joseph

That Council:

1. Adopts the draft Budget 2025–26, prepared in accordance with section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, as attached with this agenda, with the following amendments:

- (i) Total rates and municipal charges revenue equivalent to the existing general rate and municipal charge revenue generated in 2024/25, with no increase.
- (ii) Adopts the general rate in the dollar to reflect no increase in total rates revenue compared with the 2024–25 financial year.
- (iii) Adopts the following rates:

	Cents/\$CIV
General Rate for rateable residential properties – 100%	0.00190210
Agricultural land rate – 80%	0.00152168
Commercial/Industrial rate – 120%	0.00228252
Recreational land rate – 50%	0.00095105
Not-for-profit housing rate – 50%	0.00095105

2. Includes in the adopted budget a general disclosure and commitment to identify savings of \$1,556,083 from operational expenditure in the budget narrative, and:
 - (i) updates the budget risk statement and financial sustainability ratios accordingly.
 - (ii) includes in the general statement that... “a range of savings and efficiencies will be implemented across council to ensure the continued efficient and effective delivery of council priorities.”
 3. Includes the following in the adopted financial statements:
 - (i) A new line item in ‘Other Expenses’ that is included in the Comprehensive Income Statement, titled ‘Savings and efficiencies target’ shown as a reduction in expenditure equal to the savings in point 2.
 - (ii) A note that savings identified in the statements reflect provisional allocations and are subject to confirmation through Council’s review processes.
 4. Notes that the proposed savings are subject to confirmation through a structured savings identification process in early Financial Year 2025–26.
 5. Establishes an Advisory Expenditure Review Committee to review the proposed savings, efficiencies, and potential deferrals to address the proposed expenditure reductions, requests the Chief Executive Officer to develop a Terms of Reference for the Committee for Council endorsement on or before the July 2025 Ordinary Meeting, and endorses that the Committee will:
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- (i) Provide advice to Council only and will not exercise any delegated powers or make binding decisions.
 - (ii) Consist of up to at least five, and up to nine, appointed Councillors.
 - (iii) Meet regularly to receive savings proposals and provide final recommendations to Council by no later than 30 September 2025, being three months after the commencement of the 2025–26 financial year.
 - (iv) Be dissolved following the delivery of the proposed savings recommendations to Council, and no later than 30 June 2026.
6. Suspends all non-essential recruitment and new staff appointments, unless required to meet statutory obligations or critical service delivery needs, until Council considers the recommendations of the Expenditure Review Advisory Committee.
7. Approves new loan borrowings of up to \$750,000 in line with the amended Budget, and authorises the Chief Executive Officer to:
- (i) negotiate the loan;
 - (ii) approve the successful tender;
 - (iii) execute the loan documentation; and
 - (iv) delegate to the Director Corporate and/or Manager Finance and Reporting to undertake the required process as outlined in points 7(i), (ii), and (iii).
8. Gives public notice of its decision to adopt the Budget 2025–26 and the availability of the Budget document on Council’s website and at Council offices and service centres, once amendments are made.
9. Endorses officer responses to submissions in Attachment 2 to this report to be provided with appropriate adjustments if applicable following the report of the Expenditure Review Committee.
10. Responds to all submitters in accordance with Council’s Community Engagement Policy.

In Favour: Crs Kate Kendall, Alison Joseph and Daniel Young

Against: Crs Dominic Bonanno, Jennifer Anderson, Cassy Borthwick, Janet Pearce, Andrew Scanlon and Christine Walker

LOST 3/6

Cr Christine Walker moved the officer recommendation.

Resolution 2025/57

Moved: Cr Christine Walker

Seconded: Cr Janet Pearce

That Council:

1. Adopts the draft Budget 2025-26, prepared in accordance with section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020* as attached with this agenda, effective from 1 July 2025.
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2. Approves new loan borrowings of up to \$750,000 in line with the proposed Budget, and authorises the Chief Executive Officer to:
- i. negotiate the loan;
 - ii. approve the successful tender;
 - iii. execute the loan documentation; and
 - iv. delegate to the Director Corporate and/or Manager Finance and Reporting to undertake the required process as outlined in points 2 (i), (ii) and (iii)
3. Adopts the following rates:

	Cents/\$CIV
General Rate for rateable residential properties – 100%	0.00196540
Agricultural land rate – 80%	0.00157232
Commercial/Industrial rate – 120%	0.00235848
Recreational land rate – 50%	0.00098270
Not-for-profit housing rate – 50%	0.00098270

4. Gives public notice of its decision to adopt the Budget 2025-26 and the availability of the Budget 2025-26 to the public on Council's website and at Council offices and service centres.
5. Endorses officer responses to submissions in Attachment 2 to this report.
6. Responds to all submitters in accordance with Council's *Community Engagement Policy*.

In Favour: Crs Dominic Bonanno, Jennifer Anderson, Cassy Borthwick, Janet Pearce, Andrew Scanlon and Christine Walker

Against: Crs Kate Kendall, Alison Joseph and Daniel Young

CARRIED 6/3

COR.3 CONTRACTS TO BE AWARDED AS AT JUNE 2025

Summary

This report provides details of contracts proposed to be awarded under a delegation from Council, from the date of the last report. Although this report recommends noting the power delegated to Council officers, Council has the power to:

- a) direct that the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) award the contract under the direct delegation from Council; or
- b) specifically delegate the power to the CEO.

Resolution 2025/58

Moved: Cr Christine Walker
 Seconded: Cr Andrew Scanlon

That Council grants delegated authority to the Chief Executive Officer to award contract C2025-94 Supply Panel Landscaping Services

CARRIED

COR.4 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER EMPLOYMENT AND REMUNERATION POLICY

Summary

Consistent with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council must develop, adopt and keep in force a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Employment and Remuneration Policy, and establish a CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee. Council requested an amendment to the Policy to enable a change in committee membership, and as a result, appoint an additional Councillor delegate. Officers recommend the amendments in this report to effect the proposed change.

Resolution 2025/59

Moved: Cr Kate Kendall
Seconded: Cr Cassy Borthwick

That Council:

- 1. Endorses the amendments to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Employment and Remuneration Policy, as attached to this agenda.**
 - 2. Appoints Councillor Jennifer Anderson as a delegate to the CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee from 19 June 2025 until the next review of appointments to the committee, in November 2025.**
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CARRIED

12 DIRECTOR COMMUNITY REPORTS

COM.1 VICTORIAN CHILD FRIENDLY CITIES AND COMMUNITIES CHARTER

Summary

This report seeks endorsement for Council to become a signatory to the Victorian Local Government Association (VLGA) Child Friendly Cities and Communities Charter (attachment 1)

Resolution 2025/60

Moved: Cr Andrew Scanlon
Seconded: Cr Kate Kendall

That Council become a signatory to the VLGA Child Friendly Cities and Communities Charter.

CARRIED

13 URGENT BUSINESS

Nil

14 CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS

Nil

The meeting closed at 8:21pm.

The minutes of this meeting will be confirmed at the Council Meeting held on 23 July 2025.