

Hepburn

SHIRE COUNCIL

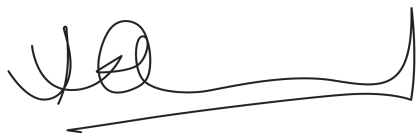
HEPBURN SHIRE COUNCIL ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL PUBLIC MINUTES

Tuesday 28 April 2026

Council Chamber
24 Vincent Street Daylesford
6:00PM

A LIVE STREAM OF THE MEETING CAN BE VIEWED
VIA [COUNCIL'S YOUTUBE CHANNEL](#)

Confirmed at the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 26 May 2026



Chair, Cr Tony Clark, Mayor

MINUTES

Tuesday 28 April 2026

Council Chamber

24 Vincent Street Daylesford

Commencing at 6:00PM

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS	4
2	OPENING OF MEETING	4
3	APOLOGIES	4
4	DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST	5
5	CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES	5
6	CONDOLENCE MOTION	5
6.1	THE PASSING OF MARGARET FULLWOOD	5
7	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TIME	6
7.1	PETITIONS	8
7.2	REQUESTS TO ADDRESS COUNCIL	8
7.3	PUBLIC QUESTIONS	9
8	OFFICER REPORTS	12
8.1	VCAT - GOLDEN POINT ROAD TRENTHAM - SUBDIVISION - COUNCIL POSITION	12
8.2	COUNCILLOR STATUTORY ROLES	21
8.3	REVISION OF INSTRUMENTS OF DELEGATION FROM COUNCIL TO THE CEO (S5) AND COUNCIL TO COUNCIL STAFF (S6)	24
8.4	INSTRUMENTS OF APPOINTMENT TO AUTHORISED OFFICERS UNDER THE PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT ACT 1987 & ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION ACT 2017	33
9	NOTICES OF MOTION	37
10	ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS	37
11	COUNCILLOR AND CEO REPORTS	38

11.1 MAYOR'S REPORT38
11.2 COUNCILLOR REPORTS.....38
11.3 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT41
12 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS.....44
12.1 CLOSURE OF MEETING TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.....44
13 CLOSE OF MEETING45

BRADLEY THOMAS
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Tuesday 28 April 2026

1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

Hepburn Shire Council acknowledges the Dja Dja Wurrung as the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters on which we live and work. On these lands, Djaara have performed age-old ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal. We recognise their resilience through dispossession and it is a testament to their continuing culture and tradition, which is strong and thriving.

We also acknowledge the neighbouring Traditional Owners, the Wurundjeri to our South East and the Wadawurrung to our South West and pay our respect to all Aboriginal peoples, their culture, and lore. We acknowledge their living culture and the unique role they play in the life of this region.

2 OPENING OF MEETING

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Cr Tony Clark, Cr Shirley Cornish, Cr Tim Drylie, Cr Lesley Hewitt, Cr Pat Hockey, Cr Brian Hood

OFFICERS PRESENT: Mr Bradley Thomas - Chief Executive Officer, Mr Bruce Lucas - Director Infrastructure and Delivery, Ms Brooke Holmes - Director Performance and Transformation, Mr Ron Torres - Director Development and Community, Allison Watt - Governance Coordinator

The meeting opened at 6:00pm.

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

“WE THE COUNCILLORS OF HEPBURN SHIRE
DECLARE THAT WE WILL UNDERTAKE ON EVERY OCCASION
TO CARRY OUT OUR DUTIES IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE COMMUNITY
AND THAT OUR CONDUCT SHALL MAINTAIN THE STANDARDS OF THE CODE OF
GOOD GOVERNANCE
SO THAT WE MAY FAITHFULLY REPRESENT AND UPHOLD THE TRUST PLACED IN THIS
COUNCIL BY THE PEOPLE OF HEPBURN SHIRE”

3 APOLOGIES

4 DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

5 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Go to 00:02:12 in the meeting recording to view this item.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 24 March 2026 (as previously circulated to Councillors) be confirmed.

MOTION

That the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 24 March 2026 (as previously circulated to Councillors) be confirmed.

Moved: Cr Pat Hockey

Seconded: Cr Lesley Hewitt

CARRIED

Voted for: Cr Pat Hockey, Cr Lesley Hewitt, Cr Tony Clark, Cr Shirley Cornish, Cr Brian Hood, Cr Tim Drylie

Voted against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

6 CONDOLENCE MOTION

6.1 THE PASSING OF MARGARET FULLWOOD

Go to 00:02:45 in the meeting recording to view this item.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council acknowledges the sad loss of Margaret Fullwood and acknowledges her long and loyal service to the Creswick community and the Creswick Museum.

Background

Margaret carried out the roll of Honorary Secretary of the Creswick Historical Museum for almost 30 years. Hard-working and thorough she was a major force behind the well-run and well-organised community facility we enjoy today. Margaret's voluntary work saw her travel to conferences further afield and to liaise with academia and other museums and oversight bodies. Complex and at times

exhausting work to maintain the integrity of the collection. The community acknowledges her tireless and profound contribution over many years.

MOTION

That Council acknowledges the sad loss of Margaret Fullwood and acknowledges her long and loyal service to the Creswick community and the Creswick Museum.

Moved: Cr Pat Hockey

Seconded: Cr Shirley Cornish

CARRIED

Voted for: Cr Pat Hockey, Cr Lesley Hewitt, Cr Tony Clark, Cr Shirley Cornish, Cr Brian Hood, Cr Tim Drylie

Voted against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

7 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TIME

This part of the Ordinary Meeting of Council allows for the tabling of petitions by Councillors and Officers and 30 minutes for the purposes of:

- Tabling petitions
- Responding to questions from members of our community
- Members of the community to address Council

Community members are invited to be involved in public participation time in accordance with Council's Governance Rules.

Individuals may submit written questions or requests to address Council to the Chief Executive Officer by 10:00am the day before the Council Meeting.

BEHAVIOUR AT COUNCIL MEETINGS

Council supports a welcoming, respectful and safe environment for members of the community to participate at Council Meetings regarding issues that are important to them. Council's Governance Rules sets out guidelines for the Mayor, Councillors, and community members on public participation in meetings. It reinforces the value of diversity in thinking, while being respectful of differing views, and the rights and reputation of others.

Under the Governance Rules, members of the public present at a Council Meeting must not be disruptive during the meeting.

Respectful behaviour includes:

- Being courteous when addressing Council during public participation time and directing all comments through the Chair
- Being quiet during proceedings

- Being respectful towards others present and respecting their right to their own views

Inappropriate behaviour includes:

- Interjecting or taking part in the debate
- Verbal abuse or harassment of a Councillor, member of staff, ratepayer or member of the public
- Threats of violence

7.1 PETITIONS

No petitions were tabled.

7.2 REQUESTS TO ADDRESS COUNCIL

Members of the community who have submitted a request in accordance with Council's Governance Rules will be heard.

Mr Vasko Drogriski addressed Council regarding the current use of Burke Square, Daylesford.

Mr John Morrissy addressed Council in relation to Traffic Petition submitted by the Trentham Community Association.

7.3 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Council received public questions in accordance with Council's Governance Rules.

Question 1 – Heather Mutimer

As councillors would be aware there is a great deal of angst and concern in the community for a number of reasons regarding council's decision regarding changes to Albert Street Daylesford. Along with the recent announcement of \$1million of federal funding via the Black Spot Program to complete these works. There are a number of issues relating to process and transparency which are at the core of this angst and concern.

This project has highlighted the growing concerns in the community relating to process and transparency in decision making that seriously impacts the community.

My question is - Can council please advise at which meeting a formal motion was moved to approve the project and chosen option

Response –

Due to the time constraints between the Community engagement process undertaken in July/August and the Blackspot funding application closing on Sunday 14 September, this item was not considered at an Ordinary Council meeting. Councillors were briefed on the community feedback and confirmed support for option 4 at a Councillor briefing on 9 September 2025.

Question 2 – Heather Mutimer

Members of the community were presented with 4 different options when asked to complete the survey last August regarding proposed changes to Albert Street Daylesford and adjacent area. Information provided by council accompanying each option, assisted and affected decision making. With all the options it was stated: "All existing large trees to be retained (and protected) with increased "green" space around them".

Yet disturbingly, members of the community - including myself, are now being told informally and formally that there is a possibility that some mature trees will need to be removed - depending on the outcome of the final design. Option 4 is now council's preferred option, with 1million dollars of Federal government funding recently being announced via the Black Spot Program.

Some could rightly argue that the survey which was supposedly meant to contribute to Council's final decision making was invalid because of this misleading information provided to the community.

If council had indicated on the survey what is now being stated, then I strongly suspect there are those who would not have voted for option 4 and therefore the vote in favour of this option would have been less than the final 38% thus raising the vote of other options.

Will council honour what was stated in the survey and ensure that "All existing large trees are to be retained (and protected)...".

Response –

Council's intent is to ensure the existing trees are retained and protected as per the principle detailed in the concept plan. This will be a key principle also for the detailed design, along with other key considerations such as access to local businesses and parking and further community engagement will be undertaken as the project planning and design progresses.

Question 3 – Grant McDonald

Preamble: Letter to Councillors dated 24 April 2026 attached

My question is, Will Council provide a formal organisational response to the questions raised in my February 2026 correspondence, rather than leaving the matter to individual councillor replies?

Response –

I want to clarify that there was a misunderstanding regarding expectations about a formal organisational response. Your February correspondence was directed to the Mayor and Councillors, and in that context it was appropriate for the Mayor to respond on behalf of Council, with officer support, rather than through a separate officer-led response.

That said, your feedback about accessibility and clarity of financial information has been heard. In response, Council has developed a Finance Snapshot—a two-page summary of the periodic budget review—which provides a different and more accessible way of communicating Council's financial position alongside the formal financial reports.

Council remains committed to transparency and continuous improvement in how we engage with the community on financial matters, and your feedback has informed this approach. For clarity with any future enquiries, where an organisational response is being sought, directing correspondence to the CEO as well as the Mayor and Councillors is recommended.

Question 4 – Grant McDonald

My question is, on what basis has Council concluded that the 2026–27 budget can be finalized in May without prior community consultation, given the Financial Vision's explicit commitments to deliberative engagement and further consultation before service changes?

Response –

I would like to clarify that the 2026–27 Budget is not being finalised in May. The May Council meeting will be to consider and endorse a draft budget for the purpose of formal community consultation.

Consistent with prior years, Council considers a draft budget in May and endorses it for public exhibition and community consultation. Community feedback received during this

consultation period is then considered by Council before the budget is formally adopted in June.

It is also important to note that the *Local Government Act 2020* does not prescribe a requirement for a draft budget to be exhibited prior to adoption. Many councils across Victoria proceed directly to the adoption of a budget. Hepburn Shire Council's approach of releasing a draft budget for consultation therefore exceeds legislative requirements and reflects Council's ongoing commitment to transparency and community engagement.

This approach aligns with the Financial Vision's commitment to transparency and community engagement, while also meeting the statutory requirement under the *Local Government Act* to adopt a budget by 30 June.

Importantly, no final decisions on the 2026–27 Budget are made in May. The May meeting is a critical step in enabling community input, not bypassing it.

8 OFFICER REPORTS

8.1 VCAT - GOLDEN POINT ROAD TRENTHAM - SUBDIVISION - COUNCIL POSITION

Go to 00:24:03 in the meeting recording to view this item.

DIRECTOR DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY

In providing this advice to Council as the Manager Planning, I Matt Rogers have no interests to disclose in this report.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 2 and 12 Golden Point Road Trentham - draft recommended permit and conditions [**8.1.1** - 18 pages]
2. 2 and 12 Golden Point Road Trentham - proposed subdivision plan Revision-G [**8.1.2** - 1 page]

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. *Endorses the position set out in this report, and detailed in Attachment 1 "2 and 12 Golden Point Road Trentham - draft recommended permit and conditions", to support the application at 2 and 12 Golden Point Road, Trentham, subject to conditions, for the purpose of its submission to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) in VCAT matter P1034/2025 (Hepburn planning permit application PLN23/0211).*

Following the preparation of the Officer's Report for the Agenda, VCAT advised Council, as a party to the VCAT application, of further information relating to the application.

This information was reviewed in detail by officers. As a result of this review, the Officer's Recommendation was subsequently amended as follows:

AMENDED OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council does not support the application at 2 and 12 Golden Point Road, Trentham, for the purpose of its submission to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) in VCAT matter P1034/2025 (Hepburn planning permit application PLN23/0211).

The grounds for not supporting the application are:

- a) *The extensive native tree removal required to create vehicle access from Golden Point Road for the new lots.*

b) The detrimental impact resulting from significant loss of native vegetation when considered across the site and the roadside.

c) Further to the amended application documents received via the VCAT process, it remains unclear exactly how many trees are to be cleared and their precise location.

MOTION

That Council does not support the application at 2 and 12 Golden Point Road, Trentham, for the purpose of its submission to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) in VCAT matter P1034/2025 (Hepburn planning permit application PLN23/0211).

The grounds for not supporting the application are:

a) The extensive native tree removal required to create vehicle access from Golden Point Road for the new lots.

b) The detrimental impact resulting from significant loss of native vegetation when considered across the site and the roadside.

c) Further to the amended application documents received via the VCAT process, it remains unclear exactly how many trees are to be cleared and their precise location.

Moved: Cr Brian Hood

Seconded: Cr Shirley Cornish

CARRIED

Voted for: Cr Tony Clark, Cr Shirley Cornish, Cr Tim Drylie, Cr Lesley Hewitt, Cr Pat Hockey and Cr Brian Hood

Voted against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Officers seek Council's endorsed position to present and submit at an upcoming VCAT appeal.

The appeal is lodged pursuant to Section 79 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 where "*an applicant for a permit may apply to the Tribunal for review of the failure of the responsible authority to grant the permit within the prescribed time.*"

The application seeks to subdivide land into five residential lots and remove native vegetation at 2 and 12 Golden Point Road, Trentham. In a prehearing conference, VCAT ordered Council to resolve a position on the application to inform VCAT's decision-making process by 1 May 2026.

Prior to the appeal being lodged, the application attracted 14 objections. A decision on the permit is now to be made by VCAT and not Council. Objectors and Council are individual parties to the appeal and will be separately represented.

Having considered the proposal, applicable planning provisions, referral authority responses and objections lodged, officers consider that it is reasonable to support the application subject to conditions. The recommended conditions alter the proposed subdivision layout in accordance with requirements from Coliban Water, and the Country Fire Authority. Additional conditions require the payment of a public open space levy, and the construction of Golden Point Road at the permit holder's expense. Attachment 1 details the officer recommended position for endorsement.

BACKGROUND

Site and Surrounds

The subject site, consisting of two adjoining lots, are known and described as Crown Allotments 11 and 12, Section 12, Parish of Trentham. Together they form an irregularly shaped lot of 3.5 hectares across the two parcels, with a frontage of 78 metres to Gleeson Street on its western side of 2 Golden Point Road, and a combined frontage of roughly 270 metres to Golden Point Road on its southern side.

The site is on the southern periphery of the built-up area of Trentham, with established dwellings to the west, north and northeast in the Neighbourhood Residential Zone. Forested land and a single home on a farming lot are located to the south and southeast with an open farming property to the southwest.

2 Golden Point Road contains scattered native vegetation, a single dwelling and associated outbuildings. 12 Golden Point Road is a vacant residential lot with substantial native vegetation for which a single dwelling was approved in 2016 but never built. The combined site can connect to all reticulated services at the landowner's cost.



Proposal

The application seeks subdivision of land into five residential lots and the removal of native vegetation. The proposed new lot sizes are:

- Lot 1 – 4028 square metres
- Lot 2 – 4024 square metres (this lot retains a dwelling and outbuilding)
- Lot 3 – 4019 square metres
- Lot 4 – 4022 square metres
- Lot 5 – 1.92 hectares (this is the remainder of 12 Golden Point Road)

The application proposed each lot to connect to sewer, water and electricity. Vehicle access is proposed from Gleeson Street on its western side and Golden Point Road to the south, with proposed Lot 2 to retain its existing access arrangement.

The application proposes the removal of native vegetation to allow for defensible space and services to the lot. The removal totals twenty-three large trees and one small, scattered tree.

The extent of native vegetation removal places the application in the 'detailed' assessment pathway under DEECA's Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation. The applicant has provided evidence of five sites available within the North Central Catchment Management Authority (NCCMA) region for a sufficient volume of offsite native vegetation offsets.

Applicable Hepburn Planning Scheme provisions

Hepburn Planning Scheme clauses under which a permit is required are:

Zoning

Neighbourhood Residential Zone - Schedule 3 (NRZ3, Clause 32.09)

A permit is required to subdivide the land in this zone.

Overlays

Environmental Significance Overlay - Schedule 1 (ESO1, Clause 42.01)

Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO, Clause 44.06)

A permit is required to subdivide land in these overlays.

Other

Native Vegetation (Clause 52.17)

A permit is required to remove native vegetation under this provision.

Other planning scheme provisions that must be considered

Clause 53.01 Public open space contribution and subdivision

Clause 53.02 Bushfire planning

Clause 53.03 Residential reticulated gas service connection

Clause 56 Residential subdivision

Planning Policy Framework that must be considered

Clause 11.01-1R Settlement - Central Highlands

Clause 11.01-1L Township and settlements

Clause 12.01-1S Protection of biodiversity

Clause 12.01-1L Native vegetation and habitat protection

Clause 12.01-2S Native vegetation management

Clause 13.02-1S Bushfire planning

Clause 14.02-1S Catchment planning and management

Clause 14.02-1L Catchment and land protection

Clause 14.02-2S Water quality

Clause 15.01-3S Subdivision design

Clause 15.01-3L Subdivision in Hepburn Shire

Clause 15.01-5S Neighbourhood character

Clause 15.01-5L-02 Neighbourhood character in townships and settlements

Clause 16.01-1S Housing supply

Clause 19.03-2L Infrastructure design and provision

Relevant documents the decision-maker may consider

Trentham Structure Plan (adopted September 2024).

KEY ISSUES

Planning controls and referrals

The subject sites are within Neighbourhood Residential Zone – Schedule 3 (NRZ3) and have Environmental Significance Overlay – Schedule 1 (ESO1) and Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO).

Officers referred the application to Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), CFA and Coliban Water, Goulburn Murray Water and Powercor. These authorities have provided conditional consent in their areas of authority.

The subdivision

(Refer to Attachment 2) The application is for a five-lot subdivision across two existing lots. The four new residential lots are for all intents and purposes on the 2 Golden Point Road land. Some land on 12 Golden Point Road will be incorporated into the easternmost new lot.

The new lots are all over 4,000 square metres in area. Surrounding home lots at the southern end of Gleeson Street (south of Walters Street) range in area from 2,300 sqm to 8,550 sqm. The new lots have their long axis oriented approximately north-south noting their predominant orientation to Golden Point Road (an east-west road). Lots at the southern end of Gleeson Street are oriented east-west noting Gleeson Street is a north-south road.

The lots' generous size, in a town context, and southern orientation can provide for spacious garden areas and pleasant outlook for new homes towards the mixed open/forested land to the south of the town. Each of the four new lots will present a conventional backyard abutment to the lot to the north at 6 Gleeson Street.

All lots can be connected to town drainage, water, power and NBN. Recommended conditions require these connections to the standards specified by Council and the relevant referral authorities.

Lot access

Driveway access for the lot adjoining Gleeson Street is from Gleeson Street. The remaining three lots have proposed driveway access from Golden Point Road. Golden Point Road is not properly constructed at this location – recommended Council engineering conditions require the applicant to construct Golden Point Road into a trafficable sealed road between Gleeson Street and the easternmost new driveway of the three lots proposed to front Golden Point Road.

This approach will provide for orderly lot access on sealed roads consistent with the existing pattern of the surrounding neighbourhood.

Native vegetation

The applicant proposed native tree removal across 2 Golden Point Road to enable the new lots, and subsequent establishment of homes, in a bushfire safe manner.

No vegetation is proposed to be removed at 12 Golden Point Road.

Notably, the land has been zoned for residential development for several decades – a zoning which provides a level of as-of-right town development taking account of natural constraints.

The proposed alignment of the to-be-constructed sealed section of Golden Point Road provides for a slightly winding path to avoid standing native trees in that road reserve.

The removal is supported by DEECA conditional on the applicant acquiring an offset in the region. The siting of the lots and associated tree removal is supported by the CFA. Conditions of both authorities are listed in the recommended conditions.

Bushfire safety

Consistent with statewide planning controls, the establishment of new homes in residential areas enables limited vegetation removal exemptions to allow a safe areas around new homes for fire-fighting purpose.

A newly constructed sealed road surface along Golden Point Road will provide for emergency vehicle access.

CFA does not object to the proposal and has provided conditions to enforce its requirements as shown in the recommended permit conditions.

Drainage

The land natural drains to a tributary of Trent Creek which flows north on land to the east and north of the site at 18 Golden Point Road and 10 Mullens Road. That tributary is identified by the North Central Catchment Management Authority as being subject to some localised flooding, but not on the subject land.

The proposal is to connect to the new lots to the town drain system via the to-be-constructed section of Golden Point Road and into the existing Gleeson Street drain consistent with Council's engineering department advice.

Officers do not anticipate any exacerbation of the localised flooding in the adjacent tributary, noting that:

- the large size of the proposed lots will have good ongoing capacity to absorb rainfall,
- the connection of new homes to town drainage, and
- the diversion of some on-site rainfall to firefighting water tanks.

Coliban Water does not object to the proposal and has provided conditions to facilitate the connection of the lots to sewer and water services. This includes conditions mandating the use of tree protection zones in the layout and construction of service to protect trees in Golden Point Road.

COUNCIL POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Council Plan 2025-2029

Future Hepburn

1. Preserve the unique character of our towns and communities, plan for future growth and protect our productive rural landscape.

Adopting a position of supporting grant of a conditional permit is consistent with planning for growth in a manner that preserves the unique character of Trentham.

The proposed lots are generously sized and will not create unreasonably dense residential development. The larger lot sizes provide opportunities for appropriate garden landscaping to mature post housing development. Each lot is planned to have individual road access consistent with the existing pattern of development in the surrounding neighbourhood.

Providing for residential development on residentially zoned land avoids impact impacts on rural productivity.

Trentham Structure Plan

The Council-adopted Trentham Structure Plan:

- proposes to change the land's zoning to Low Density Residential Zone and remove it from the town boundary at Figure 19: Proposed zoning changes' (p55). The Low Density Residential Zone is still a residential zone with as-of-right use for dwellings and a minimum lot size of 2,000sqm.
- Identified the site as a 'strategic redevelopment site' at 'Figure 9: housing theme map' (p28). This indicates the land has capacity to provide for additional housing for the town consistent with its zoning.
- Is identified as a 'precinct 3 residential area'
- Is identified as containing medium quality vegetation quality on 12 Golden Point Road and parts of 2 Golden Point Road.
- Action A7 of the structure plan states: *Implement the biodiversity assessment for medium to high biodiversity values and wildlife corridors through appropriate zoning and overlays in the Hepburn Planning Scheme to*
- *protect these areas from clearing and manage development outcomes.*

The Trentham Structure Plan clearly contemplates residential development of the land. The plan's recommendation to rezone the land to Low Density Residential Zone is premised on reducing the volume of development and residential density due to need to reduce risks and environmental impacts associated with: the documented presence of medium quality native vegetation on and around the site; the site's exposure to bushfire risk from the south and the localised flooding risk of tributary to the site's east and north.

All proposed lots are at least double the minimum 2,000sqm size allowed in the Low Density Residential Zone. Officers submit that the subdivision as proposed addresses the matters of concern above that inform the structure plan's proposed rezoning of the land. As a whole, and with appropriate permit conditions, the subdivision is consistent with the structure plan's intent of achieving a reasonable balance between housing provision in a location with good access to town and community services and the management of localised environmental and risk impacts.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The proposed subdivision has no financial implications for Council. Recommended permit conditions require the construction of services and roads at the subdividers cost and to Council and other authority standards.

COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Fourteen objections were received which related to various points including environmental impacts, bushfire risk, inconsistency with the adopted Trentham Structure Plan, service impacts and over-development.

Council officers have considered objections in recommending a position of supporting the grant of a permit with conditions before VCAT. Officers believe matters raised in objections are satisfactorily addressed:

- by the application, having regard to zoning, overly and policy objectives, or
- can be addressed via recommended conditions, or
- do not provide sufficient grounds to warrant refusal.

RISK AND GOVERNANCE IMPLICATIONS

As the application has attracted more than 10 objections, a formal position on the application should be decided on by Council in accordance with its deed of delegation for planning.

The VCAT process is designed to account for the views of all interested parties. The application will be formally decided by VCAT after considering applicant, Council, objector and referral authority views. Parties may appeal a decision of VCAT to the Supreme Court should VCAT's decision be challengeable on a point of law.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

The provision of homes on zoned residential land at the edge of Trentham:

- Reduces the need to provide extra services distant from a town
- Reduces travel distances for local daily and weekly services by locating close to the business and community facilities of the town
- Enables better management of water quality in a drinking water catchment by directing site drainage into town drains and avoid the need for on-site wastewater treatment.

Native vegetation removal will have a localised impact on biodiversity. Officers note:

- the applicant has documented the availability of native vegetation offsets within the region to the satisfaction of DEECA.
- That the site is at the edge of the extensive Wombat Forest which will continue to provide core biodiversity land in the Trentham area and beyond. The State government is currently in the legislative process of including parts of Wombat Forest close to Trentham into an expanded Wombat-Lerderderg National Park.

GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT

There are no gender equity implications associated with this report.

8.2 COUNCILLOR STATUTORY ROLES

Go to 00:36:04 in the meeting recording to view this item.

DIRECTOR PERFORMANCE AND TRANSFORMATION

In providing this advice to Council as the Interim Manager Governance, I Anthony Smith have no interests to disclose in this report.

ATTACHMENTS

- Nil

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That while Mr Don Henderson is stood down, Council appoints:

1. *Cr _____ as the Council representative to the external body, World Heritage Listing of the Victorian Goldfields Region Committee.*
2. *Cr _____ as the Council representative to the Dean Recreation Reserve and Tennis Courts Community Asset Committee.*

MOTION

That while Mr Don Henderson is stood down, Council appoints:

1. *Cr Shirley Cornish as the Council representative to the external body, World Heritage Listing of the Victorian Goldfields Region Committee.*
2. *Cr Lesley Hewitt as the Council representative to the Dean Recreation Reserve and Tennis Courts Community Asset Committee.*

Moved: Cr Shirley Cornish

Seconded: Cr Pat Hockey

Carried

Voted for: Cr Tony Clark, Cr Shirley Cornish, Cr Tim Drylie, Cr Lesley Hewitt, Cr Pat Hockey and Cr Brian Hood

Voted against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the Statutory Meeting of Council held Tuesday 18 November 2025, Council appointed Councillor representatives to the various advisory committees, community reference groups, boards and external bodies that Council represents.

Don Henderson was appointed to World Heritage Listing of the Victorian Goldfields Region Committee and the Dean Recreation Reserve and Tennis Courts Community Asset Committee. However, Mr Henderson has been served with alleged criminal

charges and as required by the *Local Government Act 2020*, has been automatically stood down while this matter is managed through the appropriate processes.

Council now needs to make a further appointment to these two committees.

BACKGROUND

At the Statutory Meeting of Council held Tuesday 18 November 2025, Council appointed Councillor representatives to the various advisory committees, community reference groups, boards and external bodies that Council represents.

Councillors are appointed for 12 months, with appointments reviewed annually at the Statutory Meeting of Council. However, Mr Henderson has been served with alleged criminal charges and as required by the *Local Government Act 2020*, Don Henderson is automatically stood down while this matter is managed through the appropriate processes.

Council is now required to review the appointment of a Councillor to the following two committees:

- World Heritage Listing of the Victorian Goldfields Region Committee and
- Dean Recreation Reserve and Tennis Courts Community Asset Committee.

KEY ISSUES

The following information provides a summary of the board and committees and the form of representation for each that is required. The two organisations are:

- World Heritage Listing of the Victorian Goldfields Region Committee - required representation any Councillor.
- Dean Recreation Reserve and Tennis Courts Community Asset Committee - required representation one Councillor.

COUNCIL POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Council Plan 2025-2029

Hepburn Working Together

2. Maintain corporate governance to enable good Council decision making and to ensure long-term financial viability.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities and the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Councillor representation is required on committees, boards and external bodies to ensure that public views are incorporated into the decision-making process.

RISK AND GOVERNANCE IMPLICATIONS

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

Councillor representation is required on committees, boards and external bodies to ensure that public views are incorporated into the decision-making process.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

There are no sustainability implications associated with this report.

GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT

There are no gender equity implications associated with this report.

8.3 REVISION OF INSTRUMENTS OF DELEGATION FROM COUNCIL TO THE CEO (S5) AND COUNCIL TO COUNCIL STAFF (S6)

Go to 00:38:09 in the meeting recording to view this item.

DIRECTOR COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE

In providing this advice to Council as the Governance Advisor, I Catherine Nurse have no interests to disclose in this report.

ATTACHMENTS

1. S5 Instrument of Delegation Council to CEO - XX April 2026 - Draft [**8.3.1** - 4 pages]
2. S6 Instrument of Delegation Council to Council Staff - XX April 2026 - Draft [**8.3.2** - 117 pages]

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. *In the exercise of the power conferred by s 11(1)(b) of the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act), resolves that:*
2. *There be delegated to the person holding the position, or acting in or performing the duties, of Chief Executive Officer the powers, duties and functions set out in the attached Instrument of Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer, subject to the conditions and limitations specified in that Instrument;*
3. *The instrument comes into force immediately upon this resolution being made and is to be signed by the Chief Executive Officer and the Mayor;*
4. *On the coming into force of the instrument all previous delegations to the Chief Executive Officer are revoked; and,*
5. *The duties and functions set out in the instrument 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.*
6. *In the exercise of the powers conferred by the legislation referred to in the attached instrument of delegation, resolves that:*
7. *There be delegated to the members of Council staff holding, acting in or performing the duties of the offices or positions referred to in the attached Instrument of Delegation to members of Council staff, the powers, duties and functions set out in that instrument, subject to the conditions and limitations specified in that Instrument;*

8. *The instrument comes into force immediately upon resolution of Council and is to be signed by the Council's Chief Executive Officer and the Mayor;*
9. *On the coming into force of the instrument all previous delegations to members of Council staff (other than the Chief Executive Officer) are revoked; and,*
10. *The duties and functions set out in the instrument 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.*

MOTION

That Council:

1. *In the exercise of the power conferred by s 11(1)(b) of the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act), resolves that:*
2. *There be delegated to the person holding the position, or acting in or performing the duties, of Chief Executive Officer the powers, duties and functions set out in the attached Instrument of Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer, subject to the conditions and limitations specified in that Instrument;*
3. *The instrument comes into force immediately upon this resolution being made and is to be signed by the Chief Executive Officer and the Mayor;*
4. *On the coming into force of the instrument all previous delegations to the Chief Executive Officer are revoked; and,*
5. *The duties and functions set out in the instrument 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.*
6. *In the exercise of the powers conferred by the legislation referred to in the attached instrument of delegation, resolves that:*
7. *There be delegated to the members of Council staff holding, acting in or performing the duties of the offices or positions referred to in the attached Instrument of Delegation to members of Council staff, the powers, duties and functions set out in that instrument, subject to the conditions and limitations specified in that Instrument;*
8. *The instrument comes into force immediately upon resolution of Council and is*

to be signed by the Council's Chief Executive Officer and the Mayor;

9. *On the coming into force of the instrument all previous delegations to members of Council staff (other than the Chief Executive Officer) are revoked; and,*

10. *The duties and functions set out in the instrument 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.*

Moved: Cr Pat Hockey

Seconded: Cr Lesley Hewitt

Carried

Voted for: Cr Tony Clark, Cr Shirley Cornish, Cr Tim Drylie, Cr Lesley Hewitt, Cr Pat Hockey and Cr Brian Hood

Voted against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Instruments of Delegation represent the formal delegation of powers by Council under the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) and enable the business of Council to be carried out efficiently and in line with Council approved policies.

The previous Instrument of Delegation to the CEO and the Instrument of Delegation to Members of Council Staff were executed on 23 September 2025.

The revised instruments reflect staffing changes in the organisation, along with legislative changes and amendments suggested by Maddocks as part of their continual review processes.

An update of other Instruments revised as part of the regular maintenance has been provided for information. These Instruments will be authorised by the CEO and the Mayor once the above Instruments have been considered by Council.

BACKGROUND

Instruments of Delegation represent the formal delegation of powers by Council. Section 11(1)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) provides for a Council to delegate powers, duties and functions to its CEO under the Act or any other Act, other than certain specified powers.

Delegations enable the business of Council to be carried out effectively, in line with Council approved policies and are assigned to positions within Council, rather than to staff individually. When executing powers under delegation, staff are also limited and bound by Council policies and procedures.

Section 11 of the Act specifies a number of powers, duties and functions that must be specified through Instruments of Delegation, along with a number of exclusions to what can be delegated to the CEO:

(1) A Council may by instrument of delegation delegate to—

(a) the members of a delegated committee; or

(b) the Chief Executive Officer— any power, duty or function of a Council under this Act or any other Act other than a power, duty or function specified in subsection (2).

(2) The following are specified for the purposes of subsection (1)—

(a) the power of delegation;

(b) the power to elect a Mayor or Deputy Mayor;

(c) the power to grant a reasonable request for leave under section 35;

(d) subject to subsection (3), the power to appoint the Chief Executive Officer, whether on a permanent or acting basis;

(e) the power to make any decision in relation to the employment, dismissal or removal of the Chief Executive Officer;

(f) the power to approve or amend the Council Plan;

(g) the power to adopt or amend any policy that the Council is required to adopt under this Act;

(h) the power to adopt or amend the Governance Rules;

(i) the power to appoint the chair or the members to a delegated committee;

(j) the power to make, amend or revoke a local law;

(k) the power to approve the budget or revised budget;

(l) the power to borrow money;

(m) subject to section 181H(1)(b) of the Local Government Act 1989, the power to declare general rates, municipal charges, service rates and charges and special rates and charges;

(n) any power, duty or function prescribed by the regulations for the purposes of this subsection.

The current Instrument of Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer and Instrument of Delegation to Members of Council Staff were executed on 23 September 2025.

Council subscribes to the Maddocks Authorisations and Delegations Service, which provides advice regarding legislative amendments and template instruments which are then tailored to organisational requirements. Maddocks have informed Council about the legislative changes that affect the powers, duties and functions of Council.

The following table provides an overview of Council's Instruments of Delegation, what powers are delegated, and what approval is required:

Delegation from Council

Require resolution of Council

Schedule 5 – Delegation from Council to the CEO under the *Local Government Act 2020*

Includes delegations required and excluded under the Local Government Act 2020

Schedule 6 – Delegation from Council to Council Staff under various Acts

Powers are delegated direct to officers under the following Acts:

- *Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2003*
- *Domestic Animals Act 1994*
- *Environment Protection Act 1970*
- *Food Act 1984*
- *Heritage Act 2017*
- *Local Government Act 1989*
- *Planning and Environment Act 1987*
- *Residential Tenancies Act 1997*
- *Road Management Act 2004*
- *Cemeteries and Crematoria Regulations 2015*
- *Planning and Environment Regulations 2015*
- *Planning and Environment (Fees) Regulations 2016*
- *Residential Tenancies (Caravan Parks and Movable Dwellings Registration and Standards) Regulations 2020*
- *Road Management (General) Regulations 2016*
- *Road Management (Works and Infrastructure) Regulations 2015*

Schedule 18 - New Instrument of Delegation Environment Protection Authority powers from Council to members of Council staff

Allows authorised officer to exercise powers held by the Environment Protection Authority under the Environment Protection Act 2017, specifically relating to:

- *onsite wastewater management systems with a design or actual flow rate of sewage not exceeding 5000 litres on any day; and*
- *noise from the construction, demolition or removal of residential premises.*

Delegation from the CEO

To be determined by the CEO

Schedule 7 – Sub-delegation from the CEO to Council Staff under various Acts Powers, as delegated to the CEO by Council or under various Acts, are sub-delegated to Council Staff under various Acts and through administrative powers.

Schedule 13 – delegation directly from the CEO to Council Staff under various Acts

Schedule 14 – delegation from the CEO to Council Staff related to VicSmart applications

Schedule 15 – delegation from the CEO to Council Staff related to Freedom of Information Processing

Schedule 16 – delegation from the CEO to Council Staff related to bushfire reconstruction

KEY ISSUES

Instrument of Delegation to Chief Executive Officer (S5) – to be adopted by Council

There are no legislative changes advised by Maddocks for this instrument. The Instrument is based upon the Maddocks template, and continues the delegations approved in September 2025.

Instrument of Delegation to Members of Staff (S6) – to be adopted by Council

The revised Instrument of Delegation to Members of Council staff is based upon the previous Instrument considered by Council in September 2025. This revision has also been updated to include recent position changes across the organisation.

The Instrument has been revised to take into account recent legislative changes and to provide further clarity on officer powers.

Amendments to the delegated powers, duties and functions in the revised Instrument of Delegation to Members of Council Staff are largely administrative in nature and will not result in any significant changes to current practices.

The revised instrument is attached. In summary, the legislative changes to the revised Instrument of Delegation are:

The following changes have been made to the S6:

- Amendments to the Planning and Environment Act 1987 which were addressed in the temporary S6A Instrument adopted by Council at the 24 February 2026 Council meeting have now been incorporated into the S6 Instrument.

As these legislative changes have been included in the S6 Instrument, once that has been adopted by Council, the temporary S6A Instrument will no longer be required and will be revoked.

Instruments of Delegation to be authorised by the CEO

The following instruments will be authorised by the CEO once Council has considered the Instrument of Delegation to the CEO.

Section 47 of the 2020 Act provides the CEO the power to sub-delegate any powers, duties or functions that has been delegated to them to members of Council staff. These powers, duties or functions may be delegated to a named person or to the holder of a specified position.

Instrument of Sub-Delegation by CEO (S7)

The revised Instrument of Delegation to Members of Council staff is based upon the previous Instrument considered by Council in September 2025. This revision has also been updated to include recent position changes across the organisation and recent legislative changes and to provide further clarity on officer powers.

In summary, the legislative changes to the revised Instrument of Delegation are:

- Minor amendments to the *Building Act 1993* as a result of the *Building Legislation Amendment (Buyer Protection) Act 2025*;
- Clarification of powers specific to Council when it is a land owner under the *Building Act 1993*.
- Minor amendments to the *Domestic Building Contracts Act 1995 (Vic)* as a result of the *Domestic Building Contracts Amendment Act 2025*;
- Clarification of powers already granted to Council under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*.
- Amendments to reflect upcoming changes to the *Heavy Vehicle National Law (2012) (Vic)* as a result of legislation passed in Queensland (*being the Heavy Vehicle National Law Amendment Act 2025 (Qld)*). These changes will take effect on a date to be proclaimed, and a note is inserted in the S7 Instrument accordingly.
- Insertion of the power under the *Integrity Oversight Victoria Act 2011*, which was formerly included in the Instrument under the *Victorian Inspectorate Act 2011*; and
- Addition of a new function under the *Victorian Early Childhood Regulatory Authority Act 2025*.

Instrument of Delegation by CEO of CEO powers, duties and functions to Members of Council Staff (S13)

This instrument allows the CEO to delegate powers, duties and functions existing under all Victorian legislation. This differs to the Instrument of Sub-Delegation by CEO (S7) in that it does not relate to *Council* powers, duties and functions, but those vested in the CEO personally.

Amendments have been made to this instrument to reflect the following:

- The *Fire Services Property Levy Act 2012* is now known as the *Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund Act 2012*, following the commencement of the *Fire Services Property Amendment (Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund) Act 2025*.
- The *Victorian Inspectorate Act 2011* is now known as the *Integrity Oversight Victoria Act 2011*.

COUNCIL POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Council Plan 2025-2029

Hepburn Working Together

2. Maintain corporate governance to enable good Council decision making and to ensure long-term financial viability.

Amendments to the delegated powers, duties, and functions in the revised Instrument of Delegation to Members of Council Staff are administrative in nature and will not result in any significant changes to current practices.

It is noted that the instruments provide that a power, duty, or function may only be exercised in accordance with adopted policies.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The revised Instruments of Delegation have been prepared based on current advice provided by Council's solicitor Maddocks.

Consultation has occurred with Managers, Coordinators, and relevant staff during the preparation of the revised Instruments of Delegation to ensure that appropriate staff delegates have been nominated.

RISK AND GOVERNANCE IMPLICATIONS

Reviewing Council's delegations ensures Council continues to comply with its obligations under various Acts and Regulations and enables the business of Council to be carried out efficiently.

If the Council did not delegate duties, powers, and functions to members of Council staff and enable the CEO to do the same, Council would not be able to manage the volume of work and decisions that are effectively carried out by officers every day.

Appropriate conferring of powers to positions within Council also enables decisions that are made on a day-to-day basis to be compliant and reduce the opportunity to be challenged from an authorising environment perspective.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

There are no sustainability implications associated with this report.

GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT

There are no gender equity implications associated with this report.

8.4 INSTRUMENTS OF APPOINTMENT TO AUTHORISED OFFICERS UNDER THE PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT ACT 1987 & ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION ACT 2017

Go to 00:40:00 in the meeting recording to view this item.

DIRECTOR PERFORMANCE AND TRANSFORMATION

In providing this advice to Council as the Governance Advisor, I Catherine Nurse have no interests to disclose in this report.

ATTACHMENTS

1. S11A - Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation - Planning & Environment Act - XX Month 2026 - Draft [8.4.1 - 1 page]
2. S11B - Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation under the EPA 2017 - XX Month 2026 - Draft [8.4.2 - 1 page]

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. *In the exercise of the powers conferred by s 147(4) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, resolves that:*
 - a. *The members of Council staff referred to in the instrument attached be appointed and authorised as set out in the instrument.*
 - b. *The instrument comes into force immediately it is signed by Council's Chief Executive Officer, and remains in force until Council determines to vary or revoke it.*
2. *In the exercise of the power conferred by s 242(2) of the Environment Protection Act 2017 and the Instrument of Delegation of the Environment Protection Authority under the Act dated 4 June 2021, resolves that:*
 - a. *The members of Council staff referred to in the instrument attached be appointed and authorised as set out in the instrument.*
 - b. *The instrument comes into force immediately it is signed by Council's Chief Executive Officer, and remains in force until Council determines to vary or revoke it.*

MOTION

That Council:

1. *In the exercise of the powers conferred by s 147(4) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, resolves that:*

- a. *The members of Council staff referred to in the instrument attached be appointed and authorised as set out in the instrument.*
 - b. *The instrument comes into force immediately it is signed by Council's Chief Executive Officer, and remains in force until Council determines to vary or revoke it.*
2. *In the exercise of the power conferred by s 242(2) of the Environment Protection Act 2017 and the Instrument of Delegation of the Environment Protection Authority under the Act dated 4 June 2021, resolves that:*
 - a. *The members of Council staff referred to in the instrument attached be appointed and authorised as set out in the instrument.*
 - b. *The instrument comes into force immediately it is signed by Council's Chief Executive Officer, and remains in force until Council determines to vary or revoke it.*

Moved: Cr Shirley Cornish

Seconded: Cr Pat Hockey

Carried

Voted for: Cr Tony Clark, Cr Shirley Cornish, Cr Tim Drylie, Cr Lesley Hewitt, Cr Pat Hockey and Cr Brian Hood

Voted against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The appointment of authorised officers enables appropriate staff within the organisation to administer and enforce various Acts, Regulations or Council local laws in accordance with the powers granted to them under legislation or a local law.

The instruments are being updated to reflect staffing changes.

BACKGROUND

Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation empower relevant staff to exercise the powers granted to authorised officers by legislation, regulations or a local law.

The Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation prepared for Council's consideration are based on advice from the Maddocks Authorisations and Delegations Service.

Whilst the appointment and authorisation of authorised officers under other relevant legislation is executed by the Chief Executive Officer under delegation,

Maddocks recommend that officers enforcing the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the *Environment Protection Act 2017* be authorised by Council resolution.

Maddocks recommends that Council to execute the appointment and authorisation of authorised under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the *Environment Protection Act 2017* because these Acts place limitations on what powers can be sub-delegated, so by delegating direct from Council, the risk of decisions being challenged on the basis that the delegation was not appropriate is mitigated.

The instruments have been prepared following consultation with the internal departments of Council and have been recently updated to reflect staffing changes. Powers are delegated to individuals, not positions.

The Instruments of Appointment to Authorised Officers that do not relate to the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the *Environment Protection Act 2017* will be executed by the Chief Executive Officer as per legislation.

KEY ISSUES

Planning and Environment Act 1987

There are no legislative changes to the authorisation under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*. The instrument has been updated in line with staff appointments.

Environment Protection Act 2017

There are no legislative changes to the authorisation under the *Environment Protection Act 2017*. The instrument has been updated in line with staff appointments.

COUNCIL POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Council Plan 2025-2029

Hepburn Working Together

2. Maintain corporate governance to enable good Council decision making and to ensure long-term financial viability.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Council subscribes to the Maddocks Authorisations and Delegations Service, and relevant advice has been considered in the preparation of this report.

For transparency purposes, Council is required to prepare a register of Instruments of Appointment to Authorised Officers and Delegations on Council's website.

RISK AND GOVERNANCE IMPLICATIONS

Instruments of authorisations allow the business of Council to continue and operate effectively.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

There are no sustainability implications associated with this report.

GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT

There are no gender equity implications associated with this report.

9 NOTICES OF MOTION

NIL

10 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

NIL

11 COUNCILLOR AND CEO REPORTS

11.1 MAYOR'S REPORT

Go to 00:41:00 in the meeting recording to view this item.

Councillor Tony Clark

The Mayor presented a verbal report.

11.2 COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Councillor Shirley Cornish

Presented a verbal report.

Councillor Tim Drylie

I also want to acknowledge the joy I felt and saw in others attending CresFest 2026 in Creswick. It was a real reminder of how important community-led arts festivals are. They lift people's spirits, bring people together, and build connection in a direct and joyful way. They help create belonging and strengthen community life.

On Anzac Day I attended services in Kingston and Creswick, and I was moved by the large number of people who turned out, and by the respect shown for those who served, suffered and lost their lives in terrible wars.

At Kingston, Ruth Ord Evans shared a compelling story about a her great aunt, Sister Margaret Anderson, who served as a nurse during World War One and who demonstrated great strength in persevering through incredibly difficult and varied conditions over several years overseas.

Professor Barry Golding also gave a powerful acknowledgement of Country. It did not divide the ceremony. It added depth and honesty. He connected remembrance with the Frontier Wars and the truth of trauma and violence, dispossession and a war fought on this land against and resisted by First Nations people.

That matters.

First Nations people defended Country. They also served in Australia's later wars. Many returned home to discrimination, exclusion and silence.

Anzac Day should not narrow remembrance. It should deepen it.

Lest we forget should mean everyone.

I also want to recognise that many people across our shire are doing it tough right now.

As I have said before, the sudden jump in fuel prices has come on top of high grocery, rent, mortgage and power bills. I also know that more people are turning to emergency food relief and other support just to get by.

However, as I said in my recent Councillor Column, I was interested to read a recent Climate Council guide, Top Tips for Taking Back Control of Your Energy, about the practical steps people are taking to manage rising costs. People are combining trips,

walking more, cycling, catching public transport when they can, travelling less, or using a smaller car. Just as importantly, many people said these changes helped them feel fitter, less stressed, more connected to others, and more in control.

But not everyone has the same choices. In rural and regional communities, distance, limited public transport, disability, caring responsibilities, illness, low income and isolation can make change much harder. So this is not only about support and compassion. This is also about the need for councils and other levels of government to fund and support communities more fairly, so people are not left behind because of where they live or the circumstances they face. For anyone needing support, Council's Access Support Services page is a helpful place to start.

I was also proud to attend the raising of the trans flag in Daylesford. At a time when many trans and gender-diverse people are facing hostility, visible acts of respect, inclusion and solidarity matter.

Councillor Lesley Hewitt

A month is a long time in a Councillor's life. During the last month Councillors have been working on the 2026-2027 budget preparation and I had forgotten that I'd attended the Farmers Day Out in Ballarat which HSC had helped sponsor. I met with several HSC farmers who valued the workshops and speakers. There is a link to our budget preparations - HSC has limited cash reserves and we have to think of creative ways to continue to provide support to residents. Working with other organisations like we did with the Farmers' Day Out and like we do with the Healthy Landscapes Program enables us to support more initiatives than we could do on our own.

Like the budget preparation internally focused work saw me interviewed as for the development of the Gender Equality Action Plan, an internal document that is a mandatory requirement of the state government.

But it has also been a month of showing Council support for a range of community activities – with people doing things themselves – Glenlyon Landcare, the Hepburn Football Club fund-raising initiative, the erecting of a Blue Tree at the Glenlyon Recreation Reserve and attending the Variety Club's Brats Bash. Whilst not a major event in the Shire, the participants stayed overnight in Daylesford before leaving on their journey to Kangaroo Island. A small event but staying and starting from Daylesford contributes to the economic well-being of the Shire.

A highlight was ANZAC Day where I attended four services. The first was at Drummond and well done to the Hall Committee for organising the service – it's only the third year that this has occurred. At Hepburn, Eganstown and Daylesford stories were told of men whose names appeared on the respective honour rolls. A moving part of these services was the telling of the stories of local men. That made the ceremonies more personal and reminded us these were real people from our own towns and districts, not just names from a distant war. It helped connect our local history with the present day.

A highlight was the new Memorial in Raglan St diagonally opposite the Farmers Arms. The RSL, Hygge (the developers of Middleton Field), local fundraisers, the American Motorcycle Club, the Shire, Friends of Wombat Hill, Daylesford Historical Society, the Daylesford Community Branch of the Bendigo Bank, Rotary and many individuals all contributed to making this happen. .

Another highlight was seeing the increasing involvement of so many of our young people. Student leaders from Daylesford Secondary College, the choir from Daylesford Primary School, and students from St Michael's Primary School and Hepburn all took part, well supported by their teachers. Their involvement matters. It shows remembrance is not fading and that younger generations are prepared to carry these traditions forward.

After the year we have had – Bondi Massacre, some of the vitriol and abuse that has been directed by some at officers and Councillors in the Shire, and the booing of indigenous veterans (and they were veterans) at some of the ANZAC services in the capital cities – it was a positive indication of the values of our community to see the respectful nature of the services and the supporting of the ANZAC message expressed by Daylesford RSL President, Ian Tinetti – democracy, respect and responsibility to act and a powerful reminder that it's not just on ANZAC Day but every day to acknowledge the humanity of people who have different views to us, to respect the diversity of our community, and to do our bit to make it a better place.

Councillor Pat Hockey

Councillors, in the lead up to Spudfest, and through a fortuitous connection, I had an in-depth visit to a potato farm in the far east of the shire last week and was reminded again of the important role our shire plays in feeding the nation. The soils and benign climate in the higher elevations make for superb growing conditions, and modern approaches to production make for high productivity and an avoidance of the overuse of pesticides and herbicides. Not to mention the stunning landscapes in which this production takes place. Farming really is at the heart of our shire.

Of course, Spudfest is the fourth in the big autumn festivals in our shire, following Chillout in Daylesford, Booktown in Clunes and Cresfest in Creswick. Each of these events go to the heart of the character of the community. Cresfest was held during this month's cycle and was a polished and well-run event with a number of councillors in attendance throughout and some fantastic performers as a drawcard. Congratulations to the organising committee and the many volunteers who threw their weight behind the event. I am looking forward to attending Spudfest at the start of May.

This month also included the Trans Gender Day of Awareness flag raising in Daylesford, which I was thrilled to be a part of. Life is full of challenges, but living your fullest self should not be subject to arbitrary barriers and bigotry. I also

attended the regular meeting of the Creswick Museum and acknowledge here the passing of their long-serving secretary Margaret Fullwood. Margaret was responsible for a formidable amount of work up to and including recent months and her loss will be keenly felt.

A busy time for councillors but, as always, I encourage you to reach out for a chat.

Councillor Brian Hood

Presented a verbal report.

MOTION

That Council receives and notes the Mayor's and Councillors' Reports.

Moved: Cr Pat Hockey

Seconded: Cr Shirley Cornish

Carried

Voted for: Cr Tony Clark, Cr Shirley Cornish, Cr Tim Drylie, Cr Lesley Hewitt, Cr Pat Hockey and Cr Brian Hood

Voted against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

11.3 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

Go to 00:59:02 in the meeting recording to view this item.

The Chief Executive Officer report informs Council and the community of current issues, initiatives and projects undertaken across Council.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER UPDATE

- Applications for the 2026 Environmental Group Grants Program, supporting local community groups dedicated to protecting and enhancing the natural environment across the Shire are open, with the program closing on 4 May 2026 - [Council opens 2026 Environmental Group Grants Program Hepburn Shire Council](#)
- As a representative of Rural Councils Victoria, I am on a fuel taskforce to provide direct input to the Premier on the challenges we are facing - this ensures our interests and concerns are directly communicated to government. This engagement has proven invaluable as we navigate the complexities of the current environment. As part of that taskforce State Government has been asked how it can assist, provide funding, or support to ensure support to the most vulnerable in our community, and Government acknowledges the fuel outages have a greater impact on rural communities. Council issued a media release in relation to fuel matters - [Securing fuel for our community Hepburn Shire Council](#)
- Council continues to provide a key role in advocating to Government, both State and Federal – this month Mayor, Cr Tony Clark, along with 10 other mayors from across Victoria, was appointed to the 2026 Local Government Mayoral Advisory Panel (LGMAP), while Cr Clark and Bruce Lucas met with Catherine King MP. Various other discussions with the State Government Departments and Members of Parliament have occurred and we have written to the new Minister for Local Government, Paul Hamer, requesting he visits Hepburn Shire noting that it's becoming increasingly evident that comprehensive reform is needed for the Local Government and we are eager to collaborate with him.
- Council has been announced as a finalist in the 2026 LGPro Awards for Excellence in the Outstanding Small Rural Council category for our Financial Vision/Rate Cap submission. The LGPro Awards for Excellence is a premier event in the local government sector, celebrating outstanding achievements and innovation. The awards are open to councils only, and nominations are based on projects implemented for 12 months or more to demonstrate measurable outcomes and community benefits. Winners will be announced on 18 June 2026.
- Cr Clark and Bruce Lucas (attending on behalf of myself) met with CEO - Women's Health Grampians to discuss matters of common interest, with

officers across the Council involved in preparing our Gender Equality Action Plan.

- International Transgender Day of Visibility (TDoV), was celebrated on March 31 to honour transgender individuals and raise awareness about the discrimination they face. The transgender flag was raised in Daylesford to recognise TDoV and show our support for the trans community.
- Our Manager Planning, Matt Rogers, has been appointed by the Minister for Planning to the Planning Regulations Advisory Committee; a small, diverse group of planning professionals representing the various regions of Victoria and other stakeholders.
- Significant work has been undertaken by officers and Councillors over the past few months in the development of the 2026/27 budget, that expects to be in line with Councils 10-year Financial Plan and will be considered by Council in May.
- The Mayor, myself and members of the Executive Team, met with the new Superintendent (Troy Hargadon) and new Local Area Commander (Brad Hall) from Victoria Police to discuss insights to how we can best work together on matters of interest for our communities.
- To support applicants in our Community Grants Program, Council is hosting an online information session where community members can learn more about the grant process, eligibility requirements, and how to submit a strong application. The session, to be held on Thursday 30 April 2026 from 6:30–7:30 pm, will also provide an opportunity to ask questions directly. [Online session to help support Community Grants Program applications Hepburn Shire Council](#)
- Trentham Visitor Information Centre open on Saturdays from May. Over the past few months, Council has worked with Trentham locals to open the Trentham Visitor Information Centre (VIC) on weekends, advertising the opportunity across its corporate channels and at local markets and shows. [Trentham Visitor Information Centre open on Saturdays from May Hepburn Shire Council](#)
- Various positive news around our planning services was announced during the month, including:
 - a 30 per cent reduction in the number of active permit applications in the past six months. This is a result made possible by the rollout of several new initiatives and our ability to recruit to a fully resourced planning team.
 - Council had 124 live permit applications at the end of March 2026, the lowest levels since pre-pandemic, while the number of applications being received by Council is remaining stable.

- Council has recently taken action against landowners breaching planning regulations and related permits. Last month, officers concluded a three-day trial at VCAT asking for the tribunal to declare the landowner 'in contempt' of the 2023 order, a serious charge allowing VCAT to impose substantial fines or prison time. Similarly, two Daylesford landowners are facing penalties of up to \$70,000 and \$6,000 respectively, for the illegal removal of vegetation.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the Chief Executive Officer's Report for April 2026.

MOTION

That Council receives and notes the Chief Executive Officer's Report for April 2026.

Moved: Cr Lesley Hewitt

Seconded: Cr Pat Hockey

Carried

Voted for: Cr Tony Clark, Cr Shirley Cornish, Cr Tim Drylie, Cr Lesley Hewitt, Cr Pat Hockey and Cr Brian Hood

Voted against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

12 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

12.1 CLOSURE OF MEETING TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Pursuant to section 66(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) Council or delegated committee must keep a meeting open to the public unless the Council or delegated committee considers it necessary to close the meeting to the public because a circumstance specified in subsection (2) applies.

The circumstances detailed in section 66(2) of the Act are:

- a) the meeting is to consider confidential information; or
- b) security reasons; or
- c) it is necessary to do so to enable the meeting to proceed in an orderly manner.

RECOMMENDATION

That in accordance with sections 66(1) and 66(2)(a) of the Local Government Act 2020, the meeting to be closed to members of the public for the consideration of the following confidential items:

1. *NOMINATIONS FOR THE COMMUNITY AWARDS 2026*
 - *personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs*

MOTION

That in accordance with sections 66(1) and 66(2)(a) of the Local Government Act 2020, the meeting to be closed to members of the public for the consideration of the following confidential items:

1. *NOMINATIONS FOR THE COMMUNITY AWARDS 2026*
 - *personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs*

Moved: Cr Shirley Cornish

Seconded: Cr Pat Hockey

Carried

Voted for: Cr Tony Clark, Cr Shirley Cornish, Cr Tim Drylie, Cr Lesley Hewitt, Cr Pat Hockey and Cr Brian Hood

Voted against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

13 CLOSE OF MEETING

The Meeting closed at 7:02pm.