



**HEPBURN SHIRE COUNCIL
ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL
PUBLIC MINUTES**

Tuesday 28 October 2025

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 25 November 2025.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cr Tony Clark".

Chair, Cr Tony Clark, Mayor

MINUTES

Tuesday 28 October 2025

Council Chamber

24 Vincent Street Daylesford

Commencing at 6:00PM

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BRADLEY THOMAS

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Tuesday 28 October 2025

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 Don Henderson, 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, Mr Chris Whyte - Manager Technology and Transformation, Ms Rebecca Smith - Manager Governance and Risk

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

Nil.

4 DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Mr Bradley Thomas declared a material conflict of interest in relation to item 1.1 on the Confidential Agenda as it is in relation to his employment contract.

5 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Go to 00:02:40 in the meeting recording to view this item.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 23 September 2025 (as previously circulated to Councillors) be confirmed.

MOTION

That the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 23 September 2025 (as previously circulated to Councillors) be confirmed.

Moved: Cr Pat Hockey

Seconded: Cr Tim Drylie

Carried

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

Voted against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TIME

Go to 00:03:37 in the meeting recording to view this item.

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

6.1 PETITIONS

No petitions were tabled.

6.2 REQUESTS TO ADDRESS COUNCIL

Brendan Murray addressed Council in regards to weed spraying on Old Ballarat Road, Daylesford.

Shane Bright addressed Council in regards to the Rex project.

6.3 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The CEO read questions received in accordance with Council's Governance Rules and the Mayor responded on behalf of Council.

Question 1 – Benny Pettersson

I understand the CEO's contract is up for renewal in April 2026. I also note the confidential item on this meeting's agenda headed "CEO Employment and Renumeration Committee".

Council's 'CEO Employment and Renumeration Policy' states: "Within six months prior to the expiry of the current CEO's Contract of Employment, the committee will provide a recommendation to Council on:

- Whether the CEO should be reappointed under a new Contract of Employment, and
- If the recommendation is to reappoint the CEO, the proposed provisions of the further Contract of Employment.

Any reappointment of the current CEO must be made by a resolution of Council.

My question is: When will the community be advised of any decision of Council to reappoint or not to reappoint the current CEO?

Response – Mayor Don Henderson

Since this is a personal employment issue, it would not be appropriate for Council to comment further, except to confirm that the community will be properly informed about any decisions regarding the CEO's contract at the right time.

Question 2 – Heather Mutimer

In February of this year (2025) Facebook advised it was changing its policy re live streaming recordings: "Beginning on February 19th, new live broadcasts can be replayed, downloaded or shared from Facebook Pages or profiles for 30 days, after which they will be automatically removed from Facebook. Live videos currently older than 30 days will be removed from Facebook. Before your archival live videos are deleted, you will be notified by email and in the app, and from then you'll have 90 days to download or transfer your content. We are launching new tools to make downloading your previous live videos easier".

In addition to the 90 days notice I understand a further six months was provided if deemed necessary.

Did Council take the necessary steps to download from Facebook, Council's recorded archival live meetings which were at threat of being deleted and if not why not?

Response – Mayor Don Henderson

While notifications were sent by Facebook, they were not received by officers as we believe the notifications were caught by the spam filter. As a result, we were not able to download the recordings before the deadline.

Council contacted Facebook, but were advised that the recordings could not be recovered. Where a recording had been downloaded, those recordings have been uploaded to YouTube to make them available again and saved to Council's document management system.

Question 3 – Heather Mutimer

What steps have been taken to ensure that meetings now recorded via YouTube are protected from a similar fate?

Response – Mayor Don Henderson

Copies of the recordings are downloaded and saved to Council's document management system.

Question 4 – Debora Semple

The recent confidential appointment of Hepburn Shire Council's CEO as an interim Board Member of the newly established Destination Central Victoria does not seem to have been publicly announced. Given the significant implications of this governance role with an organisation promoting its own business interests and agenda for the shire, regardless of whether the broader community of 17000 people agree, it would seem this decision warranted public scrutiny or at the very least a public announcement.

Why has there been no public announcement by Hepburn Shire Council regarding the CEO's appointment to the Board of Destination Central Victoria, given the relevance and potential implications of this role for the community?

Response – Mayor Don Henderson

There are no potential implications arising from the Chief Executive Officer's appointment to the Board. Each participating Local Government Area (LGA)—Hepburn, Macedon Ranges, Central Goldfields, and Mount Alexander—participates in the Interim Board Member of Destination Central Victoria and is represented on the DCV Board by its respective CEO.

Destination Central Victoria has not yet been formally launched. For this reason, Council has not issued any official communications regarding DCV at this time. However, formal announcements and communications from Council will be made as part of the organisation's official launch.

Question 5 – Debora Semple

Council has described the adopted Structure Plans as being the result of "meticulous community consultation." This characterisation is misleading and undermines

Council's credibility. A number of significant changes were adopted into the Daylesford Structure Plan with no consultation at all as were first made available to the public in an Agenda item but a few days before the deciding meeting. The proposal to include over 20 ha of farmland at the eastern entrance into the town boundary for development was not the result of meticulous consultation.

On what basis does Council describe its current strategic planning work on Daylesford's Structure Plan as the result of "meticulous community consultation," when substantial late proposals were made without meaningful opportunity for community engagement?

Response – Mayor Don Henderson

Prior to the Council's adoption of the Structure Plans and Rural Strategy in 2024, Council conducted extensive community and stakeholder engagement and consultation over close to two years, including community-led codesign sessions in each township.

In response to the meticulous community consultation process, Council changed structure plans in response to community feedback received during May and June in 2024. The proposed changes were made available in the Council agenda for the September 2024 meeting. While Council adopted the changes, Councillors recognised that not everyone may have known about the changes or had a chance to comment. So, Council requested staff to carry out additional community consultation. Only Clunes, Trentham, and Daylesford-Hepburn Springs draft structure plans were changed in substantial ways that need further consultation.

The first phase of additional consultation has recently been undertaken to obtain a better understanding of the key issues. It was not the last opportunity for the community to have their say on the changes. Further, more detailed and formal consultation is planned through a future planning scheme amendment process.

Council continues to receive important views and valuable information from community. This consultation work and people's contributions are informing how Council chooses to implement its obligations to plan for the future in a way that responsibly manages the inevitable conflicts in making choices about land use and development.

7 OFFICER REPORTS

7.1 DRAFT ROAD MANAGEMENT PLAN 2025-2029

Go to 00:23:25 in the meeting recording to view this item.

DIRECTOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND DELIVERY

In providing this advice to Council as the Manager Operations, I Lace Daniel have no interests to disclose in this report.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft Road Management Plan 2025-2029 [7.1.1 - 28 pages]
2. Public Road Register 2025 - Draft [7.1.2 - 52 pages]
3. Public Footpath Register 2025 - Draft [7.1.3 - 7 pages]

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. *In accordance with Section 53 of the Road Management Act 2004, adopts the Road Management Plan 2025-2029, as attached to this report;*
2. *Requests that a copy be placed on Council's website and the appropriate notifications be provided to satisfy Council's requirements under the regulations; and,*
3. *Authorises the Director of Infrastructure and Delivery to make periodic changes to the Register of Public Roads and Register of Public Paths to reflect changes to status, such as gifted assets, upgrades of roads, correction of errors, etc.*

MOTION

That Council:

1. *In accordance with Section 53 of the Road Management Act 2004, adopts the Road Management Plan 2025-2029, as attached to this report;*
2. *Requests that a copy be placed on Council's website and the appropriate notifications be provided to satisfy Council's requirements under the regulations; and,*
3. *Authorises the Director of Infrastructure and Delivery to make periodic changes to the Register of Public Roads and Register of Public Paths to reflect changes to status, such as gifted assets, upgrades of roads, correction of errors, etc.*

Moved: Cr Lesley Hewitt
Seconded: Cr Tim Drylie
Carried

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

Voted against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Road Management Plan (RMP) is a statutory document made under the *Road Management Act 2004*, that provides an overview of Council's road management practices.
- Under the Road Management (General) Regulations 2005, Council is required to undertake a review of its RMP every four years, in line with Council elections.
- A review of the existing plan was undertaken and an updated document subsequently placed on public exhibition, with a total of 13 submissions received.
- This report provides an overview of the submissions, officers' response, and any changes proposed to the plan, attached for formal adoption.

BACKGROUND

Under the *Road Management Act 2004* (the Act), Council is the Coordinating Authority for the local roads and road related areas defined in its Register of Public Roads (the Register), an appendix to the Road Management Plan (the Plan).

The Road Management Plan is a statutory document, made under the provisions of the Act, which establishes the system by which Council will inspect and repair local roads based on policy, operational objectives and with regard to available resources. The Plan sets out the circumstances, processes and minimum standards to which Council will perform its road management duties in seeking to provide a safe and efficient road network for all users, balancing community expectations, resources and service delivery. The Plan also includes roadside infrastructure such as footpaths and kerb and channel assets.

Under the Act, Council must also maintain a Register of Public Roads, identifying all road assets that it is responsible for. The Register includes essential data on the roads which Council has declared 'reasonably required for general public use', and these are subject to inspection and maintenance in accordance with the Road Management Plan.

The RMP is also a critical document in Council ensuring that it meets its legislative requirements under the Act, mitigates risk and manages civil liability by demonstrating that Council is responsibly managing its road assets.

KEY ISSUES

Under the Road Management (General) Regulations 2005, Council is required to undertake a review of its Road Management Plan every four years, in line with Council elections. Hepburn Shire adopted its first Road Management Plan in 2004.

A review of the current Road Management Plan was completed by Council staff and a draft document presented to a Councillor Briefing on Tuesday 5 August.

Subsequently, the plan was placed on public exhibition between Friday 22 August and Friday 19 September, allowing the community to make submissions to the plan for consideration prior to its formal adoption.

A total of 13 submissions were received and are summarised below, along with an officer response to each.

<i>Submission 1</i>
<p><u>Summary:</u> Requests the urgent repair of Creswick-Lawrence Road and Wheelers Bridge.</p>
<p><u>Response:</u> The renewal of Wheelers Bridge is a currently funded capital project, which incorporates the reconstruction of sections of Creswick-Lawrence Road. This project is currently in the procurement phase, expected to be complete by end October 2025, from there the next steps and timing will be determined.</p>
<p>As this submission relates to capital works, there are no changes to the Road Management Plan proposed.</p>
<i>Submission 2</i>
<p><u>Summary:</u> Requests the review of Carpenter Street and Pound Lane intersection at Creswick due to safety concerns, and road and drain maintenance along Carpenter Street.</p>
<p><u>Response:</u> An inspection of this intersection will be undertaken and works scheduled as applicable.</p>
<p>As this submission relates to road safety and maintenance works, there are no changes to the Road Management Plan proposed.</p>
<i>Submission 3</i>
<p><u>Summary:</u> Requests the construction of a footpath along Raglan Street, Daylesford, from Vincent Street to Ajax Road to improve pedestrian connections, accessibility and safety.</p>

Response:

This submission has been referred to Council's Strategic Planning team for consideration in the context of the Integrated Transport Strategy and long-term capital works programs.

As this submission relates to capital works, there are no changes to the Road Management Plan proposed.

Submission 4

Summary:

Requests a review of the status of the Central Springs footpath, between Fulcher Street and Tierneys Lane, highlighting safety concerns.

Response:

This section of road does not have a footpath. This submission has been referred to Council's Strategic Planning team for consideration in the context of the Integrated Transport Strategy and long-term capital works programs.

As this submission relates to capital works, there are no changes to the Road Management Plan proposed.

Submission 5

Summary:

Requests sealing of Rogers Street and St Georges Lake Road, Creswick, to reduce dust, highlighting increased traffic as a result of Djuwang Baring trail network use.

Response:

Officers have captured the consideration of these items within the recently developed Trails Precinct Traffic Management Plan, and Council recently approved funding for upgrades to St Georges Lake Road to be delivered in 2026.

As this submission relates to capital works, there are no changes to the Road Management Plan proposed.

Submission 6

Summary:

Requests that Oswin Drive, Creswick, be recognised as a maintained road in Council's register, specifically an Access Level 2 (now Unsealed Level 2) road.

Response:

Oswin Drive has a formed road and drainage, recently improved by Council to ensure year-round access. The road services multiple occupied properties and meets a number of criteria that would support it being recognised as a maintained road.

Considering the submission, it is recommended that Oswin Drive be included in Council's Register of Public Roads as a Maintained Track.

Submission 7

Summary:

Requests that Oswin Drive, Creswick, be recognised as a maintained road in Council's register.

Response:

As above.

Submission 8

Summary:

Requests that Oswin Drive, Creswick, be recognised as a maintained road in Council's register.

Response:

As above.

Submission 9

Summary:

A footpath is urgently needed in Raglan Street, Daylesford, from Vincent Street to Ajax Road. The section of road travelling west from West Street is particularly dangerous because of the terrain.

Response:

This submission has been referred to Council's Strategic Planning team for consideration in the context of the Integrated Transport Strategy and long-term capital works programs.

As this submission relates to capital works, there are no changes to the Road Management Plan proposed.

Submission 10

Summary:

Coach Tk (From Yandoit Tk), in Yandoit. This asset is classified as "Not maintained by Council" in the 2025 Road Hierarchy.

Prior to 2016 there was very little property development or occupancy along this road. Since 2016, at least three properties have been developed and occupancy has increased. These property owners are council ratepayers that depend on the road being in a trafficable state for property access.

Response:

Officers have inspected the road and previous works history; the first length of Coach Track (servicing the properties) will be included as an 'Unsealed Level 2' road. The remainder of Coach Track will remain unmaintained by Council.

Submission 11

Summary:

Councils Draft Road Management Plan refers to a range of technical and customer levels of service that form the guiding principles in the development of this plan. These principles are creditable but unfortunately not always delivered by Council. On numerous occasions I have endeavoured, with no response, to bring to Council's attention unsafe road design and inappropriate maintenance treatments. Surely it is in the Councils' and Communities' best interest to provide the safest road user environment possible by implementing Councils' Road Management Plan to its full extent.

Response:

This submission refers to matters outside the purview of the Road Management Plan which focuses on the minimum maintenance standards. Legacy items, such as design and operational decisions, such as how maintenance is undertaken do not form part of the Road Management Plan. However, the concerns raised do warrant further consideration and officers will discuss the matters raised with the submitter to understand specific details and liaise with relevant teams to ensure they are adequately addressed.

Submission 12

Summary:

Requests that Drury Lane, between Zumpes Road and 70 Drury Lane be maintained. Requests that Drury Lane between 70 and Locarno Road (non maintained) be removed from the road register. Requests that Drury Lane data in the road register be reviewed for accuracy.

Response:

Officers have inspected the road and previous works history, Drury Lane and Zumpes Road will be updated to 'Maintained Track', noting that there is limited access for a grader and limited road pavement material. A 'Maintained Track' limits works to those required for access and there is no level of service related to the road infrastructure.

The Road Register has been reviewed, confirming road details including chainage.

Submission 13

Summary:

As per above.

Response:

As per above

In addition to the community submissions, there are some additional proposed changes to the Register of Public Roads, based on working knowledge of the road network. These include:

- **Cassels Lane, Creswick:** Changed from Unmaintained to Maintained Track
- **Looby Lane, Newlyn North:** Changed from Unmaintained to Unsealed Level 2
- **Hodge Street, Daylesford (West of Vincent St Nth):** Added as a Local Access 2

COUNCIL POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Council Plan 2025-2029

Future Hepburn

2. Responsible management of infrastructure and environment to support wellbeing now and for future generations.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The management system outlined in the Plan, including inspection frequencies, defect interventions and response times has been developed based on Council's available resources and budget allocations. Changes to levels of service or extent of Council's road and footpath network could change the financial requirements to meet Council's obligations or change Council's risk of liability.

COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The updated draft Road Management Plan 2025-2029 has been placed on public exhibition for a period of 28 days, allowing for community submissions to the plan and its appendices. That exhibition period was advertised in line with legislative requirements including notification in a local paper, on Council's website, the Government Gazette and was also promoted via social media pages.

Following formal adoption, a copy of the plan will be made available on Council's website, and a direct response provided to the submissions made as part of the exhibition process.

RISK AND GOVERNANCE IMPLICATIONS

There are no increased risks associated with the recommended amendments to the Road Management Plan however it is noted that the RMP is key to mitigating risk and managing Council's potential liability. This has been carefully considered in reviewing what Council is able to reasonably and consistently achieve within its existing resources and therefore what has been documented within the Plan.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

The Road Management Plan outlines Council's approach to inspecting and maintaining its road assets, with the view to supporting social connectedness through maintaining public health and safety, reducing road related hazards and ultimately slowing long-term asset degradation, reducing risk and optimising public expenditure.

GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Whilst a Gender Impact Assessment has not been formally completed for the development of the Road Management Plan, the review of service levels considers equity and accessibility, ensuring that active transport routes are well managed and maintained, to support varied user groups and vehicle types. Consultation with the wider community also sought to garner feedback from diverse community groups including women and gender diverse groups, caregivers, older residents, and people with disabilities.

7.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 2 SEPTEMBER 2025

Go to 00:33:48 in the meeting recording to view this item.

DIRECTOR PERFORMANCE AND TRANSFORMATION

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

ATTACHMENTS

1. CONFIDENTIAL - Biannual report to Council Audit and Risk Committee Chair Shane Marr September 2025 [7.2.1 - 4 pages]
2. CONFIDENTIAL - Summary of recommendations from the September 2025 Audit and Risk Committee [7.2.2 - 1 page]
3. CONFIDENTIAL - Draft Confidential Minutes Audit and Risk Committee 2 September 2025 [7.2.3 - 27 pages]

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. *Receives the draft minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee Meeting that was held on the 2 September 2025, and;*
2. *Notes the recommendations of the Audit and Risk Committee that were moved at the meeting on 2 September 2025 (Attachment 2).*

MOTION

That Council:

1. *Receives the draft minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee Meeting that was held on the 2 September 2025, and;*
2. *Notes the recommendations of the Audit and Risk Committee that were moved at the meeting on 2 September 2025 (Attachment 2).*

Moved: Cr Tony Clark

Seconded: Cr Lesley Hewitt

Carried

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

Voted against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is for Councillors to consider advice from the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) meeting that was held on 2 September 2025.

BACKGROUND

The purpose of the Audit and Risk Committee is to oversee and monitor the effectiveness of Council in carrying out its responsibilities for accountable financial management and risk, good corporate governance, provide experience in public sector management, and the maintenance of systems of internal control, and the fostering of an ethical environment.

The Audit and Risk Committee is not a delegated committee and cannot exercise statutory functions and powers of the Council under delegation, and essentially acts as an advisory body on behalf of Council.

The Audit and Risk Committee meetings are closed to the public.

KEY ISSUES

The Audit and Risk Committee held its quarterly meeting on 2 September 2025. The Confidential Minutes of the meeting are attached for Council's consideration, along with a summary of the recommendations (attachment 2).

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.

Local Government Act 2020

The Audit and Risk Committee is governed by section 53 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, and operates in line with the Audit and Risk Committee Charter. A Workplan is developed to align with their obligations.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report. The secretariat of the Committee is managed within Council's operational budget.

COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

There are no community or stakeholder engagement implications associated with this report. The Audit and Risk Committee, and representatives from Council's

external and internal auditors respectively, have been engaged and consulted on reports that relate to their function and duty to Council.

RISK AND GOVERNANCE IMPLICATIONS

The Audit and Risk Committee was established by Council resolution on 28 August 2020 in line with section 53 of the *Local Government Act 2020*. The Committee is made up of four independent committee members – Mr Shane Marr (Chair), Mr James Kelly, Ms Philippa Murphy, and Ms Rebecca McKenzie.

At the Statutory Meeting on 26 November 2024, Council resolved to appoint Cr Don Henderson (Mayor) and Cr Tony Clark to the Audit and Risk Committee for 2024/2025.

Those Committee members in attendance were duly briefed on all reports and a robust discussion was had. Should Council disagree with any recommendations that the Audit and Risk Committee present for its consideration, then Council will need to, via a resolution of Council, state which motions Council does not accept.

If officers do not present this report to Council at the next practicable Council meeting for consideration, then there will be a breach of the Audit and Risk Committee Charter.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

There are no sustainability implications associated with this report.

GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT

There are no gender equity implications associated with this report.

7.3 COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2026

Go to 00:34:20 in the meeting recording to view this item.

DIRECTOR PERFORMANCE AND TRANSFORMATION

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

ATTACHMENTS

- Nil

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. *Adopts the following dates as the schedule for Ordinary Meetings of Council in 2026, commencing at 6:00pm;*
 - *Tuesday 24 February 2026*
 - *Tuesday 24 March 2026*
 - *Tuesday 28 April 2026*
 - *Tuesday 26 May 2026*
 - *Tuesday 23 June 2026*
 - *Tuesday 28 July 2026*
 - *Tuesday 25 August 2026*
 - *Tuesday 22 September 2026*
 - *Tuesday 27 October 2026*
 - *Tuesday 24 November 2026*
 - *Tuesday 15 December 2026*
2. *Resolves to hold the Statutory Meeting of Council on Tuesday 10 November 2026 at 6:00pm; and,*
3. *Notes that all Ordinary Meetings will be held in the Council Chamber at 24 Vincent Street Daylesford, with proceedings live streamed to the public, and meetings will be advertised and placed on Council's website.*

MOTION

That Council:

1. *Adopts the following dates as the schedule for Ordinary Meetings of Council in 2026, commencing at 6:00pm;*
 - *Tuesday 24 February 2026*
 - *Tuesday 24 March 2026*
 - *Tuesday 28 April 2026*
 - *Tuesday 26 May 2026*
 - *Tuesday 23 June 2026*
 - *Tuesday 28 July 2026*
 - *Tuesday 25 August 2026*
 - *Tuesday 22 September 2026*
 - *Tuesday 27 October 2026*
 - *Tuesday 24 November 2026*
 - *Tuesday 15 December 2026*
2. *Resolves to hold the Statutory Meeting of Council on Tuesday 10 November 2026 at 6:00pm; and,*
3. *Notes that all Ordinary Meetings will be held in the Council Chamber at 24 Vincent Street Daylesford, with proceedings live streamed to the public, and meetings will be advertised and placed on Council's website.*

Moved: Cr Pat Hockey

Seconded: Cr Shirley Cornish

Carried

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

Voted against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Each year officers propose the Council Meeting schedule for the following year, taking into account public holidays and Councillor availabilities. Dates will be published on Council's website once confirmed.

BACKGROUND

Under rule 18 of Council's Governance Rules and Election Period Policy, Council must provide reasonable notice of each Council Meeting to the public via advertising on its website, customer service centres and/or local newspapers.

KEY ISSUES

It is proposed that Council adopts the following dates as the schedule for Ordinary Meetings of Council in 2026, with a commencing time of 6:00pm:

- Tuesday 24 February 2026
- Tuesday 24 March 2026
- Tuesday 28 April 2026
- Tuesday 26 May 2026
- Tuesday 23 June 2026
- Tuesday 28 July 2026
- Tuesday 25 August 2026
- Tuesday 22 September 2026
- Tuesday 27 October 2026
- Tuesday 24 November 2026
- Tuesday 15 December 2026

The schedule omits Meetings in January, as business operations are traditionally slower following the Christmas and New Year period. This approach is consistent with other neighbouring rural Councils of similar size.

It is proposed that Council scheduled the Statutory Meeting to elect the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on Tuesday 10 November 2025.

Meetings will continue to be held in the Council Chamber at 24 Vincent Street, and would continue to be streamed via YouTube.

In line with Council's Governance Rules and Election Period Policy, Council may call a special Council Meeting when required.

A Special Council Meeting would ordinarily only be called to deal with Council business that is urgent or could not wait until the next scheduled Council Meeting.

COUNCIL POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Council Plan 2021-2025

A dynamic and responsive Council

5.3 A sustainable and agile organisation with strong corporate governance that supports excellent operations

Annually setting Council meeting dates for the next calendar year provides consistency for the community and facilitates engagement. It also ensures transparency and notice of meeting requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Council's Governance Rules and Election Period Policy are met.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The cost of facilitating Council meetings is accounted for in Council's annual budget.

COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The timetable will be published on Council's website. Individual meetings will be promoted through Council's Facebook page as they occur.

The live streaming of meetings via Council's Facebook page will continue and remain in place to promote transparency and public engagement.

RISK AND GOVERNANCE IMPLICATIONS

The Governance Rules and Election Period Policy was adopted by Council in August 2022.

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 COUNCILLOR AND CEO REPORTS

8.1 MAYOR'S REPORT

Go to 00:35:38 in the meeting recording to view this item.

Councillor Don Henderson

8.2 COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Councillor Lesley Hewitt

Presented a verbal report.

Councillor Pat Hockey

Councillors, this month was very diverse ranging from sheepdog trials to a complex planning conference on a subdivision proposal in Trentham. Councillors' views and ultimately votes in meetings are predicated on their deep engagement with the community. The diverse range of events that we attend are also very informative in that they give us a broad understanding of the community's depth and diversity.

Another highlight was the Community Bank Creswick & District Spring 2025 Art Show, a noted high point of the social life of Creswick for many years. Plus the official opening of the New Cultural Space at Central Springs Reserve, Balak Kalilk Manya - Walking Together. I also attended the Clunes Museum meeting, an active and enthusiastic group with an amazing facility.

I had always associated the Councillor's role with the monthly meeting, but it turns out that commitment is one of the least time consuming of all. Even though the Council meeting is many hours in duration, trailing into the night, Councillors spend up to twice that much time preparing for the meeting, with briefings in Daylesford scheduled most weeks and an immense amount of reading required. In addition, the due diligence to oversee the administration of our tight budget requires multiple workshops and finance-related meetings as well. Just the same though, attendance at other meetings and events occupies more time than the Council meetings and again involves lots of travelling around the shire.

I can't imagine another role that gives a person such a thorough immersion in the character of the region where you live. Everything I have seen in my travels across the shire and attendance at public events has confirmed for me that we live in one of the most unique and special places in the state. Great communities are built by engaged people and I have to again pay tribute to the volunteers who step up in our sporting clubs, emergency services, business, agriculture and the many other social groups and individuals that underpin the strength of our community.

Councillor Brian Hood

Presented a verbal report.

Councillor Tony Clark

Presented a verbal report.

Councillor Shirley Cornish

Presented a verbal report.

Councillor Tim Drylie

Presented a verbal report.

Update: Municipal Association of Victoria Annual Conference - Councillor Tim Drylie

Presented a verbal report.

RECOMMENDATION

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

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 Don Henderson, Cr Pat Hockey and Cr Brian Hood

Voted against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

8.3 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

Go to 00:55:03 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

- We have a couple of exciting expos coming up in the Shire. On Saturday 25 October from 10 am to 2 pm, the Emergency Services Expo 2025 is set to take over Victoria Park in Daylesford which will be a large-scale, family-friendly community event designed to strengthen disaster preparedness, awareness, and engagement across Hepburn Shire. [Emergency services are bringing the heat to this year's Expo Hepburn Shire Council](#) Our 2025 Positive Ageing Expo is set to return with energy, inspiration, and community spirit on Tuesday 28 October from 10 am to 3 pm at The Mechanics Trentham, this free, fully catered, 55+ community event celebrates healthy ageing and brings together people from all walks of life to connect, learn, and thrive. [Get connected at the 2025 Positive Ageing Expo Hepburn Shire Council](#)
- We have introduced a weekly 'Councillor Column' where on a rotating basis each Councillor will provide a snapshot of what they have been up to, or an item of interest. These will go live each Wednesday and will be on our socials and our website. This is a great opportunity to hear directly from all seven Councillors.
- On Monday 29 September, Council and the community finally won a two-year long battle to keep the Endeavour Group from putting a Dan Murphy's in Daylesford. We would like to extend its gratitude to staff and the community group that put in a considerable amount of time and effort to object to the licence. [Dan Murphy's shaken and stirred by the Hepburn Shire community Hepburn Shire Council](#)
- At the 25 February 2025 Ordinary Council Meeting, Council resolved the following in relation to "cooler places", this report will now be presented to the November rather than the October meeting.

"That Council directs the CEO to prepare a report to explore how appropriate Council-owned facilities or other community venues, would be accessible to community members for the purpose of respite on extreme weather days. The report is to be tabled for consideration no later than the October 2025 Council Meeting."

- Our Annual Report including an unqualified audit opinion, financial statements and performance statements has now been incorporated into the one document and available on our website at [Council performance Hepburn Shire Council](#)

- The final episode of *The Block* will air Sunday 26 October. I wanted to take a moment to acknowledge the enormous value *The Block* has brought to our community and what it represents to our local places, economy, and people. The boost to the local economy has been real, immediate, and invaluable and has been felt by our local trades, shops, accommodation, cafes and restaurants. Thank you to Channel 9, *The Block* Team, our businesses, community and staff who have all worked together to make this experience extremely positive.
- The Open Access Libraries will shortly launch in Daylesford (November) with Creswick, Clunes, and Trentham planned for 2026. The initiative enables inducted library members to access library spaces and services in non-staffed hours, with the libraries being accessible to library members from 8 am to 8 pm [Open Access Libraries | Participate Hepburn](#)
- Council is pleased to be a major supporter of the Hepburn Swiss Italian Festa which is held Friday 24 to Sunday 26 October [Hepburn Swiss Italian Festa](#)
- We have been busy getting ready for the upcoming pool season (hopefully we will have plenty of warm, sunny days). We are currently recruiting pool lifeguards so if you are an experienced lifeguard who takes initiative and stays calm under pressure, apply today at [www.hepburn.vic.gov.au/jobs](#)

RECOMMENDATION

That Council

1. *receives and notes the Chief Executive Officer's Report for October 2025; and,*
2. *notes that the report on exploring how appropriate Council-owned facilities or other community venues, would be accessible to community members for the purpose of respite on extreme weather days will now be presented at the November Council Meeting rather than October.*

MOTION

That Council:

1. *receives and notes the Chief Executive Officer's Report for October 2025; and,*
2. *notes that the report on exploring how appropriate Council-owned facilities or other community venues, would be accessible to community members for the purpose of respite on extreme weather days will now be presented at the November Council Meeting rather than October.*

Moved: Cr Pat Hockey

Seconded: Cr Tony Clark

Carried

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

Voted against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

9 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

Nil.

10 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

10.1 CLOSURE OF MEETING TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Go to 00:59:14 in the meeting recording to view this item.

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:

1.1 CEO EMPLOYMENT AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE

Because it is personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs;

The ground applies because it relates to the employment and contract of the Chief Executive Officer.

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:

1.1 CEO EMPLOYMENT AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE

Because it is personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs;

The ground applies because it relates to the employment and contract of the Chief Executive Officer.

Moved: Cr Pat Hockey

Seconded: Cr Tim Drylie

Carried

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

Voted against: Nil

Abstained: Nil

The Meeting closed at 7:02pm for the hearing of a confidential item and did not reopen to the public.

The Confidential Meeting opened at 7:04pm.

The Council determined to release the following information to the public on these items as detailed below.

1.1 CEO EMPLOYMENT AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE

This item to remain confidential because it is personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs.

11 CLOSE OF MEETING

The Meeting closed at 7:28pm.