



LATROBE CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA FOR THE COUNCIL MEETING

**TO BE HELD IN GIPPSLAND PERFORMING ARTS
CENTRE, TRARALGON
AT 6:00 PM ON
15 DECEMBER 2025
CM631**

Please note:

Opinions expressed or statements made by participants are the opinions or statements of those individuals and do not imply any form of endorsement by Council.

By attending a Council Meeting via audio-visual link those present will be recorded or their image captured. When participating in the meeting, consent is automatically given for those participating to be recorded and have images captured.

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1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE TRADITIONAL OWNERS OF THE LAND

I would like to acknowledge that we are meeting here today on the traditional land of the Brayakaulung people of the Gunaikurnai nation and I pay respect to their elders past and present.

If there are other Elders present I would also like to acknowledge them.

2. APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Proposed Resolution:

That Council confirms the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 24 November 2025 and 27 November 2025.

4. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Councillors may raise any formal acknowledgements that need to be made at this time, including congratulatory or condolences.

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TIME

Public Questions on Notice

In accordance with the Governance Rules, members of the public can lodge a question on notice before 12noon on the Friday before the day of the Council meeting in order for the question to be answered at the meeting.

Public Speakers

An opportunity for members of the public to speak to an item on the agenda will be made available by necessary means. To participate, members of the public must have registered before 12noon on the day of the Council meeting.

NOTICES OF MOTION

7. NOTICES OF MOTION

Nil

STRATEGIC ITEMS FOR DECISION

8. STRATEGIC ITEMS FOR DECISION

Item Number 8.1

15 December 2025

Investment and Growth

ADVOCACY PROJECTS - FEDERAL BUDGET SUBMISSION & PARLIAMENT DELEGATION

PURPOSE

To seek Council endorsement on the proposed interim advocacy list for inclusion in the Federal Budget Submission and for use as the advocacy platform for the 2026 Canberra Delegation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- At the Council Meeting held on 27 October 2025, Council endorsed the Advocacy Framework, establishing a consistent annual process for identifying and submitting priority advocacy projects.
- Officers undertook the first annual call-out from 8–24 October 2025, supported by an Advocacy Workshop on 22 October, generating 20 project submissions for consideration.
- Officers assessed submissions using the Advocacy Triage Flowchart (**Attachment 1**), with outcomes summarised in the Projects Assessment and Recommendations Overview (**Attachment 2**).
- Several submissions required further information such as costings, community support, or evidence of readiness preventing completion of the full prioritisation and tiering stage of the Framework.
- To maintain advocacy momentum and meet immediate deadlines, officers propose that Council endorses an interim advocacy list for two specific purposes:
 - Supporting the 2026/27 Federal Budget Submission, due January 2026; and
 - Guiding planning for Council's Canberra Delegation, proposed for March/April 2026.
- The interim list includes:
 - Advanced Air Mobility;
 - Economic Support Package;
 - Enabling Infrastructure Fund;
 - Traralgon Flood Recovery Project - Glenview Park Pavilion;
 - Inter-Township Trail Network;

- Moe Revitalisation Project; and
- Traralgon By Pass
- Officers note that some projects have not been included at this stage because submitting an incomplete or incorrect advocacy ask particularly one with financial implications poses risks to project viability and Council's financial sustainability.
- Projects that are solely State Government responsibilities have also been excluded, as the interim list is intended specifically for the Federal Budget process.
- The Economic Support Package will be developed as an interim Federal ask, drawing on prior Council submissions and focusing on job quotas, regional supply chains, and policy settings to support our economy post industry closure.
- Following endorsement of the interim list, officers will:
 - prepare the Federal Budget Submission and circulate it to Councillors for feedback;
 - develop a stakeholder map identifying relevant Ministers, Shadow Ministers, and departments; and
 - begin issuing meeting requests to secure Canberra engagements for early 2026.
- Officers will continue gathering required information with internal teams to complete the full prioritisation stage of the Framework, with a final Advocacy Platform to be presented to Council in early 2026 ahead of the Victorian State Government Election.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council endorses the proposed interim advocacy list and support Officers to prepare the Federal Budget Submission and coordinate the 2026 Delegation to Canberra.

BACKGROUND

At the Council Meeting held on 27 October 2025, Council endorsed the Advocacy Framework, establishing a consistent annual process for identifying and submitting priority advocacy projects. Implementation began with the first annual call-out, conducted from 8–24 October 2025 and supported by an Advocacy Workshop on 22 October attended by senior staff. This process generated 20 proposed projects for consideration.

Officers applied the Advocacy Triage Flowchart (**Attachment 1**) to evaluate project readiness, alignment, and supporting evidence. A summary of this assessment is provided in the Projects Assessment and Recommendations Overview (**Attachment 2**).

Through this process, officers identified that several submissions lacked key information such as costings, community support evidence, or project readiness required to complete full prioritisation under the Framework. As a result, officers propose that Council endorse an interim advocacy list to maintain momentum while further work is undertaken to fully implement the Framework.

The interim list is required for two immediate purposes:

- To support the 2026/27 Federal Budget Submission, due in January 2026; and
- To guide the planning and focus of Council's Canberra Delegation, traditionally held in the first quarter of the calendar year.

Following endorsement of the interim list, officers will prepare Council's Federal Budget Submission, which will be circulated to Councillors for feedback in line with the government's submission process. Officers will also develop a stakeholder map identifying relevant Ministers, Shadow Ministers, and departmental representatives proposed for meetings as part of the delegation. Once this is finalised, officers will commence issuing meeting requests to secure engagements for early 2026.

Officers will also continue to work closely with the relevant internal teams to gather the information required to complete the full prioritisation stage of the Advocacy Framework. A final, fully assessed Advocacy Platform will be presented to Council in early 2026 for endorsement ahead of the 2026 Victorian State Government Election.

ANALYSIS

The first year of implementing the Advocacy Framework has highlighted several practical considerations arising from the annual call-out process. While projects were submitted for assessment, officers identified significant variation in project readiness, the quality of supporting information, and the availability of evidence required to progress to full prioritisation and tiering. These factors, combined with the condensed implementation timeframe, limited officers' ability to apply the Framework in full for this cycle.

Due to these constraints, officers were unable to progress to the full prioritisation stage of the Framework. This stage involves categorising projects into tiers based on readiness, evidence, alignment, and community need. As such, officers propose introducing an additional interim step for the current cycle.

Based on the assessment completed to date, officers propose that the following projects form the interim advocacy list for the 2026/27 Federal Budget Submission and for the upcoming Canberra Delegation (March/April 2026):

- Advanced Air Mobility.
- Economic Support Package.
- Enabling Infrastructure Fund.
- Traralgon Flood Recovery Project - Glenview Park Pavilion.
- Inter-Township Trail Network.
- Moe Revitalisation Project.
- Traralgon By Pass.

Interim List Considerations

Officers note that, as this is an interim list being prepared to meet the requirements of the Federal Budget submission process by January 2026, several projects have not been included at this stage. Projects requiring further information particularly regarding costings, feasibility, or a clearly articulated advocacy ask has been excluded to avoid submitting proposals that may be inaccurate or insufficiently supported. Submitting an incomplete or incorrect ask, especially where financial implications are involved, poses a risk to both the project and Council's long-term financial sustainability. These projects will be captured and further developed as part of the full prioritisation stage of the Framework in early 2026.

Officers have also removed any projects that would only be eligible for State Government funding, as this interim list is intended specifically to support Council's Federal Budget Submission. This is particularly relevant with Council community safety ask, as Police resources are entirely a state government responsibility.

In relation to the Economic Support Package, this advocacy ask has been shaped to directly address the planned closure of local mines and power stations. Officers will draw on Council's previous government submissions and related work developed over the past two years to formulate an interim Federal ask. This will include requests for local jobs quotas, regional supply chain commitments, and supportive policy settings capable of underpinning new investment and economic diversification in the Latrobe City area.

RISK ASSESSMENT

RISK	RISK RATING	TREATMENT
<p>COMPLIANCE</p> <p>Incomplete or inconsistent submissions may lead to misalignment with internal policy or reporting obligations.</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p><i>Possible / Moderate</i></p>	<p>Adhere to Framework quality standards and undertake internal officer review before endorsement.</p>
<p>SERVICE DELIVERY</p> <p>Limited project readiness or unclear responsibilities may delay advocacy impact or delivery of outcomes.</p>	<p>High</p> <p><i>Likely / Moderate</i></p>	<p>Strengthen project documentation, assign accountable leads, and improve coordination across departments.</p>
<p>FINANCIAL</p> <p>Prioritising projects with under-developed costings may expose Council to future funding shortfalls or unbudgeted co-contributions.</p>	<p>High</p> <p><i>Likely / Moderate</i></p>	<p>Require clear budget estimates and funding models before prioritisation; flag early with delivery teams.</p>
<p>STRATEGIC</p> <p>Missed or inconsistent advocacy messages may reduce credibility and chances of success with government stakeholders and partners.</p>	<p>High</p> <p><i>Possible / Major</i></p>	<p>Maintain transparent communication of interim approach and continuous improvement messaging.</p>
<p>STRATEGIC</p> <p>Delayed endorsement of the Canberra Delegation dates may prevent securing key Federal meetings due to the short timeframe between the mayoral election and Christmas closure.</p>	<p>High</p> <p><i>Possible / Major</i></p>	<p>Seek early endorsement of approximate delegation dates; commence preparatory engagement with Federal offices prior to holiday shutdown.</p>

CONSULTATION

Consultation was undertaken with the Senior Leadership Team and Coordinators Network through the October 2025 Advocacy Call-out and Advocacy Workshop (22 October). An in-session Councillor Briefing (5 November 2025) presented the revised interim list, rationale, and proposed delegation timeframe for feedback.

Ongoing consultation with Councillors and officers will continue to refine the final Advocacy Platform and ensure clear alignment with Council's strategic objectives

COMMUNICATION

Following Council's endorsement, officers will:

- Distribute the endorsed interim list internally;
- Prepare Federal Budget submission; and
- Engage early with Federal officers to schedule meetings.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Officers preparing this report have declared they do not have a conflict of interest in this matter under the provisions of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

APPENDIX 1 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Gender

A Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) under the *Gender Equality Act 2020* is required as new or reviewed projects will have a significant and direct impact on the community. This will be undertaken by internal team leading the project.

Social

The Framework promotes equitable representation of community priorities by ensuring that projects with demonstrated social benefit—such as homelessness and youth engagement—are considered. Continued engagement and transparent scoring will ensure diverse community needs are reflected.

Cultural

Advocacy projects will continue to integrate cultural and heritage values and strengthen partnerships with First Nations communities. Co-design and culturally appropriate engagement are embedded principles of the Framework.

Health

Several projects have strong health and wellbeing outcomes, particularly those related to community safety, homelessness, and youth precincts. Continued collaboration with relevant agencies will amplify these benefits.

Environmental

Environmental sustainability remains a cross-cutting consideration across all advocacy priorities. Projects will be assessed for alignment with Latrobe City's traditional industries transition goals.

Economic

While not the direct focus of this report, effective advocacy enhances economic resilience by unlocking external funding, driving local investment, and promoting regional job creation.

Financial

Failure to secure advocacy funding may result in Council bearing the full cost of major initiatives. This reinforces the importance of robust cost planning and external funding leverage in future advocacy stages.

Attachments

1. Advocacy Triage Flowchart
2. Projects Assessment and Recommendations Overview

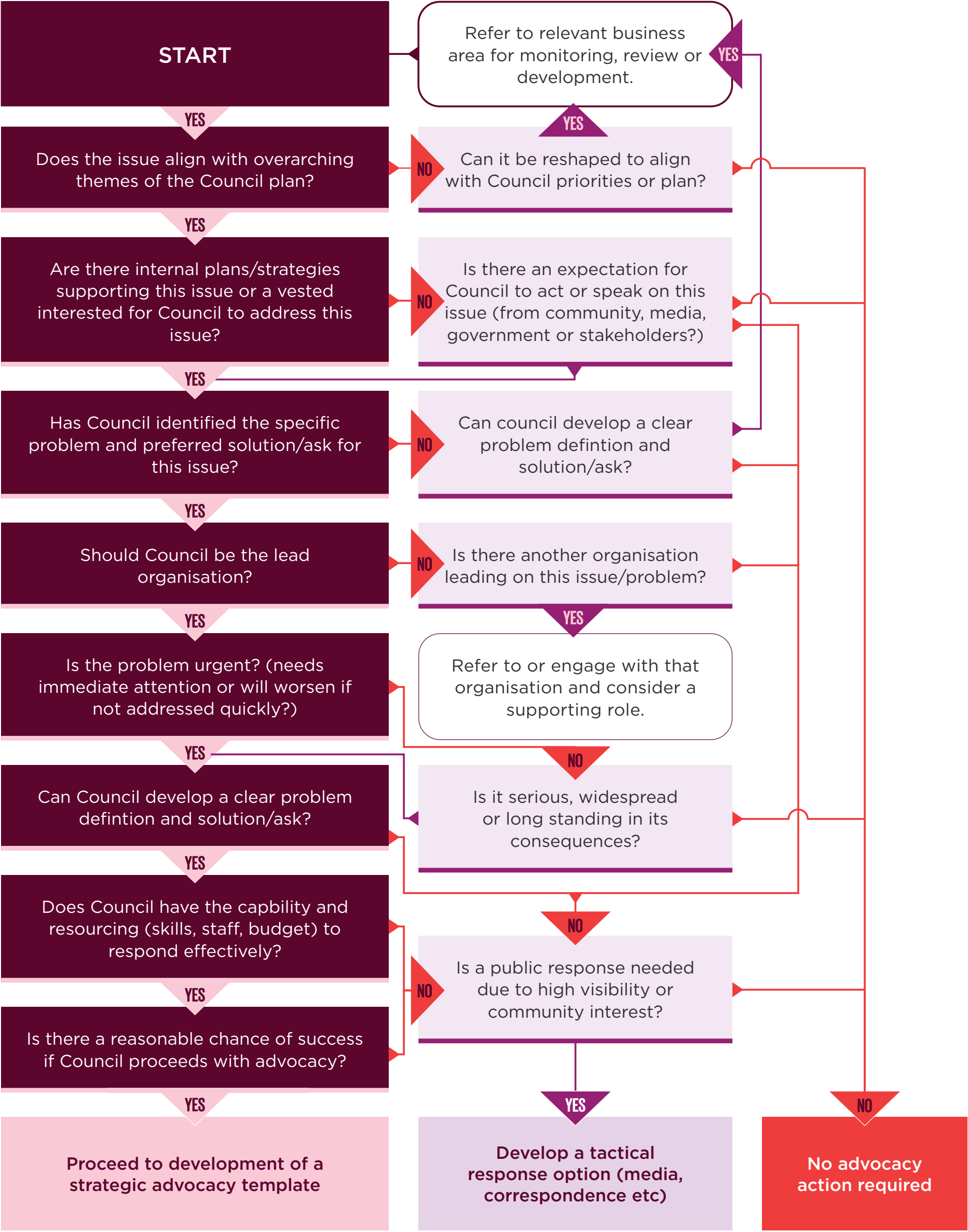
8.1

Advocacy Projects - Federal Budget Submission & Parliament Delegation

- 1 Advocacy Triage Flowchart 16
- 2 Projects Assessment and Recommendations Overview 17

Advocacy Triage Flowchart





Advocacy Projects 2026/27

Assessment and Recommendations

Division	Project	Ask	Level of Government	Recommendation & Comments
Community Liveability	Crime Enforcement	Increased Public Service Officers (PSO) and Police resourcing.	State Government	Proceed to next steps.
	Latrobe Regional Hospital		State Government	Do not proceed to next steps. LRH should lead this advocacy, with LCC supporting it.
Infrastructure and Sustainability	Traralgon Bypass	Commit to the delivery of the Bypass.	State and Federal Government	Proceed to next steps.
	Traralgon East West Link	A link to connect east to west of Traralgon.	State and Federal Government	Do not proceed to next steps. Further work required to scope out the ask.
	Moe Revitalisation Project	\$7.5 million.	State Government	Proceed to next steps.
	Improved Rail Services Freight & Passenger	Further work needed. The previous rail advocacy ask is no longer realistic due to the elevation of the train line at Pakenham, which has changed the project's scope and feasibility.	State and Federal Government	Do not proceed to next steps. It is recommended that officers work internally and with Councillors to refine and develop a more achievable advocacy ask for future consideration. This may mean uncoupling the passenger service with freight.
	Traralgon Flood Recovery Project - Glenview Park Pavilion		Federal Government	Proceed to next steps. Officers note that current government interest is low; therefore, grant funding may represent the most viable pathway for progressing this project.
	Inter-Township Trail Network	\$3 million.	State and Federal Government	Proceed to next steps. Officers should consider costing this project in stages for delivery. In the current climate \$43 million ask is unrealistic. In the context of the transition, we wouldn't want this to be our headline ask.
	Traralgon Civic Masterplan	\$1.3 million.	State and Federal Government	Further information required.

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Division	Project	Ask	Level of Government	Recommendation & Comments
Infrastructure and Sustainability	Regional Youth Activity Precinct	\$3 million.	State and Federal Government	Further information required.
Investment and Growth	Advanced Air Mobility	\$10 million for the AAM facility. \$5 million to extend the Taxiway.	State and Federal Government	Proceed to next steps.
	Centre of Advance Automotive Futures (CAAF)	Government intervention isn't required at this stage.	Private Sector	Government intervention isn't required at this stage.
	Economic Support Package	Ask still needs further work. This ask will capture job quotas and supply chain.	State and Federal Government	Proceed to next steps.
	Enabling Infrastructure Fund	\$35 million for a rolling fund.	State and Federal Government	Proceed to next steps. Officers recommend this sit under the economic support package and is highlighted as part of the new Transition Plan.
	Review of the Coal Overlays	Policy.	State Government	Proceed to next steps. Officers recommend this sits under the economic support package and is highlighted as part of the new Transition Plan.
	Gippsland Logistics and Manufacturing Precinct (Glamp) 2	Further work required.	State and Federal Government	Land needs to be identified , and cost determined before advocating to Government.
	Hydrogen Supply Project (HSP)	Support for Commercialisation.	Private Sector	Proponent to lead LCC to support. Tactical response.
	CarbonNet	Support and ongoing funding for CarbonNet.	State and Federal Government	CarbonNet to lead LCC to support. Tactical response.
	Net Zero uses of coal	This is a statement not an ask.	State and Federal Government	Tactical response.
Organisational Performance	Fire Service Levy	Abandon the Fire Service Levy.	State Government	Tactical response.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION UPDATE - OLD METHODIST CHURCH (41 PRINCES STREET, TRARALGON)

PURPOSE

To present the public submissions on the future of the Old Methodist Church in Traralgon and seek endorsement on the course of action for the site.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- At the 25 August Council meeting, Council resolved to undertake a final community consultation process to understand if the community had any projects that would be able to secure the future of the Old Methodist Church, Traralgon.
- Community Consultation ran from 1 September until 31 October 2025, with 10 submissions received (**Attachment 1**).
- Community Engagement activities included media release, social media posts, building signage as well as direct engagement with previous interested parties.
- Previously consultants have estimated the works required to make the building safe and compliant would be approximately \$840,000 plus GST (**Confidential Attachment 2**). These works would only address the structural concerns and the required amenity upgrades for compliance.
- Council does not have an identified service need for this asset.
- Two of the submissions received presented a project brief accompanied by a budget and a willingness to enter a lease with VicTrack as they were interested in staying on the current site – further details are provided within the Analysis section of the report:
 - Submission 5 – Preservation of the Old Methodist Church as a museum; and
 - Submission 8 – Old Methodist Church Futures committee.
- Based on the long term intended use identified in Submission 5, Council officers have identified this as the preferred option and to commence negotiations with the Traralgon Historical Society in relation to the project.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. receives and notes the public submissions provided as part of the final community consultation process for the Old Methodist Church (41 Princes Street, Traralgon;**
- 2. enters into:**
 - 2.1. negotiations for the sale of the building on an as is, where is basis to the Traralgon Historical Society for a nominal amount;**
 - 2.2. an agreement with the Traralgon Historical Society to provide the previously allocated \$86,000 of Council funds for the demolition of the building towards the Traralgon Historical Society's project;**
- 3. notes that the above is contingent on the Traralgon Historical Society successfully entering into a lease with VicTrack by 30 June 2026; and**
- 4. notes that should a lease not be entered into by 30 June 2026, Council resolves to demolish the building.**

BACKGROUND

At the 25 August 2025, Council meeting, Council resolved:

to undertake final community engagement regarding the Old Methodist Church building located at 41 Princes Street, Traralgon, and seeks written submissions from the public as to the future use and/or location of the building (including funding options) by no later than 5pm, 31 October 2025.

The building needs approximately \$840,000 plus GST worth of works as identified by contractors to rectify structural concerns and make the amenities compliant for public use (**Confidential Attachment 2**). In November 2021, Council allocated \$86,000 for the demolition of the Old Methodist Church, this allocation remains held in reserve.

There is no currently identified service need for the asset, and there are 14 other buildings within Traralgon of similar sizes that could be utilised instead.

Community Engagement commenced on 1 September and concluded on 31 October 2025, and Council received 10 submissions (**Attachment 1**).

Community Engagement Activities included social media and print media campaigns, signage on the building (**Attachment 3**), media release and meetings with interested parties on the project.

The campaign generated media interest and included an interview of the Mayor of the day on Win News and a Latrobe Valley Express article (**Attachment 4**).

ANALYSIS

Council received 10 submissions (**Attachment 1**) throughout the Community Engagement process, summarised in the below table.

	Project	Contact Name	Project Overview	Project Plan	Budget	VicTrack Lease
1	Stoddart Oval Development	Nicholas Scammell	Relocate the church to Stoddart oval	No - only a concept	Not Supplied	Not Applicable
2	Temporary Homeless Shelter and Soup Kitchen	Suzanne Fagan	Provide a soup kitchen for the homeless from the site	No - only a concept	Not Supplied	Not Supplied
3	Old Methodist Church	Not Supplied	Wedding venue at Victory Park	No - only a concept	Not Supplied	Not Applicable
4	Old Methodist Church (1)	Mary Giddens	No project just expressing a desire for Council to keep the asset	Not a project	Not Supplied	Not Supplied

	Project	Contact Name	Project Overview	Project Plan	Budget	VicTrack Lease
5	Preservation of the Old Methodist Church as a Museum	Barbara Johnson	Establish the building as a Traralgon Museum	Yes	\$430,000	Yes
6	Use of Old Methodist Church Building	Johanna Sykes	No project just expressing a desire for Council to keep the asset	Not a project	Not Supplied	Not Supplied
7	The Nest	Brionhey Hagen	A youth space	No - only a concept	Not Supplied	Yes
8	Old Methodist Church Futures Committee	Karen Russell	Preservation of the building for future use	Yes	\$340,000	Yes
9	Old GippsTown - Relocation	Libby Scott	Relocate the buildings to Old GippsTown at Council's expense	No - only a concept	Not Supplied	Not Applicable
10	On Clarence	Nathan & Lucy Hersey	Relocate the building to South Gippsland	No only a concept	Not Supplied – request that Council assist	Not Applicable

Table 1 – Summary of Community Submissions Received

Two of the submissions (submission 4 & 6) were community members expressing their desire for the building to be retained rather than project suggestions.

Six submissions (submissions 1, 2, 3, 7, 9 & 10) are project concepts rather than established project plans with budget and implementation objectives.

Of the submissions, four suggested relocations of the building to a new site:

- Submission 1 – Stoddard Oval, Traralgon to be used as a change-room.
- Submission 3 – Victory Park, Traralgon to be used as a wedding venue.
- Submission 9 – Old GippsTown, Moe to be added to the collection.

- Submission 10 – On Clarence, Loch to be relocated for an art space.

Of these suggestions, only the Victory Park site is Council owned, the other three sites would require landowners' consent for the building to be relocated.

A more detailed analysis of submissions 5 & 8 has been undertaken and is summarised below:

Submission 5 – Preservation of Old Methodist Church as a Museum *supplied by the Traralgon Historical Society*

The intention is to use the space as a museum celebrating the history of Traralgon. There is a staged implementation plan and a budget estimate of \$430,000 and a willingness to negotiate with VicTrack for a lease agreement. Noting that the \$430,000 is significantly less than the \$840,000 the independent Quantity Surveyor identified in their report presented to Council (**Attachment 4**)

Submission 8 – Old Methodist Church Futures Committee *supplied by the Old Methodist Church Futures committee*

The intention on for the space is to retain it in public ownership and seek to engage the Traralgon Historical Society or other community group to enter into a sublease agreement. There is a detailed budget that does reference the previously allocated \$86,000 for the site, the submission details the group is willing to negotiate with VicTrack for a lease agreement.

Based on the submissions supplied and the identified long-term use in submission 5, it is recommended that Council commence negotiations with the Traralgon Historical Society to assist with securing a lease and the subsequent sale of the building.

RISK ASSESSMENT

RISK	RISK RATING	TREATMENT
STRATEGIC Retaining an asset without an identified service need.	High <i>Moderate x Likely</i>	Proceeding with either sale or demolition of the building will remove this risk.
FINANCIAL Committing significant funds to a building without an identified service need.	High <i>Moderate x Likely</i>	Proceeding with either sale or demolition of the building will remove this risk.
FINANCIAL The community expectations of ongoing financial support towards this building.	Medium <i>Moderate x Possible</i>	Community requests for funding would be directed to the Community Grants and Budget processes for consideration against other community request.

CONSULTATION

Council commenced a Have Your Say campaign on Council's website on 1 September and this process concluded on 31 October 2025.

This campaign was supported with large scale on-building signage (**Attachment 3**), media release which generated a newspaper article in the Latrobe Valley Express (**Attachment 4**) and social media posts throughout the campaign.

COMMUNICATION

Direct communication was made with all parties who made a submission in previous engagement activities relating to the future use of the site.

All submissions have been notified of this report being presented to Council.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Officers preparing this report have declared they do not have a conflict of interest in this matter under the provisions of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

APPENDIX 1 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Gender

A Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) under the *Gender Equality Act 2020* has not been conducted as this matter does not involve a program, service or policy with a significant and direct impact on the community.

Social

Seven of the submissions highlighted the importance of retaining the building for its historical importance to the local community.

Cultural

The community has sentimental attachment to the building given its age and local historical context.

Health

Not Applicable.

Environmental

Not Applicable.

Economic

Not Applicable.

Financial

The previously allocated \$86,000 from the November 2021 resolution is still held in reserve, this maybe be relocated to the preferred project.

There is a growing asset renewal gap amongst Council's asset base, and along with the fact there is no current or identified future need, or service requiring this asset, sale or demolition of the asset are considered fiscally responsible options.

Attachments

1. Community Submissions - Old Methodist Church
2. Quantative Surveyor Price Estimates for Old Methodist Church (Published Separately)

This attachment is designated as confidential under subsection (g) of the definition of confidential information contained in section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2020, as it relates to private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that—

(i) relates to trade secrets; or

(ii) if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage. The price estimate has been completed by a qualified estimator, and the report is designated for decision making.

3. Building Signage
4. LV Express Article - 10 September 2025

8.2

Community Consultation Update - Old Methodist Church (41 Princes Street, Traralgon)

1	Community Submissions - Old Methodist Church	27
3	Building Signage	48
4	LV Express Article - 10 September 2025	49



Respondent No: 1
Login: Anonymous

Responded At: Sep 23, 2025 10:07:11 am
Last Seen: Sep 23, 2025 10:07:11 am

Q1. Project Name	Stoddart Oval Development
Q2. Project Organisation & Key Contact	Gormandale Cricket Club - Nicholas Scammell
Q3. Key Contact Phone Number	Redacted
Q4. Key Contact Email	Redacted
Q5. Project Description - Future Use of the Old Methodist Church <p>Hello, My name is Nicholas Scammell and I am the President of the Gormandale Cricket Club who play at Stoddart Oval in the West End of Traralgon. We are currently working incredibly hard to look at ways to develop our facility with upgrades to our rooms, the playing surface and a range of other things to make our Club viable and sustainable. I believe that the old Methodist Church and it's relocation to our facility could provide a unique opportunity to assist us with much needed upgrades and also provide the community in the West End of Traralgon a new place to utilise for a range of activities and groups. With all the developments now in Traralgon our Club has been left with the worst clubrooms in the region. These rooms have served us well for a long time and the upgrades that we have been primarily funding have made the facility what it is today. However, we are now seeing that participation rates and the ability to retain junior players or attempt to engage with female players directly correlates with the availability of nicer rooms and modern facilities. I look at the Imperials Cricket Club who have benefitted from brand new nets, rooms and an oval overhaul which they didn't have to pay a cent for themselves and now they are able to field more teams than they ever have and attract female participation which they never had previously all due to the investment of LCC for a single user facility. Our ground (Stoddart Oval) hosts senior and junior cricket in summer, junior football in winter while also holding other LCC events and providing the adjoining school an oval to carry out sports days and other events as well. Moving a building such as the Old Methodist Church to Stoddart Oval would benefit every user group who calls Stoddart Oval home. Now obviously this is just a suggestion as I have no idea how much it would cost to relocate the Old Methodist Church and then the cost to bring it up to a standard to be fully utilised but if it's more viable than to help us and the other user groups with a brand new pavilion then it must be explored. We would certainly want to contribute to the project in any way we could and continue to develop the project to make the building a unique facility which looks spectacular perched on the hill of a local sports ground that would be able to be accessed by the wider community while Council get to save an icon of the town and get some good feedback in the process.</p>	
Q6. I understand that any submission that is made in this process will be presented to Council and may be made public.	Yes
Q7. Approximate Project Budget	not answered
Q8. If you have a project budget you would like to upload	not answered
Q9. Funding Source; Internal / External (who?)	Clubs affiliated to the facility
Q10. Project Partners	Gormandale Cricket Club, Combined Saints Junior Football Club, Lavalla College, Cricket Latrobe Valley, Traralgon Umpires Association, Traralgon Harriers, Gormandale Football/Netball Club

Q11. Key Project Milestone - 3 Months

-

Q12. Key Project Milestones - 6 Months

-

Q13. Key Project Milestones - 12 Months

-

Q14. Are you willing to enter directly into a lease
with VicTrack?

Not Applicable

Q15. Further Information

not answered



Respondent No: 2
Login: Anonymous

Responded At: Sep 23, 2025 22:37:44 pm
Last Seen: Sep 23, 2025 22:37:44 pm

Q1. Project Name	Temporary Homeless Shelter and Soup Kitchen
Q2. Project Organisation & Key Contact	Suzanne Fagan
Q3. Key Contact Phone Number	Redacted
Q4. Key Contact Email	Redacted
Q5. Project Description - Future Use of the Old Methodist Church	With the high amount of homelessness why not open this church for drop in beds and soup kitchen its better than sleeping on the street.
Q6. I understand that any submission that is made in this process will be presented to Council and may be made public.	Yes
Q7. Approximate Project Budget	I dont have a budget I am just submitting an idea
Q8. If you have a project budget you would like to upload	not answered
Q9. Funding Source; Internal / External (who?)	Na
Q10. Project Partners	Could be Launch Housing or Uniting Church or the like homeless or community housing organisations
Q11. Key Project Milestone - 3 Months	Na
Q12. Key Project Milestones - 6 Months	N/A
Q13. Key Project Milestones - 12 Months	N/A
Q14. Are you willing to enter directly into a lease with VicTrack?	Not Applicable
Q15. Further Information	not answered

**Respondent No:** 3**Login:** Anonymous**Responded At:** Sep 24, 2025 12:29:52 pm**Last Seen:** Sep 24, 2025 12:29:52 pm

Q1. Project Name	Old Methodist Church
<hr/>	
Q2. Project Organisation & Key Contact	
<hr/>	
Q3. Key Contact Phone Number	Redacted
<hr/>	
Q4. Key Contact Email	Redacted
<hr/>	
Q5. Project Description - Future Use of the Old Methodist Church	
<p>I would love to see it moved to Victory Park and used as a non denominational venue for weddings, and other ceremonies. It could also be used as a pop up art space. This venue could be hired out and funds could be used to slowly repair and maintain it.</p>	
<hr/>	
Q6. I understand that any submission that is made in this process will be presented to Council and may be made public.	Yes
<hr/>	
Q7. Approximate Project Budget	
not answered	
<hr/>	
Q8. If you have a project budget you would like to upload	not answered
<hr/>	
Q9. Funding Source; Internal / External (who?)	Could be both, if used as an art space may be eligible for the small halls fund
<hr/>	
Q10. Project Partners	Unsure
<hr/>	
Q11. Key Project Milestone - 3 Months	
Na	
<hr/>	
Q12. Key Project Milestones - 6 Months	
Na	
<hr/>	
Q13. Key Project Milestones - 12 Months	
Na	
<hr/>	
Q14. Are you willing to enter directly into a lease with VicTrack?	Not Applicable
<hr/>	
Q15. Further Information	not answered
<hr/>	



Respondent No: 4
Login: Anonymous

Responded At: Sep 25, 2025 11:27:43 am
Last Seen: Sep 25, 2025 11:27:43 am

Q1. Project Name	Old Methodist Church
Q2. Project Organisation & Key Contact	Mary Giddens
Q3. Key Contact Phone Number	Redacted
Q4. Key Contact Email	Redacted
Q5. Project Description - Future Use of the Old Methodist Church Please do not demolish this very valuable part of Traralgon's history. My suggestion is for it to moved to another place for further use. I am a concerned ratepayer who would not like this landmark to be destroyed. It could be moved to Old Gippsdown in Moe where it could be used. I suggest the council provide the cost of moving the building	
Q6. I understand that any submission that is made in this process will be presented to Council and may be made public.	Yes
Q7. Approximate Project Budget Unsure	
Q8. If you have a project budget you would like to upload	not answered
Q9. Funding Source; Internal / External (who?)	Latrobe City Council
Q10. Project Partners	No partners
Q11. Key Project Milestone - 3 Months Unsure	
Q12. Key Project Milestones - 6 Months Unsure	
Q13. Key Project Milestones - 12 Months Unsure	
Q14. Are you willing to enter directly into a lease with VicTrack?	No
Q15. Further Information	not answered



Respondent No: 5
Login: Anonymous

Responded At: Oct 29, 2025 11:29:39 am
Last Seen: Oct 29, 2025 11:29:39 am

Q1. Project Name	Preservation of the Old Methodist Church as a Museum
Q2. Project Organisation & Key Contact	TRARALGON & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC. Contact President Barbara Johnson
Q3. Key Contact Phone Number	Redacted
Q4. Key Contact Email	Redacted
Q5. Project Description - Future Use of the Old Methodist Church	To preserve and adapt the Old Methodist Church building to create the Traralgon & District Heritage Museum.
Q6. I understand that any submission that is made in this process will be presented to Council and may be made public.	Yes
Q7. Approximate Project Budget	\$430,000 - breakdown of budget figures refer attached.
Q8. If you have a project budget you would like to upload	not answered
Q9. Funding Source; Internal / External (who?)	Heritage Grants, Philanthropic donations eg Keith Chenhall Charitable Trust, community fund-raising, Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR)in-kind support support
Q10. Project Partners	It is envisaged each stage in our proposal will involve different partners and community groups. (refer to attached submission)
Q11. Key Project Milestone - 3 Months	Procurement of building from Council and Lease arrangement from Vic Trak
Q12. Key Project Milestones - 6 Months	Initial restoration of the building as highlighted in the reports prepared for Council 2021. 2025 Heritage assessment by D. Helms 2023.
Q13. Key Project Milestones - 12 Months	Design and installation of historic displays Marketing etc, including launch of the museum.
Q14. Are you willing to enter directly into a lease with VicTrack?	Yes

Q15. Further Information

Further Information is provided on the following pages

Old Methodist Church – submission Oct 2025.

- 1. *Executive summary:*

This proposal is seeking to preserve and utilize the Old Methodist Church building in Traralgon as a dedicated local history museum. The project aims to safeguard one of Gippsland's rare pre-1880 timber buildings by creating a cultural centre for the community and stimulate heritage tourism in the district.

- 2. *Background and Significance:*

a/. Historic value: The church was built in 1879, being the second to be constructed in the town. (the original site is now known as 57 Post Office Place). Traralgon & District Historical Society (TDHS) believes it is one of oldest surviving buildings in Traralgon. The architecture of the building is an example of Carpenter Gothic Church (Helms, 2022 p.20). The Old Methodist Church building is one of only 5 surviving pre-1880 timber churches in Gippsland.

The plans for this wooden church, 20 feet (6.096m.) by 32 feet (9.754m.), were drawn up by the Rev. D. J. Flockhart (second minister appointed to Traralgon Parish). Messrs Horne & Matthews erected the building for £200 (the lowest tender).

The original small church was extended in 1888 (designed by J. Kinder, of Morwell. He also supervised the works).

In 1911 further work at the rear added a room to be used for a kindergarten. (see Helms, 2022, p. 6ff).

In 1939 a new brick church building was erected on the Methodist site. The Wooden Church building was relocated on the site and used exclusively for Sunday School activities.

The old wooden building was to be moved once more on the church site. This occurred in the 1950's when the brick Hall was built. The wooden building was moved to the south of the church and hall complex.

b/. Cultural value: The building has served as a place of worship (over 60 years) and community gathering centre for a further 80 years.

"In recognition of its history, the Uniting Church offered the former Wesleyan Chapel (Old Methodist Church), free of charge to the Traralgon & District Historical Society (TDHS) provided it was relocated from the site. The Society did not have the resources to relocate the building and so sought help from the City of Traralgon." (Council Report, 1992:29) [Helms, 2022 p.9].

c/. Risk: If demolished a tangible link to Traralgon's early settlement will be lost. Another level of risk is in moving the building ie. this poses the risk of destroying the structure.

Successful relocation could only occur at considerable expense to ensure the integrity of the building.

3. *Project Vision*

To restore and adapt the Old Methodist Church building to create the Traralgon & District Heritage Museum that –

- preserves the building's integrity;
- showcases local history, featuring transport and faith developments through time (initially). Overtime displays will feature other aspects of the Town's and District's history.

4. *Objectives*

* **Preservation** – undertake the structural repairs to ensure heritage restoration and suitability for public use.

* **Exhibition development** – prepare displays of heritage material from the artefacts collection of TDHS. (see photographic examples)

* **Community engagement** – involve (create) community interest and commitment to the proposal.

* **Tourism Growth** – over time position the museum as part of Gippsland's heritage trail.

WHY: The artefacts in storage at the Historical Society should be enjoyed by all in the community. These artefacts should be available to tell their stories a reminder of “how” we got to today!

The Traralgon District is the only urban area in Latrobe City without a Museum.

5. *Methodology*

The development of the Museum will occur overtime. There will be different stages with timelines being varied and difficult to define precisely. It is anticipated a project time of up to 15 years, if the experience of the Court House project can be used as a guideline is envisaged. Although this project is not exactly analogous.

- Stage 1: procurement of building from Council and Lease arrangement from Vic Trak; [6 months]*
- Stage 2: initial restoration of the building as highlighted in the reports prepared for Council 2021; 2025 and Heritage assessment by D. Helms, 2023; [5 years]
- Stage 3: Design and installation of historic displays; [1 year]
- Stage 4: Marketing etc. including launch of the Museum (6 months);

- Stage 5: ongoing development of the facility as a functioning Museum/tourist attraction (5 years) and as resources permit.

[* times indicative only.]

6. Budget (indicative for 1st level restoration)

ITEM	COST ESTIMATES
Heritage & Engineering Reports (Council)	\$ 0
Restoration work *	\$300,000
Display development (fit out)	\$ 80,000
Marketing etc. ?	\$ 10,000
Contingency (10%)	\$ 40,000
TOTAL	\$ 430,000

*Includes wall stabilization, replacement of weatherboards window frames as needed, Painting exterior walls & roof. etc.,
Funding sources may include Heritage Grants, Philanthropic donations, community fund-raising, in-kind support from Community organisations and individuals.

7. Evaluation

Success will be measured by –

- Visitor numbers in first 12 months (when displays completed).
- Number of school and community group visits.
- Positive media coverage and tourism impact; volunteer participation rates.

8. Conclusion

The Old Methodist Church is an irreplaceable part of Traralgon's story. Its redevelopment into a Museum will mean we have preserved our past whilst creating a cultural asset for future generations to learn about their heritage.

Sources used.

- Council reports on the structural status of the Former Methodist Church building including the Hade Consulting, (2021): Structural Inspection and assessment of existing building Traralgon Visitor's Centre. Report AND the recent report presented to Council in August 2025.
- Helms, D. (2022): "Heritage assessment – Former Traralgon Wesleyan Chapel."
- Artefacts/information in the TDHS collection files.

9. Supportive documents.

Photographic evidence of artefacts available for display from TDHS collection.



The Methodist Church , 1879 (TDHS Ref. No. 11793)



Poster for Jubilee celebrations 1929. (TDHS Ref. No. 11792).



Relocated Church to Station site 1992 (TDHS Ref. No. 13277)



The fireplace surrounds from 1st Presbyterian manse (TDHS Ref. No.


IMG 6885-1)



Early form Transport (TDHS Ref. No. 10603)



The restored 1902 Oldsmobile (TDHS Ref.



Respondent No: 6

Login: Anonymous

Responded At: Oct 30, 2025 20:09:34 pm

Last Seen: Oct 30, 2025 20:09:34 pm

Q1. Project Name	Use of Old Methodist Church Building.
Q2. Project Organisation & Key Contact	Johanna Sykes
Q3. Key Contact Phone Number	Redacted
Q4. Key Contact Email	Redacted

Q5. Project Description - Future Use of the Old Methodist Church

Dear Latrobe City Councillors, May I put my thoughts in points form:-

1. The old Methodist Church building built in 1879, I believe has a significant historical value to the History of Traralgon. Found online...2021 'LCC Receives Heritage Assessment for Traralgon's Old Methodist Church'....David Helms from Heritage Planning said.. quote ..'it [old Methodist Building] was of local historic and representative significance to Latrobe City'.
2. It was bought by LCC in 1995 removed from site and used for Council purposes on present site.
3. At this time did the Community, with the Council ownership, believe that the Council would appreciate its history and significance to the Traralgon Community? I believe so.
4. I visited Rosedale Historical Society... in the former Shire Building this place of History is now part of the Community. Important. We may not have the population for eg of England, but our older Historical Buildings are equally as important.
- 5a. Recently on SBS a program Great British Landmark Fixers... huge monies, skills etc are utilised in treasuring and restoring their historical 'Landmarks'.....great example for us.
- 5b. Thus may the LCC Councillors treasure this one small Building that you are the Caretaker of, at this time..
6. It is a landmark for Traralgon..... a couple now living in Traralgon... drove many times from Queensland to Melbourne over many years, Traralgon was the town with the small white Church.
7. I believe that the Railway owners of land do want to do the right thing for our Community.
- 8a. The interior of Building is unique, I believe the Building does need a purpose..... therefore may I suggest that the Traralgon District Historical Society move in.... Meetings to be held, Open days etc...Museum, Histories & of all our District.
- 8b. Incorporate aspects of our Indigenous History..a potential..Monies from the Indigenous community may enhance the coffers.
9. TDHS member numbers has increased... younger people seemed to be taking more interested in History... and I think they expect us to act... when asked they appreciate history... we are doing this for them, as each generation has its turn.
10. Significant amount of money is mentioned for refurbishment... may we appreciate what our previous community members in 1879 achieved to build this building many years ago.
11. In turn the Council of the day in buying the Church Building and taking responsibility for it, is to be applauded & to recognise their appreciation of an old Traralgon Historical Building with its much history.
12. This Church Building gives reference to our Christian Heritage.....important, not extremely so, however an important Historical fact.
13. With the new development at the Station, the Church Building compliments that area .. the old and the new, a pleasing feature for the east entrance to Traralgon. Took photos recently of this area... rather delightful photos with character, which would be lost without the Historical building.....
- 14a. As a tourist attraction ... close enough to be part of Victory Park .. this then will be another place for tourists to visit and leads into Franklin St..... Somewhere to take our visitors/families.... an added option for Traralgon...It is so centrally place, part of our everyday world.... by train or by road... it is there as part of our street scape. Its position is a huge advantage ...rather than being tucked away somewhere.
- 14b. Other sites...eg An old Church Building is now part of Pastoral Museum in Hamilton...A Church Building in Yinnar used as on Op Shop..... in turn Yinnar is a welcoming village with Council taking care of Yinnar.
- 15a. Appreciate the Aquatic Centre & GPAC are recent assets for Traralgon....this for our wider Community as well and have been part of planning for many many years...
- 15b. This project/Old Methodist Building is specific for Traralgon & its History.... Moe has... Gipps town. Morwell has Rose Garden/Art Gallery so it may be appropriate for Traralgon to retain this Historical building. Appreciate that the Court House is a recent acquisition [again also for the use of wider community of the time]..hopefully this Church Building will be a continuation of recognising another aspect to enhance Traralgon.
16. Thank you and may the Councillors 'agree with me' and thus celebrate the re-purposing of this Historical Building, the Old Methodist Church in Traralgon. May I also ask our Councillors to look at this Traralgon Project, as our representatives ..our Community and not be intimidated by the cost and plans given to them from other needed but different perspectives. It is part of our Traralgon Heritage and may it continue to be there for many years to come. Thanking you. Johanna Sykes. I will be happy to speak to this.

Q6. I understand that any submission that is made in this process will be presented to Council and may be made public. Yes

Q7. Approximate Project Budget

not answered

Q8. If you have a project budget you would like to upload not answered

Q9. Funding Source; Internal / External (who?)	Nil
Q10. Project Partners	Nil
Q11. Key Project Milestone - 3 Months	Nil
Q12. Key Project Milestones - 6 Months	Nil
Q13. Key Project Milestones - 12 Months	Nil
Q14. Are you willing to enter directly into a lease with VicTrack?	Not Applicable
Q15. Further Information	not answered



Respondent No: 7
Login: Anonymous

Responded At: Oct 31, 2025 15:39:08 pm
Last Seen: Oct 31, 2025 15:39:08 pm

Q1. Project Name	The Nest
Q2. Project Organisation & Key Contact	Street Peace Gippsland - Brionhey Hagen
Q3. Key Contact Phone Number	Redacted
Q4. Key Contact Email	Redacted
Q5. Project Description - Future Use of the Old Methodist Church We would like to open a drop in centre for disengaged youth. A safe place for them to come and hang out, have a meal and be mentored by our mentors to help them make better choices. We are following a model from Street Peace in Frankston. Please watch the following video. https://youtu.be/4W6bqF63yzA	
Q6. I understand that any submission that is made in this process will be presented to Council and may be made public.	Yes
Q7. Approximate Project Budget not answered	
Q8. If you have a project budget you would like to upload	not answered
Q9. Funding Source; Internal / External (who?)	Street Peace and fundraising
Q10. Project Partners	Street Peace and their partners
Q11. Key Project Milestone - 3 Months Prepare property to have a drop in space	
Q12. Key Project Milestones - 6 Months Open one day a week to disengaged youth and feed them.	
Q13. Key Project Milestones - 12 Months Open up multiple days	
Q14. Are you willing to enter directly into a lease with VicTrack?	Yes
Q15. Further Information	not answered

**Respondent No:** 8**Login:** Anonymous**Responded At:** Oct 31, 2025 16:48:46 pm**Last Seen:** Oct 31, 2025 16:48:46 pm

Q1. Project Name	Old Methodist Church
Q2. Project Organisation & Key Contact	Organisation: Old Methodist Church Futures Committee Contact: Karen Russell
Q3. Key Contact Phone Number	Ü^å&ç^å
Q4. Key Contact Email	Ü^å&ç^å
Q5. Project Description - Future Use of the Old Methodist Church	See attached file
Q6. I understand that any submission that is made in this process will be presented to Council and may be made public.	Yes
Q7. Approximate Project Budget	TBC
Q8. If you have a project budget you would like to upload	Additional information provided on following pages
Q9. Funding Source; Internal / External (who?)	Mixed
Q10. Project Partners	Collaboration with community, business and government
Q11. Key Project Milestone - 3 Months	Formalise Old Methodist Church Futures Committee and lease with VicTrack
Q12. Key Project Milestones - 6 Months	Maintenance repair plan complete
Q13. Key Project Milestones - 12 Months	Make Safe work underway.
Q14. Are you willing to enter directly into a lease with VicTrack?	Yes No Not Applicable
Q15. Further Information	not answered

Old Methodist Church Proposal 31 October 2025**Background**

The old Methodist Church was built in 1879 on the corner of Argyle and Mills Street in Traralgon. It was the second of the four churches built in the town in the 19th Century and is the only one remaining. In 1939, a new brick church was constructed beside it and sometime later, the old church was moved behind the new church to enable extensions. The old church became the infants Sunday School. In 1990 it was gifted to the community and moved to its current site by the former Traralgon City Council (LCC), its custodians. Following a restoration of the church, it became the Visitor Information Centre. Today it is the second oldest public building remaining in the town.

The heritage value of the old Methodist Church is clearly established in David Helms' 2022 report to LCC. Noted is Helms' recommendation that a Conservation Management Plan (CMP), should be commissioned prior to any relocation.

About this submission

In November 2021 following moves by Council to demolish the church, a community meeting was held to discuss enabling a future for the building. The meeting identified overwhelming community support for preservation of their church. It also highlighted priorities for the maintenance of local heritage and growing arts and culture in an inclusive community, in Latrobe City. Since that time there have been a number of meetings between Council and community members. However, for various reasons a solution for enabling the future use, and leadership to facilitate a planning strategy has not progressed. There are a range of stakeholder groups and individuals proposing ideas for the future of the church but there is currently no strategy or implementation plan for prioritising them, or the resourcing and sustainability of these proposals.

In response to strong community commitment for enabling the future of the church and also the 2023 Council 'call for submissions', the interim Old Methodist Church Futures Committee (OMCFC) was established. The group comprised a cross section of individuals with connections to a cross section of interest groups and organisations in Latrobe City and beyond. The OMCFC is committed to drive a sustainable process for enabling the building's future; and through its use, facilitate partnerships and the continued growth of tourism, heritage, and culture in Latrobe City. A submission to Council to this effect was made, including pledges of support from over 300 people in September 2023. No response was ever received.

The OMCFC remains committed to enabling the future of this historic church. A community-led effort will ensure it remains local, productive and relevant into the next century. The OMCFC remains committed to partnerships with government, corporate and community groups to enable the preservation and activation of the building.

The following proposal is in keeping with LCC's self described 'unique blend of historical charm and constant growth'* as well as its commitment to arts and culture.

(*Quote from [Visitor Information Centre – Latrobe City Place](#))

The proposal is necessary in three phases to enable considered planning and allow time for effective and sustainable implementation.

Short term action plan

Currently unused, the church's condition is deteriorating. It requires some major repairs, regular maintenance and to be 'lived in'.

Action:

- Council immediately engages with the Old Methodist Church Futures Committee OMCFC. This relationship should be a similar arrangement to the partnership with the Friends of Traralgon Courthouse.
- LCC/OMCFC to negotiate with VicTrack tenure on the current location for at least ten years.
- Use \$86k of previously approved funds to make safe the building and commence immediate structural repairs and maintenance. Consistent with the engineer's report, rebuilding and stabilising the western wall of the building should be a high priority.
- Additional funds to be sourced to enable all priority works to be completed in 5-10 years. (Funds quoted in 2023 were \$340k – \$86k = \$254k. It is noted that LCC current quote in 2025 is 3 x times this figure. As part of the process all essential works and quotations should be reviewed for comparison).
- The experience of Friends of Traralgon Courthouse Inc., in conservation management planning will be of assistance in this area.
- In the short term offer use of the building to the Traralgon and District Historical Society who may use it as a headquarters, or location or for their proposed museum. This may extend for the longer term.
- The church should also be accessible to other local groups who will be included in longer term planning for the building – tourism, cultural, educational and historical.

Medium term

A strategy and implementation plan to be developed connecting the church and other LCC historical facilities to the broader preservation context and directions of the Latrobe City Council. This includes tourism and heritage to ensure visibility, future relevance and meaning for a community in transition.

Action:

- Led by community in partnership with LCC, establish a Heritage and Cultural Alliance (The Alliance) for the city. Member organisations to include for example local historical societies, TCDA, arts groups, music bands and songwriters, education groups, Friends of the Traralgon Courthouse etc.
- Develop a strategy and implementation plan. The plan will ideally identify locations and enabling heritage overlays; funding and maintenance.

Long term

The long term vision of the OMCFC is the creation of an Arts, Heritage and Culture organisation listed on the Register of Cultural Organisations (ROCO) and a registered charity with Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status. The organisation will facilitate use of the Old Methodist Church building to promote tourism, for community education and the promotion of literature, music, arts including craft, design, film, video, television, radio, languages or movable heritage.

Action:

- The ROCO and GDR status will enable maximum flexibility in attracting grants to support the maintenance and upgrades for the building while also enhancing contributions to community arts and culture.
- The organisation will work with LCC (including Gippsland Performing Arts Centre and Latrobe Regional Gallery), community and government partners etc to nurture and support tourism, heritage retention and cultural growth in a city undergoing transition.
- Utilise the knowledge and experience gained in the project to support LCC to set up a regular heritage assessment of all historical assets across the municipality to ensure heritage safe keeping for future communities.

Through careful management and local leadership, the church will remain a community owned asset and through its use, enhance the continued growth of Latrobe City, as a cultural centre. Community involvement in this effort will be an essential mechanism in fostering individual and community wellbeing and the development of strong resilient communities.

Consultation

In preparing this proposal, a cross-section of individual community members and community groups have been consulted

Old Methodist Church Futures Committee

This proposal has been developed by a committee of community supporters.

Submission Coordinator and Contact Person:

Karen Russell

Subject: EIO Removal of Old Methodist Church (Information Centre) Traralgon

Hello Leanne

We understand that the former Methodist Church c.1879 at the Traralgon Railway Station is under threat of demolition if a new home cannot be found for this significant building. We are interested in giving this important historical building a new home in our park grounds. As we are a not-for-profit organisation, we would require the Council to manage and pay for the relocation costs and to assist with permits and site preparations.

At Old Gippsland Heritage Park we maintain and display 30 original relocated heritage buildings from all over Gippsland. We have another 18 purpose-built buildings to complete our museum. Our enthusiastic team of volunteers manage the buildings and collections with a focus on telling the Gippsland history story from the early 1840s until the closure of the model mining town of Yallourn. Please visit our website www.buildingsofoldgippsland.com.au to view our buildings and collections.

Old Gippsland was established in 1968 and opened in 1973 (recently celebrating our half century) and our core aim is to preserve the heritage buildings and collections under our care and to tell the story of the history of our region through these buildings and artefacts. In a state where there were once many more heritage parks, we are now one of only a few remaining open to the public. We attach a copy of our Strategic Plan 2025-2030 for your information.

We hope that we can help contribute towards saving this significant local heritage asset.

With kind regards

Libby Scott

Chair

Gippsland Reserve Committee of Management Inc.

Hi Dale,

As discussed recently, I would like to express an interest in the old Methodist church in Traralgon, that is being considered for demolition.

As a lover of old buildings and having previously relocated an Edwardian building, I see value in relocating the building for a purpose elsewhere in Gippsland rather than demolishing it.

My view is that, subject to an inspection to determine suitability for relocation, the church building could be provided with a new lease on life and used for an art space or retail space, in South Gippsland.

My wife Lucy, who is a well known local artist, is considering expanding her own art space in Loch, which provides for affordable flexible spaces for local artists. This is one option for the building that I would be interested in exploring. We have land available in Loch and are considering the purchase of another parcel.

I would expect that Latrobe City Council could assist with permits and associated costs, ensuring that the building will remain in Gippsland rather than being lost to history. This will also save Latrobe City Council the demolition costs and may reduce some of the heartache of some locals who believe the building should be retained.

I would be very happy to discuss this proposal with the appropriate officers at Latrobe City and look forward to a conversation and consideration of this request.

The art space website is www.onclarence.com.au

Kind regards,

Nathan and Lucy Hersey

0407502898

LATROBE CITY
COUNCIL

Old Methodist Church – Community Engagement Signage



Front of the Old Methodist Church



Western Roof of Old Methodist Church from Franklin Street

LATROBE CITY
COUNCIL

Old Methodist Church – Latrobe Valley Express Article, 10 September 2025

Public set to decide salvation or sacrifice

By AIDAN KNIGHT

ONE of the more interesting debates from the August Latrobe City Council meeting centred around keeping things holy. Specifically, the old Methodist church in Traralgon.

At the August 25 meeting at GPAC, Budgetary Ward Councillor, Leanne Potter put forward a motion to consult the community one last time on whether council should renew the lease for the historic building at 41 Princes Street.

The consultation would seek written submissions from the public about the building's future use or relocation, and importantly, whether anyone can help foot the bill. This also includes funding options for the church if it were to continue to renew its lease.

Cr Potter presented this, with the purpose of providing council with an update on negotiations with VicTrack and options available for the address (located opposite the train station), which she understands serves a lot of sentimental and historical value in the hearts of many Traralgon residents.

Sentimentality doesn't pay the bills, however, and this is reflected in the \$844,000 (plus GST) it has been calculated to cost Latrobe City to upgrade the building to meet current safety standards for public use.

Much like the building itself and the figure it

was previously dedicated to, this is a debate that refuses to die, and has been haunting council agendas for years like a heritage-listed ghost.

-By November 2021, council voted to demolish the church after salvageable items were removed;

-By December that same year, demolition was dramatically halted in favour of more community consultation;

-In May 2023, an Expression of Interest campaign was launched, essentially a call for anyone with a workable idea to step forward;

-The following November, council received those outcomes and resolved to negotiate a new lease with VicTrack, the site's actual owner, and;

-By April 2025, a draft 10-year lease, with the option for another 10, was put on the table.

And yet, despite all the twists and turns, council officers now say the building has reached the end of its useful life.

With too many upgrades required to run for public use, and no funding to back it, their recommendation is demolition.

Still, as Cr Potter reminded her colleagues, plenty of Traralgon residents remain attached to the church, and officers now recommend one last round of community engagement to see if anyone can conjure up the ideas (or cash) to save it.

"It's important we hear from the people who know and love, and not just decide what happens

to it, but also allow the community to have their say on it," she pleaded.

"Help us make a decision that honours the past and helps us move forward, making the process as meaningful as it possibly can be."

Cr Pugsley, who seconded the ultimately unanimous motion, emphasised the officers' findings were a direct result of moving the information centre previously housed in the 146-year-old church to a new address, making it of little use in its current state.

"I'm interested to see what the community would like to do with it," she said in relation to the public submissions.

In council's first year of discussion around the church, calls were made simply to relocate the building to a more central Traralgon location, as a heritage building, rather than upgrading it for any commercial use.

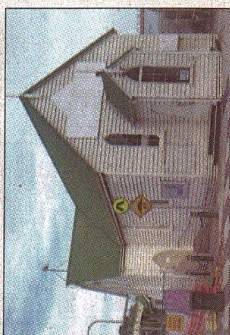
Regional historian (and former Wellington Shire Councillor) Linda Barracough said at the time that it was one of only five pre-1880 timber churches left in Gippsland.

Tyers Ward Councillor, Darren Howe also supported the notion of letting the people speak, despite the exorbitant cost council is faced with.

"We heard in 2021 the community's angst," he said, "it's time to go back to them and give them the opportunity to save it."

For now, the old Methodist church remains in limbo, somewhere between salvation and the bulldozer, waiting for the next sermon to arrive in the form of a written submission.

Written submissions from the public as to the future use and/or location of the building (including funding options) are required by no later than 5pm, October 31, 2025.



Will it stay or go: The future of the old Methodist church, Traralgon is once again in the spotlight. The site is owned by VicTrack and was the previous Latrobe Visitor Centre.

Photograph supplied

RED & GREEN TAPE FEE REVIEW AND BUSINESS FRIENDLY COUNCIL

PURPOSE

To provide Councillors with an update on the Red & Green Tape, Fee Review and outcomes of officers' participation in the Business-Friendly Council (BFC) initiative and seek endorsement of the Action Plan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Officers have undertaken an extensive review of Council's regulatory fees structure, pricing methodology, communications and processes to understand perceived and real barriers that businesses face to establish and operate in Latrobe City (the Review).
- The Review focused on strengthening Council's approach to business engagement, transparency, and regulatory support.
- The Review found no evidence that any single Council fee is acting as an isolated barrier to establishing or operating a business in Latrobe City. Instead, challenges arise from the complexity and fragmentation of internal systems, processes, and communication, rather than from fee levels themselves.
- Findings from the Review were reinforced through Council's participation in the Business-Friendly Council (BFC) Program, which identified opportunities to simplify internal processes, strengthen cross-departmental coordination, improve business-facing information, and address hidden or unexpected costs often outside Council's direct control.
- Together, the Review and the BFC Program provide a comprehensive, evidence-based foundation for improving the business experience in Latrobe City and strengthening Council's position as a transparent, supportive, and business-friendly regulator.
- Improvement actions identified through both initiatives have been consolidated and prioritised into a single Action Plan (**Attachment 1**), providing a coordinated roadmap for process improvements and organisational change.
- Delivery of the Action Plan directly supports Council Plan Key Objective 3 – Local Businesses. The action plan also supports Action 3: Reduce or simplify the fees, charges, and associated regulatory costs to establish and undertake business in Latrobe City.

- To support delivery of the Action Plan, officers recommend the establishment of an expanded Project Control Group (PCG) to oversee implementation, drive cross-departmental collaboration, and maintain organisational focus on continuous improvement.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. notes the report detailing the Red & Green Tape Fee Review, including the Business-Friendly Council Program; and**
- 2. endorses the Action Plan to simplify the fees, charges, and processes to establish and operate a business in Latrobe City.**

BACKGROUND

Latrobe City Council's Plan 2025-209 reinforces and recognises the importance of local businesses to the economic growth, stability, sustainability, and health and well-being of our region. To better support small businesses establish and operate in Latrobe City, Council's regulatory approach must continue to evolve improving the clarity and communication of fee structures, ensuring consistent service delivery, and applying risk-proportionate assessment processes.

To progress this work, Council commenced a staged program to better understand its existing regulatory environment and identify opportunities for improvement.

The Review

The Review focused on strengthening Council's approach to business engagement, transparency, and regulatory support.

The Review aimed to:

- Evaluate Council's current fees and charges, including pricing structures, methodologies, and associated revenue;
- Establish the customer voice through engagement with the Latrobe City business community; and
- Build an organisational understanding of the rationale and methodology underpinning Council's regulatory pricing.

The scope included:

- Examination of fees, charges, and permits related to business establishment and operation, including any application of risk-based models;
- Analysis of pricing structures, workflows, and process mapping;
- Consultation with internal stakeholders including the Senior Leadership Team, key regulatory units, and the Business Development team;
- Engagement with businesses through an online survey to capture sentiment, experiences, and perceived barriers; and
- Identification of recommendations for regulatory and process improvements.

Victorian Government Initiatives (Supporting Work)

In parallel with the Review, officers also participated in two Victorian State Government initiatives designed to strengthen local business environments:

- Small Business Charter (2019) (**Attachment 2**); and
- Business-Friendly Council (BFC) Program (**Attachment 3**), identified as an action in the earlier Council report.

Officers will additionally review the Department of Treasury and Finance's Local Laws Assessment Guide for further insights and continue exploring opportunities to refine and improve business processes.

Business-Friendly Council (BFC) Program

Delivered in partnership with the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR), the BFC Program is a structured improvement program designed to help councils simplify internal processes, strengthen customer-facing services, and adopt best-practice business engagement models. The program included workshops, benchmarking activities, and peer learning across participating councils, focusing on four key improvement areas:

- Business-Friendly Culture;
- Information and Communication;
- Connected Systems and Strategies; and
- Commitment and Celebration.

Through workshops held in September and October 2025, officers from Planning, Local Laws, Health Services, Economic Development, and Customer Focus participated in cross-departmental sessions to identify pain points, map internal processes, and explore business customers' experiences. Research provided by DJSIR highlighted challenges such as unclear information, sequential approvals, unexpected costs, and inconsistent communication.

Participation in the BFC Program enabled officers to benchmark Council's internal practices against leading practice, identify opportunities to reduce complexity for businesses, and directly informed the findings of the Review.

Together, the Review and the BFC Program provide a comprehensive, evidence-based understanding of the challenges businesses face when engaging with Council and have informed the development of a clearer, more supportive, and coordinated approach to business regulation and engagement in Latrobe City.

Project Control Group (PCG)

To guide this work, a cross-departmental PCG was established with representation from:

- Planning;
- Local Laws;
- Health Services;
- Customer Focus;
- Business Development; and
- Building Services.

The PCG ensured strategic alignment, strengthened organisation-wide engagement, and supported the identification of cross-departmental issues. It has played a critical role in coordinating resources and shaping the development of the Action Plan, reflecting the operational realities of delivering regulatory and customer-facing services across Council

ANALYSIS

A comprehensive program of research and engagement was undertaken to inform both the Review and the Business-Friendly Council (BFC) Program. This work included:

- A review of Latrobe City Council's 2025–26 Schedule of Fees to understand statutory and non-statutory charges;
- In-depth meetings with Planning, Health Services, and Local Laws teams to review fee structures, methodologies, processes, and customer communications;
- A business survey to capture customer perspectives and better understand business performance, confidence, perceived barriers, and desired support (**Attachment 4**);
- BFC workshops across September and October with the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR) and other local government areas, assessing current internal practices and processes; and
- BFC research conducted by DJSIR with small businesses currently working with Council. Issues identified included lack of parallel approvals, confusion around processes, unexpected costs, and unclear information requests.

Findings

Consistent with business sentiment findings, officers acknowledge the perception that Council's fees and charges create challenges for local businesses. However, the Review found no evidence that any single Council fee acts as an overwhelming barrier to establishing or operating a business in Latrobe City. Instead, the challenges faced by businesses primarily relate to the complexity and fragmentation of Council's systems, processes, and communication, rather than the fee levels themselves.

The Review also confirmed that many fee requirements and regulatory processes originate from Victorian State Government legislation, not from Council. As the delivery arm for these statutory functions, Council must apply prescribed fees, implement mandatory checks, and meet legally defined assessment timeframes. As legislation evolves, these obligations often increase in complexity, shaping the overall customer experience.

DJSIR's case studies reinforced these findings. Businesses reported that the most significant barriers were hidden or unexpected compliance-related costs, many of which fall outside Council's direct control. These unpredictable expenses often contribute to the perception that "Council is expensive," despite the root causes being externally driven.

Despite these challenges, officers identified strong opportunities to improve how Council:

- Communicates fee structures and legislative requirements;
- Sets clearer expectations about the full range of potential costs in the approvals process; and
- Supports businesses in navigating complex regulatory environments.

Strategic and Operational Insights

The combined findings from the Review and the BFC Program highlighted a series of strategic, operational, cultural, and communication issues impacting Council's ability to deliver an efficient, transparent, and business-friendly regulatory model.

These insights align closely with the four key pillars of the BFC Program:

- Business Friendly Culture;
 - Information and Communication;
 - Connected Systems and Strategies; and
 - Commitment and Celebration.
- (Fees and Charges are integrated across all pillars)*

These pillars provided a structured framework for prioritising and consolidating improvement actions to guide an Action Plan.

Action Plan

A prioritised and consolidated Action Plan has been developed (**Attachment 1**) to address the issues identified through both the Review and the BFC Program. The Action Plan provides a coordinated roadmap that strengthens Council's approach to business engagement, regulatory transparency, and customer support.

Delivery of the Action Plan directly supports Council Plan Key Objective 3 – Local Businesses, which commits Council to enabling business diversification, expansion, job creation, and economic resilience. It also supports Action 3: Reduce or simplify the fees, charges, and associated regulatory costs to establish and undertake business in Latrobe City.

Given the scale and cross-organisational nature of the implementation of the Action Plan, it is recommended that the PCG be retained and expanded to oversee implementation, strengthen collaboration, and maintain momentum. Under the proposed structure, the PCG will be led by the Business and Economic Development Team and include representatives from:

- Business Development;
- Planning;
- Health Services;
- Finance;
- Communications, Engagement and Customer Focus; and
- Business Improvement.

The PCG will continue to coordinate resources, identify cross-departmental issues, and support delivery of the Action Plan, ensuring practical and sustainable service improvements across the organisation. While also acting as a point of escalation for business related issues.

RISK ASSESSMENT

RISK	RISK RATING	TREATMENT
SERVICE DELIVERY Business customers unable to find relevant information, relative to their industry and focus, to guide them on establishing a business in the region.	Medium <i>Possible x Moderate</i>	Council to endorse the action plan.
SERVICE DELIVERY Application portal not established through the website – resulting in business customers unable to apply for different permits in parallel. Causing confusion across the teams and also for applicant.	High <i>Likely x Moderate</i>	Council to endorse the action plan. Until implementation, Business Concierge to be provided advice by relevant teams on status of permits, any blockage points for resolution with applicant. Manual system to support approach to be worked through.

RISK	RISK RATING	TREATMENT
<p>SERVICE DELIVERY</p> <p>Systems interface not implemented resulting fragmented approach between teams, and business applicants delayed in opening and running their businesses.</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p><i>Possible x Moderate</i></p>	<p>Identify software that can provide the systems interface between Pathway and Health Manager, in particular.</p> <p>In the interim, commitment between teams to meet regularly to identify parallel approvals, status and work through any issues.</p>
<p>SERVICE DELIVERY</p> <p>Website update does not occur resulting in business frustration at not being able to build knowledge and find the information relevant to their industry. Permit applications submitted that are missing information or reflect limited understanding of process and requirements.</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p><i>Possible x Moderate</i></p>	<p>Review website architecture to ensure business customer needs are forefront, easy to navigate for information – which is accurate and easy to understand.</p>
<p>FINANCIAL</p> <p>Business growth does not match population growth, impacting the local economy and population growth.</p> <p>Council perceived as not being easy to deal with, loses businesses to other regions.</p>	<p>High</p> <p><i>Likely x Moderate</i></p>	<p>Implement the Review and BFC recommendations to ensure Council can assist businesses establish and operate in the region.</p>

RISK	RISK RATING	TREATMENT
STRATEGIC Council perceived not to be easy to work with and not supportive of business as a result of not implementing the Fee Review and BFC recommendations. Does not meet Council's economic and strategic objectives.	Medium <i>Possible x Moderate</i>	Issue statement regarding focus and plans to implement the recommendations of the Review and BFC.

CONSULTATION

A business survey was established to capture the customer perspectives and better understand business performance, confidence, perceived barriers, and desired support.

Consultation also occurred as part of the BFC workshops, held in September and October of 2025 with the Victorian State Government, Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR) and other local government areas to assess current internal practices and processes.

COMMUNICATION

No communication is planned as a part of this report.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Officers preparing this report have declared they do not have a conflict of interest in this matter under the provisions of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

APPENDIX 1 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Gender

A Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) under the *Gender Equality Act 2020* has been conducted as part of the development of the Economic Development Strategy which is the overarching policy that this action plan will be imbedded into. Both policies will have a significant and direct impact on the community.

Social

Not applicable.

Cultural

Not applicable.

Health

Not applicable.

Environmental

Not applicable.

Economic

Improving the environment for businesses to operate in Latrobe City will have a positive impact on the economy. Supporting more business to operate will generate more jobs locally.

Financial

It is anticipated that this Action Plan will be delivered within the existing resources and budget allocation of the Business and Economic Development team.

Attachments

1. Business Friendly Council - Action Plan
2. The Small Business Charter established in 2019
3. The Business Friendly Council (BFC) Program
4. Business Survey Results

8.3

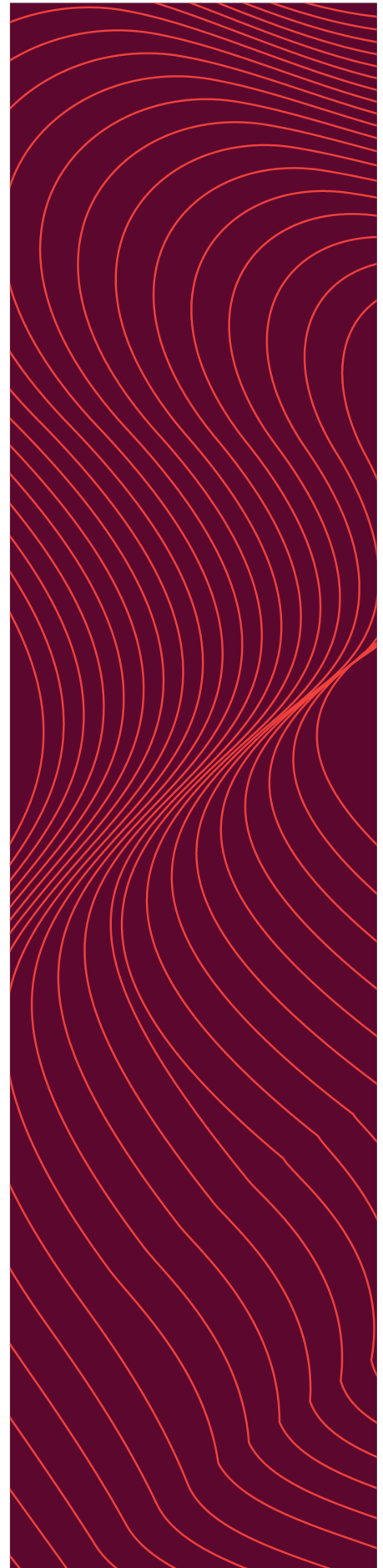
Red & Green Tape Fee Review and Business Friendly Council

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Business Friendly Council - Action Plan

December 2025



Action Plan

Local businesses do more than provide products and services they underpin Latrobe City's financial sustainability, economic strength, and community vibrancy. They are also central to population attraction and retention through the employment opportunities they create. To better support this vital sector, Council's approach to business engagement must continue to evolve, with clearer communication of fee structures and processes, more consistent service delivery, and assessment practices that are proportionate to the level of risk and nature of business activity.

This Action Plan outlines a structured roadmap to deliver this transformation. It is organised around four pillars and supported by practical initiatives, defined timelines, and measurable outcomes. Collectively, these pillars provide the framework for embedding a business-friendly culture across Council.

The first pillar, **Business Friendly Culture**, focuses on building a supportive, transparent, and solutions-focused mindset across the organisation. Key actions include development of a Business-Friendly Culture Playbook, tailored training and induction modules, cross-functional working groups, and the creation of practical tools such as case studies and resource kits to strengthen consistent business-friendly practice across Council.

The second pillar, **Information and Communications**, ensures businesses can access accurate, timely and easy-to-understand information. Improvements include a major update to the business section of Council's website, new fact sheets, localised industry guides, and alignment of internal and external messaging. These initiatives aim to create a single, intuitive entry point for all business-related information.

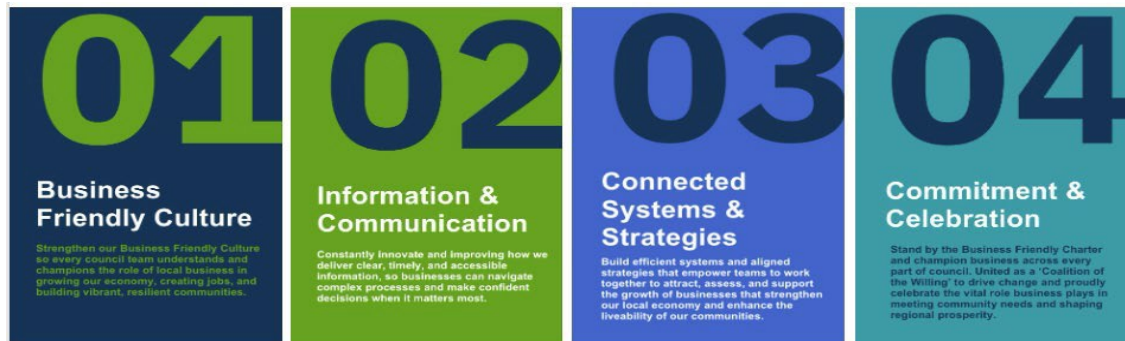
The third pillar, **Connected Systems and Strategies**, seeks to modernise and integrate Council's systems to achieve a single view of the business customer. This includes exploring funding opportunities to improve system interfaces, introducing integrated service planning, and embedding business-focused performance measures and dashboards within Council's reporting frameworks. These improvements will enhance data visibility, streamline workflows, and support more coordinated and evidence-based decision making.

The fourth pillar, **Commitment and Celebration**, strengthens the visibility, accountability and cultural adoption of Council's business-friendly approach. Actions include establishing a structured BFC reporting framework, embedding business-friendly commitments in governance processes, prioritising business visits, and proactively communicating and celebrating business achievements. These efforts will reinforce Council's ongoing commitment to supporting local industry.

Implementation will occur progressively across short, medium, and long-term phases, with oversight provided by a dedicated working group. While challenges such as system integration, operational pressures, and resourcing constraints are anticipated, these will be managed through clear governance, collaborative planning, and staged delivery.

Progress will be measured through quarterly reporting, business sentiment surveys, and direct feedback from the business community to ensure accountability and continuous improvement. Insights from this work will inform Council's broader Economic Development Strategy and reinforce its long-term commitment to fostering a resilient, confident, and business-friendly local economy.

The Four Pillars of Action



This Action Plan will be imbedded into the Economic Development Strategy and the implementation will be lead by the Business and Economic Development Team supported by the PCG.

No	Action	Timeframe	Pillar	Status
1	Establish a Project Working Group	Short -Term	Connected Systems & Strategies	Complete
2	Re-sign the Small Business Charter	Short- Term	Business Friendly Culture	
3	Facilitate a roundtable with the Victorian Small Business Commissioner	Short- Term	Commitment & Celebration	
4	Undertake an internal awareness campaign	Short -Term	Business Friendly Culture	
5	Conduct regular (bi-annual) business sentiment surveys	Short- Term	Business Friendly Culture	Commenced
6	Draft a Business-Friendly Culture playbook that will be used as a guiding framework	Short -Term	Business Friendly Culture	
7	Draft BFC toolkit related to the Business Concierge, including general information to provide staff context on the role and engagement.	Short- Term	Information & Communication	
8	Update the Council website to improve access to information	Short -Term	Information & Communication	
9	Create clear, concise fact sheets and standardised forms that simplify common business processes and improve confidence in	Short -Term	Information & Communication	

No	Action	Timeframe	Pillar	Status
	dealing with council - sector, industry and general information.			
10	Prioritise regular business visits	Short -Term	Business Friendly Culture	Commenced
11	<p>Explore feasibility and cost associated with implementing a systems interface (e.g. SmartGlue) that consolidates workflows and provides a single view of customer and application status from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pathway • Health Manager • CIA • Info Council etc. <p>Dashboard reporting as an output of systems interface.</p>	Short – Term	Connected Systems & Strategies	
12	Update the Fees and Charges Policy.	Medium – Term	Business Friendly Culture	
13	Explore a risk-based framework and/or deemed standard to guide decision-making and improve permit review timeframes, ensuring regulatory effort and assessment requirements are proportionate to the level of risk posed by the activity, business type, or location.	Medium – Term	Commitment & Celebration	
14	Validate opportunity to simplify certain fee structures, including applying flat rates for outdoor dining permits where workload and assessment requirements are consistent regardless of size.	Medium – Term	Commitment & Celebration	
15	Team definition and key contacts information - create and share a directory of teams and key contacts to help staff easily find the right internal support for business.	Medium – Term	Information & Communication	

No	Action	Timeframe	Pillar	Status
16	Business website landing page – explore the establishment of a single-entry point for business support and information on the council website, ensuring intuitive access to key topics. Includes Frequently Asked Questions relevant to industry and sector for the website	Medium – Term	Information & Communication	
17	Develop training and induction modules that upskill and train staff on business-friendly practices	Medium – Term	Business Friendly Culture.	
18	Implement a process for the Business Concierge to provide ongoing support following permit approvals	Medium – Term	Business Friendly Culture.	
19	Case Studies and Toolkit Development - Develop local business case studies and toolkits to equip staff, share success stories, and demonstrate practical examples of business-friendly practice.	Medium – Term	Business Friendly Culture.	
20	Establish integrated service model across teams to engage and support businesses, clarifying internal pathways and accountability. - service agreements validate how we work together, improve collaboration and transparency across permit processes.	Medium – Term	Business Friendly Culture	
21	Performance & Reporting Integration – develop reporting structure and system linking to the Council Plan and executive measures, including BFC reporting in the Annual Report.	Medium – Term	Connected Systems & Strategies	
22	Develop a communications plan to keep our	Medium – Term	Information & Communication	

No	Action	Timeframe	Pillar	Status
	communities informed – including general comms, media release and/or event to promote Council's commitment.			
23	Industry guides and factsheets to be localised <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Real Estate Farm Sheds Hospitality 	Long – Term	Connected Systems & Strategies	
24	Strengthen Council's understanding of business needs and embeds the role of business within Council's core functions. This includes structured surveys, feedback loops and engagement forums to ensure the business customer's voice informs decision-making.	Long- Term	Commitment & Celebration.	
25	Explore establishing Economic assistance packing for businesses ie. fee waivers	Long- Term	Business Friendly Culture.	
26	Explore the possibility to establish a single point of permit entry that enables the business to nominate the different types of permits required, which can be actioned by the teams and reviewed concurrently. Investigate technology advancements including AI	Long-Term	Connected Systems & Strategies.	

The delivery of this Action Plan aligns with the Council Plan Key Objective 3 – Local Businesses, which commits Council to supporting the growth and development of local businesses through initiatives that enable diversification, expansion, job creation, and economic resilience. It also directly supports Action 3: Reduce or simplify the fees, charges, and associated regulatory costs to establish and undertake business in Latrobe City.



Charter Agreement

Introduction

This Charter is a commitment between your council and the Victorian Small Business Commission (VSBC) to work together to create a fair and competitive trading environment for Victorian small businesses. It also tells you what you can expect as a business owner from your local council and the VSBC. By signing the charter, the VSBC and local councils agree to meet these commitments within 12 months.

Commitments and what you can expect from us

Part 1 | Work with small businesses disrupted by infrastructure projects

The VSBC will:

- a. provide councils with VSBC resources for managing the impacts of disruption
- b. provide dispute resolution services in relevant matters
- c. advocate on behalf of small businesses with authorities who undertake major works
- d. work collaboratively with council to develop practical initiatives that benefit small businesses

Your council will:

- a. refer to the VSBC's Small Business Engagement Guidelines when planning new works and request that external project managers do the same
- b. provide small businesses with the VSBC's guide for small businesses on Managing Disruption

Part 2 | Support the creation of small business networks across Victoria

The VSBC and your council will:

- a. distribute the VSBC's guide to building Stronger Networks
- b. actively engage with small business networks and identify new opportunities for development
- c. include representatives of associations in conversations concerning small businesses

Part 3 | Faster permit approvals processes for small businesses

Your council will:

- a. work towards faster permit approvals for new small businesses. This may mean:
 - i. registering with the Better Approvals Project and completing this as scheduled; or
 - ii. implementing strategies to streamline permit approvals processes for small businesses

Part 4 | Prompt payment to small businesses

The VSBC will:

- a. raise awareness of the Australian Supplier Payment Code¹ across Victoria to ensure your business is paid within 30 days of issuing an invoice

Your council will:

- a. initiate processes to ensure invoices from small businesses are paid promptly; or
- b. commit to signing up to the Australian Supplier Payment Code to pay small businesses within 30 days

Part 5 | Easy to read, easy to understand information for Victorian small businesses

The VSBC will:

- a. liaise with Small Business Victoria on the development of new resources for your business and communicate requests from your council about what is needed
- b. refer your council to new resources as they are made available

Your council will:

- a. link your business with the resources available at business.vic.gov.au
- b. provide the VSBC [Retail Lease Checklist](#) to prospective tenants

Both parties will:

- a. identify opportunities for the development of new resources for your business

Part 6 | Open channels of communication between the VSBC and local councils

The VSBC will:

- a. advocate on behalf of small business when your council notifies VSBC of key issues of concern
- b. work with relevant agencies to progress matters of concern to local councils and small businesses

Your council will:

- a. notify the VSBC of issues affecting local small business communities
- b. refer commercial disputes to the VSBC dispute resolution team as appropriate
- c. provide details of the VSBC's dispute resolution services on its website

¹ Further information on the Australian Supplier Payment Code can be found on the website of the Business Council of Australia | www.bca.com.au

Additional commitments

Promotion of Initiative

The VSBC will:

- a. provide all participating councils with the Small Business Friendly Council Initiative logo to use in their own materials
- b. provide all participating councils with an animated video promoting the benefits of having a small business friendly council to Victorian small businesses
- c. share success stories and case studies from participating councils in the VSBC eNewsletter and on social media
- d. list all participating councils on the VSBC website

Your council will:

- a. utilise the Small Business Friendly Council Initiative and videos in relevant communications
- b. provide VSBC with case studies and success stories associated with the initiative

Quality assurance and review

The VSBC will:

- a. contact your council 12 months after signing the charter to assess their status on each commitment
- b. review feedback from your council about the value of the charter and modify it as appropriate after 12 months

Your council will:

- a. work towards fulfilling each commitment within the first 12 months of signing the charter
- b. work with the VSBC to amend the charter if required

Acceptance

On behalf of LATROBE CITY COUNCIL we agree to the terms outlined in this Charter and agree to implement the Small Business Friendly Council Initiative.

Name

STEVEN PIASENTE

Position

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Signature**Date**

28 / 5 / 2019.

Name~~Judy O'Connell~~ MARK SCHRAMM**Position**

A/9 Victorian Small Business Commissioner

Signature**Date**

21/6/2019

Please provide the contact details for the CEO for your organisation, and the details of a contact person that we can use as matters for discussion arise.

CEO

Point of contact

Name**Position****Phone****Email****Postal address**

Business Friendly Council Program

Business Friendly Council (BFC) Program Insights and Council Engagement Pack

Supporting your council to deliver a more business-friendly experience

As a Cluster One council, this pack provides a comprehensive overview of the program's purpose and how it has evolved into a cost-free, state-supported model designed to better serve councils and their local business communities. You'll find detailed information about the benefits the program delivers—such as increased efficiency, stronger engagement with local businesses, and improved outcomes for economic development.

The pack also outlines the wide range of practical tools and resources available to your team, including templates, guidance materials, and access to expert support. In addition, it highlights opportunities for collaboration with other councils in your cluster, enabling the sharing of insights, challenges, and best practices to maximise the impact of your efforts. This program has been built with flexibility and partnership in mind, ensuring your council can tailor its approach while contributing to a broader, state-wide improvement in business support.

The Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR) is excited to work as your partner in strengthening as a Business Friendly Council.



Jobs, Skills,
Industry
and Regions



DJSIR Supporting Innovation

DJSIR is committed to driving sustainable economic prosperity for all Victorians by increasing participation, boosting productivity, and creating the right conditions for businesses to start, grow, and thrive.

A key enabler of this vision is the BFC Program. The BFC Program plays a vital role in reducing barriers for businesses interacting with local government by simplifying and streamlining the approvals process. It coordinates services across multiple council departments into a single, customer-friendly pathway — making it easier for new and growing businesses to navigate local requirements.

We partner for impact

To deliver meaningful outcomes for Victorian businesses and communities, DJSIR works in close collaboration with a diverse network of partners across government and industry. These partnerships amplify our collective impact, supporting stronger outcomes for local businesses, councils, and the broader Victorian economy.

Our key partners include:

- The Victorian Small Business Commission – a champion for the rights of small businesses, providing the tools and strategic guidance to make it easier to do business in Victoria
- Local councils through the Better Approvals Program – partnering to reduce red tape, streamline approvals, and improve the consistency and quality of the business experience at the local level
- Regulators and Victorian Government agencies – collaborating to deliver joined-up support for businesses, particularly where multiple approvals or regulatory steps are required
- Co Squared (facilitation partner) – supporting the BFC Program with facilitation, workshop delivery, and collaborative design processes that promote shared learning and continuous improvement.



Barabara Cullen
Project Sponsor



Corey Limon-Durand
Project Manager



Lakshmi Cashmore
Senior Project Officer

A Decade of Impact Continues

For the past decade, the **Victorian Government** has led a major reform and innovation program to improve how businesses interact with regulation.

This journey began with the **Small Business Regulation Review**, which focused on streamlining processes and cutting red tape — from first enquiry through to outcome. Through this work, strong partnerships were formed with local councils and the Victorian Small Business Commission, leading to the widespread adoption of the Small Business Friendly Charter across the state.

Building on the progress of earlier **Better Approvals** reforms, the **Business Friendly Councils** initiative takes a broader, more holistic view, helping councils redesign the way business interacts with all parts of council, not just permitting.

It supports teams to simplify internal systems, strengthen business-facing services and tools to educate and inform business while better recognising and leveraging business investment for community benefit. The program encourages innovation, collaboration and shared learning across councils, with the aim of making local government more responsive, capable and business aware.



The Small Business Friendly Charter

Since 2019, 65 Victorian councils have partnered with the Victorian Small Business Commission by entering into the Small Business Friendly Council Charter with the shared commitment to uphold a fair, vibrant and competitive environment for small business.


The Charter outlines six commitments, one of which is to streamline permit approvals. The Business Friendly Council initiative enables councils to deliver upon this Charter commitment.

The five other Charter commitments include prompt payments to small business suppliers, supporting active and engaged small business networks, minimising disruptions, offering accessible information, and communicating with and advocating for small businesses.

Many councils have made progress in delivering upon the charter commitments, demonstrating what can be achieved when local government teams consider small business needs.

“Measuring progress against our commitments in the Charter in practical ways has kept our council focused on important changes for the last 6 years. Incrementally each initiative sharpens our service delivery as a Business Friendly Council.”

Andrew Carcelli, Economic Development, City of Port Phillip

A portrait of Lynda McAlary-Smith, Victorian Small Business Commissioner. She is a woman with long brown hair, smiling, wearing a dark blue top with a white abstract pattern and pearl earrings.

“Local Governments significantly influence the experience of small business owners. By taking a business-friendly approach, councils can ensure that businesses feel supported and encouraged in establishing and operating enterprises in their local communities.”

Lynda McAlary-Smith
Victorian Small Business Commissioner

BFC Program Snapshot

Systems & Processes

The Business Friendly Council Program is a free, Victorian Government-supported initiative that helps councils build capability to better support business. It empowers council teams to strengthen the end-to-end business customer experience, and drive stronger strategic, economic and customer-centric outcomes from councils' engagement with business. By embedding a business-friendly mindset across all levels of council, the program supports long-term cultural change that benefits both local businesses and the broader community.



**No cost, high value
program for
councils**



**Delivered in clusters
for shared local
insight**



**Access expert
support, tools, and
peer learning**



**Helps councils meet
Small Business
Charter goals**

Understand the Impact of the BFC Program



THE PURPOSE

Why is this program important?

The **BFC Program** supports councils to make it easier for businesses to engage with local government. This initiative is designed to simplify regulatory processes, improve service delivery, and strengthen local economies by making councils more responsive to the unique needs of business.

Eleven pilot councils have already participated in the program, co-designing practical customer-facing tools and internal training modules. These efforts address common regulatory pain points, especially in sectors like hospitality, while fostering a culture that values business engagement, responsiveness, and efficiency.

Join the Impact: The program is now rolling out across the state and your council is part of it.



THE IMPACT

How will this program impact business customers and council?

The **BFC Program** delivers tangible benefits to both business customers and council teams.

For **councils**, the initiative enhances internal coordination and enables smarter use of regulatory resources. With access to over 30 pre-developed tools and templates, councils can improve pre-application advice, reduce repetitive queries, and shift effort to high-value activities.

For **businesses**, the program improves how they interact with council, offering clearer information, more transparent processes, and user-friendly tools that reduce delays and confusion. Whether applying for permits, seeking support, or navigating compliance, businesses gain confidence knowing what's expected and how to succeed.

This means fewer bottlenecks, more informed applicants, and better community outcomes. Thousands of Victorian businesses stand to benefit annually from the improved customer journeys, while council teams are empowered to work more strategically and collaboratively.



THE OUTCOMES

What were the project outcomes?

Participating councils will foster a more business-friendly culture by:

- Supporting businesses through approvals
- Strengthening the 'no wrong door' concierge model
- Reducing back-and-forth information requests
- Enabling complete, high-quality applications
- Streamlining application processing
- Building staff capability at key permit stages

With dedicated support from DJSIR and peer learning through the BFC Council Network, your council will be equipped to lead lasting change. By the end of the program, you'll have tangible improvements, stronger business community relationships.

Build a clearer pathway to being a Business Friendly Council.

Case Study – The Impact at City of Kingston

The City of Kingston was one of the first councils to take part in the BFC Program, and their experience shows just how much can change with the right mindset, tools, and teamwork.

Before the program, Kingston knew there were challenges in how businesses navigated council processes. Since joining the BFC program, they've introduced simple, effective tools that are already making a big difference. The **BizWiz questionnaire**, **business landing page**, **customer journey map**, and **trigger checklist** now give new business owners a clearer path. They know what to expect, who to talk to, and how to avoid delays. One small business owner even commented, *"I knew exactly what to do before I even spoke to council!"*

Behind the scenes, Kingston has created a team of **BizWiz Champions** who are council staff from departments like Planning, Environmental Health, Local Laws and more, who are ready to guide businesses and answer questions early. The internal system (C2B) also helps track interactions, spot issues faster, and reduce handover confusion.

But this isn't just about process, it's about people. The BFC program helped Kingston build a more connected team that sees supporting business as a shared responsibility. Teams are more confident, better informed, and more willing to step in and help. Councillors have also played a bigger role, attending business openings and promoting local enterprise through initiatives like the "Love Local" campaign.

The change has been felt by businesses too. Whether it's a childcare centre needing planning support or a wellness operator pivoting based on early advice, businesses are getting better guidance and more support, sooner.

It wasn't always easy, balancing new ways of working with day-to-day operations takes effort, but Kingston's team says the benefits far outweigh the challenges. They've gained practical tools, stronger collaboration, and a more confident culture.

Kingston's message to other councils – Get started as it takes time but, it really works. The BFC Program gives you the tools, support and structure to make real improvements, and it helps you build a team that's proud to back local business every step of the way.



The Program Flow

The BFC Program offers councils the balance between structured facilitation and flexibility to address unique needs for your region while working to create a network of intelligence and inspiration across Victoria.

Benefits of the program delivery model

- **No cost, high value** - As a fully funded opportunity for councils it is a chance to make meaningful improvements with expert guidance, peer support, and ready-made tools
- **Highly efficient** - Reduced operational disruptions for council teams, while advancing innovation through the program delivery model
- **Strengthened conversations** - Focused discussions will lead to deeper insights and targeted innovation tailored to your council's needs
- **Robust outcomes** - Enhanced tools, processes, and resources that directly address the needs of businesses and council teams.



Discovery Day – Cross Council Teams

The program begins with the exploration of current council practices and ambitions to strengthen as a Business Friendly Council:

- **Regulatory assessment** - Evaluation of existing processes to identify pain points for both business applicants and council teams
- **Ambition alignment** - Exploring the vision for delivering as a Business Friendly Council
- **Work alignment** - Identified existing Council initiatives to leverage for greater impact
- **Key division engagement**: Deep dive workshops with Economic Development, Planning and Health to surface key challenges and explore ambitions further.



Defining the Story of Challenges and Ambition

The core project team will gather insights from businesses and council teams to identify barriers and opportunities for improvement.

- **Barrier analysis** - Explore the obstacles that deter business and inhibit investment
- **Business experience [BX] maturity scoring** - Facilitate feedback from across council teams about the current state business customer experience
- **Opportunity identification** - Highlighted practical enhancements to improve the business experience both in digital and other channels.



Offsite Design Sprint 2-Day

A core project team will join a small cluster of councils at 2-Day Offsite Design Sprint. through a library of over 30 new tools to evaluate, select and customise. This experience will set up your blueprint to level up as a Business Friendly Council.

- **Explore challenges and opportunities** - Critically review the business customer experience and vision forward
- **Tool kit review** - Analyse the library of over 30 tools and products for adoption or refinement
- **Build the draft blueprint** - Mobilising your vision with a robust plan for your council to guide the work and next steps for engagement.



Solutions Delivery – 100 Days of Change

Staying connected as a core team and council cluster helps maintain momentum and build a coalition to test and shape future-ready tools, processes, and experiences.

- **Test and Learn**: Trial new resources—including tools and guides—to improve service delivery and ways of working.
- **Deliver Better Experiences**: Use these resources to enhance the business customer experience and streamline interactions.
- **Maintain Momentum**: Leverage the '100 Days of Change' framework to drive impact and stay connected to the BFC Network.

What are the Tools and Resources?

Business Tool Kit

Approvals Journey Map **

Business Approvals Journey Map Horizontal **

Hospitality Tool Kit

Hospitality 2D Business Permit Visual **

Hospitality Fit-out Guide

Hospitality Sector Guide **

Hospitality Website Content

Hospitality Podcast Script - Food Registration

Business Approvals Journey Map **

Hospitality - Food Permit Approval Process Flow

Hospitality - Targeted Business Concierge Questions

Agriculture Tool Kit

Sector Guide - Broiler Farm

Sector Guide - Farm Gate Sales

Sector Guide - Farm Sheds and Outbuildings

Sector Guide - Rural Industry

Agriculture 2D Business Permit Visual

Business Farmers Market Permit Guide

Website Support Tools

Business Website Landing Page **

Business Concierge Video [Script]

Business Concierge Video [Generic Animated Format] **

Business Engagement - Small Business Charter Commitments

SB Friendly Council Charter - Reporting [Against Commitments to SBC]

Collaboration Tools

Business Departmental Prompts - Trigger checklist **

Communication Guidelines **

Business Concierge Position Description

Business Concierge Information Pack **

Cross-Department Committee Terms of Reference **

Business Pre-Application Meeting Agenda [Customer] **

Business Pre-Application Meeting Agenda [Council] **

Business Permit Pipeline Review Meeting Agenda **

Business Permit Service Agreement / Commitment Statement **

Glossary of Terms

Business-Friendly Culture Change Tool Kit

Engagement Program [Guide to Strengthening as a Business Friendly Council]

Business Experience [BX] Maturity Scoring Tool

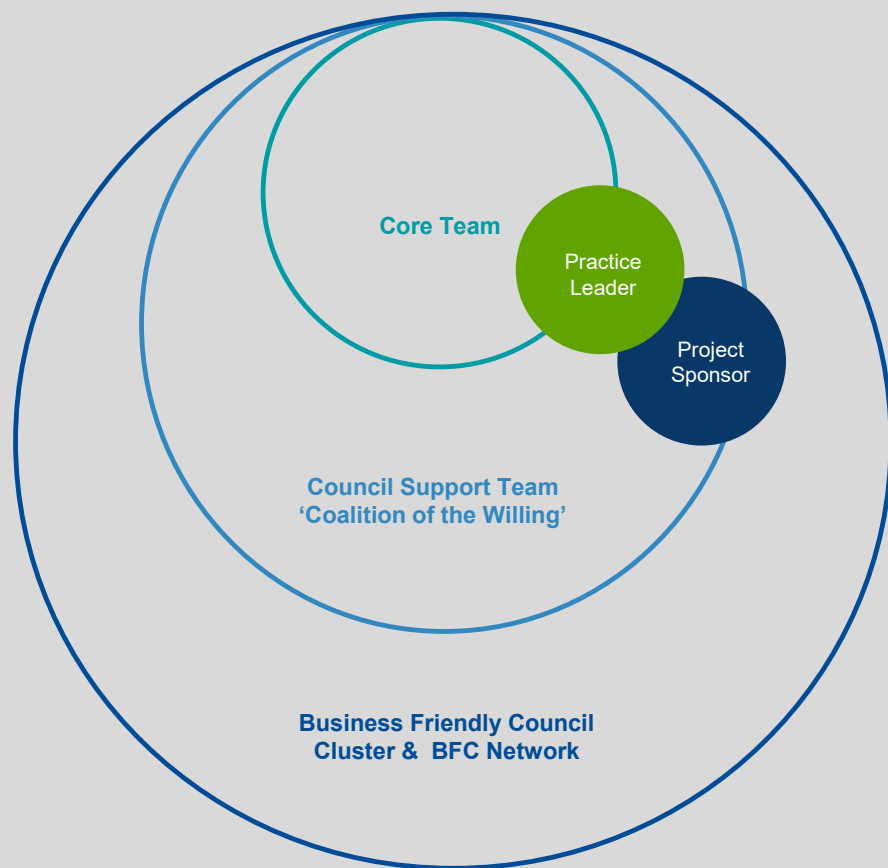
Business-Friendly Council Learning Modules

Module 1 - The Importance of Business

Module 2 - Business Regulation 101

Module 3 - Business Concierge Function Technical Skills Training

Connecting the Roles & Teams



Practice Leader

The Practice Leader is responsible for coordinating the delivery of the BFC Program within council. They drive implementation, schedule key activities, ensure cross-team collaboration, and act as the central point of contact between council and DJSIR/consultants.

Project Sponsor

The Sponsor provides strategic oversight and champions the BFC initiative at the executive level. They help remove barriers, align the program with broader council priorities, and maintain momentum across departments.

Core Team

The Core Team includes representatives from regulatory services, communications, customer service, and people & culture. They join a two-day sprint to co-design the innovation blueprint and lead day-to-day BFC delivery, ensuring reforms are practical, consistent, and embedded in workflows.

Council Support Team (Coalition of the Willing)

This is a broader group of staff across council who are supportive of the program and willing to test, promote, and adopt new ways of working. They act as change advocates, sharing feedback, encouraging uptake, and helping build a culture that's more business friendly.

BFC Cluster and Council Network (Community of Practice)

The BFC Council Network connects councils participating in the program to share insights, tools, and lessons. It fosters collaboration and learning across local government, supporting continuous improvement through peer support and shared innovation.

Cluster 1:

- Yarra Ranges Shire Council
- Murrindindi Shire Council
- Whitehorse Shire Council
- Macedon Ranges Shire Council

Case Study – Impact at Nillumbik Shire

Nillumbik Shire Council – Embedding a Business Friendly approach across the whole organisation

For Nillumbik Shire Council, the Business Friendly Council Program was about more than improving processes—it was about creating a consistent, customer-focused way of working across the entire organisation.

From the start, Nillumbik rolled out the program council-wide. All teams working with businesses—including planning, compliance, and environmental health—completed mandatory training on the new Business Concierge service, including new starters. This ensured clear processes for handling business queries.

The Business Concierge model, new to Nillumbik, has been a game-changer. Businesses now have a single contact who coordinates advice, improving internal coordination, saving time, and delivering a smoother, unified council experience.

Agreed service standards between teams and strong executive backing have helped the model stick. Even with a new council in place (as of November 2024), the foundations remain strong thanks to early investment in training, processes, and culture.

Nillumbik also recognised the importance of supporting systems. Tools like Pathway and Content Manager help track queries, manage referrals, and report on progress—giving teams greater visibility and enabling faster responses to business needs.

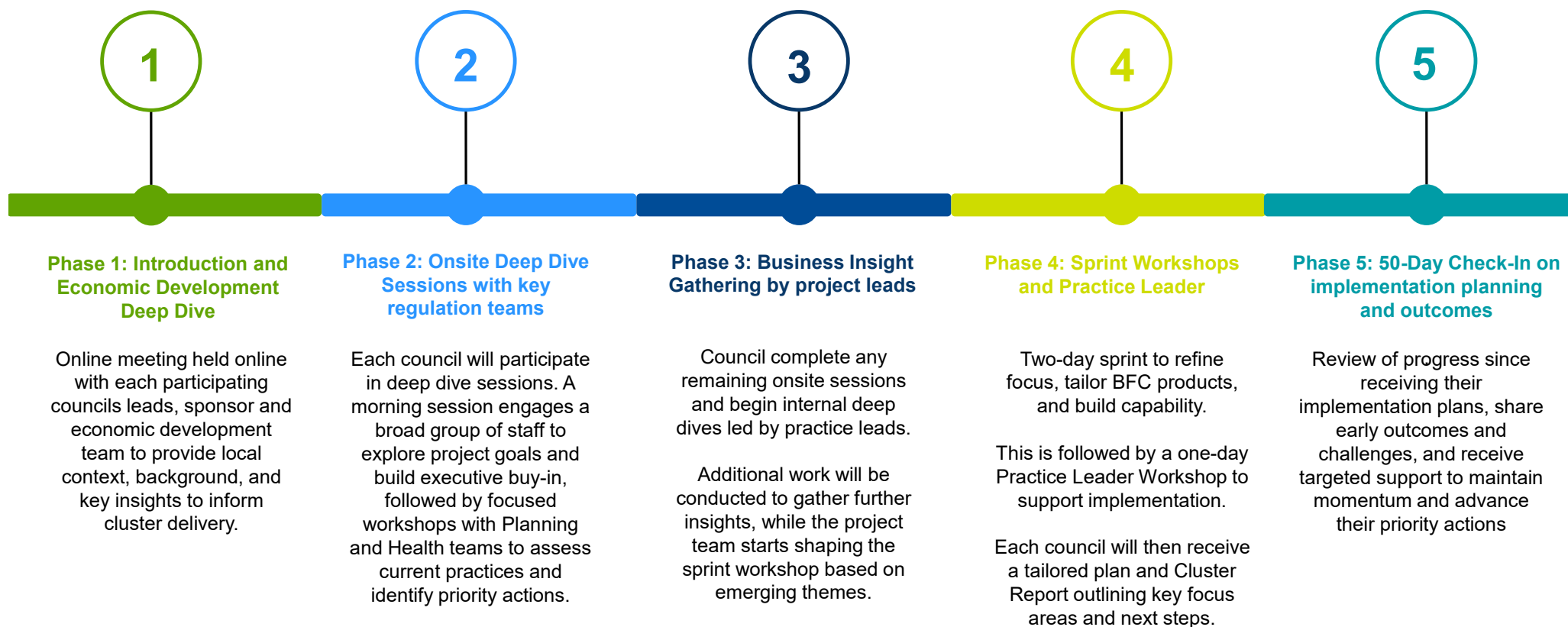
For local businesses, especially with simpler needs, many now receive advice and approvals within 10 business days. The most rewarding outcome is seeing businesses grow and contribute to the community, knowing council played a helpful role.

Challenges included communicating the new service and tools internally and externally. However, with a dedicated officer leading implementation and strong collaboration with DJSIR and consultants, the project gained real momentum.

Nillumbik’s advice to other councils - Back your people and go all in. The BFC Program gives you the tools and structure to deliver better outcomes for business, but it’s the leadership, consistency, and council-wide adoption that make it stick. The results speak for themselves: smoother processes, stronger internal collaboration, and a more confident business community.



Program Delivery Phases



FAQ

How much time do the team need to invest?

The time commitment will vary depending on the products your council chooses to implement and how ready your internal processes are.

Why do other departments than Economic Development need to be involved?

While Economic Development teams often lead this work, cross-department collaboration is essential - particularly for products focused on approvals, customer experience, and governance. Many teams contribute to the overall business experience. Broad involvement ensures solutions are practical, widely supported, and embedded into everyday operations.

How does it relate to the Small Business Charter?

The Small Business Charter outlines principles and commitments that councils make to support small businesses more effectively. The BFC Program offers practical tools and processes to help councils implement the Charter in real and tangible ways. In other words: the Charter is the 'why', and the BFC products are the 'how'.

How does working with other councils in a cluster impact us?

Working in a cluster offers several benefits:

- Shared learning: councils learn from each other's trials, successes, and failures
- Peer accountability: helps maintain momentum and commitment
- Efficiency: reduces duplication and supports consistency across regions, which benefits businesses operating in multiple LGAs.

What is the BFC Network?

The BFC Network is a statewide community of practice for council staff involved in business support, approvals, and customer experience.

What is the difference between the BFC Program and the Better Approvals for Business Program?

- Better Approvals for Business (BAB): Focused specifically on streamlining the planning and regulatory approvals process for small businesses. Delivered earlier (2018–2022).
- Business Friendly Councils (BFC): A broader program building on BAB, addressing end-to-end business interactions with councils, including governance, customer service, marketing, engagement, and economic development. BFC incorporates lessons from BAB but goes beyond approvals to support a more holistic, coordinated council approach to business.

Is it important that we have a high level of planning applications for business?

Not necessarily. Councils of all sizes benefit from improving business processes, even if planning applications are low. The goal is to:

- Make interactions simpler and more consistent
- Reduce unnecessary delays or confusion
- Create a more supportive environment for local businesses

This applies across services like permits, leases, events, and general engagement, not just planning.

Do I need to have a Concierge service to participate in the program?

No, a dedicated Concierge service is not required—councils can participate using existing roles or structures that provide business support.

Contact Us

regulationreform@ecodev.vic.gov.au



Jobs, Skills,
Industry
and Regions





Latrobe City Business Survey

- October 2025



Purpose of the business survey

- To better understand current business sentiment and the challenges of establishing and operating a business in Latrobe City,
- Inform the Red & Green Tape review, ensuring business sentiment and feedback is captured.
- Establish a business sentiment benchmark – the survey will be undertaken twice a year to help Council track trends, identify emerging issues, and develop practical solutions to support local businesses.

Background

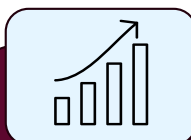
- Council recognises the vital role of business in our community, and our Council Plan 2025-2029 reinforces and recognises the importance of local businesses to the economic stability, sustainability, and health and well-being of our region - *"We are committed to working with our community and key stakeholders to grow our local economy to provide a wide range of job opportunities, economic diversification, and attract investment."*
- Through encouraging businesses to have their say, Council has an understanding of business performance, confidence, perceived and real barriers, and the practical support business is seeking..

Snapshot



Performance 69%

Better or same business performance over the past 12 months. 31% experienced a decline in performance.



Business Confidence 76.5%

Business outlook for the next 12 months - optimistic about growth and opportunity, as well as maintaining a stable performance



Business growth over 2-3 years 48%

Plan to expand their business, 28% maintain at current levels and 3% plan to scale back or close their business.



Issues impacting business

1. Access to markets / customers
2. Workforce availability/skilled workers
3. Costs, including fees and charges



Ease of starting a business 74%

Rated from neutral to very easy to start a business in Latrobe City. 26% nominated that it was difficult/very difficult.



Transparency of fees & charges 10%

Accessing information on business fees and charges. Only 7% nominated they were clear and written in plain language.

It was mixed. There were a couple of amazing people I spoke to, and some who didn't understand what I do & the support I needed

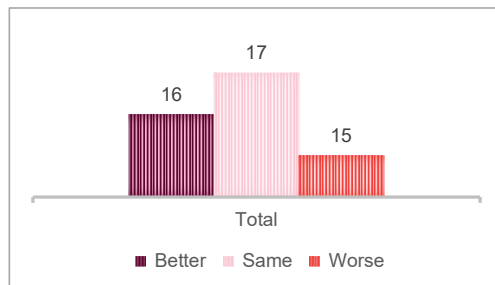


Business confidence and performance

Though some respondents nominated their business performance is worse compared to the same time 12 months ago, majority stated they were the same or better.

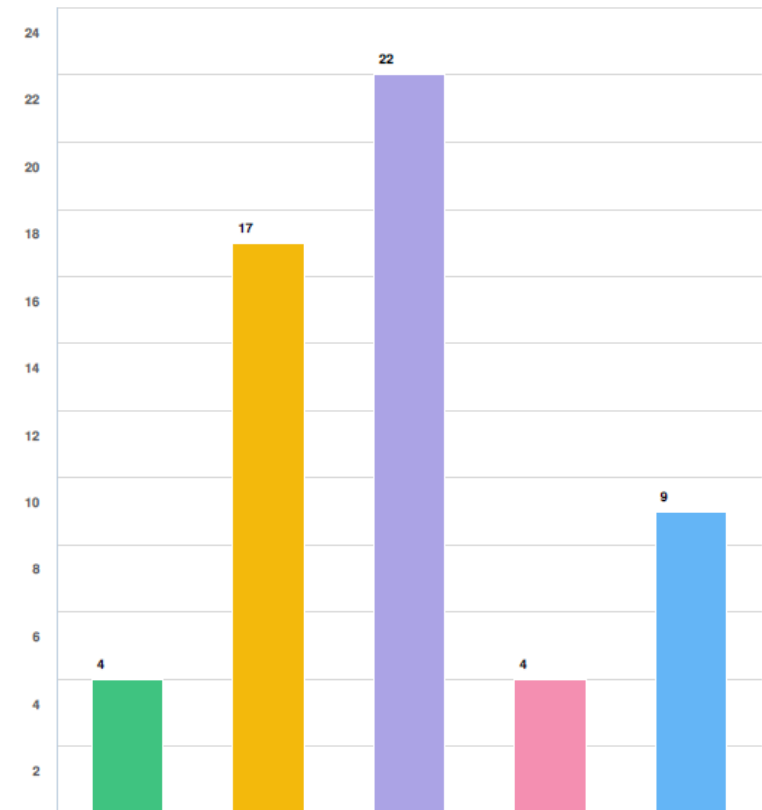
Confidence in the outlook for the next 12 months is relatively strong. Underlying reasons for the change, no change included:

- working smarter*
- because I keep working hard to win new business and stay viable.*
- hard work, good strategy and executing the plan. All rolled up with a bit of luck.*
- recession biting harder with very little Federal & State Government stimulus to help resuscitate for fear of stoking the Inflation fire*
- no money, no people in Morwell, too many people working from home, what was supposed to be the CBD of the Latrobe Valley is now just a joke.*
- living cost to society, state of Victoria approach increasing taxes and cost of living. Inability to share and inspire business to feel supported and able to grow, rather than fighting to stay in business.*



Q17. Compared to the same 12-month period last year, how has your business performance changed

Q19. How would you describe your current business outlook for the next 12 months?

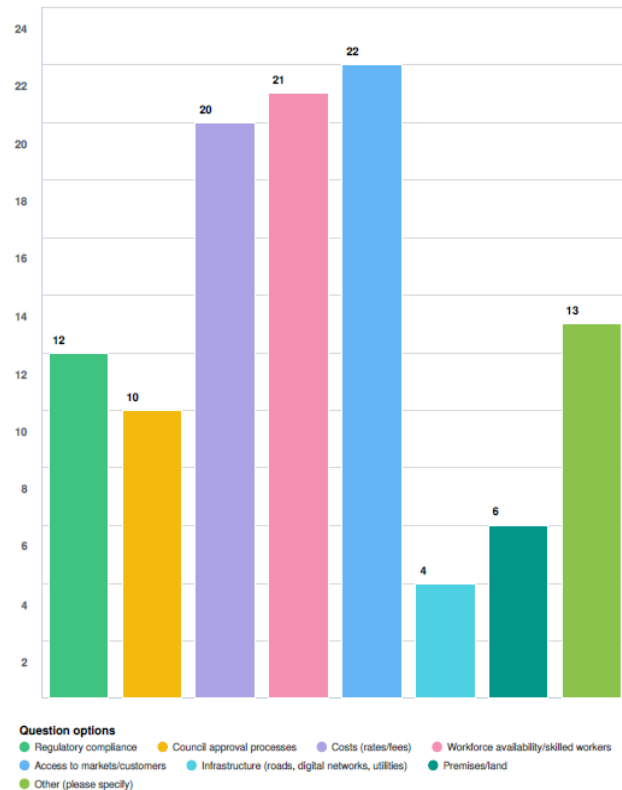


Question options

- Very Positive (optimistic about significant growth and opportunity)
- Positive (confident that you'll grow and succeed)
- Neutral (anticipate stable performance with no significant changes)
- Negative (concerned about a decline in the business)
- Very Negative (facing serious challenges that threaten our business operations)



What's driving business confidence (or lack of)



Q13. What are the issues impacting your business?

Varying issues are impacting business, some common themes:

Cost of doing business

- *fixed costs are our main struggle at the moment*
- *red tape, government costs – work cover, rates, building insurance*

Morwell decline and safety

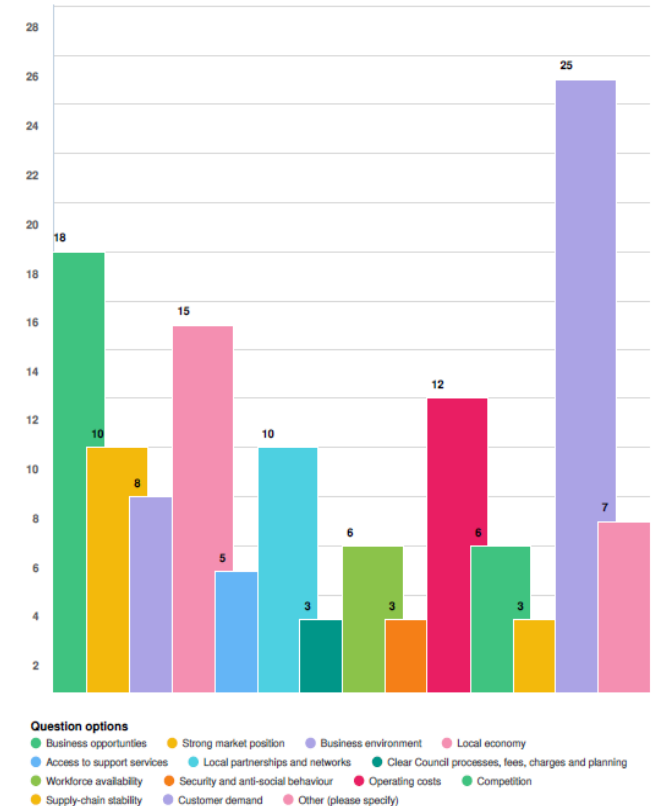
- *consumers don't feel safe around central Morwell.*
- *decline of the Morwell CBD and infrastructure*
- *safety issues... community not as safe as it used to be.*

Workforce

- *lack of workforce is exceptionally challenging*
- *constantly losing commercial business and industry employment*
- *it is purely the lack of experienced workers. We have a huge demand for our services and have over 500 children on our waitlist.*

Council relationship

- *would love more promotions of the region to drive interest*



Q20. What's driving your current outlook?



Establishing and operating a business in the region

Location, lifestyle/community, affordability of land were some of the main drivers of establishing a business in the Latrobe City.

26% of respondents stated that it was either very difficult or difficult to establish and operate in the region. Key themes:

Workforce

- cost of securing staff.
- sourcing skilled and engaged people
- recruitment of educators

Financial constraints

- not having any finances behind me before I started
- fees and definitely the ongoing fees
- financing and funding of the business and building

Market size

- customer population base hasn't increased but new approvals continue.
- limited local demand, especially in Morwell

Knowledge

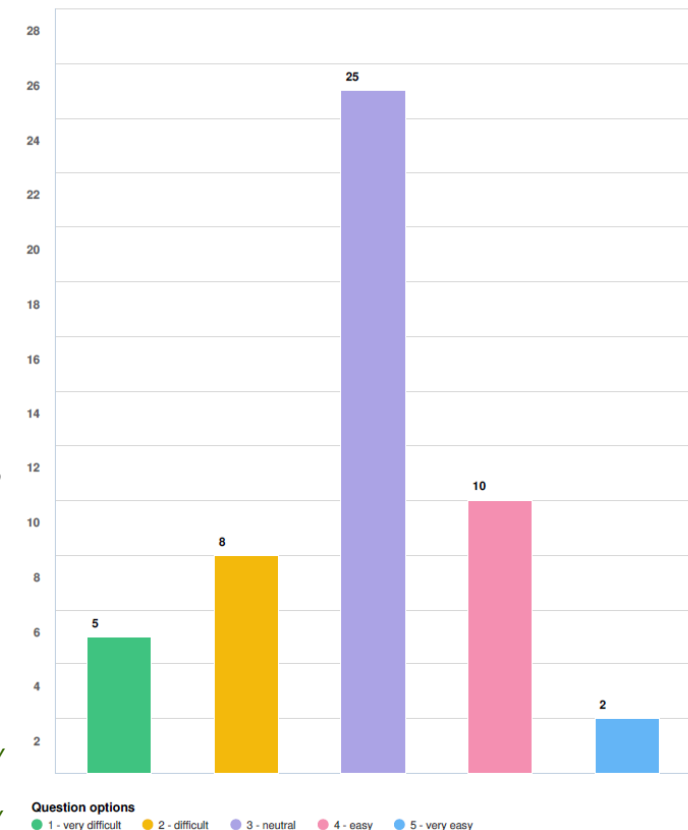
- trying to work out what was required of me
- business knowledge

Costs

- ensuring we could get the parking yearly cost waived - cost and parking is the issue
- parking is the biggest issue
- rates, taxes, and fees increasing

Council engagement

- paperwork and red tape
- Council workers taking weeks to reply to a yes or no email.
- Essential Safety Measures audit on day 2 of acquisition with no context
- never enough prior notice and transparency
- council directly is very engaged and active and always accessible.
- patient and understanding
- council workers wonderful but the amount of paperwork and permit you have to apply for and pay for is ridiculous
- everyone I spoke to and the Health officer were very helpful and have continued to be a great help.



Q8. How would you rate the ease of starting a business in Latrobe City?



Fees and charges

When asked what information about business fees and charges would make it easier for businesses to use and apply, there were those that understood the need for fees, as well as some respondents concerned about high fees and transparency.

Rising costs - perceived high and increasing annual fees

- *high fees and regulatory costs mean there's no incentive for growth*
- *government charges and levies have ballooned in the last decade*

Transparency and value - clarity on what fees fund

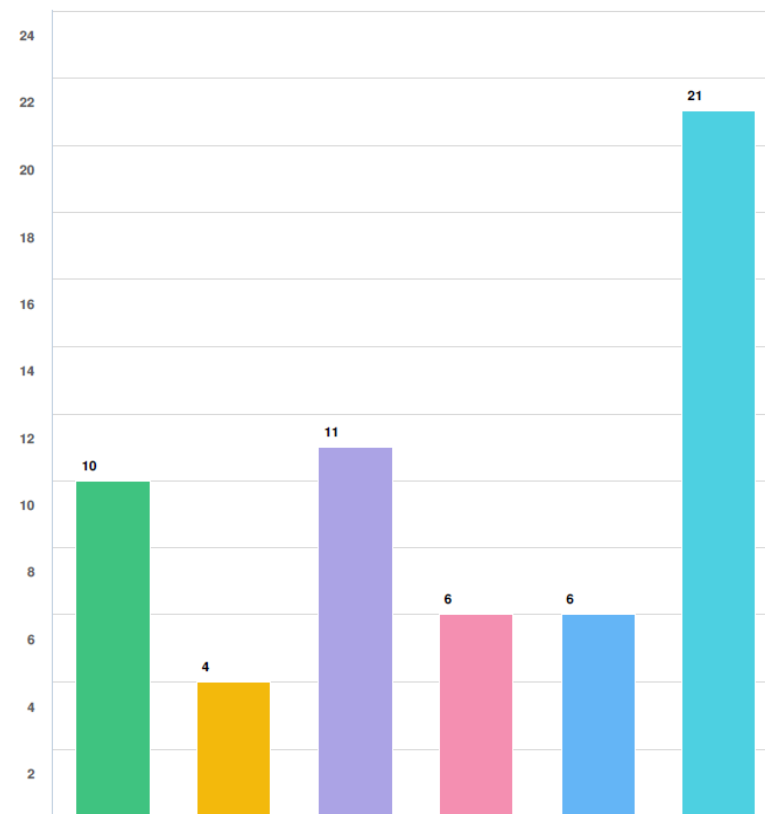
- *seems ridiculous to put barriers in front of someone trying to bring employment*
- *Council rates increases are high and seem to be growing year on year*

Reasonable / understood fees - recognition of fairness

- *the level of fees is reasonable*
- *can see the need for all the application process*

Communication and consultation - desire for clear information and engagement

- *dedicated website*
- *easier access to information*
- *an annual one-pager and timeline*
- *prior knowledge through open budgetary planning and processes*
- *to be able to meet and discuss would be ideal*



Question options

- Easy to find and accessible when you need it
- Clear and written in plain language
- Relevant and specific to your business
- Helpful in explaining why the fees/charges exist and how they are calculated
- Transparent about how often fees/charges are reviewed or updated.
- Other (please specify)

Q14. Nominate your experience accessing information on business fees and charges?



Practical tools, services and support

In addition to practical tools and support such as marketing and promotion of the local area, networking and simplified regulations – when asked what changes would improve the local business environment, key (consistent) themes:

Simplify regulation

- *simplify approvals, especially for change of use, signage, and mobile businesses*
- *reduce red tape and improve transparency around decision-making*

Strengthen local business support

- *greater promotion of local businesses and buying local (including government procurement)*
- *establish business networking and mentoring programs*
- *increase council support for small business growth, grants and expansion*

Attract Investment and promote the region

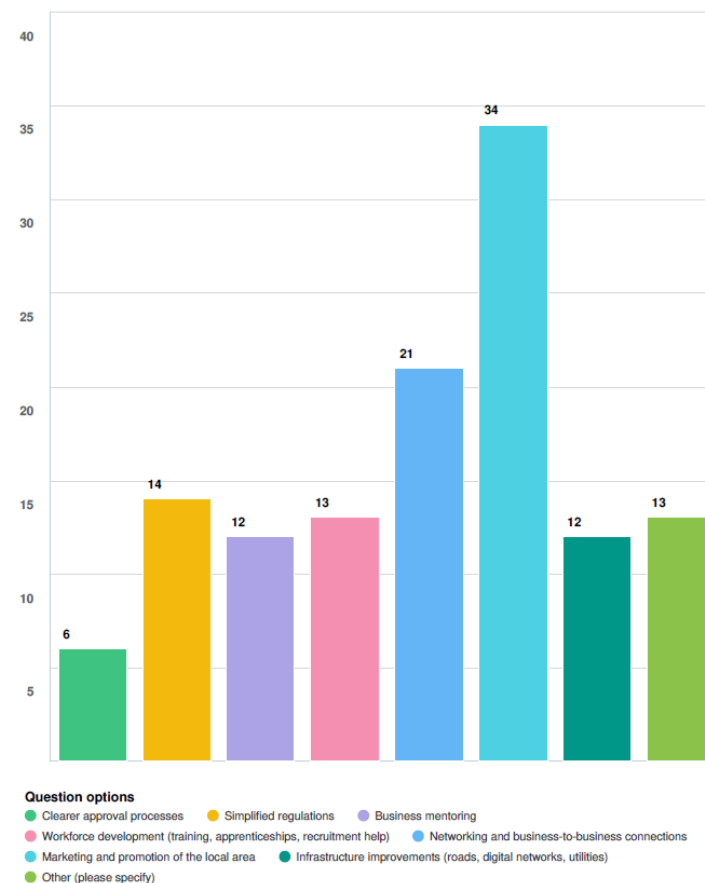
- *more marketing and promotion of Latrobe Valley as a place to live, work and invest*
- *encourage local manufacturing and fabrication and use local skills where possible*
- *attract national or regional events, conferences and games to boost tourism and investment*

Improve liveability and safety

- *address antisocial behaviour to make towns feel safer and more attractive.*
- *support community beautification of vacant shops and town centres*

Collaboration

- *encourage cohesive collaboration between businesses, government and industry*
- *focus on long-term regional strategy, not short-term fixes*

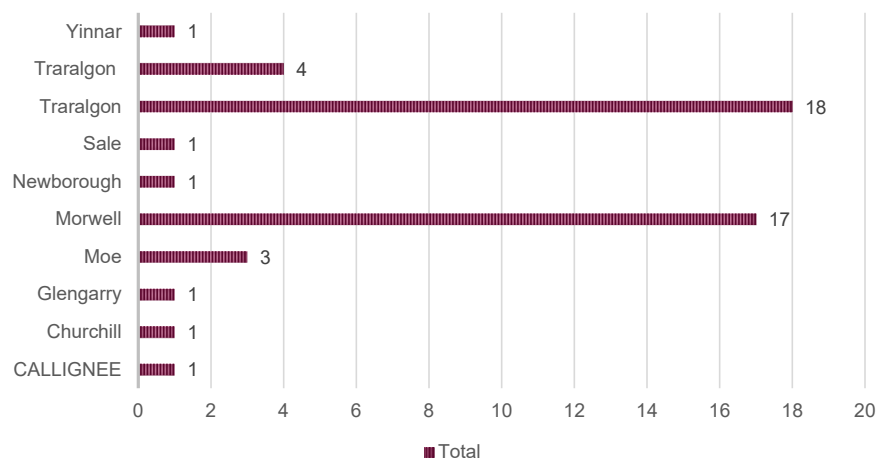


Q22. What are some practical tools, services, or changes from Council that would best support your business?

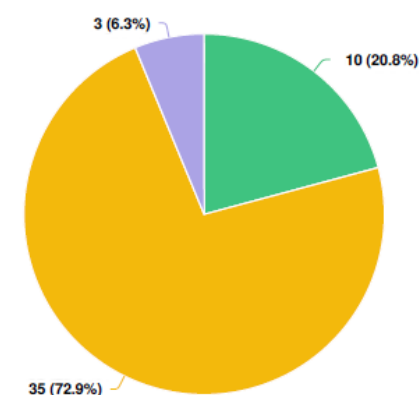


Respondents profile

- Over 3,000 emails were issued to business, as well as support through social media and industry groups – 1.7% response rate. This is lower than we would have liked and could reflect the current environment and attitudes.
- Majority of respondent were small businesses based in Traralgon and Morwell.



What is the size of your business?



Question options

● Sole trader
 ● Small (2 to 19 staff)
 ● Medium (20 to 199 staff)

PARKING MANAGEMENT POLICY FOR ADOPTION

PURPOSE

To present the draft Parking Management Policy (the policy) for Council adoption.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- At the December 2023 Council Meeting, following the evaluation of the Henry Street, Traralgon Parking Trial, Council resolved to receive a future report regarding a Car Parking Management Policy.
- Officers have conducted a literature review, including recent parking studies, which has informed the development of a Parking Management Policy and its associated service levels.
- The policy adopts the Department of Transport and Planning's Movement and Place street typology approach that recognises different streets serve distinct purposes and provides a hierarchy of users in each case with desirable levels of service.
- For example, if a Central Business District (CBD) area doesn't have 15% of on-street parking spaces available within 200m, additional parking restrictions (1P to P5min) will be considered to manage that demand so road users can expect to find an available space or, that 2% of public parking spaces should be accessible spaces in City Places.
- By providing these 'goal posts' for a level of service across different users, various parking regulations can be used to respond to each location. This will be important to ensure the Regional Car Park Fund (RCPF) delivered projects contribute to improved car park user experiences in current hot-spot areas.
- Community consultation will help inform parking management decision making. Community feedback will be sought on proposed changes to parking with the size and scope of consultation to reflect the size and scope of the proposed change.
- The policy also provides clarity on several common parking management issues, including parking regulations around schools, parking on nature strips, the provision of indented parking, and the management of private parking areas.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. adopts the Parking Management Policy; and**
- 2. publishes the Parking Management Policy on Council's website.**

BACKGROUND

At the December 2023 Council Meeting, when considering the report of the Henry Street, Traralgon Parking Trial Evaluation, Council resolved to receive a future report regarding a Car Parking Management Policy.

Officers have reviewed available policies from peer Councils, recent car parking studies such as the Traralgon Car Parking Review 2023 and Complimentary Parking Measures Assessment 2017, and available technical guidance to develop a Parking Management Policy and supporting levels of service for parking.

ANALYSIS

The proposed policy adopts the Department of Transport and Planning, Movement and Place Street Typology as shown in Appendix 1 of the draft policy to categorise the different roads within the municipality in more nuance than the quantity of vehicle traffic that they convey.

What this framework recognises is that there are different priority user groups across different streets to support the activities that take place there. For example, City Places have a high priority for pedestrian access to support economic activity and Local Streets have a low priority for commuter parking to dissuade it.

To build upon this, technical desirable levels of service are provided as a benchmark to assess the need for further intervention. For example, should a City Place have surveyed parking stress (85% occupancy or greater) within 200m of a property, further parking restriction could be considered to ensure the spaces are turned over and available.

This would likely see the introduction of more shorter time limits to turn-over spaces for on-street parking bays and thereby encourage the users seeking a longer stay to utilise the off-street parking facilities.

Example Movement and Place Street Typologies

The Traralgon Car Parking Review included Movement and Place Classifications which is provided below.

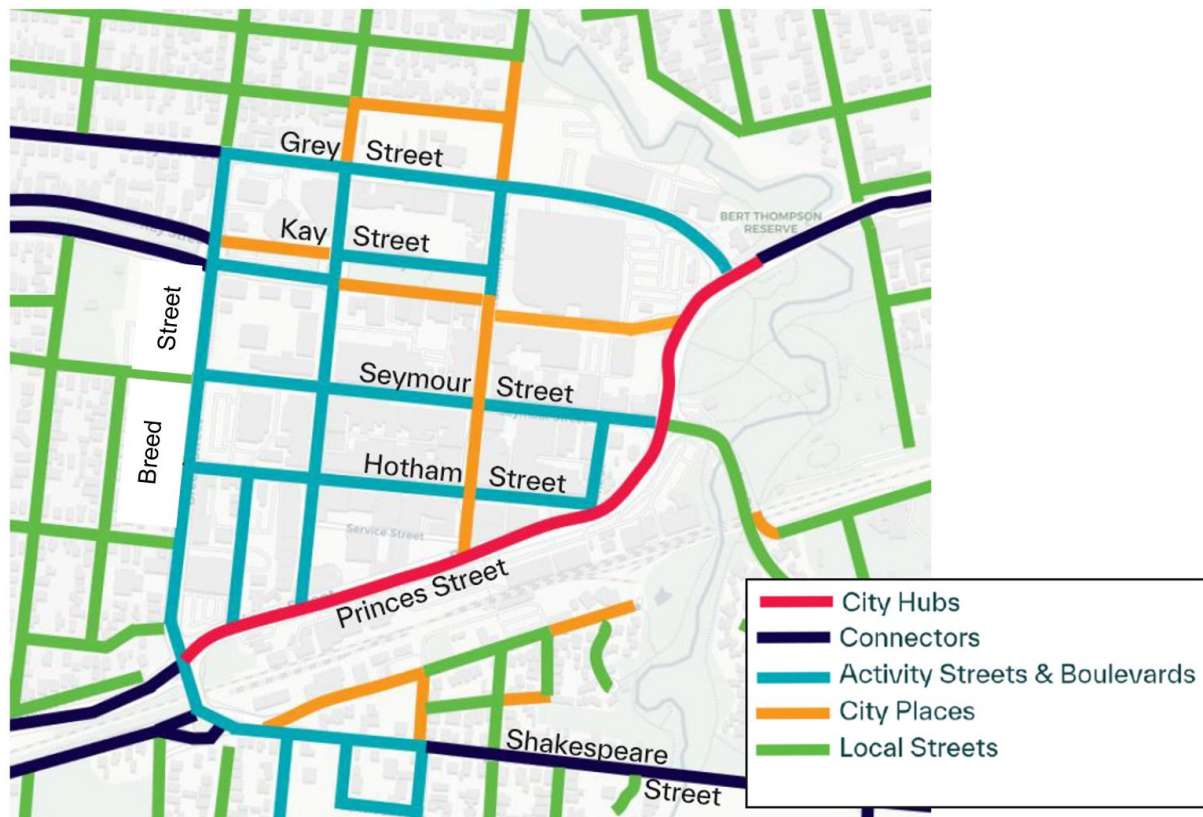


Figure 1 - Traralgon Car Parking Review Movement and Place Classification

- City Hub – Princes Highway (Breed Street to Grey Street). Primary emphasis on Movement with the M1 passing through.
- City Places – Franklin Street (Princes Highway to Kay Street). High interest CBD area with providing excellent connection to wider transport network.
- Activity Streets & Boulevard – Seymour Street. High interest retail or service areas with also a high demand for movement.
- Connectors – Kay Street (West of Breed Street). Provide transport key local transport links.
- Local Streets – Henry Street (West of Breed Street). More focused on local amenity and residential access.

Further Movement and Place assessments continue to be completed across new transport studies to align speed zoning and infrastructure treatments with the intended use of those areas. A further example of Boolarra Ave, Newborough is provided below.



Figure 2 - Example Street Typology Boolarra Ave, Newborough

Supporting Projects for Pedestrian Priority

One of the key tools to increase the use of existing car spaces is to enable easier and safer pedestrian access through CBDs. The larger volumes of vehicle movements through CBD areas when combined with existing intersections and pedestrian crossing points that provide priority access to vehicles and not pedestrians discourage walking. Instead, this is encouraging car park users to do laps of hot spot areas trying to find a space closer to their destination, instead of parking where there will be a park and walking a short distance.

There is an alignment between road safety and parking management in CBD areas to provide safe system treatments to improve safety and pedestrian accessibility. Several grant opportunities are available to provide road safety treatments to enable this that include:

- Federal Government Black Spot program; and
- TAC funded Safe Local Street and Roads program (SLRSP).

Currently, there is a Black Spot project in the delivery pipeline for Franklin Street, Traralgon (Post Office Place to Davidson Street) over the 2026 and 2027 capital works programs. A further application for the 2026/27 Black Spot Program for Seymour Street, Hotham Street, and Post Office Place, in addition to a suite of projects across the municipality under SLRSP.

For example, when the new RCPF multi-story car park opens between Kay and Grey Streets, Traralgon, the proposed Black Spot project to provide a pedestrian priority link across Kay Street at the intersection of Franklin Street, will be important to ensure the 430 new spaces provide a benefit to the wider Traralgon CBD.

Parking Permits

Parking permits are another way that priority user groups can be addressed through parking regulation and the draft policy includes:

- Accessible Parking Permit(s);
- Residential Parking Permit;
- Temporary Parking Permit; and
- Other permits where required.

Other Parking Matters

Finally, other common parking management issues are included for clarity and completeness:

- School, early learning and other similar uses;
- Parking on nature strips;
- Indented parking provision; and
- Private parking areas.

RISK ASSESSMENT

RISK	RISK RATING	TREATMENT
COMPLIANCE Inconsistency between Council Parking Management and Road Rules.	Low <i>Unlikely x Minor</i>	Endorse parking management policy to align approach with regulations.
STRATEGIC / REPUTATION Goal of current parking management approach unclear to community.	Low <i>Unlikely x Minor</i>	Develop desirable service levels to parking and implement through policy.

CONSULTATION

Internal stakeholders have been consulted in the development of the draft policy including community engagement groups. The parking studies that have informed the creation of the policy, included wide and well supported community consultation in their development and adoption into relevant strategic documents.

COMMUNICATION

Future publication on Council's website.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Officers preparing this report have declared they do not have a conflict of interest in this matter under the provisions of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

APPENDIX 1 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Gender

A Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) under the Gender Equality Act 2020 has been conducted as this matter does not involve a program, service or policy with a significant and direct impact on the community.

The Traralgon Car Parking Review (2024) received 1,474 responses with 58% identified as female, 12% identified disability or caring needs, and 79% dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with parking. Local demographic data shows that 6% of Latrobe residents aged 16+ require assistance with core daily activities (ABS 2021).

One option assessed providing parking stock that reflected proportional demographics for accessible, pram, and seniors parking which reduced total parking stock by around 10%. As the demand for parking is not evenly spread across CBD areas, the level of service approach sensitive to each site is considered a more equitable approach to provide the types of parking where it is required.

Social

Parking is a topic of high community interest across the municipality. A policy will help provide clarity to the community around Council's approach to parking management to tailor the approach to different areas.

It proposed an increase in the proportion of accessible spaces a desirable target of 2%, which is currently closer to around 1% of public parking stock.

Cultural

Cultural impacts have not been identified.

Health

Direct impacts have not been identified as part of the report. The proposed hierarchy will assist in the provision of accessible parking and prioritisation of safety relative to the street typology.

Environmental

Environmental impacts have not been identified.

Economic

Parking can support the economic activity in an area. The draft policy seeks to set desirable levels of service and tools to adjust parking behaviour to best support the priorities of the street.

Financial

The administration of parking permits is a cost to Council. Some of that is recouped through user fees which are set independently of the draft policy.

Attachments

1. Parking Management Policy

8.4

Parking Management Policy For Adoption

1	Parking Management Policy	103
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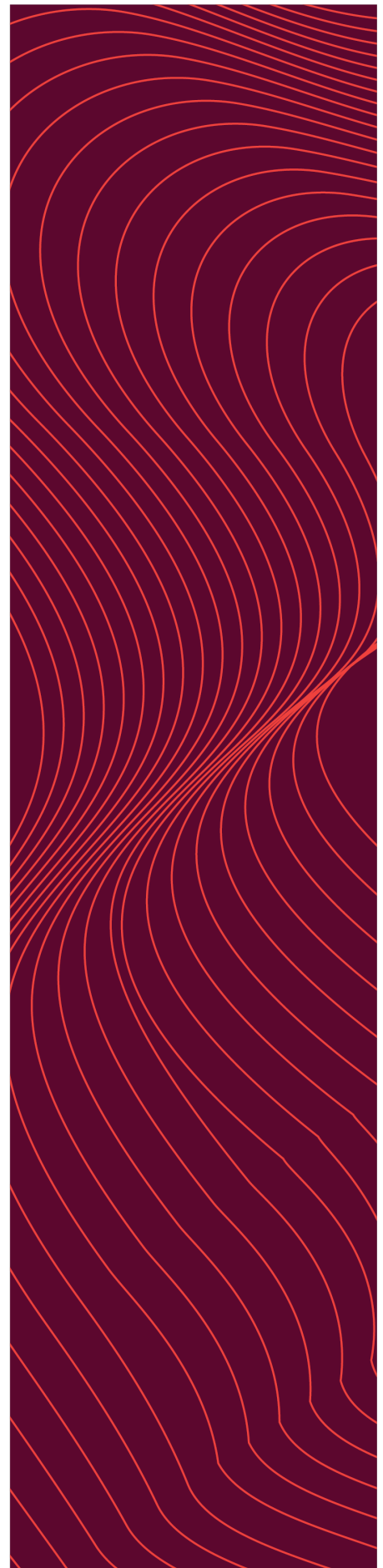


Parking Management Policy

Version no.1

Approval date: 00/00/0000

Review date: 00/00/0000



Document control

Responsible GM	Jody Riordan	
Division	Regional City Planning and Assets	
Last updated (who and when)	Manager City Assets	2025

Document history		
Authority	Date	Description of change
Council		
References	Refer to section 8 and 9 of this policy	
Next review date	2029	
Published on website	Yes	
Document reference no.		

1. Background

Council provides and manages public car parking across the municipality to benefit the community. Growth in population has also seen the demand for parking rise over time, particularly in Activity Centres. Parking is a limited and shared resource, and several legislative instruments are used to ensure fair access while also supporting local amenity and economic vitality of the City.

2. Objectives

The objective of this Parking Management Policy is to provide a framework to manage parking to best satisfy the needs of the whole community based on the Movement and Place typology of each street.

The objective is to protect amenity, whilst managing competing demands for parking by across different street typologies by:

- promoting safe, accessible and sustainable environment for all road users;
- providing access for vehicles (including emergency services) cyclists and pedestrians;
- providing equitable access to on-street parking; and
- supporting access and turnover to car parking in activity centres to improve economic activity.

3. Scope

This Policy applies to urban Council roads, Council public carparks, and private parking areas where agreements exist between Latrobe City Council and the property owner.

The Policy outlines the types of parking restrictions the Council uses, and the type of parking permits the Council issues to manage parking.

The Policy also refers to other common parking issues such as parking on the nature strip, indented parking.

4. Principles of management

The focus of parking management is to optimise the use of that space for public benefit based on the street typology and available infrastructure.

The supply of parking is relatively fixed and the ability to expand that supply is constrained in a predict and provide approach. A travel demand management approach that emphasises the efficient movement of people is a greater opportunity to improve car park user experience, particularly under congested condition.

4.1 Movement and Place Framework and Street Typology.

The Department of Transport's adopted Movement and Place Framework recognising that streets perform multiple functions. They not only move people from one destination to another (Movement), but they also serve as key places and destinations to spend time in their own right (Place).

The result is that a road network hierarchy is replaced with the following Movement and Place Street Typologies within the Municipality for this Policy:

- **City Hubs** – Have a strong emphasis on movement, such as a national highway, and can also be lined with retail businesses.

- **City Places** - should provide a pedestrian friendly environment. Aim to support businesses, on-street activity and public life while ensuring excellent connections with the wider transport network.
- **Activity Street & Boulevards** - provide access to shops and services by all modes. There is high demand for movement as well as place with a need to balance different demands within the available road space. Activity Streets and Boulevards aim to ensure a high-quality public realm with a strong focus on supporting businesses, traders and neighbourhood life.
- **Connectors** - should provide safe, reliable and efficient movement of people and goods between regions and strategic centres and mitigate the impact on adjacent communities.
- **Local Streets** - provide quiet, safe and desirable residential access that foster community spirit and local pride. They are part of the fabric of our neighbourhoods, where we live our lives and facilitate local community access.

A matrix of priority users by street typology is attached in Appendix - 1.

4.2 Safe Systems

Public safety is the highest priority for parking management and a Safe Systems approach will be utilised that relies on four pillars; Safe Speeds; Safe Roads; Safe Vehicles; and Safe People. The specific approach will be tailored to each site based on the applicable risks and road user cohorts.

4.3 Desirable Levels of Service

Desirable Levels of Service by street typology have been developed to set out goal and thresholds for parking as attached in Appendix 2. These set out the performance goals for parking and thresholds for consideration of further intervention.

Parking surveys will be conducted to confirm the existing peak parking occupancy levels against the desirable levels of service.

4.4 Parking Controls

In order to manage the utilisation of parking areas, regulatory parking treatments will be implemented to influence the parking demand profiles towards the desirable level of service.

4.5 Community Consultation

Community consultation will help inform parking management decision making. Community feedback will be sought on proposed changes to parking with the size and scope of consultation to reflect the size and scope of the proposed change. Property frontages abutting any changes will be a focus for feedback.

Parking changes may be required for strategic reasons or safety requirements. In these cases, advice will be provided on the proposed change to restrictions and accompanying reasoning, but the scope to respond to feedback may be limited.

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4.6 Parking Permits

A range of permits will be provided to balance the different needs of road users across the road network:

- Accessible Parking Permits;
- Residential Parking Permit;
- Temporary Parking Permit; and
- Other permits where required.

The cost associate with provision of parking permits will be detailed in Council's Fees and Charges.

4.7 Other Parking Management Issues - Schools, Early Learning and Other Similar Uses

When investigating parking restrictions near schools, the primary concern is the safety of vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and cyclists. Accordingly, a Safe System approach will be considered that can see the school community engaged to see road safety improvements, rather than focusing on infrastructure changes.

This can include:

- encouraging more walking and cycling to reduce traffic congestion and the demand for parking;
 - providing safe drop-off and pick-up zones;
 - changing parking restrictions to reduce congestion; and
 - ensuring neighbouring properties have adequate on-street parking opportunities.
- A similar approach will be considered at kindergartens, hospitals, and childcare centres.

Parking on the Nature Strip

Parking on the nature strip in Victoria is prohibited by the Road Rules. Signage to reinforce the existing road rules is not encouraged, except where compliance is proven to be a repeated risks to safety or sees repeated damage to community assets.

Provision of Indented Parking

The construction of new indented parking bays will be considered if:

- the width of the nature strip can accommodate the new bays without compromise to footpath safety and access;
- sight lines are not compromised;
- existing infrastructure and landscaping are not impacted;
- it consistent with the existing streetscape;
- the indented parking space is provided for wider community use and not for the sole use of any individual property;
- It is considered in line with the Special Charge Policy; and
- The asset will remain under the care and maintenance of Council.

Private Parking Areas

Council has agreements with the landowner of private parking parks to enforce parking restrictions. It is expected that, generally, the parking provisions in these private parking areas will be consistent with this Policy.

5. Accountability and responsibility

Accountability and responsibility for this policy is outlined below.

5.1 Council

- Responsibility to ensure this Policy is consistent with Latrobe City Council Strategic Direction and other Latrobe City Council Policy
- Responsibility for the decision to approve this Policy by Council Resolution

5.2 Chief Executive Officer

- Overall responsibility for compliance with this policy
- Overall responsibility for enforcing accountability
- Overall responsibility for providing resources
- Overall responsibility for performance monitoring

5.3 General Manager

- Responsibility for compliance with this policy
- Responsibility for enforcing accountability
- Responsibility for providing resources
- Responsibility for performance monitoring

5.4 Manager

- Develop frameworks and procedures in compliance with this policy
- Enforce responsibilities to achieve compliance with frameworks and procedures
- Provide appropriate resources for the execution of the frameworks and procedures

5.5 Employees, Contractors and Volunteers

- Participate where required in the development of frameworks and procedures in compliance with this policy.
- Comply with frameworks and procedures developed to achieve compliance with this policy.

6. Evaluation and Review

This policy will be reviewed on request of Council, in the event of significant change in the Executive team, significant changes to legislation applicable to the subject matter of the policy or, in any other case, during each Council term (generally four years).

Division name

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7. Definitions

Nil.

8. Related Documents

List all related Latrobe City Council Policies, Frameworks and Procedures.

- Special Charge Scheme Policy

9. Reference Documents

List any external reference materials, such as Acts, Regulations, Guidance, Industrial Instruments, Planning Instruments, etc.

- Road Safety Road Rules 2017
- Local Government Act 1989
- Road Safety Act 2009
- Road Management Act 2004
- Transport Integration Act 2010
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992

10. Appendices

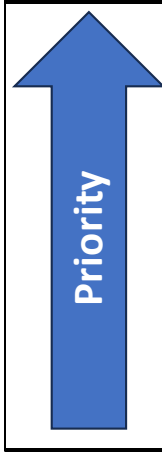
Appendix 1 – Parking User Priority by Street Typology

Appendix 2 – Desirable Levels of Service

Division name

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Appendix 1 – Parking User Priority by Street Typology

	City Hubs	City Places	Activity Streets & Boulevards	Connectors	Local Streets
	Safety	Safety	Safety	Safety	Safety
	Public Transport	Public Transport	Public Transport	Public Transport	Residents
	Accessible Parking	Bicycle parking, Pedestrian Infrastructure and Public Realm	Bicycle parking, Pedestrian Infrastructure and Public Realm	Accessible Parking	Customers and Visitors
	Customers and Visitors	Accessible Parking	Accessible Parking	Residents	Employees and Commuters
	Employees and Commuters	Customers and Visitors	Customers and Visitors	Employees and Commuters	
	Residents	Loading Zones	Loading Zones	Loading Zones	
	Loading Zones	Employees and Commuters	Employees and Commuters		
		Residents	Residents		

Appendix 2 – Desirable Levels of Service

	City Hubs	City Places	Activity Streets & Boulevards	Connectors	Local Streets
Safety	Legislative compliance	Legislative compliance. Provide safe alternative transport options.	Legislative compliance. Provide safe alternative transport options.	Legislative compliance. Encourage alternative transport option.	Legislative compliance. Encourage alternative transport option.
Public Transport, Municipal and Emergency Services	No obstruction to access	No obstruction to access	No obstruction to access	No obstruction to access	No obstruction to access
Bicycle Parking	-	Bicycle Parking available with 100m of destination	Bicycle Parking available with 100m of destination	-	-
Loading Zone	Rear access or 100m to on-street bay	Rear access or 100m to on-street bay	Rear access or 100m to on-street bay	-	-
Accessible Parking	2% Public Parking Stock Accessible. ≤80% parking occupancy within 100m	2% Public Parking Stock Accessible. ≤80% parking occupancy within 100m	2% Public Parking Stock Accessible. ≤80% parking occupancy within 100m	-	-
Customers and Visitors	≤85% parking occupancy on-street parking (P2min to P2) within 200m.	≤85% parking occupancy on-street parking (P2min to P2) within 200m. ≤85% parking occupancy on-street or off-street 3P within 400m.	≤85% parking occupancy on-street parking (P2min to P2) within 200m. ≤85% parking occupancy on-street or off-street 3P within 400m.	-	-
Employees and Commuters	All day parking available within 400m from destination	All day parking available within 400m from destination	All day parking available within 400m from destination	All day parking available within 400m from destination	-
Residents	-	-	≤80% parking occupancy within 200m of property. No obstruction to access.	≤80% on-street parking occupancy within 100m of property. No obstruction to access.	≤80% on-street parking occupancy within 50m of property. No obstruction to access.

Division name

Approved: 00/00/0000 | Review: 00/00/0000

STATUTORY PLANNING

9. STATUTORY PLANNING

Nil reports

CORPORATE ITEMS FOR DECISION

10. CORPORATE ITEMS FOR DECISION

Item Number 10.1 15 December 2025

Investment and Growth

OLD GIPPSTOWN HERITAGE PARK

PURPOSE

To consider an allocation of \$50,000 to facilitate urgent maintenance works at Old Gippstown.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Old Gippstown is located on Crown Land owned by the State of Victoria and is managed by the Gippstown Reserve Committee of Management Inc., a group of volunteers who are appointed for three-year terms by the Minister for the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA).
- The Committee has recently been reappointed by DEECA until 29 October 2028, ensuring continuity of strategic direction and governance.
- The Gippstown Reserve Committee of Management (CoM) oversees the operation of Old Gippsland Heritage Park, a significant tourism attraction for Latrobe City, that attracts approximately 7,000 visitors annually.
- Old Gippstown Heritage Park consists of over 23 heritage-listed buildings and collections valued at more than \$26 million.
- Old Gippstown released a five-year Strategic Plan (2025-2030) in March 2025, which aims to be recognised as a must-see heritage destination, targeting a broad demographic for attractions, including tourists, school programs, community parks and accredited museums.
- Historically, Old Gippstown was provided with annual recurrent operational/maintenance funding of \$20,000 by Latrobe City Council, which ceased in 2018. Since then, Old Gippstown has received various community grant funds totalling \$110,000.
- To address urgent repairs and ensure the preservation of its heritage-listed buildings, Old Gippstown has requested \$50,000 in annual recurrent funding. This funding is critical to safeguarding the Park's long-term financial viability.
- Following a decision on this report, Officers will continue to collaborate with Old Gippstown to provide a detailed implementation report, aiming to secure funding for future works.
- Officers will provide to a future Council meeting a report outlining the outcomes of the funding.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. allocates \$50,000 to Old Gippstown to enable the delivery of urgent maintenance works detailed in this report at Attachment 1 to the value of \$83,259, noting Old Gippstown's contribution of \$33,000 to the works;**
- 2. refers any future funding allocations to Old Gippstown to the annual budget process to be supported by detailed implementation plans; and**
- 3. receives a report in December 2026 from Old Gippstown detailing the outcomes delivered from the \$50,000 funding.**

BACKGROUND

Old Gippsland Heritage Park (the Park) was established in 1968 by the Moe Development Association and officially opened as a folk museum in 1973. Since 1990, administration has transitioned to the Victorian State Government, with oversight by DEECA. The site has evolved into a key heritage and educational attraction illustrating Gippsland's settlement history.

From 1993 until 2018, Latrobe City Council contributed \$20,000 per annum to Old Gippsland. In 2013, there was a request from Old Gippsland to increase this annual funding to \$50,000, however it was decided by Council to keep it at \$20,000. The last regular annual contribution was paid in 2018, since then they have had to apply for various grants.

The CoM is a voluntary body of seven members, with diverse backgrounds that complement the operations of the Park. The Park hosts major community events including Christmas celebrations, Father's Day and Australia Day Festivals and weddings, they also partner with schools to deliver heritage education programs.

ANALYSIS

The Old Gippsland Strategic Plan identifies the Park as a cornerstone heritage and tourism asset requiring structured investment and long-term planning to ensure its viability. Financial data from recent years demonstrates prudent management, modest surpluses and steady growth in visitation.

However, the Park faces significant challenges due to ageing infrastructure and limited access to recurrent funding. Key risks include deterioration of heritage buildings, restricted operational resources and the potential decline in the visitor experience without timely maintenance.

The Park contributes positively to Latrobe City's cultural, educational and tourism objectives by:

- Providing local employment and volunteer opportunities;
- Attracting domestic tourism and school excursions;
- Preserving heritage buildings and artefacts of local and state significance;
- Enhancing regional identity and community engagement; and
- Hosting community events and private functions such as weddings and family celebrations.

Benchmarking against comparable regional heritage sites (Coal Creek, Korumburra, Pioneer Settlement, Swan Hill and Flagstaff Hill, Warrnambool) indicates that similar facilities are managed by local government and deliver demonstrable social and economic benefits.

It is important to note that OldGippstown is located on crown land and any funding provided would be used to maintain assets not owned by Council. However, historically Council had provided an operational/maintenance funding of \$20,000 which ceased in 2018 reducing the precedence for Council to fund non-Council assets.

The CoM has submitted a detailed funding proposal for consideration of Council - **Attachment 1.**

The request seeks a \$50,000 contribution toward urgent maintenance works, with a total project value of \$83,259.

The CoM has committed to funding the remaining \$33,000. A breakdown of costs is outlined below:

Building	Project	Contractor	Cost
Narracan Hall	White ant repair, painting, fence repair, gutter repair and cleaning, brick walkway reset	In-house and contractor	\$20,322
Solicitor's Office	Weather boards replaced, cleaned and painted, repair door and window frame, sign repairs.	In-house and sub-contractor (painter)	\$8,724
General store	Repair back door and wall, repair windows, paint, repair leaks in the roof & verandah	In-house and contractor	\$13,614
Church	Weatherboard repairs, window frame, door, painting and roof treatment, stained glass repairs	Sub-contractor and in-house	\$18,607
School	Window frame replacement, roof treatment and repainting. Chimney clean, walkway and back step repairs	Sub-contractor and in-house	\$21,992
Less			\$83,259
Old Gippstown Heritage Park			-
Latrobe City Council Grant			\$50,000
			\$33,259

As part of the proposal, the CoM expressed interest in receiving recurring funding; however, no details were provided regarding how these ongoing funds would be utilised.

Therefore, Officers recommend that the Council allocate \$50,000 from any budget surplus to facilitate urgent maintenance works outlined in this report (**Attachment 1**), totalling \$83,259. This recommendation also notes a contribution of \$33,000 from Old Gipps town. Additionally, the Council should allocate \$50,000 from the annual budgets of 2026/2027 and 2027/2028, contingent upon Old Gipps town providing a detailed report of the proposed expenditures that meets the Council's satisfaction.

As part of this report, it is proposed that Council will receive an annual report from Old Gipps town outlining the outcomes achieved through the funding.

RISK ASSESSMENT

RISK	RISK RATING	TREATMENT
COMPLIANCE Demise of old heritage buildings that are no longer in safe condition for visitor experience.	Medium <i>Likely x Moderate</i>	Funding support of urgent building repair works to decrepit buildings.
SERVICE DELIVERY Reduced service offerings and visitor numbers due to outdated and unpreserved buildings.	Medium <i>Likely x Moderate</i>	Funding support in accordance with prudent financial management to upgrade facilities to meet contemporary standards.
FINANCIAL Potential closure and financial instability without recurrent funding.	Medium <i>Likely x Moderate</i>	Funding support in accordance with prudent financial management or consideration of other revenue generating programs or partnerships.
STRATEGIC Reputational damage and perception of inaction if not supported.	Medium <i>Likely x Moderate</i>	Proactive stakeholder engagement and clear messaging of previous financial support.

CONSULTATION

Councillors and Officers have undertaken regular consultation and engagement with the Gippsdown Reserve Committee of Management and DEECA. Ongoing engagement is planned with heritage organisations, tourism associations and community groups to support collaborative planning and investment.

COMMUNICATION

Councillors and Officers will continue ongoing liaison with Old Gippsdown, ensuring the support and promotion of the Park as a key heritage and tourism destination within the municipality.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Officers preparing this report have declared they do not have a conflict of interest in this matter under the provisions of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

APPENDIX 1 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Gender

A Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) under the *Gender Equality Act 2020* has not been conducted as this matter does not involve a program, service or policy with a significant and direct impact on the community.

Social

The social value of events and the visitor economy are highlighted throughout the Old Gippsstown Strategic Plan and align with the Latrobe City Events & Visitor Economy Strategy. Social benefits range from growing community pride, offering positive educational value and celebrating our history and heritage.

Cultural

Old Gippsstown has developed into a dynamic and relevant cultural heritage site that honours the past while embracing the future.

Health

Maintaining the Park provides the opportunity for the local community and beyond to experience high profile events and tourism experiences at this historic site, having a positive impact on the overall health and wellbeing of our community.

Environmental

Any future developments or maintenance repairs would be undertaken to protect the environment and limit any adverse environmental impacts.

Economic

Old Gippsstown generates a positive economic impact to the local municipality, supporting local businesses and suppliers through their events and general operations.

Financial

The proposed source of funding for the once off funding of \$50,000 is the 2024/25 cash surplus. Ongoing funding will require further analysis and consideration as part of future budgets.

Attachments

1. Old Gippsstown Presentation to Council

10.1

Old Gippstown Heritage Park

1	Old Gippstown Presentation to Council	123
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Report to Latrobe City Council 10th November 2025



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1. Introduction

The Gippsland Reserve Committee of Management Incorporated welcome the opportunity to present this report to the Latrobe City Council, providing evidence of the importance of Old Gippsland Heritage Park, Moe as a major asset and gateway for Latrobe City Council, the local community, broader Gippsland family, Victorians and tourists exploring our rich Gippsland history from early pioneering and gold mining days to the model mining town of Yallourn.

We are pleased to confirm that the Minister for the Department of Energy, Environment, and Climate Action has re-appointed all of the current Committee of Management members for another 3 years, as well as a new member to our team, with our terms expiring 29th October 2028. This re-appointment means we can continue to drive forward with our current vision and strategic planning direction.

The voluntary Committee of Management comprises of 7 passionate, energetic and dedicated people, with diverse backgrounds that complement the operations of the Park.

2. Executive Summary

As a voluntary Committee of Management, we take our responsibilities seriously, with our core purpose of preserving the Park, buildings and collections and establishing the foundations for a sustainable and viable asset for the long term, ensuring the Park's future is secured as a major attraction for the Gippsland Region. This vision is reflected in our Strategic Plan for 2025-2030 with a vision to be a version of Sovereign Hill, Ballarat.

The Gippsland Reserve Committee of Management Inc. is requesting financial support of \$50,000 for heritage buildings urgent repairs and maintenance to be incorporated into the Latrobe City Council 2025/26 budget to ensure the Park remains viable and open in the future.

Historically, Old Gippsland in the past was provided with an annual recurrent operational/maintenance grant of \$20,000 by the Latrobe City Council, however this support has been removed in recent budgets. Added to this grant removal is the exclusion of buildings maintenance and on-going preservation for Latrobe City Council grants affecting our ageing weatherboard heritage buildings. In 2023 a grant submission for repairs to Heritage Overlay Ashdale Farmhouse (c.1894) was unsuccessful due to it fitting into the *'for general maintenance, ongoing care of an existing asset'* category, even though it involved the complete replacement of the verandah and stumps due to a white ants' infestation.

Unfortunately, we receive no recurrent funding from the Department of Environment, Energy & Climate Action and rely solely on our own limited revenue streams and grant applications from other sources to maintain, preserve and repair buildings and manage our infrastructure. A recently commissioned insurance valuation report valued the buildings at \$12M, coupled with collections estimated at \$4M and the land at approximately \$10M. Therefore, the Committee is responsible for and manages Government and community assets in excess of \$26M.

It is critical for the operation of the Park that our ageing buildings are maintained, and our vast collections adequately preserved, archived, and displayed.

3. Context & Background

Old Gippsdown Heritage Park, as we know it today, was established in 1968 by the Moe Development Association and administered by the City of Moe. The township was designed by architect Fritz Suendermann of Roy Grounds & Associates, and the Old Gippsdown Folk Museum was officially opened by Sir Rupert Hamer on 10th March 1973. In 1990, the City of Moe passed administration of Old Gippsdown to the Victorian State Government and is now under the auspices of the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (D.E.E.C.A.) with the heritage buildings and collections situated on Crown Land and owned by the State of Victoria.

Purpose

To protect and preserve our irreplaceable heritage buildings and collections and provide opportunities for the local community, students and visitors to experience, appreciate and learn about Gippsland's history in a well-designed park and gardens.

Values

Excellence - Collaboration - Integrity - Inclusion - Respect – Innovation

The attached list of buildings at Old Gippsdown was created for a Valuation Report in June 2024 and presents the buildings and infrastructure that is managed by the Committee.

4. Financial Provision & Economic Impact

a. Profit & Loss Performance

The 2024/25 profit & loss year recorded revenue of \$387K and expenditure \$378K providing a gross surplus \$19K and net surplus \$9K. Wages represent 63% of revenue. Our modest surplus position has been achieved by prudent financial management, however reliance on grants of \$35K from various sources has been critical to assist with \$52K expended for the repairs, maintenance and improvements in the Park.

The 2025/26 budget forecast is a surplus of \$23,990 and includes increased admission and rental income.

The summary of recent reporting periods below highlights our capacity to manage the Park over the past 3 year term of the current Committee.

Financial Year	Income	Expenditure	Result
2022/23	\$369,423	\$433,670	-\$73,624
2023/24	\$362,249	\$285,929	\$76,320
2024/25	\$387,783	\$378,161	\$9,622
*2025/26 Forecast	\$548,319	\$524,329	\$23,990

*2025/26 year includes a one-off lease adjustment from McDonalds, Moe.

b. Balance Sheet

We have a strong balance sheet with equity as at 30th June 2025 of \$334,403 and cash at bank balance \$275,291. The value of the land, buildings & collections have been excluded from the balance sheet.

c. Urgent Buildings Maintenance/Repairs

The buildings highlighted for urgent maintenance and repairs for the \$50,000 include:

Building	Project	Contractor	Cost
Narracan Hall	White ant repair, painting, fence repair, gutter repair and cleaning, brick walkway reset	In-house and contractor	\$20,322
Solicitor's Office	Weather boards replaced, cleaned and painted, repair door and window frame, sign repairs.	In-house and sub-contractor (painter)	\$8,724
General store	Repair back door and wall, repair windows, paint, repair leaks in the roof & verandah	In-house and contractor	\$13,614
Church	Weatherboard repairs, window frame, door, painting and roof treatment, stained glass repairs	Sub-contractor and in-house	\$18,607
School	Window frame replacement, roof treatment and repainting. Chimney clean, walkway and back step repairs	Sub-contractor and in-house	\$21,992
			\$83,259

Our buildings are the backbone of the park and the main attraction for visitors and the driver for increased admissions and improved revenue stream as we strive to become financially independent.

d. Visitors/Admissions

Year Jan-Dec	Admissions	Group	Students	Total
2023	3440	426	2766	6632
2024	2797	235	3229	6261
2025 YTD Sep	3846	307	2089	6242

Admissions exclude special events where visitors enter via main gate with gold coin donation. Estimated events this year have attracted over 4000 people.

As Old Gippsdown builds its image and profile with targeted marketing, the budget forecasts a 14% admission growth per annum. The use of the Latrobe City Council Economic Impact Calculator with recent postcode data states the financial impact to be \$222,370 pa.

As we improve our financial position we will have the ability to contribute greater funds to operating costs and ongoing maintenance and improvements. Visitor numbers will grow with improved presentation of buildings, new features, attractions, events and facilities.

We are confident that the community will appreciate and support the Park's new image and profile and attend events, services and facilities offered. As Old Gippsdown Heritage Park's reputation grows, so will its profile within the tourism industry as a key destination. The community will take pride in Old Gippsdown Heritage Park as a thriving centre of activity that preserves the region's heritage while embracing new opportunities for growth and prosperity.

e. Operations, Marketing and Resourcing

Old Gippsdown Heritage Park will operate as a thriving community space and cultural destination, supported by a growing team with a clear mandate for the Park's development. A business and marketing plan consistent with the Strategic Plan will build tourism opportunities and cultural offerings capturing the imagination of visitors and the local community alike.

Old Gippsdown Heritage Park's positive economic impact will grow with support from the Latrobe City Council, stakeholder engagements and strategic partnerships. A thorough assessment of the Park's infrastructure is underway and will form a long-term management plan that enhances the visitor experience and increases revenue in alignment with the Strategic Plan. This can only occur by implementing strategic conservation plans for our buildings & collections, ensuring the continuous future use of our heritage buildings and surrounds for local history exhibitions, displays and associated activities etc. to tell the story of Gippsland's dynamic and diverse past.

We will continue to uphold our responsibility for the preservation of the region's heritage for future generations. The Park will serve as a beacon of cultural significance, instilling a sense of pride, inclusivity and connection among the Latrobe City community.

5. Community Engagement

Old Gippsdown Heritage Park is known mainly as an historical Park, that is a good place to visit for events and school programs. While it hosts regular events and has a dedicated volunteer base, the Park's profile and image is poor, and it struggles to attract new visitors and foster a strong sense of community ownership.

Our vision for the future is to transform Old Gippsdown into a vibrant, inclusive community space where all people of Latrobe City can gather, participate and celebrate. It will be buzzing with community-led activities, innovative educational programs, events and a "*must-see*" destination for visitors.

Enhanced volunteer programs, strong partnerships with local groups, and exciting new initiatives including displays, parks & gardens and well-maintained buildings and collections of the period will ensure Old Gippsdown Heritage Park is a destination with a lively, engaging and welcoming space. It will celebrate the community's diversity and heritage, creating a strong

sense of ownership and pride among residents and visitors.

Our current connections to relevant organisations include:

- Heritage Australia & Victoria
- Membership of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria, Australian Museums and Galleries Association Victoria, Gippsland Association of Affiliated Historical Societies, Centre for Gippsland Studies (Federation University, Morwell campus)
- 23 buildings at Old Gippsdown are mentioned in the Heritage Overlay with Latrobe City Council being of Significant or Contributory significance level.

We are appointed by the Minister for the Department of Environment, Energy & Climate Action every three years and work closely with the Regional Office with invitations to DEECA officers to our monthly meetings and distribution of monthly minutes, financial statements and reports.

An annual return is submitted to DEECA at the end of the financial year.

Each year we host a number of successful events including the Community Christmas Celebrations, Australia Day, Father's Day and other as well as weddings, community meetings and special occasions.

The Old Gippsland Café re-opens in late November after the previous tenant decided to vacate. We are confident that the Café will enhance the Park and offer casual dining in a unique location during business hours and weekends.

Old Gippsdown is recognised by the community as an important asset with invaluable support from Moe Lions, Moe Rotary and other service clubs. Old Gippsdown Men's Shed and Latrobe Valley Woodturners Club have dedicated club rooms in the Park and Old Gippsdown Freemasons Lodge carry out bi-monthly services in the Narracan Hall .

a. Environmental Stewardship and Access to Open Space

We celebrate Old Gippsdown Heritage Park as a beacon of environmental stewardship and a vibrant natural sanctuary. Visitors and the community will consider Old Gippsdown Heritage Park as a place to visit and enjoy, students to learn of the past and a community venue hosting events and special celebrations. Everyone will feel inspired by the Park's commitment to protecting our local history in buildings, collections, displays and park in its role as an educator and information source.

b. Preserving Historical and Cultural Significance

Old Gippsdown Heritage Park has developed into a dynamic and relevant cultural heritage site that honours the past while embracing the future. Visitors will explore the well-maintained, relocated and restored heritage buildings, each telling a unique story of Gippsland's history and showcasing collections and artefacts pertaining to the individual building's era. People of all ages will explore interactive exhibits and share their experiences on social media. Old Gippsdown Heritage Park is a place of learning, offering engaging educational programs that highlight the historical and cultural significance of the area. It is hoped that first nations people participate in the park with their

indigenous heritage, traditional knowledge and truth telling.

6. Strategic Plan

Old Gippsdown Heritage Park recognises that strategic planning provides the direction and framework for good governance, ensuring our decisions are aligned with its purpose, values, and long-term goals while fostering accountability, transparency, and ethical behaviour. The Committee have worked tirelessly to create a robust strategic plan that clarifies our mission and vision, guides resource allocation, manages risks, and promotes stakeholder engagement, which are all essential components of effective governance.

The reappointment of the existing Committee to October 2028 will ensure the implementation of the vision and strategic direction of the Park will continue.

Whilst the Strategic Plan commenced in January this year, we are excited about its progress to date, as follows:

A. Governance

- Interaction/meetings with Latrobe City Council, DEECA, Local Members of Parliament & Minister's Office
- Reviewing and implementing policy development
- Initiate sponsorship policy and strategy
- Support and guidance by DEECA
- EOI (LCC) for relocation of Old Methodist Church Traralgon to the Park

and the previous year:

- Adoption of new business name and logo
- Obtaining building valuations for insurance purposes
- Managing transfer of Dept. Transport road reserve to Gippsdown Reserve
- Formation of Heritage Buildings & Collections Sub-Committee

B. People

- Coordination and assistance/seminars with Destination Gippsland
- Annual appraisals
- Volunteer recruitment campaign
- Induction program introduced
- Maintained safe work practices
- New Grounds Supervisor appointed
- New volunteers accepted

C. Community

- Australia Day
- Volunteer Connections
- Father's Day Car Show
- EID Festival
- Easter Family Fun Day
- Teddy Bears Picnic
- Talk like a Pirate Day
- Joint 2025 Christmas celebrations planned with Moe Lions Club
- Grant application for auto doors under Universal Tourism Funding
- School vacation programs

D. Heritage Buildings and Collections

- Renovating shed for purpose built archive building

- GARD building repairs white ant damage
- Red Shed repairs after storm damage from falling tree
- Removal of 4 dangerous trees
- Church barge board replacement
- Tucks tinsmith guttering
- National Bank interiors Painting
- Chimney caps on Narracan Hall, Ashdale and Cobb & Co buildings
- New computer and hardware to catalogue collections
- Strong interest from Aunty Cheryl Drayton, however DEECA directive to initiate contact with GlaWAC without response or interest.
- Updated cataloguing computer & software comprising nearly 10,000 entries [multiple items for each entry]

E. Grounds and Facilities

- Special Park Future Sub- Committee and draft capital works program
- Entrance Building Sub-Committee developing brief for LV Drafting proposal for a new main entrance building comprising of administration, café, public toilets, function area, corporate facilities
- Auto doors grant application pending approval
- Child Safe Policy/WWCC being developed
- Local gardening group assisting with gardens

F. Education

- Developing curriculum-ready content
- School holiday program introduced
- First stage in marketing to schools
- Additional volunteers assisting with the education program

G. Tourism and Events

- Annual special events calendar operational
- **Tourist Information Centre request declined**
- Building relations with Walhalla, Holden Centre & Coal Creek Community Park & Museum, Gippsland Vehicle Museum.
- Working relationship and assistance by Destination Gippsland
- Attendance at wedding expo

7. Benchmarking

The Committee continue to monitor progress and growth with monthly reports to budget that is primarily centered on revenue.

Financial performance to budget

Admissions

Forecast 14% increase pa

2024/25 11,116

2025/26 budget 12,615

By 2030 +21,000

Schools

7% increase pa

2024/25 students 2,684

2025/26 budget 2,875

By 2030 +3,700

Events

4 major events per annum
School holiday programs
Functions
Weddings
Special celebrations/events

Café

Stable tenants
Menu
Opening hours
Profile/Image/Feedback
Strategic Priorities
Tourist admissions
Buildings repairs/maintenance/presentation
GARDS building returned to Park 2028 for Archive/Display Centre
New Café/Admin/Function Building

8. Risks & Opportunities

The Committee revisits the challenges of business by managing the risks and taking opportunities where they arise.

Risks

Financial instability
Buildings & collections deterioration
Preservation of collections
Complex regulatory responsibilities
Committee of Management recruitment, skills and experience
Volunteer recruitment
Tourist/Visitors

Opportunities

Recurrent funding
Image/profile
Targeted Marketing program
Strategic alliance with parks/museums
Strategic relationships with regional events/functions
Tourist/visitors
Schools tours
Events
Technology

Implications

This report highlights Old Gippsdown Heritage Park's important contributions to the Latrobe City Council, Community and presentation of Gippsland's historical settlement during the 1840s through to the 1930s.

Our existence is centred on the buildings that house the collections of Gippsland's history.

Without the financial support by the Latrobe City Council we will not be able to present and preserve our buildings to the standards expected, which in turn will:

1. It will be difficult to maintain our sustainability.
2. Impact the ability to attract visitors
3. Have reputational damage to our brand, profile & image
4. Resignation of Committee due to lack of support
5. Loss of a community venue
6. Community discontent
7. Negative media

Our strategic plan is solid and we are sowing the seeds for growth and prosperity for Old Gippsdown Park and the Latrobe City Council.

9. Case Studies

The following Case Studies are provided as examples of other similar historic sites and their management structure and funding characteristics. It is further noted that historic parks are in decline.

The Case Studies were selected to demonstrate the uniqueness of Old Gippsdown Heritage Park and important contributions to the community, cultural experiences and tourism significance. These case studies highlight the \$M allocated to these historic parks under the management of local government entities. Old Gippsdown Heritage Park request of \$50,000 is a modest investment by the Latrobe City Council in comparison to the case studies as follows.

a. Coal Creek Community Park & Museum, Korumburra

Coal Creek is a Community, Local and State government funded project to preserve the cultural history of the area and was opened to the public in 1974. There are now 53 buildings in the heritage village.

The operating budget for Coal Creek Community Park and Museum was \$838,073 for the 2023-24 financial year, covering administrative costs, wages, utilities, tramway maintenance, and insurance. South Gippsland Shire Council manages Coal Creek, a Crown Land site, and has been investing significantly in its ongoing operation.

b. Pioneer Settlement, Swan Hill

In 1962, Swan Hill community members and senior members of the State Government decided to explore the possibility of purchasing the PS Gem for Swan Hill to use as an art gallery, and as the beginnings of an open air, living history museum.

The Pioneer Settlement is owned and managed by Swan Hill Rural City Council. The Settlement was kicked off in 1963 with the arrival of the paddle-steamer Gem, formally opening to the public in 1966 and has been in public ownership since.

	2023/24 Actual \$'000	2024/25 Forecast \$'000	2025/26 Budget \$'000
Revenue	2,465	2,150	2,593
Expenditure	3,658	3,198	3,244
Capital Expenditure	140	0	800
Surplus/(deficit)	(1,333)	(1,048)	(1,451)

c. Flagstaff Hill Maritime Museum and Village, Warrnambool

Flagstaff Hill opened to the public in 1975 and is managed by the Warrnambool City Council (WCC). Flagstaff Hill is home to Australia's richest maritime collection of over 9,000 objects, which are of local, state, and national significance and all have a tale to tell.

	2023/24 Actual \$'000	2024/25 Forecast \$'000	2025/26 Budget \$'000
Income	1,285	1,281	1,347

Expenditure	(2,271)	(2,290)	(2,334)
Surplus/(deficit)	(1,064)	(1,133)	(951)

COUNCIL COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

PURPOSE

To present the 2026 Councillor committee appointments for adoption.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Council has numerous committees on which Councillors are appointed as members.
- Council committees include:
 - decision-making Community Asset Committees established under section 65 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (Act);
 - non-decision-making forums such as but not limited to:
 - the Audit and Risk Committee established under the Act; and
 - Advisory Committees and Project Reference Groups established by Council resolution.
- Membership on these committees may also include community representatives, as individuals or on behalf of organisations, and Council officers.
- Council also appoints one or more Councillors to external committees and working groups, to represent the Council's interests and report back to Council.
- The committee appointments are presented to Councillors for review annually.
- As part of the review the Latrobe City International Relations Committee (as per the Council resolution at the November 2025 Council Meeting), the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee and Latrobe City Council Rail Freight Working Group have been removed. Further details can be found in the analysis section of this report.
- The proposed 2026 Councillor committee appointments can be found at **Attachment 1** to this report.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. **appoints Councillors to Council and external committees as outlined in Attachment 1; and**
2. **publishes the appointments on Council's website.**

BACKGROUND

Latrobe City Councillors chair or sit on a range of committees. Committees play a role in managing, maintaining or advising on a range of Council responsibilities and functions. Committees established by Council provide an opportunity for community members and organisations to have input on managing assets, or various projects or topics by providing information, advice, and feedback. Committees comprise one or more Councillors and several community members supported by a Council officer.

The formation and functioning of these committees are governed by rules set out in the Act, the Governance Rules, or resolutions of Council.

Attachment 1 sets out the proposed Councillor appointments.

A broader review of all Committees will be completed in 2026.

ANALYSIS

Councillor appointments

Each year Councillors are invited to review and provide feedback on the Councillor appointments to each Committee. At the Ordinary Council Meeting held 16 December 2024, the Councillor committee appointments were adopted for 2025. Councillors have provided their feedback, and the updated Councillor committee appointment list can be found at **Attachment 1**.

Three Committees that have been removed from the list, as outlined below.

Latrobe City International Relations Committee

At the Ordinary Council Meeting held 24 November 2025, Council resolved to disband the International Engagement and Investment Committee.

Any international relations economic development activities will now be referred to the Economic Development Advisory Committee.

Animal Welfare Advisory Committee

The Animal Welfare Advisory Committee held three meetings during 2025 (as per the terms of reference) and was unable to hold an official meeting due to a lack of quorum for the second consecutive meeting. In lieu of a Committee Meeting, catch ups to provide general updates were held. Over the past two years, three of the six scheduled meetings have not progressed due to a lack of attending members.

- Since the commencement of this committee, several positive improvements have been realised as follows.
 - At the pound:
 - employment of a dedicated Animal Attendant;
 - trial of community volunteers to interact with impounded animals (this was unfortunately unsuccessful and further hindered by COVID restrictions);

- improved process in the ongoing management of 84Y agreements;
 - reduction in wait lists for the cat cage loan program; and
 - weekly Pet of the Week posts on social media to increase adoption rates of surrendered and abandoned animals.
- Council adoption of Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029.

It is considered that this Committee has met its initial intended purpose, and a report will be presented to Council in early 2026 to discuss its future. Future reporting regarding the DAMP annual Action Plan will be reported directly to Agriculture Victoria.

Latrobe City Council Rail Freight Working Group

The Rail Freight Working Group hasn't met since 2016.

Council is a member of both the Regional Freight Alliance and SEATS which provide Council avenues to advocate for Latrobe City's freight needs.

The 2025-29 Council Plan transport focus is mostly on passenger travel. Through our Advocacy priorities, SEATS and RFA it is officers' opinion that our transport advocacy priorities are more than covered through these channels.

A report will be presented to Council in early 2026 to discuss the future of the committee.

Review of ongoing Memberships

A review of Council's memberships is currently underway with a report to be presented on all memberships in early 2026.

Council is currently a member of Regional Capitals Australia with the Mayor appointed to the group. Council is considering the ongoing value of continuing membership of this and other groups. At this point Regional Capitals Australia has been removed from the committee appointment list until the membership review has been completed.

RISK ASSESSMENT

RISK	RISK RATING	TREATMENT
COMPLIANCE Failure to appoint Councillors to committees as required to fulfil statutory obligations.	High <i>Likely x Moderate</i>	Appoint councillors to committees at the Council Meeting.

RISK	RISK RATING	TREATMENT
STRATEGIC Failure to meet community expectations with regard to committee participation.	Medium <i>Possible x Minor</i>	Appoint Councillors to committees on an annual basis.

CONSULTATION

Consultation has been held with officers responsible for each Committee, with ongoing consultation to be held with committee members to discuss the requirements of Council and the need for Committees to ensure that they adhere to the requirements of their Terms of Reference and Instrument of Sub-Delegation.

Further consultation will occur with committee members as part of the broader committee review to take place in 2026.

COMMUNICATION

Councillor appointments will be published on the Council's website.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Officers preparing this report have declared they do not have a conflict of interest in this matter under the provisions of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

APPENDIX 1 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Gender

A Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) under the *Gender Equality Act 2020* has not been conducted as this matter does not involve a program, service or policy with a significant and direct impact on the community.

GIAs are required to be conducted when the Committee Terms of Reference are developed.

Social

The appointment of Councillors will mean that committees can meet to discuss and recommend activities that support inclusion, social and cultural activities.

Cultural

Committees provide a forum for representation and inclusion of diverse cultural perspectives, leading to decisions that overlook the needs of various community groups.

Health

Not applicable.

Environmental

Not applicable.

Economic

Not applicable.

Financial

Not applicable.

Attachments

1. 2026 Councillor Committee Appointments

10.2

Council Committee Appointments

1	2026 Councillor Committee Appointments	142
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Committee Name	Committee Type	Councillor Membership Requirements	Officer Recommendation	Other members	Frequency of Meetings	Primary Function	Ward
Road, Facility and Place Name Committee	Delegated Committee	The Mayor as chair and up to three Councillors	Cr Harriman Cr Gibson Cr Campbell Cr Morgan	Nil	As required	1.2 The committee is established to oversee the administration of naming matters on behalf of Council as a Naming Authority under the Geographoc Place Names Act 1998.	
Australia Day Advisory Committee	Advisory Committee	Two Councillors	Cr Pugsley Cr Harriman	The Committee shall comprise of a maximum of 16 members, being: Up to two Councillors; Up to ten Community representatives appointed via expression of interest process; One representative of the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation where GLaWAC choses to nominate a representative; and Latrobe City Council Officers Coordinator Events and Tourism Senior Event Officer Council Representatives Youth Council	At least three per year	The Committee is established to: Provide an opportunity for a cross-functional Committee to be formed to further engage the community in both contributing to, and sharing in the success that Australia Day generates throughout our municipality each year; and To provide high level guidance, recommendations and strategic direction to ensure that community needs and expectations are represented and met.	
Centre for Australian Automotive Futures Committee	Advisory Committee	Three Councillors	Cr Pugsley Cr Gibson Cr Howe Alt: Cr Harriman	3.1.2.a representative from the Confederation of Motorsport (CAMS); and 3.1.3.a representative of the Latrobe Valley Authority; and 3.1.4.1 representative of the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation where GLaWAC chooses to nominate a representative.	Monthly	2.4.1.to develop a feasibility study brief (brief) for the appointment of consultants to investigate the feasibility of a motorsports complex and ancillary activities within Latrobe City; 2.4.2.to assess applications received in response to the brief and make recommendations about the appointment of a suitable person or organisation (the Consultant) to undertake the feasibility study, in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy; 2.4.3.monitor and receive progress reports from the Consultant at the intervals specified in the brief; 2.4.4.assess the final report from the Consultants and make recommendations to the Council about the matters contained in that report; 2.4.5.identify funding opportunities for development of a motorsport complex or various components within it (if deemed viable); 2.4.6.At the conclusion of the feasibility study, the Committee will determine if there is an ongoing role. If it is deemed that there is a role, a report will be prepared for Council requesting that the Committee continue and implement the findings of the feasibility study.	
Chief Executive Officer Employment Matters Committee	Advisory Committee	Mayor Deputy Mayor Two other Councillors	Cr Gibson Cr Harriman Cr Howe Cr Morgan	The Mayor; The Deputy Mayor; Two other Councillors (appointments will generally include the immediate past Mayor, and one other Councillor); and An independent person (not a Councillor of Council Staff member).	At least four per year	This Committee ensures Council meets the requirements relating to CEO employment and remuneration in accordance with section 45(2) of the Act. The Committee is to be chaired by an independent member who is a full member of the Committee and is entitled to be remunerated for their advisory role. It is responsible for overseeing all aspects of the CEO's employment lifecycle, including recruitment, performance reviews, and contract management. The committee ensures that the CEO's remuneration and benefits are fair, transparent, and aligned with the Council's strategic objectives.	
Early Years Reference Committee	Advisory Committee	Two Councillors	Cr Potter Cr Howe Alt: Cr Morgan	The Committee shall comprise of up to 11 members, being: Two Councillors; Up to two professional representatives from each of the following sectors: Early Years Sector (representative of organisations providing services within the Latrobe City municipality.) Up to four Community representatives appointed via expression of interest process; 1 representative of the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation where GLaWAC choses to nominate a representative; and Two Latrobe City Council Child and Family Services Officers.	At least four per year	The Committee is established to: To assist in the promotion of the Latrobe City Municipal Early Years Plan 2016 -2020 to the community. To monitor the progress of the Latrobe City Municipal Early Years Plan 2016-2020. Through the chair, to inform Councillors of matters related to the needs of children and their families that may affect their participation in community life or their development into the future. To advocate in relation to areas of identified need on behalf of children and their families. To provide input into the development of future Latrobe City Council plans and strategies that have a focus on the early years.	
Economic Development Advisory Committee	Advisory Committee	The Mayor and Deputy Mayor	Cr Gibson Cr Harriman	The Committee Shall comprise of up to ten members, comprising of: Up to two x Councillors Up to eight representatives from industry sectors indentified as core economic strengths in Latrobe City. Those sectors are identified as, but not limited to the following: Existing and New Energy Defence Capability Advanced Manufacturing Food and Fibre Civil and Commercial Development Advanced Air Mobility Circular Economy One representative of the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation where GLaWAC chooses to nominate a representative The Latrobe City Chief Executive Officer may be engaged in the Committee from time to time, however will not be identified as a formal member of the committee	Twice per year or as necessary	2.3 The Committee is established to: 2.3.1 Provide industry sector market intelligence and sector specific opportunities 2.3.2 Provide input and guidance in relation to the growth and diversification of the Latrobe City Economy 2.3.3 Provide guidance on economic development opportunities which come to the attention of the committee 2.3.4 Perform other activities related to this Terms of Reference as requested by the Council	
Gaskin Park Pavillion Project Reference Group	Advisory Committee	Up to two Councillors	Chair: Cr Potter Alt: Cr Morgan	Up to two x Councillors, one whom shall be nominated as Chair One representative of the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation where GLaWAC chooses to nominate a representative One x Churchill Football Netball Club (Football) One x Churchill Football Netball Club (Netball) One x Churchill Cricket Club One x Churchill Baseball Club One x Sport and Recreation Victoria Nominated Representative LCC officers One x LCC Project Owner (including PRG secretariat) One x City Assets Manager One x Coordinator Building Projects and Maintenance One x Project Manager LCC officers as required (EX Officio)	Monthly or as necessary	The PRG is established to: 2.3.1. Provide an interface between Council and the wider community 2.3.2. Provide specific feedback to Council about elements of the project where members of the Gaskin Park Multi-Use Pavilion PRG have specialist expertise. 2.3.3. Provide advice to Council on issues relating to the construction of the pavilion at Gaskin Park 2.3.4. Provide feedback and support for community engagement startegies with the wider community and stakeholders. 2.3.5. Act as advocates for the project with the wider community.	
Gippsland Regional Indoor Sports Stadium 2023 Upgrades – Project Reference Group	Advisory Committee	Up to two Councillors	Chair: Cr Campbell Cr Harriman	Up to two x Councillors, one whom shall be nominated as Chair One representative of the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation where GLaWAC chooses to nominate a representative One x Latrobe Valley Badminton Association One x Traralgon Amateur Basketball Association nominated representative One x Gippsland United Basketball Club nominated representative One x Gippsland League Netball nominated representative One x Sport and Recreation Victoria nominated representative LCC officers One x LCC Project Owner (including PRG secretariat) One x Project Manager LCC officers as required (Ex Officio)	Monthly or as necessary	The PRG is established to: 2.3.1. Provide an interface between Council, the Project Steering Committee (PSC) and the wider community. 2.3.2. Provide specific feedback to the Project Steering Committee about elements of the project where members of the Gippsland Regional Indoor Sports Stadium PRG have specialist expertise. 2.3.3. Provide advice to Council on issues relating to the infrastructure upgrades at the Gippsland Regional Indoor Sports Stadium. 2.3.4. Provide feedback and support for community engagement strategies with the wider community and stakeholders. 2.3.5. Act as advocates for the project with the wider community.	Jeeralang Ward

Gippsland Sports and Entertainment Park Redevelopment Project	Advisory Committee	Up to two Councillors	Chair: Cr Morgan Cr Lund	The PRG will comprise of 10 members plus LCC officers, being: Up to two x Councillors, one whom shall be nominated as Chair One representative of the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation where GLaWAC chooses to nominate a representative One x Falcons 2000 Soccer Club nominated representative One x Gippsland United Football Club nominated representative One x Gippsland Soccer Referees nominated representative One x Latrobe Valley Soccer League nominated representative One x Football Victoria nominated representative One x Football Australia nominated representative One x Sport and Recreation Victoria nominated representative LCC officers One x LCC Project Owner (including PRG secretariat) One x Senior Project Manager LCC officers as required (Ex Officio)	Monthly or as deemed necessary	The PRG is established to: 2.3.1. Provide an interface between Council, the Project Steering Committee (PSC) and the wider community. 2.3.2. Provide specific feedback to the Project Steering Committee about elements of the project where members of the Gippsland Sports and Entertainment Park PRG have specialist expertise. 2.3.3. Provide advice to Council on issues relating to the redevelopment of the Gippsland Sports and Entertainment Park. 2.3.4. Provide feedback and support for community engagement strategies with the wider community and stakeholders. 2.3.5. Act as advocates for the project with the wider community.	Yallourn Ward
Hyland Highway Municipal Landfill Consultative Committee	Advisory Committee	Up to two Councillors	Cr Harriman Cr Campbell	Up to two Councillors; One representative from each of the following sectors: Environmental Protection Authority (EPA), Victoria Gippsland Waste and Resource Recovery Group (or equivalent State Government agency representative) Loy Yang Power Federation University Up to five of Community representatives appointed via expression of interest process; Two Latrobe City Council Officers including: Manager Sustainability and Environment & Coordinator Landfill Services	At least two per year	The Committee is established to: 2.3.1. act as an advocate and sounding board for the community and other stakeholders bringing to the attention of Latrobe City any issues of concern that may arise during the construction of works and in the operation of the premises; and 2.3.2. act as a channel of communication between the community, stakeholders and Latrobe City.	Loy Yang ward
Lake Narracan Advisory Committee	Advisory Committee	Up to two councillors	Cr Gibson Cr Pugsley	Up to two Councillors Up to 5 representatives from: - Latrobe Valley Model Aeroplane Club - Latrobe Valley Hovercraft Club - Latrobe Valley TS Naval Cadets - Latrobe Valley Ski Club - Moe Lions Club Up to two of Community representatives appointed via expression of interest process; One representative of the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation where GLaWAC choses to nominate a representative; and One Latrobe City Council Officer.	Bi-monthly	The Committee is established to: (a) share information between other of Lake Narracan and Latrobe City Council regarding Lake Narracan; (b) provide advice, information and feedback in relation to Lake Narracan and its surrounding area on operational and maintenance matters; (c) provide advice, information and feedback to Council in relation to the use of the Lake Narracan waterway for recreational purposes; and (d) provide advice, information and feedback to Council in relation to the Lake Narracan foreshore and surrounding areas.	Newborough Ward
Latrobe City Community Safety Advisory Committee	Advisory Committee	Up to two Councillors	Cr Gibson Cr Howe Alt: Cr Campbell	23 members Up to two Councillors Victoria Police x 2 Department of Justice and Community Safety Department of Families, Fairness and Housing V/Line Latrobe Valley Buslines Up to two Latrobe City Liquor Accord representatives Advance Morwell Committee for Moe Representative from Traralgon based community group Stockland Plaza MidValley Plaza Neighbourhood Watch Latrobe Braikaulung Advisory Committee representative up to four community representatives GlaWAC up to two LCC officers	At least four per year	The Committee is established to: 2.3.1. Create safe and secure environments for all Latrobe City residents. 2.3.2. Build and maintain strategic partnerships across key community safety stakeholders within Latrobe City. 2.3.3. Identify and work to address community safety issues through information sharing and collaboration on initiatives across jurisdictions and agencies. 2.3.4. Improve perceptions of safety within Latrobe City. 2.3.5. Reduce antisocial behaviour and street crime within identified hotspots and reduce the incidence and prevalence of damage to property. 2.3.6. Promote Responsible Serving of Alcohol in the hospitality industry, thus reducing alcohol related assaults, antisocial behaviour and other forms of crime in partnership with licensed traders. 2.3.7. Encourage the use and support of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles to deal with day time and night time activities within Latrobe City, to encourage and support the use of a safer environment for all Latrobe City residents.	
Latrobe Regional Gallery Advisory Committee	Advisory Committee	Up to two Councillors	Cr Morgan Cr Potter Alt: Cr Pugsley	One representative from Federation University ARC Yinnar Friends of the Gallery Two Community Representatives LRG Arts Director or Senior Curator LCC Manager Arts and Events	Quarterly	2.3.The Committee is established to: 2.3.1.research, advise and support the implementation of arts policies relevant to the Gallery; 2.3.2.ensure that arts management practice is in accordance with Council's Arts Strategy and with the highest possible arts industry standards nationally; 2.3.3.provide advice regarding cultural tourism opportunities for the Gallery; 2.3.4.provide advice in relation to the development and maintenance of a professional, innovative, economically responsible and well maintained public art program; 2.3.5.implement consistent, transparent and equitable process for the identification, commissioning, management, maintenance and decommissioning of public artworks; and 2.3.6.support the Gallery in its contribution to a sustainable and strong creative industry, so as to increase the capacity of local artists in connection with a wider national conversation.	Monwell River Ward
Latrobe Tourism and Major Events Advisory Committee	Advisory Committee	Four Councillors (one from each Ward)	Cr Gibson Cr Howe Cr Morgan Cr Campbell Alt: Cr Harriman	Up to 15 members: One representative each from GLaWAC Latrobe City Tourism Association Latrobe City Economic Development representative (LCC officer) Latrobe City Arts & Events Manager Up to seven representatives with an interest in key subject areas Latrobe City Council Events and Tourism Representatives (ex-officio)	Bi-monthly	The Committee is established to: - Provide advice to Council on policies and strategies for furthering the development of tourism within Latrobe City and an avenue for consultation and exchange between Council and the tourism industry regarding issues and maximising tourism opportunities. - Consider proposals for major event selection and funding applications received and make recommendations to Council in relation to the selection and funding of such events; - Provide advice in relation to the development and submission of event funding applications; and - Provide advice to Council in relation to the planning and development of major events and major event infrastructure in Latrobe City.	
Moe Southside Community Precinct Advisory Committee	Advisory Committee	Up to two Councillors	Cr Pugsley Cr Gibson	Up to two Councillors Up to two community representatives 1 Council Officer Up to 5 representatives from the following user groups - Moe Cricket Club - Moe Football Netball Club - Moe Urban Fire Brigade - Moe South Street Primary School - Moe P.L.A.C.E.	Bi monthly	The Committee is established to: (a) share information between users1 of the Precinct; (b) provide advice, information and feedback in relation to the Precinct and its surrounding area on operational and maintenance matters; (c) provide advice, information and feedback to Latrobe City Council in relation to amenities, facilities and events for the Precinct and surrounding areas.	Moe Ward

Regional Carpark Fund Multi-Level Carpark Project Reference Group (2 Kay Street, Traralgon)	Advisory Committee	Up to two Councillors	Cr Howe Cr Harriman	Two x Councillors, one of whom shall be nominated as Chair. One x Local Residents Group representative. One x Grey Street Primary School appointed Representative. One x Community representative One x Latrobe City Business Chamber appointed Representative. Up to Two x adjoining property owners that own an adjoining property but do not run a business from that property Up to Two x adjoining business operators that run a business from an adjoining property where they are not the property owner One x State Government Representative. LCC officers One x LCC Project Sponsor (GM RCPA). One x Project Owner (Senior PM RCPF). One x Project Manager. One x Project Officer. LCC officers as required.	Monthly or as necessary	The PRG's role is to report to the Council and provide appropriate advice, information, and feedback on matters relevant to this Terms of Reference in order to facilitate decision making by the Council in relation to the discharge of its responsibilities. 2.2. The PRG is an advisory group only and has no delegated decision-making authority. 2.3. The PRG is to provide strategic input for consideration, and not to provide input directed at personal benefit or against the objectives of the Project. 2.4. The PRG is established to: 2.4.1. Provide an interface between Council, the Project Control Group (PCG), the Project Assurance Group (PAG) and the wider community. 2.4.2. Provide specific feedback to the Project Assurance Group about elements of the project at a strategic level. 2.4.3. Provide advice to Council on issues relating to the development of the multi-level carpark project at 2 Kay Street, Traralgon. 2.4.4. Provide feedback and support for community engagement strategies with the wider community and stakeholders. 2.4.5. Act as advocates for the project with the wider community.	Loy Yang ward
Sporting Hall of Fame Committee	Advisory Committee	Up to two Councillors	Cr Harriman Cr Barnes	2 Councillors 3 Community representatives	Monthly or as deemed necessary	The Committee is established to: 2.3.1. To engage the community in both contributing to, and sharing in the success of the Latrobe City Sporting Hall of Fame. 2.3.2. Manage the nomination process, for inducing new Members and Legends into the Sporting Hall of Fame every four years, in line with the Commonwealth Games.	
Ted Summerton Reserve 2023 Upgrades – Project Reference Group	Advisory Committee	Up to two Councillors	Chair: Cr Gibson Cr Pugsley	Up to two x Councillors, one whom shall be nominated as Chair One representative of the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation where GLaWAC chooses to nominate a representative One x AFL Victoria nominated representative One x Cricket Victoria nominated representative One x Cricket Latrobe Valley nominated representative One x Moe Football Netball Club nominated representative One x Moe Cricket Club nominated representative One x Moe Fire Brigade nominated representative One x Sport and Recreation Victoria nominated representative LCC officers One x LCC Project Owner (including PRG secretariat) One x Project Manager LCC officers as required (Ex Officio)	Monthly or as deemed necessary	The PRG is established to: 2.3.1. Provide an interface between Council, the Project Steering Committee (PSC) and the wider community. 2.3.2. Provide specific feedback to the Project Steering Committee about elements of the project where members of the Ted Summerton 2023 Upgrades PRG have specialist expertise. 2.3.3. Provide advice to Council on issues relating to the infrastructure upgrades at Ted Summerton Reserve. 2.3.4. Provide feedback and support for community engagement strategies with the wider community and stakeholders. 2.3.5. Act as advocates for the project with the wider community.	Moe Ward
Traralgon Flood Recovery Project Stage 1 - Project Reference Group	Advisory Committee	Up to three Councillors	Cr Howe Cr Harriman Cr Potter	GM RCPA – Jody Riordan Manager City Assets – Josh Wilson Coordinator Building Projects – Karen Tsebelis Project Manager Project Support Officer One representative of the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation where GLaWAC chooses to nominate a representative Two representatives from the Traralgon Football Netball Club One x Football and one x Netball) One representative from the Traralgon Boxing Club One representative from the Ex-Students Cricket Club One representative from Sport and Recreation Victoria (State Government)	Fortnightly until August 2023 Then monthly	Stage 1 of the Traralgon Flood Recovery Project (TFRP) has been funded via several streams of funding notably by Council, the State Government, and the Federal Government which includes the following projects Multi Use Pavilion at the Traralgon Recreation Reserve; and Indoor Multi Sports Hall at Glenview Park, Traralgon.	
Traralgon Recreation Reserve and Showgrounds Advisory Committee	Advisory Committee	Up to two Councillors	Cr Harriman Cr Campbell	Up to two Councillors Up to 11 representatives nominated from each of the following: Traralgon Football Netball Club Traralgon and District Agricultural Society Ex Students Cricket Club TEDAS Traralgon Men's Shed Traralgon Bridge Club Traralgon Urban Fire Brigade Traralgon Amateur Boxing Club South and Central Axeman Association Traralgon Pigeon Club Traralgon Playgroup Inc Up to 2 community representatives	Bi monthly	The Committee is established to: (a) share information between other resident users of the recreation reserve and showgrounds and Latrobe City Council regarding the Traralgon Recreation Reserve and Showgrounds; (b) provide advice, information and feedback in relation to the reserve and showgrounds and its surrounding area on operational and maintenance matters; (c) provide advice, information and feedback to Latrobe City Council in relation to amenities, facilities and events for the reserve and showgrounds and surrounding areas.	Loy Yang ward
Victory Park Precinct Advisory Committee	Advisory Committee	Up to two Councillors	Cr Harriman Cr Campbell	Up to two Councillors Up to 7 representatives from: Traralgon Lions Club City of Traralgon Band Latrobe Valley Community Choir 1st Traralgon Scouts Gippsland Model Engineering Society Monomeith Senior Citizens Centre Traralgon Community Development Association	Bi monthly	The Committee is established to: (a) share information between other users of Victory Park and Latrobe City Council regarding the Victory Park Precinct; (b) provide advice, information and feedback in relation to Victory Park and its surrounding area on operational and maintenance matters; (c) provide advice, information and feedback to Latrobe City Council in relation to amenities, facilities and events for Victory Park and surrounding areas.	Loy Yang ward
Baillie Reserve Tyers Community Asset Committee	Community Asset Committee	One Councillor	Cr Howe	The Committee will comprise of up to 8 members being: (a) 1 Councillor; (b) 1 Council officer; Community Asset Committee Terms of Reference Page 5 of 12 (c) 3 representatives nominated from each of the following user groups: - 1 representative of Traralgon Tyers United Football Netball Club; - 1 representative of Tyers Soccer Club; and - 1 representative of Tyers Tennis Club. (d) 1 representative of the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation where GLaWAC chooses to nominate a representative; and (e) up to 4 community representatives who must be residents of the Latrobe City municipality (unless otherwise approved by Council) or a number of representatives as determined by Council not connected with the user groups specified in paragraph (c).	At least four per year	The purpose and role of the Committee is to act as an agent of Latrobe City Council and not as an independent entity in operating and managing the Reserve which is entrusted in the Committee's care and to undertake functions relating to the Reserve	Tyers Ward

Callignee and Traralgon South Sporting Facilities Community Asset Committee	Community Asset Committee	One Councillor	Cr Campbell	(a) 1 Councillor; (b) 1 Council officer; (c) 4 representatives of the following user groups: □ 1 representative of Traralgon South Tennis Cub; □ 1 representative of CATS Cricket Club; □ 1 representative of Traralgon South Netball Club; □ 1 representative of Traralgon South Badminton Club; (d) 1 representative of the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation they choose to nominate a representative; and (e) up to 3 community representatives who must be residents of the Latrobe City municipality (unless otherwise approved by Council) or a number of representatives as determined by Council not connected with user groups specified in paragraph (c).	At least four per year	The purpose and role of the Committee is to act as an agent of Latrobe City Council and not as an independent entity in operating and managing the Facility which is entrusted to the Committee's care and to undertake functions relating to the Facility	Jeeralang Ward
Crinigan Bushland Reserve Community Asset Committee	Community Asset Committee	Two councillors	Cr Morgan Alt: Cr Lund	(a) 2 Councillors; (b) 1 Council officer; (c) 1 representative of the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation where GLaWAC chooses to nominate a representative; (d) 1 representative of the Maryvale Private Hospital; and (e) up to 7 community representatives who must be residents of the Latrobe City municipality (unless otherwise approved by Council) or a number of representatives as determined by Council.	At least four per year	The purpose and role of the Committee is to act as an agent of Latrobe City Council and not as an independent entity in operating and managing the Crinigan Bushland Reserve which is entrusted to the Committee's care and to undertake functions relating to the Crinigan Bushland Reserve	Yallourn Ward
Edward Hunter Heritage Bush Reserve Community Asset Committee	Community Asset Committee	Two councillors	Cr Pugsley Cr Gibson	The Committee will comprise of up to 11 members appointed by the Council being: (a) 2 Councillors; (b) 1 Council officer; (c) 1 representative of the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation where GLaWAC chooses to nominate a representative; and (d) up to 7 community representatives who must be residents of the Latrobe City municipality (unless otherwise approved by Council) or a number of representatives as determined by Council.	At least four per year	The purpose and role of the Committee is to act as an agent of Latrobe City Council and not as an independent entity in operating and managing the Edward Hunter Heritage Bushland Reserve which is entrusted to the Committee's care and to undertake functions relating to the Edward Hunter Heritage Bushland Reserve	Moe Ward
George Bates Reserve Community Asset Committee	Community Asset Committee	Up to two Councillors	Cr Morgan Alt: Cr Pugsley	The Committee will comprise of up to 8 members being: (a) Up to 2 Councillors; (b) 1 Council officer; Community Asset Committee Terms of Reference Page 5 of 12 (c) 2 representatives nominated from each of the following user groups: □ 1 representative of Yallourn North Football Netball Club; □ 1 representative of Yallourn North Cricket Club; (d) 1 representative of the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation where GLaWAC chooses to	At least four per year	The purpose and role of the Committee is to act as an agent of Latrobe City Council and not as an independent entity in operating and managing the Reserve which is entrusted in the Committee's care and to undertake functions relating to the Reserve	Yallourn Ward
Latrobe Regional Airport Community Asset Committee	Community Asset Committee	One Councillor	Cr Howe Alt: Cr Barnes Alt: Cr Potter	The Board will comprise of up to 10 members appointed by the Council being: a) 1 Latrobe City Councillor; who will also be Chairperson of the Committee b) 1 Latrobe City Officer namely the Manager Economic Development or equivalent role as may exist from time to time. c) 1 representative of the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation where GLaWAC chooses to nominate a representative; and d) 7 independent members from the community.	Every two months	The purpose and role of the Board is to act as an agent of Latrobe City Council and not as an independent entity in managing the Airport which is entrusted in the Board's care and to undertake functions and duties relating to the Airport	Morwell River Ward
Mathison Park Community Asset Committee	Community Asset Committee	Up to two Councillors	Cr Potter Alternate Cr Morgan	The Committee will comprise of up to 9 members appointed by the Council being: (a) Up to 2 Councillors; (b) 1 Council officer; (c) 1 representative of the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation where GLaWAC chooses to nominate a representative; and (d) up to 9 community representatives who must be residents of the Latrobe City municipality unless otherwise approved by Council.	At least four per year	The purpose and role of the Committee is to act as an agent of Latrobe City Council and not as an independent entity in operating and managing the Facility which is entrusted to the Committee's care and to undertake functions relating to the Facility	Budgerie Ward
Morwell Centenary Rose Garden Community Asset Committee	Community Asset Committee	One Councillor	Cr Morgan Alt: Cr Lund	The Committee will comprise of up to 14 members appointed by the Council being: (a) 1 Councillor; (b) 2 Council officers; (c) 1 representative of the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation where GLaWAC chooses to nominate a representative; and (d) up to 4 community representatives; (e) up to 6 volunteers nominated by the Friends of Morwell Centenary Rose Garden Group (Friends Group).	At least six per year	The principle purpose and role of the Committee is to manage and maintain the Rose Garden to ensure that the original aims when the Rose Garden was first established are continued	Morwell River Ward
Ollerton Avenue Bushland Reserve Community Asset Committee	Community Asset Committee	Two councillors	Cr Pugsley Cr Gibson	The Committee will comprise of up to 11 members appointed by the Council being: (a) 2 Councillors; (b) 1 Council officer; (c) 1 representative of the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation where GLaWAC chooses to nominate a representative; (e) up to 7 community representatives who must be residents of the Latrobe City municipality (unless otherwise approved by Council) or a number of representatives as determined by Council.	At least four per year	The purpose and role of the Committee is to act as an agent of Latrobe City Council and not as an independent entity in operating and managing the Ollerton Avenue Bushland Reserve which is entrusted to the Committee's care and to undertake functions relating to the Ollerton Avenue Bushland Reserve	Newborough Ward
Traralgon Railway Reservoir Conservation Reserve Community Asset Committee	Community Asset Committee	Up to three Councillors	Cr Harriman Cr Campbell	The Committee will comprise of up to 13 members appointed by the Council being: (a) Up to 3 Councillors; (b) 1 Council officer; (c) 1 representative of the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation where they choose to nominate a representative; and (d) up to 8 community representatives who must be residents of the Latrobe City municipality unless otherwise approved by Council.	At least four per year	The role of the Committee is to act as an agent of Latrobe City Council and not as an independent entity in operating and managing the Facility which is entrusted in the Committee's care and to undertake functions relating to the Facility	Loy Yang Ward
Yallourn North Community Housing Community Asset Committee	Community Asset Committee	One Councillor	Cr Morgan	The Committee will comprise of up to 9 members appointed by the Council being: (a) 1 Councillor; (b) 1 Council officer; (c) 1 representative of the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation where GLaWAC chooses to nominate a representative; and (d) up to 6 community representatives, one of whom will be a resident of the Units.	At least three per year	The purpose and role of the Committee is to act as an agent of Latrobe City Council and not as an independent entity in managing the Units which are entrusted in the Committee's care and to undertake functions relating to the Facility	Yallourn Ward
Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee	Other	Nil Councillors may be appointed as community representatives.	Cr Lund Cr Gibson Cr Potter Cr Pugsley	As determined by the EM Act 2013 Chaired by Officer delegated by the CEO Representatives from Municipal council/ Alpine Resort Management Board Victoria Police Fire Rescue Victoria Country Fire Authority Ambulance Victoria Victoria State Emergency Service Australian Red Cross Department of Health and Human Services	TBC	The peak emergency management planning body in Latrobe. There is no requirement for a Councillor to be on this Committee. Currently, there is a practice of at least one Councillor joining in a community representative member position. This committee reports to the Regional Emergency Management Planning Committee (non-council Committee).	
Audit and Risk Committee	Statutory Committee	Two Councillors One Alternate	Cr Campbell Cr Potter Alt: Mayor	The Council will appoint as members of the Committee: - two Councillors and one alternate; and - three (3) external independent members, one of whom will be appointed by Council as Chairperson of the Committee.	At least four per year	The Audit and Risk Committee's purpose is to support Council in discharging its oversight responsibilities related to financial and performance reporting, risk management, fraud prevention systems and control, maintenance of a sound internal control environment, assurance activities including internal and external audit and Council's performance with regard to compliance with its policies and legislative and regulatory requirements.	

Alliance of Councils for Rail Freight Development	External Committees and Associations		Cr Pugsley Cr Morgan	26 rural, regional and metropolitan municipalities in Victoria	Unknown	The Rail Freight Alliance represents the Local Government Sector in Victoria and adjoining States in freight logistics interests connecting Victoria nationally and internationally	
Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) National General Assembly	External Committees and Associations	The Mayor or delegate	Cr Gibson		Annually	Voting on motions at the National General Assembly	
Gippsdown Reserve Committee of Management Inc. (by invitation)	External Committees and Associations		Cr Pugsley Cr Gibson Cr Howe	Unknown - Committee of Management	Unknown	Old Gippsdown was established in 1968 with the aim of preserving the heritage and telling the story of the region, through a collection of buildings and artefacts. It is an historical village with 35 relocated buildings from Gippsland and 10 others being built to complete the town.	
Hazelwood Rehab Project - Environment Review Committee	External Committees and Associations	One Councillor	Cr Morgan	VFF Morwell River Wetlands Committee/Federation University Australia Latrobe Valley Field Naturalist Club Latrobe City Council Councillor Latrobe City Council Environmental Planner SRW DEECA EPA WGCMA Engle Hazelwood Environmental Manager (Chairperson) Engle Hazelwood Environment Officer Engle Hazelwood Project Director (optional)	At least twice per year	The ERC provides an interface between Hazelwood and its stakeholders to collaborate, at a strategic level, relating to environmental concerns with its key operations, potential benefits to community and environmental outcomes, including: • engaging with the community on environment protection; • focussing on continuous improvement on environmental issues and opportunities, and working towards achieving shared objectives; • having strategic discussions that challenge and influence the business in constructive ways, knowledge sharing and support the delivery of improved environmental outcomes; and • providing a forum to enhance two way communication and developing relationships for the benefit of the environment.	
Latrobe City Trust	External Committees and Associations		Cr Gibson Cr Potter Cr Harriman	The Trust Deed does not have a prescriptive requirements about Councillor membership. There have been three Trustees, in addition to the Chief Executive Officer and the Mayor, which in recent times have been Councillors.	Bi-monthly	The Latrobe City Trust was settled by Loy Lang Power Management Pty Ltd in 1999 to raise funds and encourage local philanthropy to support individuals and communities across what is now Latrobe City through the distribution of grants.	Moe /Yallourn Ward
Latrobe Valley Mine Rehabilitation Advisory Committee	External Committees and Associations		Cr Morgan Alt: Cr Potter	TBC	Unknown	The Latrobe Valley Mine Rehabilitation Advisory Committee comprises representation from a broad range of stakeholder groups with an interest in mine rehabilitation in the Latrobe Valley	
Moe Yallourn Rail Trail Committee of Management	External Committees and Associations		Cr Gibson Cr Pugsley	Unknown	Monthly	1. To manage and develop the Moe-Yallourn Rail Trail. 2. To develop and implement a long-term maintenance and development plan. 3. To ensure the protection of remnant native flora and fauna, control of noxious weeds, pest plants and animals and upkeep walking tracks. 4. To improve the rail trail environmentally. 5. To identify and reduce/remove risks for rail trail users. 6. To facilitate and promote educational programs to provide better understanding of the rail trail for all users.	
Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) Representative	External Committees and Associations	One Delegate and one substitute delegate	Cr Gibson Cr Campbell (Substitute)	Nomination by member LGAs	Unknown	The MAV is a membership association and the legislated peak body for local government in Victoria.	
National Timber Councils Association	External Committees and Associations	one delegate and one alternate	Cr Harriman Alt: Cr Barnes	Network of councils involved in forestry and plantation	Unknown	The National Timber Councils Association Incorporated has been formed to provide local government with a peak national body advocating from a local perspective on issues affecting local communities, industry, the environment and government in timber regions.	
One Gippsland	External Committees and Associations	Mayor	Cr Gibson	Bass Coast Shire Council; Baw Baw Shire Council; East Gippsland Shire Council; Federation University; Food & Fibre Gippsland Latrobe City Council; South Gippsland Shire Council; Destination Gippsland; Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation; TAFE Gippsland; and Wellington Shire Council.	At least six annually	One Gippsland a peak regional advocacy body representing this diverse region. We aim to connect the dots between government, business and community, while also collectively working together to champion the interests of our region and our people.	
Regional Cities Victoria	External Committees and Associations	Mayor	Cr Gibson	Municipalities of Ballarat, Bendigo, Geelong, Horsham, Latrobe, Mildura, Shepparton, Wangaratta, Warrnambool and Wodonga	Bi-monthly	RCV is an alliance of regional cities dedicated to achieving real change in regional Victoria through policy development and active implementation of those policies.	
Roadsafe Gippsland Community Road Safety Council	External Committees and Associations		Cr Howe Cr Morgan	Unknown	Unknown	Reducing Road Trauma	
South East Australian Transport Strategy (SEATS)	External Committees and Associations		Cr Pugsley	Unknown	Unknown	SEATS has developed the South East Transport Strategy which collectively identifies a number of Priority Projects that go beyond the boundaries of individual local councils and benefit the entire region and beyond.	
Timber Towns Victoria	External Committees and Associations	Via membership and nomination	Cr Harriman Alt: Cr Barnes	Via membership and nomination	Bi-monthly	Timber Towns Victoria (TTV) is an incorporated Local Government Association formed in the early 1980s, representing the interests of municipal councils in relation to forestry on both public and private land.	
Victorian Farmers Federation Latrobe Working Group	External Committees and Associations	One Councillor	Cr Howe Alt: Cr Potter	Unknown	As Required	The working group allows for both parties to discuss a broad range of topics such as weed management, road and drainage issues, funding opportunities, regulation/planning changes and the effects climate change has on farming.	

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

PURPOSE

To seek approval of the revised Terms of Reference and the process for the appointment of Committee Members.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- At the Council Meeting on 28 July Council endorsed the Terms of Reference (ToR) for a new Economic Development Advisory Committee (Committee). At that meeting Council also approved officers to conduct an Expression of Interest process for up to eight external committee members and present a report to a future Council meeting.
- At the Council Briefing on 15 September 2025, a report was presented for discussion recommending the appointment of an Independent Chair for the Economic Development Advisory Committee, in accordance with Clause 3.2 of the ToR. Feedback from Councillors noted that there were no female candidates in the review of candidates for the role and requested Officers to review the process for appointment.
- Given the above feedback, Officers recommend a change to the ToR to require that all of the interested parties submit an Expression of Interest (Eoi) for consideration. Interested parties would be requested to nominate as a committee member and, if interested, Chair. Those parties that express an interest in being the Chair would be assessed against the selection criteria to determine a recommendation for Council's consideration. A revised ToR are attached at **Attachment 1**.
- A further report would then be prepared for Councillors to consider the Chair and Committee appointments.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. **adopts the revised Terms of Reference for the Economic Development Advisory Committee;**
2. **authorises Council officers to conduct an Expression of Interest process to identify and recommend suitable candidates for appointment as members of the Committee and Chair of the Committee; and**
3. **requests a further report be presented for consideration and appointment of Committee members and Chair.**

BACKGROUND

Council operates several committees to provide input and advice to Council across multiple areas. Latrobe City previously operated an Economic Development Advisory Committee, and although the ToR for this Committee were updated in 2023, the Committee wasn't formally convened.

Council noted that in view of the ongoing economic transformation, diversification and growth that is required for our community to thrive during the lead up and following the closure of the coal fired power stations, it is prudent to seek external advice from industry leaders to support Council's economic development and investment activities.

A further review of the ToR was undertaken to reflect the changing economic conditions and requirements. These draft ToR contained a clause that an Independent Chair would be directly appointed and the remaining members would be appointed via an Eol process.

Council officers developed a set of criteria to assist in the identification of a suitable candidate for Independent Chair. Three candidates were assessed against the criteria. A recommendation was contained in a report presented to a Council Briefing on 15 September 2025. Councillors noted at the briefing that there were no female candidates included in the assessment and requested officers review the candidate selection process.

ANALYSIS

It is important to have a representative group of industry leaders to provide advice to Council on issues and opportunities for growth/diversification. To be truly representative, diversity in the representation is needed. The consideration of candidates for the position of Chair did not reflect the importance of diversity in candidate consideration.

To address this issue, officers recommend a change to the ToR to require that all of the proposed members submit an Eol for consideration. Interested parties would be requested to nominate as a committee member and, if interested, Chair. Those parties that express an interest in being the Chair would be assessed against the selection criteria to determine a recommendation for Council's consideration.

RISK ASSESSMENT

RISK	RISK RATING	TREATMENT
STRATEGIC Not having a representative, active and effective Economic Development Advisory Committee with a strategic focus.	Low <i>Possible x Minor</i>	Councillors to approve the revised ToR. Councillors to appoint new committee members in line with the ToR criteria.

CONSULTATION

If the new ToR for the Committee are endorsed by Council, officers will develop a detailed communications plan to ensure the EoI for members of the Committee, is well communicated and engaged.

COMMUNICATION

If the new ToR for the Committee are endorsed by Council, officers will develop a detailed communications plan to ensure the EoI for members of the Committee, is well communicated and engaged.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Officers preparing this report have declared they do not have a conflict of interest in this matter under the provisions of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

APPENDIX 1 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Gender

A Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) under the *Gender Equality Act 2020* has not been conducted as this matter does not involve a program, service or policy with a significant and direct impact on the community.

A Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) under the *Gender Equality Act 2020* has been conducted as this Committee will have an impact on the community.

Consideration will need to be taken in the Committee proceedings and the EoI process to encourage women to participate by:

- using networks to spread the word about the committee and the EoI so women become aware of its existence;
- Providing a mentor/training/support to any women interested in the committee, ensuring the EoI form acknowledges these resources can be implemented if preferred;
- ensuring there is flexibility in the Committee's practices. For example, when will meetings be held and considering timings to make it easier for women to attend, keeping in mind things such as childcare requirements and the regularity of part time work for women;
- providing online attendance as a meeting option (again, more suited to women who may have other time requirements); and
- assuming more EoIs than committee positions are received, consider how committee members will be selected, and include women and/or diverse representatives on the selection panel.

Social

Not applicable.

Cultural

Not applicable.

Health

Not applicable.

Environmental

Not applicable.

Economic

The redefining of the Committee will assist in the economic growth and diversification of Latrobe City.

Financial

Costs to deliver the Committee will be approximately \$20,000 per year which will need to be considered as part of a future budget allocation. This includes remuneration for the Chair at \$1,500 per meeting and Committee members \$1,000 per meeting, plus reasonable travel expenses. These fees are in line with the Audit and Risk Committee members fee structure. Current internal resources can manage the administration of the Committee.

Attachments

1. Revised Economic Development Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

10.3

Economic Development Advisory Committee

- 1 Revised Economic Development Advisory Committee
Terms of Reference 153

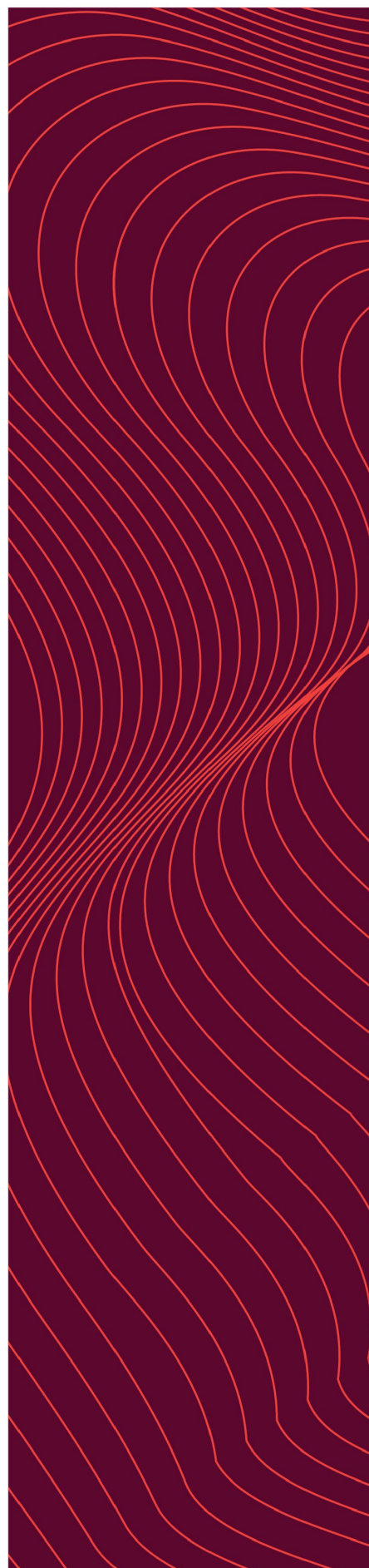


Economic Development Advisory Committee

Terms of Reference

December 2025

DRAFT



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1. Establishment of the Committee

- 1.1 The Economic Development Committee (hereinafter referred to as "the Committee"), is a formally appointed Advisory Committee of Latrobe City Council established for the purposes of providing advice to Council.
- 1.2 The Committee will consist of a maximum of eight external members, including the allocation of an external Committee Chair, and will be appointed at Councils discretion, by formal resolution of Council.
- 1.3 New members of the committee will be identified through a public Expression of Interest (Eoi) process. The Eoi will ensure the strategic intention of the committee is understood by applicants.
- 1.4 External members will be on a two-year membership, with an ability to re-elect.
- 1.5 Two Councillors will be allocated to the committee annually, as part of the annual committee allocation process.
- 1.6 The membership of this Committee and these Terms of Reference will be adopted by resolution of Latrobe City Council at a Council Meeting.

2. Objectives

- 2.1 The Committee's role is to report to the Council and provide appropriate advice, information and feedback on matters relevant to this Terms of Reference to facilitate decision making by the Council.
- 2.2 The Committee is an advisory committee only and has no delegated decision-making authority.
- 2.3 The Committee is established to:
 - 2.3.1 Provide industry sector market intelligence and sector specific opportunities;
 - 2.3.2 Provide input and guidance in relation to the growth and diversification of the Latrobe City economy;
 - 2.3.3 Provide guidance on economic development opportunities which come to the attention of the Committee;
 - 2.3.4 Perform other activities related to this Terms of Reference as requested by the Council.
- 2.4 The Committee will be asked to provide guidance, input or opportunities that align with and facilitate the implementation and direction of the Council Plan, and the Latrobe City Economic Development Strategy 2025-2029, once adopted by Council.

3. Membership

Composition of the Committee

- 3.1 The committee shall comprise of up to ten members, comprising of:
 - 3.1.1 Up to two Councillors;
 - 3.1.2 Up to eight representatives from industry sectors identified as core economic strengths in Latrobe City. Those sectors are identified as, but not limited to the following:
 - 3.1.2.1 Existing and New Energy;
 - 3.1.2.2 Defence Capability;
 - 3.1.2.3 Advanced Manufacturing;

- 3.1.2.4 Food and Fibre;
- 3.1.2.5 Civil and Commercial Development;
- 3.1.2.6 Advanced Air Mobility;
- 3.1.2.7 Circular Economy.
- 3.1.3 A representative of the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC) where GLaWAC chooses to nominate a representative; and
- 3.1.4 The Latrobe City Chief Executive Officer may be engaged in the Committee from time to time, however, will not be identified as a formal member of the committee.
- 3.2 As part of the Expression of Interest process, interested parties will be invited to nominate to be the Chair of the Committee. All interested parties that nominate will be assessed against a selection criteria and a recommendation will be presented to Council for consideration and, if determined appropriate, appointed by formal resolution.
- 3.3 Secretariat of the Committee will be provided by Latrobe City Council Officers and meetings will be attended by the General Manager Investment and Growth, Manager Investment Attraction and Manager Business and Economic Development.

Length of appointment

- 3.4 The Committee shall be in place for as long as Latrobe City Council sees fit, and the appointed sector representative members shall be for a term of two (2) years.
- 3.5 Prior to the expiration of each term, there will be a call for nominations for the next term. Current Committee members can re-nominate.

Selection of members and filling of vacancies

- 3.6 Latrobe City Council officers will undertake a public EoI process, identifying members of the committee to align with a key set of criteria, that aligns with the Committee's strategic intent. The criteria are outlined as follows,
 - 3.6.1 The expertise of applicants in their sector of speciality;
 - 3.6.2 The applicants' identified and expressed connection to Economic and Industry leaders external to Latrobe City;
 - 3.6.3 The applicants' identified and expressed commitment to growing and supporting the economic diversification of Latrobe City;
 - 3.6.4 The applicants' expertise on similar committees, in both the private and public sector.
- 3.7 All members will be appointed at Councils discretion, and by formal resolution of Council.

Co-option of members

- 3.8 With the approval of the Chair, the Committee may invite other individuals to participate in the proceedings of the Committee on a regular or an occasional basis and including in the proceedings of any sub-committees formed.

Attendance at meetings

- 3.9 All Committee members are expected to attend each meeting.
- 3.10 A member who misses two consecutive meetings without a formal apology may at the discretion of Latrobe City Council have their term of office revoked.
- 3.11 A member who is unable to attend the majority of meetings during the year may at the discretion of Latrobe City Council have their term of office revoked.

Resignations

- 3.12 All resignations from members of the Committee are to be submitted in writing to the General Manager of the relevant division, Latrobe City Council, PO Box 264, Morwell VIC 3840.

4. Proceedings

Chair

- 4.1 The Committee Chair will be appointed in accordance with Clause 3.2
- 4.2 If the Chair is unavailable, they may nominate a replacement from the current membership of the Committee to chair the meeting.
- 4.3 The Chair will receive payment as set by Council, with review of the remuneration to be at Council's discretion.

Meeting schedule

- 4.4 Meetings of the Committee will be held twice per year, once in Melbourne and once in Latrobe City, or as may be deemed necessary by Latrobe City Council or the Committee to fulfil the objectives of the Committee. Special meetings may be held on an as-needs basis.

Meeting Expense Reimbursement

- 4.5 Committee members may be reimbursed on request for reasonable travel and accommodation costs directly associated with committee meeting attendance, to a maximum value of \$1,000 per member, per year.
- 4.6 Committee members must provide appropriate supporting documentation to substantiate the claim as appropriate to the type of claim, including original invoices and receipts. If sufficient supporting documentation is not provided, claims will not be considered.
- 4.7 Claims for reimbursement must be submitted within 60 days of an expense being incurred.

Meeting procedures

- 4.8 Meetings will follow standard meeting procedures as established in any guidance material and outlined in these terms of reference for Advisory Committees provided (see appendix one for the agenda template).
- 4.9 Members are expected to comply with the confidential information provisions contained in the *Local Government Act 2020* and must treat information they receive as confidential unless otherwise advised. Members must not use confidential information other than for the purpose of performing their function as a member of the Committee.
- 4.10 If a member has a general or material conflict of interest as defined in the *Local Government Act 2020* regarding an item to be considered or discussed by the Committee, the member must disclose this to the Chair if they are attending the meeting.
 - 4.10.1 Once a declaration of either general or material conflict of interest has been made, the member must leave the room and remain outside until the conclusion of the relevant discussion. The time of leaving the meeting room and the time of their return must be recorded in the minutes or notes of the meeting.
- 4.11 All recommendations, proposals and advice must be directed through the Chair.

Quorum

- 4.12 A majority of the members constitutes a quorum.
- 4.13 If at any Committee meeting a quorum is not present within 30 minutes after the time appointed for the meeting, the meeting shall be deemed adjourned.

Minutes of the Meeting

- 4.14 A Latrobe City Officer or authorised agent shall take the minutes of each Committee meeting.
- 4.15 The minutes shall be in a standard format including a record of those present, apologies for absence, adoption of previous minutes and a list of adopted actions and resolutions of the Committee (see appendix two for the minutes template).

- 4.16 The minutes shall be stored in the Latrobe City Council corporate filing system (currently Ci Anywhere electronic document and records management system).
- 4.17 The agenda shall be distributed at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting to all Committee members, including alternative representatives.
- 4.18 A copy of the minutes shall be distributed to all Committee members (including alternative representatives) within 10 working days of the meeting.

Reports to Council

- 4.19 With the approval of the Chair, a report to Council may be tabled on the Committee's progress towards the objectives included in this Terms of Reference.
- 4.20 Reports to Council should reflect a consensus of view. Where consensus cannot be reached, the report should clearly outline any differing points of view.
- 4.21 Reports to Council will be co-ordinated through the General Manager of the relevant division that the Committee falls under.


5. Review of Committee and Duration of the Committee

- 5.1 The Committee will cease to exist by resolution of the Council, or once the objectives at item 2.3 are demonstrated to have been met, whichever occurs first.
- 5.2 A review of the Committee will take place at least once every three years at which time the Terms of Reference will also be reviewed.
- 5.3 A review will be conducted on a self-assessment basis (unless otherwise determined by Council) with appropriate input sought from the Council, the CEO, all Committee members, management and any other stakeholders, as determined by Council.
- 5.4 The review must consider:
 - 5.4.1 The Committee's achievements;
 - 5.4.2 Whether there is a demonstrated need for the Committee to continue; and
 - 5.4.3 Any other relevant matter.


6. Authority and Compliance Requirements

- 6.1 The Committee is a consultative committee only and has no executive powers nor does it have any delegated decision making or financial authority.
- 6.2 Failure to comply with the provisions outlined in this Terms of Reference may result in termination of the Member's appointment.

Appendix 1: Agenda Template



Agenda



[Name] Advisory Committee

Date: 00/00/0000

Time: 00.00pm to 00.00pm



Location: [include specific meeting room and address]

Agenda items

No.	Item/description	Owner	Attachment
	Welcome and introduction	Chair	N/A
2	Apologies	All	
3	Declarations of Interest Members of the Committee are to declare any conflicts of interest or any interests in matters listed on the agenda.	All	
4	Confirmation of Minutes Confirmation of the previous minutes of the meeting.		
5	Matters arising from previous meeting Review of action progress from previous meeting.	All	
6	Reports/items for consideration Matters being presented for discussion in accordance with the terms of reference.		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List ▪ List 		
7	General business	All	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ List 		

Next meeting: 00 January, 00.00am to 00.00am

Appendix 2: Minutes Template

[Name] Advisory Committee Minutes

Date: 00/00/0000
 Time: 00.00pm to 00.00pm
 Location: [include specific meeting room and address]
 Chairperson: Name

No.	Item description
1	Present
	Apologies
3	Interest disclosures Members of the Committee declare any conflicts of interest or interest in matters discussed at the meeting. The following members of the Committee declared a Conflict of Interest at the meeting and left the meeting whilst the matter was being discussed: , Name, nme left 00.00am/pm, Time returned 00.00am/pm • Name, nme left 00.00am/pm, Time returned 00.00am/pm • Name, Time left 00.00am/pm, Time returned 00.00am/pm
4	Confirmation of minutes That the minutes of the meeting held on [date] of the [name] Advisory Committee be confirmed.
5	Matters arising from previous meeting List the item and action agreed and assign any follow up actions and expected timeframes. 1. Item heading Action(s): • List • List 2. Item heading Action(s): • List • List
6	Items for consideration List the item and action agreed and assign any follow up actions and expected timeframes. 3. Item heading Action(s): • List List 4. Item heading Action(s): • List List
	General business List the item and action agreed and assign any follow up actions and expected timeframes. 5. Item heading Action(s): • List , List 6. Item heading Action(s): • List List

Next meeting: 00 January, 00.00am to 00.00am, Location

AUTHORISATION OF COUNCIL OFFICERS UNDER THE PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT ACT 1987

PURPOSE

To seek authorisation of Ben Marchbank, Statutory Planner under section 147(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and section 313 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Through Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation, Council appoints specific officers to be authorised officers for the administration and enforcement of legislation under applicable Acts.
- By authorising Ben Marchbank, the officer will be able to perform their duties with respect to the planning powers and functions of the Council.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council, in the exercise of the powers conferred by section 147(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, resolves that:

- 1. Ben Marchbank be appointed and authorised as set out in the Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation attached to this report;**
- 2. the Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation comes into force immediately after the common seal of Council is affixed to the instrument, and remains in force until Council determines to vary or revoke it; and**
- 3. the Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation be sealed.**

BACKGROUND

There are often clauses within Acts or Regulations that state an “authorised officer” can undertake a specific function and therefore the authorised officer needs to be identified by role and officer name.

Section 147(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* provides for the following:

Any reference in this Act to an Authorised officer of a responsible authority or of the Department is a reference to an officer or employee of the authority or employee of the Department whom the authority or the Secretary to the Department (as the case requires) authorises in writing generally or in a particular case to carry out the duty or function or to exercise the power in connection with which the expression is used.

Section 313 of the *Local Government Act 2020* provides for the following:

- (1) *The Secretary, a Council or a person authorised by the Council either generally or in a particular case may institute proceedings in the corporate name of the Council for—*
 - (a) *the recovery of any municipal rates, service charges, special purpose charges, fees or other money due to the Council under any Act, regulation or local law; or*
 - (b) *the enforcement of any provision of any Act, regulation or local law for which the Council is responsible; or*
 - (c) *the recovery of any penalty or surcharge in relation to any offence under any Act, regulation or local law the enforcement of which is the responsibility of the Council; or*
 - (d) *any other purpose specified by the Council.*
- (2) *A Chief Executive Officer or person authorised by the Council either generally or in a particular case may represent the Council in all respects as though the Chief Executive Officer or person authorised by the Council was the party concerned in any proceedings in which the Council is a party or has an interest.*
- (3) *Proceedings for a summary offence under this Act may be commenced within the period of 3 years after the commission of the alleged offence.*

ANALYSIS

Section 147(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and section 313 of the *Local Government Act 2020* specifically require that the appointment of an authorised officer must come from Council.

RISK ASSESSMENT

RISK	RISK RATING	TREATMENT
COMPLIANCE Officers not authorised by Council; officers will be unable to adequately perform their duties.	Medium <i>Possible x Minor</i>	Provide authorisation to Planning Officer.
SERVICE DELIVERY Delays in processing decisions on planning applications.	Medium <i>Possible x Minor</i>	Provide authorisation to Planning Officer.
STRATEGIC Permit applicants may become frustrated with delays and appeal to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal.	Medium <i>Likely x Moderate</i>	Provide authorisation to Planning Officer.

CONSULTATION

Not applicable.

COMMUNICATION

Not applicable.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Officers preparing this report have declared they do not have a conflict of interest in this matter under the provisions of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

APPENDIX 1 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Gender

A Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) under the *Gender Equality Act 2020* has not been conducted as this matter does not involve a program, service or policy with a significant and direct impact on the community.

Social

Not applicable.

Cultural

Not applicable.

Health

Not applicable.

Environmental

Not applicable.

Economic

The authorisation of officers enables Council to support private and public investment.

Financial

The authorisation of the officer ensures that the officer is able to perform duties that they are required to undertake as part of their role.

Attachments

1. S11A - Ben Marchbank

10.4

Authorisation of Council Officers under the Planning & Environment Act 1987

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Maddocks Delegations and Authorisations

S11A Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation (Planning and Environment Act 1987)



Latrobe City Council

Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation
(Planning and Environment Act 1987 only)

December 2025

Ben Marchbank

Statutory Planner



Maddocks

**Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation
(Planning and Environment Act 1987)**

In this instrument "**officer**" means -

Ben Marchbank

By this instrument of appointment and authorisation Latrobe City Council -

1. under s 147(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* - appoints the officer to be an authorised officer for the purposes of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the regulations made under that Act; and
2. under s 313 of the *Local Government Act 2020* authorises the officer either generally or in a particular case to institute proceedings for offences against the Acts and regulations described in this instrument.

It is declared that this instrument -

- comes into force immediately upon its execution;
- remains in force until varied or revoked.

This instrument is authorised by a resolution of the Council on the Monday, 15 December 2025.

The Common Seal of LATROBE CITY COUNCIL

was affixed in accordance with Local Law No. 1

this day of 2025 in the presence of:

Steven Piasente – Chief Executive Officer

URGENT BUSINESS

11. URGENT BUSINESS

Business may be admitted to the meeting as urgent business in accordance with clause 20 of the Governance Rules, by resolution of the Council and only then if it:

- 20.1 Relates to or arises out of a matter which has arisen since distribution of the agenda; and
- 20.2 Cannot reasonably or conveniently be deferred until the next Council meeting.

REPORTS FOR NOTING

12. REPORTS FOR NOTING

Item Number 12.1 15 December 2025

Investment and Growth

MAYORS REPORT - INTERNATIONAL URBAN AND REGIONAL COOPERATION (IURC) WORKSHOPS BARCELONA, SPAIN

PURPOSE

To report on the Mayor's participation in Global Thematic Networking Workshops (Workshops) of the International Urban and Regional Cooperation (IURC) European Union - Asia and Australasia held at the Smart City Expo World Congress (SCEWC) 2025 in Barcelona, Spain.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Council approved at the Special Council Meeting on 14th October 2025 for the Mayor to attend the Global Thematic Networking Workshops (Workshops) of the International Urban and Regional Cooperation (IURC) European Union - Asia and Australasia held at the Smart City Expo World Congress (SCEWC) 2025 in Barcelona, Spain .
- The Mayor attended as a representative of One Gippsland.
- The IURC is a European Union (EU) program promoting multi-city cooperation on sustainable urban development, building partnerships between EU and non-EU cities.
- OneGippsland will be leading Gippsland's involvement in the IURC program pending approval by the One Gippsland board. Federation University, who also attended the workshops in Barcelona, have confirm their willingness to be involved in the IURC program.
- The Mayor's attendance at the Workshops presented the opportunity to meet other regions who have managed the challenges faced by Gippsland and Latrobe City specifically as well as the opportunity to directly engage with other program representatives. The objective of the meetings was to determine which regions would be a good match for Gippsland and to continue to collaborate with.
- A list of the one on one meetings can be found at **Attachment 1** and the specific focused areas in the analysis section of this report. A full summary of the workshops can be found at the link [here](#) as provided by the IURC.
- The Cities identified for Gippsland to collaborate with are West Greece, with a focus on food provenance and food traceability and Bremen, with a focus on on-shore wind, off-shore wind and hydrogen.

- As a next step OneGippsland will be writing to West Greece and Bremen to request and gauge their interest to partner with Gippsland under the IURC program.
- One Gippsland's continued involvement in the IURC program will be determined by the One Gippsland's Board at the February Board meeting.
- One of the future opportunities for Gippsland's participation in the IURC program will be for the partner regions to visit Gippsland and later in 2026 for representatives from Gippsland to visit West Greece and representatives from Latrobe City to visit Bremen.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the report on the Mayor's participation at the Global Thematic Networking Workshops (Workshops) of the International Urban and Regional Cooperation (IURC) European Union - Asia and Australasia held at the Smart City Expo World Congress (SCEWC) 2025 in Barcelona, Spain.

BACKGROUND

The IURC is a program of the European Union (EU) promoting multi-city cooperation on sustainable urban development, building partnerships between EU and non-EU cities.

The IURC is implemented in the Americas, China, Asia, and Australasia, with a central coordination service in Brussels, the EU capital.

The IURC EU-Asia and Australasia project operates in Japan, the Republic of Korea, China, Hong Kong SAR, Taiwan, Singapore, Australia, New Zealand, India, and Malaysia.

Activities to be implemented include geographic and thematic partnerships, training, advanced cooperation visits, networking events, and thematic reports. Activities started in September 2025 and will continue for two years.

One Gippsland

One Gippsland was approached by the IURC to lead the Gippsland participation in the program. At its September 2025 Board Meeting, One Gippsland members supported involvement on a provisional basis, entering discussions in good faith, with a six-month review to occur. One condition includes that there is no cost to One Gippsland members (Councils) to participate.

The IURC program is consistent with One Gippsland's position to encourage new industry and investment in the region.

Since August 2025, One Gippsland members have participated in several events and discussions through the IURC program, including an online international launch, in-person Australian launch (hosted by Melbourne City Council), introductory presentations and several online meetings.

At the special Council Meeting in October 2025, the Mayor was endorsed to attend the SCEWC to participate in the Global Thematic Networking Workshops with the requirement to bring back a written report to Council.

ANALYSIS

Areas of interest identified through the participation in Barcelona included:

- New energy for example possible green hydrogen future driven by offshore wind including hydrogen off biomethane potential, biogas.
- Training institutions, research and arrangements for offshore wind skill development.
- Modern Industrialisation, precision engineering, parts manufacturing, including supply chain for offshore wind.
- Interest in supply chain opportunities and attracting investment to the region.
- Partnering with Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft Institute, a leading organisation for application-orientated research on cutting edge technologies and innovation.

- Aerospace, civilian and defence application.
- Advanced farming and food tech with export expertise. Universities and research know-how in agri-food innovation and value-added product development. Integration of research with local producers to boost competitiveness.
- Sustainability and innovation; value-added traceability and providence of food products, new crops including precision farming, protected cropping, digitalisation and agri-tech, resilience and food security, collaboration practices.
- Agriculture/food tourism.

Details of the one on one meetings can be found in **Attachment 1** and included:

- Sofia Karveli & Sotirios Pavleas- Region of Western Greece.
- Tina Pezdirc Nograšek from the Ljubljana urban region in Slovenia.
- Patricia Szczygiel from the Pomorskie Region in Poland.
- Marcin Wajda and Aleksandra Szwed from the Mazovia region Poland.
- Julia Diers from the Bremen / Bremerhaven region in Germany.
- Maria Goulaptsi Head of Directorate of Innovation and Entrepreneurship Support Region of Central Macedonia (Cr Hersey met separately).
- Austrade Miguel Rios Gonzalez Investment Director Australian Trade and Investment Commission – Madrid.

Both West Greece and Bremen were deemed by the Mayor and the OneGippsland Chair, Cr Nathan Hersey as the best fit for Gippsland. West Greece has strong links between tourism and food and would be relevant to the Gippsland Agribusiness sector and Bremen strong connection to new energy with experience and interest in on shore, off shore wind, and hydrogen.

Costs

The IURC paid for the majority of the costs associated with attending the workshop, however the Mayor incurred \$920.00 in incidentals associated with the trip including travel to Melbourne airport, additional day accommodation, meals not covered by the program and travel at the conference.

Next Steps

One Gippsland will be writing to both Bremen and Western Greece to determine their interest in collaborating with Gippsland.

The One Gippsland Secretariat, and Federation University will be taking the lead in working with RMIT (the IURC lead in Australia) to drive Gippsland's involvement.

Over the next two months One Gippsland will be assessing Gippsland's ongoing involvement in the IURC program. A report will be presented to the One Gippsland board in February 2026 detailing recommendations including Gippsland's ongoing involvement, the agreed regions to work with, the agreed projects, the benefits and proposed outcomes for Gippsland.

RISK ASSESSMENT

RISK	RISK RATING	TREATMENT
STRATEGIC Latrobe City not continuing to be involved in the IURC program.	Low <i>Possible x Minor</i>	Continue to be involved in the One Gippsland discussions and in the development of the One Gippsland report outlining Latrobe City's involvement.

CONSULTATION

There has been no consultation in relation to Latrobe City's involvement with the IURC program.

COMMUNICATION

As the IURC program develops and it is more clear as to Latrobe City's involvement and the role of One Gippsland key messages will be prepared if and when required and shared with the community.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Officers preparing this report have declared they do not have a conflict of interest in this matter under the provisions of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

APPENDIX 1 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Gender

A Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) under the *Gender Equality Act 2020* has not been conducted as this matter does not involve a program, service or policy with a significant and direct impact on the community.

Social

Not applicable.

Cultural

Not applicable.

Health

Not applicable.

Environmental

Not applicable.

Economic

Not applicable.

Financial

The IURC paid for the majority of the costs associated with attending the workshop, however the Mayor incurred \$920.00 in incidentals associated with the trip, including travel to Melbourne airport, additional day accommodation, meals not covered by the program and travel at the conference.

Attachments

1. Attachment 1 - IURC meetings

12.1

Mayors Report - International Urban and Regional Cooperation (IURC) Workshops Barcelona, Spain

1	Attachment 1 - IURC meetings	178
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Attachment A – IURC One on One meetings**Gippsland IURC Analysis of project opportunities based on available information**

Potential partners: New energy ***Bremerhaven Germany**

Agri-tech ***Western Greece**

EU Region/EU City	Population	Economic	What can we share
Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes France	8m 70,000km ²	Energy, Aeronautics, Construction, Digital, Mechanics, Metallurgy, Robotics, Chemicals, Agriculture, Food & Forestry, Tourism	The region is known for its advanced industries, research and innovation, as well as for its green and digital transition policies. It has global partners. Interest: policies supporting innovation and decarbonization in industry, particularly through hydrogen technologies.
Basque country Spain	2.2m 7,200km ²		The Basque Construction Cluster shares expertise in industrialized building, digitalization (BIM, robotics, IoT), and sustainable housing models. We bring best practices in circular economy, social housing regeneration, and public-private collaboration, Main economic sectors: Advanced manufacturing, Automotive, Energy (renewables, hydrogen), Construction & Smart housing, Digital & Industry 4.0, Health & Biotechnology, Agri-food, Circular economy.
*Bremerhaven Germany One to One Meeting	118,000	43.2m cars exported Container terminal Frozen food and fish	Key sectors: Aerospace, automotive, maritime (low emissions port), wind and renewables, food and beverage. Possible green hydrogen future driven by offshore wind. Training institute offshore wind Modern Industrialisation- challenge re location of renewable energy source including hydrogen off biomethane? Interest in supply chain opportunities for offshore wind. 'Bremen Invest' for attracting investment to the region.

			Partnering with Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft Institute, a leading organisation for application-orientated research on cutting edge technologies and innovation. Contact: Julia Diers EU manager for the region, attending on behalf of her manager and new to the role. Was unable to provide much detail.
Central Macedonia	1.8m 18,810km ²		Food processing, textiles (design, smart fabrics, and niche production), chemicals & plastics (supporting both agriculture and manufacturing), construction materials, and machinery. Advanced farming and food tech (fruits, wine, dairy) with export expertise. Universities and research know-how in agri-food innovation and value-added product development. Integration of research with local producers to boost competitiveness.
Coimbra Portugal	140,000 319km ²	Tourism 500,000 visitors pa	Opportunities: How to train professionals adapted to the challenges of a sustainable tourism destination? How to implement sustainable practices that are accepted by both tourists and residents? How to create a comprehensive data collection and monitoring system that evaluates crucial indicators and engages tourists in promoting the destination?
Debrecen Hungary	328,700 461km ²	Education + research, industry + manufacturing, advanced industry Automotive plant planned	Waste/grey water reuse in battery and vehicle manufacturing. Wants to learn about financing and meeting circularity. Challenges: the regional city has skills and housing shortages. Competition from other regions. Growth v environment.
Emilia Romana Italy	4.5m 22,466km ²	Advanced manufacturing, automation, packaging, automotive, aerospace, agrifood, textile, medical devices, pharmaceuticals,	How open innovation ecosystems can boost competitiveness through clusters, research, business and academia. Best practices include strong public-private collaboration, international partnerships, and integration of research infrastructures, fostering sustainable growth, digital transformation, and knowledge transfer. Interest: How partner regions address the twin digital and energy transitions in advanced manufacturing. Particular interest in AI driving industrial

		IT/AI services, culture and creativity, tourism	modernization, resource efficiency, clean energy, global value chains, collaborations supported by policies.
Granada Spain	514,800 City		Notes: Tourism and service sector dependency. Ageing population. 18% unemployment. Environmental problems: Terrible air quality. Recycling rate – 14.9%. Limited water. Opportunities: Waste management, circularity, emissions reduction.
Ile-de-France	12.4m 12,000km ² Inc Paris		Hydrogen pioneer. Potential for geo-thermal. Interest: Clean tech, semi-conductors and quantum computing
Ljubljana Region Slovenia One to One meeting	555,948 2,334 km ² Ljubljana is the capital		Coastal region with 25 municipalities, urban and rural. Ljubljana home to a number of scientific institutes including chemistry and biology. IT and Finance largest service sector including pharmaceuticals and automotive. Precision engineering including automotive parts and aerospace. Advanced air mobility and aircraft manufacturer. Research advanced into building hydrogen engines for planes. Interest areas: Industrial modernisation – sustainability and circular economy Solutions; smart manufacturing and digitalization; value-added production examples: collaboration and innovation ecosystem, Agribusiness – Sustainability and innovation; value-added and new crops including precision farming, digitalisation and agri-tech, resilience and food security, collaboration practices Ag products include honey, hops, wine and pork. Contact: Tina Nogrsek

Mazovia Poland One to one meeting	5.5m 35,558km2 Contains Warsaw	Tourism + National Park Agriculture – orchards Petrochemicals	<p>Mazovia is Poland's most developed and largest region, home to Warsaw. It has a quarter of Poland's population and a third of Poland's GDP.</p> <p>It combines research and innovation potential with a diverse economy. Its Smart Specialisation Strategy focuses on safe food, smart systems in industry which includes a petrochemical industry and infrastructure, modern business ecosystem and high quality of life - driving sustainable, inclusive and digital transformation.</p> <p>Grants are available for companies to undertake entrepreneurial discovery processes.</p> <p>Interest area: Agri- Food Cluster</p> <p>dynamic centre for agriculture, food technology, and startups, with strong ties to scientific research and innovation. Roughly 30% of Poland's IMD (Innovation, Modernization, and Development) potential resides there, particularly in fruit, vegetable, dairy and diet-related production including trialling a zero-waste dairy processing factory.</p> <p>The region boasts a vibrant agritech startup ecosystem, and two local startups recently reached the finals of a national innovation competition — one specializing in logistics and the other in climate adaptation.</p> <p>Piotr also highlighted increasing investment in renewable energy, notably biogas plants and agricultural photovoltaics, illustrating how Mazovia is aligning agricultural modernization with green transition goals.</p> <p>Contact: Marvin Wanda</p>
Messina Sicily	220,000		<p>Massive tourism potential. Good at festivals and events. Great heritage/history. Challenges: Branding, knowledge, off-season travel</p> <p>Project to benefit both: Enhancing visitor numbers and sustainable tourism via – op VR technologies, heritage, off-season travel, branding, diving, food and</p>

			wine, eco tours, app development, community engagement, training guides and operators. Maybe start a sister tourism region exchange? Lots for us to give.
Prato Italy	200,000 City	Textiles – 3% of entire EU	Opportunities in tourism (proximity to Florence). Industrial tourism? Prato comments: Rethink the local tourism offer to valorise industrial assets and extend visitor stays. Co-design new tourism products with stakeholders, by exploiting digital tech such as a VR metaverse. Prato aims to boost its industrial tourism activities. Further, it wishes to introduce circularity in tourism business models by re-skilling the labour force and involving new stakeholders to co-design the new tourism offer.
Pomorskie Poland One to one meeting	Urban and rural Capital Gdansk Pop rural 851,502 Area 18,293		Has been a green energy region for ten years including on shore and commencement of offshore wind turbine building (largest in the country with one turbine 5MW in place). Nuclear potential for energy mix. Transmission of new energy to southern Poland. Considerable activity in work force development from secondary schools to tertiary including universities and trade skills Interest in aerospace civilian and defence application. Similarities outside the Clean Energy theme and growing renewables: Coastal location and important port region, tourism, forestry. Interest in use of technology for protection of crops and management of agricultural land. Mainly crops. Contact: Patricia /Adam Mikołajczyk
Sisak Moslavina Croatia	140,000	University – Metallurgy Oil refinery + chemicals	Heavy industry is important but so too is ag + forestry. Eco-tourism in forests. Climate + env stress.

	4,468km ²	Metal processing Ag + forestry (44% forest)	
Trier Germany	113,000 City	Mix of industry, services trade, and viticulture	Best practice circular economy Also notable for forestry
Val D'Oise France	1.3m 1,246km ² Paris region		Seem happy to collaborate on just about anything in Industrial Modernisation and Agri-food. Expertise in collaborative effort. Agrifood business park dedicated to food tech.
*Western Greece One to one meeting	648,000 11,350km ² Inc Patras		Has 13 regions with 3 research institutes with focus on start-ups and microelectronics. Significative experience in EU cooperation projects (more than 300 projects of more than €100m) Interest: Agri-Food + Industrial Modernisation with grants to businesses for innovation and work with researchers including food traceability and food systems. Strong links between tourism and food Highest production of strawberries in the region including export. Looking to new markets for exporting olive oil. Fishing industry off the coast including lakes system in the north. Interest in aqua circularity and energy savings, onshore wind and solar, food safety and providence including a support from EU from The Innovation Valley grant. Focus on climate change impact and adaptability Contact: Sofia Karvelli and Sotirios

LATROBE CITY COUNCIL LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTION 2024

PURPOSE

To provide an overview of the 2024 Latrobe City local government election process.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) conducted the 2024 general election for Latrobe City Council (Council) in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2020*. The election period took place over 17 September to 25 October 2024 inclusive.
- The election was conducted by postal voting. Data from the VEC indicated a total of 58,168 voters were enrolled and 41,562 ballot paper envelopes were returned, representing a voter turnout of 78.41%.
- Since the 2020 local government elections, Latrobe City's electoral structure changed from a four-ward structure, with multiple councillors for three of those wards, to nine single-member wards.
- There were twenty candidates in total across the municipality. Of the nine single-member wards, eight were contested and one, Newborough Ward, was uncontested with the single candidate elected unopposed.
- A vote recount occurred in Yallourn Ward due to a close margin, resulting in the other candidate being declared the successful candidate after the recount. An application was made to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) seeking a further recount. However, VCAT found in favour of the VEC and ordered that no additional recount was required to be undertaken.
- Under the services agreement with the VEC, Council has paid \$510,533 (including GST) for 2024 election services to date. This figure includes the legal costs associated with the VCAT matter, which were \$35,568.
- Fifteen complaints were received by the VEC during the election, and can be broadly categorised as covering election conduct, candidate behaviour and administrative requirements.
- Non-voter follow-up and compulsory voting enforcement has been progressed by the VEC this year and will continue into 2026.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes this report.

BACKGROUND

Victorian local government elections are held every four years. The VEC acts as the statutory election services provider under section 263 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Latrobe City is comprised of nine single-member wards. This follows an electoral structure review which concluded in May 2024.

A timeline of the 2024 election is as follows:

- 7 August: Close of voters roll.
- 9 September: Candidate nominations open.
- 17 September: Candidate nominations close.
- 7 October: Voting opens.
- 25 October: Voting closes.
- 26 October: Election day – when the previous Council term formally ends.
- 11 November: Successful candidates declared.
- 27 November: VCAT proceeding initiated for Yallourn Ward.
- 11 April 2025: Judgment received in Yallourn Ward VCAT proceeding.

ANALYSIS

Turnout

The voter turnout of 78.41% was down from the figure of 79.27% at the 2020 general election. The rate of informal votes was also higher, at 4.57% compared to 3.51% in 2020. However these figures varied significantly within the individual wards, with turnout ranging from 73.85% to 82.47%, and informal voting from 3.57% to 6.49%.

It was noted in the VEC's report to Parliament on the 2024 elections that while there was an increase in voter turnout for metropolitan councils from 2020, there was a decrease for rural and regional councils, with the most noticeable decline being for municipalities that changed to a single-member ward structure.

Candidates

With twenty candidates across the nine single-member wards, this is a decrease from twenty-four candidates in 2020. This may have been due to the change to electoral structure. However, the VEC has reported an increase in candidates on average across the State.

Complaints

Fifteen complaints were received by the VEC during the election, around election conduct, candidate behaviour and administrative requirements. Where a complaint related to the election process contains allegations of potential breaches of the *Local Government Act 2020*, it is referred to the Local Government Inspectorate for review. Eight of the fifteen complaints were referred to the Inspectorate for the 2024 election. The total number of complaints appears to be in line with previous elections.

Cost

As the statutory election services provider, the VEC enters agreements with individual local councils to conduct each general election. The agreement sets out the services that will be provided by the VEC, and how the costs of those services will be charged to the relevant council.

Council includes general election costs in its annual budget process. For the 2024 election, \$569,947.47 was included in the budget which was based on the cost estimate provided by the VEC, being election costs of \$496,093.86 and compulsory voting enforcement costs of \$73,853.61. As legal proceedings would generally not be a part of the election process and cannot be foreseen in advance, potential legal costs do not form part of the costs estimate.

At the time of this report, Council has paid \$510,533.72 for 2024 election services, being \$399,574.30 for provision of election services, \$75,391.46 for provision of compulsory voting enforcement and \$35,567.96 for legal costs of the VCAT matter regarding the vote count in Yallourn Ward.

One final invoice is expected from the VEC in December 2025 for remaining compulsory voting enforcement services.

To date the VEC's actual costs invoiced to conduct the 2024 general election for Latrobe City Council are within the overall budgeted amount. Any unspent budget amounts will represent a saving against the adopted annual budget position, with the savings to be considered/utilised as part of a future budget process.

All figures noted above are inclusive of GST.

Yallourn Ward

The Yallourn Ward had two candidates standing for election. The original vote count returned a result of one candidate receiving three more votes than the other. Due to the close result, the VEC conducted a recount. On recount, the other candidate was declared the successful candidate by four votes.

On 27 November 2024, an application was made to VCAT requesting a stay of the election results for that ward, and a further recount of votes - *Wiebenga v Victorian Electoral Commission (No. 2)* (Review and Regulation) [2025] VCAT 320.

After a number of administrative matters in the proceeding were finalised, including substitution of applicants and withdrawal of the application for a stay of results, the

hearing took place on 13 March 2025. VCAT delivered its decision on 11 April 2025 that no further recount was required.

The total legal costs associated with the VCAT matter were \$47,423.94. Pursuant to the election services agreement and cost recovery proposal agreed by the parties, Council is responsible for the amount of \$35,567.96.

Compulsory Voting Enforcement

Failure to vote notices were mailed by the VEC between 17 February and 17 March 2025 to registered voters who were not recorded as having voted, with infringements then issued from 14 April to 19 May 2025 to individuals who did not respond with a sufficient reason or evidence for not voting. Penalty reminder notices were sent following close of the infringement notice period.

For each of the above steps, Council received prior communication from the VEC that notices were about to be issued. This was to allow our Customer Focus team to have the appropriate information available for any incoming contact from community members regarding the process, and requirement to make contact with the VEC.

Revenue from non-voting enforcement is returned to Council by the VEC. To date, \$165,327.65 has been received for the 2024 election. As enforcement is a process that can continue over a significant period, this has been in addition to amounts that have continued to be received during the 2024/25 and 2025/26 financial years for the 2016 and 2020 general elections.

RISK ASSESSMENT

RISK	RISK RATING	TREATMENT
FINANCIAL The costs of the election are not appropriately planned for, leading to negative budget impact.	Medium <i>Possible x Moderate</i>	Council includes an amount for each general council election in the budget, informed by the VEC costs estimate.
REPUTATIONAL/ STRATEGIC Perception that the election was not conducted fairly and transparently.	Medium <i>Possible x Moderate</i>	The election was conducted in accordance with the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> , with the ability for VCAT oversight.

CONSULTATION

As this report is a summary of the 2024 election, no further consultation was required.

COMMUNICATION

No additional communication is required in relation to this report.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Officers preparing this report have declared they do not have a conflict of interest in this matter under the provisions of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

APPENDIX 1 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Gender

A Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) under the *Gender Equality Act 2020* has not been conducted as this matter does not involve a program, service or policy with a significant and direct impact on the community.

Social

Not applicable.

Cultural

Not applicable.

Health

Not applicable.

Environmental

Not applicable.

Economic

Not applicable.

Financial

The cost of each election is included in the relevant Council budgets, based on cost estimates provided by the VEC. The estimate provided for the 2024 election was \$569,947.47, which did not include any potential litigation costs.

Attachments

Nil

13. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Nil reports

14. ITEMS FOR TABLING

Nil reports

**MEETING CLOSED TO
THE PUBLIC TO
CONSIDER
CONFIDENTIAL
INFORMATION**

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Section 66 of the *Local Government Act 2020* enables Council to close the meeting to the public to consider *confidential information* as defined in that Act.

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