



Date: Tuesday, 28 January 2025
Time: 3.00pm
Location: Loddon Shire Council Chambers, Wedderburn

MINUTES

Council Meeting

**MINUTES OF LODDON SHIRE COUNCIL
COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT THE LODDON SHIRE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, WEDDERBURN
ON TUESDAY, 28 JANUARY 2025 AT 3.00PM**

PRESENT: Cr Dan Straub (Mayor), Cr Nick Angelo, Cr Gavan Holt, Cr David Weaver and Cr Miki Wilson

IN ATTENDANCE: Lincoln Fitzgerald (Chief Executive Officer), Steven Phillips (Director Operations), Michelle Stedman (Director Corporate), David Stretch (Acting Director Community Wellbeing) and Lisa Clue (Manager Governance)

1 OPENING AFFIRMATION

The Mayor read the Opening Affirmation.

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Chief Executive Officer read the Acknowledgement of Country.

3 APOLOGIES

Nil

4 DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Nil

5 PREVIOUS MINUTES**5.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES****File Number:** FOL/19/45615**Author:** Lisa Clue, Manager Governance**Authoriser:** Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer**Attachments:** Nil**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council confirm the Minutes of the following meetings as previously circulated to Councillors:

1. Council Briefing of 17 December 2024
2. Council Meeting of 17 December 2024.

REPORT

This report seeks Council confirmation of Minutes from the December 2024 Council Briefing and Council Meeting, as previously circulated to Councillors.

RESOLUTION 2025/1**Moved:** Cr David Weaver**Seconded:** Cr Miki Wilson

That Council confirm the Minutes of the following meetings as previously circulated to Councillors:

1. Council Briefing of 17 December 2024
2. Council Meeting of 17 December 2024.

CARRIED

6 COUNCIL AUSPICED MEETINGS

6.1 RECORD OF COUNCIL AUSPICED MEETINGS

File Number: 02/01/001

Author: Lisa Clue, Manager Governance

Authoriser: Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer

Attachments: Nil

RECOMMENDATION

That Council confirm the records of the following auspiced meetings as detailed within this report:

1. Councillor Induction held 10 December 2024
2. Council Briefing held 17 December 2024.

Rule 35 of Council's Governance Rules requires a record of meetings conducted under the auspices of Council to be presented to the next available scheduled Council meeting for confirmation that must include:

- a) a record of which Councillors and officers attended the meeting;
- b) a summary of the matters considered in the meeting; and
- c) a record of any conflicts of interest disclosed by Councillors and officers and any Councillors or officers that left the meeting whilst a matter that their conflict of interest related to was being discussed.

Section 3 of the Governance Rules defines meetings conducted under the auspices of Council to mean a meeting of the kind described in section 131(1) of the Local Government Act 2020 and includes a meeting which:

- a) is schedule or planned for the purpose of discussing the business of Council or briefing Councillors;
- b) is attended by a majority of Councillors;
- c) is attended by at least one member of Council staff; and
- d) is not a Council meeting or delegated committee meeting.

This report seeks confirmation of a Councillor Induction session held on 10 December 2024 and the Council Briefing held on 17 December 2024.

Meeting details	<p>Councillor Induction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory and Strategic Planning • Introduction to Integrated Strategic Planning
Date	10 December 2024
Councillor Attendees	<p>Cr Straub (Mayor) Cr Angelo Cr Holt Cr Weaver Cr Wilson</p>
Staff/ Stakeholder representatives	<p>Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer Wendy Gladman, Director Community Wellbeing Steven Phillips, Director Operations Lisa Clue, Manager Governance</p> <p>Glenn Harvey, Manager Development and Compliance; Louise Johnston, Statutory Planning Coordinator; Carolyn Stephenson, Senior Strategic Planner; and Darcy Jackson, Statutory Planning Officer – items 1 and 2 below</p>
Item(s) discussed.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strategic Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan and Policy Development • Planning Scheme Amendments • Council Involvement • Planning Scheme Review • 2025 Project Opportunities 2. Statutory Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Victoria Planning Provisions and Planning Schemes • What is a Planning Permit? • The Planning Permit Process? • Council’s Role in the Planning Process 3. Introduction to Integrated Strategic Planning
Conflict of Interest Disclosures – Councillor/ officer making disclosure	Nil
Councillor/officer left room	n/a

Meeting details	Briefing
Date	17 December 2024
Councillor Attendees	Cr Straub (Mayor) Cr Angelo Cr Holt Cr Weaver Cr Wilson
Staff/ Stakeholder representatives	Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer Wendy Gladman, Director Community Wellbeing Steven Phillips, Director Operations Michelle Stedman, Director Corporate Lisa Clue, Manager Governance Kevin Leddin (Acting Manager Financial Services) – items 2 and 3 below Rosanne Lacorcica and Jeff Smith (Transmission Company Victoria) – item 4 below David Stretch (Manager Tourism and Economic Development) – items 4 and 5 below Louise Johnston (Statutory Planning Coordinator) and Glenn Harvey (Manager Development and Compliance) – item 6 below Jade Clymo – Planning Permit Applicant – item 6 below
Item(s) discussed.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review of Council Meeting Agenda 2. Finance Report for Quarter Ending 30 September 2024 3. Councillor Allowances 4. VNI West Project Update 5. Tourism and Economic Development Activity Report, July – December 2024 6. Planning Application 6009 – 565 Calivil Mail Road, Calivil 7. Rural Councils Victoria Nominations 8. General Business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication from the Treasurer of Victoria • Communication from Community Bank Inglewood & Districts • Victorian Economic Growth Statement • Rate Cap • Murray Darling Basin Plan • Australia Day Update • 30 Years of Loddon • Employment Enterprise Agreements • Local Government Sector Groups – Proposed Event • National General Assembly Motion • Christmas Break

Conflict of Interest Disclosures – Councillor/officer making disclosure	Nil
Councillor/officer left room	n/a

RESOLUTION 2025/2

Moved: Cr Nick Angelo

Seconded: Cr Gavan Holt

That Council confirm the records of the following auspiced meetings as detailed within this report:

1. Councillor Induction held 10 December 2024
2. Council Briefing held 17 December 2024.

CARRIED

7 REVIEW OF ACTIONS

7.1 REVIEW OF ACTIONS

File Number: 02/01/002

Author: Lisa Clue, Manager Governance

Authoriser: Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer

Attachments: 1. Resolutions acted upon since the December 2024 Council meeting

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive and note resolutions acted upon since the December 2024 Council meeting as attached to this report.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no conflict of interest for any Council staff member involved in the preparation of this report, or involved in the subject matter of the report.

REPORT

A document containing the status of actions arising from December Council meeting resolutions; one action from a September Council meeting resolution; and one action from a November Council meeting resolution, is attached to this Agenda report.

Three actions generated from December Council meeting resolutions have all been acted upon.

One action reported on as progressing at the December Council meeting relates to a resolution requiring a report to be provided to Council at the December 2024 or January 2025 Council meeting. This report, regarding amendments to Council's Governance Rules is contained within this January 2025 Council Agenda.

One action reported on as progressing at the December Council meeting relates to a report on Newbridge Water and Sewerage, which will be presented to the March 2025 Council meeting (in accordance with the resolution).

RESOLUTION 2025/3

Moved: Cr Miki Wilson

Seconded: Cr David Weaver

That Council receive and note resolutions acted upon since the December 2024 Council meeting as attached to this report.

CARRIED

8 MAYORAL REPORT**8.1 MAYORAL REPORT****File Number:** 02/01/001**Author:** Lisa Clue, Manager Governance**Authoriser:** Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer**Attachments:** Nil**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receive and note the Mayoral Report.

REPORT

Mayor Straub commenced his report by welcoming his fellow Councillors, Council staff and those viewing the meeting via the live stream back for the 2025 calendar year, and extended his best wishes to those affected by recent local tragedies.

Murray River Group of Councils	
20/01/2025 – 2025 Planning Meeting - Serpentine	
Other Council activities	
Date	Activity
	Various meetings with individuals and community groups, including Pyramid Hill Progress Association.
26/01/2025	Australia Day Celebrations – Dingee and Pyramid Hill

9 COUNCILLORS' REPORT**9.1 COUNCILLORS' REPORTS**

File Number: 02/01/001

Author: Lisa Clue, Manager Governance

Authoriser: Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer

Attachments: Nil

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive and note the Councillors' reports.

REPORT

Each Councillor presented a verbal report at the meeting.

Cr Weaver

Date	Event/Activity
	Tour of Boort District Health, Loddon Place (Aged Care) and Hospital
25/01/2025	Flavours of Loddon Food Truck Festival - Boort
26/01/2025	Australia Day Celebration - Boort

Cr Wilson

Date	Event/Activity
	Inglewood Lions Club get together
13/01/2025	Meeting with Council Officers regarding Inglewood Streetscape Project
	Site visits around the Shire
26/01/2025	Australia Day Celebrations – Inglewood and Bridgewater

Cr Angelo

Date	Event/Activity
20/12/2024	Kingower Community Christmas Function
21/12/2024	Carols - Eddington
26/01/2025	Australia Day Celebrations – Eddington, Newbridge and Tarnagulla

Cr Holt

Date	Event/Activity
23/12/2024	Staff Christmas Function - Wedderburn
26/01/2025	Australia Day Celebration - Wedderburn
	Wedderburn Harness Racing Club Cup Carnival

RESOLUTION 2025/4

Moved: Cr Nick Angelo

Seconded: Cr Miki Wilson

That Council receive and note the Mayoral and Councillors' reports.

CARRIED

10 DECISION REPORTS

10.1 GOVERNANCE RULES REVIEW

File Number:

Author: Lisa Clue, Manager Governance

Authoriser: Michelle Stedman, Director Corporate

Attachments: Nil

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Acknowledge that due to the scheduling of mandatory Councillor training and the Christmas/New Year holiday period, there has been limited time to brief incoming Councillors on this matter or discuss in detail other elements of the Governance Rules, and
2. Defer consideration of this matter until April 2025.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no conflict of interest for any Council staff member involved in the preparation of this report, or involved in the subject matter of the report.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION

The Loddon Shire Council Governance Rules v3 were adopted by Council on 22 August 2023.

At the August 2024 Council meeting, in response to a Notice of Motion, and following a period of community engagement, Council resolved to amend the Governance Rules with the inclusion of sub-clause 4 into Division 2 – Standards of conduct, item 30.

At the September 2024 Council Meeting, in response to a Notice of Motion, Councillors resolved the following:

That a report be provided to Council at a meeting in December 2024 or January 2025 on:

an amendment of Loddon Shire Council's Governance Rules to -

- a. removing 65, item (4)(b) - must relate to a matter of business on the meeting agenda*
- b. amending Rule 65, item (4)(c) to add a time period. Ie. Must not relate to subject matter previously responded to by Council in the last six months*

BACKGROUND

The *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) requires a Council to develop, adopt and keep in force Governance Rules for or with respect to a number of specific matters. While there is no legislated timeframe for review, a Council must ensure that a process of community engagement is followed prior to amending its Governance Rules.

At the September 2024 Council Meeting, in response to a Notice of Motion, Councillors resolved that a report be provided to Council at a meeting in December 2024 or January 2025 regarding an amendment to the Governance Rules as detailed in the 'Previous Council discussion' section of this report.

Model Governance Rules

In response to a recommendation contained within the Operation Sandon Special Report released by the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC) in 2023, a Local Government Steering Committee has been convened to guide development of Model Governance Rules to promote best practice council meeting procedures. Local Government Victoria has advised Councils it is working towards having the Model Governance Rules finalised and published by December 2025.

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

Due to the scheduling of mandatory Councillor training since Councillors were sworn in on 19 November 2024 and the Christmas/New Year holiday period, there has been limited time to brief incoming Councillors on this matter or discuss in detail other elements of the Governance Rules.

Given the important nature of matters contained within the Governance Rules, such as the conduct of Council meetings and conflict of interest disclosures, additional time is required to ensure that Councillors are provided a fair opportunity to review the rules, and potentially identify further amendments, prior to commencing a process of community engagement, as required by the Act.

COST/BENEFITS

Costs associated with this matter are predominately officer time.

RISK ANALYSIS

Governance Rules ensure effective meetings, provide clear direction for meeting protocol and mitigate reputational and unacceptable conduct risks.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

A process of community engagement will be undertaken after Councillors have had an opportunity to discuss in detail all elements of the Governance Rules.

RESOLUTION 2025/5

Moved: Cr Miki Wilson

Seconded: Cr David Weaver

That Council:

1. Acknowledge that due to the scheduling of mandatory Councillor training and the Christmas/New Year holiday period, there has been limited time to brief incoming Councillors on this matter or discuss in detail other elements of the Governance Rules, and
2. Defer consideration of this matter until April 2025.

CARRIED

10.2 ANNUAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM 2024-25 - AMENDMENT TO ALLOCATIONS**File Number:** FOL/19/4522**Author:** David Southcombe, Manager Assets and Infrastructure**Authoriser:** Steven Phillips, Director Operations**Attachments:** 1. Program Summary**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council approves the reallocation of funds within the 2024-2025 Annual Infrastructure Program as shown in Table 1.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no conflict of interest for any Council staff member involved in the preparation of this report, or involved in the subject matter of the report.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION

The Annual Infrastructure Program was presented at the June 2024 Council Meeting.

The last quarterly report on progress of the Annual Infrastructure Program and Flood Restoration Program was provided at the November 2024 meeting. A Program summary can be found in Attachment 1.

BACKGROUND

Council allocates significant funding for capital infrastructure projects on an annual basis. Council staff actively scope and develop new infrastructure projects and maintain a rolling program of these projects. The rolling program is a database that forms the basis of the Annual Infrastructure Program.

The Annual Infrastructure Program is funded by Council and external grants. An important source of funding for Council is the Roads to Recovery program. Currently Council has been allocated \$21,012,056 for the 2024-2029 funding period.

At the conclusion of the 2019-2024 Roads to Recovery funding period a balance of \$400,680 of funding remained unspent. Roads to Recovery officers recently advised they'd prefer Council continue to invest these funds in additional road projects rather than return the unspent funds.

The Annual Infrastructure Program is progressing with the majority of projects in progress or completed. Within these projects there are savings within existing approved projects that can be reallocated.

This report seeks Council's approval for the reallocation of funds within the Annual Infrastructure Program to address emerging needs and optimise the use of available funding.

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

It is proposed to reallocate the remaining funds from the 2019-2024 Roads to Recovery program and from savings within existing projects to undertake additional gravel road resheets and a project to remove seven disused emulsion and fuel tanks at Council's Depots and install one new emulsion tank at Council's Operation Centre. Council's Works Department have advised they have capacity to undertake additional gravel resheets and the new project to remove the disused tanks and install a new emulsion tank.

The proposed changes to budget allocations are shown in Table 1 following.

Table 1 – Current and Proposed Allocations

Current Allocations	Amount
TSD0152 - North and Southey Street Drainage	\$352,000
LBCC0415 - Sidney Watsons Road Bridge Replacement	\$300,000
Roads to Recovery 2019-2024 Balance of Funding	\$400,680
Total	\$1,052,680
Proposed Allocations	Amount
TSD0152 - North and Southey Street Drainage	\$152,000
LBCC0415 - Sidney Watsons Road Bridge Replacement	\$250,000
New Gravel Resheet Projects (New projects)	\$250,680
Works Depot Emulsion Tank Project (New project)	\$400,000
Total	\$1,052,680

Assets & Infrastructure in conjunction with the Works are currently identifying road segments to form the new gravel resheet projects. Council will be advised of this list as part of the next Annual Infrastructure Program quarterly report update in February.

COST/BENEFITS

Reallocating funds will ensure Council can reliably store emulsion and enable the removal of fire and environmental risks from the disused tanks. The completion of additional gravel road resheets will support reducing the road infrastructure renewal gap. Council's asset renewal gap according to the estimates in the Asset Plan 2022 is \$22 million over a 10 years period.

RISK ANALYSIS

Undertaking the removal and replacement of emulsion and fuel tanks at Council's depots will reduce Council's risks of pollution leaking into the environment, fire or explosion and meet compliance with EPA Guidelines.

The remaining Roads to Recovery funding from the 2019-2024 program needs to be expended by June 30, 2025. Council's works team have capacity to undertake additional gravel road resheets. Council can also engage contractors to undertake works if required.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

The new projects and allocation changes have been developed in consultation with Council staff, in particular the Assets & Infrastructure Department, the Works Department, the Finance Department, and the MEG group.

RESOLUTION 2025/6

Moved: Cr Gavan Holt
Seconded: Cr Nick Angelo

That Council approves the reallocation of funds within the 2024-2025 Annual Infrastructure Program as shown in Table 1.

CARRIED

11 INFORMATION REPORTS

Nil

12 COMPLIANCE REPORTS**12.1 COMMUNITY ASSET COMMITTEES - CEO ANNUAL REPORT TO COUNCIL****File Number:** FOL/20/7622**Author:** Lisa Clue, Manager Governance**Authoriser:** Michelle Stedman, Director Corporate**Attachments:** 1. Community Asset Committees - Summary of report data**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receive and note the CEO report on the 2023/24 Activities and Performance of Community Asset Committees.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no conflict of interest for any Council staff member involved in the preparation of this report, or involved in the subject matter of the report.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION

The activities and performance of Council's Community Asset Committees was most recently discussed by Councillors at the December 2023 Council meeting.

BACKGROUND

The *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) provides for councils to establish Community Asset Committees for the purpose of managing community assets within the municipality, and requires the CEO to submit an annual report to Council in relation to the activities and performance of Community Asset Committees.

Loddon Shire has a strong record of volunteerism which is reflected by the community assets and services offered. These volunteer committees make it possible for Council to support this level of service.

This report relates to the activities and performance of Council's 18 Community Asset Committees, established in August 2020:

Boort Aerodrome	Inglewood Town Hall Hub
Boort Memorial Hall	Korong Vale Mechanics Hall
Boort Park	Korong Vale Sports Centre
Campbell's Forest Hall	Little Lake Boort
Donaldson Park	Pyramid Hill Memorial Hall
East Loddon Community Centre	Wedderburn Community Centre
Hard Hill Tourist Reserve	Wedderburn Engine Park and Market Square Reserve
Inglewood Community Elderly Persons Units	Wedderburn Mechanics and Literary Institute Hall
Inglewood Community Sports Centre	Yando Public Hall

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

In accordance with section 47 of the Act, the CEO has delegated a range of powers, duties and functions to members of the Community Asset Committees to facilitate management of each community asset.

To support compliance with the Act, Community Asset Committees were requested to report on their 2023/24 activities and performance. Reporting includes:

- Provision of financial statements which are then audited or reviewed by Council officers
- Minutes from Annual meetings.
- Members of the Committee
- Fees and charges
- Casual and seasonal bookings
- Maintenance/improvements completed.

A summary of information and data received is attached to this report. The summary outlines the significant investment of time and effort by committees to maintain, enhance and promote use of their facilities, but also the challenges of aging assets, low income and low usage at some facilities.

Reports received indicate Community Asset Committees have achieved the objectives documented in their respective Instruments of Delegation, being:

- a) to co-ordinate, manage, and develop for community benefit, the community asset identified within the Instrument in accordance with the principles of sound financial management,
- b) to raise funds, receive rental fees, admission charges, donations and any contributions and expend same for objective (a) above,
- c) to advise and liaise with Council and Council staff in relation to the achievement of the foregoing objectives and in the planning of works and programs for community assets.

Council appreciates the commitment of its volunteers in supporting the management of these important community assets, and acknowledges the challenges faced by committees, particularly those with decreasing volunteer numbers.

Officers continue to maintain contact with, and provide support to each Community Asset Committee including the provision of assistance with compiling financial statements; sourcing funding opportunities; and compliance with instruments of delegation. Officers also provide support to Committees considering options for future management of community assets to reflect community needs and volunteer resources.

COST/BENEFITS

Community Asset Committee volunteers manage Council assets which provide a service to their community. This volunteer effort reduces the resource requirements of Council. Without these volunteer groups it is unlikely that this level of service could be maintained. Assistance to and support of the committees is provided by Council.

RISK ANALYSIS

Risk mitigation is achieved through the Instruments of Delegation from the CEO; the annual reporting process; and maintaining contact with the Committees. Financial risk is monitored through the provision of financial statements from the Committees.

The attached summary outlines the seasonal and casual use of these facilities. This data indicates that some facilities receive limited use which can result in challenges recruiting and retaining volunteers and meeting outgoing costs to retain the current service level.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Community Asset Committees have provided activity and performance data and information for the purpose of preparing this report.

RESOLUTION 2025/7

Moved: Cr Nick Angelo

Seconded: Cr David Weaver

That Council receive and note the CEO report on the 2023/24 Activities and Performance of Community Asset Committees.

CARRIED

13 URGENT BUSINESS

Nil

14 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

Nil

NEXT MEETING

The next Meeting of Council will be held on 25 February 2025 at Wedderburn commencing at 3.00pm.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 3.33 pm.

Confirmed this.....day of..... 2024

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CHAIRPERSON