



Date: Tuesday, 22 July 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, 22 JULY 2025 AT 3.00PM**

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Lincoln Fitzgerald (Chief Executive Officer), Wendy Gladman (Director Community Wellbeing), Michelle Stedman (Director Corporate), Steve Van Orsouw (Director Operations) and Lisa Clue (Manager Governance)
Janine Jackson (Manager Organisation Development) for Agenda item 14.3

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

Lincoln Fitzgerald declared a Material conflict of interest in relation to Agenda item 14.3 – 2025-2026 CEO Performance Plan, and advised he will leave the meeting while the item is being considered by Council.

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 20 June 2025
2. Council Meeting of 20 June 2025
3. Council Forum of 8 July 2025

REPORT

This report seeks Council confirmation of Minutes from the June 2025 Council Briefing and Council Meeting, and the July 2025 Council Forum, as previously circulated to Councillors.

RESOLUTION 2025/96

Moved: Cr Nick Angelo

Seconded: Cr David Weaver

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

1. Council Briefing of 20 June 2025
2. Council Meeting of 20 June 2025
3. Council Forum of 8 July 2025.

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. Council Briefing held 20 June 2025
2. Council Forum held 8 July 2025.

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 scheduled 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 the Council Briefing held on 20 June 2025 and the Council Forum held 8 July 2025.

Meeting details	Briefing
Date	20 June 2025
Councillor Attendees	Cr Straub (Mayor) Cr Angelo Cr Weaver Cr Wilson
Staff/ Stakeholder representatives	Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer Wendy Gladman, Director Community Wellbeing Steve Van Orsouw, Director Operations Michelle Stedman, Director Corporate Lisa Clue, Manager Governance Janine Jackson, Manager Organisation Development and Justin Hanney, Davidson Executive – item 3 below
Item(s) discussed.	1. Council Plan Workshop 2. Review of Council Meeting Agenda 3. Chief Executive Officer Performance Review 2025
Conflict of Interest Disclosures – Councillor/ officer making disclosure	Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer declared a Material Conflict of Interest in relation to item 3 above.
Councillor/officer left room	Lincoln Fitzgerald left the meeting for item 3 above.

Meeting details	Forum
Date	8 July 2025
Councillor Attendees	Cr Straub (Mayor) Cr Angelo Cr Holt Cr Weaver Cr Wilson (virtual)
Staff/ Stakeholder representatives	Steve Van Orsouw, Acting Chief Executive Officer Wendy Gladman, Director Community Wellbeing Michelle Stedman, Director Corporate Lisa Clue, Manager Governance Lincoln Fitzgerald (Chief Executive Officer) and Justin Hanney (Davidson Executive) – Both attended virtually for item 1 below Janine Jackson (Manager Organisation Development) – items 1 and 2 below Amber Lockhart (Team Leader Records and Customer Service) – item 2 below Deanne Caserta (Manager Financial Services) – item 3 below Simon Coutts (Grantus) (virtual) – item 5 below Nicole Taylor (Manager Community Services) – items 5 and 6 below Christine Coombes (Executive Services Officer) – General Business
Item(s) discussed.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chief Executive Officer KPIs 2. Draft Customer Experience Strategy 2025 – 2029 3. Financial Plan 2025/26 – 2034/35 4. Management of Campbells Forest Hall 5. Draft Loddon Onsite Wastewater Management Plan Introduction 6. Draft Loddon Shire Inclusive Communities Plan, Community Engagement Survey Summary 7. Wedderburn Caravan park – First Right to Purchase Lease 8. General Business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Services Volunteer Fund • Public Accounts and Estimates Committee hearings
Conflict of Interest Disclosures – Councillor/officer making disclosure	Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer declared a Material Conflict of Interest in relation to item 1 above but advised, due to the nature of the item being discussed, he is not required to leave the Forum.
Councillor/officer left room	N/A

RESOLUTION 2025/97

Moved: Cr Miki Wilson

Seconded: Cr Gavan Holt

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

1. Council Briefing held 20 June 2025
2. Council Forum held 8 July 2025.

CARRIED

Unconfirmed

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. Status of Council Meeting resolution actions**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receive and note the status of Council resolution actions, 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 associated with Council resolutions is attached to this Agenda report.

There were no outstanding actions from Council meeting resolutions prior to June 2025.

All six actions arising from June Council meeting resolutions have been completed.

RESOLUTION 2025/98

Moved: Cr Nick Angelo

Seconded: Cr David Weaver

That Council receive and note the status of Council resolution actions, 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

Prior to presenting his report, Mayor Straub thanked all who had sent messages of support following the recent passing of his mother.

Section 65 Community Asset Committees:	
14/07/2025	Pyramid Hill Memorial Hall – Annual General Meeting
Other Council activities	
Date	Activity
24/06/2025 – 26/06/2025	Australian Local Government Association 2025 National General Assembly - Canberra
07/07/2025	Telephone discussion with Victorian Governor's Chief of Staff
08/07/2025	July Council Forum - Wedderburn
16/07/2025	Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) Regional Meeting – Swan Hill
16/07/2025	Pyramid Hill Progress Association Annual General Meeting
21/07/2025	Pyramid Hill Historical Society Annual General Meeting

RESOLUTION 2025/99

Moved: Cr Dan Straub (Mayor)

Seconded: Cr Gavan Holt

That Council receive and note the Mayoral Report.

CARRIED

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 Wilson

Council activities	
Date	Activity
24/06/2025 – 26/06/2025	Australian Local Government Association 2025 National General Assembly - Canberra
08/07/2025	July Council Forum - Virtual
	Not in our Name - Essential Services and Volunteer Fund Group - Virtual
14/07/2025	Audit and Risk Committee Special Meeting - Virtual
17/07/2025	Bridgewater on Loddon Development meeting - Virtual

Cr Weaver

Council activities	
Date	Activity
24/06/2025 – 26/06/2025	Australian Local Government Association 2025 National General Assembly - Canberra
08/07/2025	July Council Forum - Wedderburn

Cr Angelo

Council activities	
Date	Activity
24/06/2025 – 26/06/2025	Australian Local Government Association 2025 National General Assembly - Canberra
08/07/2025	July Council Forum - Wedderburn

Cr Holt

Audit and Risk Committee	
14/07/2025	Special Meeting - Virtual
Other Council activities	
Date	Activity
08/07/2025	July Council Forum - Wedderburn
16/07/2025	Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) Regional Meeting – Swan Hill
17/07/2025	Logan Recreation Reserve Committee of Management Meeting

RESOLUTION 2025/100

Moved: Cr David Weaver

Seconded: Cr Nick Angelo

That Council receive and note the Councillors' reports.

CARRIED

10 DECISION REPORTS

10.1 DRAFT ONSITE WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR PUBLIC DISPLAY

File Number:**Author:** Wendy Gladman, Director Community Wellbeing**Authoriser:** Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer**Attachments:** 1. DRAFT Onsite Wastewater Management Plan 2025-2030

RECOMMENDATION

That Council place the draft Onsite Wastewater Management Plan 2025-2030 on public display and seek community feedback.

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 draft Onsite Wastewater Management Plan was presented to the July 2025 Council Forum.

BACKGROUND

An Onsite Wastewater Management Plan (OWMP) is a planning and management document that focuses on the cumulative risks that onsite wastewater management systems (OWMS) present in a municipality and shapes Council's activities in managing those risks now and into the future.

The identification and assessment of risks identified in an OWMP supports the development and implementation of actions to protect human health and the environment.

The *Environment Protection Act 2017* (the Act) and Environment Protection Regulations 2021 (Regulations) set out the laws that apply to owners and occupiers of land with an OWMS and provide councils with a range of powers and tools to regulate OWMS.

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

The OWMP 2025-2030 builds on and replaces the previously developed Domestic Waster Water Management Plan 2015 -2019.

The OWMP has been updated to reflect legislative, policy and guidance changes since 2019 and aims to improve the protection of human and environmental health.

The OWMP applies a risk assessment approach, categorising locations that are unsewered based on their likely impact, including cumulative risk, on the environment or human health. The impact assessment includes groundwater, surface water, special environmental areas and any downstream considerations.

Whilst there are no high-risk localities within Loddon Shire, there are recommendations listed within the OWMP that can further improve our commitment to protecting, improving and promoting environmental and public health and wellbeing in the Shire.

The OWMP covers the municipality but excludes the following:

- premises with sewage flow rates above 5,000 litres per day
- properties connected to reticulated sewerage, being Wedderburn, Inglewood, Bridgewater, Boort and Pyramid Hill.

Townships within the scope of the OWMP include Dingee, Eddington, Korong Vale, Laanecoorie, Mitiamo, Newbridge, Serpentine and Tarnagulla.

Properties outside of these towns are considered rural and do not form part of the risk assessment process used to develop the OWMP. They are considered lower risk and applications for onsite wastewater management are dealt with on an individual basis.

The draft Onsite Wastewater Management Plan is being presented to Council for approval to place on public display to receive community feedback prior to formal adoption of the plan.

COST/BENEFITS

The Onsite Wastewater Management Plan (OWMP) serves both as a public-facing document and an operational tool for Council. For the community, the OWMP provides clear guidance on areas suitable or unsuitable for onsite wastewater systems, outlines system maintenance responsibilities, and supports informed decision-making for landowners and developers in unsewered areas.

Internally, the OWMP is primarily used by Council's Environmental Health and Planning teams to assess planning and permit applications for Onsite Wastewater Management Systems (OWMS). It provides a framework for determining land capability, identifying constraints, and ensuring systems are appropriately designed and located to minimise health and environmental risks. The plan supports consistent and defensible decision-making in line with regulatory requirements.

The cost of updating the OWMP includes officer time, engagement of specialist consultants, and consultation. These costs were within a project-specific budget that was established with funding received from the Department of Health to complete with this work.

Most of the actions identified in the OWMP will be absorbed into the existing Environmental Health budget. Funding from grants or Council budget bids will be sought where there are specific projects to be delivered.

RISK ANALYSIS

Updating the OWMP is critical to ensuring Council meets its legislative responsibilities, under the *Environment Protection Act 2017* and Public Health obligations. It protects public and environmental health and manages long-term planning effectively. Failure to do so carries considerable regulatory, environmental, and reputational risk. An updated plan also strengthens Council's ability to apply consistent decision-making.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

This OWMP was developed with input from relevant stakeholders including Goulburn Murray Water, North Central Catchment Management Authority, Coliban Water and neighbouring Councils.

The OWMP has progressed through internal officer review and was presented to the July 2025 Council Forum.

RESOLUTION 2025/101

Moved: Cr Gavan Holt
Seconded: Cr Nick Angelo

That Council place the draft Onsite Wastewater Management Plan 2025-2030 on public display and seek community feedback.

CARRIED

10.2 2025 NATIONAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONFERENCE OUTCOMES

File Number:**Author:** Renae Colls, Executive Assistant**Authoriser:** Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer**Attachments:** 1. 2025 NGA Communique

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the attendance and outcomes from the 2025 Australian Local Government Association, National General Assembly held in Canberra from 24 – 27 June 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

Councillors discussed the National General Assembly at the March 2025 Council Forum and Council Meeting.

At the March 2025 Council Meeting, Councillors endorsed the submission of seven Notices of Motion, through the Murray River Group of Councils (MRGC) for consideration at the NGA.

BACKGROUND

The Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) hosts the National General Assembly (NGA) annually, providing an important forum for local governments to come together to discuss key national issues affecting the sector and to advocate to the Federal Government.

The NGA attracts representations from all 537 Councils across Australia, attracting more than 1,300 delegates. The General Assembly is an important development forum for Councillors and officers, to share perspectives and ideas and establish national and regional positions on issues affecting many Australian communities.

It also provides an invaluable opportunity for Local Government to engage directly with the Federal Government to develop national policy and learn about industry best practice.

The theme of this year's NGA conference was *"National Priorities Need Local Solutions"*.

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

To purpose of this report is to provide Council with an overview of Loddon Shire Council's attendance at the 2025 National General Assembly of Local Government, including advocacy efforts through the Murray River Group of Councils and outcomes of submitted motions.

Mayor, Cr Dan Straub, Cr Miki Wilson, Cr David Weaver, Cr Nick Angelo and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Lincoln Fitzgerald attended and represented Loddon Shire Council and MRGC at the 2025 NGA which was held on the 25 - 27 June 2025 in Canberra. Cr Gavan Holt was an apology and unable to attend due to unforeseen circumstances.

As Chair of the MRGC, Mayor Cr Dan Straub led the group's advocacy efforts. On behalf of MRGC member councils, Loddon Shire Council submitted seven Notices of Motion to the NGA. In summary, the motions called on the Federal Government to:

- **Housing** - Fund local councils to invest in trunk infrastructure to unlock housing supply in regional communities to improve housing affordability;
- **Energy** - Mandate that energy projects in regional communities (transmission lines, solar/wind farms, batteries etc.) leave a lasting legacy fund in the impacted communities;
- **Water** - Fix the broken Basin Plan by stopping open market water purchases and working instead with irrigators and Basin communities to deliver sustainable water reform;
- **Roads and Bridges** - Close the \$1 billion per year local road maintenance funding gap;
- **Resilient Infrastructure** - Fund local councils to invest in preventative infrastructure works to support increased resilience to natural disasters;
- **Swimming Pools** - Allocate significant dedicated funds to local councils to support the redevelopment and/or remediation of aquatic facilities; and
- **Financial Sustainability** - Restore the Federal Financial Assistance Grants to one per cent of Commonwealth taxation revenue.

All seven motions were accepted by the Assembly. Six were included as sub-motions due to their alignment with similar submissions from other councils. The resolutions passed at the NGA will now be considered by the ALGA Board to inform national policy positions and funding decisions at the federal level.

While in Canberra, MRGC delegates met with the Hon. Kristy McBain MP, Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories and Minister for Emergency Management. Discussions focused on key advocacy priorities, with particular attention to Local Government financial sustainability and emergency management.

Mayor, Cr Dan Straub and CEO Lincoln Fitzgerald also met with Cr Matt Burnett, ALGA President and CEO, Amy Crawford to present MRGC's key advocacy priorities and discussed collaboration opportunities to further amplify advocacy efforts at a national level.

Councillors also met with the Hon. Bridget McKenzie, Senator for Victoria (Leader of the Nationals in the Senate) and Dr Anne Webster MP, Member for Mallee and Shadow Minister for Regional Development, Local Government & Territories, Shadow Minister for Regional Communications.

Over the three days there were a number of presentations, discussion groups and forums.

A summary of the NGA is provided in *Attachment 1 – 2025 NGA Communique*.

NGA 2025 Business Papers can also be found via the ALGA website at

<https://conferenceco.eventsair.com/nga-2025>

MRGC delegates intended to build on the success of the NGA by undertaking follow up direct advocacy to relevant Ministers.

COST/BENEFITS

The estimated cost per delegate to attend the 2025 NGA was approximately \$2,075. This figure includes conference registration, accommodation, travel and meals.

Costs associated with attending the 2025 NGA, including administrative support, were funded from existing 2024/25 budget allocations.

RISK ANALYSIS

No risks have been identified for the subject matter of this report.

RESOLUTION 2025/102

Moved: Cr Miki Wilson
Seconded: Cr Nick Angelo

That Council notes the attendance and outcomes from the 2025 Australian Local Government Association, National General Assembly held in Canberra from 24 – 27 June 2025.

CARRIED

Unconfirmed

10.3 CONTRACT C639 - SUPPLY & DELIVERY OF QUARRY PRODUCTS PANEL**File Number:** 14.01.001**Author:** Daniel Lloyd, Manager Works**Authoriser:** Steve Van Orsouw, Director Operations**Attachments:** 1. **Contract C639 - Tender Evaluation Report - Confidential**

This attachment is designated as confidential in accordance with Section 3(1)(g(ii)) of the *Local Government Act 2020*. It contains private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

(under separate cover)

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Appoint the following tenderers to Contract C639 – Supply & Delivery of Quarry Products Panel:
 - Allstone Quarries Pty Ltd
 - E.B. Mawsons & Sons Pty Ltd
 - Goldfield Gravel Pty Ltd
 - Reeves Earthmoving Pty Ltd
 - Unyte Southern Pty Ltd
2. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to undertake the necessary administrative actions to complete the Contract documents

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION

There has been no previous discussion with Council on this matter.

BACKGROUND

Council's current contract 749 – Supply & Delivery of Quarry Products has now expired 30 June 2025.

The intent of this contract is to create a panel of fixed price, approved suppliers to enable ongoing purchases for road maintenance and renewal works throughout the year when required. This will ensure compliance with statutory purchasing obligations and develop a simple process for procurement of quarry materials.

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

Contract C639 – Supply & Delivery of Quarry Products Panel was publicly advertised that resulted in Council receiving 5 responses. These responses were evaluated by an assessment panel to demonstrate value for money against set criteria. This report can be found in confidential Attachment 1.

The Panel will provide Council with an efficient and compliant way to engage the necessary contractor/supplier to carry out capital and maintenance works required by Council.

COST/BENEFITS

The panel of contractors will enable more efficient processes to purchase Quarry products, as prices will be fixed for the term of the contract. Council will simply provide a purchase order for the required amount on an as need basis without the need to source and review quotes. It will also allow for clear budgets to be set based on the annual requirements for quarry products.

RISK ANALYSIS

Establishing a Panel of Contractors is a procurement strategy that reduces the risks associated with the supply and purchasing of goods.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

The development of this contract and tender has been prepared with consultation with the Works Department and Finance Department.

RESOLUTION 2025/103

Moved: Cr David Weaver

Seconded: Cr Nick Angelo

That Council:

1. Appoint the following tenderers to Contract C639 – Supply & Delivery of Quarry Products Panel:
 - Allstone Quarries Pty Ltd
 - E.B. Mawsons & Sons Pty Ltd
 - Goldfield Gravel Pty Ltd
 - Reeves Earthmoving Pty Ltd
 - Unyte Southern Pty Ltd
2. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to undertake the necessary administrative actions to complete the Contract documents.

CARRIED

10.4 CAMPBELLS FOREST HALL COMMUNITY ASSET COMMITTEE - DISBANDMENT**File Number:****Author:** Lisa Clue, Manager Governance**Authoriser:** Michelle Stedman, Director Corporate**Attachments:** Nil**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council:

1. disband the Campbells Forest Hall Community Asset Committee, effective 22 July 2025; and
2. write to members of the Campbells Forest Hall Community Asset Committee thanking them for their voluntary service to the community.

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 Campbells Forest Hall Community Asset Committee was established by resolution of Council on 25 August 2020 and Council has appointed members to the Committee annually since that time.

Councillors were briefed on transition arrangements for management of the Campbells Forest Hall at the July 2025 Council Forum.

BACKGROUND

At its August 2020 meeting, Council established and first appointed members to the Campbells Forest Hall Community Asset Committee in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*. Powers, duties and functions required of Committee members to manage the community asset were then delegated by the Chief Executive Officer.

Council's Community Asset Committee Policy documents reasons why an established Community Asset Committee may be disbanded by Council, including where there is evidence of support for disbandment of the committee at a local level, and if an incorporated body approaches Council about undertaking the role of the committee.

This report responds to a Campbells Forest Hall Community Asset Committee resolution requesting Council consider disbanding the Committee, and a Campbells Forest Progress Association Inc. resolution agreeing to manage the Campbells Forest Hall in the event the Community Asset Committee is disbanded by Council.

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

In March 2025 Council officers were advised that the Campbells Forest Hall Community Asset Committee had voted unanimously to apply for incorporation as the Campbells Forest Progress Association Inc. with a Statement of Purpose that included management of the hall.

Since that time officers have had discussions with members of the Community Asset Committee to ensure any change to management of the Campbells Forest Hall is compliant with legislation, Council policy and delegations.

On 11 June 2025, correspondence (including meeting Minutes) was received from the Campbells Forest Hall Community Asset Committee advising Council that, at a meeting on 10 June 2025 the Committee resolved to write to Council:

1. requesting it consider disbanding the Campbells Forest Community Asset Committee in accordance with its instrument of delegation by the Chief Executive Officer and the Loddon Shire Council Community Asset Committee policy
2. supporting future management of the Campbells Forest Hall being undertaken by the Campbells Forest Progress Association Inc. under a Management Agreement with Loddon Shire Council
3. requesting community memorabilia, including honour rolls located in the Campbells Forest Hall remain in the hall and be maintained by the new incorporated committee
4. requesting approval for funds held by the Campbells Forest Community Asset Committee to be transferred to Loddon Shire Council and then transferred in full to the Campbells Forest Progress Association Inc.
5. advising Community Asset Committee records, including those relating to assets, financial statements and meeting minutes will be transferred to Council during or immediately following transition to a new management arrangement.

Further, on 11 June 2025, correspondence was received from the Campbells Forest Progress Association Inc. advising that, at a meeting held 10 June 2025 the Progress Association resolved to agree to manage the Campbells Forest Hall under a Management Agreement with Loddon Shire Council, in the event the Campbells Forest Hall Community Asset Committee is disbanded by Council.

Over recent weeks, Council officers and the Campbells Forest Progress Association Inc. have been discussing transition arrangements and negotiating the content of a Management Agreement, including responsibilities of parties involved.

If Council resolves to disband the Campbells Forest Hall Community Asset Committee, the associated Instrument of Delegation will be revoked by the Chief Executive Officer and the Management Agreement will be finalised to take immediate effect.

COST/BENEFITS

There are no direct costs associated with the transition arrangements proposed in this report as the content of the Management Agreement is, in the most part consistent with the content of the Campbells Forest Hall Community Asset Committee Instrument of Delegation by the Chief Executive Officer.

RISK ANALYSIS

The transition arrangements detailed in this report support continued management of the Campbells Forest Hall for the benefit of the local community with minimal disruption and cost to Council.

Risks associated with management of the hall are, as far as possible mitigated through the Management Agreement, including responsibilities for insurance and a requirement for an annual report of activities to Council.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Transition arrangement discussions involving Council officers and members of the Community Asset Committee and the Campbells Forest Progress Association Inc. have been ongoing since May 2025

RESOLUTION 2025/104

Moved: Cr Gavan Holt

Seconded: Cr Miki Wilson

That Council:

1. disband the Campbells Forest Hall Community Asset Committee, effective 22 July 2025;
and
2. write to members of the Campbells Forest Hall Community Asset Committee thanking them for their voluntary service to the community.

CARRIED

Unconfirmed

10.5 WEDDERBURN KINDERGARTEN SERVICE**File Number:****Author:** Nicole Taylor, Manager Community Services**Authoriser:** Wendy Gladman, Director Community Wellbeing**Attachments:** Nil**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council:

1. cease the delivery of the sessional program at the Wedderburn Kindergarten at the conclusion of Term 4 2025
2. provide public notice of Council's intention to sell the property at 77 Ridge Street, Wedderburn and undertake community engagement in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy and the Local Government Act 2020
3. if no objections are raised during community engagement, sell 77 Ridge Street, Wedderburn within 10% of an independent valuation price
4. authorise the Chief Executive Officer to undertake the necessary administrative actions to implement this decision.

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

Councillors received an update on the Wedderburn Early Learning Centre (ELC) and the possible impact on the Council-operated Wedderburn Kindergarten at the April 2025 Council Forum.

A report was provided to the April 2025 Council meeting, requesting Council advocate for the inclusion of a sessional kindergarten program at the ELC.

BACKGROUND

Council is an approved Early Years Manager (EYM) appointed to manage and deliver funded kindergarten programs on behalf of the State Government. Council is EYM for all Kindergarten services in Loddon Shire, including Boort, Dingee, Inglewood Pyramid Hill and Wedderburn.

The Victorian State Government committed to the construction and operation of 50 Early Learning Centres in communities across Victoria that have the greatest need for childcare and kindergarten places. The first four sites have been constructed and commenced operation this year (2025).

Loddon Shire Council is one of 14 sites that will be constructed this year and be ready to operate from the commencement of Term 1 in 2026. The ELC will provide long day care, and both integrated and sessional kindergarten programs.

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

The introduction of the new ELC will strengthen the access to early childhood education and care services for families in Wedderburn and the surrounding area from 2026.

As a result, Council officers assessed the impact of the new service on the Wedderburn Kindergarten program, considering the current and future usage levels, service levels required to be responsive to community needs, minimising duplication and a coordinated approach to early years provision in the area.

The ELC will play a key role in supporting local families through the provision of childcare services. The review also identified that the ELC will offer sufficient kindergarten places to meet the current and future needs of the community.

This report proposes that, due to the opening of an Early Learning Centre in 2026 that will fulfill the community's early childhood education and care needs, Council cease the delivery of sessional kindergarten at the Wedderburn Kindergarten at the conclusion of the 2025 school year.

In addition, the facility currently used to deliver the Wedderburn Kindergarten program is a Council owned building. Officers have considered any operational needs for the building and consider that upon closure of the kindergarten service the building would be considered surplus to requirement. This report provides Council with the opportunity to consider disposal of this asset following the cessation of the service.

Council officers will liaise with Wedderburn Kindergarten staff, families and the parent committee, and will continue to work closely with Early Learning Victoria to manage the transition effectively.

RESOURCING

The transition process will continue to be managed within existing staff capacity. Council officers will liaise with Wedderburn Kindergarten staff, families and the parent committee, and will continue to work closely with Early Learning Victoria to manage the transition effectively.

COST/BENEFITS

The provision of early childhood education and care services from a single site, such as the new ELC co-located at Wedderburn College, provides families with other children easier drop offs, and enhances the early years to school transition. The delivery of childcare and kindergarten enhances the childcare to kindergarten transition. Having long day care with kindergarten embedded offers families more flexible access to longer hours than a stand-alone sessional kindergarten.

Council currently receives funding from the State Government for the delivery of Wedderburn Kindergarten program. This funding will cease should Council determine to exit this service and is offset by the reduced operational costs of the service.

Council receives funding support as an EYM; the removal of one service will impact on the total funding received. Council is currently undertaking a service review, which will consider the longer term EYM sustainability with this service reduction.

Industrial obligations to staff in the form of redundancy payments have been calculated and, should they be required, can be met within the existing adopted Council budget.

Should Council determine that the building be surplus to requirement, the disposal of the asset would reduce the maintenance and renewal obligation in the long term and provide a cash return to Council upon sale of the asset.

RISK ANALYSIS

There are inherent risks associated with workforce transitions, including industrial relations, staff morale, and potential gaps in service delivery. These risks are being mitigated through clear communication, adherence to fair work principles, and proactive recruitment strategies across the broader kindergarten workforce.

Although there will be enthusiasm from the community surrounding the opening and operation of the new ELC, the proposed disposal of the existing kindergarten building may generate some community concern due to the involvement of many families during its tenure. While acknowledging this connection to the facility by the community, Council has a responsibility to make decisions that are financially sustainable in the long-term interests of the community.

Should Council determine to proceed, the disposal of the asset will be in accordance with the Disposal of Council Asset Policy, Land Disposal and Acquisition Policy and the Community Engagement Policy which will provide the community with the opportunity to provide feedback.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

In line with Council's industrial obligations, a structured and transparent engagement process has been undertaken with staff at the Wedderburn Kindergarten. Preliminary discussions have been conducted with the kindergarten parents committee and families at the service. Council's kindergarten team will continue to provide information to staff and families throughout the transition process.

In accordance with Section 114 (2b) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, any sale of land by a Council under this section must be undertaken in accordance with the Council's Community Engagement Policy.

Council will publish notice of intention to sell land on Council's website and by public notice in the Loddon Herald newspaper for a period of four weeks. Council's Community Reference Group will be notified of the intention to sell.

If no submissions are received regarding the intent to sell, the property will proceed to sale process. If submissions are received, follow up detail will be provided to Council prior to the sale process proceeding.

RESOLUTION 2025/105

Moved: Cr Miki Wilson

Seconded: Cr Nick Angelo

That Council:

1. cease the delivery of the sessional program at the Wedderburn Kindergarten at the conclusion of Term 4 2025
2. provide public notice of Council's intention to sell the property at 77 Ridge Street, Wedderburn and undertake community engagement in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy and the Local Government Act 2020
3. if no objections are raised during community engagement, sell 77 Ridge Street, Wedderburn within 10% of an independent valuation price
4. authorise the Chief Executive Officer to undertake the necessary administrative actions to implement this decision.

CARRIED

10.6 DRAFT CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE STRATEGY FOR PUBLIC DISPLAY

File Number: FOL/24/4014

Author: Janine Jackson, Manager Organisation Development

Authoriser: Michelle Stedman, Director Corporate

Attachments: 1. Customer Experience Strategy 2025-2029

RECOMMENDATION

That Council approve the draft Customer Experience Strategy being placed on public display to receive community feedback from Monday 28 July 2025 to Monday 11 August 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 draft Customer Experience Strategy was presented to Councillors at the July 2025 Forum.

The July Forum report included an overview of:

- findings from initial community engagement, and data profiling used to inform this Draft
- key changes from the Customer Service Strategy 2018-2022 (the first Strategy)
- the strategic direction of the Draft Customer Experience Strategy 2025-2029 (the Strategy)
- next steps in the development of the Strategy.

During and following this discussion, clarity was provided around the implementation of e-services to extend online customer request services and minor amendments were incorporated to wording of draft actions.

BACKGROUND

Loddon Shire Council understands the importance of providing a responsive, accessible and efficient service to all customers, knowing that every time a customer uses our services or interacts with an officer, they have expectations about the experience they will have. Therefore, we need to consider how we can ensure that every interaction the customer has with Council is consistent and responsive.

The previous Loddon Shire Council Customer Service Strategy 2018-2022 (the first strategy) outlined Loddon Shire Council's strategic approach to the delivery of customer service across the Shire. A review of this first strategy is a deliverable within the 2021-2025 Council Plan's (the plan) outcome of '*A supported and accessible community*', along with the way we communicate and engage with the community being directly linked to the Community Vision.

Subsequently, this Draft Customer Experience Strategy 2025-2029 (the Draft Strategy) will build and embed a customer-driven culture by expanding on the learnings and development from the first strategy, with the aim of implementing a cross functional approach throughout the organisation that will enhance the customer experience throughout all aspects of Council operations.

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

The direction of the Draft Strategy has been informed by insights from extensive customer engagement using various communication methods, and relevant data profiling. Key changes from the first strategy include:

- using language that influences an understanding across the organisation that the Customer Experience is influenced by all staff that represent council and interact with members of the community;
- a stronger focus on training and awareness to ensure we are embedding a customer centric culture across the organisation;
- streamlining content using plain language and graphics to enhance accessibility and relevance for Loddon's diverse community;
- improved consideration of inclusivity to ensure we are consulting with, and meeting the needs of a diverse range of people;
- optimising the use of technology and thinking of innovative ways to interact with the community while still maintaining a traditional approach; and
- engaging with the community regularly, capturing insights to inform continuous improvement.

The Draft Strategy framework includes four key strategic directions:

- Enabled and Accountable
- Accessible and Inclusive
- Informed and Analytical
- Contemporary yet Traditional

These have been derived from 'what we have heard' through surveys and listening posts, demographic profiling of data from the ABS 2021, and the results of the Community Satisfaction Survey 2024, undertaken by JWS Research.

Each strategic direction is underpinned with Council's commitment and the actions we will undertake to deliver that commitment. They also take into account Loddon's challenges, but identify opportunities to enhance the customer experience.

The key points identified as being important to our customers included:

- An organisation in which officers follow through on commitments and actions
- Professional and knowledgeable Officers available to respond to enquiries
- Improving flexibility and customer convenience across a large geographic area
- Acknowledging different cultural perspectives and different needs of the community
- Deeper engagement with the community and visitors to drive continuous improvement
- Maintaining traditional methods for transacting but also offering contemporary communication processes.

The Draft Strategy also maintains a cross-functional approach to create momentum for buy-in across the organisation. It maintains a large focus on internal education and will include extensive collaboration with all staff to create a new Customer Service Charter (the Charter). The Charter will set the standard for delivering on our promise to customers and will be the frame which supports an organisational customer-centric culture that is seen to be business as usual.

This report seeks Council's support to release the Draft Strategy for community feedback.

COST/BENEFITS

The cost of resourcing the actions in this strategy falls predominantly within existing budgets, in particular employee time.

RISK ANALYSIS

Council must have a strategy in place to guide the level and quality of customer service.

Understanding the relationships between people, systems, technology, and governance will encourage continuous improvement of existing Council practices, policies and processes. Not understanding the needs of the community can have a negative impact on Council and result in reputational damage.

With any strategy development there is always a risk that the community expectations will exceed Council's capacity to deliver. Comprehensive engagement and consultation processes may also pose a risk in that, the information received may not represent the broader community.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

The development of the strategy has been informed initially by a comprehensive engagement process and community survey. This process allowed the community numerous opportunities to contribute to the development of the strategy and provided us with an understanding of where Council needs to improve and what Council needs to continue to do well.

Additionally, demographic profiling provided valuable context to warrant including initiatives in the strategy that are inclusive and meet the needs of all people who access Council services.

The final draft Customer Experience Strategy is attached for Council to review, with the intention to return the document to the community and key stakeholders for consultation from Monday 28 July 2025 to Monday 11 August 2025.

The draft strategy will be used to undertake the final round of community consultation, placing the document on public display and inviting comment. The document will be displayed via print and social media, displayed in key community locations and on Council's online engagement platform connect@Loddon.

RESOLUTION 2025/106

Moved: Cr Miki Wilson

Seconded: Cr Gavan Holt

That Council approve the draft Customer Experience Strategy being placed on public display to receive community feedback from Monday 28 July 2025 to Monday 11 August 2025.

CARRIED

10.7 32 WILSON STREET WEDDERBURN -WEDDERBURN LIONS CLUB REQUEST FOR LAND AVAILABILITY FOR A SUPPORTED RESIDENTIAL SERVICE.

File Number: GF/19/19534

Author: Christine Coombes, Executive Services Officer

Authoriser: Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer

- Attachments:**
1. Lions - Letter to Council re land for a Supported Residential Services project
 2. Concept Plan of land availability for Ambulance Victoria and Supported Residential Services Facility at 32 Wilson Street Wedderburn
 3. Lions - letter to Council re new Ambulance Station

RECOMMENDATION

That

1. That advice be given to the Wedderburn Lions Club that Council is prepared to make Council owned land at 32 Wilson Street Wedderburn available to the Wedderburn Lions Club at no cost for the purpose of building a Supported Residential Services facility.
2. This offer is subject to all costs associated with the establishment and operation of the Supported Residential Services facility being met by parties other than the Loddon Shire Council.
3. This offer from the Loddon Shire Council expires on 30 June 2029 if the project has not been substantially commenced by that date.
4. It should also be noted that the Wedderburn Community Centre Committee of Management is the Council's delegated operator of this site, and it should be informed of Council's offer to the Wedderburn Lions Club.

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

Council have previously discussed the matter of land availability for the purpose of an aged care facility in Wedderburn in September 2016 and August 2020. Further details are included in the body of this report.

BACKGROUND

Council's offer to the Wedderburn Lions Club:

In 2016 the Lions wrote to Council seeking support for land to be made available for the purpose of an Aged Care Facility. The request was discussed at the Ordinary Meeting of 13 September 2016, with the following motion discussed and resolved:

Extract from the minutes of Council Meeting 13 September 2016



ORDINARY MEETING MINUTES

13 September 2016

5. INFORMATION REPORTS**5.1 INWARDS CORRESPONDENCE****SUMMARY**

Relevant correspondence received by Council since previous meeting.

Author: Phil Pinyon, Chief Executive Officer

Council Plan ref: Strategic enabler: Transparent communication

File No: various

Attachment: Copies of inwards correspondence

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the Inwards Correspondence.

Date	From	Subject
12/8/2016	Wedderburn Lions Club	Several letters regarding Aged Care Facility Land – adjacent to Wedderburn Community Centre
29/08/2016	Keren Chapman	Enclosing letter sent to Peter Walsh regarding Boort Primary School site.

MOTION

Moved: Cr Holt

Seconded: Cr McKinnon

1. That Council receives and notes the Inwards Correspondence.
2. That advice be given to the Wedderburn Lions Club that Council is prepared to make Council owned land at 32 Wilson Street Wedderburn available to the Wedderburn Lions Club at no cost for the purpose of building an aged care facility.

This offer is subject to all costs associated with the establishment and operation of the aged care facility being met by parties other than the Loddon Shire Council.

This offer from the Loddon Shire Council expires on 30 June 2020 if the project has not been substantially commenced by that date.

It should also be noted that the Wedderburn Community Centre Committee of Management is the Council's delegated operator of this site, and it should be informed of Council's offer to the Wedderburn Lions Club.

Carried

The Lions sought support, funding and feasibility following Council's agreement to make the land at 32 Wilson Street available. In 2020, works had not been commenced, with the Lions seeking an extension to the timing of the land availability.

This request for extension was presented at the Ordinary Council Meeting 25 August 2020. Councillors at the time discussed and resolved to extend the expiration date for the project to be substantially commenced.

Extract from the minutes of Ordinary Meeting 25 August 2020, Urgent Business:

13.4 WEDDERBURN AGED CARE FACILITY

RESOLUTION 2020/1

Moved: Cr Gavan Holt

Seconded: Cr Geoff Curnow

1. That advice be given to the Wedderburn Lions Club that Council is prepared to make Council owned land at 32 Wilson Street Wedderburn available to the Wedderburn Lions Club at no cost for the purpose of building an aged care facility.
2. This offer is subject to all costs associated with the establishment and operation of the aged care facility being met by parties other than the Loddon Shire Council.
3. This offer from the Loddon Shire Council expires on 31 August 2024 if the project has not been substantially commenced by that date.

It should also be noted that the Wedderburn Community Centre Committee of Management is the Council's delegated operator of this site, and it should be informed of Council's offer to the Wedderburn Lions Club.

CARRIED

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

The Wedderburn Lions Club have written to the Chief Executive Officer on 10 July 2025, requesting that, an extension to the sunset clause to allow the Club access to the old Primary School site for its Supported Residential Service planned in conjunction with the proposed Ambulance Station.

The Lions, with the support of local members of Parliament, Inglewood and District Health Service and other key stakeholders, continue to seek funding and support for a proposed facility.

COST/BENEFITS

Nil costs to date. Costs will involve, sub division and legal fees, which would be expended from Land and Buildings Reserve, when details of establishment are confirmed.

RISK ANALYSIS

It is a risk to the community if the establishment of a facility were to receive funding and suitable land wasn't made available.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Council officers have met with Lions and Ambulance Victoria members to discuss the proposed use of the land at the Community Centre site.

Lions have provided a letter of support, attached, for the co-location of a new assisted living facility and an Ambulance Station for Wedderburn.

RESOLUTION 2025/107

Moved: Cr Gavan Holt

Seconded: Cr Miki Wilson

1. That advice be given to the Wedderburn Lions Club that Council is prepared to make Council owned land at 32 Wilson Street Wedderburn available to the Wedderburn Lions Club at no cost for the purpose of building a Supported Residential Services facility.
2. This offer is subject to all costs associated with the establishment and operation of the Supported Residential Services facility being met by parties other than the Loddon Shire Council.
3. This offer from the Loddon Shire Council expires on 30 June 2029 if the project has not been substantially commenced by that date.
4. It should also be noted that the Wedderburn Community Centre Committee of Management is the Council's delegated operator of this site, and it should be informed of Council's offer to the Wedderburn Lions Club.

CARRIED

Unconfirmed

10.8 ADOPTION OF INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES PLAN

File Number:

Author: Wendy Gladman, Director Community Wellbeing

Authoriser: Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer

Attachments:

1. Loddon Shire Inclusive Communities Plan
2. Summary of feedback Loddon Shire Inclusive Communities Plan

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopt the Loddon Shire Inclusive Communities Plan 2025-2029.

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

At the April 2025 Council meeting, Council resolved to place the draft Inclusive Communities Plan 2025-2029 (draft ICP) on public display and seek community feedback.

The feedback received from the public display period, and suggested amendments to the draft ICP was presented to the July 2025 Council Forum.

BACKGROUND

The Loddon Shire Inclusive Communities Plan (ICP) supersedes the Access and Inclusion Plan 2018-2022 and is designed to foster a more inclusive, equitable and accessible environment for all members of the community.

While the ICP aims to improve access and inclusion for all, our community consultation identified the importance of a more conscious effort to include and engage groups that can experience disadvantage or are often under-represented in mainstream community activities, including people with a disability, our young people, LGBTQIA+ community members, people from non-English speaking backgrounds and older people.

The plan was shaped by extensive community consultation across Loddon Shire, engaging over 230 community members and organisations.

This plan has been developed to be consistent with the requirements set out under the Disability Act 2006, Gender Equity Act 2020, Equal Opportunity Act 2010, and council's commitment to positive aging following the exit from Commonwealth Home Support Program. By consolidating these population groups into the draft ICP it reduces the number of strategic documents being developed by Council and minimises action duplication as many of the outcomes identified in the ICP are common across a diversity of groups.

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

The draft ICP was placed on public display between 8 May and 6 June 2025 inviting community feedback. This report provides Council with:

- a summary of the feedback received
- suggested amendments to the plan based on this feedback (highlighted yellow in Attachment 1: Loddon Shire Inclusive Communities Plan)
- the final version of the ICP to Council for adoption.

Council received 10 responses to the public display of the draft ICP. From these responses the following themes emerged:

- The majority of the respondents found the plan and its focus areas relevant (66.7% very relevant).
- 100% of the respondents agreed it is important to make the community more inclusive and welcoming.
- Participants, particularly young people and LGBTQIA+ individuals reported feeling unheard or unwelcome in their communities.
- Some respondents noted that they felt that dominant voices often overshadow marginalised perspectives.
- Of the respondents only 22.2% reported always feeling welcome and represented and 33.3% reported rarely or never feeling welcome.

A document providing a summary of the feedback, and details of the amendments to the draft ICP proposed following a review of the feedback from respondents is provided as Attachment 2.

COST/BENEFITS

The costs associated with the public display period and finalisation of the ICP are predominantly officer time. Advertising was undertaken through Council's Facebook page and in Council's weekly update in the Loddon Herald.

RISK ANALYSIS

The limited sample size reduces the ability to generalize findings to a broader population, although it does provide us with a snapshot of the opinions of those who took the time to provide feedback.

These responses combined with the initial engagement of 230 community members provides a more robust representation informing the content of the ICP.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement on the draft ICP was invited between 8 May and 6 June 2025 via the following methods:

- online survey available via connect@loddon
- promotion via Loddon's Facebook page
- Loddon Herald advertisements

RESOLUTION 2025/108

Moved: Cr Nick Angelo

Seconded: Cr David Weaver

That Council defers the Inclusive Communities Plan at this point for further consideration.

CARRIED

10.9 LEASE OF COUNCIL PROPERTY - PYRAMID HILL COMMUNITY CENTRE**File Number:****Author:** Wendy Gladman, Director Community Wellbeing**Authoriser:** Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer**Attachments:** 1. Lease Terms - Confidential

This attachment is designated as confidential in accordance with Section 3(1)(g(ii)) of the *Local Government Act 2020*. It contains private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

This attachment contains contractual information. **(under separate cover)**

RECOMMENDATION

That Council

1. enter into a lease agreement with Northern District Community Health Service for the Pyramid Hill Community Centre health wing; and
2. authorise the Chief Executive Officer to sign the lease and complete any necessary administrative actions to implement this resolution.

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

There have been no previous Council reports regarding a lease agreement with Pyramid Hill Community Centre.

BACKGROUND

The construction of the Pyramid Hill Community Centre is complete, and the building was officially opened in April 2025. Stage 1 of the building included the redevelopment of the community space and the addition of a health wing which will facilitate the co-location of community groups and community services.

The Pyramid Hill Progress Association has agreed to enter into a management agreement with Council to manage the community space (outlined in blue on the below floor plan) and negotiations have occurred with Northern District Community Health (NDCH) to manage the health wing (outlined in red on the below floor plan) under a lease agreement with Council.

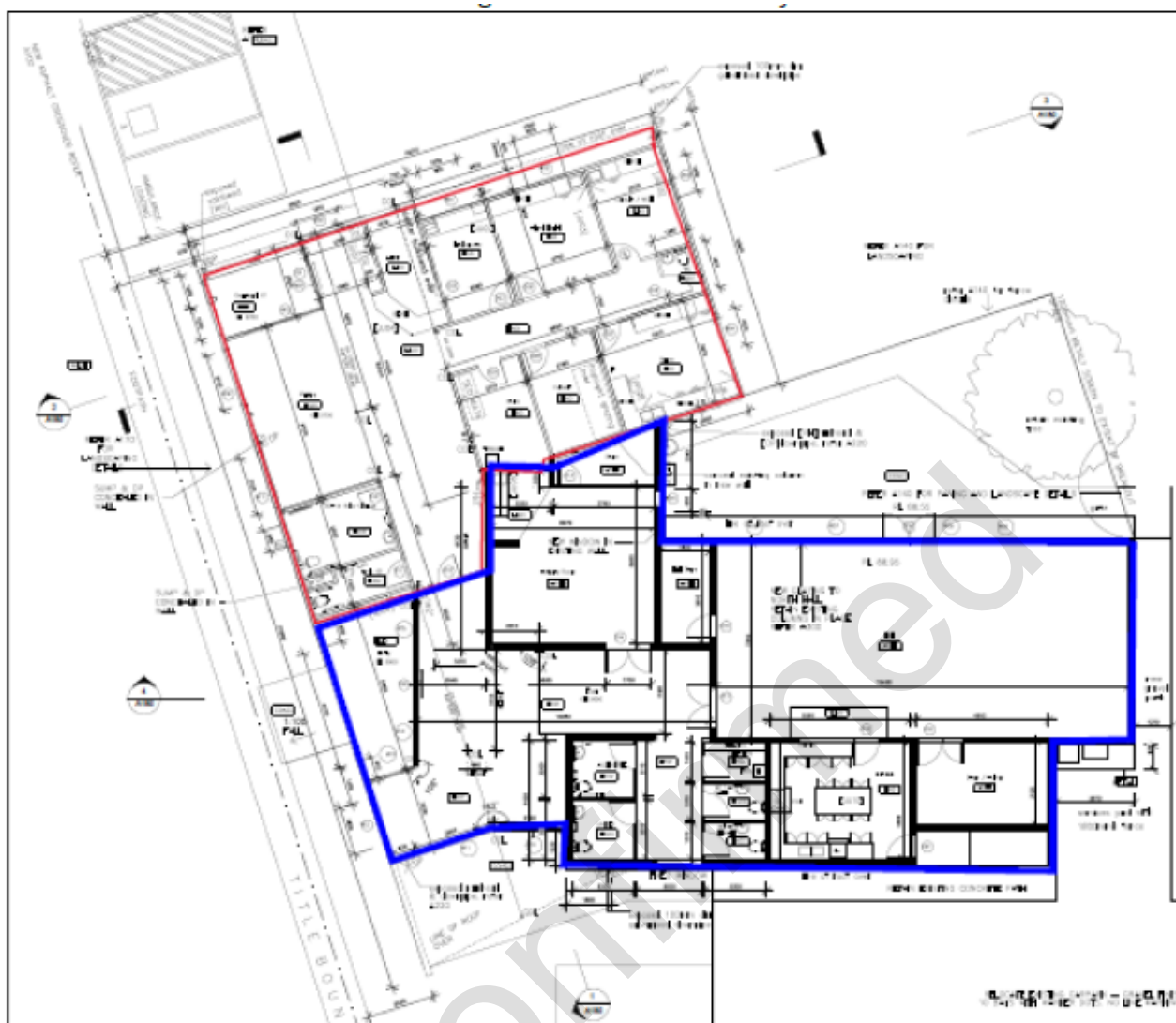
Council officers and NDCH have been working through the details of the lease agreement and are now ready to formalise the document. The terms of the lease require Council, under the levels of authority delegations, to authorise the Chief Executive Officer to sign the lease agreement. This report is to provide that authorisation.

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

It is proposed that Council enter into a lease agreement with NDCH to provide them with use of the purpose-built Pyramid Hill Community Centre Health Wing.

The terms of the lease agreement have been provided as Attachment 1.

The two defined management areas are detailed in the floor plan below with the red line indicating the dedicated health area to be leased by NDCH and the blue line indicating the community area to be managed by Pyramid Hill Progress Association.



Under the terms of the lease NDCH is permitted to provide community health services including community nursing, allied health services (such as podiatry), nurse practitioner, GP outreach and counselling.

COST/BENEFITS

The terms of the lease agreement provide Council with an annual rental income. The agreement also provides Council's Maternal and Child Health Service with access to a fit for purpose consulting room.

Entering into a lease agreement provides NDCH and Council with security of tenure for the lease period, demonstrating an ongoing commitment to the Pyramid Hill community.

NDCH presence in Pyramid Hill ensures people can access care early, navigate complex systems and receive support tailored to their needs. The service is already deeply embedded in the community and brings local knowledge, trusted relationships and multidisciplinary services. With the opportunity the new facility provides, NDCH are seeking to expand the range of services offered to the community.

RISK ANALYSIS

As with any lease arrangement there are some inherent risks associated with this agreement which could include breach of lease terms, insurance coverage gaps, unclear responsibilities, financial risks. Whilst this risk is considered low, Council will mitigate this to the extent possible through:

- the use of a formal tenancy agreement
- ensuring the provision of the required documentation to evidence insurance and Workcover responsibilities are met by the tenant
- providing the tenant with the Responsibilities Agreement – clearly outlining what is Council and tenant responsibilities
- monitoring the lease payments to ensure prompt action if failure to pay

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Council has worked closely with key stakeholders involved with the Pyramid Hill Community Centre during the planning, design and delivery of the project, including NDCH, Pyramid Hill Progress Association and Pyramid Hill Senior Citizens.

The proposal to lease was advertised in accordance with Section 115 (4) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, if a Council proposes to lease land that is subject to subsection (3) and that was not included as a proposal in the budget, the Council must undertake a community engagement process in accordance with the Council's community engagement policy in respect of the proposal before entering into the lease.

Advertising commenced on 10 April 2025 for a period of two weeks, with no responses received.

RESOLUTION 2025/109

Moved: Cr David Weaver

Seconded: Cr Nick Angelo

That Council

1. enter into a lease agreement with Northern District Community Health Service for the Pyramid Hill Community Centre health wing; and
2. authorise the Chief Executive Officer to sign the lease and complete any necessary administrative actions to implement this resolution.

CARRIED

11 INFORMATION REPORTS

Nil

Unconfirmed

12 COMPLIANCE REPORTS

12.1 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE UPDATE

File Number:

Author: Michelle Stedman, Director Corporate

Authoriser: Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer

Attachments: Nil

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the summary of the Audit and Risk Committee Meeting – 14 July 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

Council most recently received an update on a Loddon Shire Council Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) meeting at its May 2025 meeting.

BACKGROUND

Council's ARC has been established in accordance with section 53 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, to support it 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.

This report is a requirement of the ARC Charter which states:

'A summary of each ARC meeting will be reported at the next meeting of the Council.'

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

Below is a summary of the ARC meeting held online on Monday, 14 July 2025.

Member attendees:

Marg Allan – Independent Member (Chair)

Rod Poxon – Independent Member

Amber Currie – Independent Member

Cr Gavan Holt – Councillor Representative

Cr Miki Wilson – Substitute Councillor Representative (observer)

Officer attendees:

Lincoln Fitzgerald – Chief Executive Officer
Michelle Stedman – Director Corporate
Lisa Clue – Manager Governance
Deanne Caserta – Manager Financial Services

Other attendees:

Brad Ead – AFS & Associates Pty Ltd

Apologies:

Nil

The following matters were considered by the ARC at the meeting:

Report	Discussion points
1. Financial Plan 2025/26 – 2034/35	<p>Following a presentation on the Loddon Shire Council Financial Plan 2025/26 – 2034/35, ARC members and Council officers discussed the Plan, with a focus on the approach, assumptions and strategic actions.</p> <p>The ARC then resolved:</p> <p>That the Audit and Risk Committee express concern about the long term financial predictions and recommend to Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. More detailed work be undertaken to refine the Long Term Financial Plan including current assumptions2. As a matter of urgency, Council consider resourcing the identified strategic actions with a view to introducing zero base budgeting (2026/27 onwards) and service reviews as a priority; and3. That Council give serious consideration to alternate funding options such as, but not limited to potential loans, rate increases, and changes in reserves management.

COST/BENEFITS

This report provides Council with oversight of the work of the ARC, providing a level of surety that services are undertaken efficiently and effectively.

There are no costs associated with development of this report, however there are modest costs associated with the Audit and Risk Committee and undertaking regular internal and external auditing of Council activities. These costs are provided for in Council's approved budget.

RISK ANALYSIS

The ARC has risk management oversight for the Council and monitors, reviews, endorses and advises Council on matters as set out in the Charter.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Officers involved in the conduct of the ARC meeting were consulted in the preparation of this report.

RESOLUTION 2025/110

Moved: Cr Gavan Holt
Seconded: Cr Nick Angelo

That Council receives and notes the summary of the Audit and Risk Committee Meeting – 14 July 2025.

CARRIED

Unconfirmed

13 URGENT BUSINESS**RESOLUTION 2025/111**

Moved: Cr Nick Angelo

Seconded: Cr Miki Wilson

That Council admit as urgent business, matters relating to:

1. Municipal Association of Victoria State Council
2. Bendigo Adelaide Bank Closures.

CARRIED

13.1 MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA STATE COUNCIL**RESOLUTION 2025/112**

Moved: Cr Miki Wilson

Seconded: Cr Nick Angelo

That Council:

1. Authorise the Mayor to submit a motion to the MAV State Council opposing the Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund levy in accordance with Council's current resolution;
2. Request the MAV to continue uniting councils in opposition to the Emergency Services & Volunteers Fund levy; and
3. Authorise the CEO to authorise any minor changes to improve the wording of the motion and/or to update the motion relative to any other changes to the issue that may have occurred between the council meeting and the date of its lodgement to the MAV.

CARRIED

13.2 BENDIGO ADELAIDE BANK CLOSURES**RESOLUTION 2025/113**

Moved: Cr Gavan Holt

Seconded: Cr Nick Angelo

That Council write to the Bendigo Adelaide Bank expressing its disappointment and concern at today's announcement that it is discontinuing its agency model. This will impact Loddon Shire as it includes agencies at Boort and Wedderburn, and will create anxiety and stress to those residents and businesses who still require physical banking services.

CARRIED

14 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

RECOMMENDATION

That Council considers the confidential report(s) listed below in a meeting closed to the public in accordance with Section 66(1) and 66(2)(a) of the Local Government Act 2020:

14.1 Appointment of Audit and Risk Committee Independent Member

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 3(1)(f) of the Local Government Act, and the Council is satisfied that discussion of this matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it deals with personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs.

Personal information regarding recruitment and selection

14.2 Wedderburn Caravan Park - First right to purchase lease

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 3(1)(a) and (g(ii)) of the Local Government Act, and the Council is satisfied that discussion of this matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it deals with Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released and private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

Pursuant to Section 66 (5)(b) of the Local Government Act 2020, If released the information to be received, discussed or considered in relation to this agenda item, may prejudice the commercial position of Council and/or disadvantage a private business, as various negotiations remain pending.

14.3 2025-2026 CEO Performance Plan

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 3(1)(f) of the Local Government Act, and the Council is satisfied that discussion of this matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it deals with personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs.

This report contains personal information regarding the setting of 2024-2025 Key Performance Indicators for the Chief Executive Officer.

RESOLUTION 2025/114

Moved: Cr Nick Angelo

Seconded: Cr David Weaver

That the meeting be closed to the public in accordance with Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2020 while Council considers the confidential reports listed below:

14.1 Appointment of Audit and Risk Committee Independent Member

14.2 Wedderburn Caravan Park – First right to purchase lease

14.3 2025-2026 CEO Performance Plan.

.CARRIED

14.1 APPOINTMENT OF AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE INDEPENDENT MEMBER**RESOLUTION 2025/115**

Moved: Cr Gavan Holt

Seconded: Cr Nick Angelo

That Council appoint Mr Mick Cummins as an Independent Member of the Audit and Risk Committee for a four-year term from 1 August 2025 to 31 July 2029.

CARRIED

14.2 WEDDERBURN CARAVAN PARK - FIRST RIGHT TO PURCHASE LEASE**RESOLUTION 2025/116**

Moved: Cr Miki Wilson

Seconded: Cr David Weaver

That Council:

1. Acknowledges receipt of the notice for the first and last right of refusal pursuant to sub-clause 16.13 of the Wedderburn Caravan Park Lease received on 26 June 2025; and
2. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to formally advise the tenants solicitors that Council does not wish to exercise the option of first right to purchase.

CARRIED

Lincoln Fitzgerald declared a Material conflict of interest in relation to the next Agenda item and left the meeting.

Directors and the Manager Governance left the meeting.

Janine Jackson, Manager Organisation Development joined the meeting.

14.3 2025-2026 CEO PERFORMANCE PLAN**RESOLUTION 2025/117**

Moved: Cr Nick Angelo

Seconded: Cr David Weaver

That Council endorse the 2025-2026 Loddon Chief Executive Officer Performance Plan Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) as detailed in the attachment to this report.

CARRIED

NEXT MEETING

The next Meeting of Council will be held on 26 August 2025 at Wedderburn commencing at 3.00pm.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 5.00 pm.

Confirmed this.....day of..... 2025

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CHAIRPERSON

Unconfirmed