



Date: Tuesday, 24 February 2026
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, 24 FEBRUARY 2026 AT 3.00PM**

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Lincoln Fitzgerald (Chief Executive Officer), David Stretch (Acting Director Community Wellbeing), Michelle Stedman (Director Corporate), Steve Van Orsouw (Director Operations) and Tracy Hunt (Governance Coordinator)

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

3.1 LEAVE OF ABSENCE

RESOLUTION 2026/11

Moved: Cr Miki Wilson
Seconded: Cr Nick Angelo

That Council grant Cr Miki Wilson a leave of absence from 14 March 2026 to 27 April 2026.

CARRIED

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 27 January 2026
2. Council Meeting of 27 January 2026
3. Council Forum of 10 February 2026

REPORT

This report seeks Council confirmation of Minutes from the January 2026 Council Briefing and Council Meeting, and the February 2026 Council Forum as previously circulated to Councillors.

RESOLUTION 2026/12**Moved:** Cr Miki Wilson**Seconded:** Cr David Weaver

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

1. Council Briefing of 27 January 2026
2. Council Meeting of 27 January 2026
3. Council Forum of 10 February 2026

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 meeting as detailed within this report:

1. Councillor Financial Workshop held 22 January 2026
2. Council Briefing held 27 January 2026
3. Council Forum held 10 February 2026

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 the Councillor Financial Workshop held 22 January 2026, the Council Briefing held 27 January 2026 and the Council Forum held 10 February 2026.

Meeting details	Councillor Financial Workshop
Date	22 January 2026
Councillor Attendees	Cr Straub (Mayor) Cr Angelo Cr Holt Cr Wilson
Staff/ Stakeholder representatives	Steve Van Orsouw, Acting Chief Executive Officer Wendy Gladman, Acting Director Corporate David Southcombe, Acting Director Operations Lisa Clue, Manager Governance Natalie Martin, Manager Financial Services Christine Coombes, Executive Services Officer – Item 2 below
Item(s) discussed.	1. 2026/27 Budget Workshop 2. Service profiles in preparation for budget
Conflict of Interest Disclosures – Councillor/ officer making disclosure	Nil
Councillor/officer left room	N/A

Meeting details	Briefing
Date	27 January 2026
Councillor Attendees	Cr Straub (Mayor) Cr Angelo Cr Holt Cr Weaver Cr Wilson
Staff/ Stakeholder representatives	Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer Wendy Gladman, Acting Director Corporate Steve Van Orsouw, Director Operations Lisa Clue, Manager Governance VicGrid Representatives - Adele McCarthy (Executive Director, Strategy & Planning), Geoff Caine (Regional Director North West), Marg Sangalli and Sarah Hobgen (Engagement Support) – item 4 below Jordan Fraser (Community Compliance Coordinator) – item 5 below Orrin Hogan (Manager Community Partnerships) – item 6 below David Southcombe (Manager Assets and Infrastructure) and Tinu Scaria (Assets and GIS Officer) – items 7 and 8 below
Item(s) discussed.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2025/26 CEO Mid-year Performance Update 2. Submission to the Federal Parliamentary Inquiry into Local Government Funding and Fiscal Sustainability 3. Review of Council Meeting Agenda 4. VicGrid Presentation – Draft Renewable Energy Zone Orders 5. Draft Domestic Animal Management Plan Feedback Received 6. Inglewood Community Sports Centre Precinct Concept Plan 7. Proposal to name an unnamed land in Pyramid Hill to Appleby Lane 8. Register of Public Roads Review and Update 9. General Business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urgent Business Motions • Australia Day Honours List • Roadside Weed Management • Calendar of Agenda Items
Conflict of Interest Disclosures – Councillor/officer making disclosure	Cr Weaver declared a General Conflict of Interest during General Business discussion on Urgent Business Motions as an owner of land adjacent to Lake Boort.
Councillor/officer left room	Cr Weaver

Meeting details	Forum
Date	10 February 2026
Councillor Attendees	Cr Straub (Mayor) Cr Angelo Cr Holt Cr Weaver Cr Wilson (Virtual)
Staff/ Stakeholder representatives	Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer Steve Van Orsouw, Director Operations Michelle Stedman, Director Corporate Lisa Clue, Manager Governance Orrin Hogan (Manager Community Partnerships) – items 1 and 9 below Chris Earl (Loddon Herald) and Chalpat Sonti (Media and Communications Coordinator) – item 2 below David Stretch (Manager Tourism and Economic Development) – items 2 and 10 below Nicole Taylor (Manager Community Services) – items 4, 11 and 12 below Prue Milgate, Rob Leach and Linda Younghusband (Inglewood and Districts Community Enterprise Limited) – item 4 below Natalie Martin (Manager Financial Services) – item 8 below Bruce Arthur (Major Projects Program Manager) and David Southcombe (Manager Assets and Infrastructure) – item 9 below Glenn Harvey (Manager Development and Compliance), Carolyn Stephenson (Senior Strategic Planner), Louise Johnston (Statutory Planning Coordinator), Paul Buxton and Kellie Marks (Plan2Place Consulting - Virtual) – item 10 below
Item(s) discussed.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strategic Resource Plan – Project Prioritisation Matrix 2. Loddon Herald Update 3. 2026 ALGA National General Assembly – Call for Motions 4. Presentation of the Early Childhood Education and Care Feasibility Study 5. Draft 2025/26 Annual Action Plan and Mid-Year Progress Updates 6. Review of Forward Council Agendas 7. General Business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MAV State Council Meeting Motions • Murray Darling Basin Plan Submission • State Budget • CEO Updates • Community Support • Audit and Risk Committee Charter Review • Rate payments 8. Finance Report for the period ending 31 December 2025 9. Project Management Framework 10. Bridgewater and Inglewood Structure Plans – Presentation of Findings and Draft Recommendations by Plan2Place 11. Maternal and Child Health Service Review 12. Kindergarten Service Review

Conflict of Interest Disclosures – Councillor/ officer making disclosure	Nil
Councillor/officer left room	N/A

RESOLUTION 2026/13

Moved: Cr David Weaver

Seconded: Cr Nick Angelo

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

1. Councillor Financial Workshop held 22 January 2026
2. Council Briefing held 27 January 2026
3. Council Forum held 10 February 2026

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. Status of Council 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 was one outstanding action prior to the January 2026 Council meeting. This action, from the November 2025 Council meeting, relating to updating Council's 2024 Priorities document, has commenced and is not yet complete.

All five actions arising from the January Council meeting resolutions have been acted upon.

RESOLUTION 2026/14**Moved: Cr Nick Angelo****Seconded: Cr Gavan Holt**

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

Mayor Straub presented a verbal report at the meeting.

Murray River Group of Councils	
19/02/2026	Meeting, Melbourne
North Central Local Learning and Employment Network	
13/02/2026	Meeting with Department of Education
17/02/2026	Board Meeting, Charlton
Other Council activities	
Date	Activity
16/02/2026	Mitiamo Progress Association Meeting, Mitiamo
18/02/2026	Rural Councils Victoria Training Day, including RCV Prospectus Launch, Melbourne

RESOLUTION 2026/15

Moved: Cr David Weaver

Seconded: Cr Nick Angelo

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 Angelo

Council activities	
Date	Activity
10/02/2026	Council Forum, Wedderburn
20/02/2026	Tarnagulla & Inglewood Wards - Councillor and Loddon Leaders Tour
20/02/2026	Tarnagulla Community Planning Committee Meeting, Tarnagulla

Cr Holt

Council activities	
Date	Activity
03/02/2026	St Arnaud Rotary Club Meeting – Guest Speaker
10/02/2026	Council Forum, Wedderburn
13/02/2026	East Wimmera Region CWA Annual Conference – Guest Speaker
20/02/2026	Tarnagulla-Inglewood Ward - Councillor and Loddon Leaders Tour

Cr Weaver

Integrated Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee Meeting	
Date	Activity
19/02/2026	Meeting, Bendigo
Council activities	
Date	Activity
26/01/2026	Australia Day Celebrations Boort Citizen of the Year Presentation
10/02/2026	Council Forum, Wedderburn
14/02/2026	Boort-Yando Cricket Club 40 Year Celebration, Boort

Cr Wilson

Section 65 Community Asset Committees	
22/02/2026	Inglewood Community Sports Centre General Meeting, Inglewood
Council activities	
Date	Activity
10/02/2026	Council Forum, Wedderburn
19/02/2026	Bridgewater on Loddon Development Committee Meeting
20/02/2026	Tarnagulla-Inglewood Ward - Councillor and Loddon Leaders Tour
23/02/2026	Audit and Risk Committee Meeting, Wedderburn

RESOLUTION 2026/16

Moved: Cr Gavan Holt

Seconded: Cr David Weaver

That Council receive and note the Councillors' reports.

CARRIED

10 DECISION REPORTS**10.1 PA 6094 - USE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE LAND FOR A DWELLING AND ASSOCIATED OUTBUILDINGS AT HARPERS LANE, WEDDERBURN**

File Number:

Author: Louise Johnston, Statutory Planning Coordinator

Authoriser: Glenn Harvey, Manager Development and Compliance

Attachments:

1. Decision Report
2. Proposed Plans
3. Objection

RECOMMENDATION

That the Responsible Authority having considered all matters which the Planning and Environment Act, 1987, requires it to consider, decides to issue a Notice of Decision to grant a planning permit 6094 for use and development of the land for a dwelling and an associated outbuildings subject to the following conditions:

Amended plans required

1. Before the use start(s), amended plans must be submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority. When approved, the plans will be endorsed and will then form part of the permit. The plans must be drawn to scale with dimensions and three copies must be provided. The plans must be generally in accordance with the plans submitted with the application but modified to show:
 - (a) Landscape plan as required by condition 4 below

Layout not altered

2. The use and development as shown on the endorsed plans must not be altered or modified unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Responsible Authority.

Materials

3. All external materials, including the shipping containers must be non-reflective and finished in muted tones to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

Landscape plan

4. Within three months of the date of the permit, a landscape plan to the satisfaction of the responsible authority must be submitted to and approved by the responsible authority. When approved, the plan will be endorsed and will then form part of the permit. The plan must be drawn to scale with dimensions and a copy must be provided. The plan must show:
 - a) Landscaping, comprising a mixture of indigenous trees and shrubs around the perimeter of the containers extending for a length of the containers and 10 metres either side and for a minimum two (2) metres wide.
 - b) Planting schedule of proposed indigenous vegetation within the landscape areas as described above.
 - c) Management and maintenance regime.

All species selected must be to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

Completion of landscaping

5. Before the *occupation of the development* starts or by such later date as is approved by the responsible authority in writing, the landscaping works shown on the endorsed plans must be carried out and completed to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

Landscaping maintenance

6. The landscaping shown on the endorsed plans must be maintained to the satisfaction of the responsible authority, including that any dead, diseased or damaged plants are to be replaced.

Drainage

7. All stormwater discharged from the subject land shall be connected to the legal point of discharge to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority. No concentrated stormwater shall drain or discharge from the land to adjoining properties.

Environmental Health Officer

8. The dwelling will be required to connect to reticulated sewerage, if available. If reticulated sewerage is not available, all wastewater from each dwelling must be treated and retained within the lot in accordance with the requirements of the Environment Protection Regulations under the *Environment Protection Act 2017* for an on-site wastewater management system.
9. The dwelling must be connected to a reticulated potable water supply or have an alternative potable water supply, with appropriate storage capacity, to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
10. The dwelling must be connected to a reticulated electricity supply or have an alternative energy source.

Expiry

11. This permit will expire if the permitted development is not started within two years of the date of this permit, or is not completed within four years of that date, or the permitted use is not started within two years of the completion of the development, or is discontinued for a period of two years.

The responsible authority may extend these periods if a request is made in writing before the permit expires, or:

- Within six months afterwards if the development has not been started, or the development is complete but the use has not started, or the use has been discontinued for a period of two years.
- Within twelve months afterwards if the development started lawfully before the permit expired.

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 discussions on this matter.

BACKGROUND

An application was lodged on 9 October 2025 proposing to use and develop the land for a (retrospective) dwelling and outbuildings (six shipping containers) at CA 49 & 49A Harpers Lane Wedderburn.

The application was advertised to surrounding and adjoining landowners; with one objection being received.

The application was referred internally to the Councils Environmental Health Officer who provided conditional consent.

Issues raised in the objection include the dwelling not constructed to current building standards, location of the containers contributing to further flooding of the adjoining property and the impact of the buildings and works on privacy and amenity of the adjoining property.

The application is considered to accord with the planning policy framework of the Loddon Planning Scheme as demonstrated in the report.

The Officer recommendation is to issue a notice of decision to grant a planning permit.

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

Under the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (the Act) the Minister of Planning delegates a municipal council power to become the planning authority for any planning scheme in force in its municipal district.

A municipal council is obligated to enforce and administer the relevant Planning Scheme and must use the scheme to determine applications. The Loddon Planning Scheme is the relevant Planning Scheme for Council. An application is referred to Council for determination, which:

- receive one or more objections, and/or
- are to be recommended for refusal by the Planning officer.

Pursuant to Section 52 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, notices were sent to owners and occupiers of adjoining land, opposite and surrounding the site.

Council has received one objection as a result of the public notification process and the Officers recommendation is to issue a Notice of Decision to grant a planning permit for use and development of the land for a dwelling and an associated outbuildings subject to conditions. A decision report detailing this application has been prepared and can be found in Attachment 1.

COST/BENEFITS

There are various costs associated with having a delegated Planning Officer consider an application, provide a recommendation and the time for the Councillors to consider this recommendation.

The benefits associated with this report is to provide the Council the opportunity to fulfil its requirement under law and provide the community with a statutory service that delivers well managed and appropriate development.

RISK ANALYSIS

The risks of Council not fulfilling its statutory obligation under the Act include:

- inappropriate use and development which could endanger life and property
- Council's reputation as a Responsible Authority
- breaches of the Planning & Environment Act 1987 requiring compliance action.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Refer to the decision report for further detail on the application

RESOLUTION 2026/17

Moved: Cr Gavan Holt

Seconded: Cr David Weaver

That the Responsible Authority having considered all matters which the Planning and Environment Act, 1987, requires it to consider, decides to issue a Notice of Decision to grant a planning permit 6094 for use and development of the land for a dwelling and an associated outbuildings subject to the following conditions:

Amended plans required

1. Before the use start(s), amended plans must be submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority. When approved, the plans will be endorsed and will then form part of the permit. The plans must be drawn to scale with dimensions and three copies must be provided. The plans must be generally in accordance with the plans submitted with the application but modified to show:
 - (a) Landscape plan as required by condition 4 below

Layout not altered

2. The use and development as shown on the endorsed plans must not be altered or modified unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Responsible Authority.

Materials

3. All external materials, including the shipping containers must be non-reflective and finished in muted tones to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

Landscape plan

4. Within three months of the date of the permit, a landscape plan to the satisfaction of the responsible authority must be submitted to and approved by the responsible authority. When approved, the plan will be endorsed and will then form part of the permit. The plan must be drawn to scale with dimensions and a copy must be provided. The plan must show:
 - a) Landscaping, comprising a mixture of indigenous trees and shrubs around the perimeter of the containers extending for a length of the containers and 10 metres either side and for a minimum two (2) metres wide.
 - b) Planting schedule of proposed indigenous vegetation within the landscape areas as described above.
 - c) Management and maintenance regime.

All species selected must be to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

Completion of landscaping

5. Before the *occupation of the development* starts or by such later date as is approved by the responsible authority in writing, the landscaping works shown on the endorsed plans must be carried out and completed to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

Landscaping maintenance

6. The landscaping shown on the endorsed plans must be maintained to the satisfaction of the responsible authority, including that any dead, diseased or damaged plants are to be replaced.

Drainage

7. All stormwater discharged from the subject land shall be connected to the legal point of discharge to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority. No concentrated stormwater shall drain or discharge from the land to adjoining properties.

Environmental Health Officer

8. The dwelling will be required to connect to reticulated sewerage, if available. If reticulated sewerage is not available, all wastewater from each dwelling must be treated and retained within the lot in accordance with the requirements of the Environment Protection Regulations under the *Environment Protection Act 2017* for an on-site wastewater management system.
9. The dwelling must be connected to a reticulated potable water supply or have an alternative potable water supply, with appropriate storage capacity, to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
10. The dwelling must be connected to a reticulated electricity supply or have an alternative energy source.

Expiry

11. This permit will expire if the permitted development is not started within two years of the date of this permit, or is not completed within four years of that date, or the permitted use is not started within two years of the completion of the development, or is discontinued for a period of two years.
The responsible authority may extend these periods if a request is made in writing before the permit expires, or:
 - Within six months afterwards if the development has not been started, or the development is complete but the use has not started, or the use has been discontinued for a period of two years.
 - Within twelve months afterwards if the development started lawfully before the permit expired.

CARRIED

10.2 PA 6107 - PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE SUBDIVISION OF LAND INTO TWO LOTS AT 20 KINIRY STREET, BOORT

File Number:

Author: Louise Johnston, Statutory Planning Coordinator

Authoriser: Glenn Harvey, Manager Development and Compliance

Attachments:

1. Decision Report
2. Proposed plan of Subdivision
3. Objection

RECOMMENDATION

That the Responsible Authority having considered all matters which the Planning and Environment Act, 1987 requires it to consider, and has decided to issue a Notice of Decision to grant a planning permit 6107 for the two lot subdivision at 20 Kiniry Street, Boort subject to the following conditions:

FORMAL PLAN OF SUBDIVISION

1. The formal plan of subdivision lodged for certification must be in accordance with the approved plan and must not be modified except to comply with statutory requirements or with the further written consent of the Responsible Authority.

Reticulated Services

2. The owner of the land must enter into agreements with the relevant authorities for the provision of water supply, drainage, sewerage facilities, electricity and gas services to each lot shown on the endorsed plan in accordance with the authority's requirements and relevant legislation at the time.

Easements

3. All existing and proposed easements and sites for existing or required utility services and roads on the land must be set aside in the plan of subdivision submitted for certification in favour of the relevant authority for which the easement or site is to be created.

Certification

4. The plan of subdivision submitted for certification under the *Subdivision Act 1988* must be referred to the relevant authority in accordance with Section 8 of that Act.

Drainage

5. The whole of the subject land, including landscaped and paved areas, must be graded and drained to the satisfaction of the council as the responsible drainage authority so as to prevent the discharge of water from the subject land across any road or onto any adjoining land.

VEHICLE CROSSING

6. The proposed vehicle crossover is to be constructed to the satisfaction and requirements of Council. No impending or redirection of existing surface flow is allowed to occur as a result of these works. Any redundant crossover must be reinstated to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority

7. Prior to the commencement of any works on the road reserve the owner/applicant must submit a Works in a Road Reserve application and be issued a permit to occupy the road for works.
8. All existing road reservation assets are to be protected and maintained throughout the works including all utilities and services. Any damage is to be restored prior to issuing of statement of compliance
9. All drainage and crossover works constructed or carried out as required by conditions 5 & 6 above must be completed to a standard satisfactory to Council prior to the issuing of Statement of Compliance.

TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICES

10. The owner of the land must enter into an agreement with:
 - a telecommunications network or service provider for the provision of telecommunication services to each lot shown on the endorsed plan in accordance with the provider's requirements and relevant legislation at the time; and
 - a suitably qualified person for the provision of fibre ready telecommunication facilities to each lot shown on the endorsed plan in accordance with any industry specifications or any standards set by the Australian Communications and Media Authority, unless the applicant can demonstrate that the land is in an area where the National Broadband Network will not be provided by optical fibre.

Before the issue of a Statement of Compliance for any stage of the subdivision under the Subdivision Act 1988, the owner of the land must provide written confirmation from:

- a telecommunications network or service provider that all lots are connected to or are ready for connection to telecommunications services in accordance with the provider's requirements and relevant legislation at the time; and
- a suitably qualified person that fibre ready telecommunication facilities have been provided in accordance with any industry specifications or any standards set by the Australian Communications and Media Authority, unless the applicant can demonstrate that the land is in an area where the National Broadband Network will not be provided by optical fibre.

EXPIRY

11. This permit will expire if one of the following circumstances applies:
 - the plan of subdivision is not certified within two (2) years of the issue date of this permit.
 - the subdivision is not completed within five (5) years of the certification of the plan of subdivision under the Subdivision Act 1988.

The Responsible Authority may extend the periods referred to if a request is made in writing before the permit expires, or within six months afterwards.

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 discussions on this matter.

BACKGROUND

A planning application for a two lot subdivision at 20 Kiniry Street, Boort was lodged on 20 November 2025 proposing to subdivide the land into two lots.

The application was advertised to surrounding landowners and included a notice on the site of the subject land with one objection being received.

The application was referred internally to the Councils Assets and Infrastructure team.

Issues raised in the objection include the size of the lots not being consistent with the larger lots of 1000sqm in the township of Boort and not reflecting the neighbourhood character of the area.

The application is considered to accord with the planning policy framework of the Loddon Planning Scheme as demonstrated in the report.

The Officer recommendation is to issue a notice of decision to grant a planning permit.

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

Under the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (the Act) the Minister of Planning delegates a municipal council power to become the planning authority for any planning scheme in force in its municipal district.

A municipal council is obligated to enforce and administer the relevant Planning Scheme and must use the scheme to determine applications. The Loddon Planning Scheme is the relevant Planning Scheme for Council. An application is referred to Council for determination, which:

- receive one or more objections, and/or
- are to be recommended for refusal by the Planning officer.

Pursuant to Section 52 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, notices were sent to owners and occupiers of adjoining land, opposite and surrounding the site.

Council has received one objection as a result of the public notification process and the Officers recommendation is to issue a Notice of Decision to grant a planning permit for the two lot subdivision at 20 Kiniry Street, Boort subject to conditions. A decision report detailing this application has been prepared and can be found in Attachment 1.

COST/BENEFITS

There are various costs associated with having a delegated Planning Officer consider an application, provide a recommendation and the time for the Councillors to consider this recommendation.

The benefits associated with this report is to provide the Council the opportunity to fulfil its requirement under law and provide the community with a statutory service that delivers well managed and appropriate development.

RISK ANALYSIS

The risks of Council not fulfilling its statutory obligation under the Act include:

- inappropriate use and development which could endanger life and property
- Council's reputation as a Responsible Authority
- breaches of the Planning & Environment Act 1987 requiring compliance action.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Refer to the decision report for further detail on the application.

RESOLUTION 2026/18

Moved: Cr David Weaver

Seconded: Cr Nick Angelo

That the Responsible Authority having considered all matters which the Planning and Environment Act, 1987 requires it to consider, and has decided to issue a Notice of Decision to grant a planning permit 6107 for the two lot subdivision at 20 Kiniry Street, Boort subject to the following conditions:

FORMAL PLAN OF SUBDIVISION

1. The formal plan of subdivision lodged for certification must be in accordance with the approved plan and must not be modified except to comply with statutory requirements or with the further written consent of the Responsible Authority.

Reticulated Services

2. The owner of the land must enter into agreements with the relevant authorities for the provision of water supply, drainage, sewerage facilities, electricity and gas services to each lot shown on the endorsed plan in accordance with the authority's requirements and relevant legislation at the time.

Easements

3. All existing and proposed easements and sites for existing or required utility services and roads on the land must be set aside in the plan of subdivision submitted for certification in favour of the relevant authority for which the easement or site is to be created.

Certification

4. The plan of subdivision submitted for certification under the *Subdivision Act 1988* must be referred to the relevant authority in accordance with Section 8 of that Act.

Drainage

5. The whole of the subject land, including landscaped and paved areas, must be graded and drained to the satisfaction of the council as the responsible drainage authority so as to prevent the discharge of water from the subject land across any road or onto any adjoining land.

VEHICLE CROSSING

6. The proposed vehicle crossover is to be constructed to the satisfaction and requirements of Council. No impending or redirection of existing surface flow is allowed to occur as a result of these works. Any redundant crossover must be reinstated to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority
7. Prior to the commencement of any works on the road reserve the owner/applicant must submit a Works in a Road Reserve application and be issued a permit to occupy the road for works.
8. All existing road reservation assets are to be protected and maintained throughout the works including all utilities and services. Any damage is to be restored prior to issuing of statement of compliance
9. All drainage and crossover works constructed or carried out as required by conditions 5 & 6 above must be completed to a standard satisfactory to Council prior to the issuing of Statement of Compliance.

TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICES

10. The owner of the land must enter into an agreement with:
- a telecommunications network or service provider for the provision of telecommunication services to each lot shown on the endorsed plan in accordance with the provider's requirements and relevant legislation at the time; and
 - a suitably qualified person for the provision of fibre ready telecommunication facilities to each lot shown on the endorsed plan in accordance with any industry specifications or any standards set by the Australian Communications and Media Authority, unless the applicant can demonstrate that the land is in an area where the National Broadband Network will not be provided by optical fibre.

Before the issue of a Statement of Compliance for any stage of the subdivision under the Subdivision Act 1988, the owner of the land must provide written confirmation from:

- a telecommunications network or service provider that all lots are connected to or are ready for connection to telecommunications services in accordance with the provider's requirements and relevant legislation at the time; and
- a suitably qualified person that fibre ready telecommunication facilities have been provided in accordance with any industry specifications or any standards set by the Australian Communications and Media Authority, unless the applicant can demonstrate that the land is in an area where the National Broadband Network will not be provided by optical fibre.

EXPIRY

11. This permit will expire if one of the following circumstances applies:
- the plan of subdivision is not certified within two (2) years of the issue date of this permit.
 - the subdivision is not completed within five (5) years of the certification of the plan of subdivision under the Subdivision Act 1988.

The Responsible Authority may extend the periods referred to if a request is made in writing before the permit expires, or within six months afterwards.

CARRIED

10.3 FINANCE REPORT FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2025

File Number: FOL/22/4399

Author: Natalie Martin, Manager Financial Services

Authoriser: Michelle Stedman, Director Corporate

Attachments: 1. Quarter 2 Finance Report - YTD 31 December 2025

RECOMMENDATION

That Council

1. receives and notes the Finance Report for the quarter ending 31 December 2025
2. approves the budget revisions included in the report for internal reporting purposes only
3. approves the supplementary valuations of rateable and non-rateable properties in respect of the 2025/26 financial year, as returned by the Shire Valuers, LG Valuations Pty Ltd, and endorses them being incorporated into the register of rateable and non-rateable properties
4. notes that a revised budget under s97 (3) of the *Local Government Act 2020* is not required.

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 last quarterly report presented to Council was for the quarter ending 30 September 2025 (Q1) at the November 2025 Council Meeting. The 2024/25 Annual Report was adopted at the October 2025 Council Meeting including the audited Financial and Performance Statements.

BACKGROUND

Section 97 of the *Local Government Act 2020* outlines that a quarterly budget report is to be presented to Council:

- 1) *As soon as practicable after the end of each quarter of the financial year, the Chief Executive Officer must ensure that a quarterly budget report is presented to the Council at a Council meeting which is open to the public.*
- 2) *A quarterly budget report must include—*
 - (a) *a comparison of the actual and budgeted results to date; and*
 - (b) *an explanation of any material variations; and*
 - (c) *any other matters prescribed by the regulations.*
- 3) *In addition, the second quarterly report of a financial year must include a statement by the Chief Executive Officer as to whether a revised budget is, or may be, required.*

The Finance Report for the period ended 31 December 2025 includes standard year to date information about budget variations, cash, investments, interest, debtors and creditors, and provides a comparison of year-to-date actual results to year-to-date budget (by dollars and percentage) and total amended budget (by percentage).

The information is in the format provided in the adopted 2025/26 Budget, and includes operating results, capital expenditure and funding sources.

The report also includes reporting on supplementary valuations. Each year Council makes a number of additions, subtractions and alterations to the valuations contained in the annual rate book through administrative processes as advised by Victorian Valuer General. These changes arise from various sources including:

- splitting of parcels into new rateable assessments
- development of vacant or unproductive land (urban and rural)
- consolidation of separate rateable assessments into one assessment
- re-assessment of property valuations arising from objections to the initial valuation
- additions and cancellations of licences (grazing and water frontages)
- change of use
- covenant on Title
- area amendment
- change of Australian Valuation Property Classification Code (AVPCC)
- supplementary valuation corrections.

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

Income Statement (revenue)

Council's year to date (YTD) operating revenue totals **\$19.37M**, representing 68% of the annual budget.

Rates are levied in the first quarter, resulting in a significant proportion of revenue being recognised early in the year. Rate payments are received progressively through the debtors balance in the Balance Sheet.

Grant income is currently below budget due to funding for Roads to Recovery (R2R) and disaster-recovery flood works not yet being received, however, there is no concern regarding the eventual receipt of these grants.

Investment income continues to perform strongly and has exceeded the original adopted budget. A budget revision has been completed to reflect these favourable returns.

Income Statement (expenditure)

Total operating expenditure for the first six months was **\$22.17M**, bringing year to date spending to 50% of the amended 2025/26 budget of \$44.61M. Materials and services are tracking favourably at the end of quarter 2, with some costs still to be capitalised as part of the progressing flood restoration program.

Capital Works

Delivery of the capital works program of \$12.13M, including carry forward projects from 2024/25, is progressing, with **\$2.56M** spent to date. A further \$3.60M has been committed. Based on the year-to-date actuals and commitments, the capital program is currently tracking at 51% of the amended budget.

Balance Sheet

Council has a cash total of **\$36.65M**. Total debtors at the end of December 2025 are \$13.03M, including \$10.12M in rates and \$2.13M in Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund Levy. Sundry debtors total \$0.84M with a large amount of that being from Government Departments as grant agreements are implemented.

RESOURCING

Preparation of this report has been completed using existing staff resources with all work undertaken as part of normal operational duties.

COST/BENEFITS

There are no associated costs with the preparation of this report other than staff resourcing as allowed for in operational budgets.

The benefit to Council and the community of quarterly financial reporting is that financial data and representation of property valuations and rating income is disclosed accurately and regularly and is subject to inspection and scrutiny. Processes around quarterly reporting also ensure our rating system is kept up-to-date with latest and most accurate valuation data.

Provision of financial reports on at least a quarterly basis is a requirement of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

RISK ANALYSIS

The provision of regular and accurate finance reports minimises the risk of Council not delivering projects within the approved budget. Council's risk exposure is increased if the rating system does not reflect the valuation changes associated with supplementary valuations as Council will not be aware of the changes, which can alter rate revenue in the current and future rating years.

Quarterly Finance reports are part of a 'monitoring progress' control measure against Council's Strategic Risk related to Financial Sustainability. Regular monitoring of Council's financials works to provide assurance over financial reports and aims to identify areas in which action may need to be taken by Council to ensure a sustainable financial position is maintained.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Consultation occurs regularly with respective managers in understanding budget responsibilities and keeping within budgetary constraints.

Consultation with ratepayers and authorities that act on behalf of ratepayers occurs when a change to a property is required or occurs by virtue of a sale.

External engagement with the community was undertaken during the submission period of the budget, and regular reporting provides a mechanism of monitoring the financial outcomes of Council against that expectation.

CONCLUSION

Council's financial performance for the period ending 31 December 2025 remains stable, with revenue and expenditure broadly aligned to expectations. Investment returns continue to out-perform, and the capital works program is progressing with strong commitments in place. Supplementary valuation movements are being monitored to ensure the accuracy of the rating system. Overall, results to date indicate Council is on track to deliver the 2025/26 amended budget.

RESOLUTION 2026/19

Moved: Cr Nick Angelo

Seconded: Cr David Weaver

That Council

1. receives and notes the Finance Report for the quarter ending 31 December 2025
2. approves the budget revisions included in the report for internal reporting purposes only
3. approves the supplementary valuations of rateable and non-rateable properties in respect of the 2025/26 financial year, as returned by the Shire Valuers, LG Valuations Pty Ltd, and endorses them being incorporated into the register of rateable and non-rateable properties
4. notes that a revised budget under s97 (3) of the *Local Government Act 2020* is not required.

CARRIED

10.4 ANNUAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM 2025-26 AND FLOOD RESTORATION PROGRAM 2025-26 QUARTERLY UPDATE

File Number:

Author: David Southcombe, Manager Assets and Infrastructure

Authoriser: Steve Van Orsouw, Director Operations

Attachments: 1. **Attachment 1 - Project Status 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.

Project estimates are listed which could influence future tenders

2. **Attachment 2 - Project Status Report without cost estimates**

3. **Attachment 3 - Project Allocation Changes**

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Note quarter 2 progress toward delivering the Annual Infrastructure Program 2025-26
2. Approve the reallocation of funds to the value of \$180,000 from the Emulsion Tank Replacements and Pyramid Hill Maternal Child Health building demolition project to the Domestic Pound Project and Laanecoorie Newbridge Road project
3. That Council note the update on progress of the Flood Restoration Program as of 31 December 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 Annual Infrastructure Program was presented at the March 2025 Council Meeting.

The last quarterly report on progress of the Annual Infrastructure Program and Flood Restoration program was provided at the November 2025 Council meeting.

BACKGROUND

This report is produced quarterly and is provided to Council for the purpose of reporting progress of the Annual Infrastructure Program and Flood Restoration Program. The information in this report provides progress to the end of December 2025.

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

There are 66 individual projects, including 5 carryovers from previous financial years that form part of the Annual Infrastructure Program 2025-2026. A total of 12 projects have been completed and 43 projects are in progress.

Table 1 provides a progress summary to the end of the second quarter of the 2025–2026 financial year of the Annual Infrastructure Program.

Table 1: Annual Infrastructure Program progress

Program Category	Total number of projects carried over from previous year(s)	Total number of new projects in 2025 - 2026	Total number of projects	Total number of projects in progress	Total number of projects completed to Dec 31, 2025	% Complete
Local Roads Gravel Resheet	0	8	8	1	2	25%
Local Roads Gravel Shoulder Resheet	0	2	2	0	2	100%
Local Road Construction - Asset Preservation	2	5	7	4	0	0%
Township Street Improvement	0	4	4	3	1	25%
Urban Drainage	0	2	2	2	0	0%
Local Bridges and Culverts	0	2	2	2	0	0%
Reseals	0	28	28	28	0	0%
Parks and Gardens	1	2	3	0	1	33%
Buildings	2	8	10	4	5	50%
TOTAL	5	61	66	44	11	17%

At the end of the second quarter, 11 projects or 17% have been completed, 44 projects are in progress, and a further 11 projects are yet to commence.

Project Status Report

A status of all projects is listed in Attachment 1 - Project Status Report and Attachment 2 – Project Status Report without cost estimates. The tracking column shows which projects are categorised as “On Track” to be completed by March 31, “Caution” to be completed by June 30, or “Off Track” and at risk of not being completed by 30 June 2026. Currently there are no “Off Track” projects and all projects are expected to be completed by June 30, 2026.

Updated Project Allocations

Two projects require an increase in their allocation to be undertaken in their entirety.

Domestic Pound project

As advised in the November quarterly report, this project was expected to require additional funds to be completed following the completion of detailed designs and thorough interrogation of cost estimates. The current approved budget allocation for this project is \$318,000, it is proposed to increase the budget allocation to \$438,000 to allow the completion of this project.

Laanecoorie Newbridge Road project

The procurement process for this project has been undertaken and requires an increase to the original budget allocation to allow the continuation of the project. The current budget allocation for this project is \$424,270. It is proposed to increase the budget allocation for this project to \$484,270.

The required additional funding to complete these projects totals \$180,000. This can be funded from savings in the Emulsion Tank Replacements and Pyramid Hill Maternal Child Health building demolition (BLD141) which are both completed with a combined underspend of \$186,265 (as at Feb 26).

Flood Restoration Program

Table 2: Summary of progress for the Flood Restoration Program 2022 Event.

RECONSTRUCTION OF ESSENTIAL PUBLIC ASSETS WORK 2022 Event					
		COMPLETED	IN PROGRESS	AWAITING APPROVAL	
Treatment Category	Total number of damages recorded	Total number of damages rectified	Number of damage rectifications currently in progress	Number of damages waiting to be scoped	% Complete
Unsealed pavements	375	122	240	13	33%
Sealed pavements	164	112	42	10	68%
Clearing and earthworks	3	1	2	0	33%
Road furniture and delineation	2	1	0	1	50%
Drainage structures	31	18	8	5	58%
Total	575	254	292	29	44%

Table 3: Summary of progress for the Flood Restoration Program 2022 Event by Category.

IMMEDIATE RECONSTRUCTION WORKS	
TOTAL	90
COMPLETED	90
% Complete	100%
% Timeline	100%

RECONSTRUCTION OF ESSENTIAL PUBLIC ASSETS	
TOTAL	575
COMPLETED	254
% Complete	44%
% Timeline	69%

Total	
TOTAL	665
COMPLETED	344
% Complete	52%
% Timeline	69%

Table 4: Summary of progress for the Flood Restoration Program 2023/24 Event.

23/24 EVENT					
		COMPLETED	IN PROGRESS	AWAITING APPROVAL	
Treatment Category	Total number of damages recorded	Total number of damages rectified	Number of damage rectifications currently in progress	Number of damages waiting to be scoped	% Complete
Unsealed pavements	59	0	59	0	0%
Sealed pavements	15	0	15	0	0%
Concrete	1	0	1	0	0%
Drainage structures	7	0	0	7	0%
Emergency works	122	122	0	0	100%
Total	204	122	75	7	60%

The damages recorded are continuously monitored and reassessed which has resulted in consolidation of multiple damages and as such the total number of recorded damages has decreased from the previous report.

COST/BENEFITS

Annual Infrastructure Program

The Annual Infrastructure Program expenditure in the second quarter of the 2025–2026 financial year was \$1,291,516 for a total expenditure of \$1,910,759 in the 2025-2026 financial year. Attachment 1 lists all projects in the program which have an allocated budget of \$8,744,743 for the 2025-2026 financial year.

Flood Restoration Program

The Procurement process within Council has proven to be highly beneficial in that the costs to Council and the National Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements have consistently been within the certified estimates. This has allowed the program to progress in a timely manner and as a result it is anticipated that most work packages will be completed by June 2026.

The National Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements funding requires all flood restoration be completed by 30 June 2027.

A total of \$9,721,444.38 has been drawn down in advances, against which \$5,790,186.57 in claims have been approved. Of the approved claims, \$2,287,084.45 relates to Reconstruction of Essential Public Assets claims against approved Cost Estimates, with the remaining balance representing Restoration and Replacement, Counter Disaster Operations, Emergency Works and Immediate Reconstruction Works claims.

Claims currently under assessment total \$1,549,496.91 (Claim 29, 32 and 33) noting that Claim 29 has been approved in the Claims Management System and is awaiting the claim confirmation advice.

Based on the current position, the expected remaining advance balance is \$2,381,760.90. It is anticipated that a request for a further payment advance to the Department of Transport Planning will be undertaken in quarter 3.

RISK ANALYSIS

Annual Infrastructure Program

There are a number of risks associated with the delivery of the Annual Infrastructure Program and other significant projects. The following is a list of some but not all of the associated risks:

- delivering within timeframe and budget
- meeting community expectations
- delivering projects in accordance with engineering standards
- compliance with procurement legislation

Council officers are committed to monitoring and managing the risks associated with the Annual Infrastructure Program to ensure that any issues are minimised.

Flood Restoration Program

There are a number of risks associated with the delivery of the Flood Restoration Works Program. The following is a list of some but not all of the associated risks.

- meeting community expectations
- delivering projects in accordance with VicRoads & engineering standards
- Industry compliance with both Federal and State Government Acts.

Council officers are committed to monitoring and managing the risks associated with the Flood Restoration Works Program to ensure that any issues are minimised.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

The information provided in this report is presented after consultation between the Manager Assets and Infrastructure, Manager Flood Restoration and the Works Department.

RESOLUTION 2026/20

Moved: Cr Miki Wilson

Seconded: Cr Gavan Holt

That Council:

1. Note quarter 2 progress toward delivering the Annual Infrastructure Program 2025-26
2. Approve the reallocation of funds to the value of \$180,000 from the Emulsion Tank Replacements and Pyramid Hill Maternal Child Health building demolition project to the Domestic Pound Project and Laanecoorie Newbridge Road project
3. That Council note the update on progress of the Flood Restoration Program as of 31 December 2025.

CARRIED

11 INFORMATION REPORTS

11.1 EXECUTIVE DIRECTORATE QUARTERLY ACTIVITY REPORT Q2 OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2025

File Number:

Author: David Stretch, Manager Tourism and Economic Development

Authoriser: Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer

Attachments:

1. Tourism and Economic Development Key Actions
2. Media and Communications Report
3. Tourism and Marketing Report
4. Spendmapp Data Report

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive and note the Executive Directorate quarterly activity 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.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION

This report is a quarterly activity report to Council – an ongoing delivery requirement.

BACKGROUND

The development of an Executive Directorate quarterly report consolidates the former Tourism and Economic Development quarterly activity reports from Executive Directorate staff and broadens to capture data related to the delivery of other functions.

This report represents the second quarterly report (October – December) for the 2025-2026 financial year and provides context for some of the work undertaken across the Directorate during the reporting period.

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

The Executive Directorate delivers a broad range of services across multiple areas of Council operations. This report provides an overview of the key activities undertaken during the reporting period, outlining service performance, activity levels and outcomes achieved.

Detailed data and further information are provided in the attachments.

Economic Development

Economic development is the process of building economic capacity of an area in order to deliver improved social well-being and environmental outcomes for communities.

The Loddon Shire Economic Development Strategy 2025-2029 provides a framework and comprehensive plan to foster economic growth and resilience in the region.

The Strategy prioritises several objectives, including optimising the agricultural sector, promoting housing development as a catalyst for growth, positioning the Council as a collaborative partner, enhancing community liability, and fostering innovative and diverse industries.

Strategic Objectives - Economic Development

1. Optimised Agricultural Sector

An optimised agricultural sector that promotes collaboration and innovation among producers, enhancing productivity, resilience, market responsiveness, and the region's capacity to attract investment, new businesses, and talent.

2. Housing: A catalyst for growth

A diverse and sustainable housing supply which supports economic growth by attracting and retaining residents and workers, while strengthening existing townships.

3. Council: An advocating & collaborative partner

Council actions that foster a growing and prosperous Loddon Shire by collaborating with businesses and industry partners, and government entities to attract investment, and promote sustainable economic growth and job creation.

4. Liveable & Resilient Communities

Loddon will be known for its lifestyle and opportunities, offering equitable access to services and employment, celebrated through a strong regional identity that attracts people and investment, comprised of townships that foster a sense of place and culture.

5. Innovative & Diverse Industries

A diverse and innovative industry base that has capabilities to respond to emerging industry, economic and policy trends, leveraging regional supply chain opportunities while value adding to the local economy.

Please see attachments for details on:

- Economic Development Department actions for the period October - December 2025
- Spendmapp data for the period October - December 2025

Tourism

The Loddon Shire Visitor Economy Strategy 2025-2030 outlines a community-centric approach to building a sustainable and thriving visitor economy for the Loddon Shire.

The Visitor Economy Strategy aims to enhance the well-being of residents and visitors by adopting a destination stewardship model that prioritises social, cultural, environmental, and economic outcomes.

Strategic Objectives – Visitor Economy

1. Enhancing the visitor experience

Enhance and expand the quality and variety of visitor experiences in the Loddon Shire, strengthen connections between visitors, local people and place through authentic experiences and events, and develop infrastructure that supports placemaking, events and visitor services to improve the overall experience.

2. Destination marketing and storytelling

Share the unique stories of the people and place to attract visitors who value and protect the environment, culture and lifestyle. Target the right visitor markets through effective communication and partnerships, and extend visitor engagement by enhancing visitor servicing and bringing local stories to life.

3. Stewardship - management and resourcing

Foster strong leadership and collaboration to drive the vision for Loddon Shire visitor economy. Engage the community in tourism decision-making to build social license, and secure funding and resources to ensure stability and sustainable growth.

Please see attachment for details on:

- Visitor Economy Strategy Actions for the period October - December 2025
- Tourism Marketing Report for the period October - December 2025
- Visit Loddon Valley Social Media Report for the period October – December 2025
- Visitor Information Centre footfall and visitor data

Caravan Parks

Loddon Shire owns three caravan park sites, Bridgewater, Pyramid Hill and Wedderburn, and is the committee of management for the Boort Caravan Park which is located on Crown Land.

Bridgewater and Wedderburn Caravan Parks operate under 25-year commercial leases. Boort, operates under an older Crown lease structure and Pyramid Hill operates under a management agreement.

Site visits were undertaken at each park during December 2025, during which all parks were in preparation mode for the summer heat, along with the larger parks preparing for the arrival of guests for the peak period.

Boort, Bridgewater and Wedderburn had increased bookings during Spring, Boort Show, school holidays and public holiday weekends, with periods of the parks being at maximum occupancy. All four parks had an increase in harvest workers seeking cabins and powered sites.

Upgrades during the quarter included:

- Bridgewater
 - Completed by lessee:
 - Rectification of playground defects
 - Completed by Council:
 - Annual playground inspection
- Boort
 - Completed by lessee:
 - Replacement of jumping pillow
 - Completed by Council:
 - Filling of pot holes in gravel and bitumen areas.
 - Annual tree inspection and rectification works
 - Electrical and plumbing repairs
- Pyramid Hill
 - Management agreement updated, next review scheduled for November 2027
 - Completed by Council:
 - Annual tree inspection and rectification works
- Wedderburn
 - October 2025, lease transferred to new operator.

Media and Communications

Media and Communications is a unit of the Executive Directorate. Staffed by the Media and Communications Coordinator, it is responsible for managing Council's external communications – including with the traditional media as well as social media, publishing the Loddon Bulletin, and the Council websites – and some internal communications.

Key actions and deliverables undertaken during October – December 2025 are attached to this report.

COST/BENEFITS

Loddon Shire's economic development focuses on population growth, and business attraction to strengthen the local economy. Agriculture remains the backbone, complemented by advanced food manufacturing.

Strategic investments in housing, infrastructure, and visitor experiences aim to increase economic output and community resilience.

Council initiatives align with the current plan to support housing development, attract new businesses, and boost visitation, ensuring sustainable growth and improved quality of life.

The costs associated with the delivery of activities within this report primarily relate to officer time and operational delivery, rather than capital investment.

The Loddon Shire Economic Development Strategy (2025–2029) and Visitor Economy Strategy (2025–2030) set a clear vision for a thriving, sustainable future. These plans strengthen agriculture, enable housing growth, foster innovation, and adopt a destination stewardship model to deliver social, cultural, environmental, and economic benefits.

Investing in tourism and economic development will attract visitors, create jobs, diversify industries, and enhance community well-being.

As part of this vision, improving caravan parks will support destination development and boost visitor experiences.

The media and communications function of the Directorate supports frequent and multi-faceted community engagement, enhancing Council's brand, profile and reputation in the community.

RISK ANALYSIS

Economic Development - Failure to invest in economic development programs can leave Loddon Shire Council businesses vulnerable to economic downturns and less capable of handling future challenges, thereby affecting the region's long-term sustainability and prosperity.

Tourism - Failure to invest in tourism risks economic stagnation, reduced visitation, and diminished local business viability. For Loddon Shire, it threatens lost revenue opportunities, weakened regional competitiveness, limited job creation, and declining community pride.

Caravan Parks - Council maintains insurance for capital assets and public liability for each park, with operators to have public liability and WorkCover to cover their management and employees.

Media and Communications - Failure to deliver this function risks community mistrust, misinformation, and reduced engagement. For Loddon Shire Council, it may lead to reputational damage, inconsistent messaging during emergencies, lower transparency and weakened stakeholder confidence—ultimately undermining effective service delivery and organisational credibility across the region.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

The Tourism and Economic Development team regularly consults and engages with business and community stakeholders across the Shire, in Central Victoria and Melbourne, including but not limited to:

- Federal Government and agencies
- State Government departments and agencies
- Regional Development Victoria
- Regional Tourism Board
- Regional Local Governments
- First Nations Organisations
- Major business and employers
- Small business and retail
- Tourism, Progress and Community Groups
- Community House network
- Tourism and regional business NFPs and stakeholders

Caravan Parks - There is regular contact between the Executive Services Officer with and the lessees/managers of the Parks. Site visits occur regularly throughout the year.

Media and Communications – Mayor, Councillors and Executive team. Council staff, suppliers, local and regional media outlets and communications stakeholders.

RESOLUTION 2026/21

Moved: Cr Miki Wilson
Seconded: Cr Nick Angelo

That Council receive and note the Executive Directorate quarterly activity report.

CARRIED

11.2 ROAD MANAGEMENT PLAN COMPLIANCE REPORT

File Number: 14/01/022
Author: Daniel Lloyd, Manager Works
Authoriser: Steve Van Orsouw, Director Operations
Attachments: Nil

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive and note the road management plan compliance report.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no conflict of interest for any council staff member involved in writing this report or involved in the subject matter of the report.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION

This is the second report for the 2025-2026 financial year, summarising road network defect rectification compliance against requirements specified within the Loddon Shire Road Management Plan.

BACKGROUND

As a matter of good governance this report is produced quarterly and provides statistical data with respect to the Organisation's performance in managing the road network. Performance is measured through a comparison of actual defect rectification timeframes against requirements specified in the Road Management Plan.

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

Table 1 provides a summary of the compliance against the schedule of road and street inspection regimes as set in the Road Management Plan.

Table 1: Inspection summary report

Quarter 2 (01/10/2025 – 31/12/2025)						
Work Group	Number of scheduled inspections	Number completed by due date	Number completed after due date	Number not completed	Compliance	Number of Defects Raised
Loddon Goldfields	28	27	1	0	96.4%	503
Loddon Plains	22	22	0	0	100.0%	453
Total	50	49	1	0	98.0%	956

During the second quarter of 2025-2026 financial year, 98.0% of the programmed inspections were completed according to the schedule. This is 2.0% below the target of 100% set in the Road Management Plan.

Table 2 provides a summary of compliance of actual response times for rectification works of defects as detailed in the defect intervention levels and response timetables of the Road Management Plan. The defects have been identified through programmed inspections, customer requests and works crews identifying and rectifying defects as they find them, known as ad hoc work actions.

Table 2: Defect rectification summary report

Quarter 2 (01/10/2025 – 31/12/2025)								
Work Group	Number of Defects				Compliant with RMP			
	Ad hoc	Requests	Defects from inspections	Total	Yes	No	Not complete	%
Loddon Goldfields	1	14	466	481	474	7	0	98.5%
Loddon Plains	1	3	467	471	471	0	0	100.0%
Shire Wide	0	7	290	297	285	12	17	95.9%
Townscape Services	55	4	65	124	122	2	0	98.3%
Total	57	28	1288	1373	1352	21	17	98.4%

During the second quarter of 2025-2026 financial year, 98.4% of all date imposed defects were completed before their due date. This is 1.6% below the target of 100% set in the Road Management Plan. There were 21 defects completed after their due dates, due to unplanned staff leave. Additional training will be offered over the next 6 months to help cover staff absences during periods of leave and the implementation of a casual staff pool will commence during the next quarter.

Table 3 provides a summary of performance against the unsealed road maintenance grading program, defects as identified through programmed inspections, customer requests and works crews identifying and rectifying defects as they find them, known as ad hoc work actions. The maintenance grading program identifies each road segment by its road hierarchy and grading frequency as detailed in the Road Management Plan.

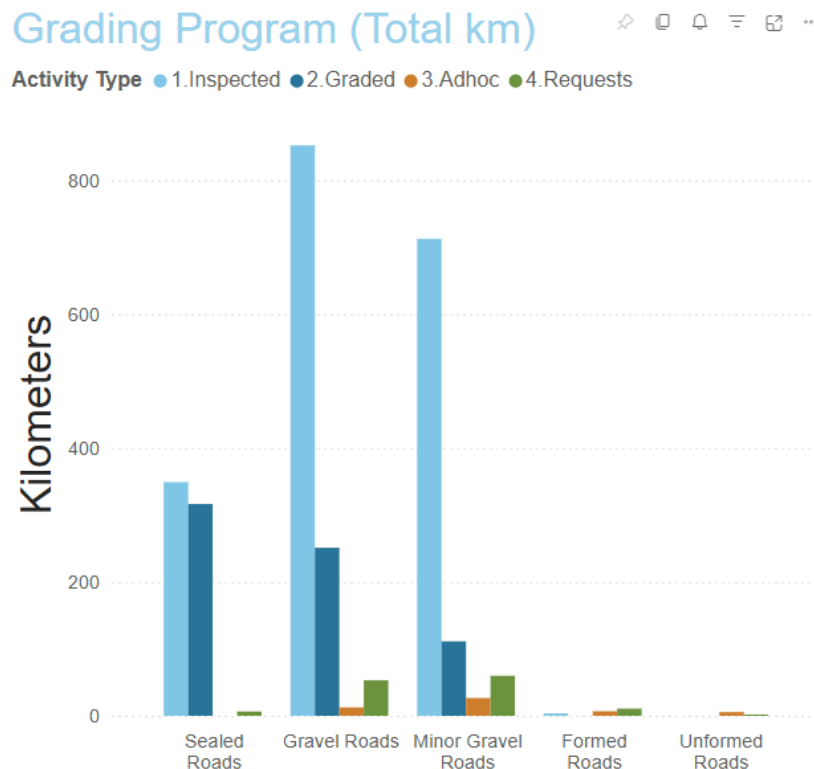
Table 3: Maintenance grading program

Quarter 2 (01/10/2025 – 31/12/2025)											
Work Group	Number of Grading Work Actions					Compliant within scheduled timeframes				KM Graded	KM Inspected
	Roads Graded	Defects	Requests	Ad hoc	Total	Yes	No	Not completed	%		
Loddon Goldfields	85	1	15	23	124	105	19	0	84.6%	478	1244
Loddon Plains	122	1	19	7	149	148	1	0	99.3%	383	672
Shire Wide	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0	0.0
Total	207	2	34	30	273	253	20	0	92.6%	862	1,917

The data in Table 3 indicates that 273 grading work actions were completed for the second quarter of 2025-2026 financial year. There is no set level of compliance for the maintenance grading program in the Road Management Plan.

The graph below (Chart 1) has been provided to demonstrate a breakdown of the grading work actions, by road hierarchy and kilometres. The sealed roads section relates to shoulder grading on the Sealed Road network. The gravel road section includes all grading work on Gravel Collector and Gravel Access roads. The Gravel Minor and the Formed Road sections relate directly to Council’s road hierarchy and show all grading work on roads within that hierarchy.

Chart 1: Maintenance Grading Program



COST/BENEFITS

The year to date actual expenditure to the end of second quarter of 2025-2026 financial year of the Local Road Maintenance Program is \$4,415,345. The expenditure for the second quarter was \$2,209,612

The benefits to the community in complying with the RMP are that it provides a safer road network.

RISK ANALYSIS

Repairing 100% of all date imposed defects before their due date limits Council’s liability for any claims for damage made against Council.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

No internal or external consultation is required in the formation of this report.

RESOLUTION 2026/22

Moved: Cr Nick Angelo

Seconded: Cr Miki Wilson

That Council receive and note the road management plan compliance report.

CARRIED

11.3 2025/26 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN AND MID-YEAR PROGRESS REPORT

File Number:**Author:** Renae Colls, Executive Assistant**Authoriser:** Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer**Attachments:**

1. 2025/26 Annual Action Plan
2. Mid-year Progress Report

RECOMMENDATION

That Council endorse the 2025/26 Annual Action Plan and note the mid-year Progress 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.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION

Councillors reviewed the Draft 2025/26 Annual Action Plan and Mid-year Progress Report at the February 2026 Council Forum.

BACKGROUND

At the October 2025 Council Meeting, Council adopted the Community Vision 2035 and Council Plan 2025-2029 incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.

The Community Vision 2035 documents the community's 10-year vision for Loddon Shire, while the Council Plan 2025-2029 is the high-level document that details the strategic objectives to work towards the community's vision for the four-year period.

Under the previous Council Plan 2021-2025, Council prepared a single Annual Plan 2021-2025 that covered the entire four-year period. While this approach provided long-term visibility, it required actions to be planned several years in advance and limited flexibility.

Under the current Council Plan 2025-2029, Council has moved to a standalone annual action plan for the beginning of each financial year. This change supports clearer annual planning, improved alignment with the budget and transparent reporting to the community.

As the Council Plan 2025-2029 was adopted in October 2025, the attached 2025/26 Annual Action Plan (Attachment 1) has been combined with the Mid-year Progress Report (Attachment 2) as a once off arrangement. The 2026/27 Annual Action Plan will be developed concurrently with the Annual Budget.

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

The *Local Government Act 2020* requires Council to report on the Council Plan on an annual and mid-year basis to ensure the strategic direction is aligned to the long-term Community Vision 2035 and current community needs.

The 2025/26 Annual Action Plan (Attachment 1) outlines the actions Council has undertaken and will continue to undertake during the 2025/26 financial year. These actions directly support the strategic objectives of the Council Plan and have been developed with consideration of the 2025/26 budget and delivery of operational KPIs.

The Mid-year Progress Report (Attachment 2) provides an update on actions delivered and progress achieved by Council during the period from June 2025 to December 2025.

The 2025/26 Annual Action Plan identifies 71 actions.

An overview of the actions is as follows:

- 18 are complete
- 51 are in progress
- 2 are not yet commenced

COST/BENEFITS

The benefit of the Annual Action Plan and Mid-year Progress Report provides a clear and accessible overview of Council's actions and delivery timeframe, providing better transparency to the community.

The cost associated with the development of the 2025/26 Annual Plan and Mid-year Progress Report is officer time and graphic design works.

RISK ANALYSIS

The 2025/26 Annual Action Plan will assist in moderating the community's expectations of Council in achieving the Community Vision 2035, which should assist in managing reputation risk.

By developing an annual action plan, council is able to demonstrate an integrated approach which connects the Community Vision, Council Plan Objectives, Actions to be delivered and the Annual Budget. This ensures that council is efficient in the use of its financial and human resources.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

The 2025/26 Annual Action Plan was developed in collaboration with Councillors and Council management staff, who collectively identified the actions incorporated in the plan.

RESOLUTION 2026/23

Moved: Cr Miki Wilson

Seconded: Cr David Weaver

That Council endorse the 2025/26 Annual Action Plan and note the mid-year Progress Report.

CARRIED

11.4 DEVELOPMENT & COMPLIANCE QUARTERLY ACTIVITY REPORT

File Number:

Author: Glenn Harvey, Manager Development and Compliance

Authoriser: Steve Van Orsouw, Director Operations

Attachments:

1. Applications processed in Quarter 2 - 2025/26
2. Applications completed in Quarter 2 - 2025/26

RECOMMENDATION

Council receive and note the second quarter Development & Compliance Quarterly Activity Report for 2025/26 financial year.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION

Council is provided with information on a quarterly basis summarising activities relating to strategic land use planning projects, planning and building permits, certificates and statutory enforcement activity undertaken within the Development & Compliance Department. This report provides an overview of performance for the second quarter of the 2025/26 financial year.

BACKGROUND

This report summarises the work and activities undertaken by the Development and Compliance Department for the second quarter of the 2025/26 financial year and provides Council with a high level summary for the purpose of monitoring performance within this area.

Council undertakes strategic land use planning projects to ensure that the Loddon Planning Scheme is robust, relevant and supportive of the Council Plan objectives.

Council maintains powers under the *Planning & Environment Act 1987*, which are delegated to the Planning Officers. Applications made under these powers include but are not limited to the following:

- consideration of a planning application for a new use/development
- consideration of an amendment to an existing planning permit
- secondary consent applications (minor changes)
- extensions of time to existing planning permits.

Council provides a range of building services through the Municipal Building Surveyor including the following:

- issuing relevant permits and certificates
- issuing report and consent determinations on matters not complying with the Building Regulations
- building advisory and information services including legal point of discharge requests
- consultancy and building control functions
- administrative functions prescribed by the Building Act and Regulations including keeping records relating to the activity of private building surveyors issuing permits within Loddon Shire
- regulatory enforcement of relevant Acts.

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

Strategic Planning

Wedderburn Flood Management Plan

This project will provide the modelling for the extent of flooding in Wedderburn and the identification of mitigation measures. These mitigation measures will include recommendations regarding any required changes to the flood controls in the Loddon Planning Scheme, as well as engineering solutions and information to support emergency management.

During the October to December 2025 quarter, the following actions have been undertaken by the Strategic Planner to progress this project:

- Continued community engagement to collect local knowledge of flood extent and encourage participation in the project.
- Further data provision to Hydrology by HARC Services to support modelling.
- Discussion with HARC Services and North Central Catchment Management Authority to identify data gaps.
- Engagement of surveyors to complete additional data capture of flood levels during the 2023 event at documented locations and Nardoo and Korong Creek cross sections at key locations.
- Liaison with landowners to enable access for survey work.
- Provision of survey data to HARC Services.

The consultants for the project are currently using the information collected so far to finalise hydrology and hydraulic modelling, flood extent mapping and identify possible mitigation measure options. This information will be made available to the Project Reference Committee for feedback in February/March. This information will then be used to develop flood animations and a draft flood study report. There will be a Councillor briefing and further community consultation to present this information in April/May.

Bridgewater and Inglewood Town Structure Plans

Loddon Shire is currently undertaking structure plans for Bridgewater and Inglewood. These towns were prioritised because of the greater growth pressure in these towns and the “Unlocking Loddon” project identified the need for precinct planning of these towns to support coordinated infrastructure investment and affordable housing development.

The structure plans will map out the future of these towns in terms of urban expansion, housing development, infrastructure investment, opportunities for new business and job creation, urban design enhancement and environmental management. The structure plans will largely be implemented through the planning scheme (zones and overlays), and will also identify priorities for Council infrastructure investment, and initiatives by other agencies that Council can advocate.

Plan2Place have been engaged by the Department of Transport and Planning to complete this project for Council.

During the October to December 2025 quarter the following actions were undertaken by the Strategic Planner to progress this project:

- Publish and promote online survey and collate results
- Conduct community drop in sessions in Bridgewater and Inglewood
- Further engagement with key agencies
- Review of the background papers produced by Plan2Place
- Discuss and review draft structure plan options with Department of Transport and Planning and Plan2Place

Plan2Place have prepared draft structure plans that will be returned to the community for further consultation and feedback in April.

Amendment C48 to the Loddon Planning Scheme

Amendment C48 to the Loddon Planning Scheme will implement many of the recommendations of the Loddon Planning Scheme Review that was adopted by Council in May 2024. Amendment C48 provides for updating information in the Municipal Planning Strategy, refinement of local policy, clarification of the purpose and scope of the Environmental Overlay Schedule 2 and inclusion of a contemporary strategic work plan.

Following Council's resolution to seek authorisation to commence the amendment process in August 2024, draft amendment documents were submitted to the Department of Transport and Planning for review and authorisation. In December 2024, Department of Transport and Planning responded seeking clarification about some matters requesting particular elements of the amendment be removed as they were considered to be beyond the scope of an "update amendment". The elements they have requested be removed, pending further strategic work, are the revised town structure plans and the McIntyre and Wehla rural living policy. Those modifications were made to the amendment in early 2025.

During the October to December 2025 quarter, the following actions have been undertaken by the Strategic Planner to progress this project:

- Review of letter received from the Department of Transport and Planning on 18 December 2025 offering conditional authorisation of the amendment.
- Request for a meeting with Department of Transport and Planning to seek clarity about some of the conditions and discuss the appropriate timing to move the amendment forward to ensure coordination with other projects.

Flood Planning Scheme Amendment

Loddon Shire submitted a funding request in March 2025 to the Department of Transport and Planning Regional Flood-related Amendments Program. This program is aimed to support local government to improve floodplain management and flood resilience with the provision of funding to undertake planning scheme amendments to implement completed flood studies. Council has not been advised about the status of the funding request and have been advised by NCCMA and Department of Transport and Planning that there are options being developed to enable the incorporation of completed and adopted flood studies into planning schemes in a coordinated and streamlined manner.

During the October to December 2025 quarter, the following actions were undertaken by the Strategic Planner to progress this project:

- Discussions with North Central Catchment Management Authority and Department of Transport and Planning regarding options to incorporate completed flood studies into the Loddon Planning Scheme.

Newbridge

At the March 2025 Council meeting, Council resolved to begin a land use planning process to determine the most appropriate way to expand the township of Newbridge. This project is being led by Community Partnerships, given its strong foundation in Community Planning. Strategic Planning provides support and will be involved to facilitate the likely land use planning outcomes.

During the October to December 2025 quarter, the following actions were undertaken by the Strategic Planner to support this project:

- Worked with Community Partnerships and Economic Development to develop a scope and proposed methodology for the project.

Statutory Planning

Planning permit activities

A detailed summary of planning permit status can be found in Attachments 1 and 2.

Timeframes

The *Planning & Environment Act 1987* requires a 60 day timeframe for the processing of planning applications by councils. The Act details how the 60 days is to be measured following the acceptance of a planning permit application.

Table 1 provides a summary of the average timeframe in which the Development and Compliance Department assessed and issued Planning Permits during the second quarter of the 2025-2026 financial year and compares these against the small to medium regional council's average.

Table 1: Average timeframes for decisions

Month	Quarter 2 of the 2025-2026 financial year			
	Average gross days to determine	Median processing days to determine	Completed within 60 days	Rural average completed within 60 days
October	109	41	88%	74%
November	36	41	100%	73%
December	27	27	100%	71%
Total for the Quarter	72	41	94%	74%

During the second quarter of the 2025-2026 financial year 94% of all Planning Permit applications were assessed and issued within the timeframes as set in the *Planning & Environment Act 1987*. This was 20% above the average for small to medium regional Council's. In addition, all Vic Smart applications were decided within 10 day timeframe, a good result for Council and its planning team.

Building Services

Throughout the first quarter of the 2025-2026 financial year, items of significance relating to the activity of Council's building services include:

- following up with the owner on recent building fires and the clean-up of these sites.
- issuing of demolition consents and variations sitting under Part 5 of the Building Regulations.
- follow up on enforcement activities including Court and Building Appeals items
- ongoing implementation and performance improvement of software system changes.

Building permits

Table 1 provides the number and total value of building permits issued for the three quarters of 2024-2025 and the second quarter of 2025-2026. There is variation in the value of permits throughout any given financial year, and this is attributable to the scale and cost of individual projects.

Table 1: Summary of new building permits issued

	Quarter 3 2024-25 (01/01/2025 – 31/03/2025)	Quarter 4 2024-25 (01/04/2025 – 30/06/2025)	Quarter 1 2025-26 (01/07/2025 30/09/2025)	Quarter 2 2025-26 (01/10/2025 – 31/12/2025)
No. of new Permits	27	34	44	29
Value of Works	\$5,497,115	\$9,547,045	\$11,842,481	\$4,600,133

Table 2 provides a summary of the number of final inspections and certificates of occupancy issued for building permits for each quarter.

Table 2: Summary of final inspections and occupancy permits

	Quarter 3 2024-25 (01/01/2025 – 31/03/2025)	Quarter 4 2024-25 (01/04/2025 – 30/06/2025)	Quarter 1 2025-26 (01/07/2025 – 30/09/2025)	Quarter 2 2025-26 (01/10/2025 – 31/12/2025)
Certificates of final inspection	23	14	22	37
Occupancy Permits	9	9	12	18

Council Building Services staff continue to work proactively with Council issued permit holders, sending follow up letters to notify building owners approximately two months before their building permits are due to lapse. This allows owners to arrange a final inspection/occupancy permit or apply for an extension of time for their building permit.

Statutory enforcement

Table 3 provides a high level summary of statutory enforcement activities undertaken by the Municipal Building Surveyor.

Table 3: Summary of statutory enforcement activities

Type	Actions incomplete from previous report period	New action started	Total actions	Building notice issued	Building order issued	Appeal to Building Appeals Board	Legal action / solicitors letter started this quarter	Legal action ongoing	No. resolved during this quarter
Building damaged by fire	4	1	5	5	1	0	0	1	1
Works required to make building safe (including pools)	24	0	24	3	4	0	0	0	0

Type	Actions incomplete from previous report period	New action started	Total actions	Building notice issued	Building order issued	Appeal to Building Appeals Board	Legal action / solicitors letter started this quarter	Legal action ongoing	No. resolved during this quarter
Carrying out building works without a permit	29	5	34	34	3	0	0	1	0
Works not in accordance with building permit	2	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0
Illegal occupation of non-habitable building	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Building with non-complying essential safety measures	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0

Whilst new issues requiring enforcement are identified regularly, it is also noted there are some longstanding enforcement activities that are ongoing. The time spent on individual items can be significant particularly when it requires escalation to the Court system. Council officers endeavour to resolve matters without legal intervention.

COST/BENEFITS

The expenditure for the second quarter of the 2025-2026 financial year for strategic planning was \$10,284, statutory planning \$55,213 and building services \$65,985.

Benefits derived from investing in the Development and Compliance Department include:

- Clearly defined directions for land use and development that are underpinned by research and supported by the community.
- A relevant and effective planning scheme that provides for economic development, population growth, attractive townships and protection of heritage and the environment.
- well managed and appropriate development
- well informed community members who understand the value of planning within local government
- applications processed in a timely manner
- correct implementation of regulations and standards

RISK ANALYSIS

There are risks associated with all building and development works. As such, it is vital that legislation, standards and controls are administered effectively. Failure of Council to adequately enforce the provisions of applicable legislation poses the following possible risks:

- unsafe development and or building works which may affect the safety of property owners, occupiers and the general public within Loddon Shire
- Council's reputation as a Responsible Authority and/or regulatory authority
- Council being held liable for failure to act in a matter which results in damage to other property, or injury or death to a person
- failure to meet statutory obligations set within relevant legislation.

As part of the risk management process when undertaking enforcement work, the Municipal Building Surveyor makes reference to the building enforcement intervention filter criteria, developed by the Victorian Municipal Building Surveyors Group and which forms part of the procedures covered in Loddon Shire Council's Building Control Policy.

In respect to the Wedderburn Flood Management Plan, new guidelines have been introduced and include an additional increase in water level height to take account of climate change impacts. This additional height has proven to be a challenge in other studies across the State.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

The Planning and Building Staff consult with several stakeholders on a regular basis including:

- applicants
- surrounding land owners
- regulatory authorities
- consultants
- other Loddon Shire Council departments
- other municipalities

All strategic projects discussed above will involve extensive community consultation

RESOLUTION 2026/24

Moved: Cr Nick Angelo

Seconded: Cr David Weaver

Council receive and note the second quarter Development & Compliance Quarterly Activity Report for 2025/26 financial year.

CARRIED

11.5 COMMUNITY WELLBEING DIRECTORATE QUARTERLY ACTIVITY REPORT Q2 OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2025

File Number:

Author: Wendy Gladman, Director Community Wellbeing

Authoriser: Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer

Attachments: 1. Community Wellbeing quarterly activity report

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive and note the Community Wellbeing Directorate quarterly activity 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.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION

The report for the first quarter of the financial year was provided to the November 2025 Council meeting.

BACKGROUND

Quarterly reporting provides Council with a structured overview of the Directorate's activities, service delivery outcomes, and operational performance.

This report represents the second quarterly report for the 2025–2026 financial year and provides context for the work undertaken across the Directorate during the reporting period, October – December 2025.

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

The Community Wellbeing Directorate is responsible for delivering a broad range of services and programs that support the health, safety, and wellbeing of the Loddon Shire community.

This report provides an overview of the key activities, service delivery outcomes, and compliance functions undertaken during the quarter across the Directorate's service areas, including:

- **Kindergartens** – delivery of early childhood education programs and services.
- **Maternal and child health** – provision of health and developmental services to children and families.
- **Immunisation** – provision of immunisation to infants and school aged children
- **Community compliance** – enforcement and education related to animal control, local laws, and planning compliance.
- **Environmental health** – management of public health functions, including food premises inspections, septic system approvals, and investigation of public health complaints.
- **Municipal fire prevention** - inspections, hazard reduction, and community education to manage fire risk and ensure compliance with fire prevention legislation.
- **Community support** – administration of Council's Community Support Policy.
- **Community planning** – information on the current status of recognised community planning committees and currency of community plans.

The report provides Council with information on activity levels and service outcomes for the reporting period. Detailed data and further information are provided in Attachment 1.

COST/BENEFITS

The costs associated with the delivery of the activities within this report primarily relate to officer time and operational delivery, rather than capital investment.

Administration of Council statutory, community wellbeing functions involves significant engagement with residents, ratepayers, community groups and other organisations. This investment increases when compliance issues arise, complex cases or projects are being managed, or additional support is required to meet community needs.

While these activities can often require substantial officer time and resources, particularly when compliance matters escalate to enforcement or legal processes, they deliver important benefits and outcomes to both Council and the community including:

- improved public health, safety, and wellbeing across the municipality
- enhanced township amenity and environmental protection
- greater compliance with legislation and responsible animal management and confidence in Council's regulatory role
- delivery of quality early years services
- strengthened community partnerships and confidence in Council's community development role

Regular reporting on the activities and outcomes of the Community Wellbeing Directorate provides Council with clear insight into the value and impact of its investment in community services and supports. Further, it enables Council to monitor performance, identify emerging risks, gaps or opportunities and maintain confidence that statutory and community obligations are being met efficiently and effectively.

RISK ANALYSIS

Failure to adequately deliver, administer, or enforce the legislative and program responsibilities across the Community Wellbeing Directorate presents a range of operational, reputational, and community risks.

For the regulatory and compliance areas (including Planning Compliance, Local Laws, Environmental Health, and Animal Management), inadequate management or enforcement of relevant Acts — such as the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, *Impounding of Livestock Act 1994*, *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*, and *Food Act 1984* — could result in:

- barriers to appropriate development and associated economic growth within Loddon Shire
- public health risks, including the spread of infectious diseases and foodborne illness
- contamination of land or waterways
- reduced public safety, increasing the likelihood of injury, fire, or other hazards
- diminished township amenity and environmental quality
- reputational damage to Council as a regulatory authority
- failure to meet statutory obligations and reporting requirements

For the service delivery areas (including Kindergartens, Maternal and Child Health, Immunisation, and Community Support), risks may include:

- reduced access to essential early years and family health services
- diminished community confidence and satisfaction
- non-compliance with sector standards and funding agreements
- inability to meet identified community needs and expectations.

Collectively, these risks emphasise the importance of maintaining robust systems of governance, staff capability, compliance oversight, and continuous improvement to ensure Council meets its legislative obligations and delivers safe, high-quality services to the community.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

The Community Wellbeing Directorate engages regularly with residents and ratepayers, business operators, community groups, partners and other agencies in the delivery of its services and compliance functions.

Across the Directorate, consultation occurs through a variety of channels and ranges from formal engagement to day-to-day interactions with community members, service users and other agencies

Proactive consultation and open communication help build community understanding of Council's regulatory responsibilities and supports voluntary compliance. Engagement also focuses on identifying community needs, encouraging participation and building partnerships that improve community outcomes.

RESOLUTION 2026/25

Moved: Cr Miki Wilson

Seconded: Cr Nick Angelo

That Council receive and note the Community Wellbeing Directorate quarterly activity report.

CARRIED

12 COMPLIANCE REPORTS

Nil

13 URGENT BUSINESS**RESOLUTION 2026/26**

Moved: Cr Miki Wilson

Seconded: Cr Nick Angelo

That due to the timeframes required for submissions, Council accept an item of Urgent Business relating to:

1. a submission to the Australian Local Government Associations National General Assembly.

CARRIED

13.1 SUBMISSION TO AUSTRALIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATIONS NATIONAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY**RESOLUTION 2026/27**

Moved: Cr Miki Wilson

Seconded: Cr David Weaver

That Council:

1. Submit the following motion to the Australian Local Government Association's National General Assembly -

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Local Government Association to provide improved reporting monitoring the progress of previous years motions when requesting nominations for the current year's general assembly.

2. Authorise the CEO, in consultation with the Mayor, to make minor changes to improve the wording of the motion and/or to update the motion relative to any changes to the issue that may have occurred between the council meeting and the date of its lodgement with the Australian Local Government Association.

CARRIED

14 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

Nil

NEXT MEETING

The next Meeting of Council will be held on 24 March 2026 at Wedderburn commencing at 3.00pm.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 3:56 pm.

Confirmed this.....day of..... 2026

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CHAIRPERSON