COUNCILLOR BRIEFING RECORD

DATE: 23 September 2025
START TIME: 3.35 pm

ATTENDEES:

Councillors:
Cr Karen Stephens (Mayor), Cr Robyn McDonald (Deputy Mayor), Cr Matt Jowett, Cr Duane Angelino, Cr John Pepper, Cr Michael Noske, Cr Michael Carr (4.05).

Officers:
CEO (Helen Havercroft), Director Community Services (Brett Jackson), Director Corporate Services (David Hol), Director Infrastructure Services (Aaron Moyne)

Other attendees: Nil

APOLOGIES:

Declaration of Conflict of Interest:	• Cr McDonald – Community Grants • Cr Pepper – Community Grants
Items Discussed:	• Items on the Council agenda • Island Park safety netting • Island Park flooding levels • Local Port delinquent vessels • Community questions • Community grants eligibility • Long Term Financial Plan • Borrowing costs • Financial and capital reporting
Councillor Items	• Rate Recovery Properties
Other Items	• Primary Production Rebate funds • Heywood and Portland Battery Project

FINISH TIME: 4.54 pm

COUNCILLOR BRIEFING RECORD

DATE: 6 October 2025
START TIME: 4.30 pm

ATTENDEES:

Councillors:
Cr Karen Stephens (Mayor), Cr Robyn McDonald (Deputy Mayor), Cr Matt Jowett, Cr Michael Carr, Cr Duane Angelino, Cr John Pepper, Cr Michael Noske.

Officers:
CEO (Helen Havercroft),

Other attendees: Nil

APOLOGIES:

Nil

Declaration of Conflict of Interest:	• Nil
Items Discussed:	• Monthly financial reporting • Bridgewater Amenity Update • Advocacy Strategy Discussion • Henty Street Amenity Update • Fallen Trees over Fences • Condition of toilets at Heywood Rec Reserve • ESVF Advocacy and Discussion following news articles • Community Engagement • Car parking enforcement • SWVA Parliament House event • Introduction of CIVICA into Council • Promotion of Council Meetings
Other Items	• Nil

FINISH TIME: 6.20 pm

COUNCILLOR BRIEFING RECORD

DATE: 14 October 2025
START TIME: 4.00pm

ATTENDEES:

Councillors:
Cr Karen Stephens (Mayor), Cr Robyn McDonald (Deputy Mayor), Cr Matt Jowett, Cr Duane Angelino.

Officers:
CEO (Helen Havercroft), Director Community Services (Brett Jackson), Director Corporate Services (David Hol), Director Infrastructure Services (Aaron Moyne)

Other attendees: Lynne McMahon – Emergency Management Coordinator (item 1)
Will Kerr – Construction Engineer (Item 2)
Simone Scott - Governance Manager (Item 3)

APOLOGIES:
Cr Michael Noske, Cr Michael Carr, Cr John Pepper

Declaration of Conflict of Interest:	• Nil
Items Discussed:	• Councils' role in emergencies • Roads and Infrastructure presentation Session 2 • Procurement Policy review
Councillor Items	• Late night shopping Portland • Civic Hall hire query • Noosa Shire cyber security issue • Royal Hotel parking • Tree planting query • Notices of Motion / Governance Rules • Rates discussion
Other Items	• Building staff update • Dartmoor property update • Financial Statements status • CEO, Mayor and Cr Minister meetings • Long Term Financial Plan feedback

FINISH TIME: 6.49 pm

COUNCILLOR BRIEFING RECORD

DATE: 21 October 2025
START TIME: 4.10pm

ATTENDEES:

Councillors:
Cr Karen Stephens (Mayor), Cr Robyn McDonald (Deputy Mayor), Cr Matt Jowett, Cr Duane Angelino, Cr Michael Carr, Cr John Pepper.

Officers:
CEO (Helen Havercroft), Director Community Services (Brett Jackson) (on-line), Director Corporate Services (David Hol), Director Infrastructure Services (Aaron Moyne)

Other attendees: Manager Planning and Development (Matt Berry) Item 1 & 3
Economic Development Coordinator (Bryce Spencer) Item 3
Governance Manager (Simone Scott) Item 5

APOLOGIES: Cr Michael Noske

Declaration of Conflict of Interest:	• Nil
Items Discussed:	• VicGrid presentation – online • Domestic Animal Management Plan • Community Support and Funding Policy • Draft Annual Report • Lease and License Policy • Events Update
Councillor Items	• SES / ESVF • Tree Planting • Bunting in Cliff St • Hurd St fencing • Winter period Casterton statistics • Road Re-linemarking
Other Items	• Storm update • Audit status • ERP System Upgrades

FINISH TIME: 7.30 pm

17/10/2025

Mrs Helen Havercroft

Chief Executive Officer

Glenelg Shire Council

PO Box 152

Portland, Vic 3305

Dear Helen

Re: Notice of Motion –Protection of Recreational Fishing within Portland Bay

In accordance with the Council's Governance rules, I give notice of my intention to move the following motion at the Council meeting to be held on 28th October 2025.

1. That Council writes a submission in support of the draft FISHERIES (PORTLAND BAY COMMERCIAL FISHERY) NOTICE 2025.

Attachment

- Att-1-DRAFT-Fisheries-Portland-Fishery-Notice-2025-2 (1)

Yours Sincerely

CR Michael Carr

Fisheries Act 1995

FISHERIES NOTICE 2025

I, Travis Dowling, Chief Executive Officer of the Victorian Fisheries Authority, as delegate of the Minister for Outdoor Recreation, having undertaken consultation in accordance with Section 3A of the **Fisheries Act 1995** (the Act), make the following Fisheries Notice under Sections 68A, 114 and 152 of the Act:

TRAVIS DOWLING
Chief Executive Officer
Victorian Fisheries Authority

……../……./2025

FISHERIES (PORTLAND BAY COMMERCIAL FISHERY) NOTICE 2025

(1) Title

This Notice may be cited as the Fisheries (Portland Bay Commercial Fishery) Notice 2025.

(2) ***Objectives***

The objective of this Notice is to provide for the management, development and use of the fisheries resource in an efficient and effective manner, enabling sharing of the resource between all marine users by:

i. prohibiting the use of mesh nets, trawl nets and seine nets in specified waters of Portland Bay;

ii. restricting the use of longlines in specified waters of Portland Bay;

iii. prohibiting the take of yellowtail kingfish in specified waters of Portland Bay by Ocean Fishery Access Licence holders and Trawl (Inshore) Fishery Access Licence holders.

(3) ***Authorising provisions***

This Notice is made under sections 68A, 114 and 152 of the Act.

(4) ***Commencement***

This Notice comes into operation on *** November 2025.

(5) ***Definitions***

In this Fisheries Notice –

'***specified commercial fishers***' means holders of a Trawl (Inshore) Fishery Access Licence, or any person acting or purporting to act under a Trawl (Inshore) Fishery Access Licence, or holders of an Ocean Fishery Access Licence.

(6) ***Prohibition on the use of nets in specified waters of Portland Bay***

(1) For the purposes of section 114 of the Act, the use of a mesh net, trawl net or seine net in the area shown hatched in Schedule 1 is prohibited.

DRAFT

(7) ***Use of fishing lines in or on specified waters of Portland Bay***

(1) For the purposes of section 114 of the Act –

a) the use of more than one longline at any one time; or

b) use of a longline with more than 50 hooks attached

in the area shown hatched in Schedule 1 is prohibited.

(8) ***Catch limit for yellowtail kingfish***

(1) For the purposes of section 68A of the Act, the daily catch limit for specified commercial fishers with respect to the taking of yellowtail kingfish (*Seriola grandis*) in the area shown hatched in Schedule 1, is 0 fish.

(2) Sub clause (1) does not apply to specified commercial fishers who:

a) are undertaking fishing activities in accordance with the conditions of their access licence and the provisions of this Fisheries Notice; and

b) do not intentionally seek to take or target yellowtail kingfish; and

c) take all reasonable steps to immediately release any yellowtail kingfish into the waters from which it was taken with the least possible injury or damage.

(9) ***Application to Fisheries Reserves***

For the purposes of section 152(4), this notice applies to all Fisheries Reserves.

(10) ***Revocation***

Unless sooner revoked, this Notice will be revoked on **** 2026.

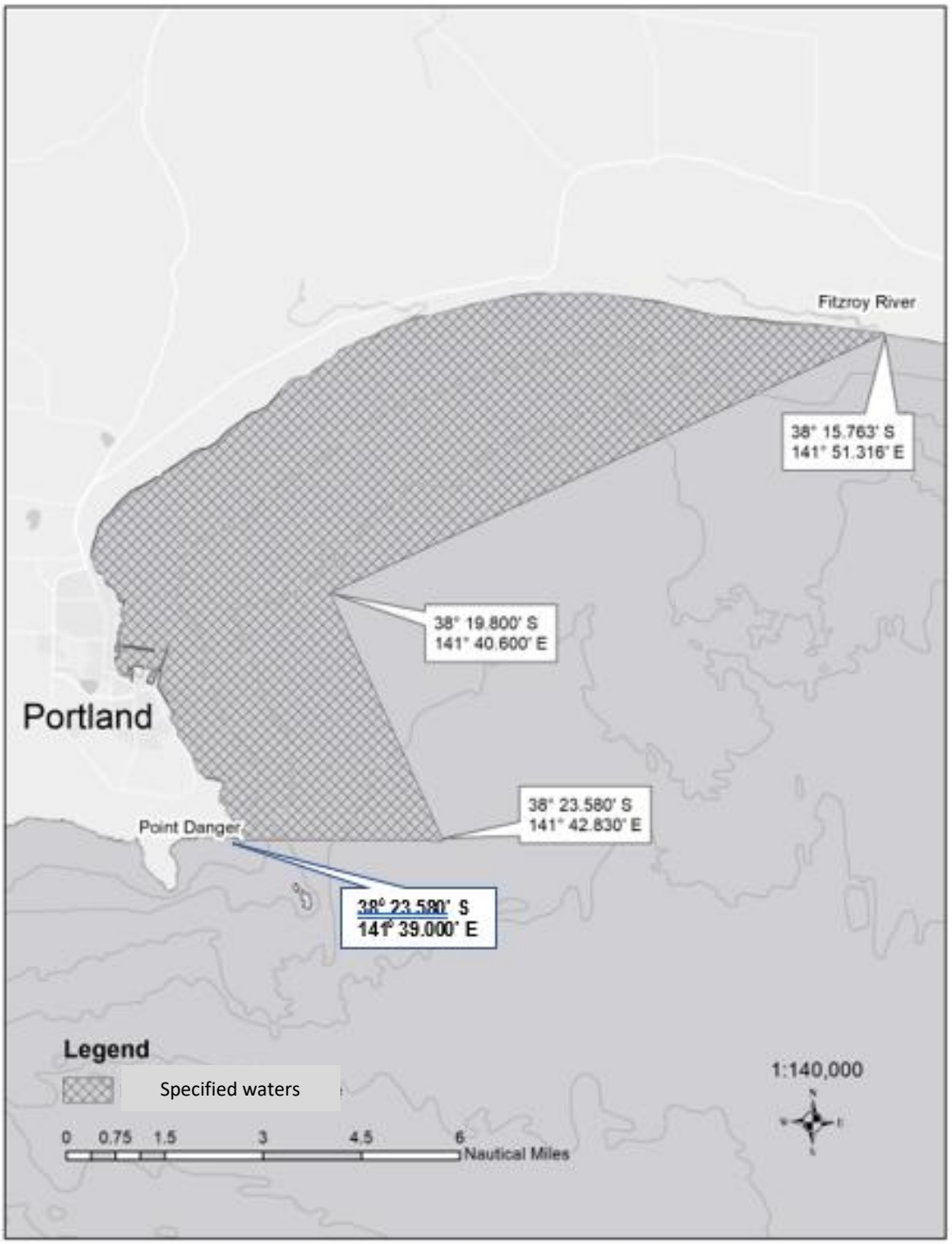
Notes:

It is an offence under section 68A of the Act to take or possess more fish than the catch limit for that species of fish. Various penalties apply.

Contravention of any prohibition under section 114 of the Act, as set out in this Fisheries Notice, is an offence under section 114(3) of the Act. A maximum penalty of 100 penalty units or 6 months imprisonment or both applies.

DRAFT

Schedule 1


Fitzroy River
38° 15.763' S
141° 51.316' E
38° 19.800' S
141° 40.600' E
Portland
38° 23.580' S
141° 42.830' E
Point Danger
38° 23.580' S
141° 39.000' E
Legend
Specified waters
0 0.75 1.5 3 4.5 6
Nautical Miles
1:140,000

Glenelg Shire Council

2025/2026 Financial Report - YTD September

Glenelg Shire Council 2025/2026 Financial Report - YTD September

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Comprehensive Income Statement

For the Period ended September 2025

	2025/26 Adopted Budget	2025/26 Forecast Budget	September 2025 YTD Forecast Budget	September 2025 YTD Actual
Income				
Rates and Charges	35,817,660	31,856,619	31,256,525	30,690,753
Statutory Fees and Fines	717,500	717,500	111,653	137,841
User Fees	2,873,229	2,873,229	732,865	762,253
Grants - Operating	16,772,875	13,822,273	7,440,681	7,447,504
Grants - Capital	10,627,172	10,871,063	0	0
Other Income	1,162,623	3,192,623	753,940	775,752
Contributions - Non Monetary	69,273	65,000	0	0
Contributions - Monetary	65,000	81,773	79,773	15,146
Net Gain (or Loss) on disposal of PP & E	471,650	471,650	303,127	162,583
Total Income	**68,576,982**	**63,951,730**	**40,678,564**	**39,991,832**
Expenses				
Employee Costs	28,240,160	28,240,160	6,379,670	6,389,171
Materials and Services	20,717,454	21,478,038	5,559,440	5,190,591
Borrowing Costs	362,500	362,500	90,624	48,351
Bad and Doubtful Debts	0	0	0	0
Other Expenses	2,374,306	2,374,306	689,101	737,578
Finance Costs - Leases	27,400	27,400	7,427	4,189
Depreciation and Amortisation	13,396,000	13,396,303	3,349,071	3,349,451
Other Expenses - ERP Project	990,285	1,287,285	566,022	558,827
Other Expenses - Landfill Provision Adjustment	(450,000)	(450,000)	0	0
Total Expenses	**65,658,105**	**66,715,992**	**16,641,355**	**16,278,158**
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	**2,918,877**	**(2,764,262)**	**24,037,209**	**23,713,673**

Notes:

- *The Comprehensive Income Statement shows the full amount of Rates and Charges income for 2025/26 (Rates and Charges are invoiced in August each y*
- *Variance notes are based on a materiality threshold where the variance between Actual expenditure and the YTD Forecast Budget is greater or less than $500,000 and/or 10 percent.*

Category	Variance Notes
Rates and Charges	The Forecast Budget for Rates and Charges income is approx $4M lower than the Adopted budget due to the 40% Primary Production rebate. The 40% rebate of $3.96M has been offset by a $3.96 increase in grant funding to fund the rebate.
Grants - Operating	The Forecast Budget for Operating Grants is $3M lower than the Adopted Budget. This amount is predominantly due to the following - $5.6M reduction in 2025/26 Federal assistance funding due to receiving this amount in 2024/25; $4M increase due to the grant received from the State Government for the 40% Primary Production rebate (received in lieu of Rates income); $200k received from the State Government to administer the 40% Primary Production rebate; $479k of additional grant income due to carry forward grant projects; a reduction in Grant funding of $2M as a result of reclassifying the Child Care Subsidy as other income (Other income has simultaneously increased by $2M).
Other Income	The Forecast Budget for Other income is $2M higher than the adopted budget due to the reclassification of Child care subsidy income from Operational Grant income to Other income. All income categories have been reviewed as a result of transitioning to CIVICA and it was recognised that the Child Care Subsidy does not meet the definition of a Grant.
Net Gain (or Loss) on disposal of Property Plant & Equipment	The Net Gain on the disposal of Plant and Equipment is higher than YTD Budget as the proceeds from disposal are yet to be reduce by the carrying value of the asset to determine the Net Gain/Loss.
Borrowing Costs	YTD Borrowing Costs are $48k. $4M of the $7M loan facility was drawn down in June 2024/25 and converted into a Fixed Rate loan in August 2025. Council still expects to draw down the remaining $3M of the loan when the carried forward Portland Foreshore Multipurpose project progresses.

Balance Sheet

For the Period ended September 2025

	2025/26 Adopted Budget	2025/26 Forecast Budget	September 2025 YTD Actual
Assets			
Current Assets			
Cash and Cash Equivalents	3,177,400	2,779,885	12,257,788
Trade and other receivables	3,000,000	3,000,000	32,637,470
Inventories	250,000	500,000	583,600
Prepayments	550,000	550,000	32,862
Other Assets	100,000	100,000	0
Total Current Assets	**7,077,400**	**6,929,885**	**45,511,720**
Non-Current Assets			
Trade and other receivables	7,000	0	0
Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	576,066,000	581,269,383	572,024,979
Right of Use Assets	421,958	421,958	264,139
Total Non-Current Assets	**576,494,958**	**581,691,342**	**572,289,118**
Total Assets	**583,572,358**	**588,621,227**	**617,800,839**
Liabilities			
Current Liabilities			
Trade and other payables	3,000,000	3,000,000	543,551
Trust funds and deposits	1,400,000	1,400,000	6,212,589
Contract and Other Liabilities	500,000	500,000	4,190,002
Provisions	5,600,000	5,600,000	5,210,728
Interest-bearing loans and borrowings	331,422	331,422	211,113
Lease Liabilities - Current	182,821	182,821	140,821
Total Current Liabilities	**11,014,242**	**11,014,242**	**16,508,804**
Non-Current Liabilities			
Non Current Provisions	5,300,000	5,300,000	5,212,245
Non Current Interest-bearing loans and borrowings	6,354,181	6,354,181	3,769,789
Lease Liabilities - Non Current	250,953	250,953	130,336
Total Non-Current Liabilities	**11,905,134**	**11,905,134**	**9,112,370**
Total Liabilities	**22,919,376**	**22,919,376**	**25,621,174**
Net Assets	**560,652,982**	**565,701,850**	**592,179,665**
Equity			
Accumulated surplus	133,526,982	132,031,738	158,509,553
Reserves	427,126,000	433,670,112	433,670,112
Total Equity	**560,652,982**	**565,701,850**	**592,179,665**

Balance Sheet variance notes

For the Period ended September 2025

Category	Variance Notes
Cash and cash equivalents	Cash Balances at 30 June are high due to the early payment of VLGGC funds in June 2025 and $4M of Grant funding received during September to subsidise the 40% Primary Production Rebate. The first instalment of rates was also due in Sep 2025. Cash balances are expected to be approx $2.8M at 30 June.
Trade and other receivables	Trade and other receivables are currently sitting at approx $32.6M for the period ending 30 September 2025. Rates debtors and Emergency Services Volunteer Levy (ESVF) debtors make up the majority of the debtors balance. The balance of debtors will reduce throughout the year in line with rate instalment due dates.
Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	There has been an increase again in Property, Infrastructure, Plant and Equipment values due to Revaluations.
Trade and other payables	Trade and Other payables are $544k at 30 September. The main contributors to this balance at 30 September is payroll Creditors for $307k and Rates overpayments of $131k.
Trust funds and Deposits	Trust Funds and Deposits at 30 September are $6.2M and are largely made up of Emergency Services Volunteer Levy (ESVF) fees that Council has raised and will need to pass on as a result of raising Rates for 2025/26. This liability will reduce throughout the year as Council passes on the ESVF monies. Other amounts in trust are $692k in Refundable deposits and $393k in Retentions.
Provisions	Current and Non Current provisions are made up of Employee, Landfill and Gravel Pit Provisions. Council will be provided with information from various bodies throughout 2025/26 Financial Year to inform these calculations.
Contract and Other Liabilities	At 30 September 2025, $4.19M is sitting as a liability in Council's Balance Sheet. This amount represents unearned grant income for the Portland Multipurpose faclity and Gymnastics facility. It will be removed from the Balance Sheet and recognised as income when the projects begin to incur expenditure.
Interest Bearing Loans and borrowings	Additional borrowings of $3M are budgeted for the 2025/26 Financial Year. Council drew down $4M of a $7M faciliity limit in 2024/25 and is expecting to draw down the remaining $3M amount in 2025/26.

Statement of Cash Flows

For the Period ended September 2025

	2025/26 Adopted Budget Inflow (Outflow)	2025/26 Forecast Budget Inflow (Outflow)	September 2025 YTD Actual Inflow (Outflow)	% of Forecast Budget
Cash flows from operating activities				
Rates & Charges (including kerbside collection)	35,818,000	31,856,619	5,049,995	16%
Statutory Fees and Fines	718,000	718,000	137,841	19%
User Fees	2,873,000	2,873,000	1,047,377	36%
Grants - Operating	16,772,600	13,472,360	7,429,027	55%
Grants - Capital	6,369,000	6,369,000	0	0%
Contributions - monetary	69,000	69,000	15,146	22%
Interest received	50,000	50,000	96,074	192%
Other receipts	1,112,800	3,142,800	679,678	22%
Employee costs	(28,240,400)	(28,781,400)	(7,513,042)	26%
Materials and services	(21,282,400)	(23,232,245)	(6,408,694)	28%
Short term, low value and variable lease payments	(10,000)	(10,000)	(21,923)	219%
Trust funds and deposits	0	0	641,565	0%
Other payments	(2,374,400)	(2,374,400)	(737,590)	31%
Other Expenditure - ERP Special Project	(990,000)	(1,287,000)	(558,827)	43%
GST	0	0	(123,336)	0%
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	**10,885,200**	**2,865,734**	**(266,708)**	
Cash flows from investing activities				
Payments for property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	(15,245,000)	(16,711,049)	(1,480,655)	9%
Payments for carry forward property, infrastructure, plant and equipment			0	0%
Proceeds from sale of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	617,000	617,000	161,699	26%
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities	**(14,628,000)**	**(16,094,049)**	**(1,318,956)**	
Cash flows from financing activities				
Finance costs	(363,400)	(363,400)	(48,351)	13%
Proceeds from borrowings	3,000,000	3,000,000	0	0%
Repayment of borrowings	(314,000)	(314,000)	19,098	-6%
Interest paid - Lease liabilities	(27,000)	(27,000)	(4,189)	16%
Repayment of lease liabilities	(221,400)	(221,400)	(56,105)	25%
Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities	**2,074,200**	**2,074,200**	**(89,547)**	
Net increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	(1,668,600)	(11,153,115)	(1,675,212)	
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year	4,846,000	13,933,000	13,933,000	
Cash and cash equivalents	**3,177,400**	**2,779,885**	**12,257,788**	

Notes:

Category	Variance Notes
Rates & Charges	$5M of Rates and Charges Income of has been collected to 30 September 2025. Council has also received $4M of Grant funding in September in leiu of Primary Production Rates income per the State Governments 40% Primary Producer rebate.
Operating Grants	$7.4M of Operating Grant income has been received YTD. This includes the $1.4M of Federal Assistance funding and the 40% Primary Producer rebate of $3.96M.
Other Receipts	The Forecast Budget for Other receipts is $2M higher than the adopted budget due to the reclassification of Child care subsidy income from Operational Grant income to Other income.
Leases	YTD Council has allocated higher expenditure to leases than budgeted for. This is an anomoly as additional lease expenditure has been budgeted under Materials and Services.
Interest Income	YTD interest income is higher due to a delay in carried forward project expenditure and Grant income received sooner than expected.

Statement of Capital Works

For the Period ended September 2025

	2025/26 Adopted Budget	2025/26 Forecast Budget	September 2025 YTD Actual
Property			
Buildings	4,821,942	5,005,297	59,467
Total Property	**4,821,942**	**5,005,297**	**59,467**
Plant and Equipment			
Cultural Collection Acquisitions	15,000	15,000	2,590
Plant, machinery and equipment	2,241,936	2,241,936	384,207
Fixtures, fittings and furniture	10,000	10,000	18,421
Library Resources	95,000	95,000	15,539
Total Plant and Equipment	**2,361,936**	**2,361,936**	**420,757**
Infrastructure			
Roads	4,330,000	4,464,194	(88,148)
Bridges	150,000	350,000	12,525
Footpaths and Street Furniture	110,000	110,000	0
Drainage	150,000	201,925	37,909
Recreational, Leisure and Community facilities	1,450,000	1,681,086	26,489
Waste Management	20,000	20,000	7,900
Parks, Open Space and Streetscapes	40,000	40,000	1,573
Aerodromes	50,000	99,001	40,887
Off Street Carparks	50,000	50,000	0
Other Infrastructure - LRCI	1,710,949	1,479,529	113,297
Total Infrastructure	**8,060,949**	**8,495,735**	**152,431**
Total Capital Works Expenditure	**15,244,827**	**15,862,968**	**632,655**
Capital Works represented by:			
New Asset Expenditure	326,618	287,206	1,640
Asset Renewal Expenditure	12,528,878	13,271,280	527,837
Asset Upgrade Expenditure	2,389,331	2,304,482	103,178
Total Capital Works	**15,244,827**	**15,862,968**	**632,655**

Notes:

Category	Variance Notes
Property	The 2025/26 budget for "Property" includes $4.4M for the Foreshore Multipurpose project, $320k for Building Renewals and $275k of Carried forward works for buildings. YTD $60k of works have been completed - mostly on the carried forward works projects for buildings.
Plant and equipment	The 2025/26 budget for "Plant & Equipment" includes $2.2M in Light and Heavy Plant Renewals and $140k in other plant and equipment upgrades. YTD spend includes $385k spent on Light Fleet and Heavy Plant renewals and $16k spent on Library Resources.
Infrastructure	The 2025/26 budget for "Infrastructure" includes $4.8M for Road & Bridge renewals, $1.5M for carried forward LRCI projects, $1.1M for the upgrade for the Gymnastics Building and $250k for the Heywood Pool amenities upgrade. YTD expenditure is $152k and has mostly been spent on the carried forward LRCI projects. We received a credit for roads expenditure in the September quarter due to identifying that a contractor had overcharged Council.



Glenelg Shire Council
Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee held on
Thursday 11 September 2025 at 1:00 pm at
Glenelg Shire Offices
71 Cliff Street, Portland

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1. PRESENT

Mr David Stafford (Independent Member/Chairperson)
Mr Anthony Oxford (Independent Member)
Mr John Duffield (Independent Member)
Ms Sam Sharp (Independent Member)
Cr Karen Stephens (Mayor)
Cr Robyn McDonald (Deputy Mayor)
Cr Matt Jowett (Councillor)
Mr Brad Ead (AFS & Associates)
Ms Helen Havercroft (Chief Executive Officer)
Mr David Hol (Director Corporate Services)
Mr Aaron Moyne (Director Infrastructure Services)
Mr Brett Jackson (Director Community Services)
Ms Rebecca Campbell (Chief Finance Officer)
Ms Simone Scott (Manager Governance)
Ms Kylie Walford (Corporate Governance Coordinator)
Ms Louise Haluska (Business Support Officer)

2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Chair read the Acknowledgement of Country.

3. RECEIPT OF APOLOGIES

Mr Luke Snowdon (KPMG)
Mr Nikolas Petrovski (KPMG)

4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Recommendation

That the minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee held on 5 June 2025, as circulated, be confirmed.

MOTION

MOVED Member Sam Sharp

That the minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee held on 5 June 2025, as circulated, be confirmed.

SECONDED Member John Duffield

CARRIED

FOR: Member David Stafford, Member John Duffield, Member Sam Sharp, Member Anthony Oxford, Cr Stephens, Cr McDonald and Cr Jowett
AGAINST: Nil

5. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Cr Jowett declared a Material Conflict of Interest in item 7.11 CEO and EA Expenditure and advised this prior to the meeting.

Action: That the wording in the Agendas be amended to include Independent Members for declarations of Conflicts of Interest.

6. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Status from Actions from Audit and Risk Committee Meeting on 5 June 2025:

Item	Action
4.1	Amend minutes to remove Member Duffield's acceptance of the 5 December 2024 Audit and Risk Committee Meeting minutes. *Actioned.*
7.2	A copy of Council's submission to Infrastructure Victoria regarding the '30-Year Infrastructure Strategy 2025-2055' to be shared with AFS & Associates. *Actioned 21 July 2025.*
7.10	Independent Members suggest that future reports should include due dates and costings. *Request referred to Infrastructure Department requesting this information be considered for future Project Update Reports.*
7.13	Independent Members requested clarification about how PEN testing differentiates between phone and desktop applications. *Response outlined in Item 7.19.*
7.14	Independent Members requested an update on the go live support, post-go live support, and code testing to be presented at the next Audit and Risk Committee Meeting. *Response outlined in Item 7.21.*
7.17	That Item numbers be added to the Work Plan corresponding to the agenda items for ease of reading. *Actioned, see item 7.26.*

7.18 The title of the Master Internal Audit Action Plan List is to be changed to include the external audit items and an abeyance status to be added to reflect items that have been placed on hold while waiting for ERP implementation.

Actioned, see item 7.23.

7.20 The names of all approvers to be added to the CEO and EA expenditure logs and the report template to be amended regarding the change to CEO authorisations going to the CFO.

Actioned, see item 7.11.

Questions on notice from Audit and Risk Committee Meeting on 5 June 2025:

Item Question

7.9 Independent Members requested a report on how odometer reading non-compliance is managed, including repeat offender reviews, to be presented at a future Audit and Risk Committee Meeting.

The following response is provided:

Monitoring odometer reading compliance presents some challenges due to the current fuel management process. Multiple operators are responsible for refuelling vehicles, and in some cases, odometer readings are entered manually by console operators at the point of purchase, which we have no control over. From a fuel management perspective, odometer readings are not as critical as monitoring fuel price and quantity. We receive email alerts when unusual pricing or quantities occur, which helps us manage fuel usage more effectively than relying solely on odometer data.

At present, odometer data is reviewed through quarterly audits. During each audit, a random sample of 10 vehicles is selected for verification against recorded readings. While this provides a snapshot of compliance, it does not capture repeat non-compliance across the entire fleet.

Question on Notice: Independent Members requested further information on how Council deals with repeat offenders.

7.11 Independent Members requested a list of third-party assurance reports to be presented to a future Audit and Risk Committee Meeting to consider which accreditations should be reviewed by the Committee going forward.

Actioned, see item 7.25.

7. MANAGEMENT REPORTS

7.1. KPMG OUTCOME OF THE AUDIT OF THE ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE STATEMENT

This item will be tabled at the Unscheduled Audit and Risk Committee Meeting (online).

7.2. KPMG RECEIVE THE CLOSING REPORT - FINANCIAL REPORT AND PERFORMANCE STATEMENT

This item will be tabled at the Unscheduled Audit and Risk Committee Meeting (online).

7.3. LOCAL GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE REPORTING FRAMEWORK 2024/2025

This item will be tabled at the Unscheduled Audit and Risk Committee Meeting (online).

7.4. SUMMARY OF ASSET VALUATIONS

This item will be tabled at the Unscheduled Audit and Risk Committee Meeting (online).

7.5. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT - CAPITAL PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Author: Kylie Walford, Corporate Governance Coordinator
Director: David Hol, Director Corporate Services

Executive Summary

This report is to present to the Audit and Risk Committee the Internal Audit Report on Capital Project Management.

Recommendation

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives the Internal Audit Report Capital Project Management.

MOTION

MOVED Member Anthony Oxford

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives the Internal Audit Report Capital Project Management.

SECONDED Member Sam Sharp

CARRIED

FOR: Member David Stafford, Member John Duffield, Member Sam Sharp, Member Anthony Oxford, Cr Stephens, Cr McDonald and Cr Jowett
AGAINST: Nil

Background/Key Information:

An internal audit for the review of Capital Project Management was undertaken in accordance with year one of the Strategic Internal Audit Program 2024 – 2027 (SIAP).

Council's contracted Internal Auditors, AFS & Associates, were engaged to complete the audit.

The objective of the review was to review Council's application of risk management through an established Project Management Framework in the planning, prioritising and execution of capital projects.

The scope of the review was as follows:

- Identify and assess the framework and systems for managing capital projects and alignment to better practice.

- Assess how project management incorporates risk management in planning, execution and completion of projects and how it integrates with the organisation's Risk Management Framework (risks to focus on: schedule overruns, budget overruns, scope expansion and quality risks).

- Review capital project reporting frameworks including the efficiency and effectiveness of the controls and the monitoring and reporting of risks.

- Review cost estimating, phasing across multiple years and budget bids.

- Review cost monitoring and additional budget request processes and controls.

- Test a sample of over-budget projects (complete and in progress) and ensure budget variation occurred in line with framework and delegations.

- Identify how and if quality assurance over project management occurs, including inspections and approval for final claims payment, release of retentions and guarantee claims (if necessary).

- Review the alignment of the Project Management Framework against the new principles included in the *Local Government Act 2020*.

In the final report, under detailed findings, there were three (3) audit findings. One of the detailed findings was classified as a moderate risk and two of the detailed findings were classified as minor risk exposures. There were also five areas of strength identified.

Of the three findings, there are three recommendations, all of which were agreed to by management and the relevant management comments were applied, with target dates assigned.

The full report is attached to this Agenda. Following Audit and Risk Committee consideration, all recommendations will be added to the Internal and External Audit Action List and their progress will be reported to the Audit and Risk Committee on a quarterly basis.

a. Council Plan and Policy Linkage

Our Voice and Action - A highly engaged and capable local government, leading Glenelg to ensure the needs and aspirations of our community are realised.

b. Impact Assessment

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* requires Council to conduct an Impact Assessment when developing policies, procedures, programs or services that have a direct and significant impact on the public.

Has an Impact Assessment been completed?

Not applicable.

c. Legislative, Legal and Risk Management Considerations

Section 54 of the *Local Government Act 2020* states Council must prepare and approve an Audit and Risk Committee Charter.

The Audit and Risk Committee Charter requires the Internal Auditor to establish an Internal Audit Plan in conjunction with the Audit and Risk Committee and the Executive Leadership Team, and to implement the Plan with regular reports to both the Audit and Risk Committee and Chief Executive Officer.

d. Consultation and/or communication processes implemented or proposed

- AFS & Associates (internal auditor)
- Key personnel
- Executive Leadership Team.

e. Financial Implications and Collaboration

The Internal Audit Program is incorporated into the Council Budget.

It is anticipated that the recommendations accepted will be implemented within current operational budgets.

f. Governance Principles

Local, Regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision making.

Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

The transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

The economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.

The municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making.

Innovation and continuous improvement is to be pursued.

The ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.

Attachment List

1. Final V 2 Capital Project Management Internal Audit Report [**7.5.1** - 17 pages]

7.6. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT - CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

Author: Kylie Walford, Corporate Governance Coordinator
Director: David Hol, Director Corporate Services

Executive Summary

This report is to present to the Audit and Risk Committee the Internal Audit Report - Contract Management.

Recommendation

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives the Internal Audit Report Contract Management.

MOTION

MOVED Member John Duffield

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives the Internal Audit Report Contract Management.

SECONDED Member Anthony Oxford

CARRIED

FOR: Member David Stafford, Member John Duffield, Member Sam Sharp, Member Anthony Oxford, Cr Stephens, Cr McDonald and Cr Jowett
AGAINST: Nil

Background/Key Information:

An internal audit for the review of Contract Management was undertaken in accordance with year one of the Strategic Internal Audit Program 2024 – 2027 (SIAP).

Council's contracted Internal Auditors, AFS & Associates, were engaged to complete the audit.

The objective of the review was to confirm that Council maintains and applies an effective contract management process that aligns to better practice.

The scope of the review was as follows:

- Assess Council's Contract Management Framework against a best practice guide (i.e. Australian National Audit Office, Municipal Association Victoria).
- Ensure quality assurance over Contract Management exists.
- Evaluate contracts for the use of performance indicators and monitoring.
- Evaluate the monitoring of spend to panel suppliers as a corruption prevention strategy and ensuring fairness to suppliers.

- Evaluate GSC's Contract Register, including monitoring for contract currency and processes for communication to responsible owners and the need for procurement processes to commence.

- Review and test the application of contracting and contract management policies and procedures for major suppliers being used and contracts in place, including infrastructure, works, goods and service suppliers and contracts.

- Review the use of systems/software for contract management.

- Review the processes and internal controls for managing risks associated with the following:

    - contract variations
    - contract dispute management
    - contract management and reporting
    - payment claims processes and matching to original contracts and subsequent variations
    - ensure the Claims Management process is robust.

In the final report, under detailed findings, there were five audit findings. Two of the detailed findings were classified as moderate risks and three of the detailed findings were classified as minor risk exposures. There were also four areas of strength identified.

Of the five findings, there are nine recommendations, all of which were agreed to by management and the relevant management comments were applied, with target dates assigned.

The full report is attached to this Agenda. Following Audit and Risk Committee consideration, all recommendations will be added to the Internal and External Audit Action List and their progress will be reported to the Audit and Risk Committee on a quarterly basis.

a. Council Plan and Policy Linkage

Our Voice and Action - A highly engaged and capable local government, leading Glenelg to ensure the needs and aspirations of our community are realised.

b. Impact Assessment

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* requires Council to conduct an Impact Assessment when developing policies, procedures, programs or services that have a direct and significant impact on the public.

Has an Impact Assessment been completed?

Not applicable.

c. Legislative, Legal and Risk Management Considerations

Section 54 of the *Local Government Act 2020* states Council must prepare and approve an Audit and Risk Committee Charter.

The Audit and Risk Committee Charter requires the Internal Auditor to establish an Internal Audit Plan in conjunction with the Audit and Risk Committee and the Executive Team, and to implement the Plan with regular reports to both the Audit and Risk Committee and Chief Executive Officer.

d. Consultation and/or communication processes implemented or proposed

- AFS & Associates (internal auditor)
- Key personnel
- Executive Leadership Team
- Audit and Risk Committee.

e. Financial Implications and Collaboration

The Internal Audit Program is incorporated into the Council Budget.

It is anticipated that the recommendations accepted will be implemented within current operational budgets.

f. Governance Principles

Local, Regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision making.

Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

The transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

The economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.

The municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making.

Innovation and continuous improvement is to be pursued.

The ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.

Attachment List

1. Contract Management FINAL [**7.6.1** - 24 pages]

7.7. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT - PAST ISSUES REVIEW

Author: Kylie Walford, Corporate Governance Coordinator
Director: David Hol, Director Corporate Services

Executive Summary

This report is to present to the Audit and Risk Committee the Internal Audit Report – Past Issues Review.

Recommendation

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives the Internal Audit Report – Past Issues Review.

MOTION

MOVED Member Anthony Oxford

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives the Internal Audit Report – Past Issues Review.

SECONDED Member John Duffield

CARRIED

FOR: Member David Stafford, Member John Duffield, Member Sam Sharp, Member Anthony Oxford, Cr Stephens, Cr McDonald and Cr Jowett
AGAINST: Nil

Action: Member Duffield requested that the scope of the Past Issues report be expanded to include commentary on open issues.

Background/Key Information:

An internal audit for the review of Past Issues (completed recommendations as a result of findings from previously issued internal audit reports) was undertaken in accordance with year one of the Strategic Internal Audit Program 2024 – 2027 (SIAP).

When moderate and high risk recommendations as a result of internal audit findings from previous audits are completed, they are now assessed annually by Council's Internal Auditors, AFS & Associates. This provides assurance to the Committee that recommendations marked as complete by management have adequately mitigated the risk identified.

The scope of the review was as follows:

- Review of the register of completed and closed Internal Audit agreed management actions as reported and provided by management.
- Review and examination of documentation supporting the management advised 'closed' or 'completed' actions to mitigate the risk identified by Internal Audit.

- Discussion with key personnel where required to confirm any points of clarification.

- Determining whether those agreed management actions deemed ‘complete’ or ‘closed’ by management have been adequately completed to mitigate the risk identified as part of the original Internal Audit.

- Reporting on those agreed management actions which are confirmed as complete or closed and those which management would like to have the committee review and close.

- Those agreed management actions which we have not been able to confirm as complete or closed, due to unavailable supporting evidence or documentation addressing the risk/s identified, will be summarised and provided to management.

Of the four major findings and eight moderate findings, all 12 items were confirmed as satisfactorily being completed.

A copy of the full internal audit report is attached to this report.

a. Council Plan and Policy Linkage

Our Voice and Action - A highly engaged and capable local government, leading Glenelg to ensure the needs and aspirations of our community are realised.

b. Impact Assessment

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* requires Council to conduct an Impact Assessment when developing policies, procedures, programs or services that have a direct and significant impact on the public.

Has an Impact Assessment been completed?

Not applicable.

c. Legislative, Legal and Risk Management Considerations

The Audit and Risk Committee Charter requires the Internal Auditor to establish an Internal Audit Plan in conjunction with the Audit and Risk Committee and the Executive Leadership Team, and to implement the Plan with regular reports to both the Audit and Risk Committee and Chief Executive Officer.

d. Consultation and/or communication processes implemented or proposed

AFS & Associates
Key Personnel
Audit and Risk Committee

e. Financial Implications and Collaboration

Nil.

f. Governance Principles

Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

The transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

Innovation and continuous improvement is to be pursued.

Attachment List

1. Review of actions to close out high and medium risk internal audit recommendations FINAL [**7.7.1** - 23 pages]

7.8. STRATEGIC INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRAM STATUS UPDATE

Author: Kylie Walford, Corporate Governance Coordinator
Director: David Hol, Director Corporate Services

Executive Summary

This report, to be presented by AFS & Associates, provides a current status for approaching topics and scopes within the Strategic Internal Audit Program.

Recommendation

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives the Strategic Internal Audit Program Status Update.

MOTION

MOVED Member Sam Sharp

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives the Strategic Internal Audit Program Status Update.

SECONDED Member John Duffield

CARRIED

FOR: Member David Stafford, Member John Duffield, Member Sam Sharp, Member Anthony Oxford, Cr Stephens, Cr McDonald and Cr Jowett
AGAINST: Nil

Background/Key Information:

In accordance with the Audit and Risk Committee Charter, Council sets an internal audit plan to direct the activities of the internal audit function. Internal audit provides a review of the effectiveness of governance, risk management and control processes. Whilst a three-year plan exists, the Audit and Risk Committee will retain its ability to recommend amendments as required where circumstances change or new risks present.

The attached report provides a current status of internal audits, along with a draft scope for the following approaching audit: Records Management and Information Privacy.

a. Council Plan and Policy Linkage

Our Voice and Action - A highly engaged and capable local government, leading Glenelg to ensure the needs and aspirations of our community are realised.

b. Impact Assessment

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* requires Council to conduct an Impact Assessment when developing policies, procedures, programs or services that have a direct and significant impact on the public.

Has an Impact Assessment been completed?

Not applicable.

c. Legislative, Legal and Risk Management Considerations

Section 54 of the *Local Government Act 2020* states Council must prepare and approve an Audit and Risk Charter.

The Audit and Risk Committee Charter requires the Internal Auditor to establish an Internal Audit Plan in conjunction with the Audit and Risk Committee and the Executive Leadership Team, and to implement the Plan with regular reports to both the Audit and Risk Committee and Chief Executive Officer.

d. Consultation and/or communication processes implemented or proposed

AFS & Associates.
Audit and Risk Committee

e. Financial Implications and Collaboration

Internal Audits are incorporated in Council's Budget 2025/2026.

f. Governance Principles

Local, Regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision making.

Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

The transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

Collaboration with other Councils (section 109 *Local Government 2020*) and Governments and statutory bodies is to be sought along with Financial and Resource Implications and Opportunities.

Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

The economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.

Innovation and continuous improvement is to be pursued.

The ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.

Attachment List

1. Strategic Internal Audit Status Update - 11 Sep 2025 [**7.8.1** - 7 pages]

7.9. INDUSTRY UPDATE

Author: Kylie Walford, Corporate Governance Coordinator
Director: David Hol, Director Corporate Services

Executive Summary

The attached Agency Report, to be presented by AFS & Associates, contains an update of recent regulatory and integrity agency reports and publications of interest.

Recommendation

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives the Agency Report.

MOTION

MOVED Cr McDonald

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives the Agency Report.

SECONDED Cr Stephens

CARRIED

FOR: Member David Stafford, Member John Duffield, Member Sam Sharp, Member Anthony Oxford, Cr Stephens, Cr McDonald and Cr Jowett
AGAINST: Nil

Background/Key Information:

In accordance with the Audit and Risk Committee Work Plan under Compliance and Performance Management, the Audit and Risk Committee are presented with reports by regulatory and integrity agencies on investigations relevant to Council.

a. Council Plan and Policy Linkage

Our Voice and Action - A highly engaged and capable local government, leading Glenelg to ensure the needs and aspirations of our community are realised.

b. Impact Assessment

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* requires Council to conduct an Impact Assessment when developing policies, procedures, programs or services that have a direct and significant impact on the public.

Has an Impact Assessment been completed?

Not applicable.

c. Legislative, Legal and Risk Management Considerations

These reports relate to a number of legislative provisions of the *Local Government Act 2020*. Council's internal audit program plays a key role in assisting the organisation in governance, compliance and risk management.

d. Consultation and/or communication processes implemented or proposed

AFS & Associates
Audit and Risk Committee

e. Financial Implications and Collaboration

Nil.

f. Governance Principles

Local, Regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision making.

Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

The transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

Collaboration with other Councils (section 109 *Local Government 2020*) and Governments and statutory bodies is to be sought along with Financial and Resource Implications and Opportunities.

Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

The economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.

The municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making.

Innovation and continuous improvement is to be pursued.

The ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.

Attachment List

1. Industry Update - 11 Sep 2025 [**7.9.1** - 10 pages]

7.10. OUTSTANDING DEBTORS AT 30 JUNE 2025

Author: Rebecca Campbell, Chief Finance Officer
Director: David Hol, Director Corporate Services

Executive Summary

The purpose of these reports is to enable the Audit and Risk Committee to monitor Council's Financial position including Rates Revenue and Debtors. As at 30 June 2025, Council's provision for doubtful debts (expected credit loss) was $10.2k.

Recommendation

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives the reports on Debtors outstanding as at 30 June 2025.

MOTION

MOVED Member Anthony Oxford

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives the reports on Debtors outstanding as at 30 June 2025.

SECONDED Member John Duffield

CARRIED

FOR: Member David Stafford, Member John Duffield, Member Sam Sharp, Member Anthony Oxford, Cr Stephens, Cr McDonald and Cr Jowett
AGAINST: Nil

Background/Key Information:

Reports to be prepared for the Audit and Risk Committee Meeting include:

Trade & Other Receivables report as at 30 June 2025

Council had $3.7M of Debtors balances outstanding at 30 June 2025. Rates & Charges Revenue outstanding is $1.9M and Other Debtors Income outstanding is $1.8M.

For comparative purposes, Total Debtors outstanding at 30 June 2024 was $3.97M. Rates & Charges Revenue outstanding was $1.8M and Other Debtors outstanding was $2.17M.

The following revenue streams have a charge on the property until the debt is paid, or the property is sold, and outstanding rate amounts are not normally considered at risk:

- Rates & Charges Revenue.
- Fire Hazard Clearing charges.
- Strathdownie Drainage Scheme charges.

Rates and Charges Debtors

The attached report summarises the Rates & Charges Revenue outstanding at 30 June 2025. Rates & Charges Revenue owing at 30 June has increased compared to 2023/24 and totals $1.9M. Outstanding Rates and Charges encompass Rates, Kerbside Collection Charges, Interest, Fire Services Levies and Legal charges.

For comparative purposes, at 30 June 2024, Rates & Charges Revenue outstanding was $1.8M.

Council is in the process of putting in place an automated payment arrangement system that allows debtors to enter into a payment arrangement that suits their personal situation. Details will be distributed with the 2025/26 Rates notices. It is anticipated that this software will assist in the management of payments and payment plans which is currently manual as well as providing benefits in cash flow.

Other Debtors

Debtors with invoices owing more than 180 days as at 30 June 2025

Debtors with balances over 180 days are equal to approximately $233k at 30 June 2025. Of this amount:

- $7k is not due yet (Planning Permits);
- $34k relates to Fire Hazard Clearing charge which will be a charge against the debtors property until paid;
- $66k relates to asbestos removal and remediation which is also a charge against the debtors property until paid;
- $65k relates to the Trawler Wharf with $54k of Trawler Wharf debtors on Payment Plans; and
- $56k relates to Mooring Fees with $45k of debtors on Payment Plans

Debtors with balances more than 180 days and $1,000 at 30 June 2025

Debtors with balances owing greater than 180 days and more than $1,000 total $221k and are broken down as follows:

- $81k is between 180 and 365 days overdue and includes the $66k asbestos removal debtor (charge against the debtor property if unpaid after 5 years); and
- $139k is past due by more than 365 days and includes $52k of Trawler Wharf debtors and $45k of Mooring Fee debtors.

Expected Credit Loss

As at 30 June 2025, Council Finance officers have assessed $605k of Council's Debt as being impaired and recognised an Expected Credit Loss of $10k.

Council is in the fortunate position that half of its outstanding debtor balances (being rates) are secured by a charge over the property until the debt is paid, or the property is sold and has not been included in the calculation for impairment calculation.

a. Council Plan and Policy Linkage

Our Voice and Action - A highly engaged and capable local government, leading Glenelg to ensure the needs and aspirations of our community are realised.

b. Legislative, Legal and Risk Management Considerations

In accordance with Section 101 Financial Management Principles in the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council is required to monitor financial risks having regard to economic circumstances.

In accordance with Section 180 of the *Local Government Act 1989* Unpaid Rate or Charge, Council is required to adhere to this legislation when following up on outstanding debt.

c. Consultation and/or communication processes implemented or proposed

Reports are prepared for the Audit and Risk Committee.

d. Financial Implications and Collaboration

Financial resources administration time is provided for in the adopted budget.

e. Governance Principles

The ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.

Attachment List

1. Outstanding Debtors Trade and Other Receivables at 30 June 2025 [**7.10.1** - 2 pages]
2. Outstanding Debtors Rate Report 2024-2025 [**7.10.2** - 1 page]

Cr Jowett redeclared a Conflict of Interest and left the meeting at 1:37pm.

7.11. CEO & EA EXPENDITURE - CREDIT CARD AND REIMBURSEMENTS

Author: Rebecca Campbell, Chief Finance Officer
Director: David Hol, Director Corporate Services

Executive Summary

This report provides the Audit and Risk Committee with a report on Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and CEO Executive Assistant (EA) expenditure. This report is required as a result of the actions resulting from an audit undertaken by VAGO on Fraud and Corruption Control in Local Government.

Recommendation

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives the report on CEO & EA Expenditure for the period 1 May 2025 to 31 July 2025.

MOTION

MOVED Member Sam Sharp

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives the report on CEO & EA Expenditure for the period 1 May 2025 to 31 July 2025.

SECONDED Member Anthony Oxford

CARRIED

FOR: Member David Stafford, Member John Duffield, Member Sam Sharp, Member Anthony Oxford, Cr Stephens and Cr McDonald.
AGAINST: Nil

Background/Key Information:

As a result of the report tabled by the Victorian Auditor-General in Parliament in June 2019 on Fraud and Corruption Controls – Local Government, it was recommended by the Audit and Risk Committee that Council report CEO and CEO Executive Assistant expenditure (including petty cash, credit card and reimbursement expenditure) to the Audit and Risk Committee on a quarterly basis.

A summary of CEO and CEO Executive Assistant expenditure is provided in the table below and a full summary is attached as a separate circulation:

CEO & CEO Executive Assistant Expenditure

1 May to 31 July 2025

Employee	Credit Card	Other
Chief Executive Officer	$2,704.43	$131.45
CEO Executive Assistant	$5,730.10	$0.00
Total Expenditure	**$8,434.53**	**$131.45**

Other expenditure accounts is made up of employee reimbursements paid through Council's petty cash or creditor system.

These expenditure transactions are now approved by the CFO or Director Corporate Services, rather than the Mayor.

a. Council Plan and Policy Linkage

Leading Glenelg - Create shared visions within the Community, ensuring agreed outcomes

b. Legislative, Legal and Risk Management Considerations

In June 2019, the Victorian Auditor-General tabled its report to Parliament on Fraud and Corruption Controls – Local Government. In this report, VAGO identified limitations in fraud and corruption controls over staff expenditure, particularly CEO expenditure. Council have prepared this report on credit card and reimbursement expenditure for the CEO and CEO EA to improve these controls.

c. Consultation and/or communication processes implemented or proposed

The VAGO Report on Fraud and Corruption Control was presented to Councillors, Audit and Risk Committee and the Executive Leadership Team.

d. Financial Implications and Collaboration

It is not possible to quantify the financial or resource implications relating to any improvements in internal controls.

e. Governance Principles

The ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.

Attachment List

1. CEO and EA Employee Reimbursements May to July 2025 [**7.11.1** - 21 pages]
2. CEO and EA Credit Card Expenditure - May to July 2025 [**7.11.2** - 7 pages]

Cr Jowett rejoined the meeting at 1:38pm.

7.12. AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE SELF ASSESSMENT SURVEY RESULTS 2024/2025

Author: Kylie Walford, Corporate Governance Coordinator
Director: David Hol, Director Corporate Services

Executive Summary

This report provides the outcome of the Self-Assessment of the Audit and Risk Committee's effectiveness for the financial year 2024/2025 in accordance with Section 54(4) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Recommendation

That the Audit and Risk Committee:

1. Receives the Self-Assessment Report of the Audit and Risk Committee's effectiveness for the financial year 2024/2025.

2. Recommends that the Audit and Risk Committee Self-Assessment Report be tabled at the next available Council Meeting.

MOTION

MOVED Member John Duffield

That the Audit and Risk Committee:

1. **Receives the Self-Assessment Report of the Audit and Risk Committee's effectiveness for the financial year 2024/2025.**

2. **Recommends that the Audit and Risk Committee Self-Assessment Report be tabled at the next available Council Meeting**.

SECONDED Member Anthony Oxford

CARRIED

FOR: Member David Stafford, Member John Duffield, Member Sam Sharp, Member Anthony Oxford, Cr Stephens, Cr McDonald and Cr Jowett
AGAINST: Nil

Background/Key Information:

Section 54(4) of the *Local Government Act 2020* states an Audit and Risk Committee must:

a) undertake an annual assessment of its performance against the Audit and Risk Committee Charter; and

b) provide a copy of the annual assessment to the Chief Executive Officer for tabling at the next Council Meeting.

In June 2025, members of the Audit and Risk Committee with voting rights (four Independent Members and three Councillors) were issued with a self-assessment survey to complete on the effectiveness of the Audit and Risk Committee during the financial year 2024/2025. Of the seven members with voting rights, four independent members and three Councillors provided responses.

Members were asked to rate each question as follows:

1. Special Strength.

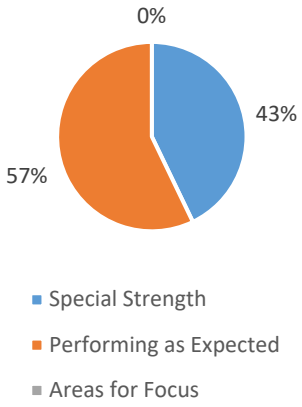
2. Performing as Expected.

3. Area of Focus.

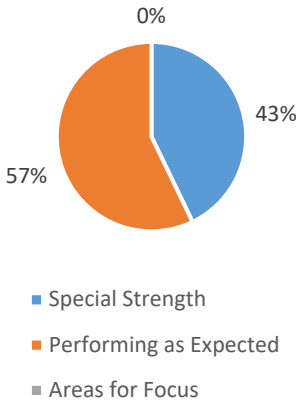
Members were also invited to provide general comments and were encouraged to provide explanatory comments where an 'area for focus' response was given.

The survey-assessment form had a total of 32 questions contained in the following eight categories. The following graphs outline responses by percentage for each titled category:

Audit Committee Charter

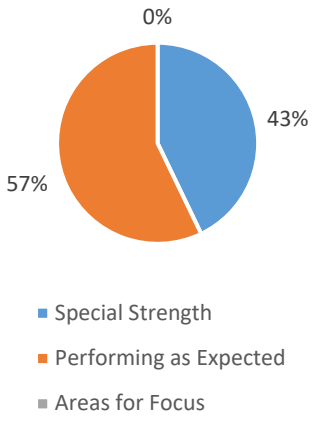


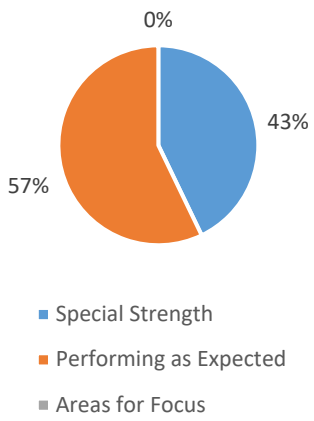
Skills and Experience



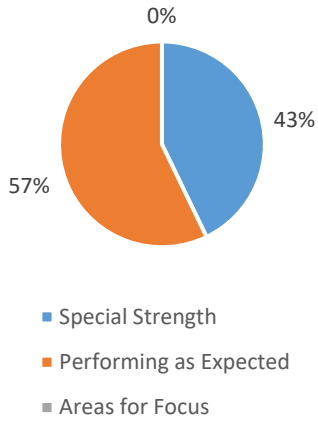
Understanding the Business

Meeting Administration and Conduct

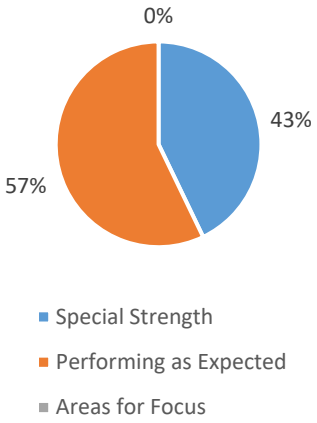




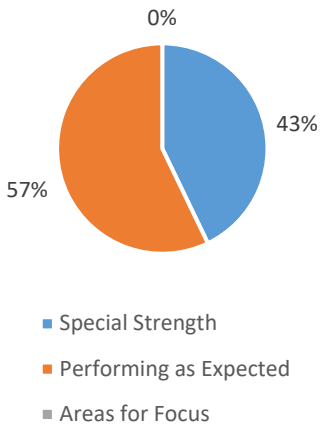
Communications with Council



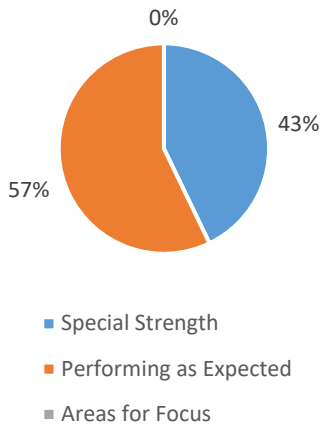
Management Commitment and Support



Internal Audit



External Audit



Overall Results:

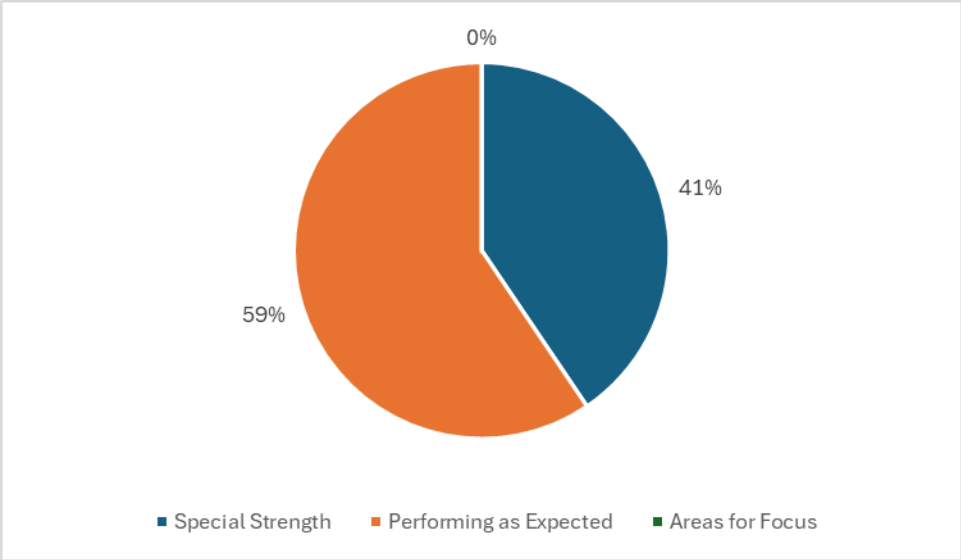
The overall result of the self-assessment shows that members have rated the Audit and Risk Committee as:

- Special Strength – 139 responses

- Performing as Expected – 204 responses
- Area for Focus – 0 responses.

For all questions, this indicates that there is a high level of satisfaction with the performance of the Audit and Risk Committee.

The attachment to this report provides a full breakdown across the categories of the total scoring, along with comments provided by members, for consideration by management and discussion where required.



a. Council Plan and Policy Linkage

Our Voice and Action - A highly engaged and capable local government, leading Glenelg to ensure the needs and aspirations of our community are realised.

b. Impact Assessment

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* requires Council to conduct an Impact Assessment when developing policies, procedures, programs or services that have a direct and significant impact on the public.

Has an Impact Assessment been completed?

Not applicable.

b. Legislative, Legal and Risk Management Considerations

In accordance with Section 54(4) of the *Local Government Act 2020* an Audit and Risk Committee must undertake an annual assessment of its performance against the Audit and Risk Committee Charter; and provide a copy of the annual assessment to the Chief Executive Officer for tabling at the next Council Meeting.

c. Consultation and/or communication processes implemented or proposed

The annual Self-Assessment Survey is to be completed by all voting members including Independent Members and Councillors.

d. Financial Implications and Collaboration

Nil.

e. Governance Principles

Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

The transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

Innovation and continuous improvement is to be pursued.

The ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.

Attachment List

1. Audit and Risk Committee Self Assessment Survey Form 2024 2025 - 7 responses collated [**7.12.1** - 4 pages]

7.13. KEY POLICY REVIEW - FRAUD PREVENTION FRAMEWORK

Author: Kylie Walford, Corporate Governance Coordinator
Director: David Hol, Director Corporate Services

Executive Summary

To seek Audit and Risk Committee endorsement of the revised Fraud Prevention Framework and recommend referral to Council for adoption.

Recommendation

That the Audit and Risk Committee:

1. Receives the report on 'Review of Council's Fraud Prevention Framework', including:

    - Fraud and Corruption Control Policy
    - Fraud and Corruption Control System
    - Fraud and Corruption Risk Register
    - Fraud and Corruption Incident Register.

2. Recommends that the Fraud Prevention Framework Officer be tabled at the next available Council Meeting for adoption.

MOTION

MOVED Member Sam Sharp

That the Audit and Risk Committee:

1. Receives the report on 'Review of Council's Fraud Prevention Framework', including:

- **Fraud and Corruption Control Policy**
- **Fraud and Corruption Control System**
- **Fraud and Corruption Risk Register**
- **Fraud and Corruption Incident Register.**

2. Recommends that the Fraud Prevention Framework Officer be tabled at the next available Council Meeting for adoption.

SECONDED Member Anthony Oxford

CARRIED

FOR: Member David Stafford, Member John Duffield, Member Sam Sharp, Member Anthony Oxford, Cr Stephens, Cr McDonald and Cr Jowett

AGAINST: Nil

Action: Member Duffield requested that a nil value be reported through the Attestation Report when no incidents are recorded.

Background/Key Information:

Under Section 54 (2)(c) of the *Local Government Act 2020* an Audit and Risk Committee must monitor and provide advice on risk management and fraud prevention systems and controls. This is also defined in the Audit and Risk Committee Charter 2025 - 2027.

As outlined in the Audit and Risk Committee Annual Work Plan 2025 - 2026 and Key Policy Review Register, the Audit and Risk Committee is to receive a report following the review of the Fraud and Corruption Control Policy and Fraud and Corruption Control System, as part of Council's Fraud Prevention Framework. This Framework provides overarching direction and sets out the policies and procedures designed to achieve this, forming the foundation for fraud, misconduct and corruption prevention.

Fraud and Corruption Control Policy

The Glenelg Shire is committed to excellence in service performance and in meeting its statutory obligations. This includes maintaining a strong culture and sound governance that not only provides for the protection of public funds and assets but also protects the integrity, security and reputation of the Glenelg Shire Councillors, employees and the services it provides to the community.

The Policy clearly outlines the expected conduct of employees, volunteers and contractors of the Glenelg Shire Council in relation to prevention, detection and reporting of fraudulent and / or corrupt activity.
A review of the Policy has been completed and a revised and updated Policy has been developed with non-material changes as follows:

- Updated adoption, expiry and review dates.

- Definitions of Fraud and Corruption (page 50)
  Removal of word 'Councillor' as Policy only covers employees, volunteers and contractors, as there are provisions in the *Local Government Act* 2020 and Model Councillor Code of Conduct which cover Councillor Conduct.

A copy of the tracked changes, revised Policy is attached for reference.

Fraud and Corruption Control System

The System summarises the anti-fraud and anti-corruption strategies, including internal controls used within Council covering the areas of prevention, detection and response.

A review of the System has been completed and a revised and updated System has been developed with non-material (main) changes as follows:

- Updated adoption, expiry and review dates.
- 3.0 Responsibilities for Fraud Prevention, Detection and Response (pages 2 - 4)

  Enhanced and expanded to ensure clear and defined roles and responsibilities, with the addition of Audit and Risk Committee, CEO and Public Interest Disclosure Officer.

  4.0 Communications: Training and Awareness Overview (page 5)

  Importance and mechanisms of fraud and corruption control – inclusion of 'mandatory' training and for every new employee on or within two months of commencement.

  6.1 Prevention (page 11)

  Accountability and High-risk responsibilities – inclusion of police check and verification of references and qualifications as part of screening for potential new employees.

A copy of the tracked changes, revised System is attached for reference.

Fraud and Corruption Risk Register

The Risk Register identifies the areas of vulnerabilities and possible fraud and strategies to eliminate or minimise those risks.

The register is attached to this report and amendments including strengthened controls are highlighted in red font.

Fraud and Corruption Incident Register

This register lists all incidents of Fraud and Corruption that have occurred, details of the incident, findings and actions and controls implemented following the discovery.

All incidents are also reported as required to the Audit and Risk Committee separate to this report.

There are no incidents to report.

a. Council Plan and Policy Linkage

   Our Voice and Action - A highly engaged and capable local government, leading Glenelg to ensure the needs and aspirations of our community are realised.

b. Impact Assessment

   The *Gender Equality Act 2020* requires Council to conduct an Impact Assessment when developing policies, procedures, programs or services that have a direct and significant impact on the public.

Has an Impact Assessment been completed?

In its preparation of this revision, the Fraud and Corruption Control Policy and System have considered the *Gender Equality Act 2020.* The Policy and System have been assessed as not requiring a Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) due to the documents being purely administrative in nature with no potential to influence gender roles.

c. Legislative, Legal and Risk Management Considerations

In accordance with the Australian Standard AS 8001:2021 – Fraud and Corruption Control, organisations are required to implement a Fraud and Corruption Control System (FCCS) that integrates prevention, detection, and response mechanisms into broader governance practices.

While there is no explicit legislative requirement for a fraud and corruption prevention policy, it is considered best practice for local governments to maintain a documented position outlining their commitment to integrity and accountability.

Section 54 (2)(c) of the *Local Government Act 2020* outlines that an Audit and Risk Committee Charter must specify the functions and responsibilities of the Audit and Risk Committee including:

(a) monitor the compliance of Council policies and procedures with overarching governance principles;

(c) monitor and provide advice on risk management and fraud prevention systems and controls.

d. Consultation and/or communication processes implemented or proposed

- Executive Leadership Team
- Internal fraud risk owners
- Audit and Risk Committee
- Council
- GSC Website

e. Financial Implications and Collaboration

Not applicable.

f. Governance Principles

Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

The transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

The ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.

Attachment List

1. Draft Fraud and Corruption Control Policy - Tracked Changes [**7.13.1** - 6 pages]
2. Draft Fraud and Corruption Control System - Tracked Changes [**7.13.2** - 30 pages]
3. Fraud and Corruption Risk Register Version - Tracked Changes [**7.13.3** - 10 pages]
4. Glenelg Shire Council Fraud and Corruption Incident Register [**7.13.4** - 1 page]

7.14. KEY POLICY REVIEW - PROCUREMENT POLICY

Author: Simone Scott, Executive Manager Governance
Director: David Hol, Director Corporate Services

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to present to the Audit and Risk Committee the draft Procurement Policy which has been reviewed in accordance with section 108 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (Vic).

Recommendation

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives the draft Procurement Policy.

MOTION

MOVED Member John Duffield

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives the draft Procurement Policy.

SECONDED Member Anthony Oxford

CARRIED

FOR: Member David Stafford, Member John Duffield, Member Sam Sharp, Member Anthony Oxford, Cr Stephens, Cr McDonald and Cr Jowett
AGAINST: Nil

Background/Key Information:

Under Section 108 of the *Local Government Act 2020,* Council must review its Procurement Policy at least once during a council term.

This revised policy is based on the MAV Best Practice Procurement Policy Template, developed in collaboration with procurement professionals from across Victoria. The template is designed to be practical, flexible, and fully compliant with the Act and the 2024 Best Practice Guidelines.

Policy Document
Council has tailored the template to reflect its own governance structure and strategic priorities, resulting in a streamlined policy that strengthens probity, consistency, and strategic alignment across all procurement activities.

The Policy has been updated to reflect current organisational standards and structure. Content was improved to provide clarity and functionality for all users.

CEO Delegation Benchmarking
A benchmarking exercise was undertaken as part of this project which involved several Victorian shires. The observation from this benchmarking is that the delegated procurement authority from Council to the Glenelg Shire CEO, is comparable to other equivalent size Councils as are the delegation levels for Directors.

Tender Evaluation Matrix
Glenelg Shire Council has both mandatory and optional evaluation criteria depending on the type and size of the tenders being requested. The most commonly used evaluation criteria include:

- Mandatory – local content & environmental sustainability;

- Selected – price, resources & capacity, demonstrated previous experience, OHS, proposed methodology, quality, reliability and past performance.

Glenelg Shire Council has a mandatory weighting of up to 25% for economic contribution which is significantly higher than other Councils in the region. It is recommended to reduce this criteria to 15%.

The level of commitment demonstrated to maximise environmental sustainability weighting of 25% is relevantly higher than Council's in the region. This was also noted by the staff feedback as part of the survey. It is standard for companies to have policies and certifications related to environmental. It is recommended to reduce this criteria to 10%.

Contract Variations and their interaction with the Procurement Policy
A number of discrepancies regarding interpretation and understanding of variation authorisation processes with several projects identified a need to clarify and educate staff on the obligations for variations to contracts. Additional wording and detail has been included in the policy following clarification, reviewing other Council procurement and discussions with relevant staff.

Summary
Draft changes proposed in the Procurement Policy presented for consideration.

Item	Recommendation
3.1 Treatment of GST	Policy to reflect Exclusive of GST, except where specifically stated otherwise
7.2 Delegation Limits	*Positions and Level Authority included/updated* **Insert:** Senior Executive Officer up to $100,000 Team Leaders up to $20,000 Business Support Officers up to $10,000 **Remove** Responsible Budget Officer Other Officer

Item	Recommendation
7.3 Procurement Thresholds Quote Value Up to $5,000 - 1 verbal $5,001 to $50,000 - 2 written quotes	Quotes to be saved in Sharepoint Up to $2,000 - Best price available 1 verbal or written quote $2,001 - $10,000 - 1 written quote $10,001 to $50,000 - 2 written quotes
8 Gender Impact Assessment	*New Clause* In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020* (Vic), Council is committed to ensuring a gender lens is applied to all new policies, programs and services that directly and significantly impact the public and ensure that a gender impact assessment (GIA) is conducted as needed. Records of GIA conducted must be saved in the records management system with the relevant procurement in accordance with the GIA Policy
11 Appendix A – Definitions Contract Variation	*New Definition* A Contract Variation refers to any modification made to the original terms and conditions of an executed contract. Variations may be financial or non-financial in nature and must be managed transparently, appropriately documented and assessed to ensure they do not undermine the principles of value for money, probity, equity, or open and fair competition
Contract Variation - Financial	A variation that alters the contract's monetary value. This includes: • increases or decreases in contract cost, • whether within or exceeding approved contingencies, Subject to approval in line with Council's financial delegation limits and governance requirements
Contract Variation - Non-Financial	A variation that does not result in a financial adjustment but alters other contractual parameters, such as: • Project timelines or milestones, • Scope, specifications or design details, • Working hours or access arrangements, • Location or quantity changes or Any other aspect of the contract provided it doesn't impact cost

Item	Recommendation
Emergency	*New Definition* Sudden or unexpected occurrence requiring immediate action eg: • The occurrence of a natural disaster such as flooding, bushfire or epidemic which may require the immediate procurement of goods, services or works to provide relief; • The occurrence of an unplanned event such as damage of council property including road infrastructure or IT incidents which may require the immediate procurement of goods, services or works to ensure business continuity and/or community safety; • The unforeseen cessation of trading of a core service provider due to bankruptcy and a need to appoint a replacement service provider on the grounds of public safety;
12.1 Social Procurement	Economic Contribution to the Shire **Insert** up to 15% **Remove** up to 25%
12.2 Environment Procurement	Commitment to maximise environmental sustainability **Insert** up to 10% **Remove** up to 25%
13 Appendix C – Exemptions	*The follow items have been included in the exemptions table:* • Department of Transport – Valuations (supplementary & objection) • Dept of Jobs, Precincts & Regions – Sec 69 cat, dog & DAB registrations • Wannon Water – fire plug maintenance • Department of Transport – Traffic Signal Maintenance, Main Rds street lighting Council contribution (60/40) spilt) • Powercor – provide maintenance for public lighting and power connections and upgrades to facilities • Victorian Electoral Commission - Council Elections • Council contributions – approved as part of the budget • Novated Contracts - Where the initial contract was entered into in compliance with the Act and due diligence has been undertaken in respect to the new party. • Supermarket purchasing cards

Next Steps

The draft policy review is presented for Audit and Risk Committee comments prior to listing at an upcoming Councillor briefing session.

a. Council Plan and Policy Linkage

Our Voice and Action - A highly engaged and capable local government, leading Glenelg to ensure the needs and aspirations of our community are realised.

b. Impact Assessment

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* requires Council to conduct an Impact Assessment when developing policies, procedures, programs or services that have a direct and significant impact on the public.

Has an Impact Assessment been completed?

Yes.

c. Legislative, Legal and Risk Management Considerations

All legal and legislative requirements have been considered in preparation of the policy.

d. Consultation and/or communication processes implemented or proposed

A consultation process was untaken in reviewing the policy including:

- Consultation with staff and the Southwest Councils network group.
- Following adoption of the policy by Council, it will be communicated to staff.

e. Financial Implications and Collaboration

The adoption of the procurement policy will not require additional direct budget implications.

f. Governance Principles

The transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

Attachment List

1. COUNCIL POLICY Procurement Policy CPO CORPS CP 001 CLEAN [**7.14.1** - 25 pages]
2. COUNCIL POLICY Procurement Policy CPO CORPS CP 001 TRACKED [**7.14.2** - 38 pages]

7.15. COMMUNITY SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS

Ms Helen Havercroft, Chief Executive Officer, provided a verbal update on the Community Satisfaction Survey results.

Attachment List

1. Community Satisfaction Survey 2025 [**7.15.1** - 55 pages]

Ms Lee Oakley, Workcover, Risk & Insurance Officer, joined the meeting at 1:47pm.

7.16. REVIEW COUNCIL'S RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK INCLUDING ORGANISATIONAL STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

Author: Lee Oakley, Workcover, Risk and Insurance Officer
Director: David Hol, Director Corporate Services

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide the Audit and Risk Committee with the updated Organisational Risk Management Framework and Strategy document.

Recommendation

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives the Organisational Risk Management Framework and Strategy document.

MOTION

MOVED Member Sam Sharp

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives the Organisational Risk Management Framework and Strategy document.

SECONDED Member John Duffield

CARRIED

FOR: Member David Stafford, Member John Duffield, Member Sam Sharp, Member Anthony Oxford, Cr Stephens, Cr McDonald and Cr Jowett
AGAINST: Nil

Background/Key Information:

The Organisational Risk Management Framework and Strategy document incorporates all risk management policies and processes and details reporting mechanisms to senior management.

This document previously reviewed every four years is now reviewed annually due to changes in process, roles and responsibilities or legislative changes.

The Organisational Risk Register has also completed its annual review cycle. An extract on the extreme and high risks is attached for Audit and Risk Committee members information. One new high risk was identified during the review, which is associated with the roll out of the new ERP system. These risks continue to be monitored and actions undertaken to mitigate the risk where practical.

A new Strategic Risk Register is currently under development and is being reviewed by the Executive Leadership Team.

a. Council Plan and Policy Linkage

Our Voice and Action - A highly engaged and capable local government, leading Glenelg to ensure the needs and aspirations of our community are realised.

b. Legislative, Legal and Risk Management Considerations

The report outlines the risk management framework

c. Consultation and/or communication processes implemented or proposed

Consultation with Council departments during the review process

d. Financial Implications and Collaboration

The review of Council's Risk Management program is undertaken within the existing organisational Budget.

e. Governance Principles

Innovation and continuous improvement is to be pursued.

Attachment List

1. ORGANISATIONAL STRATEGY Risk Management Framework [**7.16.1** - 22 pages]
2. Risk Register Appendix [**7.16.2** - 11 pages]

7.17. RISK, WORKCOVER AND OHS QUARTERLY REPORTS

Author: Lee Oakley, Workcover, Risk and Insurance Officer
Director: David Hol, Director Corporate Services

Executive Summary

This quarterly report provides an overview of Risk, Workcover and Occupational Health and Safety matters for the period 1 April to 30 June 2025.

Recommendation

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives the Risk, Workcover and Occupational Health and safety (OHS) quarterly reports.

MOTION

MOVED Member Anthony Oxford

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives the Risk, Workcover and Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) quarterly reports.

SECONDED Member John Duffield

CARRIED

FOR: Member David Stafford, Member John Duffield, Member Sam Sharp, Member Anthony Oxford, Cr Stephens, Cr McDonald and Cr Jowett
AGAINST: Nil

Background/Key Information:

This quarterly report provides an overview of Risk Management, Workcover, Insurance and Occupational Health and Safety, for the period 1 April to 30 June 2025

Reports include:

- No Workcover claims for this quarter, showing a consistent reduction in claims
- Summary of current Workcover claims
- Update on legal and insurance claims
- OHS Committee meeting summary
- Portland Waste Transfer Station Worksafe visit summary
- Hazards continue to be identified and reported

a. Council Plan and Policy Linkage

Our Voice and Action - A highly engaged and capable local government, leading Glenelg to ensure the needs and aspirations of our community are realised.

b. Legislative, Legal and Risk Management Considerations

Compliance monitoring and improvements are undertaken in accordance with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*, and Regulations, and any relevant legislation when undertaking Risk, Workcover and Injury Management.

c. Consultation and/or communication processes implemented or proposed

Consultation processes are undertaken in accordance with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* and Regulations and Council's Policies and Procedures.

d. Financial Implications and Collaboration

Risk Management, Workcover, Insurance and Occupational Health and Safety is undertaken to ensure the best outcome and within budget requirements.

e. Governance Principles

Innovation and continuous improvement is to be pursued.

Attachment List

1. Confidential Work Cover Quarterly Report 1 April to 30 June 20 [**7.17.1** - 5 pages]
2. OHS Quarterly Report 1 Apr 30 June [**7.17.2** - 7 pages]
3. Risk Management Quarterly Report 1 April to 30 June 2025 [**7.17.3** - 3 pages]

7.18. REVIEW COUNCIL'S INSURANCE PROGRAM

Author: Lee Oakley, Workcover, Risk and Insurance Officer
Director: David Hol, Director Corporate Services

Executive Summary

This report provides the Audit and Risk Committee with a summary of Council's Insurance renewal program.

Recommendation

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives the Insurance renewal program summary.

MOTION

MOVED Member John Duffield

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives the Insurance renewal program summary.

SECONDED Member Sam Sharp

CARRIED

FOR: Member David Stafford, Member John Duffield, Member Sam Sharp, Member Anthony Oxford, Cr Stephens, Cr McDonald and Cr Jowett
AGAINST: Nil

Background/Key Information:

Each insurance policy purchased by Council varies depending on the total sum insured, indemnity limits, exclusions and excesses payable. A summary is provided below.

Broker and Claims Service
Jardine Lloyd Thompson Pty Ltd Public Sector are currently used by the Glenelg Shire Council for broking and claims management.

Each year, Council officers along with our brokers assess current insurance coverage and seek comparisons with other insurance providers to ensure adequate coverage and to pursue the best value premium costs in comparison to the coverage provided by each policy.

MAV Insurance - Liability Mutual Insurance provides a scheme which the Council can avail itself of services, including Risk Management, In-house legal advice, and seminars and workshops. Its main function is that the scheme provides excess claims management for Public Liability, Products Liability and Professional Indemnity insurance coverage.

General Insurances

For 2025-2026 there was an overall premium increase of 4.64% across all general insurances, however reductions in premiums occurred for Corporate Travel (-0.9%), Hangarkeepers Airport (-0.9%), Cyber Liability (-0.9%), plus Councillors and Officers Liability (-11.5%).

Increases in General Insurance premiums ranged from 1.5% to 55.5%. The largest percentage increase in premium was observed for the Community Liability Pack (55.5% or $2,935). This is primarily due to the increase in the number of occurrences where Council insurance is purchased when external groups are booking Council premises. This is a net zero cost to Council as it is including within hiring arrangements for those hiring out Council facilities.

Managed Investment Scheme

JMAPP Discretionary Trust experienced a 10.2% increase in 2025-2026 premium. This trust consists of two parts – the scheme cover and the insurance cover. Council had five claims in the 2024-2025 period, including the Casterton Storm event which contributed to a higher charge this financial year.

Motor Insurance

The motor vehicle insurance has increased by 1.5%. It is currently seeing inflationary pressures on motor vehicle repair costs (labour and parts). Council has a 4-year loss ratio of 65.3% (incurred costs compared to insurance premium), contributing to the 1.5% increase. During 2024-2025 Council had 23 total claims, of which 15 were associated with the Casterton storm in late 2024, seven claims associated with wildlife damage and one claim due to third party damage. Of these claims, four vehicles were written off, three due to hail damage and one due to wildlife.

Public and Product Liability Insurance

The Glenelg Shire Council experienced a 6.5% increase in the cost of their Public and Product Liability insurance when compared to 2024-2025. In general, the overall sector experienced a 9.5% increase for 2025-2026. Council had one public liability claim settlement in 2024-2025.

Workcover Premium

The Workcover premium payable for 2025-2026 was based on a total remuneration of $27,338,187 and a premium rate of 2.1762% (a decrease of 0.2984% on last year).

Total remuneration for 2025-2026 is calculated by applying a percentage increase to the 2024-2025 estimated figure supplied to WorkSafe. The premium rate was calculated by adjusting the weighted industry rate of 2.4731% to account for Councils better than average performance rate of 0.879939. Council is currently performing 12% better than the industry average.

It should be noted that the final WorkCover remuneration figures for 2024-2025 have been finalised and submitted to WorkSafe. It is anticipated that Council will receive a premium refund, which should cover the budget deficit indicated below.

Workcare Scheme
This does not include any liability still pending from the MAV WorkCare scheme

Summary of Insurance costings 2025-2026:

Insurance	Budget 2025-26	Actual	Variance
General Insurances (Corporate travel, JMAPP Building, Cyber, Personal Accident, etc)	$275,000	$304,829	$29,829
Public Liability & Professional Indemnity	$385,000	$405,076	$20,076
Workcover premium (5% discount)	$600,000	$564,866	$-35,134
Total	$1,260,000	$1,274,771	
Overbudget			$-14,771
General Insurances (Motor vehicle, Airport etc)	Multiple Budget Allocations	$237,107	

Conclusion

There continues to be upwards pressure on the cost of insurance to Council.

a. Council Plan and Policy Linkage

Our Voice and Action - A highly engaged and capable local government, leading Glenelg to ensure the needs and aspirations of our community are realised.

b. Legislative, Legal and Risk Management Considerations

The report considers the requirements of the *Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2013* and Councils obligations under the *Local Government Act 2020* for insurance.

c. Consultation and/or communication processes implemented or proposed

Liaison with Council's insurers was undertaken as part of the assessment.

d. Financial Implications and Collaboration

The review of the Council's insurance program was undertaken within the existing operational budget, noting an over expenditure compared to estimate.

e. Governance Principles

Innovation and continuous improvement is to be pursued.

Attachment List

1. Glenelg Shire Council Insurance Summary 2025-2026 [**7.18.1** - 3 pages]

Ms Lee Oakley left the meeting at 2:02pm

Mr Adam Knell, Manager Information Technology, joined the meeting at 2:02pm.

7.19. SECURITY AND PENETRATION TEST STATUS UPDATE

Author: Adam Knell, Manager Information Technology
Director: Ann Kirkham, Chief Information Officer - Glenelg Futures

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide the Audit and Risk Committee with an update on the security and penetration testing undertaken by Council.

Recommendation

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives the update on the security and penetration test.

MOTION

MOVED Member Anthony Oxford

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives the update on the security and penetration test.

SECONDED Member John Duffield

CARRIED

FOR: Member David Stafford, Member John Duffield, Member Sam Sharp, Member Anthony Oxford, Cr Stephens, Cr McDonald and Cr Jowett
AGAINST: Nil

Background/Key Information:

In August 2023, Council went out for quote for internal and external security and penetration testing services. CyberCX was the successful vendor and the security and penetration test was undertaken in February 2024. The main objective of this assessment was to ascertain the extent to which an unauthenticated user and an internal employee could obtain access to unauthorized data and hosts within the Glenelg network.

Council received the External and Internal Network Penetration Test Report in March 2024. The report was provided to the June Audit and Risk Committee meeting. This provided immediate and long-term recommendations with risk level ratings. Action Plans were developed outlining the outcomes for the External Test and the Internal Test to show progress on the recommendations. All actions from the External Pen Test have been completed. The Internal Pen Test Action Plan is attached. Provided below is a summary of the recommendations and actions to date.

External Penetration Test Recommendations Status update:

Recommendations	June 2025	Sept 2025
1 - Medium risk	completed	completed
1 - Low risk	completed	completed
1 - For information	completed	completed

Internal Penetration Test Recommendations Status update:

Recommendations	June 2025	Sept 2025
3 - Critical risks	3 Completed	3 Completed
9 - High risks	9 completed	9 completed
19 - Mediums	11 completed 8 underway	12 completed 7 underway
4 - Low risk	1 Completed 3 underway	3 Completed 1 underway

Action Items from Previous Meeting

"Independent Members requested clarification about how PEN testing differentiates between phone and desktop applications."

Penetration testing is a simulated exercise undertaken by external experts to test vulnerabilities on Council systems, networks and devices. This helps to strengthen defences, protect sensitive information, and reduce the risk of cyber incidents. The testing applies the same principles to desktop applications and mobile devices with different areas of focus due to how and where data is stored.

Testing of desktop applications focuses on how data is secured, how personal and private information (PPI) is transmitted or secured and whether systems could be vulnerable.

Mobile devices, which include phones, focus on how securely the data is stored on the device and how apps such as Authenticator can manage the risk associated with loss, compromise or theft.

Council provided mobile devices are managed and secured using antivirus and endpoint protection software, firewalls and monitoring to detect suspicious activities, regular patching and updates, and restrictions on installing unauthorised software. All devices are enrolled in InTune which provides the ability to remotely lock or wipe devices if lost or stolen.

There would be serious implications if anyone was to download Council data onto a personal device and the device was lost, compromised or stolen. Any exposure of PPI could breach privacy legislation, require mandatory reporting, lead to identity theft and loss of community trust. An infected personal device could also create a backdoor into Council systems.

Council is developing a requirement that any personal device used to access Council systems must be enrolled in Microsoft InTune. This will strengthen Council security and data protection and reduce the risk of compromise.

a. Council Plan and Policy Linkage

Our Access, Transport and Technology - Making it easier for people to connect in and around the Glenelg Shire.

b. Legislative, Legal and Risk Management Considerations

The *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* outlines an organisation's obligation regarding privacy and information security.

The Victorian Protective Data Security Framework (VPDSF) and the Victorian Protective Data Security Standards (VPDSS) establish mandatory requirements to protect public sector data and provide for governance across the four domains of information, personnel, ICT and physical security. Under the VPDSS, agencies must have effective business continuity processes in place to enable them to respond to and recover from any event that affects the confidentiality, integrity and availability of public sector data.

c. Consultation and/or communication processes implemented or proposed

This report is prepared for the Audit & Risk Committee.

d. Financial Implications and Collaboration

The penetration test as undertaken by external consultants as per recommendations from the Cyber Crime Audit and the Protective Data Security Plan Maturity Assessment to improve security, lower risks and meet compliance.

e. Governance Principles

Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

Innovation and continuous improvement is to be pursued.

Attachment List

1. Pen Test Action Outcomes Sept 2025 [**7.19.1** - 3 pages]

7.20. CYBER SECURITY INCIDENT REPORT

Author: Adam Knell, Manager Information Technology
Director: Ann Kirkham, Chief Information Officer

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide the Audit and Risk Committee with the quarterly Cyber Security Incident Report update.

Recommendation

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives the quarterly Cyber Security Incident Report update.

MOTION

MOVED Member Anthony Oxford

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives the quarterly Cyber Security Incident Report update.

SECONDED Member Sam Sharp

CARRIED

FOR: Member David Stafford, Member John Duffield, Member Sam Sharp, Member Anthony Oxford, Cr Stephens, Cr McDonald and Cr Jowett
AGAINST: Nil

Background/Key Information:

Council is committed to monitoring and continually improving its cyber security practices, as this is pivotal to protecting Council's data assets in this increasingly digital world.

Employee Cyber Awareness

Council staff are continually provided cyber security training via Council's Employee Cyber Awareness Training system. Cyber awareness training is run every quarter and phishing campaigns run monthly.

April 2025 to June 2025:

Item	Details
Employee Training Rolled Out	Business email compromise, information privacy and security, keep secure module scam training sessions, smishing.
Simulated Phishing Emails Sent out by the Cyber Security Training Platform	Apr – 223 May – 225 Jun – 233

Simulated Phishing Emails Reported by Staff	Apr – 44 - ↓ 10 May – 56 - ↑ 12 Jun – 58 - ↑ 2
Users who clicked on a test phishing email	Apr – 4 - ↓ 5 May – 9 - ↑ 5 Jun – 3 - ↓ 6

Red denotes a negative while Green is positive.

If an individual clicks on an attachment or link in a Phishing simulated email, they're then directed to a course. These courses are quick reminders to identify what to look out for in a phishing email. On completion they're reminded of Council's phishing reporting process.

Mimecast

Mimecast is Council's real time email protection system that monitors emails and protects Council from SPAM, malware, and advanced threats.

Month	Total Inbound Emails	Rejections (incl. Viruses and SPAM)
Apr 2025	153,388 ↓ 17,596	62,807 ↓ 5,972
May 2025	236,827 ↑ 83,439	124,032 ↑ 83,439
Jun 2025	111,106 ↓ 125,721	53,860 ↓ 70,172

Mimecast also provides a list of users who have repeatedly clicked unsafe email links. Based on the results extra training is provided for specific users or units to improve skills and knowledge and reduce the risk to the organisation.

Cyber Security Incidents

The Cyber Security Incident Response Log records all cyber security incidents. Council had two cyber security incidents in the April to June quarter:

Incident	Outcome
None reported in the last 3 months.	

Breached Password List

Every month IT receives a report alerting users who may have had their password breached on the dark web. Where a breach has occurred, users are contacted, provided with information on best practices and directed to reset their password.

Users set a password of 14 characters or more which is required to be changed every 120 days. The last 5 passwords cannot be reused. The reduction of exposed passwords is pleasing, and exposed accounts have all had their passwords reset.

Months	Exposed Passwords
Apr – Jun	11 ↓ 11

Endpoint Protection Software

Endpoint Protection software has been rolled out to Council devices, including mobile devices. Within this service is a managed detection and response solution with a dedicated team providing 24/7 coverage to eradicate threats to Council devices within minutes. This system provides a more in-depth insight into Council's device environment, with real-time and historical application and asset inventory information.

a. Council Plan and Policy Linkage

Our Access, Transport and Technology - Making it easier for people to connect in and around the Glenelg Shire.

b. Legislative, Legal and Risk Management Considerations

The *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* outlines an organisation's obligation regarding privacy and information security.

The Victorian Protective Data Security Framework (VPDSF) and the Victorian Protective Data Security Standards (VPDSS) establish mandatory requirements to protect public sector data and provide for governance across the four domains of information, personnel, ICT and physical security. Under the VPDSS, agencies must have effective business continuity processes in place to enable them to respond to and recover from any event that affects the confidentiality, integrity and availability of public sector data.

c. Consultation and/or communication processes implemented or proposed

This report is prepared for the Audit & Risk Committee.

d. Financial Implications and Collaboration

The cyber incident security log and report supports Council's commitment to report back to the Audit and Risk Committee in the event of a cyber security breach or incident.

e. Governance Principles

Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

The ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.

Attachment List

Nil.

Mr Adam Knell left the meeting at 2:13pm.
Ms Rebecca Campbell left the meeting at 2:13pm.

Ms Ann Kirkham, Chief Information Officer - Glenelg Futures, joined the meeting at 2:13pm.

7.21. ERP CIVICA UPDATE - GO LIVE

Author: Jemma Dillon, Digital Glenelg Program Manager
Director: Ann Kirkham, Chief Information Officer

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide the Audit and Risk Committee with an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) implementation update.

Recommendation

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives an update on the ERP implementation.

MOTION

MOVED Member John Duffield

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives an update on the ERP implementation.

SECONDED Member Sam Sharp

CARRIED

FOR: Member David Stafford, Member John Duffield, Member Sam Sharp, Member Anthony Oxford, Cr Stephens, Cr McDonald and Cr Jowett
AGAINST: Nil

Question on Notice: Member Duffield questioned where data migration was at and at what point user acceptance would be finished, ie once all the data has been migrated.

Action:

1. Member Duffield suggested testing against live data coming across from the old system to the new system, ie open purchase orders.

2. Member Duffield requested from a risk perspective that change management/organisation readiness continue to be included in update reports, also focusing on staff who are not subject matters experts or key module users.

Background/Key Information:

As we approach ERP go-live, our strategy prioritises system readiness, data integrity, business continuity, and staff readiness. We have aligned our approach with learnings from regional peers, incorporating the go-live plans from Horsham Rural City Council, Hindmarsh Shire Council and Loddon Shire Council, along with detailed input from our data migration partners.

Civica has provided a standard cutover plan, which we have used as a base to develop a more tailored approach aligned to our business needs and legacy system constraints. The objective is not only successful technical deployment, but also a stable and supported transition that enables long-term system success and staff buy-in.

Current State

We are continuing user acceptance testing, teams have been advised that once they confirm the system works for their scenarios, they should continue retesting to build familiarity and confidence ahead of go-live. This focus on repeated, real-world use is intended to reduce friction during the transition and help staff prepare for day-to-day system use.

Go-Live Plan

A key element of the current plan is to stop all processing activities at close of business on the Wednesday prior to go-live, marking the beginning of the system blackout period. Data migration will take place on Thursday, with Friday dedicated to data verification and reconciliation in the production environment. We are not planning to commence processing in the new ERP system until the following Wednesday. This four-day window allows time for staff to complete final checks, confirm system readiness, and resolve any issues before resuming transactional activity, while also providing a window for rollback if required.

The blackout period is also intended to reduce the need for weekend work, giving key staff time to recharge before go-live. Ideally, no weekend work will be required, as many members of the project team and the most heavily affected units have caring responsibilities. This approach reflects lessons learned from other council go-lives, where early processing led to data issues and increased demand for support during the initial transition.

The go-live plan has not yet been circulated for review by Subject Matter Experts, Council staff working most closely with the project team to configure, map data and test the system, and it has not yet been approved by the Project Control Group. It remains subject to change.

Hyper Care Support

Hyper care support will be provided for an extended period. Project team members have been allocated by module to provide continuity of support, ensuring they are available to assist staff during the hyper care period. In addition to internal support, data migration and application-level hyper care will also be available.

The project team will triage all issues to ensure only critical cases are escalated to application support.

This layered approach, including floorwalker assistance and an elevated helpdesk presence, is designed to ensure a smooth transition and timely resolution of issues as staff begin using the new system.

a. Council Plan and Policy Linkage

Our Access, Transport and Technology - Making it easier for people to connect in and around the Glenelg Shire.

b. Legislative, Legal and Risk Management Considerations

The ERP implementation complies with all legislation requirements and Council data requirements.

c. Consultation and/or communication processes implemented or proposed

Ongoing project monitoring, communication and consultation are undertaken with staff to ensure maximum staff adoption at go live and beyond.

d. Financial Implications and Collaboration

Not applicable, within the operational budget.

e. Governance Principles

Innovation and continuous improvement is to be pursued.

Attachment List

Nil.

Ms Ann Kirkham left the meeting at 2:25pm.

7.22. AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE BIANNUAL REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1 JANUARY 2025 TO 30 JUNE 2025

Author: Kylie Walford, Corporate Governance Coordinator
Director: David Hol, Director Corporate Services

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to present the Audit and Risk Committee Biannual Report for the period 1 January 2025 to 30 June 2025.

Recommendation

That the Audit and Risk Committee:

1. Receives the Audit and Risk Committee Biannual Report for the period 1 January 2025 to 30 June 2025.

2. Recommends that the Audit and Risk Committee Biannual Report for the period 1 January 2025 to 30 June 2025 be tabled at the next available Council meeting.

MOTION

MOVED Member John Duffield

That the Audit and Risk Committee:

1. Receives the Audit and Risk Committee Biannual Report for the period 1 January 2025 to 30 June 2025.

2. Recommends that the Audit and Risk Committee Biannual Report for the period 1 January 2025 to 30 June 2025 be tabled at the next available Council meeting.

SECONDED Member Anthony Oxford

CARRIED

FOR: Member David Stafford, Member John Duffield, Member Sam Sharp, Member Anthony Oxford, Cr Stephens, Cr McDonald and Cr Jowett

AGAINST: Nil

Background/Key Information:

Under Section 54 (5) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, an Audit and Risk Committee must prepare a biannual audit and risk report that describes the activities of the Audit and Risk Committee and includes its findings and recommendations.

This report satisfies the reporting requirement.

The biannual report must then be provided to the Chief Executive Officer for tabling at the next Council Meeting.

The Audit and Risk Committee Biannual Report is a summary of the Committee's operation and activities for the period 1 January 2025 to 30 June 2025, covering the following sections:

- Overview
- Audit and Risk Committee's Charter
- Membership
- Meetings and Attendance
- External Audit
- Internal Audit
- Key Activities – Audit and Risk Annual Work Plan
- Committee's Performance; and
- Conclusion.

a. Council Plan and Policy Linkage

Our Voice and Action - A highly engaged and capable local government, leading Glenelg to ensure the needs and aspirations of our community are realised.

b. Impact Assessment

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* requires Council to conduct an Impact Assessment when developing policies, procedures, programs or services that have a direct and significant impact on the public.

Has an Impact Assessment been completed?

Not applicable.

c. Legislative, Legal and Risk Management Considerations

Section 54 (5) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

d. Consultation and/or communication processes implemented or proposed

- Chief Executive Officer
- Director Corporate Services
- Manager Governance
- Audit and Risk Committee Chairperson

The adopted report will be made publicly available on Council's website.

e. Financial Implications and Collaboration

Nil.

f. Governance Principles

Local, Regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision making.

Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

The transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

Collaboration with other Councils (section 109 *Local Government 2020*) and Governments and statutory bodies is to be sought along with financial and resource implications and opportunities.

Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

The economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.

The municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making.

Innovation and continuous improvement is to be pursued.

The ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.

Attachment List

1. Audit and Risk Committee Biannual Report for the period 1 January 2025 to 30 June 2025 [**7.22.1** - 9 pages]

7.23. REVIEW OF INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL AUDIT ACTION LIST

Author: Kylie Walford, Corporate Governance Coordinator
Director: David Hol, Director Corporate Services

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to brief the Audit and Risk Committee on the current status of the Internal and External Audit Action List.

Recommendation

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives the Internal and External Audit Action List Report.

MOTION

MOVED Member Sam Sharp

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives the Internal and External Audit Action List Report.

SECONDED Member Anthony Oxford

CARRIED

FOR: Member David Stafford, Member John Duffield, Member Sam Sharp, Member Anthony Oxford, Cr Stephens, Cr McDonald and Cr Jowett
AGAINST: Nil

Note: An error is noted in the covering report. Zero Internal Audit items were completed in the last quarter.

Background/Key Information:

In accordance with the Audit and Risk Committee Annual Workplan under 'Internal Control Environment', the Audit and Risk Committee is to receive a quarterly report on the status of the Internal and External Audit Action List.

The Internal and External Audit Action List details each recommendation from prior internal audits conducted, as well as external financial audits which contain recommendations requiring action.

Management comments have been updated for items in progress and three items have been completed in the last quarter, as highlighted in the Internal and External Audit Action List.

When items perceived as medium and high risks have been completed, they will now be assessed annually by Council's Internal Auditors, AFS & Associates, to provide assurance to the committee that recommendations marked as complete by management have adequately mitigated the risk identified. This report titled 'Past Issues' will be presented to a future Audit and Risk Committee Meeting.

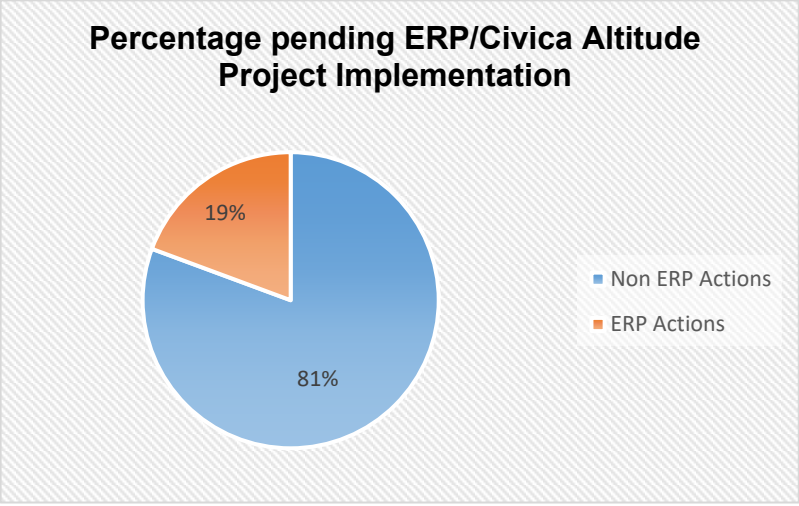
Summary of Status of Actions

Internal Audits

Number of Internal Audit actions	42
Number Completed in last quarter	0
Number pending ERP/Civica Altitude Project	11
High Risk items	0
Moderate Risk items	19
Low Risk items	21
Opportunities	2

External Audits

Number of External Audit actions	8
Number Completed in last quarter	3
Number pending ERP/Civica Altitude Project	1
High Risk items	1
Moderate Risk items	3
Low Risk items	2
VAGO Unrated	2



a. Council Plan and Policy Linkage

Our Voice and Action - A highly engaged and capable local government, leading Glenelg to ensure the needs and aspirations of our community are realised.

b. Impact Assessment

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* requires Council to conduct an Impact Assessment when developing policies, procedures, programs or services that have a direct and significant impact on the public.

Has an Impact Assessment been completed?

Not applicable.

c. Legislative, Legal and Risk Management Considerations

In accordance with s53 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council must establish an Audit and Risk Committee.

The aim of the Audit and Risk register is to assist with adopting effective internal controls to mitigate the risk.

d. Consultation and/or communication processes implemented or proposed

Communication was undertaken with key staff with comments updated as required and presented to the Executive Leadership Team prior to the Audit and Risk Committee.

e. Financial Implications and Collaboration

Resource and budget implications will vary dependent upon the specific audit recommendation.

f. Governance Principles

Local, Regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision making.

Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

The transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

Collaboration with other Councils (section 109 *Local Government 2020*) and Governments and statutory bodies is to be sought along with Financial and Resource Implications and Opportunities.

Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

The economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.

The municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making.

Innovation and continuous improvement is to be pursued.

The ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.

Attachment List

1. CURRENT Master Internal and External Audit Action List [**7.23.1** - 18 pages]

7.24. COUNCILLORS QUARTERLY EXPENDITURE REPORT

Director: Helen Havercroft, Chief Executive Officer

Executive Summary

This report is for Councillor expenditure that has been incurred during the period 1 April 2025 to 30 June 2025.

Recommendation

That Audit and Risk Committee receives the Councillors quarterly expenditure report for the period 1 April 2025 to 30 June 2025.

MOTION

MOVED Member Sam Sharp

That Audit and Risk Committee receives the Councillors quarterly expenditure report for the period 1 April 2025 to 30 June 2025.

SECONDED Member John Duffield

CARRIED

FOR: Member David Stafford, Member John Duffield, Member Sam Sharp, Member Anthony Oxford, Cr Stephens, Cr McDonald and Cr Jowett

AGAINST: Nil

Background/Key Information:

In accordance with section 40 of the *Local Government Act 2020:*

(1) A Council must reimburse a Councillor or a member of a delegated committee for out-of-pocket expenses which the Council is satisfied -

(a) are bona fide expenses; and

(b) have been reasonably incurred in the performance of the role of Councillor or member of a delegated committee; and

(c) are reasonably necessary for the Councillor or member of a delegated committee to perform that role.

In accordance with Regulation 10(e)(f)(g) of the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*, Council publishes details of expenses, including reimbursements of expenses for each Councillor and member of a Council Committee paid by the Council. The following categories are provided:

- Travel expenses (Includes remote allowance) – TR;
- Car mileage expenses – CM;
- Childcare expenses – CC;

- Information and communication technology – IC; and
- Conference and training expenses – CT.

Under section 41(2)(d) of the *Local Government Act 2020,* Council must have particular regard to expenses incurred by a Councillor who is a carer in a care relationship within the meaning of section 4 of the *Carers Recognition Act 2012*. This is a new requirement under the *Local Government Act 2020,* therefore is not addressed in Regulation 10(e)(f)(g) of the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020.*

Documentation is required to provide evidence of the expense specifying the business purpose for each claim.

Councillors are also required to maintain a logbook with each entry providing a clear description of the business purpose.

Following is a table of expenditure that has been incurred by Councillors during the period 1 April 2025 to 30 June 2025 together with the financial year, year to date totals.

Note: In some instances, journaling of some items may not necessarily appear in the month that they were expended and will appear in the next quarterly report.

Councillor	TR	CM	CC	IC	CT	Qtrly Total	Financial Year to Date
Angelino				$403		$403	$2,680
Carr				$403		$403	$5,941
Jowett	$18			$403		$421	$2,361
McDonald, R				$403		$403	$5,220
Noske				$403		$403	$2,274
Pepper				$403		$403	$2,343
Stephens	$7,523			$542	$1,053	$9,118	$33,586
Martin							$969
McDonald, A							$2,954
Northcott							$582
Wilson							$1,758
Totals	**$7,541**			**$2,960**	**$1,053**	**$11,554**	**$60,668**

Table 1: Quarterly expenditure and financial year to date totals

In accordance with Section 39 of the *Local Government Act 2020,* Councillors are entitled to receive an allowance whilst performing their duty as a Councillor. The Mayor or a Deputy Mayor are also entitled to receive a higher allowance with the Mayor being provided full use of a vehicle.

Following is a table of Councillor allowances paid for the period 1 April 2025 to 30 June 2025.

Councillor	Qtrly Total	Financial Year to Date
Angelino	$5,671	$21,740
Carr	$5,672	$28,492
Jowett	$5,671	$21,740

McDonald, R	$9,332	$43,169
Noske	$5,671	$21,740
Pepper	$5,671	$21,740
Stephens	$18,664	$95,205
Martin		$8,054
McDonald, A		$8,054
Northcott		$8,054
Wilson		$8,054
Totals	**$56,353**	**$286,043**

a. Council Plan and Policy Linkage

Our Voice and Action - A highly engaged and capable local government, leading Glenelg to ensure the needs and aspirations of our community are realised.

b. Impact Assessment

The Gender Equality Act 2020 requires Council to conduct an Impact Assessment when developing policies, procedures, programs or services that have a direct and significant impact on the public.

Has an Impact Assessment been completed?

Not applicable.

b. Legislative, Legal and Risk Management Considerations

- *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 39 Allowances for Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors.
- *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 40 Reimbursement of Expenses of Councillors and members of a delegated committee.
- Regulation 10 f & g of the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting Regulations 2020).*
- *Carers Recognition Act 2012.*

c. Consultation and/or communication processes implemented or proposed

Councillor Expenditure is reported on a quarterly basis to the Council Meeting and Audit and Risk Committee and the quarterly expenditure is accessible via Council's website.

Councillor Expenditure is also reported annually in Council's Annual Report.

d. Financial Implications and Collaboration

Councillor Allowances and Councillor Expenditure are accounted for in the 2024-2025 Annual Council Budget.

e. Governance Principles

Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

The transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

The ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.

Attachment List

Nil

7.25. THIRD PARTY ASSURANCE REPORTS - AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE

Author: Kylie Walford, Corporate Governance Coordinator
Director: David Hol, Director Corporate Services

Executive Summary:

A list of third-party assurance reports for consideration by the Audit and Risk Committee.

Recommendation

That the Audit and Risk Committee considers the list of third-party assurance reports and advises which accreditations are to be received by the Committee going forward.

MOTION

MOVED Member John Duffield

That the Audit and Risk Committee considers the list of third-party assurance reports and advises which accreditations are to be received by the Committee going forward.

SECONDED Member Anthony Oxford

CARRIED

FOR: Member David Stafford, Member John Duffield, Member Sam Sharp, Member Anthony Oxford, Cr Stephens, Cr McDonald and Cr Jowett
AGAINST: Nil

Note: Member Sharp noted that she would like to see relevant assurance reports from a Childcare Services perspective.

Action: From a risk mitigation, that the third party assurance reports listed be recorded in the Workplan with a date when they were last completed and a due date (if known).

Background Information:

At the June 2025 Audit and Risk Committee Meeting, whilst considering the '*Local Port of Portland Bay, Safety and Environmental Management Plan Audit*, Independent Members requested a list of further third-party assurance reports to be presented to a future Audit and Risk Committee Meeting to consider which accreditations should be reviewed by the Committee going forward.

Third-party assurance reports are audits that may take place by a third party other than planned/appointed internal and external audits by Council's appointed internal and external auditors. These are generally financial audits, performance audits, and compliance audits.

The following third-party assurance reports are listed for Audit and Risk Committee consideration.

Department	Third-Party Assurance Report
CEO	Nil.
Corporate Services	OHS ISO45001 Audit
Community Services	Accreditation of Childcare Centres (unannounced audits)
Glenelg Futures	Nil.
Infrastructure	Local Port of Portland Bay Safety & Environmental Management Plan Audit
	Electrical Safe Victoria (ESV) Powerline Clearance
	Kerbside Collection contamination audits
	Environmental monitoring - Portland Landfill
	Environmental Protection Authority Closed Landfill Audits
	Landfill Capping Performance Monitoring (Lysimeter/vegetation)
	Lifesaving Victoria Pool Safety Audits
	Aquatics Contractor Audits and Inspections
	National Saleyards Quality Assurance (NSQA) Audit – Saleyards
	European Union Cattle Accreditation Scheme (EUCAS) Audit – Saleyards
	CASA Surveillance Audits

a. Council Plan and Policy Linkage

Our Voice and Action - A highly engaged and capable local government, leading Glenelg to ensure the needs and aspirations of our community are realised.

b. Impact Assessment

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* requires Council to conduct an Impact Assessment when developing policies, procedures, programs or services that have a direct and significant impact on the public.

Has an Impact Assessment been completed?

Not applicable.

c. Legislative, Legal and Risk Management Considerations

In accordance with s53 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council must establish an Audit and Risk Committee.

One of the objectives of the Audit and Risk Committee is to oversee internal and external audit functions.

d. Consultation and/or communication processes implemented or proposed

Executive Leadership Team
Audit and Risk Committee

e. Financial Implications and Collaboration

Nil.

f. Governance Principles

Local, Regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision making.

Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

The transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

Collaboration with other Councils (section 109 *Local Government 2020*) and Governments and statutory bodies is to be sought along with Financial and Resource Implications and Opportunities.

Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

The economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.

The municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making.

Innovation and continuous improvement is to be pursued.

The ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.

Attachment List

Nil

7.26. AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE ANNUAL WORKPLAN 2025/2026 - STANDING ITEM

Author: Kylie Walford, Corporate Governance Coordinator
Director: David Hol, Director Corporate Services

Executive Summary

In accordance with Section 54(3) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, an Audit and Risk Committee must adopt an annual work program.

The Annual Work Plan is a standing item to the Audit and Risk Committee Agenda.

Recommendation

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives the Audit and Risk Committee Annual Work Plan for the year ending 30 June 2026, as a standard quarterly standing item.

MOTION

MOVED Member John Duffield

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives the Audit and Risk Committee Annual Work Plan for the year ending 30 June 2026, as a standard quarterly standing item.

SECONDED Member Anthony Oxford

CARRIED

FOR: Member David Stafford, Member John Duffield, Member Sam Sharp, Member Anthony Oxford, Cr Stephens, Cr McDonald and Cr Jowett
AGAINST: Nil

Note: Due to large Agendas, the Workplan can be adjusted if there are any reports that Members do not believe are necessary or could be reported less regularly. Members were invited to provide feedback to Kylie Walford.

Action: Third party assurance reports to be added to the Workplan.

Background/Key Information:

The Audit and Risk Committee endorsed the Audit and Risk Committee Annual Work Plan for the year ending 30 June 2026 at its meeting on 5 June 2025, with Council adoption on 22 July 2025.

The annual work plan sets the Agenda for the Committee for the next 12 months.

There are two amendments to the Annual Workplan this quarter:

- No 56. Addition of ‘Third Party Assurance Reports’.

- Report item numbers correlating to the 11 September 2025 Agenda have been added to the workplan, as requested by Members at the June Audit and Risk Committee.

a. Council Plan and Policy Linkage

Our Voice and Action - A highly engaged and capable local government, leading Glenelg to ensure the needs and aspirations of our community are realised.

b. Impact Assessment

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* requires Council to conduct an Impact Assessment when developing policies, procedures, programs or services that have a direct and significant impact on the public.

Has an Impact Assessment been completed?

Not applicable.

c. Legislative, Legal and Risk Management Considerations

Section 54(3) of the *Local Government Act 2020* states that an Audit and Risk Committee must adopt an annual work program.

d. Consultation and/or communication processes implemented or proposed

Quarterly Audit and Risk Committee item to be reviewed prior to 30 June each year.

e. Financial Implications and Collaboration

Not applicable.

f. Governance Principles

Local, Regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision making.

Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

The transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

Collaboration with other Councils (section 109 *Local Government 2020*) and Governments and statutory bodies is to be sought along with Financial and Resource Implications and Opportunities.

Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

The economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.

The municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making.

Innovation and continuous improvement is to be pursued.

The ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.

Attachment List

1. Audit and Risk Committee Annual Work Plan 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026 [**7.26.1** - 4 pages]

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

1. Recruitment for New Independent Member

   Due to Bonnie Holmes' tenure which expired on 31 August 2025, recruitment for a new Independent Member of the Audit and Risk Committee has commenced.

2. Audit and Risk Committee Charter

   The Audit and Risk Committee Charter was adopted by Council in July. Committee Members were asked to sign the Charter following the meeting.

3. Long Term Financial Plan

   Councillors are heavily involved in developing the assumptions in which to build Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) modelling. The LTFP is expected to be released at the September Council Meeting.

4. Former MAV WorkCare Scheme

   Following the second actuarial review, the former MAV WorkCare scheme has notified of an outstanding liability for Council. An update will be presented to Councillors in the coming days.

5. Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund

   Discussion was held on community response to the ESVF appearance on rates notices. This year's rates notices include a direct debit payment option. It was further noted that a freeze on the ESVP was applied for all primary production properties.

10. NEXT AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING

Due to the unavailability of one Independent Member and one member of management, it was agreed to defer the next Audit and Risk Committee Meeting from 4 December to 11 December 2025.

An Unscheduled Audit and Risk Committee Meeting will be held online on a date to be confirmed.

11. CLOSURE OF AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING

The Audit and Risk Committee Meeting closed at 2:47 pm.

Audit & Risk Committee Self-Assessment Survey

Performance for the Year Ended 30 June 2025

Rating Scale	*1 = Area for focus*	*2 = Performing as expected*	*3 = Special Strength*

Your Ratings of Performance

Comments are expected from respondents in the spaces provided at the end of each section where Ratings of 1 are given. This will assist in the identification of opportunities for improvement.

All comments (not including member name) will be provided verbatim in the public Council Meeting Agenda. Any confidential comments should be discussed with the Chief Executive Officer.

Member Name (optional): 7 Respondent results

ID	Questions	Ratings [Select boxes as appropriate] 1	2	3	Comments/ Suggestions for Improvement (if rating of 1 is given)
	A. Audit and Risk Committee Charter				
1	The Charter clearly articulates the Committee's roles and responsibilities and provides it with the necessary authority to discharge them		4	3	
2	The Charter facilitates and supports the effective operation of the Committee		4	3	
3	During the past year, the Committee has adequately addressed all of its responsibilities as detailed in the Charter		4	3	
4	The Charter ensures the Committee is sufficiently independent from the management of Council		4	3	
			16	12	
	B. Skills and Experience				
5	The Committee has the desired mix of skills to allow it to effectively discharge its responsibilities		4	3	
6	The Committee has been able to analyse and critically evaluate information presented to it by management		4	3	1. Independent Member – I have only been on Committee for 6 months.
7	There is a clear process that Committee members can follow to access advice and /or training to improve their skills and knowledge		5	2	
8	The Committee's collective skills are adequate in light of its responsibilities		5	2	1. Independent Member – I'm unsure of everyone's qualifications.
9	The Committee has responded appropriately where significant risks and/or control breakdowns have been brought to its attention		5	2	
10	The Committee has shown an openness to new ideas and different views in its deliberations		4	3	
11	The Committee has been sufficiently probing and challenging in its deliberations.		5	2	

ID	Questions	Ratings [Select boxes as appropriate] 1	2	3	Comments/ Suggestions for Improvement (if rating of 1 is given)
			32	17	
	C. Understanding the Business				
12	The Committee has an adequate understanding of Council's:				
	- Risk management framework and risk profile		4	3	
	- Internal control framework to mitigate significant risks		5	2	1. Independent Member: I'm still getting a feeling for all controls.
	- Financial and statutory reporting requirements		4	3	
	- Legislative compliance requirements		5	2	
13	The Committee receives appropriate briefings on:				
	- Current and emerging business risks		3	4	
	- Changes in financial reporting requirements		4	3	
	- Changes in performance reporting requirements		5	2	
	- Integrity Body reports		5	2	
	- Changes in the business/regulatory environment		5	2	
			40	23	
	D. Meeting Administration and Conduct				
14	The Committee has had an appropriate number of meetings to properly discharge its responsibilities		4	3	
15	Agendas are structured to allow sufficient time to discuss all critical issues		3	4	
16	The Committee receives agendas and supporting papers in sufficient time prior to meetings		3	4	
17	Agendas and supporting papers are of sufficient clarity and quality to enable the Committee to make informed decisions		2	5	
18	Committee meetings are well run and productive		2	5	
19	Committee minutes are appropriately maintained and provided to Council on a timely basis		4	3	1. Independent Member: some more detail should be included in minutes.
			18	24	
	E. Communications with Council				
20	Committee communications to Council about its deliberations and decisions are appropriate.		4	3	
21	Committee reports to Council on its activities are appropriate		5	2	
			9	5	

ID	Questions	Ratings [Select boxes as appropriate] 1	2	3	Comments/ Suggestions for Improvement (if rating of 1 is given)
	F. Management Commitment & Support				
22	Information and briefing papers presented by management meet the Committee's expectations in respect of:				
	- Council's risk profile and mitigating actions for key risks		5	2	
	- Maintenance of a strong internal control environment that is effective in mitigating key risks		5	2	
	- Management of Council's compliance and regulatory obligations		5	2	
	- Council's external reporting requirements		5	2	
23	The Committee has a positive attitude to continuous improvement in its dealings with management		4	3	
			24	11	
	G. Internal Audit				
24	The Committee considered the performance of the internal audit function		3	4	
25	The adequacy of the independent internal audit advisory service is essential to the effectiveness of internal audit to provide assurance to the Audit and Risk Committee		3	4	
26	The Committee reviewed and approved the Strategic Internal Audit Plan (SIAP)		3	4	
27	The Committee reviewed and approved any significant changes to the Strategic Internal Audit Plan (SIAP)		4	3	
28	The Committee reviewed all internal audit reports and monitored management responses to recommendations		4	3	
29	The Committee reviewed the Internal Audit Charter to ensure that appropriate structures, authority, access and reporting arrangements are in place for the internal audit function		4	3	
			21	21	
	H. External Audit				
30	The Committee reviewed and approved the external audit strategy		4	3	
31	The Committee reviewed external audit reports and management letters and monitored management responses to findings and recommendations made by external audit		4	3	
32	The Committee provided feedback on the performance of external audit		4	3	
			12	9	
	Total		**204**	**139**	

I. Other Comments [Please phrase your comments as opportunities for improvement]

Please note here any other comments you would like to make about the Committee's performance:

Independent Member:

1. The Committee functions well. Risk is considered and critical and high risks queried. Audit program, internal and external, is reviewed and appears to be adequate based on legislative requirements.

2. As fairly new to the Committee, I am still feeling my way and as such my response is generally generic.

3. I'm still in a learning phase at Glenelg.

Councillor:

1. In my brief time on the Committee I have limited knowledge of many of these performance areas. However, I have confidence in my experience, diligence and commitment of the members from what I have observed and read so far.

AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE

BIANNUAL REPORT

For the Period 1 January 2025 to 30 June 2025

Presented to the Audit and Risk Committee on 11 September 2025.

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PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide to Council a bi-annual report on the activities of Council's Audit and Risk Committee in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020.*

BACKGROUND

Under Section 54 (5) of the *Local Government Act 2020* an Audit and Risk Committee must prepare a biannual audit and risk report that describes the activities of the Audit and Risk Committee and includes its findings and recommendations. This biannual report must be provided to the Chief Executive Officer for tabling at the next Council Meeting.

Under Section 53 of the *Local Government Act 2020* it is a requirement that Council must establish an Audit and Risk Committee.

The Glenelg Shire Council Audit Committee (the Committee) was established in 1997 and the Audit and Risk Committee was reconstituted on 25 August 2020 following the introduction of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

AUDIT COMMITTEE CHARTER

Under Section 54 (1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* it is a requirement for Council to prepare and approve an Audit and Risk Committee Charter.

The Committee reports to Council and provides advice, assurance and recommendations relevant to its charter.

Under Section 54 (2) of the *Local Government Act 2020,* the Audit and Risk Committee Charter must specify the functions and responsibilities of the Audit and Risk Committee including the following:

- Monitor the compliance of Council policies and procedures with:
    - The overarching governance principles; and
    - The *Local Government Act 2020* and the regulations and any Ministerial directions.
- Monitor Council financial and performance reporting;
- Monitor and provide advice on risk management and fraud prevention systems and controls; and
- Oversee internal and external audit functions.

The Charter is reviewed bi-yearly. The revised Audit and Risk Committee Charter for 2023-2025 was received by the Audit and Risk Committee on 1 June 2023 and therefore is due for review by June 2025.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the Committee currently comprises of five independent representatives, one of whom is chair, and three Councillors including the Mayor and Deputy Mayor. The Committee meets at least four times a year.

Membership for the period 1 January 2025 to 30 June 2025 was as follows:

Name	**Membership Type**	**Term Expiry Date**
Independent Members		
Mr David Stafford	Independent Member – *Chairperson (elected 6 December 2024)*	25 August 2028
Ms Bonnie Holmes	Independent Member	31 August 2025
Mr Tony Oxford	Independent Member	25 June 2028
Mr John Duffield	Independent Member	28 February 2029
Ms Samantha Sharp	Independent Member	11 March 2029
Mr Philip Saunders	*Independent Member*	*Tenure Expired 29 February 2025*
Mr Greg Tremewen	*Independent Member*	*Retired 4 March 2025*
Councillor Representatives		
Cr Karen Stephens	Mayor	*Pending Mayoral Election 19 November 2025*
Cr Robyn McDonald	Deputy Mayor	*Pending Deputy Mayor Election 19 November 2025*
Cr Matt Jowett	Councillor	October 2028

The Chairperson of the Committee is appointed on an annual basis from the independent membership by all members of the Committee.

The Chief Executive Officer, Director Corporate Services, Director Community Services, Director Infrastructure, Executive Manager Governance, Chief Finance Officer and Corporate Governance Coordinator attend all meetings by invitation to assist the Committee, however they do not have voting rights. A standing invitation is also extended to the Council's appointed VAGO representative (external auditor) KPMG and Council's Internal Auditors (AFS & Associates).

MEETINGS AND ATTENDANCE

Three Audit and Risk Committee (A&R) meetings were held between 1 January 2025 and 30 June 2025 and member attendance was as follows:

Member Name	Meeting 1 6 March 2025	Meeting 2 5 June 2025
Mr David Stafford	✓	✓
Ms Bonnie Holmes	✓	✓
Mr Tony Oxford	✓	×
Mr John Duffield	✓	✓
Ms Sam Sharp	Appointed 11/03/2025	✓
Cr Karen Stephens	✓	✓
Cr Robyn McDonald	✓	✓
Cr Matt Jowett	✓	×

✓ = Attended
× = Apology received

EXTERNAL AUDIT

Council's external auditor is the Victorian Auditor General. The Auditor-General appointed KPMG in November 2023.

The External Auditor's primary duty is to express an opinion on the financial statements, and to report to Council on any weakness in internal control identified during the audit.

INTERNAL AUDIT

Council manages the internal audit function with audits being outsourced to a single service provider established via a public tender process to obtain specialist audit and financial advice and satisfy the requirements under the Council's Procurement Policy. AFS & Associates were awarded the contract on 1 August 2022, expiring 1 August 2026.

In accordance with the Audit and Risk Committee Charter, Council sets a Strategic Internal Audit Plan to direct the activities of the internal audit function. Internal audit provides a review of the effectiveness of governance, risk management and control processes.

A three-year Strategic Internal Audit Plan 2024-2027 was adopted by Council on 23 July 2024.

Following a risk survey completed by Audit and Risk Committee Independent Members, Councillor Committee Members, Executive Team and key management, a three year program was developed which includes the following topics:

Year 1 2024/25:

1. Long Term Financial Planning – Completed. Received by A&R 6/03/2025
2. Capital Project Management – Completed. To be presented to A&R 11/09/2025
3. Contract Management – Completed. To be presented to A&R 11/09/2025

4. Review of actions to close out high and medium risk internal audit recommendations – Completed. To be presented to A&R 11/09/2025
5. Annual Review of Internal Audit Program and development of rolling 3rd year – Completed. To be presented to A&R 11/09/2025.

Year 2 2025/26:

1. Records Management and Information Privacy – in progress.
2. Governance
3. Payroll
4. Review of actions to close out high and medium risk internal audit recommendations
5. Annual Review of Internal Audit Program and development of rolling 3rd year.

Year 3 2026/27:

1. Asset management – Road Assets
2. Organisation Culture
3. Procurement
4. Review of actions to close out high and medium risk internal audit recommendations
5. Annual Review of Internal Audit Program and development of rolling 3rd year.

KEY ACTIVITIES – AUDIT AND RISK ANNUAL WORK PLAN

Under Section 54 (3) of the *Local Government Act 2020* an Audit and Risk Committee must adopt an annual work program.

The Audit and Risk Committee Annual Work Plan sets the framework for the reports to be considered by the Committee throughout the year.

In addition, the Executive Team include additional items of interest during the year to keep the Committee briefed of emerging issues or changes.

The key activities of the Committee for the period 1 January 2025 and 30 June 2025 were as follows:

<u>Financial Reports</u>

The Committee considered the following finance reports between 1 January 2025 and 30 June 2025:

- Audited Financial Statements and Performance Statement as at 30 June 2025
- Glenelg Shire Council Financial Quarterly Report
- Budget Process and Timelines
- Annual Budget 2025/2026 update

- Summary of Asset Valuations
- Councillor Expenditure Quarterly Report
- CEO and EA Expenditure Report – Credit Card reimbursements

Risk Management

At each of its meetings the Committee considered a report that provides an overview of developments in relation to Council's organisational risk management function.

The Committee considered the following risk management reports between 1 January 2025 and 30 June 2025:

- Risk, Workcover and OHS Quarterly Report
- Council Litigation Matters

Other Matters

The Committee also considered the following matters during the period 1 January 2025 and 30 June 2025 in accordance with its Charter and Annual Work Plan:

- Draft External Audit Strategy
- Interim Management Letter for the Financial Year Ending 30 June 2025
- Strategic Internal Audit Program Status Update
- Draft Strategic Internal Audit Program July 2024 to June 2027
- Industry Update (Regulatory and Integrity Agency Reports)
- Audit and Risk Committee Biannual Report for the period 1 July 2024 – 31 December 2024;
- Review of Audit and Risk Committee Charter
- Business Continuity Plan Update
- Information Asset Register Update
- Protected Data Security Plan Action Plan
- Monitors Report / Final Monitors Report
- Security and Penetration Test Action Plan
- Cyber Security Incident Report

- ERP Program Update
- Glenelg Shire Council Project Update
- Project Update – Portland Foreshore Multipurpose Facility
- Local Port of Portland Bay, Safety and Environmental Management Plan Audit
- Audit and Risk Committee Self-Assessment Survey 2024-2025 Distribution
- Internal Audit Action List
- Road Management Plan Compliance Report
- WEX Motorpass Fuel Cards for the 2024/2025 year
- Attestation Compliance Report
- Draft Audit and Risk Committee Annual Work Plan Ending 30 June 2026

COMMITTEE PERFORMANCE

As required by its Charter, the Committee is required to undertake a self-assessment of its performance measured against the Committee's obligations as detailed in the Charter. The results of the self-assessment will be presented to the September 2025 Audit and Risk Committee Meeting.

The results of the self-assessment showed that members have a high level of satisfaction with the performance of the Audit and Risk Committee.

MINUTES OF THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE

In accordance with Section 54(6) of the *Local Government Act 2020* the Chief Executive Officer must ensure the preparation and maintenance of agendas, minutes and reports of the Audit and Risk Committee and table reports and annual assessments of the Audit and Risk Committee at Council meetings when required and when requested by the chairperson of the Audit and Risk Committee.

Accordingly, all minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee are presented to the next available Council Meeting.

CONCLUSION

It is of the view that the Audit and Risk Committee has discharged its responsibilities under the Audit and Risk Committee Charter and that with the information presented to it, considers the Council has strong executive management, leadership and governance processes in place to proactively respond to organisational risks that may present.

The three-year Strategic Internal Audit Plan 2024-2027 and Internal Audit Annual Work Plan 2025-2026 have been developed taking into consideration both the organisation's operational and strategic risks as well as current emerging issues faced by the Glenelg Shire Council.

The Committee will continue to review Council's governance, accountability, risk and internal controls to reduce the risk to the organisation and recommend improvements where identified.

David Stafford, Chair



On behalf of the Audit & Risk Committee
27 August 2025

COUNCIL POLICY

TITLE:	PROCUREMENT POLICY
ID NUMBER:	CPO-CORPS-CP-001 (DocSetID 2290676)
DEPARTMENT:	CORPORATE
UNIT:	CONTRACTS AND PROCUREMENT
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Director Corporate Services

ADOPTED DATE AND BY WHOM:	14 December 2021 – by Council
EXPIRY DATE:	October 2029
REVIEW DATE:	At least once during each 4-year term of the Council

AVAILABILITY:	Organisation wide	Yes ☒	No ☐
	Public	Yes ☒	No ☐
	Internet	Yes ☒	No ☐
ADVISE AVAILABILITY:	Media Release	Yes ☐	No ☒
	Sou Wester (Responsible Officer to prepare article)	Yes ☒	No ☐

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1. References

- *Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)*
- *Gender Equality Act 2020 (Vic)*
- *Protected Disclosures Act 2012 (Vic)*
- *Victorian Industry Participation Policy Act 2003 (Vic)*
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)*
- *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)*
- *Competition and Consumer Act 2010*
- Local Government (General) Regulations 2015 (Vic)
- Department of Treasury and Finance, Competitive Neutrality Policy 2012
- Victorian Local Government Best Practice Procurement Guidelines 2024
- Local Jobs First Policy (LJFP) Guidelines
- Australian Standards Code of Tendering AS 4120-1994
- Instruments of Delegation by the CEO to Officers authorised to procure goods, services and supplies on behalf of Council
- Glenelg Shire Council, Records Management Policy OPO-CORPS-RECM-001
- Glenelg Shire Council, Discipline Procedure OPR-CEO-OD-014
- Glenelg Shire Council, Staff and Councillor Code of Conduct OPO-CEO-HR-003
- Glenelg Shire Council, Councillor Code of Conduct CPO-CEO-CS-008
- Glenelg Shire Council, Environmental Sustainability Policy CPO-ASSETS--EV-001
- Glenelg Shire Council, Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy and Procedure CPO-CEO-CS-007
- Glenelg Shire Council, Current Credit Card Policy OPO-CORPS-FI-007
- Glenelg Shire Council, Petty Cash Policy CPO-CORPD-FI-004
- Glenelg Shire Council, OHS Contractor Management Procedure OPR-CORPS-RM-012
- Public Interest Disclosure Procedure (DocSetID: 2580165)

2. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to guide Council's procurement activities in a manner that promotes open and fair competition, ensures Value for Money, and upholds the principles of transparency, probity, and accountability. It supports ethical, efficient, and effective procurement practices that deliver value to the community and align with Council's strategic objectives.

Council is required under section 108 and 109 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (*the Act*) to prepare, adopt and comply with its Procurement Policy. In accordance with *the Act*, the Procurement Policy sets out the key principles and process applied to the purchases of Goods, Services and Works by Council.

3. Council Policy and Applicability

This Policy applies to all procurement activities undertaken by Council and is binding upon Councillors, Council Officers, Contractors, Consultants and or third parties acting on behalf of Council to comply with the principles and framework set out in this policy.

In accordance with *the Act*, this Policy seeks to ensure open and fair competition and Value for Money whilst upholding the principles of transparency, probity and accountability.

Key terms used throughout this policy are defined in the Definitions section within this policy.

3.1 Treatment of GST

All monetary values stated in this policy exclude GST, unless specifically stated otherwise.

3.2 Procurement during the Caretaker Period

In accordance with section 69 of *the Act*, Council must not make major procurement decisions during the caretaker period that could influence the outcome of an election or bind an incoming Council.
All procurement activities during the caretaker period must:

- Be assessed for political or commercial risk;
- Be clearly and appropriately documented; and
- Comply with all relevant probity principles and legislative requirements.

Further guidance will be provided by Council through caretaker period protocols and/or be referenced within Council's procurement policy or guidelines.

4. Guiding Principles

Council's procurement processes shall be based on the following principles, irrespective of the value and complexity of that procurement.

4.1 Probity, Accountability and Transparency

Council is committed to upholding the highest standards of probity, accountability and transparency in all procurement activities, in line with *the Act*, and the Victorian Best Practice Procurement Guidelines (2024).

All Councillors, Council officers and authorised agents involved in procurement activities must act ethically, impartially and in the public interest. They are individually accountable for their decisions and the outcomes of procurement processes undertaken on behalf of Council.

All procurement activities must be conducted in a manner that:

- Complies with *the Act*, this Procurement Policy, associated procurement manual or guidelines, relevant legislation and applicable standards.
- Demonstrates integrity, fairness, and transparency.
- Is defensible under internal and external scrutiny.
- Manages conflicts of interest and maintains public trust.
- Prevents and mitigates risks such as fraud, corruption or collusion.

Where procurement activities are carried out by authorised agents on Council's behalf (e.g. external parties, consultants, contractors), they must comply with the same legal, ethical and procedural obligations as Council officers.

To support probity and accountability, Council will:

- Apply consistent and transparent processes that ensure fair and equitable treatment of all suppliers.
- Ensure procurement criteria and conditions are not changed after public release unless formally approved in line with policy or procedure.
- Require all participants involved in procurement activities to act in good faith, declare and manage conflicts of interest, and adhere to relevant codes of conduct and ethical standards.
- Prohibit the acceptance of any gifts, benefits or hospitality from current or prospective suppliers in accordance with Council's Gifts, Benefit's and Hospitality policy.

4.1.1 Disclosure of Information

Commercial in Confidence information received by Council must not be disclosed and is to be stored in a secure location. Councillors and Council staff must take all reasonable measures to maintain confidentiality of:

- Information submitted by suppliers in tenders, quotations or during tender negotiations; and
- Information that is marked confidential, or reasonably understood to be confidential due to its nature; and
- Any details related to current or proposed contracts, particularly where disclosure could compromise Council's position or breach probity.

Discussion with potential suppliers during tender evaluations should not go beyond the extent necessary to resolve doubts on what is being offered by that supplier.

At no stage should any discussion be entered into which could improperly influence the procurement process or negotiation of a contract prior to the contract approval process being finalised, other than authorised pre- contract negotiations.

4.2 Strategic Procurement

Council adopts a strategic approach to procurement to maximise value and efficiency.

Each procurement activity will be planned with consideration of the following principles:

- Opportunities for aggregated purchasing across Council or with other entities through approved purchasing schemes.
- Collaborative or joint procurement arrangements.
- Utilisation of existing internal and external supplier panels or contracts; and
- Alternative contracting models that best support the delivery of outcomes.

Guidance materials and procurement planning templates are available to support council officers in applying these principles effectively throughout the procurement process.

4.3 Value for Money

Council is committed to achieving Value for Money in all procurement decisions. This means selecting the option that offers the best overall outcome - not just the lowest price, but based on a balanced assessment of cost, quality, risk, sustainability and social impact over the entire lifecycle of the goods, services or works

Council's approach to Value for Money includes integration of Quadruple Bottom Line (QBL) principles which means ensuring that economic, environmental, social, and ethical considerations are embedded into procurement planning and decisions wherever practical and proportionate.

In applying the Value for Money principle, Council will:

- *Consider Whole-of-Life Costs*: including planning, acquisition, operation, maintenance, and disposal.
- *Optimise Quality and Performance*: ensuring goods, services, and works are fit for purpose, durable, and supported by service warranties where appropriate.
- *Deliver Broader Community Benefits*: encouraging procurement outcomes that generate positive social, economic, and environmental impacts, including through support of local, social, Indigenous, and inclusive suppliers.
- *Champion Sustainable and Ethical Procurement*: engaging suppliers who demonstrate compliance with fair, ethical, and socially responsible labour practices, and who meet legislative and regulatory obligations, including workplace safety.
- *Minimise Environmental Impact*: selecting products and services that reduce resource consumption, emissions, waste, and environmental degradation.

- *Support Innovation:* encouraging new solutions, technologies, or delivery models that improve outcomes or efficiencies.
- *Promote Fair Competition and Efficiency*: ensuring open, transparent procurement processes that support innovation and reduce duplication.
- *Enable Collaboration and Aggregation*: leveraging shared services, panel arrangements, and approved purchasing schemes where appropriate.

Further details regarding sustainable and social procurement are within Appendix B.

4.3.1 Quadruple Bottom Line (QBL) Principles

Council will, wherever appropriate, incorporate the following Quadruple Bottom Line considerations into its procurement planning and decision making:

a. Economic

Support local suppliers (as defined in this policy's definition), small to medium enterprises (SMEs), and regional businesses

- Create local jobs and stimulate economic development within the Council area and nominated surrounding regions.
- Consider long-term value and cost-effectiveness, not just upfront price.

b. Environmental

- Reduce waste, greenhouse gas emissions, and resource use.
- Prioritise recycled, energy-efficient, or sustainably made goods and services.
- Support the circular economy and climate resilience through environmentally responsible purchasing.

c. Social

- Promote diversity, equity, and inclusion across supply chains.
- Support Indigenous-owned businesses, disability enterprises, and certified social benefit suppliers.
- Provide employment and training opportunities for disadvantaged or marginalised groups.

d. Ethical Governance

- Work with suppliers who follow ethical practices including fair labour, safe workplaces and compliance with modern slavery laws.
- Maintain transparency, integrity, and compliance in all procurement activities.

4.4 Risk Management

Procurement activities must be properly planned and executed to protect Council from risks including but not limited to; personal injury, property damage, financial loss, reputational harm, legal exposure, and disruption to the delivery of goods, services, or works.

To minimise procurement-related risks and uphold best practice, Council implements the following risk mitigation strategies:

- **Procurement Planning**: allowing sufficient time for procurement preparation, market engagement, and internal approvals to reduce the risk of rushed or non-compliant processes.
- **Standardised Contract Documentation**: using Council approved templates that include legally reviewed terms and conditions to ensure consistency and reduce contractual ambiguity.
- **Securities**: requiring appropriate security deposits such as bank guarantees to protect against supplier non-performance or contract default
- **Due diligence Checks**: undertaking financial and reference checks on new and existing suppliers, with periodic reviews as needed to ensure ongoing capability and compliance.
- **Subject Matter Expert Input**: referring complex or technical specifications to qualified internal or external subject matter experts to ensure clarity, feasibility, and risk mitigation.
- **Contract Execution before Commencement**: ensuring that all contracts are fully executed and documented before any goods are delivered, services commenced, or payments issued.
- **Standards and Compliance**: incorporating relevant Australian Standards, legislative requirements, and industry best practices into specifications and contract terms.
- **Ongoing Contract Management**: requiring contract managers to actively monitor contractor performance, deliverables, and compliance throughout the contract term, with issues documented and addressed promptly.

Ensuring staff have adequate training and understanding of the procurement policy and processes.

These practices are consistent with the Local Government Best Practice Procurement Guidelines 2024, which emphasises proactive risk planning, transparency, and strong governance as essential to achieving Value for Money and ensuring public confidence in procurement outcomes.

5. Council Policy

5.1 Procurement Structure, Processes, Procedures and Systems

Council maintains a procurement function responsible for:

- Maintaining the Procurement Policy and associated guidelines, processes and procedures.
- Maintaining appropriate purchasing, procurement, and contract management systems and tools.
- Providing procurement-related advice and support to the organisation as required.
- Building organisational procurement and contract management capability (including delivery of training and provision of guidance materials).
- Promoting awareness and monitoring of compliance with this Policy.
- Ensuring Legislation is followed, reporting breaches and corrective actions in a timely manner.
- Collaborating with other councils and organisations to identify best practice in and achieving better value from procurement.

Council will maintain internal procurement control documents detailing the processes, procedures and systems related to procurement including maintaining details of tendered contracts.

5.2 Procurement Methods

The standard methods for procurement activities are:

- Purchase Order (preferred method).
- Purchase Card.
- Request for Quotation (RFQ) process, followed by a Contract and or Purchase Order.
- Request for Tender (RFT) process, followed by a Contract and or Purchase Order.
- Approved Purchasing Schemes or Panel Contracts.

All procurement activities must:

- Be supported by identified and available funding.
- Be authorised in accordance with Council's approved financial delegations and thresholds.
- Involve more than one person with appropriate documentation and approvals to ensure transparency and accountability.

5.2.1 Expressions of Interest (EOI)

Expressions of Interest may be used where:

- Multiple suppliers are likely.
- Full tendering is burdensome, or procurement is complex.
- Vendor interest or capability is uncertain.
- Council seeks preliminary advice from the market.

5.2.2 Alternative Approaches Following an Unsuccessful Tender

If a public tender process concludes with no submissions received, Council may consider alternative procurement approaches, including:

- Reissuing the tender in its original form.
- Revising the scope or requirements and reissuing the tender.
- Inviting a limited number of suitable suppliers to submit proposals (Select Sourcing).
- Entering direct negotiations with a supplier (Sole Sourcing).

Any alternative procurement approach must be:

- Supported by documented market analysis and a clear rationale for the selected approach.
- Demonstrated to achieve Value for Money, fairness, and probity, in line with *the Act*, this Policy, and best practice procurement principles.

5.3 Collaborative Procurement

In accordance with Section 108 (c) of *the Act*, Council will actively seek opportunities to collaborate with other councils and public bodies in the procurement of goods, services or works, where such collaboration can deliver economies of scale, improved value for money, or other strategic benefits.
Council officers must give due consideration to collaborative procurement opportunities as part of the planning phase for all procurement activities.

Where a procurement recommendation is brought before the Council, the accompanying report must include:

- An outline of any potential collaborative procurement opportunities identified, including the public bodies or councils involved; and
- A statement explaining why Council did, or did not, pursue the identified opportunities for collaboration in relation to that procurement process.

5.4 Tender Evaluation

Council is committed to ensuring a fair, consistent, and transparent approach to the evaluation of tenders. To uphold these principles:

- Late tenders will not be accepted under any circumstances to ensure procedural fairness and integrity.
- Tender evaluation criteria and weightings will be documented and approved prior to issuing any tender to ensure transparency and consistency in assessment.
- An Evaluation Panel comprising appropriately qualified and briefed members will be established for each tender process. The panel will assess submissions objectively against the pre-determined criteria.
- Where beneficial, external representatives with relevant expertise may be included on the Evaluation Panel or engaged as advisors to enhance capability and ensure appropriate oversight.
- All panel members must complete a Conflict-of-Interest declaration before commencing any evaluation activities. Identified conflicts must be managed in accordance with Council's policies and procedures.
- The evaluation process will be conducted in a manner that is robust, unbiased, and able to withstand internal and external scrutiny.
- A Probity Advisor should be engaged, and a Probity Plan developed for complex, high-value or high-risk procurements, particularly those exceeding $10 million.

5.4.1 Contract Negotiations and Best and Final Offer (BAFO) Process

To ensure the best value outcome for Council, contract negotiations may be conducted with one or more shortlisted tenderers, provided such negotiations remain consistent with the original scope, intent and probity principles of the tender process.

Council may also implement a shortlisting process as part of the evaluation. Where appropriate, shortlisted tenderers may be invited to submit a Best and Final Offer (BAFO) to allow Council to clarify, refine, or enhance proposals prior to final contract award.

Any negotiation or BAFO process will be conducted in a fair, transparent, and equitable manner, in line with *the Act*, relevant procurement best practice guidelines and Council's procurement policy.

5.5 Panel Arrangements

When accessing established panel arrangements quotations should be sought consistent with the guidelines set out in Clause 7.3 to ensure that any procurement through panels demonstrates value for money and competitive process.

An exception is that an Approved Supplier may be appointed directly for works up to $15,000 where a schedule of rates has been provided under the terms of

the panel. For procurements greater than $15,000 the quotation requirement outlined in 7.3 should be followed.

Note: If an existing panel or unit rate contract is in place for goods, (such as a specific price per unit), Council Officers can access these contracts without the need to undertake a full Request for Quote process where value for money can be provided

6. Procurement Monitoring, Reporting and Non-Compliance

Council is committed to transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement in all procurement activities.

The Procurement Team is responsible for monitoring procurement performance and compliance with this policy. This includes oversight of:

- Procurement activities and trends
- Use of Procurement exemptions
- Alignment with procurement thresholds and financial delegations
- Documentation and record keeping practices

Non-compliance Management:

- Minor or administrative non-compliance will be addressed by relevant Council staff in leadership positions, with a focus on education and corrective action.
- Serious or repeated breaches, or matters involving probity, integrity, or public interest concerns, will be escalated to the Audit and Risk Committee, Executive Leadership Team, through an Attestation Report and reported to Council where required.

Any breach of this Policy may be considered a breach of organisational policy and could result in disciplinary action including potential termination. Breaches will be assessed in accordance with relevant internal policies and frameworks, including those governing:

- Staff and Councillor conduct
- Fraud and corruption prevention
- Ethical and accountable behaviour

All staff are responsible for compliance with this policy.

7 Effective Legislative and Policy compliance and Control

7.1 Financial delegations

Section 47 of *the Act* defines the process for Council to delegate its powers, duties and functions to a member of its staff. Council has by an appropriate Instrument of Delegation, delegated powers and responsibilities to the Chief Executive Officer.

In turn the Chief Executive Officer has by an appropriate Instrument of Delegation, delegated powers and responsibilities to Officers as appropriate to perform their role.

Council maintains a documented system of procurement delegations, which controls employee authorisation limits in line with the below authorisation limit table. Officers must be aware of their role and financial responsibilities and must ensure that all purchases they make are within their delegated authority.

7.2 Delegation Limits

Delegation limits for requisition and purchase order approvals are set by the CEO under the CEO's power of delegation. Procurement delegation limits for the CEO are set by Council.

Officers responsible for procurement are prohibited from splitting invoices for the purpose of avoiding established procurement delegations.

Any Council employee may requisition works, goods or services. However, only employees with delegated authority, as listed below, can authorise the associated requisition or purchase order:

Position Title	Delegated Limited (GST exclusive)	Procurement Activities / Additional Guidance & Conditions
CEO (or delegate)	up to $500,000	• Purchase Orders • Procurement Exemptions • Contracts • Contract Variations: (Maximum limit under delegation *cumulative*) All expenditure including contract variations must be within the approved budget, otherwise escalate
Directors (or delegate)	up to $200,000	• Purchase Orders • Procurement Exemptions • Contracts • Contract Variations: (Maximum limit under delegation – *cumulative*) All expenditure including contract variations must be within the approved budget, otherwise escalate
Senior Executive Officer/Managers	up to $100,000	• Purchase Orders
Coordinators	up to $50,000	• Purchase Orders
Team Leaders	up to $20,000	• Purchase Orders
Business Support Officers	up to $10,000	• Purchase Orders

If an officer holds a credit card with an approved credit limit higher than the authorised officer's limit, then this takes precedent.

7.3 Procurement Thresholds

A public tender process must be used for all procurements valued at $200,000 (exc GST) and above.

For procurements valued under $200,000 (exc GST), the following thresholds below apply:

Value Excl GST	Minimum Procurement Requirement	Additional Guidance
Up to $2,000	Best price available 1 Verbal or Written Quote	Quote to be saved in Sharepoint
$2,001 - $10,000	1 Written Quote	Quote to be saved in Sharepoint
$10,001 to $50,000	2 Written Quotes	Quotes to be saved in Sharepoint
$50,001 to $200,000	3 Written Quotes	
$200,001 +	Public Tender	Evaluation report to CEO (contracts up to $500,000) Council Report (above $500,001)

Employees must not generate multiple purchase orders for the one supplier to circumvent the above procurement limit processes.

7.4 Exemptions from Procurement Thresholds

An exemption to the Procurement Thresholds and procedures may be requested under the following circumstances:

- In matters of Emergency including public health, security, or safety or because of an unforeseen event or occurrence;
- Installations where a change in supplier would necessitate the procurement of Goods and Services that do not meet the requirements for interoperability or interchangeability;
- An absence of competition for technical reasons;
- The Goods, Services or Works are required as part of a grant, funding agreement, lease or similar arrangement specifically stating how the Goods, Service or Works are to be provided or undertaken; and
- Where the procurement is on Council's exemption list (refer to Appendix D).

An exemption cannot be sought by the CEO if the value of the procurement is over $200,000. In this case, an exemption can be sought from Council.

Exemptions regarding application of the mandatory weightings as stated in Appendix B can only be approved by the CEO. A 'Procurement Policy Exemption Form' must be completed.

7.5 Aggregate Spend

There is no specific length of time applicable to a contract for the purpose of applying thresholds, where significant amounts are spent in aggregate either on one supplier or for one service over time.

The test(s) to be applied in determining the financial value of a contract are;

The value of a contract is the aggregate value of the contract over the term of the contract.

- If the term of the contract is not clear, a default term of 2 years is to be used for cumulative expenditure.
- Where the aggregate value of similar suppliers across Council exceeds the relevant threshold over a 2 year period.
- Where the aggregate value of the same supplier exceeds the relevant threshold over a 2 year period.
- Reviews of the aggregate spend of all Council suppliers will be conducted quarterly and where aggregate expenditure with suppliers not under contract exceeds the above threshold, formal tenders will be called for the supply of the relevant categories of goods services or works.

7.6 Public Interest Disclosure Procedures

The position of Director Corporate Services is the appointed Public Interest Disclosure Coordinator (PID). If improper conduct is suspected, Council's PID Coordinator can be contacted as follows:

Public Interest Disclosure Coordinator
Mr David Hol
Director Corporate Services
Phone: (03) 5522 2222
Email: pid@glenelg.vic.gov.au
(dedicated public interest disclosure email address)
or dhol@glenelg.vic.gov.au

8. Gender Impact Assessment

In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020* (Vic), Council is committed to ensuring a gender lens is applied to all new policies, programs and services that directly and significantly impact the public and ensure that a gender impact assessment (GIA) is conducted as needed. Records of GIA conducted must be saved in the records management system with the relevant procurement in accordance with the GIA Policy.

9 Records Management

All Council records created and managed as a result of implementing this policy will be managed in accordance with the Council's Records Management Policy.
The Records Management Policy assigns responsibilities for records management to employees, supervisors, volunteers and other specific positions.

No Council records are to be destroyed without consideration of the requirements of the *Act*(s) that govern the functions relevant to this policy. Prior to destruction, advice must be sought from the Records Management Unit, with consideration to the requirements of the appropriate Retention and Disposal Authority (RDA).

10 Victorian State Legislation Copyright Acknowledgement

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11 Appendix A - Definitions

Term	Definition
the Act	Local Government Act 2020 (Vic).
Best Practice	As defined in the Local Government Best Practice Procurement Guidelines or any other document specified by Council.
Collaborative Procurement Arrangement	a contract established by Council, government or a nominated agent, such as Procurement Australasia, Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) or a local government entity, for the benefit of numerous state, federal and/or local government entities and others that achieves best value by leveraging combined economies of scale.
Commercial in Confidence	Information that, if released, may prejudice the business dealings or commercial interests of the Council or another party (e.g. prices, discounts, rebates, profits, methodologies, and process information etc.)
Conflict of Interest	Any general or material conflict as defined in sections 127–128 of *the Act*, where personal, professional or financial interests may, or may appear to, influence impartial decision-making.
Contract Management	The process that ensures all parties to a contract fully meet their respective obligations as efficiently and effectively as possible, to deliver the contract objectives and provide Value for Money.
Contract Variation	A Contract Variation refers to any modification made to the original terms and conditions of an executed contract. Variations may be financial or non-financial in nature and must be managed transparently, appropriately documented and assessed to ensure they do not undermine the principles of value for money, probity, equity, or open and fair competition.
Contract Variation - Financial	A variation that alters the contract's monetary value. This includes: • Increases or decreases in contract cost, • Whether within or exceeding approved contingencies, Subject to approval in line with Council's financial delegation limits and governance requirements
Contract Variation - Non-Financial	A variation that does not result in a financial adjustment but alters other contractual parameters, such as: • Project timelines or milestones, • Scope, specifications or design details, • Working hours or access arrangements, • Location or quantity changes or Any other aspect of the contract provided it doesn't impact cost
Council	Glenelg Shire Council
Council Officer	Any Council employee, contractor or consultant authorised to act on behalf of the Council, including Councillors in their official capacity.
Emergency	A sudden or unexpected occurrence requiring immediate action eg: • The occurrence of a natural disaster such as flooding, bushfire or

	• epidemic which may require the immediate procurement of goods, services or works to provide relief; • The occurrence of an unplanned event such as damage of council property including road infrastructure or IT incidents which may require the immediate procurement of goods, services or works to ensure business continuity and/or community safety; • The unforeseen cessation of trading of a core service provider due to bankruptcy and a need to appoint a replacement service provider on the grounds of public safety;
Local Supplier	is defined as a commercial business that meets at least one of the following criteria: • Maintains an operational premises that is physically located within the municipal boundaries of Council; **or** • Delivers, sources or undertakes the majority of their goods, services or works within the Council area; **or** is located within a municipality that borders Council where geographic proximity clearly contributes to local, economic, social or community outcomes.
Material Breach	Any breach of this policy that may also represent a breach of legislation such as procurement thresholds, fraud or corruption, and occupational health and safety.
Panel Contract	A panel contract (or standing offer arrangement) is a procurement method where a council selects multiple suppliers through a tender process for works, goods and services on a regular basis over a specified time. They allow Council staff to purchase from these panel suppliers without a public procurement process for each individual purchase. Panel contracts cannot be used to purchase works, goods or services that fall outside the scope of the original arrangement. Any other service outside of the original scope would need to be procured via a different procurement process.
Probity	Probity is the evidence of ethical behaviour, and can be defined as complete and confirmed integrity, uprightness, and honesty in a particular process. Probity is a defensible process which can withstand internal and external scrutiny, which achieves both accountability and transparency, providing respondents with fair and equitable treatment.
Procurement	Refers to the end-to-end process of acquiring external goods, services, and works. It encompasses the entire lifecycle, from initial planning and concept development through to contract completion, asset disposal, or the conclusion of a service. Procurement also includes the organisational structures, governance, and compliance frameworks that support and guide procurement activities within the council operations.
Total Contract Sum	The potential total value of the contract including: • costs for the full term of the contract, including any options

	for either party to extend the contract • applicable goods and services tax (GST) • anticipated contingency allowances or variations all other known, anticipated and reasonably foreseeable costs.

12. Appendix B – Social and Environmental Procurement

12.1 Social Procurement

Council supports procurement that not only delivers appropriate value for money but also generates positive social outcomes. This includes fostering and maintaining a strong community by exploring ways to generate local employment and further strengthening the local economy.

Council is committed to supporting the local business community and encouraging its involvement in purchasing processes. Buying locally is preferred where local suppliers are competitive and achieve value for money.

Council requires all procurement evaluation criteria to include the following:

Evaluation Criteria	Minimum Weighting
Economic Contribution to the Shire	10%

12.2 Environmental Procurement

The way in which Council procures materials and services has an impact on its environmental, economic, and social obligation through:

- Ensuring suppliers minimise the environmental impact of their operations and maintain environmentally responsible policies and practices including reducing their greenhouse gas emissions.
- Selecting products/services that have minimal effect on the depletion of natural resources and biodiversity and promote a circular economy.
- Improving our ability to adapt to climate change.
- Reducing water consumption and improving water management.
- Improving equity of access to opportunities.
- Supporting and fostering social and service innovation and emerging sectors.

Council is also committed to minimising Council's environmental footprint by purchasing goods and services with fewer impacts on the environment.

Council requires all procurement evaluation criteria to include the following:

Evaluation Criteria	Minimum Weighting
The level of commitment demonstrated to maximise environmental sustainability	10%

13. Appendix C Information Technology equipment and software procurement requirements.

The IT department is responsible for the procurement of all Council software and IT equipment. All purchases that incorporate technology must be approved by the Executive Leadership Team.

These technologies include applications hosted both inside and outside Council's network, software that is licensed or on subscription, available on websites or over the internet, apps that hold Council data, online booking systems, community consultation platforms, tracking, reporting and monitoring systems, smart sensors, business directories, open data platforms, livestreaming and digital permit systems.

Engaging early at the procurement or project initiation stage will reduce delays, ensure the solution is viable and provide better outcomes. Minimum requirements to be met include:

- Compatibility and integration with existing systems.
- Compliance with privacy, data protection and cyber security standards.
- Avoidance of functional duplication.
- Network capability.
- Alignment with Council's strategic direction.

The following forms must be completed prior to approval of any technology acquisition and require Director approval to progress.

The Software Acquisition Request Form outlines the business needs, initial and ongoing costs, implementation and integration requirements, budget alignment, and the type of data to be entered and stored.

The Hardware Request Acquisition Form outlines the intended purpose, compatibility with existing systems, security requirements, initial cost, expected lifespan, whether it is a new or replacement asset and budget alignment.

Please contact IT for assistance with completing the forms.
Renewal or upgrade of existing IT equipment purchased outside the life cycle costs will need to be budgeted for by the unit.

Where a project requires software acquisition, budget for implementation and licensing costs for the first year must be within the project scope and budget. The software will then be included in the IT application budget for the ongoing lifecycle costs.

Renewal or upgrades of applications is the responsibility of Application Owners. They are responsible for assessing the performance and functionality of software prior to renewal or upgrade, ensuring it continues to meet business needs, provides value for money, is vendor-supported, remains up-to- date and is compatible and compliant with Council's systems.

Australian Privacy Principles and Council Polices require all personal, sensitive and confidential data be stored and retained in Australia. Any request where data is stored outside Australia may be rejected.

Council monitors its IT networks. Any unapproved software and hardware detected will be investigated, and breaches may result in immediate removal.

14. Appendix D – Exemptions

The following procurements are either exempt from market engagement and/or the requirement for a Purchase Order. With the Chief Executive's approval, exemptions can be added or removed from this list at any time.

Category	Description	Exempt from market engagement	Exempt from purchase order
Utilities	Where there is only a single provider such as: Water Services	Yes	Yes
Utilities	Where there are multiple providers such as: Power Gas Telecommunications	No	Yes
Insurance premiums and claims	WorkCover and other insurances	Yes	Yes
Prescribed contracts	Legal services	Yes	No
Payroll expenses	Superannuation, PAYG and long service entitlements	Yes	Yes
GST	Goods and Services Tax payable.	Yes	Yes
Postage	Australia Post	Yes	Yes
Vehicle registrations	VicRoads vehicle registrations	Yes	Yes
Councillor expenses	Allowances and Reimbursements	Yes	Yes
Refundable trust funds	Includes Security Bonds, Contract Retentions and other funds held in trust	Yes	Yes
Collaborative procurement providers	Municipal Association of Victoria, Procurement Australia, State Government prequalified supplier list	Yes	No
Levies, fees or fines due by Council to	EPA Victoria Levy	Yes	Yes

Category	Description	Exempt from market engagement	Exempt from purchase order
another level of Government.	State Revenue Office – Land Tax	Yes	Yes
	State Revenue Office - Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund (ESVF)	Yes	Yes
	Department of Transport – Valuations (supplementary & objection)	Yes	No
	Dept of of Jobs, Precincts & Regions – Sec 69 cat, dog & DAB registrations	Yes	No
	Wannon Water – fire plug maintenance Department of Transport – Traffic Signal Maintenance, Main Rds Street lighting Council contribution (60/40 split) Powercor – provide maintenance for public lighting and power connections and upgrades to facilities, Victorian Electoral Commission - Council Elections	Yes	No
Council Contribution	Council contributions – approved as part of the budget	Yes	No
Novated Contracts	Where the initial contract was entered into in compliance with *the Act* and due diligence has been undertaken in respect to the new party.	Yes	No
Other	Acquisition of Land and Buildings.	Yes	Yes
	Medical expenses (including workcover)	Yes	No
	Venue hire	Yes	Yes
	Memberships and subscriptions. - approved as part of the budget	Yes	No
	External audit fees – Victorian Auditor- General's Office	Yes	No

Category	Description	Exempt from market engagement	Exempt from purchase order
	Annual community grants	Yes	Yes
	Professional workshop and conference registration fees and associated costs	Yes	No
	Loans and investments	Yes	Yes
	Advertising for: General Public notices Recruitment	Yes	No
	Accommodation associated with provision of employment.	Yes	No
	Salary Packaging	Yes	Yes
	Leases for equipment	Yes	Yes
	Supermarket Purchasing cards	Yes	Yes
	Where the acquisition is of a cultural or artistic nature i.e. a live show or art piece, and the purchase is within the adopted budget	Yes	Yes

COUNCIL POLICY

TITLE:	FRAUD AND CORRUPTION CONTROL POLICY
ID NUMBER:	CPO-CORPS-GE-001 DocSetID: 2553622
DEPARTMENT:	Corporate Services
UNIT:	Corporate Services
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Director Corporate Services

ADOPTED DATE AND BY WHOM:	Audit and Risk Committee: 11 September 2025 Council Meeting: To be considered by Council 28 October 2025
EXPIRY DATE:	28 October 2027
REVIEW DATE:	10 August 2027 *This policy will be reviewed every two years or as required by any legislative or council changes.*

AVAILABILITY:	Organisation wide	Yes ☒	No ☐
	Public	Yes ☒	No ☐
	Internet	Yes ☒	No ☐
ADVISE AVAILABILITY:	Media Release	Yes ☐	No ☒
	Sou Wester (Responsible Officer to prepare article)	Yes ☒	No ☐

1. References

- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.
- *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012*
- *Public Administration Act 2004*
- *Independent Broad-Based Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2011*
- *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*
- Australian Standard on Fraud and Corruption Control (AS 8001: 2021)
- Australian Standard in Risk Management (AS ISO 31000:2018)
- Australian Standard in Anti-bribery Management Systems (AS ISO 37001:2019)
- Australian Standard in Information Security Management (AS ISO 27001:2022)

Related Policies and Delegations

- Fraud and Corruption Control System (DocSetID 2553623)
- Public Interest Disclosure Procedures (Whistleblower) (DocSetID 2580165)
- Equal Opportunity, Anti-Discrimination and Anti Bullying Policy (DocSetID 1750333)
- Privacy Policy (DocSetID 643084)
- Staff Code of Conduct (DocSetID 1706557)
- Councillor Code of Conduct (DocSet ID 2246857)
- Performance Improvement Procedure (DocSetID 2270468)
- Customer Service Charter (DocSetID 2303623)
- Customer Complaints Handling Policy (DocSetID 2299280)
- Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy – Employees (DocSetID 2606019)
- Records Management Policy (DocSetID 1933907)
- Media Policy (DocSetID 1454922)
- Governance Rules (DocSetID 2726760)
- Information Security Policy (DocSetID 3003942)

The position of Director Corporate Services is the appointed Public Interest Disclosure Coordinator (PID). If improper conduct is suspected, Council's PID Coordinator can be contacted as follows:

Public Interest Disclosure Coordinator
Mr David Hol
Director Corporate Services
Phone: (03) 5522 2222
Email: pid@glenelg.vic.gov.au (dedicated public interest disclosure email address) or dhol@glenelg.vic.gov.au

2. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to clearly outline the expected conduct of, employees, volunteers and contractors of the Glenelg Shire Council (GSC) in relation to Prevention, Detection and Reporting of fraudulent and corrupt activity.

This Policy and the supporting Fraud and Corruption Control System supports Council staff with increased knowledge and guidance regarding fraud and corruption issues, indicators of behaviour that may lead to fraud detection, reporting obligation and procedures for how to deal with fraudulent and corrupt behaviour.

2.1 Objectives

The objectives of this Policy are to:

- Develop and support a culture of awareness where employees have an understanding of expected behaviour and a willingness to report any incidents of suspected fraud or corruption.

- Provide a strategic framework that ensures Council employees understand their responsibilities in the prevention, detection and reporting of fraud and corruption.

- Reduce the opportunities for the occurrence of fraud by improving the effectiveness of GSC fraud and corruption management framework.

- To protect public money and assets, and to protect the integrity, security and reputation of the GSC Councillors, employees, and the services it provides to the community.

3. Scope

This Policy applies to all employees and volunteers engaged directly by GSC as well as all agents and contractors either engaged by GSC or by an authorised contractor of GSC.

4. Council Policy

GSC is committed to protecting its revenue, expenditure, reputation and assets from any attempt, by members of the public, contractors, agents, intermediaries or its own employees to gain financial or other benefits by deceit or dishonest conduct. GSC requires all Council employees, volunteers, contractors and agents of GSC to act honestly and with integrity and to safeguard the public resources for which they are responsible.

Council will not tolerate fraud and corruption in any form and is committed to:

- Preventing fraud and corruption in the workplace;

- Ensuring immediate and appropriate investigation procedures are implemented in the case that fraud and corruption is suspected;

- Referring cases of suspected fraud and corruption to the authorities following due investigation;

- Applying appropriate disciplinary penalties should fraud and corruption occur; and

- The recovery of any loss suffered through fraudulent and corrupt activity.

All reports of fraud and corruption received will be fully investigated and appropriate action taken. Employees must be aware of the GSC intention to suspend or dismiss employees, report internal and/or external fraudulent and/or corrupt activity to Victoria Police, the Local Government Inspectorate, the Victorian Ombudsman or IBAC and prosecute, where appropriate, employees and any other parties to the matter, found to be involved in fraudulent or corrupt activities. GSC will pursue recovery of any financial loss through civil proceedings.

This Policy also complements GSC's commitment to the Staff Code of Conduct, the GSC Public Interest Disclosure Procedures and other related GSC policies, procedures and guidelines. The GSC Fraud and Corruption Control System provides procedural direction and information for all GSC employees and contractors to follow in order to prevent, detect and report instances of fraudulent activity.

All levels of management and employees are responsible for the prevention and detection of fraud and corruption and for the implementation and operation of controls that minimise fraudulent and corrupt behaviour within their area of responsibility. Further detail of responsibility and accountability is provided within the GSC Fraud and Corruption Control System.

4.1 Definitions of Fraud and Corruption

Fraud is defined in accordance with the Australian Standard: Fraud and Corruption Control AS 8001:2021 as:

"Dishonest activity causing actual or potential gain or loss to any person or entity including theft of moneys or other property by persons internal and/or external to the organisation and/or where deception is used at the time, immediately before or immediately following the activity."

Property in this context also includes intellectual property or other intangibles such as information. Fraud also includes the deliberate falsification, concealment, destruction or use of falsified documentation used or intended for use for a normal business purpose or the improper use of information or position for personal financial benefit. While conduct must be dishonest for it to meet the definition of "fraud" the conduct need not necessarily represent a breach of criminal law. The concept of fraud within the meaning of the Standard can involve fraudulent conduct by internal and/or external parties targeting the organisation itself targeting external parties.

Examples are (but not limited to):

- Theft and/or misappropriation of GSC revenue in the form of cash, cheques, money order, electronic funds transfer or other negotiable instrument;

- Unauthorised removal of equipment, parts, software, and office supplies from GSC premises;

- Deliberate over-ordering of materials or services to allow a proportion to be used for personal purposes;

- Submission of sham taxation arrangements for an employee or contractor to circumvent GSC procedures for engagement of employees and contractors;

- Submission of fraudulent applications for reimbursement;

- Payment of fictitious employees or suppliers;

- Falsification of time records;

- Damage, destruction or falsification of documents for the purpose of material gain;

- Failure to disclose a conflict of interest in the performance of duties as a employee or contractor of GSC; and

- Any computer related activity involving the alteration, destruction, forgery or manipulation of data for fraudulent purposes or misappropriation of Council-owned software;

- Unauthorised release, dissemination or use of confidential and private information held by GSC, including within GSC's ICT infrastructure or in physical format.

Further examples of fraudulent activity are provided within the GSC Fraud and Corruption Control System.

Corruption is defined in accordance with the Australian Standard: Fraud and Corruption Control AS 8001:2021 as:

"Dishonest activity in which a person associated with an organisation (e.g. director, executive, manager, employee or contractor) acts contrary to the interests of the organisation and abuses their position of trust in order to achieve personal advantage or advantage for another person or organisation. This can also involve corrupt conduct by the organisation, or a person purporting to act on behalf of and in the interests of the organisation, in order to secure some form of improper advantage for the organisation either directly or indirectly."

For further definitions of Fraud and Corruption related terminology refer to the Australian Standard: Fraud and Corruption Control AS 8001:2021.

5. Records Management

All Council records created and managed as a result of implementing this policy will be managed in accordance with the Council's Records Management Policy.

The Records Management Policy assigns responsibilities for records management to employees, supervisors, volunteers and other specific positions.

No Council records are to be destroyed without consideration of the requirements of the Acts that govern the functions relevant to this policy. Prior to destruction, advice must be sought from the Information and Data Unit, with consideration to the requirements of the appropriate Retention and Disposal Authority (RDA).

6. Victorian State Legislation Copyright Acknowledgement

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FRAUD & CORRUPTION CONTROL SYSTEM

Approved by Audit and Risk Committee: 11 September 2025
Adopted by Council: To be considered by Council 28 October 2025

Expiry Date: 28 October 2027
Review Date: 10 July 2027

1.0 Objectives

The objectives of the Fraud and Corruption Control System are to:

- Provide a practical set of procedures and guidelines which enable staff to appropriately prevent, detect, respond and deal with incidents of fraud and corruption
- Establish an ongoing program of employee fraud and corruption awareness through regular training programs and inclusion in the recruitment and induction process
- Ensure that the principles of natural justice are applied to all investigations of fraud and corruption
- Target potential fraud and corruption activities through fraud and corruption risk assessments, control measures and appropriate mitigation strategies
- Reduce the potential for fraud and corruption within and against Council
- Build a culture which seeks to prevent fraud and corruption.

2.0 Scope

This System applies to all Glenelg Shire Council (GSC) employees, volunteers and contractors (GSC staff). It should be read in conjunction with the Fraud and Corruption Control Policy and the Staff Code of Conduct.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO), and the Executive Leadership Team (ET) are responsible for the implementation of the Fraud and Corruption Control System.

The Director of Corporate Services is the central point of contact within GSC for the Fraud and Corruption Control System and Fraud and Corruption Control Policy.

3.0 Roles and Responsibilities for Fraud Prevention, Detection and Response

Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee will support Council to achieve sound managerial review and control over all Council activities through the internal and external audit functions. This includes ensuring that audit recommendations are implemented in a timely manner.

The Committee will also support Council to prepare, maintain and implement the Fraud and Corruption Control System, monitor its effectiveness and review the document every two years.

Council (as the Governing Body)

Council as the body responsible for the good governance of the municipality is responsible for:

- acknowledging and accepting overall accountability for controlling the organisation's fraud and corruption risks

- having awareness of the Glenelg Shire Council's fraud and corruption exposures

- setting the tone for honesty and integrity in the provision of services to the community and their leadership of the Glenelg Shire organisation

- ensuring that Management has appropriate but affordable measures in place to detect and minimise the risk of fraudulent and corrupt behaviour

- commitment to controlling the risks of fraud and corruption both against Glenelg Shire Council and by the organisation.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

The CEO will ensure Council procedures support the reporting of suspected acts of fraud and/or corruption; investigate allegations of fraud and corruption in a timely manner; and report to Audit and Risk Committee and Council and take legal redress (such as criminal prosecution) as necessary.

The CEO is also responsible for reporting all suspected corrupt conduct to the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC).

Executive Leadership Team

The Executive Leadership Team (including the CEO and Directors) are responsible for:

- supporting the 'tone from the top' set by Council with regard to fraud and corruption perception and acceptability for GSC

- setting an example and addressing behavioural matters that may undermine good governance and ethical conduct

- accountable for fraud and corruption control within their respective business unit

- responding to concerns and issues in a timely manner

- monitoring compliance with Council policies and procedures.

Employees (including contractors and volunteers)

All members of GSC staff have a responsibility to behave ethically and with integrity and to expect this behaviour of all colleagues. In turn, all GSC staff, are required to report any behaviour which is potentially fraudulent or corrupt. Managers and staff at all levels are responsible for exercising due diligence and control to prevent, detect and report acts of fraud and corruption. In addition, Council and management have the following general responsibilities (further detailed within the System areas following):

- Must act with propriety in all Council activities

- Must not use their position with Council to gain personal advantage or to confer advantage, or disadvantage, on any other person

- Take appropriate responsibility to safeguard Council assets against theft, misuse or improper use

- Report any suspicion of fraudulent or corrupt activity in a timely manner.

Public Interest Disclosure Officer

The *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012* protects persons who report improper conduct by public officers against reprisals.

The Public Interest Disclosures Officer ('PID Officer') is responsible for ensuring persons who report genuine suspicions of fraud and/or corruption are protected from unjust recrimination or retribution. The role and responsibilities are further set out in Council's Public Interest Disclosures Policy and Procedures.

4.0 Communications: Training and Awareness Overview

Council-wide interaction and awareness is at the core of the Fraud and Corruption Control System.

An ongoing awareness program is required to be implemented to ensure that GSC staff have the necessary knowledge, understanding and culture to prevent instances of fraud and corruption and where issues arise, to detect and report.

Fraud awareness or prevention provisions should be included in employee position descriptions, employee induction, contract documentation, and any other process where employee conduct is involved. Instilling a culture of ethical behaviour (code of conduct) eg communicating that honest trust and integrity are the expected norm.

The program will need to promote confidential processes whereby employees can feel comfortable to identify any suspicion of fraud and where such employees can be protected from possible victimisation or discrimination. To this end, this Fraud and Corruption Control System is intrinsically linked to the provisions of the GSC Public Interest Disclosure Procedures.

The training and awareness should include communication and promotion of understanding of the key stages and elements of Fraud Prevention, Detection and Response which are detailed further in this System.

There is a need to promote community awareness that fraud committed against the Glenelg Shire Council is not acceptable and perpetrators will be prosecuted.

The CEO and Executive Leadership Team are responsible for performing a fraud risk assessment of the organisation, which identifies and assesses those functions and operations which are exposed to fraud. The staff and managers of these identified areas of higher fraud risk should be targeted for specialised training and awareness programs where appropriate, such areas/functions may include:

- Positions with substantial delegated spending authority
- Activities that are considered high risk
- Human relationships that may increase the likelihood or potential for the committal of fraud
- Units, sections or departments considered susceptible to fraud due to e.g. being semi-autonomous, having had previous incidents of fraud, or geographically isolated.

Refer to appendices 1 and 2 for examples of methods and types of fraudulent activity and potential indicators for risk of fraud.

The following table provides a summary of the key elements and plan for Fraud Communication, Training and Awareness for GSC:

COMMUNICATION, TRAINING AND AWARENESS

Key communication elements

The following communication elements are essential to the System:

- General awareness of the Fraud and Corruption Control Policy.
- Understanding of organisational expectations regarding fraud and corruption.
- Understanding of the requirements of and references contained in the System.
- Awareness and ownership of the responsibilities referenced within the System.

Key messages

1. Council's stance on fraud and corruption is outlined in the policy.
2. The System provides reference to the internal controls used within Council to prevent, detect and respond to fraud and corruption.
3. Fraud and corruption risks are assessed and further mitigating options are developed through risk management processes.
4. Reporting requirements regarding fraud and corruption are aligned with and use, where possible, current complaints / Public Interest Disclosures (PIDs) / Performance Management and risk reporting processes.

Key communication

Communication	Channel	Frequency
Introduction to fraud and corruption controls	Policy and Control System included in Induction Pack	For every new employee on or soon after commencement
Fraud and Corruption Control Policy	Electronic Document Records Management System (ECM / Corporate Policy & Procedures Dashboard.	Ongoing

	Fraud and Corruption Control System	Electronic Document Records Management System (ECM) / Corporate Policy & Procedures Dashboard	Ongoing
	Importance and mechanisms of fraud and corruption control	Staff Code of Conduct Mandatory Compliance Training via PEaRL or in person.	All Council officers every two years and for every new employee on or within two months of commencement.
	Responsibilities of specific areas identified within the Fraud Risk Assessment process	Specific contact from Fraud and Corruption Control System owner	After review of System.

Responsibilities of specific areas	
Area	**Outline of responsibility**
Director of Corporate Services	Policy and System owner – maintenance and review with prevention input as required
Director of Corporate Services with People and Culture assistance	Provision of training and building of awareness
Audit and Risk Committee	Oversight of risk management function and assessment of risk management profiles/incident reports
Other	As outlined in System areas below

Other communications - Reporting	
Suggested report content	**Report to**
Risk Incident Report	Executive Leadership Team and Audit and Risk Committee
Complaints	GSC Customer Complaints Handling Policy - CPO-CORPS-CUSTS-003 in instances of external complaints and this System for internal
Public Interest Disclosures	Follow GSC Public Interest Disclosure Procedures OPR-CORPS-GE-029

Glenelg Shire Council Fraud and Corruption Control System supports the GSC Fraud and Corruption Control Policy and is based on *Standards Australia AS 8001:2021 Fraud and Corruption Control* and covers the following areas:

1. Prevention
2. Detection
3. Response

Effective planning is essential for preventing fraud and corruption and responding promptly and appropriately when it occurs. The Fraud and Corruption Control System has three key stages, which are able to be addressed across ten components, summarised in the table below:

Components	**Distribution across the 3 Stages**		
	Prevention	Detection	Response
1. An integrated Council policy	☑		
2. Risk assessment	☑		☑
3. Internal controls	☑	☑	☑
4. Staff education and awareness	☑		☑
5. Public interest disclosures (PIDs)		☑	
6. Investigations		☑	☑
7. Code of Conduct	☑		
8. Internal reporting		☑	☑
9. External reporting			☑
10. Client and community awareness	☑		

This System specifies the responsibilities of GSC officers in that it:

- Details the various responsibilities and accountabilities of various managers and other groups within Council

- Obliges Council officers who suspect, or become aware of potential fraud and corruption to report the matter without delay to a supervisor or manager.

5.0 Monitoring of the effectiveness of this System

The effectiveness of this System will be monitored by the Executive Leadership Team and the Audit and Risk Committee. This will include regular review and reporting by internal audit on fraud and corruption risk identification and management and the effectiveness of internal controls to prevent it. There will also be monitoring and reporting on any reported and/or incidents under investigation, as appropriate, to ensure that adequate processes are being followed and where process and controls need to be implemented or strengthened going forward. Fraud and corruption risks will also be assessed and included through the risk assessment and reporting process.

The outcome to be achieved is that regular monitoring and reporting on fraud and corruption risk management is effective and meets the standards of good governance required by the Audit and Risk Committee and the Council.

6.0 Fraud and Corruption Control System

6.1 PREVENTION: This stage outlines the systems, frameworks and processes in place across Council to support the prevention of fraud and corruption.

What		How	Who	When
Element	**Components**	**Action Plan**	**Oversight***	**Time Frames**
1. Integrated policy	Fraud and Corruption Control Policy and System	▪ Senior management to endorse and promote the System, and to take ongoing action to ensure staff awareness of the Policy and System.	ELT	Ongoing – see training and awareness plan above
		▪ Policy and the System are to be regularly reviewed.	Director Corporate Services and CEO	Every two years
2. Risk Assessment	Risk Assessment and management	▪ Overall fraud and corruption risks to be included in the Organisational Strategic Risk Register.	Director Corporate Services	Regular updates and annual review of risk
		▪ Specific functional area fraud risks to be addressed in Fraud Risk Register. ▪ Mitigating controls to be documented within the register and ensure that these processes are implemented and being enforced to reduce the risk of fraud. ▪ Consider the potential for performance targets to incentivise fraudulent and corrupt behaviour.	Director Corporate Services (supported by Managers)	

What		How	Who	When
Element	**Components**	**Action Plan**	**Oversight***	**Time Frames**
3. Internal controls	Corporate Governance and Risk Framework	▪ Governance and risk policies and procedures are developed and approved.	CEO	Ongoing
		▪ Clear accountability and reporting framework to be maintained and reviewed regularly.	CEO	
		▪ Framework to promote staff accountability for their own work processes to be maintained.	CEO	
		▪ Where fraud and corruption risks are known to exist, work processes are to be clearly documented and available to Council officers through the risk assessment and reporting processes.	Director Corporate Services (supported by Managers)	
		▪ Fraud and corruption risk assessments are undertaken, and consideration is given to the organisation's size, functions and operating environment, any changes in structure or functions, external and internal fraud risks and new and emerging fraud risks. The Fraud Risk Register is reviewed annually including assessments of fraud and corruption risk.	Director Corporate Services (supported by Managers)	
	Accountability and High risk responsibilities	▪ Organisational chart to be kept up to date and available to all officers via PEaRL. ▪ Delegations Register to be kept up to date and available to all officers.	CEO Director Corporate	Ongoing

What		How	Who	When
Element	**Components**	**Action Plan**	**Oversight***	**Time Frames**
			Services	
		▪ Prevention of fraud and corruption to be included in job description documentation.	CEO Director Corporate Services	
		▪ Ensure that controls in their area of responsibility are properly documented	Director Corporate Services (supported by Managers)	
		▪ Ensure and demonstrate adherence to work procedures, particularly in high fraud and corruption risk functions. ▪ Coordinate scheduled pressure testing with the Internal Audit function, especially where manual controls exist. Internal controls identified as weak or to have failed the pressure testing program must be remediated.	Director responsible for area of high fraud risk	
		▪ Supervisors/managers to monitor adherence to work procedures and ensure training and advice is provided to staff on procedures where needed.	ELT	
		▪ Accounting and data access controls are in place and where identified separation of duties have been implemented to mitigate risk.	Director Corporate Services	

What		How	Who	When
Element	**Components**	**Action Plan**	**Oversight***	**Time Frames**
		▪ Periodic reconciliations are undertaken and any irregularities that are identified are reviewed at the earliest opportunity. ▪ Access to software systems is restricted to those who need system access for operational purposes. User passwords are required to be changed regularly.		
		▪ Recordkeeping to be monitored for adherence to recordkeeping classification policies ie: • Establish restriction of access to classes or categories of records by employee profile, which should: • Account for new, seconded and higher duty employees for level of records access; • Undertake a semi-frequent check of employee access levels purging redundant employee profiles and catches employee profiles that have moved position.	Director Corporate Services/CIO	
		▪ Screening of potential new employees to be conducted via police check and verification of references and qualifications. ▪ Documented exit procedures are put in place for staff in relation to physical and	CEO	For each new employee Ongoing

What		How	Who	When
Element	**Components**	**Action Plan**	**Oversight***	**Time Frames**
		computer access and the return of any GSC property.		
		▪ Documented procedures for higher risk activities such as tendering, payroll, accounts payable and procurement. ▪ Duties that may create opportunities for fraud or corruption, such as the creation of purchase orders and authorisation of payments, should be separated as required. ▪ Credit cards are restricted to authorised personnel.	Director Corporate Services	Ongoing
		▪ Major suppliers are vetted through references and credit checks. ▪ Review vendor/supplier records regularly to remove duplications and make old records inactive within the database. ▪ Maintain a register of all contracts.	Director Corporate Services	For each new major supplier Ongoing Ongoing
		▪ Regular financial reporting and periodic reconciliations also deter and limit fraud and corruption opportunities.	Director Corporate Services	Ongoing
	Conflicts of interest, Gifts and Benefits	▪ Ensure regular training for Council officers on the contents and purposes of the System.	Director Corporate Services	Every two years (topic incorporated into Fraud and

What		How	Who	When
Element	**Components**	**Action Plan**	**Oversight***	**Time Frames**
	and Personal disclosures			Corruption Control Training
		▪ GSC adhere to its tender processes, including identification of any conflicts of interest, to ensure the integrity of all elements of the process.	Director Corporate Services	Ongoing
		▪ Staff to be reminded to declare any gift, benefit or hospitality offered or accepted ▪ Register of gifts and benefits to be maintained and reviewed on an annual basis.	CEO	Annually
		▪ Staff to be reminded annually to make appropriate declarations, and a Register of interests to be maintained.	CEO	Annually
	Committees and Workgroups	▪ Governance to address fraud and corruption risk to be maintained: - Audit and Risk Committee	Council	Ongoing
		▪ Audit and Risk Committee to give due consideration to risks of fraud and corruption.	Committee Chair (Audit and Risk Committee)	
	Internal Audit	▪ Internal Audit to regularly review processes and provide recommendations for improved systems and controls to prevent fraud risk. ▪ Findings from audit which may highlight control weaknesses and Fraud risk should	Audit and Risk Committee	Ongoing. Ongoing monitoring of

What		How	Who	When
Element	**Components**	**Action Plan**	**Oversight***	**Time Frames**
		be prioritised and monitored by the committee. ▪ Fraud Risk Assessment/Register should be updated to reflect any changes to Fraud risk, control or required actions identified through internal audit. ▪ Implement pressure testing as part of internal audit areas with high risk ratings or high reliance on manual controls. Internal controls identified as weak or to have failed the pressure testing program must be remediated.		recommendations.
4. Staff education and awareness	Availability of policies and procedures	▪ Policies and procedures and other staff processes and information to be available in Council's Electronic Document Records Management System and communicated to all staff.	Director Corporate Services	Ongoing, and updated as policies developed/updated
	Training and awareness	▪ Maintain a communications plan for fraud and corruption awareness and training. ▪ Where appropriate, specialist training in fraud prevention and management will be provided to managers of higher risk areas/functions.	Director Corporate Services	Ongoing

What	How		Who	When
Element	**Components**	**Action Plan**	**Oversight***	**Time Frames**
5. Code of Conduct	Induction program	▪ Information on fraud and corruption prevention and control to be provided to all new staff.	Director Corporate Services	As soon as possible and within 2 months of arrival.
	Staff training	▪ Ethical culture and awareness of fraud and corruption prevention and control procedures and processes to be promoted through Code of Conduct training.	Director Corporate Services	Two Years
	Staff Performance and Development	▪ Culture, values and an organisational understanding to be included as part of staff performance management processes for each Council officer.	Director Corporate Services	Annual
6. Client and community awareness	Availability of Policies and procedures	▪ Website to include Policy and System ▪ Relevant corporate reports and publications (including GSC tender documents) to make reference to fraud and corruption prevention and control.	Director Corporate Services	Ongoing
	Training and awareness	▪ External parties dealing with Council are to be advised of Council's Fraud and Corruption Control Policy, GSC Customer Complaints Handling Policy or the GSC Public Interest Disclosure Procedures which are available on the GSC website.	CEO / Director Corporate Services	Ongoing
7. Information Security Management	Policies and procedures	▪ Framework and supporting policies and procedures are developed and approved in line with relevant standards.	Chief Information Officer	Ongoing

What		How	Who	When
Element	**Components**	**Action Plan**	**Oversight***	**Time Frames**
		▪ Information Security Management Framework to be maintained and reviewed regularly.	Chief Information Officer	Ongoing
	Awareness	▪ Regular assessment of exposure to technology-enabled fraud.	Chief Information Officer	Ongoing
	Reporting	▪ Key performance indicators around security incidents will be monitored and reported as required to the Audit and Risk Committee. ▪ GSC will notify the Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner (OVIC) of any security incident that has an adverse impact on confidentiality, integrity or availability of Council data or information.	Chief Information Officer	Ongoing
	Third party arrangements	▪ Due diligence will be applied in the selection of External Parties that collect or are provided with access to GSC data and information, via a Data Sharing Agreement. ▪ An ISO 27001 (International standard to manage information security) compliance certificate should be considered when engaging external parties for high risk contracts involving access to GSC information and data.	Contract managers	Ongoing

6.2 DETECTION: This stage outlines mechanisms in place across Council to detect or expose fraud and corruption.

What		How	Who	When
Element	**Components**	**Action Plan**	**Oversight***	**Time Frames**
1. Internal controls	Formal and informal work processes	▪ Functional area processes, guidelines, instructions and risk assessment to be complied with and detective processes put in place to identify any deviations from usual process or expectations. ▪ Ongoing awareness and training of work processes to be provided.	ELT	Ongoing
		▪ Monitoring compliance with and the effectiveness of system controls and for detecting any irregularities or breaches which may lead to potential instances of fraud.	ELT	Ongoing
2. Public Interest Disclosures (PIDs)	Management of PIDs	▪ Public Interest Disclosure Procedures to be kept up to date and reviewed regularly. ▪ **All GSC employees who suspect fraud or corruption have an obligation to report it by notifying either their Manager, Director or the Chief Executive Officer – as appropriate in the circumstances.** ▪ **GSC employees may also invoke the Public Interest Disclosure Procedures that protects the employee.**	Director Corporate Services All Staff	Every four years Ongoing
		▪ All staff to adhere to Public Interest Disclosure Procedures that protects the employee.	All Staff	Ongoing

What		How	Who	When
Element	**Components**	**Action Plan**	**Oversight***	**Time Frames**
		▪ Management to take reasonable actions to minimise risks of victimisation and to ensure victimisation of disclosers is dealt with swiftly and appropriately. ▪ Discretion and confidentiality are essential at all stages during a fraud investigation.	ELT	
3. Investigations	Investigation Processes	▪ Policies, systems and procedures are in place to enable reporting of any suspected instances of fraudulent or corrupt conduct. ▪ The need for early fraud detection is emphasised as GSC's fidelity guarantee insurance does not cover financial losses as a result of fraud: - If the incident occurred more than 18 months before it is discovered by GSC - If GSC agrees with an offending employee not to seek recovery - If the incident is discovered more than 6 months after the employee's death or cessation of employment with GSC.	CEO	Ongoing
		▪ All GSC employees who suspect fraud or corruption have an obligation to report it either directly to IBAC OR to a public body's Public Interest Disclosure Coordinator who will provide you with support, advice and welfare protections if you make a public interest disclosure. The Glenelg Shire's PID Coordinator is Mr David Hol, Director Corporate Services dhol@glenelg.vic.gov.au 5522 2222	All Staff	As required

What		How	Who	When
Element	**Components**	**Action Plan**	**Oversight***	**Time Frames**
		▪ If reported directly to IBAC via the established Public Interest Disclosure Process, IBAC assess these reports to determine if they will conduct an investigation, or refer to another investigative body.	All Staff	
4. Internal reporting	Complaints	▪ GSC Performance Management Procedure OPR-CEO-OD-009 and GSC Customer Complaints Handling Policy - CPO-CORPS-CUSTS-003 ▪ to be kept up to date and reviewed regularly. ▪ All staff to adhere to policy and procedures.	Director Corporate Services All Staff	Review every four years
	Performance Management Framework	▪ Organisational structure to be supported through adherence to official delegations, proper and full use of supervisory reporting relationships.	Managers	Ongoing
	Management reports	▪ Analysis of GSC's internal management accounting reports to detect trends, such as unanticipated budget to actual expenditure, unusual trends in bad or doubtful debts. ▪ Post transactional review conducted by personnel not involved in the preparation or authorisation of transactions to assist in uncovering potential fraud or corruption, altered, missing or inadequate documentation.	Executive Leadership Team	Ongoing
	Internal Audit	▪ Internal Audit Plan to take into account risk incidents as reported in the Fraud Risk Register.	Audit and Risk Committee	Ongoing
		▪ Internal Audit to conduct regular reviews of Council functions and processes to identify susceptible areas.	Audit and Risk Committee	

What		How	Who	When
Element	**Components**	**Action Plan**	**Oversight***	**Time Frames**
		▪ Internal audit's processes include testing access controls, reviewing separation of duties and various reconciliations and have the potential to detect fraudulent or corrupt conduct.		
		▪ Respond promptly to audit findings and recommendations.	Audit and Risk Committee	
	Informal reporting channels	▪ Culture of reporting to be supported and promoted through induction, training, the intranet, organisational planning and policies and procedures.	Managers	Ongoing
		▪ Corporate ownership and personal accountability to be actioned by all staff.		

6.3 **RESPONSE**: This stage outlines the processes for responding to fraud and corruption within Council and the channels for ensuring improvements or remedies for exposed or potential fraud and corruption are made.

What		How	Who	When
Element	**Components**	**Action Plan**	**Oversight***	**Time Frames**
1. Internal controls	Corporate Governance and Risk Framework	▪ Review as necessary and in response to incidents or report: - Governance and/or risk management framework and processes - Council reporting - Council evaluation	CEO	As required
	Policies and procedures	▪ Policies and procedures to be reviewed post any incident report (potential or confirmed): - Potential for changes to controls or process to prevent future incidents - Taking into account recent risk incidents. - In response to recommendations by internal auditor.	ELT	As required and routine reviews
2. Staff education and awareness	Training/ awareness program	▪ Awareness of internal controls/prevention mechanisms to be reinforced through training on any new processes or procedures.	ELT	Ongoing
		▪ Council stance on fraud and corruption to be stated in relevant corporate communications.	CEO	As required
3. Investigations	Investigation pending	▪ Except where it is has been reported as a disclosure pursuant to the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012* which is 'protected' under that Act, all reported incidents of suspected fraud or corrupt conduct must be immediately reported to the CEO by the Director or Manager (or Contract manager in the case of a contract) prior to investigation of such allegations being undertaken.	CEO / ELT All Staff	As required

What		How	Who	When
Element	Components	Action Plan	Oversight*	Time Frames
		▪ The CEO or Director Corporate Services shall be responsible for advising the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee and the Mayor. ▪ Where the CEO is suspected of fraud or corrupt conduct the report should be made to either the Director Corporate Services or IBAC (external). ▪ Anonymous reports may be directed to the CEO or Director Corporate Services. Adequate supporting information to enable an investigation to be undertaken must be provided.		
	Investigations conducted	▪ In the first instance, the highest priority will be given to the protection of all records that may shed light on the occurrence of fraud. ▪ GSC will take immediate action to: - Identify those parties (internal and external) involved - Identify whether funds have been removed from bank accounts controlled by GSC - Freeze GSC bank accounts to prevent further leakage of funds - Act to freeze an account into which GSC funds have been transferred (this will require swift legal action) - Risk assess what the event will mean to the organisation and activate the organisation's response and recovery system as appropriate - suspend workers suspected of involvement in the event, including deactivation of their physical and	CEO	As required

What		How	Who	When
Element	Components	Action Plan	Oversight*	Time Frames
		system access, without compromising investigation opportunities. ▪ When a fraud investigation takes place, it must be undertaken in a methodical and comprehensive manner. Management will decide how and by whom the investigation will be conducted and whether the Police or any external assistance will be used and being mindful of the legalities involved. ▪ Purpose of the fraud investigation: - To determine if in fact a fraud has been committed; - Identify the person(s) responsible for the fraud; - Discover the extent of the fraud and determine the action to be taken; - Provide the basis of any insurance claim; and - Identify how long the fraud has been occurring and thereby the extent of the breakdown of internal controls.		
	Public Interest Disclosures (PIDs) and Compliance	▪ Investigations to be conducted according to: - Performance Management Procedures - Public Interest Disclosure Procedures ▪ Discretion and confidentiality are essential at all stages during a fraud investigation. ▪ If the employee has acted in accordance with the requirements of the Policy or System no GSC employee shall: - dismiss or threaten to dismiss an employee;	CEO / Director Corporate Services	As required

What		How	Who	When
Element	Components	Action Plan	Oversight*	Time Frames
		- discipline or suspend or threaten to discipline or suspend an employee; - impose any penalty upon an employee; or - intimidate or coerce an employee. ▪ A violation of this section will result in discipline up to and including dismissal. ▪ This does not prevent disciplinary action where the person making the disclosure is also involved in the fraudulent or corrupt behaviour or where the disciplinary action is not related to the disclosure and is reasonable in the particular circumstances.		
	Investigations reports	▪ Where a proven fraud occurs and is investigated, the responsible Director, in conjunction with the relevant Manager will determine investigation outcomes/results supported and implemented by means determined by management. ▪ All incidences of proven fraud and/or corrupt conduct will be reported to the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee by the CEO in a timely fashion.	CEO/ ELT	As required
4. Risk assessment and Internal reporting	Fraud Risk Register and reporting	▪ All incidences of potential fraud and/or corruption to be reported as a risk incident and recorded in the Fraud Risk Register and reported to the Mayor and Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee. ▪ Confidentiality should be considered key throughout the investigation process and incidents only documented where confidentiality will be maintained.	CEO	Incident to be reported within 24 hours of identification. Register to be updated

What		How	Who	When
Element	Components	Action Plan	Oversight*	Time Frames
				within 48 hours of incident being reported and updated as investigation progresses. .
	Risk reporting	▪ Risk incidents to be used in identifying risks, reviewing Strategic Risk Profile and identifying risk mitigation strategies and ongoing review of fraud and corruption risk.	CEO and ELT	As required
5. External Reporting	External audit (VAGO)	▪ External auditing and financial statements to be consistent with relevant or applicable Standards, including any required disclosures.	Audit and Risk Committee	Annually
	IBAC oversight-reporting and complaints management	▪ Reporting to the IBAC to be done as per the Independent Broad-Based *Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2011* with appropriate actions taken in regard to IBAC recommendations. ▪ There is a legislative requirement for mandatory reporting of identified or suspected corrupt conduct to IBAC, which was introduced in December 2016. ▪ Where a person attempts to disclose to a GSC employee that a Councillor is involved (or reasonably suspected of being involved) in fraudulent or corrupt conduct, the person is to be advised that their disclosure must be made direct to IBAC or the Victorian Ombudsman. GSC cannot lawfully accept or refer such a disclosure under the Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012.	CEO or Director (whichever is most appropriate)	As required

What		How	Who	When
Element	Components	Action Plan	Oversight*	Time Frames
		▪ Glenelg Shire Council recognises the need to assist IBAC where possible, and potentially utilise the skills and legislative powers that IBAC possesses when conducting investigations into potential corruption in the public service.		
	Victoria Police	▪ In all circumstances, where GSC's investigation indicates that serious fraudulent or corrupt activity may have occurred, the matter will be reported to the Victoria Police. Prosecution in the civil court will be taken against employees or other individuals involved in recovering losses incurred by GSC where this is appropriate.	CEO or Director (whichever is most appropriate)	As required
	External Investigations	▪ Where external investigation is required, for example the Police or other independent investigators, the external agent will be in charge of the investigation. ▪ Wherever possible, the Glenelg Shire will inform itself of the publicly known circumstances in which fraud has occurred or has been prevented from occurring in local government through obtaining access to reports about the outcomes of investigations into fraud and making these available to both Councillors and employees.	CEO	As required
	Insurer reporting	▪ Under the conditions of the GSC Fidelity Guarantee Insurance all suspected fraud or corruption of a material nature should be reported to the insurers.	CEO	As required
	External Reporting/Media	▪ The GSC Media Policy shall be observed at all times, and no employee, Councillor or other person associated with the Glenelg Shire Council shall make any public comment in relation to any suspected fraud or corruption, whether proven or otherwise. Any public	Mayor/CEO	As required

What		How	Who	When
Element	Components	Action Plan	Oversight*	Time Frames
		comment will be decided jointly and announced by either the Mayor or Chief Executive Officer.		
	Governance publications	Fraud prevention and control matters to be reported in the Annual Report.	CEO	Annually and as necessary

*Oversight - This refers to the person or group who is to ensure the item in the action plan is done, as distinct from the person or group who is responsible for actioning the item. The exception to this is a reference to “All staff” where oversight is not practical.

7.0 References

- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.
- *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012*
- *Public Administration Act 2004*
- *Independent Broad-Based Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2011*
- Australian Standard on Fraud Control and Corruption Control (AS 8001: 2021)
- Australian Standard in Risk Management (AS ISO 31000:2018)

Related Policies and Delegations

- Fraud and Corruption Control Policy (DocSetID 2553622)
- Public Interest Disclosure Procedures (Whistleblower) (DocSetID 2580165)
- Equal Opportunity, Anti-Discrimination and Anti Bullying Policy (DocSetID 1750333)
- Privacy Policy (DocSetID 643084)
- Staff Code of Conduct (DocSetID 1706557)
- Councillor Code of Conduct (DocSet ID 2246857)
- Performance Improvement Procedure (DocSetID 2270468)
- Customer Service Charter (DocSetID 2303623)
- Customer Complaints Handling Policy (DocSetID 2299280)
- Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy – Employees (DocSetID 2606019)
- Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy – Councillors (DocSetID 1134387)
- Records Management Policy (DocSetID 1933907)
- Media Policy (DocSetID 1454922)
- Governance Rules (DocSetID 2726760)
- Information Technology Azure Cloud Security Benchmark Policy (DocSetID 3081598)
- IT Disaster Recovery Plan (DocSetID 2655888)
- Information Security Management Framework (DocSetID 2952437)
- Business Continuity Plan (DocSetID 3022186)
- Information Security Policy (DocSetID 3003942)
- Information Security Incident Response Plan (DocSetID 2952436)
- Protective Data Security Plan (DocSetID 2986896)
- Acceptable Device Use Policy (DocSetID 2888830)

Appendix 1 – A selection of common methods and types of fraud

- payment for work not performed
- forged endorsements
- altering amounts and details on documents
- collusive bidding
- overcharging
- writing off recoverable assets or debts
- unauthorised transactions
- selling information
- altering stock records
- altering sales records
- cheques made out to false persons
- false persons on the payroll
- unrecorded transactions
- transactions (expenditure/receipts/deposits) recorded for incorrect sums
- cash stolen
- supplies or equipment stolen or borrowed without authority
- IOUs used in petty cash
- substituting old goods for new
- sales not recorded at all
- false official identification used
- damaging or destroying documentation
- using copies of records and receipts
- using imaging and desktop publishing technology to produce apparent original invoices
- transferring amounts between accounts frequently
- delayed terminations from payroll
- bribes
- over claiming expenses
- skimming odd cents and rounding
- running a private business with official assets
- using facsimile signatures
- false compensation and insurance claims
- selling waste and scrap

Appendix 2 – Possible indicators of the existence of fraud

- missing expenditure vouchers and unavailable official records
- crisis management coupled with a pressured business climate
- excessive variations to budgets or contracts
- refusals to produce files, minutes or other records
- related party transactions
- increased employee absences
- borrowing from fellow employees
- an easily led personality
- covering up inefficiencies
- lack of supervision
- staff turnover is excessive
- figures, trends or results which do not accord with expectations
- bank reconciliations are not maintained or can't be balanced
- excessive movement of cash funds
- multiple cash collection points
- remote locations
- unauthorised changes to systems or work practices
- employees with outside business interests or other jobs
- large outstanding bad or doubtful debts
- officers with excessively flamboyant characteristics
- employees suffering financial hardships
- placing undated/postdated personal cheques in petty cash
- employees apparently living beyond their means
- heavy gambling habits
- signs of drinking or drug abuse problems
- conflicts of interest
- lowest tenders or quotes passed over with scant explanations recorded
- employees with an apparently excessive work situation for their position
- managers bypassing subordinates
- subordinates bypassing managers
- excessive generosity
- large sums of unclaimed pay
- large sums held in petty cash
- lack of clear financial delegations
- secretiveness
- apparent personal problems
- marked character changes
- excessive ambition
- apparent total lack of ambition
- poor morale
- excessive control of all records by one officer
- poor security checking processes over staff being hired
- unusual working hours on a regular basis
- refusal to comply with normal rules and practices
- personal creditors appearing at the workplace
- non taking of leave
- excessive overtime
- large backlogs in high risk areas
- lost assets
- absence of controls and audit trails

Glenelg Shire Council

Long Term Financial Plan

2025 - 2035

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Overview

This Long-Term Financial Plan (Plan) details the amount of income and expenditure that Council expects to generate and spend over the course of the next ten years based on a set of assumptions. The projected income and expenditure facilitate the delivery of community services, maintaining and renewing existing assets, and delivery of new infrastructure.

Every dollar spent over the next ten years will need to be matched by an equivalent income source. Sourcing sufficient income to fund projected expenditure is important to demonstrate the Plan is viable over the ten-year period. Not surprisingly, there is more demand for expenditure than there are available sources of income. Prioritising the demand for expenditure within the limited income streams is vitally important.

Financial modelling has been undertaken which has shown a mismatch between Council income and expenditure. This has resulted in insufficient cash being generated which impacts Council's ability to fund capital works and improve Council's financial position. This is reflected in key financial performance measures such as the underlying result ratio and the total comprehensive result being in deficit.

To address this, there are essentially two options available to Council - increase income or reduce operational expenditure. As a rural Council, the ability to increase income is limited. As a result, the Plan includes a proposal to reduce certain expenditure by 2.5% in the 2026-2027 financial year.

The Plan does not articulate how these savings will be delivered. This will require a program of service planning going forward to determine where savings can be made.

In addition, reflecting that Council has had a consistent turnover of staff each year, resulting in operational savings in employee expenses, the Plan will reflect an expected expenditure at 95% of the full time staffing levels.

An important premise for Council in its financial planning is to ensure that any debt incurred can be repaid within a reasonable term to ensure the organisation does not inherit generational debt. Within the Plan, Council is proposing to borrow $10M to fund important projects which will serve multiple generations of our community, whilst ensuring it can repay that debt, leaving future Councils the opportunity to do the same.

Council benchmarks financial performance using key ratios for liquidity, indebtedness, asset renewal and the adjusted underlying result. These ratios are color-coded—green for strong performance, amber for areas of medium risk, and red representing higher risk.

Details of the approach to these ratios is outlined further in this report and the Plan responds to these ratios in the following ways.

Operating result – The Plan improves the comprehensive result over the term by systematically reducing the deficit each year to manageable levels.

Adjusted underlying result – The Plan systematically reduces the deficit in underlying result over the term of the Plan, nearing a break even result and maintaining a medium risk level.

Liquidity - The Plan enables Council to move from high risk to medium risk over the 10-year term. The liquidity ratio stabilises after 2026-27 with Council allocating increased expenditure towards asset renewal and new assets and uses surplus cash to reduce outstanding loans.

Indebtedness - The Plan outlines the management of the current $7M borrowings and allows for a potential $10M new loan to assist in funding a potential major project in 2028-2029. The ratio remains at a low risk with all debts repaid by 2033.

Asset renewal -The Plan allows for a greater investment in Capital projects including a potential new major project for $20M in 2028-2029. The Asset renewal gap is reduced through additional expenditure of $1M each year on asset renewal but remains at a medium risk level.

With plans, strategies, priorities, issues and risks all being dynamic influences in relation to any document such as this, the Plan will be reviewed and adjusted annually to reflect material changes, and to incorporate the outcomes of annual budget considerations.

Legislative Requirements

The Local *Government Act 2020,* Section 91, outlines the legislative obligations relating to the finance plan. They are as follows:

91 Financial Plan

(1) A Council must develop, adopt and keep in force a Financial Plan in accordance with its deliberative engagement practices.
(2) The scope of a Financial Plan is a period of at least the next 10 financial years.
(3) A Financial Plan must include the following in the manner and form prescribed by the regulations—
(a) statements describing the financial resources required to give effect to the Council Plan and other strategic plans of the Council;
(b) information about the decisions and assumptions that underpin the forecasts in the statements specified in paragraph (a);
(c) statements describing any other resource requirements that the Council considers appropriate to include in the Financial Plan;
(d) any other matters prescribed by the regulations.
(4) A Council must develop or review the Financial Plan in accordance with its deliberative engagement practices and adopt the Financial Plan by 31 October in the year following a general election.

In addition, the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* prescribe that the form of the financial statements used in this plan together with the required resource requirements such as human resources and organisational structure of full-time equivalent staff.

Link to Council and Wellbeing Plan and Community Vision

The Financial Plan links to the achievement of the Community Vision and the Council Plan within the Integrated Strategic Planning & Reporting framework. This framework guides the Council in identifying community needs and aspirations over the long term (Community Vision), medium term (Council and Wellbeing Plan) and short term (Annual Budget) and then holding itself accountable (Annual Report).

The following figure demonstrates how each element might inform or be informed by other parts of the integrated framework.

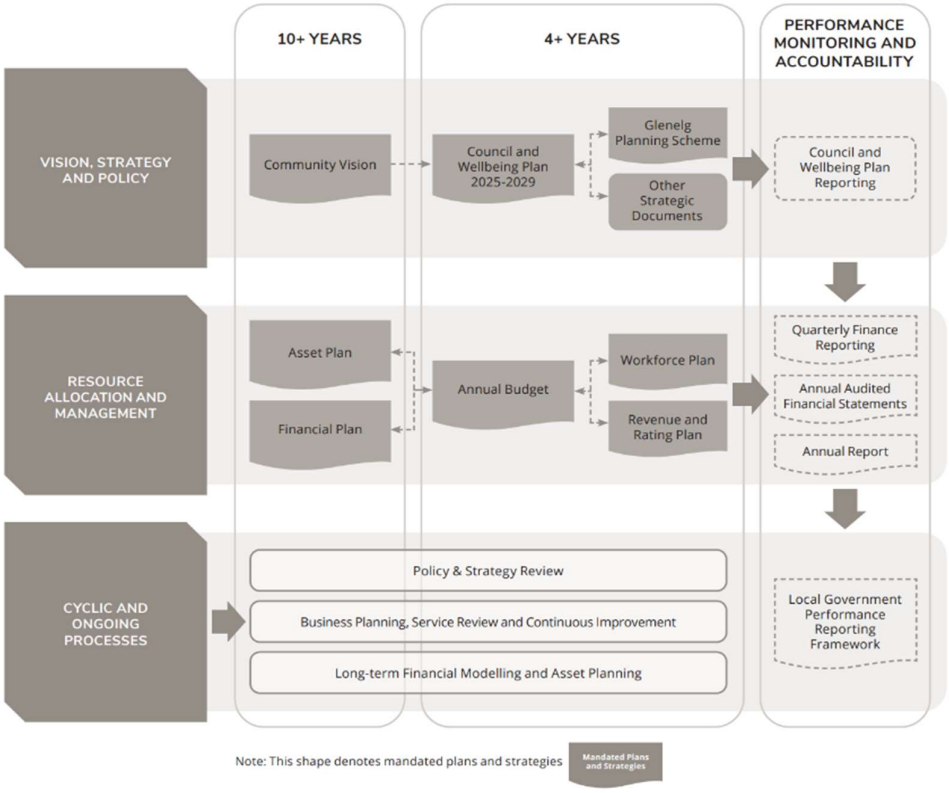


Figure 1. Council's strategic planning framework

Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029

The Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 was supported by an extensive community engagement process throughout early 2025. A summary of the outcome from this engagement is provided below.

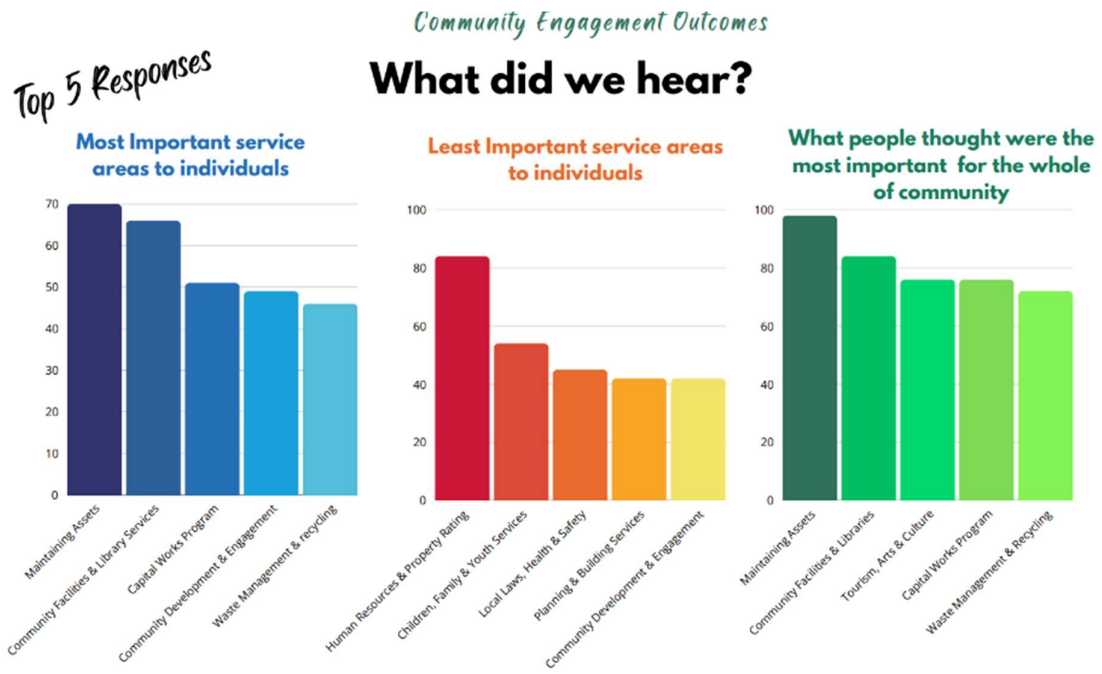


Figure 2. 2025-2026 Community engagement outcomes

The feedback received has informed this Plan. It saw community support for the allocation of budget to relevant services and infrastructure. Some considerations included within the Plan are:

- Options for increasing investment in assets.
- Potential investment in local infrastructure by allowing for a major project.
- Increasing councils' cash position.

The balancing exercise is therefore to prioritise, in a financially viable and sustainable manner, the demands of current and future community desires including:

- Increasing expectations of a growing community and the need for new and upgraded services
- The number, scope, and standard of services that council directly delivers
- New infrastructure facilities at the expense of increased renewal funding
- The community appetite to accept an increase in rates (above the rate cap) and/or increases to user fees as a source of additional funding to achieve these objectives.
- Debt funding to support the delivery of new infrastructure projects, as a targeted use of borrowings to ensure intergenerational equity and enable timely investment in essential assets without adversely impacting operational sustainability.

Strategic Planning Principles

The Plan is developed in the context of the following strategic planning principles:

- Council has an integrated approach to planning, monitoring and performance reporting.
- The Plan articulates the 10-year financial resources necessary to implement the goals and aspirations of the Council and Wellbeing Plan and Community Vision.
- The risks to effective implementation of the Plan are identified in this document.
- The Plan provides a platform for monitoring of progress and an opportunity to identify and adapt to changing circumstances.

The Plan contains the influences that will affect the strategic financial direction of Council. It enables Councillors and staff to understand the financial relationship between individual financial strategies and how these affect the overall outcomes for Council.

Financial Management Principles

The Plan demonstrates the following financial management principles, as specified in the *Local Government Act 2020*, Division 4, Section 101:

- Revenue, expenses, assets, liabilities, investments and financial transactions are managed in accordance with Council's financial policies and strategic plans.
- Management of the following financial risks:
    - the financial viability of the Council
    - the management of current and future liabilities of the Council.
- Financial policies and strategic plans are designed to provide financial stability and predictability for the community.
- Council maintains accounts and records that explain its financial operations and financial position.

Service Performance Principles

Glenelg Shire Council provides a number of operating activities and initiatives under the various service categories to its community. The adopted 2025-2026 Council budget outlines total expenditure of $65.6M and total income of $68.5M.

The following service performance principles are followed in line with Part 5, Section 106 of the Act:

(a) services should be provided in an equitable manner and be responsive to the diverse needs of the municipal community;
(b) services should be accessible to the members of the municipal community for whom the services are intended;

(c) quality and costs standards for services set by the Council should provide good value to the municipal community;
(d) a Council should seek to continuously improve service delivery to the municipal community in response to performance monitoring;
(e) service delivery must include a fair and effective process for considering and responding to complaints about service provision.

Council provides quality services that provide value for money to the community. The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) is designed to communicate council's performance regarding the provision of this quality and efficient service delivery.

Community expectation is a major influence on Council's service provision, but when those expectations exceed total funding available for those services, this can put additional pressure on Council resources to continue providing services at a similar level. The Plan provides the mechanism to demonstrate how the service aspirations within the Council and Wellbeing Plan may or may not be funded.

Council looks to maintain the current range of services it offers to the community, which is based on previous community consultation and experience. This is embedded within the annual budget process and provides preliminary guidance for the Plan and is based on the service delivery model from previous years.

When external funding for services are not maintained at the same level of cost increases, Council is required to either reduce the service level or fund the shortfall directly by reallocating resources from other service areas. This places greater pressure on Glenelg Shire's financial position and takes critical funds away from other services or asset renewal programs. This can also be referred to as 'cost shifting'.

Council's Long Term Financial Plan proposes to reduce employee expenses and materials and services by 2.5% in the 2026-2027 financial year. Council will need to identify which services will be impacted by this expenditure reduction.

Engagement Principles

Council has a comprehensive community engagement framework. Council proposes the following consultation process to ensure due consideration and feedback is received from relevant stakeholders for this Plan:

- Draft Plan prepared by management
- Extensive modelling on various scenarios discussed with Councillors at briefings for refinement and inclusion in Plan.
- Consider placing the Plan on public exhibition at September Council meeting for a period of 21 days and calling for community feedback
- Community engagement is conducted using print media, radio and social media channels
- Finalised Plan, including any revisions, presented to October Council meeting for adoption.

Asset Plan Integration

Integration with the Asset Plan is a key principle of the Council's strategic financial planning principles. The purpose of this integration is designed to ensure that future funding is allocated in a manner that supports service delivery in terms of the plans and the effective management of Council's assets into the future.

The Asset Plan, which is also currently being developed for adoption by Council, identifies the operational and strategic practices which will ensure that Council manages assets across their life cycle in a financially sustainable manner. The Asset Plan, and associated asset management policies, provide Council with a sound base to understand the risk associated with managing its assets for the community's benefit.

The Asset Plan is designed to inform the 10-year Long Term Financial Plan by identifying the amount of capital renewal, backlog and maintenance funding that is required over the life of each asset category. The level of funding will incorporate knowledge of asset condition, risk issues, as well as the impact of reviewing and setting intervention and service levels for each asset class. Subsequently as the Asset plan is developed, it will inform refinement of the financial plan as this information is finalised.

The key objective is to maintain Council's assets into the future and consider potential funding options for the expenditure gaps where available. New borrowings should only be considered for new infrastructure or major asset upgrades.

Council must consider the total financial impacts of future projects. When making the decision to undertake future works, it is vital that Council is fully informed on the full life cycle costs for that project, including any additional operating, maintenance, depreciation, and renewal costs to be factored into future budgets. Council should also consider if it continues to maintain certain assets or if Council is better positioned to divest these assets.

The overall objective is to ensure that financial resources are properly allocated to provide the desired level of service in the most cost-effective manner, for present and future customers. This will also minimise potential risks to Council whilst preserving the financial position of Council in the long term.

Revenue and Rating Plan Integration

The *Local Government Act 2020* requires each council to prepare a Revenue and Rating Plan to cover a minimum period of four years following each Council election. The Revenue and Rating Plan establishes the revenue raising framework within which the Council proposes to work.

The revenue raised by a local government is for delivering services and infrastructure to benefit those providing the revenue – the local community. The Revenue and Rating Plan is therefore linked to planned expenditure in the annual budget and long-term planning documents. They cannot be separated, as any increase in spending by a council must be matched by revenue. Council provides a number of services and

facilities to the local community and in doing so, must collect revenue to cover the cost of providing these services and facilities.

The strategies and actions outlined in Revenue and Rating Plan feed into the budgeting and long-term financial planning documents, as well as other strategic planning documents under Council's strategic planning framework.

Long Term Financial Plan Audit 2024

In preparation for this Long-Term Financial Plan, Council included an audit on this process as part of its Strategic Internal Audit Plan.

AFS Chartered accountants undertook this work and provided a report in December 2024. The report identified 3 areas of strength, 4 minor findings for improvement and 2 moderate findings for improvement. These 6 findings are reflected into 10 recommendations which were all accepted by Council staff and have been considered and actioned in the development of this plan.

A summary of these 10 findings are as follows:

1.1	Development of a procedure to support the financial forecasting process	Procedure being developed in conjunction with development of this plan
1.2	Review of the Financial model	Financial model refined. Note access to independent industry model being currently rolled out
1.3	Implement process to update model annually	Process now includes review and update of financial plan as part of annual budget process.
2.1	Model to incorporate justification for assumptions	Details of assumptions have been included within this plan
2.2	Justification required for variations from published indexation to be documented in the model and plan	Details of adjusted CPI considerations outlined in this plan.
3.1	Ensure LTFP developed with input from relevant Council service areas	Development of Plan included consultation with internal stakeholders and outlined in procedure.
4.1	Include multi-variable scenario analysis to support the process	Multiple scenarios and options were developed and considered prior to the Council adoption of the preferred model outcome.
5.1	Include targets for financial sustainability indicators	Financial indicators now reflect high medium and low risk details
5.2	Financial sustainability targets to be included in LTFP procedure	Financial indicators and ranges table included in LTFP procedure
6.1	Financial buffers to be identified with sustainability metrics	Financial indicators table with range buffers reflecting high medium and low risk included within plan.

Financial Ratio's and Objectives

Financial measures demonstrate Council's financial sustainability to fund the aspirations of the Community Vision and the Council and Wellbeing Plan.

The financial modelling used in the development of this Plan references some key financial ratios. Each one should not be considered individually as it is the collective of these ratios (together with other measures) that provide an indicative picture of the Council financial position.

The balance of these ratios can fluctuate with timing such as major expenses or variations. A strong risk in indebtedness, for example, may not be an appropriate result where long-term investment in multi-generational capital is required. Generally, Council is looking to achieve a medium risk level or better in these ratios.

This Plan has been underpinned by adhering to several financial commitments aimed to maintain financial sustainability, these being:

Adjusted Underlying Result

- Excludes one off capital grants and related income
- Includes depreciation
- Measures if Council can operate sustainably based on only own-source income and recurrent grants. i.e. ordinary business

Measure: Adjusted Underlying Surplus (or Deficit) as a % of adjusted underlying revenue.

Calculation:

$$\frac{\text{Adjusted underlying surplus (or deficit)}}{\text{Adjusted underlying revenue}} \text{ X } 100$$

The 'underlying result' – Should aim to be 'break even' or a surplus over the period of the Plan.

This Plan provides for an improved outcome in this area without fully achieving a desired break-even status.

The Plan reports a steadily improving underlying deficit for the duration of this 10-year plan. While it may not be feasible to fully eliminate this deficit in the short term, for long term financial sustainability it is important that Council works towards reducing the underlying deficit. Ideally, the underlying would reflect a breakeven or preferred surplus result, however this position is not quite achieved based on current expenditure needs and revenue constraints.

Liquidity

- Can include aspects such as working capital and unrestricted cash
- Ensures sufficient funds are available to pay bills as and when they fall due

Measure: Current assets compared to current liabilities as a %

Calculation:

$$\frac{\text{Current Assets}}{\text{Current Liabilities}} \text{ X } 100$$

The cash position should aim to have sufficient cash available for daily operational requirements and current liabilities

Whilst the proposal allows for an improved cash result over the term of the Plan, this ratio does remain as a medium risk due to greater expenditure on new capital and asset renewal contributions and usage of surplus cash to make additional loan repayments which reduce non-current liabilities.

Indebtedness

- Can include aspects such as loans and debts and non-current liabilities such as provisions.
- Ensures that the level of long-term liabilities is appropriate to the size and nature of a council's activities

Measure: Non-current liabilities compared to own-source revenue as a %

Calculation:

$$\frac{\text{Non-current liabilities}}{\text{Own-source revenue}} \text{ X } 100$$

Indebtedness – Should aim to keep total loan liability as a percentage of rates and charge revenue to medium risk as indicated by VAGO

This Plan maintains a strong indebtedness outcome by addressing current borrowings, only contemplating further loans for intergenerational projects and enabling a prompt borrowing repayment schedule.

Asset Renewal

- Includes expenditure on asset renewal and upgrade (not new assets)
- Comparison against depreciation

Measure: Asset Renewal and Upgrade Compared to Depreciation as a %

Calculation:

$$\frac{\text{Asset Renewal and Upgrade Expense}}{\text{Asset Depreciation}} \text{ X } 100$$

Asset renewal and upgrade – Should aim to allocate adequate funds to replace assets and infrastructure as they reach end of life

Whilst the result in this Plan is below the 100% target, this Plan commits greater expenditure to capital asset renewal resulting in an improved outcome and requires further data validation of the assets to warrant further investment to the 100% target.

In an ideal world, Council would aim to allocate adequate funds towards asset renewal to replace assets and infrastructure as they reach the end of their service life. However, Council currently has insufficient funding to allocate to asset renewal to reduce the escalating risk and maintenance of aging infrastructure.

Council manages over $750 million worth of community assets consisting of roads, drains, footpaths, buildings, sporting facilities, recreation reserves and streetscapes. Council would need to spend over $15 million each year just to adequately maintain or replace these community assets. Due to income constraints, funding in the order of $9-10 million is proposed each year. Whilst this initially falls below the targeted spend required, a significant uplift is outlined from 2033 when borrowings are repaid which releases further funds for capital expenditure.

These ratios highlight council's challenges to fund the ongoing renewal and maintenance of the community assets it currently holds over the long term.

Financial Ratio Risk Table

The following table outlines four key financial ratio measures and where the result indicates a high, medium or low risk.

Risk	Underlying Result	Liquidity	Indebtedness	Renewal Gap
High	**Negative 10% or less** Insufficient revenue is being generated to fund operations and asset renewal.	**Equal to or less than 100%** Insufficient current assets to cover liabilities.	**More than 60%** Potentially long-term concern over ability to repay debt levels from own source revenue.	**Equal to or less than 50%** Spending on existing assets has not kept pace with consumption of these assets.
Medium	**Negative 10% to zero** A risk of long term run down to cash reserves and inability to fund asset renewals.	**100% -150%** Need for caution with cash flow, as issues could arise with meeting obligations as they fall due.	**40 - 60%** Some concern over the ability to repay debt from own sourced revenue.	**50-100%** May indicate insufficient spending on renewal of existing assets.
Low	**More than zero** Generating surpluses consistently.	**More than 150%** No immediate issues with repaying short term liabilities as they fall due.	**40% or less** No concern over the ability to repay debt from own sourced revenue.	**More than 100%** Low risk of insufficient spending on asset base.

The outcomes of these ratios for the 10 years of the plan are highlighted below

Financial Indicators Legend: High Risk | Medium Risk | Low Risk

	Actual	Budgeted								
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35
Liquidity	117%	84%	99%	114%	114%	111%	114%	116%	110%	122%	126%
Indebtedness	24%	28%	26%	23%	41%	34%	29%	22%	11%	7%	7%
Asset Renewal	88%	100%	59%	59%	64%	61%	62%	59%	59%	65%	84%
Adjusted Underlying Result	-1.3%	-22.1%	-4.8%	-4.1%	-4.2%	-4.4%	-3.8%	-3.1%	-2.3%	-1.6%	-1.1%

Assumptions

The development of a 10-year plan requires a number of assumptions to be made which may or may not eventuate. For example, Rate cap information is only released on an annual basis, and CPI figures are estimates only. Future EBA negotiations will determine impacts on employee costs and further unknowns such as potential defined benefit contributions are not known at this time.

Some key challenges and risks to long-term financial planning include

• Population demographic, needs and minimal growth	• Grants not keeping pace with CPI / Rate Cap
• Rate Capping	• Cost of Living
• Grant attraction	• Asset deterioration
• Rising insurance and energy costs	• Enterprise bargaining impacts
• Rising building and construction costs	• Cost shifting

Subsequently, the Plan is an evolving document and subject to change as circumstances come to light. It should not be considered a rigid unwavering direction.

This Plan will also be subject to annual updates following the Council annual budget process to ensure it remains current.

As part of the development of this Plan, the following assumptions have been considered:

1. Service Levels

Generally, service levels are to be maintained at the same or similar levels where possible. The Plan does commit to identifying savings of 2.5% across Employee expenses and materials and services in 2026-2027. The nature of how these savings will be achieved will be subject of executive and councillor deliberations over the forthcoming period and may result in changes to service delivery outcomes.

2. CPI

The CPI estimate is forecast to be in the range of 2% to 3% per annum. A figure of 2.5% has been used as an average over the term of the plan. A review of other indexes, such as the Road and Bridge Construction index was undertaken which had increased by 8.94% over the past three years and therefore was not discernibly different to warrant variation away from the 2.5% figure.

As certain categories of expenditure are likely to increase more than CPI, Council will be unable to undertake the same amount of work at the increased cost and may need to revise services to meet budget.

3. Rates Income

The assumption for rates income is that increases will be around 2.5% per annum similar to CPI. Modelling of variations such as the current 3% were considered, however given the CPI expectations and history of Rate Cap determinations by the Minister for Local Government, a figure of 2.5% was considered the most likely and has been used across the term of the Plan.

The Plan does not include any proposed applications for an increased rate cap or reducing rates at an amount lower than the estimated cap. These options may be considered by Council as the details on the rate cap are released annually in December.

There is limited growth predicted and therefore no significant allowance has been made for supplementary rates. Whilst a number of potential major developments could occur, these will not be factored into the modelling until such times as these projects increase in their scope and probability.

4. Depreciation

Council's annual depreciation is predicted to stay steady and is based upon figures from revaluation actions undertaken in 2025-2026. An increase is included in both depreciation and operational costs based on new capital investment forecasts, such as the major project outlined in 2028-2029.

5. Employee Costs

The current Council Enterprise Agreement (EA) expires in June 2027. A rate of 3.5% has been used up to that period. Post 30 June 2027, the assumption is that employee costs will rise in line with projected CPI and rate cap amounts.

A one off 2.5% reduction in employee costs has been identified from 2026-2027 although the nature of how this target is to be achieved will be developed following the adoption of the proposed Plan.

A slight reduction in employee numbers associated with the ERP project has been anticipated as these temporary employment arrangements are scheduled to come to an end.

The Superannuation Guarantee increased to 12% in 2025-2026 and there are no expected further changes over the term of the plan. There has also been no allocation for any contribution to the unfunded defined benefits superannuation liability should it arise

A review of the Workforce Plan did not identify any further adjustments that need to be included in the financial plan.

Potential changes to the childcare industry have also not been factored in until such time as further clarity and timing is forthcoming.

6. Materials and Services

Material costs include items required for the maintenance and repairs of Council buildings, roads, drains and footpaths which are more governed by market forces based on availability rather than CPI.

Other associated costs included under this category are utilities, contracted services and consumable items for a range of services. Council also utilises external expertise on a range of matters, including legal services and audit.

Evidence suggests that Council expenses for materials and services has also increased at a greater rate than rate cap over the past few years. Building materials, insurances and government charges are examples where costs have increased at rates from 10% - 100%.

Modelling included several variations of materials and services and settled on a figure of 3%, which although greater than the predicated rate cap and CPI, is considered appropriate.

In addition, as outlined earlier in this report, a one-off reduction of 2.5% is required for materials and services in 2026-2027.

7. Grant Funding

Grant revenue represents income usually received from other levels of government. Some grants are singular and attached to the delivery of specific projects, whilst others can be of a recurrent nature and may or may not be linked to the delivery of projects.

Operating grants account for approximately 25% of Council's total revenue. The Victorian Grants Commission (VGC) is responsible, under federal legislation, to distribute the total amount received from the federal government to the 79 Victorian Councils. The VCG Grants comprise a 'General Purpose Grant' and a 'Roads Grant' and accounts for approximately $11.4M of income in 2025-2026.

Grants are based on confirmed funding levels (including capital grants) or a reasonable expectation (based on past experience or indicators from Government) that the grant will be received. An increase of approximately 3% per annum for government grants has been applied for operational grants such as the Victorian Grants Commission.

The Plan also reflects that in 2025-2026, $5.7M of the operating grant from the Victorian grants Commission was paid in June, which has to be reflected in that preceding financial year.

Capital grants are usually non recurrent and only known funding is included in future projections.

The Roads to Recovery (R2R) funding, is classed as recurrent meaning that Council receives this funding annually from the Federal Government. Council's current R2R funding allocation accounts for approximately $20M over a 5-year period and requires Council to contribute towards roads related expenditure to maximise the outcomes of the grant.

The current funding allocation is from 1 July 2024 – 30 June 2029 and Council has been provided with an annual payment schedule for the R2R grants for that time. For the period after 30 June 2029, R2R income the assumption is that R2R Grant funding will increase by 3% per annum for the period 2030-35.

Additional Capital grant income of $10M has been included in 2028-2029 and is a contribution towards the development of a potential major project. This is supported by potential matched borrowings of $10M.

Such a project is not yet scoped to provide accurate funding estimates, nor contributions required by Council. A community consultation on the project would also need to be undertaken before it came to fruition.

As Council is not aware of any other capital grants opportunities, the assumption is not to include any additional capital grants in the projections. Council will however still

pro-actively advocate to other levels of government for grant funding support to deliver important infrastructure and service outcomes for the community.

Council may use its own funds to leverage higher grant funding and maximise external funding opportunities. It is important that this Plan incorporates a level of flexibility to enable Council to contribute funds to significant projects at various times to take advantage of government grant opportunities. The mechanisms of government result in such opportunities not being able to be accurately forecasted over the term of this financial plan.

8. Borrowings

Whilst not a source of income, borrowings can be an important cash management tool in appropriate circumstances. Loans can only be approved by council resolution. The following financial sustainability principles must be adhered to with new borrowings:

- Borrowings must only be applied for where it can be proven that repayments can be met in the Long-Term Financial Plan
- Borrowings must not be used to fund ongoing operations.
- Borrowings are appropriate for funding large capital works where the benefits are provided to future generations.

Council will aim to maintain its debt at levels which are sustainable, with:

- Indebtedness where loans and borrowings are not to exceed 60% of own source revenue, and an interest cover ratio at least double Council' estimated interest amount.

Council's borrowings at 30 June 2025 were $4M. Council expects to draw down new loan borrowings of $3M in 2025-2026. A rate of 4.9% (fixed term) has been utilised for interest expenses. The model outlines that Council does project to potentially pay its loan out early due to expenditure savings.

A provision for $10M of new loans has been included in 2028-2029 for Council's contribution towards the major project. A fixed rate of 5% has been estimated for the duration of this loan. The model outlines that Council does project to potentially pay its loan off by 2033 due to proposed expenditure savings.

9. Waste Charges

The residential waste management charge is set at $498 for the 2025–2026 year, representing a 57.59% increase from the previous year's charge of $316.

This increase factors in Council's transition of services to a full cost recovery basis for kerbside collection and the new Food Organics Green Organics (FOGO) collection service scheduled to commence in April 2026.

Whilst further changes are required under the legislative waste reform and circular economy obligations, such as a fourth bin for glass, there is uncertainty of this roll out and therefore no additional allowance for expenditure or increased income in this area outside of the rates and charges percentage increases has been included.

Uncertainty also exists due to potential fluctuations in EPA and waste levy charges, as well as ongoing increases in fuel and contractor costs—both of which have historically increased more than CPI. These costs are key components of waste management and directly influence the waste management charge

10. User Fees

A general percentage increase of 3% has been utilised in this area based on historical evidence that such costs increase greater than CPI. Additionally, there are known gaps to full cost recovery that Council is currently addressing through a staged approach in some fees that were well below industry average and cost of service.

The 3% estimate assumes an average overall increase across user fees.

11. Statutory Fees and Fines

Statutory fees and fines are those which council collects under the direction of legislation or other government directives. The rates used for statutory fees and fines are generally advised by the state government department responsible for the corresponding services or legislation, and generally councils will have limited discretion in applying these fees. Such increase are usually not known until the relevant financial year. An estimate of 3% has been applied.

12. Rating Agreements

Council has currently in place 6 rating agreements that contribute payment in lieu of rates (PiLoR). Whilst 2 agreements are due to expire on the 30 June 2026, no significant changes are expected at this time. The remaining 4 agreements are valid until 2032 and are based on energy generation.

Council has therefore assumed that payment in lieu of rates revenues will remain broadly consistent with current levels throughout the duration of the Plan.

Whilst Council is aware of several proposed large-scale renewable energy developments, no assumptions regarding their commencement or contribution to PiLoR revenue have yet been factored into this 10-year financial outlook.

13. Contributions

Contributions represent funds received by council, usually from non-government sources, and are usually linked to projects. Contributions can be made to council in the form of either cash payments or asset handovers.

Examples of contributions include:

- Monies collected from developers under planning and development agreements
- Contributions from user groups towards upgrade of facilities
- Assets handed over to council from developers at the completion of a subdivision, such as roads, drainage, and streetlights.

Glenelg Shire has minimal transactions in this area and have estimated 0% in the Plan over the next 10 years as these contributions traditionally haven't increased in value.

14. Other income

Revenue from other income mainly comprises investment income plus the recovery income from a variety of sources such as insurance claims. With little data in order to forecast an average figure of 2% has been utilised.

15. Other expenses

Other expenses include administration costs such as Councillor allowances, election costs, sponsorships, partnerships, community grants, lease expenditure, emergency services and volunteer fund, audit costs and other costs associated with the day to day running of Council. Whilst Councillor allowances have increased at a greater rate than the rate cap in 2025-2026, Council has applied a conservative figure of 2.5% per annum to average out predicted costs.

Council is also aware of other current challenges and expected future events with potential to impact the Financial Plan projections. Items specific to Glenelg Shire Council include:

- Unfunded Superannuation Liability – A major financial risk exists for council in the form of unfunded superannuation liabilities in relation to the defined benefits superannuation scheme. Council has had two calls in the past years: $840K (December 2010) and $4.051M (June 2012). Current index measures are not predicting another call in the foreseeable future.

- Landfill Rehabilitation – As at 30 June 2025, Council's landfill provision is calculated at $4.5M (non-cash backed). Council is required to calculate the value of ongoing monitoring and works post landfill closure for a period of 30 years and recognise this amount as a liability on its Balance Sheet. Any adjustments to this liability are recognised in Council's Income statement and Balance Sheet.

- Quarries Restoration – Council is obligated to rehabilitate a quarry back to its natural state at the end of its life. Council estimates the cost of rehabilitation works for each quarry and recognises this as a probable future expense on its balance sheet to ensure that this future liability is recognised. Any adjustments to this future liability are recognised in Council's Income statement and Balance Sheet. The current provision amount is $193k at 30 June 2025.

Appendix 1 – Financial Policy Statements and Targets

Appendix 2 – Assumptions

Appendix 3 – Financial Plan Statements

This section presents information regarding the Financial Plan Statements for the 10 years from 2025-2026 to 2034-2035.

- Comprehensive Income Statement
- Balance Sheet
- Statement of Changes in Equity
- Statement of Cash Flows
- Statement of Capital Works
- Statement of Human Resources

Appendix 4 - Financial Performance Indicators

The table highlights Council's projected performance across a range of key financial performance indicators. These indicators provide an analysis of Council's 10-year financial projections and should be interpreted in the context of the organisation's objectives and financial management principles.

Appendix 5 – Borrowings

The table highlights Council's projected loan balance, including new loans and loan repayments for the 10 years of the Financial Plan.

Council's projected performance across a range of debt management performance indicators is also provided.

Appendix 1 – Financial Policy Statements and Targets

Policy Statement	Measure	Target	Actual 2024/25 $'000	Forecast 2025/26 $'000	2026/27 $'000	2027/28 $'000	2028/29 $'000	2029/30 $'000	2030/31 $'000	2031/32 $'000	2032/33 $'000	2033/34 $'000	2034/35 $'000
Underlying Result													
Council's ability to operate sustainably based only on own-source income and recurrent grants (includes	Operating result greater than $0	$0	$9,020	-$5,167	-$2,992	-$2,574	$7,274	-$2,898	-$2,558	-$2,142	-$1,639	-$1,098	-$764
Liquidity - Working Capital													
Council's ability to pay bills as and when they fall due	Current assets / current liabilities	Above 100%	117%	84%	99%	114%	114%	111%	114%	116%	110%	122%	126%
Indebtedness													
Council's ability to cover non current liabilities with own source revenue (includes Landfill rehabilitation, employee provisions and interest bearing loans)	Non-current liabilities / own source revenue	Below 60%	24%	28%	26%	23%	41%	34%	29%	22%	11%	7%	7%
Asset Renewal													
Adequate allocation of funds towards renewal capital to replace assets and infrastructure that reach the end of	Asset renewal and upgrade expense / Asset depreciation	100%	88%	100%	59%	59%	64%	61%	62%	59%	59%	65%	84%
Cash Reserves													
Sufficient unrestricted cash reserves to ensure ongoing liquidity and address unforseen cash impositions	Cash balance to be maintained above $10M. Approximately 23% of Own Source Revenue.	$10,000 23%	$13,933 36%	$5,477 14%	$7,367 18%	$9,429 22%	$10,150 23%	$10,067 23%	$10,230 22%	$10,375 22%	$10,021 21%	$10,732 22%	$11,363 23%

Appendix 2 – Assumptions

Escalation Factors	Movement %									
	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35
General Escalation Factors										
CPI	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%
Rate Cap set by ESC	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%
Superannuation Guarantee	12.00%	12.00%	12.00%	12.00%	12.00%	12.00%	12.00%	12.00%	12.00%	12.00%
Interest Rates - Borrowing - Loan #1	4.90%	4.90%	4.90%	4.90%	4.90%	4.90%	4.90%	4.90%	4.90%	4.90%
Interest Rates - Borrowing - Loan #2	5.04%	5.04%	5.04%	5.04%	5.04%	5.04%	5.04%	5.04%	5.04%	5.04%
Interest Rates - Income	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%
Income Statement Escalation Factors										
Statutory fees and fines	4.44%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%
User fees	5.48%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%
Grants - Operating	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%
Grants - Capital	-15.59%	-59.35%	5.26%	0.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%
Grants Commission	5.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%
Monetary Contributions	15.00%	-53.32%	114.23%	-53.32%	114.23%	-53.32%	114.23%	-53.32%	114.23%	-53.32%
Non-Monetary Contributions	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%
Other Income	-152.58%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%
Employee Costs	8.76%	0.90%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%
Materials and services	3.49%	0.43%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%
Depreciation and Amortisation	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Other expenses	-5.67%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%

Appendix 3 - Financial Plan Statements - Comprehensive Income Statement

	Actual	Forecast									
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35
	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000
Income											
Rates and charges	33,431	35,818	36,651	37,501	38,373	39,268	40,187	41,129	42,209	43,205	44,226
Statutory fees and fines	687	718	739	761	784	808	832	857	882	909	936
User fees	2,724	2,873	2,959	3,048	3,140	3,234	3,331	3,431	3,534	3,640	3,749
Grants - Operating	22,264	11,055	17,246	17,734	18,236	18,753	19,286	19,835	20,400	20,983	21,582
Grants - Capital	12,590	10,627	4,320	4,547	14,547	4,684	4,824	4,969	5,118	5,271	5,430
Contributions - monetary	60	69	32	69	32	69	32	69	32	69	32
Contributions - non-monetary	494	65	65	65	65	67	69	71	73	75	78
Other income	2,205	1,163	1,183	1,205	1,227	1,249	1,273	1,297	1,321	1,347	1,373
Total Income	**74,456**	**62,387**	**63,196**	**64,931**	**76,404**	**68,132**	**69,834**	**71,657**	**73,571**	**75,499**	**77,406**
Expenses											
Employee costs	25,965	28,240	27,073	27,750	28,444	29,155	29,883	30,631	31,396	32,181	32,986
Materials and services	20,020	20,717	20,806	21,430	22,073	22,865	23,551	24,257	24,985	25,734	26,506
Depreciation	15,622	15,622	15,622	15,622	15,622	16,022	16,022	16,022	16,022	16,022	16,022
Depreciation - right of use assets	254	226	254	254	254	254	254	254	254	254	254
Allowance for impairment losses	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Borrowing costs	10	279	315	292	435	693	559	446	294	76	-
Finance Costs - leases	23	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27
Other expenses	3,088	2,374	2,434	2,495	2,557	2,621	2,686	2,753	2,822	2,893	2,965
Net loss on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	423	(472)	(454)	(393)	(321)	(390)	(376)	(376)	(376)	(376)	(376)
Other Expenses - Special Project	721	990	327	244	256	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Expenses - Landfill Provision Adjustment	(704)	(450)	(215)	(215)	(215)	(215)	(215)	(215)	(215)	(215)	(215)
Total Expenses	**65,436**	**67,555**	**66,188**	**67,505**	**69,130**	**71,031**	**72,392**	**73,799**	**75,210**	**76,596**	**78,170**
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	**9,020**	**(5,167)**	**(2,992)**	**(2,574)**	**7,274**	**(2,898)**	**(2,558)**	**(2,142)**	**(1,639)**	**(1,098)**	**(764)**
Other comprehensive income											
Net asset revaluation gain /(loss)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total other comprehensive income	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Comprehensive Result	**9,020**	**(5,167)**	**(2,992)**	**(2,574)**	**7,274**	**(2,898)**	**(2,558)**	**(2,142)**	**(1,639)**	**(1,098)**	**(764)**

Appendix 3 - Financial Performance Indicators - Balance Sheet

	Actual		Forecast								
	2024/25 $'000	2025/26 $'000	2026/27 $'000	2027/28 $'000	2028/29 $'000	2029/30 $'000	2030/31 $'000	2031/32 $'000	2032/33 $'000	2033/34 $'000	2034/35 $'000
Assets											
Current assets											
Cash and cash equivalents	13,933	5,477	7,367	9,429	10,150	10,067	10,230	10,375	10,021	10,732	11,363
Trade and other receivables	3,677	3,677	3,677	3,677	3,677	3,677	3,677	3,677	3,677	3,677	3,677
Inventories	628	628	628	628	628	628	628	628	628	628	628
Prepayments	454	454	454	454	454	454	454	454	454	454	454
Non-current assets classified as held for sale	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Contract assets	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other assets	191	191	191	191	191	191	191	191	191	191	191
Total current assets	**18,883**	**10,427**	**12,317**	**14,379**	**15,100**	**15,017**	**15,180**	**15,325**	**14,971**	**15,682**	**16,313**
Non-current assets											
Property, infrastructure, plant & equipment	568,366	569,920	564,445	559,240	574,553	569,223	564,255	558,713	553,196	548,704	547,239
Right-of-use assets	321	321	321	321	321	321	321	321	321	321	321
Total non-current assets	**568,687**	**570,241**	**564,766**	**559,561**	**574,874**	**569,544**	**564,576**	**559,034**	**553,517**	**549,025**	**547,560**
Total assets	**587,570**	**580,668**	**577,082**	**573,940**	**589,973**	**584,561**	**579,757**	**574,359**	**568,488**	**564,707**	**563,873**
Liabilities											
Current liabilities											
Trade and other payables	4,124	4,124	4,124	4,124	4,124	4,124	4,124	4,124	4,124	4,124	4,124
Trust funds and deposits	1,423	1,423	1,423	1,423	1,423	1,423	1,423	1,423	1,423	1,423	1,423
Contract and other liabilities	4,762	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500
Provisions	5,584	5,679	5,743	5,853	5,966	6,081	6,198	6,318	6,440	6,565	6,692
Interest-bearing liabilities	-	458	481	505	1,031	1,165	892	657	876	-	-
Lease liabilities	197	197	197	197	197	197	197	197	197	197	197
Total current liabilities	**16,090**	**12,381**	**12,467**	**12,602**	**13,241**	**13,490**	**13,334**	**13,219**	**13,560**	**12,809**	**12,936**
Non-current liabilities		6,635	6,178	5,697	14,542	12,111	9,946	6,768	2,611	0	0
Provisions	5,202	4,998	4,799	4,600	4,401	4,203	4,005	3,808	3,611	3,414	3,218
Interest-bearing liabilities	4,000	6,178	5,697	5,192	13,511	10,946	9,054	6,111	1,736	0	0
Lease liabilities	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132
Total non-current liabilities	**9,333**	**11,307**	**10,627**	**9,924**	**18,044**	**15,281**	**13,192**	**10,051**	**5,479**	**3,546**	**3,350**
Total liabilities	**25,423**	**23,688**	**23,095**	**22,526**	**31,285**	**28,771**	**26,526**	**23,270**	**19,038**	**16,355**	**16,285**
Net assets	**562,147**	**556,980**	**553,988**	**551,414**	**558,688**	**555,790**	**553,231**	**551,089**	**549,450**	**548,352**	**547,588**
Equity											
Accumulated surplus	106,349	101,182	98,190	95,616	102,890	99,992	97,433	95,291	93,652	92,554	91,790
Reserves	455,798	455,798	455,798	455,798	455,798	455,798	455,798	455,798	455,798	455,798	455,798
Total equity	**562,147**	**556,980**	**553,988**	**551,414**	**558,688**	**555,790**	**553,231**	**551,089**	**549,450**	**548,352**	**547,588**

Appendix 3 - Financial Performance Indicators – Statement of Cash Flow

	Actual					Forecast					
	2024/25 $'000	2025/26 $'000	2026/27 $'000	2027/28 $'000	2028/29 $'000	2029/30 $'000	2030/31 $'000	2031/32 $'000	2032/33 $'000	2033/34 $'000	2034/35 $'000
	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)
Cash flows from operating activities											
Rates and charges	33,336	35,818	36,651	37,501	38,373	39,268	40,187	41,129	42,209	43,205	44,226
Statutory fees and fines	687	718	739	761	784	808	832	857	882	909	936
User fees	3,232	2,873	2,959	3,048	3,140	3,234	3,331	3,431	3,534	3,640	3,749
Grants - operating	21,815	11,055	17,246	17,734	18,236	18,753	19,286	19,835	20,400	20,983	21,582
Grants - capital	7,768	6,437	4,320	4,547	14,547	4,684	4,824	4,969	5,118	5,271	5,430
Contributions - monetary	60	69	32	69	32	69	32	69	32	69	32
Interest received	398	398	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
Net Trust funds and deposits	(250)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other receipts	1,746	765	1,133	1,155	1,177	1,199	1,223	1,247	1,271	1,297	1,323
Net GST refund / payment	90	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Employee costs	(25,188)	(28,818)	(27,073)	(27,750)	(28,444)	(29,155)	(29,883)	(30,631)	(31,396)	(32,181)	(32,986)
Materials and services	(20,301)	(21,232)	(21,323)	(21,964)	(22,625)	(23,435)	(24,140)	(24,866)	(25,614)	(26,384)	(27,178)
Short-term, low value and variable lease payments	(60)	(60)	(60)	(60)	(60)	(60)	(60)	(60)	(60)	(60)	(60)
Other Expenses - ERP Project	(721)	(990)	(327)	(244)	(256)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other payments	(2,333)	(2,374)	(2,434)	(2,495)	(2,557)	(2,621)	(2,686)	(2,753)	(2,822)	(2,893)	(2,965)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	**20,280**	**4,659**	**11,915**	**12,353**	**22,399**	**12,795**	**12,995**	**13,276**	**13,605**	**13,905**	**14,139**
Cash flows from investing activities											
Payments for property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	(16,536)	(15,863)	(9,662)	(9,784)	(30,474)	(10,334)	(10,484)	(9,884)	(9,884)	(10,884)	(13,884)
Proceeds from sale of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	256	617	633	490	611	805	601	601	601	601	601
Net cash provided by/ (used in) investing activities	**(16,280)**	**(15,246)**	**(9,029)**	**(9,294)**	**(29,863)**	**(9,529)**	**(9,884)**	**(9,284)**	**(9,284)**	**(10,284)**	**(13,284)**
Cash flows from financing activities											
Finance costs	(10)	(279)	(315)	(292)	(435)	(693)	(559)	(446)	(294)	(76)	-
Proceeds from borrowings	4,000	3,000	-	-	10,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
Repayment of borrowings	(282)	(365)	(458)	(481)	(1,155)	(2,431)	(2,165)	(3,178)	(4,157)	(2,611)	-
Interest paid - lease liability	(23)	(27)	(27)	(27)	(27)	(27)	(27)	(27)	(27)	(27)	(27)
Repayment of lease liabilities	(255)	(197)	(197)	(197)	(197)	(197)	(197)	(197)	(197)	(197)	(197)
Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities	**3,430**	**2,132**	**(997)**	**(997)**	**8,186**	(3,348)	(2,948)	(3,847)	(4,675)	(2,911)	(224)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash & cash equivalents	**7,430**	**(8,456)**	**1,889**	**2,062**	**721**	**(83)**	**163**	**145**	**(354)**	**710**	**632**
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year	6,503	13,933	5,477	7,367	9,429	10,150	10,067	10,230	10,375	10,021	10,732
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	**13,933**	**5,477**	**7,367**	**9,429**	**10,150**	**10,067**	**10,230**	**10,375**	**10,021**	**10,732**	**11,363**

Appendix 3 - Financial Performance Indicators – Statement of Capital Works

	Actual	Forecast									
	2024/25 $'000	2025/26 $'000	2026/27 $'000	2027/28 $'000	2028/29 $'000	2029/30 $'000	2030/31 $'000	2031/32 $'000	2032/33 $'000	2033/34 $'000	2034/35 $'000
Property											
Buildings											
Building improvements	333	5,005	1,375	1,375	1,375	1,375	1,375	1,375	1,375	1,375	1,375
Leasehold improvements	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Buildings	**333**	**5,005**	**1,375**	**1,375**	**1,375**	**1,375**	**1,375**	**1,375**	**1,375**	**1,375**	**1,375**
Total Property	**333**	**5,005**	**1,375**	**1,375**	**1,375**	**1,375**	**1,375**	**1,375**	**1,375**	**1,375**	**1,375**
Plant and equipment											
Cultural Collection	26	15	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Plant, machinery and equipment	1,405	2,242	1,640	1,535	1,725	1,585	1,735	1,135	1,135	1,135	1,135
Fixtures, fittings and furniture	-	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Computers and telecommunications											
Library books	84	95	95	95	95	95	95	95	95	95	95
Total Plant and equipment	**1,515**	**2,362**	**1,755**	**1,650**	**1,840**	**1,700**	**1,850**	**1,250**	**1,250**	**1,250**	**1,250**
Infrastructure											
Roads	7,314	4,464	4,947	5,152	5,152	5,699	5,699	5,699	5,699	5,699	5,699
Roads - LRCI	1,306	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bridges	-	350	171	178	178	-	-	-	-	-	-
Footpaths and cycleways	123	110	126	131	131	-	-	-	-	-	-
Off street car parks	-	50	57	59	59	-	-	-	-	-	-
Drainage	2,369	202	171	178	178	-	-	-	-	-	-
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	207	1,681	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
Waste management	3	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
Parks, open space and streetscapes	961	40	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240
Aerodromes	72	99	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
Local Port	-	-	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
Other infrastructure	944	-	500	500	21,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	2,000	5,000
Other infrastructure - LRCI	-	1,480	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Infrastructure	**13,298**	**8,496**	**6,532**	**6,759**	**27,259**	**7,259**	**7,259**	**7,259**	**7,259**	**8,259**	**11,259**
Total Capital Works expenditure	**15,146**	**15,863**	**9,662**	**9,784**	**30,474**	**10,334**	**10,484**	**9,884**	**9,884**	**10,884**	**13,884**
Represented by:											
New asset expenditure	1,415	282	500	500	20,500	500	500	500	500	500	500
Asset renewal expenditure	11,003	13,228	9,162	9,284	9,974	9,834	9,984	9,384	9,384	10,384	13,384
Asset expansion expenditure	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Asset upgrade expenditure	2,727	2,353	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Capital Works expenditure	**15,146**	**15,863**	**9,662**	**9,784**	**30,474**	**10,334**	**10,484**	**9,884**	**9,884**	**10,884**	**13,884**
Funding sources represented by:											
Grants	6,512	5,555	-	-	10,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
Contributions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Council cash	4,634	7,308	9,662	9,784	10,474	10,334	10,484	9,884	9,884	10,884	13,884
Borrowings	4,000	3,000	-	-	10,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Capital Works expenditure	**15,146**	**15,863**	**9,662**	**9,784**	**30,474**	**10,334**	**10,484**	**9,884**	**9,884**	**10,884**	**13,884**

Appendix 3 - Financial Performance Indicators – Statement of Human Resources

Staff expenditure	2024/25 $'000	2025/26 $'000	2026/27 $'000	2027/28 $'000	2028/29 $'000	2029/30 $'000	2030/31 $'000	2031/32 $'000	2032/33 $'000	2033/34 $'000	2034/35 $'000
Staff Expenditure											
Total Staff Expenditure	26,324	28,574	29,406	30,222	31,129	29,378	30,113	30,866	31,637	32,428	33,239
Employee costs - capital	(248)	(206)	(212)	(219)	(225)	(224)	(229)	(235)	(241)	(247)	(253)
Employee costs - special project	(111)	(128)	(64)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Staff Expenditure - Operating	**25,965**	**28,240**	**27,073**	**27,750**	**28,444**	**29,155**	**29,883**	**30,631**	**31,396**	**32,181**	**32,986**

Staff numbers	2024/25 FTE	2025/26 FTE	2026/27 FTE	2027/28 FTE	2028/29 FTE	2029/30 FTE	2030/31 FTE	2031/32 FTE	2032/33 FTE	2033/34 FTE	2034/35 FTE
Staff numbers											
Employees - Operating	245.0	267.6	260.9	260.9	260.9	260.9	260.9	260.9	260.9	260.9	260.9
Employees - Capital	3.9	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
Employees - Special Project	3.3	0.9	0.5	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total staff numbers	**252.2**	**271.5**	**264.4**	**263.9**	**263.9**	**263.9**	**263.9**	**263.9**	**263.9**	**263.9**	**263.9**

Appendix 4 - Financial Performance Indicators

Indicator	Measure	Actual 2024/25 $'000	2025/26 $'000	2026/27 $'000	2027/28 $'000	2028/29 $'000	2029/30 $'000	2030/31 $'000	2031/32 $'000	2032/33 $'000	2033/34 $'000	2034/35 $'000	Trend +/o/-
			Forecast										
Operating Position													
Adjusted Underlying Result	Adjusted underlying surplus (deficit) / Adjusted underlying revenue	-1.3%	-22%	-5%	-4%	-4%	-4%	-4%	-3%	-2%	-2%	-1%	o
Liquidity													
Working Capital	Current assets / current liabilities	117%	84%	99%	114%	114%	111%	114%	116%	110%	122%	126%	+
Unrestricted Cash	Unrestricted cash / current liabilities	87%	44%	59%	75%	77%	75%	77%	78%	74%	84%	88%	o
Obligations													
Loans and Borrowings - compared to rates	Interest bearing loans and borrowings / rate revenue	14%	21%	19%	17%	43%	35%	28%	19%	7%	0%	0%	-
Loans and Borrowings - interest and principal payments compared to rates	Interest and principal repayments on interest bearing loans and borrowings / rate revenue	1%	2%	2%	2%	5%	9%	8%	10%	12%	7%	0%	o
Indebtedness	Non-current liabilities / Own source revenue	24%	28%	26%	23%	41%	34%	29%	22%	11%	7%	7%	+
Asset Renewal	Asset renewal and upgrade expense / Asset depreciation	88%	100%	59%	59%	64%	61%	62%	59%	59%	65%	84%	-
Stability													
Rates concentration	Rate revenue / adjusted underlying revenue	44%	56%	51%	50%	51%	51%	51%	51%	51%	51%	51%	-
Rates effort	Rate revenue / CIV of rateable properties in the municipality	0.33%	0.33%	0.33%	0.33%	0.33%	0.33%	0.33%	0.34%	0.34%	0.34%	0.34%	o
Efficiency													
Expenditure Level	Total Expenses / No. Property assessments	4683.69	4822.58	4724.99	4819.02	4935.05	5070.72	5167.91	5268.36	5369.06	5468.05	5580.36	+
Revenue Level	Total Rate revenue / No. Property assessments	1863.19	1905.79	1954.08	2002.84	2052.82	2104.05	2156.56	2210.39	2265.56	2322.11	2380.07	+

Appendix 5 – Borrowings

	Actual 2024/25 $'000	2025/26 $'000	2026/27 $'000	2027/28 $'000	2028/29 $'000	2029/30 $'000	2030/31 $'000	2031/32 $'000	2032/33 $'000	2033/34 $'000	2034/35 $'000
Opening Balance	282	4,000	6,635	6,178	5,697	14,542	12,111	9,946	6,768	2,611	0
Plus New Loans	4,000	3,000	-	-	10,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
Less Principal Repayment	(282)	(365)	(458)	(481)	(1,155)	(2,431)	(2,165)	(3,178)	(4,157)	(2,611)	-
Closing Balance	**4,000**	**6,635**	**6,178**	**5,697**	**14,542**	**12,111**	**9,946**	**6,768**	**2,611**	**0**	**0**
Interest Payments	10	279	315	292	435	693	559	446	294	76	-

Respondent No: 1
Login: [redacted]
Email: [redacted]

Responded At: Oct 06, 2025 12:27:52 pm
Last Seen: Oct 06, 2025 01:11:31 am
IP Address: [redacted]

Q1. **Contact Name:** [redacted]

Q2. **Contact Email:** [redacted]

Q3. **Feedback:**

Having lived in Buloke Shire for several years, I would hate to see Glenelg end up as just rates, roads, rubbish. Despite my own financial hardship, I would definitely rather pay above the rate cap, and higher user charges where necessary, to make sure Council services aren't just maintained, but actually grow. These collective resources will make a much bigger difference to my quality of life than a few hundred dollars a year in my bank account will. I firmly believe that our Shire, and Portland in particular, is at a fork in the road for long term growth. If we don't push through the growing pains and invest more now, we may lose the momentum we have, and it could easily be a generation or more before we have another opportunity like this to chose vibrance and optimism over fear and stagnation. This is not the time for low-risk investment in our community's future.

Q4. **If insufficient room please upload your feedback here:** not answered

Respondent No: 2
Login: [redacted]
Email: [redacted]

Responded At: Oct 06, 2025 17:29:11 pm
Last Seen: Oct 06, 2025 17:29:11 pm
IP Address: n/a

Q1. **Contact Name:** [redacted]

Q2. **Contact Email:** [redacted]

Q3. **Feedback:**

Council needs to work through progression to achieve growth with high risk investment. Embrace change and educate community while being transparent

Q4. **If insufficient room please upload your feedback here:** not answered

Respondent No: 3
Login: [redacted]
Email: [redacted]

Responded At: Oct 07, 2025 11:10:56 am
Last Seen: Oct 07, 2025 11:10:56 am
IP Address: n/a

Q1. **Contact Name:** [redacted]

Q2. **Contact Email:** [redacted]

Q3. **Feedback:**

Frustration comes from a post that comes out from Glenelg Shire Council 22hrs ago and we have till next wk to respond to a ten yr plan!! Being transparent and ensuring all this information is out in the public arena with plenty of time for community to respond NEEDS to be a priority. I have not read it all as yet but Page 6 states that council intend to raise rates above the capped CPI as they see fit to cover shortfalls within the Glenelg Shire Council ALL RESIDENTS need to be very concerned with this point alone and have their say ASAP. They talk about a wellbeing program for the council which supports community, but then adds a point about raising user pay amounts to cover costs! Making sport and activities more affordable and accessible for our youth in the community should be a priority. So they're not bored, not getting into mischief and doing things which they shouldn't be doing. This in turn will improve the mental health of all the community. Looking at how good policy transparency and community consultation impacts all. How it improves relationships between council and community. A ten year plan should involve more work with ensuring all our community know about it. A community meeting where input can be given and discussion held and questions answered. Relationships between council and community need to be worked on for the benefit of ALL. I would like to object to these two clauses alone as well as request that the closing date for community be extended so council can implement more community consultation.

Q4. **If insufficient room please upload your feedback here:** not answered

Respondent No: 4
Login: [redacted]
Email: [redacted]

Responded At: Oct 07, 2025 12:12:05 pm
Last Seen: Oct 07, 2025 12:12:05 pm
IP Address: n/a

Q1. **Contact Name:** [redacted]

Q2. **Contact Email:** [redacted]

Q3. **Feedback:**

Rates should not be increased!!! I have just purchased a home at nearly 30 years old. I can't afford to rent, my repayments are enough without being slammed with high rates.

Q4. **If insufficient room please upload your feedback here:** not answered

Respondent No: 5
Login: [redacted]
Email: [redacted]

Responded At: Oct 14, 2025 09:28:05 am
Last Seen: Oct 13, 2025 22:26:27 pm
IP Address: [redacted]

Q1. **Contact Name:** [redacted]

Q2. **Contact Email:** [redacted]

Q3. **Feedback:**

Please find attached my feedback on the LTFP.

Q4. **If insufficient room please upload your feedback here:** [redacted]

[redacted]

October 14, 2025

Rebecca Campbell
Chief Financial Officer
Glenelg Shire Council

RE FEEDBACK: GLENELG SHIRE COUNCIL LONG TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

Thank you for providing the opportunity to provide feedback on Council's Liong Term Financial Plan (LTFP).

Council's role within the community has always been close to my personal and professional life. My father worked in Local Government for over 35 years. I have been a qualified civil engineer for 25 years and I have worked within Local Government or within businesses that contract to Local Government for over 20 years.

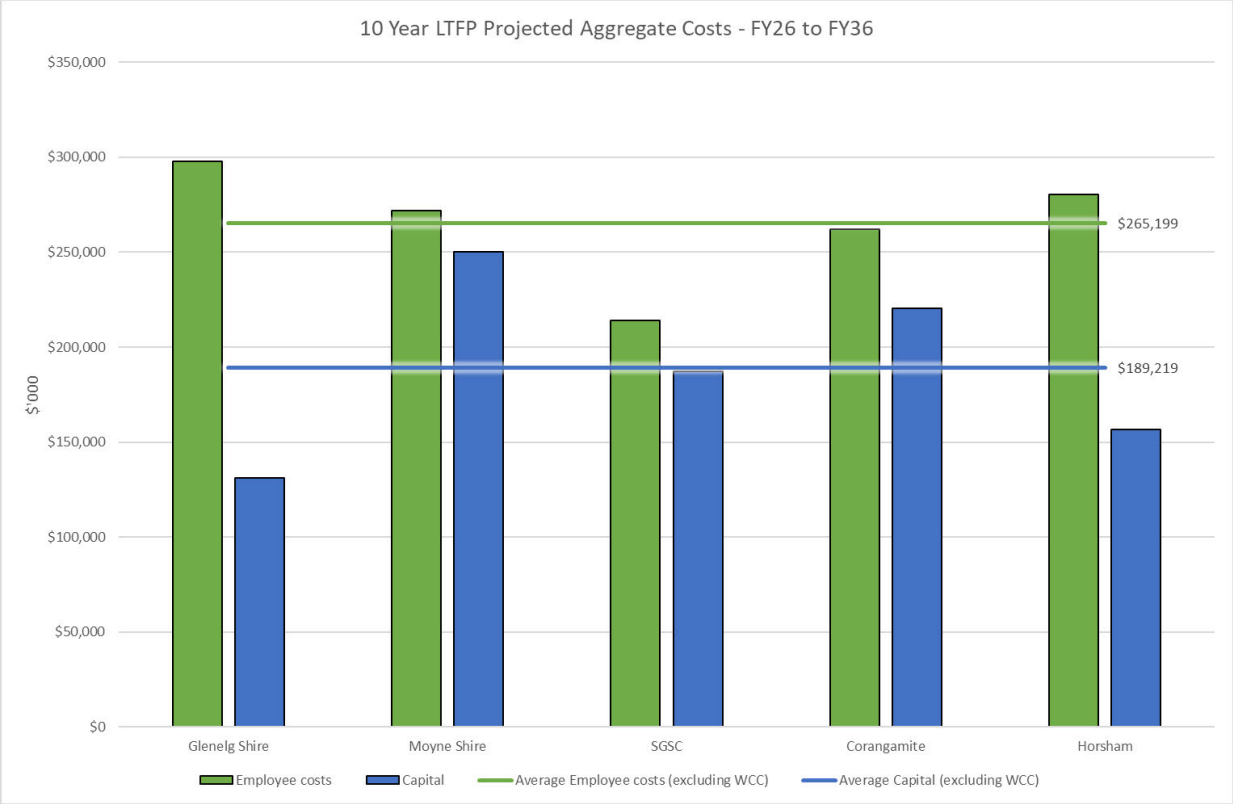
Councils perform a lot of roles, but their core responsibility has and always will be community. Provision of and maintenance of community assets is not the only role of Council, but to the community this is the most important role of Council. This was highlighted through the outcomes of the community engagement process undertaken by GSC in developing the Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029. I note the following:

- Maintaining assets was the most important service area to individuals, capital works program was the 3rd most important service area to individuals
- Maintaining assets was what people thought was the most important for the whole of community, capital works program was the 4th most important for the whole of community

As an asset management professional with considerable experience, I have reviewed the Glenelg Shire Council (GSC) LTFP through an asset management lens and compared/benchmarked areas of the LTFP against neighbouring Councils.

My comparison centred on projected income, employee expenses and capital expenses over a 10 period (FY26 to FY35). I have compared Warrnambool City Council, Glenelg Shire Council, Moyne Shire Council, Southern Grampians Shire Council, Corangamite Shire Council and Horsham Rural City Council. These Councils (apart from Warrnambool City Council) are somewhat similar and form a quality sample. To further balance the analysis, I have compared aggregate spend over ten years (FY26 to FY35). This represents a decent quantity of data and is appropriate for the longer-term view required when analysing assets.

This analysis is best represented by the following graph.



My view of this summary (in terms of GSC) is:

- There is a gross underinvestment in capital over the term of the LTFP
- This has been identified in the LTFP
- This underinvestment will widen the gap between the desired level of service of assets and the actual/current level of service of assets.
- In my opinion the risk of this underinvestment has been incorrectly classified as medium risk within the LTFP
- As an infrastructure expert, I believe this underinvestment should be classified as high risk. I note that there are other Council's that identify any investment less than 100% as high risk. I also note that as maintaining assets is the most important service area to the community (as highlighted by the community engagement process undertaken by GSC in developing the Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029) that the community would logically view this underinvestment as high risk
- I believe that this risk should be reassessed as high and the LTFP updated accordingly
- Council needs to better understand what the level of service of assets will be in FY35 and what the gap will be between this level of service and the desired level of service based on this projected under expenditure
- Council also needs to better understand what this underinvestment means from a financial point of view for the 10-20 year period following FY35
- If this underinvestment in infrastructure occurs, the cost of closing the gap beyond FY35 will be far greater than maintaining or closing the gap between now and FY35
- I believe the community needs to be informed of what this underinvestment in capital means in terms of financial liability (closing the gap) for the 10-20 year period post FY35
- This underinvestment is extremely short sighted and is setting up future generations for inadequate infrastructure and an extremely difficult task to return assets to the desired level of service

- The LTFP identifies the following in terms of Asset Plan Integration, *"Integration with the Asset Plan is a key principle of the Council's strategic financial principles"*
    - I wholeheartedly agree with this principle
    - I note that the Asset Plan is currently being developed and as such has not driven the LTFP
    - The Asset Plan should drive the LTFP in terms of projected asset expenditure to meet a desired level of service
    - Without this Asset Plan the LTFP is ill informed
    - The importance of developing this Asset Plan cannot be understated
    - Based on the communities' view of the high importance of maintaining assets and capital works program and the requirements of the Asset Plan to drive the LTFP in terms of projected asset expenditure to meet a desired level of service this Asset Plan is the most important plan to Council and community and therefore should be Council's highest priority
- There is an unusually high projection for employee costs over the life of the LTFP compared to other Councils

I would welcome the opportunity to provide further clarification and share and discuss my analysis further.

Yours sincerely,



[redacted]

MIEAust CPEng NER

Professional Engineer [redacted] (VIC)

[redacted]

Subject: FW: are you doing any public briefings on the 1-year financial plan?

From: [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 25 September 2025 9:35 AM
To: Rebecca Campbell [redacted]
Subject: are you doing any public briefings on the 1-year financial plan?

*** [EXTERNAL] This message comes from an external organisation. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders. ***

Good morning Rebecca
I'm writing to you because you are listed as the contact person for the 10 year financial plan consultation. Maybe I have missed something you already did, as I have been away, but I'm wondering if you are going to have any public briefings on the plan or the process, because trying to give feedback through "have your say" Website is quite difficult. It is hard for people to get their head around the whole thing and then work out what kind of comments to make without having the opportunity to ask questions.

I know it's often hard to get people to attend meetings, but if there was enough notice, I think you would get a lot of interest. From my perspective, even though I'm used to looking at financial plans and budgets, I still find it a struggle to get my head around a long-term plan. I think this is the stage of the process where it would be really good to give people the opportunity for a live Q&A.

Kind regards
[redacted]
Portland, Vic, Australia
[redacted]

[redacted]

Subject: FW: feedback on financial plan.

From: [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, September 27, 2025 19:29
To: Your Say <Yoursay@glenelg.vic.gov.au>
Subject: feedback on financial plan.

*** [EXTERNAL] This message comes from an external organisation. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders. ***

Dear Council Officer,

Firstly I was unable to access feedback document linked to financial plan. Reading the plan it appears the environment is again neglected at a time that climate change is impacting on our community. The "What we Hear" data displayed totally ignored the 20/40 policy of the council in which the environment was the number one concern from the extensive shire wide surveys carried out as part of the 20/40 project. While there are many natural environmental areas the council and their budget need to address two stand out.

1. Manna gums are being decimated by koala over grazing . Thousands and thousands of dead manna gums are evident throughout the shire. This is massively decreasing the shade and shelter for the community in an increasing hotter and dryer climate. Shire budget should include dollars for massive planting of manna gums and invest in tree collars to protect the few surviving trees. A planned koala urban grazing program by the shire would be a world first and attract grants to support such a project. Budget wise it cost council thousands of dollars more to cut down a dead manna gums, remove wood and mulch stump. Surely a tree guard such as those used by indigenous rangers at Mt Eccles would save thousands of dollars and also eliminate the cost of replanting manna gums. (it takes a hundred years to replace a large manna gum so as they say the best time to plant a tree is yesterday)

2. Even though the number one concern by the community in the 20/40 plan was caring for the environment council have no service area for the environment or employees with expertise dedicated to sustaining our local environment. Manna gums disappearing, daily removal of native vegetation by an army of tree removal companies, massive weed infestations, limited support for active landcare groups and approval of the use of toxic chemical such as methyl bromide that is banned in most countries are just a few of the areas council neglects in the budget. Hardworking landcare groups or any environmental group with a project that will improve the environment have no means of gaining a grant from the council annual grants program. Every other group in the community can access these grants but the environment work can't be applied for because council has no service area for the environment.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Subject: FW: Thank you for completing Comment on the Long Term Financial Plan

From: [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, October 7, 2025 12:17
To: Your Say <Yoursay@glenelg.vic.gov.au>
Subject: Re: Thank you for completing Comment on the Long Term Financial Plan

There is la lot of older infrastructure required for the youth of our community to be updated and added to.

Yaraman park have a grant waiting of 1 million but need other elements of work done before this can take place. No one is taking ownership of this. They may loose this grant if it's not addressed!

I am happy to discuss all this further in person.

The swimming pool and facilities here are atrocious. The youth need a bowling alley/ picture theatre hang out area for winter which let's face it is a huge part of the yr here.

I'd also like to know where the 2million that Portland Aluminium pay to council is going.

The 10 year plan is very wishy washy stating more study needs to be made into all areas. How can this pass as the strategy for the next 10 years when there is no real hard evidence for it all. Yet once it's closed we as the community have no further input or say?

Lots of questions here and would appreciate further discussion.

Regards

[redacted]

On Tue, 7 Oct 2025 at 11:10 am, Your Say Glenelg <notifications@engagementhq.com> wrote:

> Hi,
>
> Thanks for providing your feedback. Your responses are listed below.
>
> **Contact Name:**
>
> [redacted]
>
> ---
>
> **Contact Email:**
>
> [redacted]

Feedback:

Frustration comes from a post that comes out from Glenelg Shire Council 22hrs ago and we have till next wk to respond to a ten yr plan!! Being transparent and ensuring all this information is out in the public arena with plenty of time for community to respond NEEDS to be a priority. I have not read it all as yet but Page 6 states that council intend to raise rates above the capped CPI as they see fit to cover shortfalls within the Glenelg Shire Council ALL RESIDENTS need to be very concerned with this point alone and have their say ASAP. They talk about a wellbeing program for the council which supports community, but then adds a point about raising user pay amounts to cover costs! Making sport and activities more affordable and accessible for our youth in the community should be a priority. So they're not bored, not getting into mischief and doing things which they shouldn't be doing. This in turn will improve the mental health of all the community. Looking at how good policy transparency and community consultation impacts all. How it improves relationships between council and community. A ten year plan should involve more work with ensuring all our community know about it. A community meeting where input can be given and discussion held and questions answered. Relationships between council and community need to be worked on for the benefit of ALL. I would like to object to these two clauses alone as well as request that the closing date for community be extended so council can implement more community consultation.

Thanks again

Your Say Glenelg



GLENELG SHIRE

GLENELG SHIRE COUNCIL
ROAD MANAGEMENT PLAN
2025

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VERSION	NAME	DATE ADOPTED
1	Local Road Management Plan 2005	25 January 2005
2	Road Management Plan – June 2009	25 June 2009
3	Road Management Plan – September 2013	26 November 2013
4	Road Management Plan - 2017	23 January 2018
5	Road Management Plan - 2021	26 October 2021
6	Road Management Plan - 2025	

1. Background

1.1 Purpose and Scope of the Road Management Plan

This Road Management Plan (hereinafter referred to as "this Plan") for Local Roads has been prepared to meet the following objectives:

- To meet the requirements of the *Road Management Act 2004*.
- To provide a safe and functional local road network.
- To minimise Council's exposure to risk related to the management and control of local road assets.

This Plan applies to all roads identified in Council's adopted Road Hierarchy document and listed in Council's Register of Public Roads (refer Section 2.1).

It establishes a management framework for all works and services that are undertaken and provided on Council's road network. This Plan demonstrates the steps to be taken by Glenelg Shire to inspect and maintain the condition of its road related assets within the resource capacity of the municipality.

This Plan has been prepared in accordance with Part 3 of the Road Management (General) Regulations 2016 and the Code of Practice for Road Management Plans 2004.

The following assets are encompassed by this Plan:

All Sealed and Unsealed Roads listed in Council's Register of Public Roads including:

- Road infrastructure such as:
  - road pavements,
  - sealed surfaces,
  - road shoulders within the limits identified in Figure 1.
- Road related infrastructure such as:
  - kerb and channel,
  - traffic islands,
  - line marking,
  - road furniture including regulatory and advisory signs, guideposts, guard rail and barrier fences,
  - above and below ground drainage systems including catch drains.

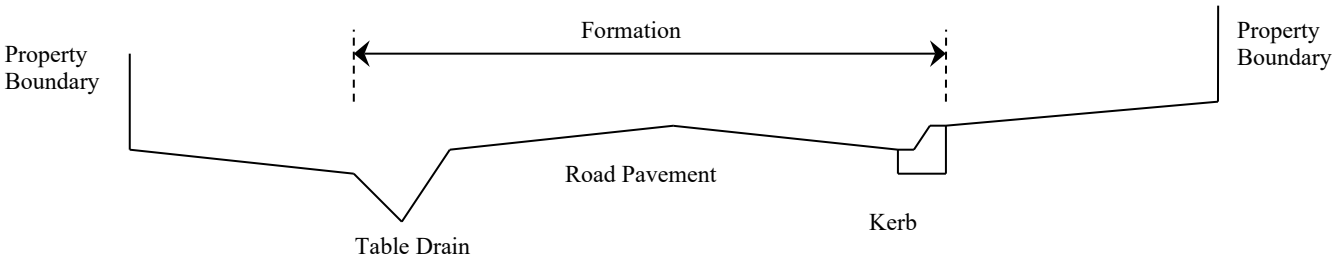
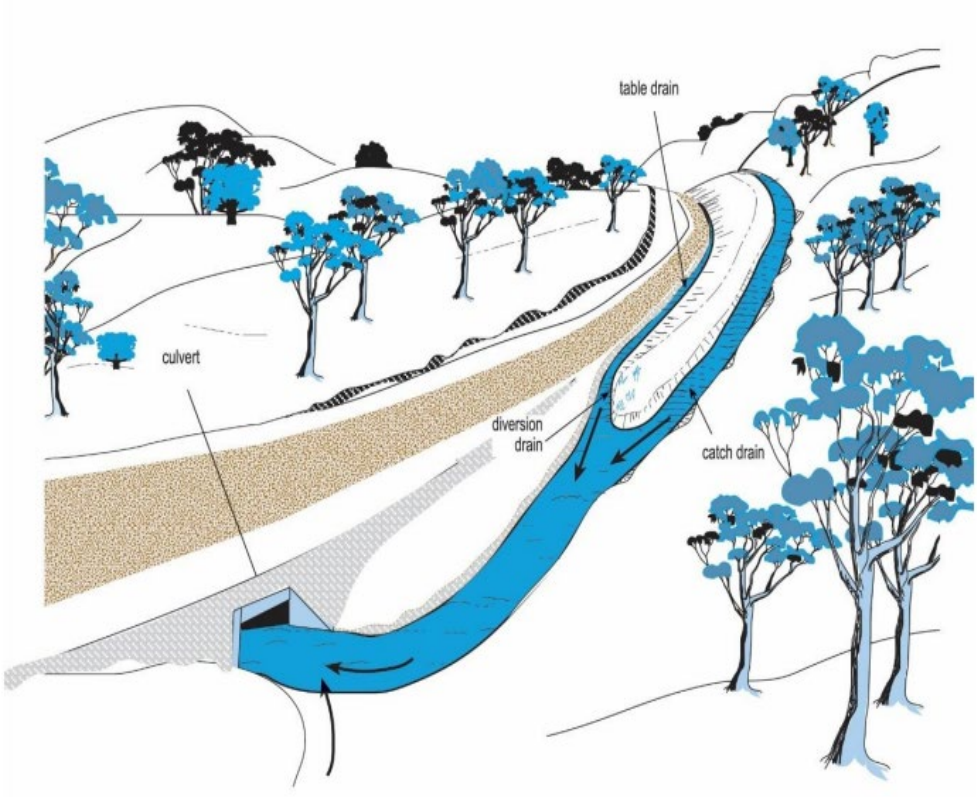


Figure 1. Road Formations

- Ancillary Areas to Roads (On road indented car parks, bus stops and rest areas) including:
  - Formation, pavement, sealed surfaces, kerb and channel and drainage.
- Road Structures including:
  - Road bridges, major culverts, roundabouts, median strips and guard rail.
- Off Road Urban Carparks that are owned or managed by Council and recorded on the Register of Public Roads. *Note: Carparks that are not described in the Register of Public Roads are excluded from the provisions of this Plan.*
- Surface and Subsurface Drainage including:
  - Table drains, catch drains, subsurface drains, diversion and cutoff drains such as displayed in figure 2.



Source: ARRB (2009).

Figure 2. Typical rural road surface drainage components

- Footpaths and within a road reserve including
  - On-road and off-road footpaths
  - Footbridges
  - Paved Surfaces (both sealed and unsealed)

Registered Assets that are adjacent to arterial roads, such as service roads, cemetery roads, ancillary areas, stack sites, internal access roads and footpaths, for which Council is the responsible authority, are also encompassed by this Plan.

1.2 Assets Not Encompassed by this Plan

The following road and access related assets are not encompassed by this Plan:

- Roads on freehold land (including common property) except where such land is owned and managed by Glenelg Shire Council.
- Unconstructed urban streets, unformed roads, unused road reserves, urban laneways, grassy lanes, driveways and informal tracks.
  Note: Council is not obliged to undertake any maintenance activities on any such roads, and they shall not be placed on Council's Register of Public Roads or if identified to no longer be "reasonably required for general public use", then such road shall be removed from the Register of Public Roads and the date that it was removed noted.
- Rail and cable tram structures.
- Vehicle crossings (driveways) - the portion of a vehicle crossing located between the carriageway and the property boundary is the responsibility of the adjoining property owner to maintain such as displayed in figure 3. & 4.



Figure 3. Urban Roadside Responsibility

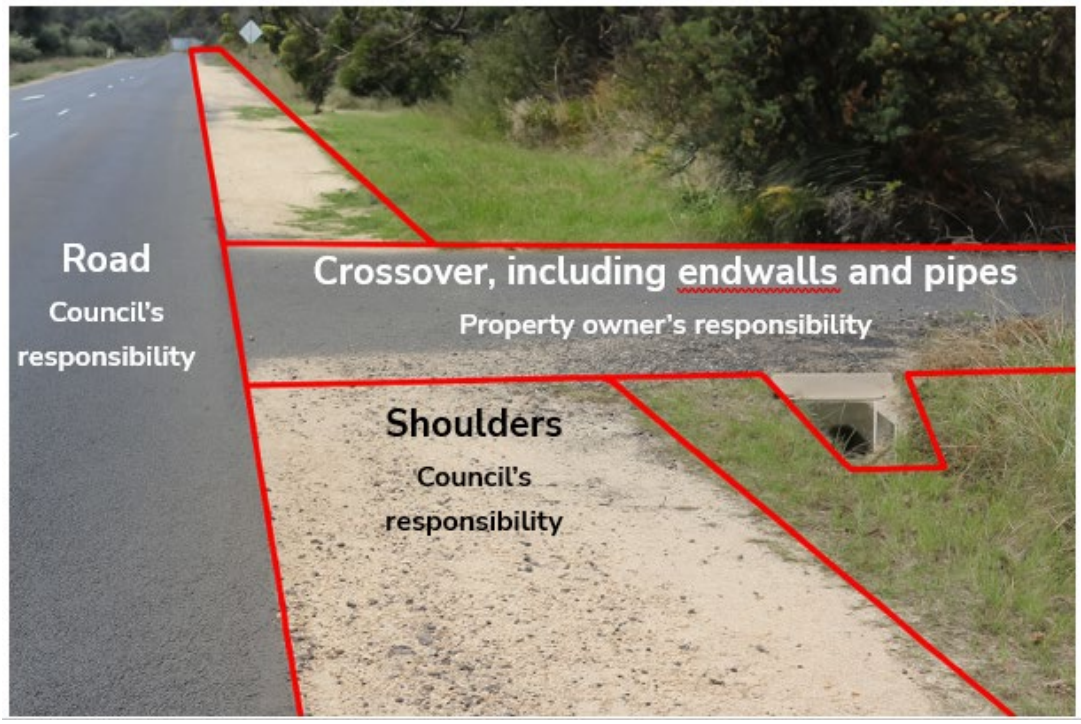


Figure 4. Rural Roadside Responsibility

- Roadside – as per Section 107 of the Road Management Act, Council has no "statutory duty or a common law duty to perform road management functions in respect of a public highway which is not a public road or to maintain, inspect or repair the roadside", described as "any land that is within the boundaries of the road (other than shoulders) which is not a roadway or pathway". This includes landscaped tree plots within the footpath/pathway where the surface of the tree plot is not constructed with the intention of providing a trafficable pedestrian surface.
- Roads under the control of other Road Authorities, inclusive of The Department of Transport and Planning (DTP), the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA).
- Nature strips and infill areas - those residual areas between the road formation and the property boundary not occupied by the footpath and private road crossings. Nature Strips are normally sown to grass but may also receive alternative approved treatments as identified in Council's Nature strip Landscaping Guidelines[1] with responsibility for maintenance of the nature strip generally being allocated to the property owner.
- Street trees are managed in accordance with Urban Tree Policy[2] and not under the provisions of this Plan.
- Property stormwater drains – these drains carry stormwater from a property to a discharge point in the kerb or drain or underground drainage pipe. They are there to benefit the property and as such are the responsibility of the owner of the property being served to maintain.
- Cattle underpass structures – these are box culvert type structures built for the purpose of providing safe crossing for cattle under a road. The culvert is installed and owned by the property owner and owner responsibility for the

[1] Nature Strip Landscaping Guidelines ECM 2346446
[2] Urban Tree Policy ECM 2575569

maintenance of these structures is established through a Section 173 (Local Government Act 1989) Agreement with the adjacent landowner. After the initial 12-month construction defect liability period, Council assumes responsibility for the road pavement, seal, markings, and guideposts only. Responsibility for the structure, including attachments such as guardrail, farm access approaches, fencing and underpass drainage remains with the owner for the duration of the agreement.

- Minor street furniture – assets which have no impact on the ability to maintain a road or road infrastructure including bollards, seats, bicycle racks and waste receptacles.
- Streetlights – are an asset owned by the Shire but maintained by Powercor through an agreement. Powercor retains maintenance responsibility.

1.3 Force Majeure

Glenelg Shire Council will make every effort to meet its commitments under this Road Management Plan; however, there may be situations or circumstances that affect Council's business activities to the extent that it cannot deliver on the service levels described in this Plan.

Glenelg Shire Council shall not be liable for failure to observe or perform in accordance with any provision of this plan for any reason or cause which could not with reasonable diligence be controlled or prevented by it, including without limitation, war, insurrection, riot, civil commotion, strikes, lock-outs, labour or industrial disputes, natural disasters such as fires, floods or storms, power shortages or power failure, inability to obtain sufficient labour, raw materials, fuel or utilities.

In the event that the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Council has considered the impact of such an event on the limited financial resources of Council and its other conflicting priorities, and determined that the Road Management Plan cannot be met, then pursuant to Section 83 of the *Wrongs Act*, the CEO will send a "Request to Suspend"[3] notification to Council's Officer in charge of adhering to this Plan and inform them that some, or all of the timeframes and responses in Council's Road Management Plan are to be suspended.

Once the scope of the event/s have been determined and the resources committed to the event response have been identified, then there will be ongoing consultation between Council's CEO and Council's Officer responsible for adhering to this Plan, to determine which parts of this Plan are to be reactivated and when and a "Request to Reactivate"[4] will be sent when required.

1.4 Key Road Assets Statistics

Council is the responsible authority for approximately 976 km of sealed rural local roads, 1442 km of rural gravel or limestone surfaced roads, 164 km of sealed and 47 km of unsealed urban roads. 46 bridges and 165 major culverts on these local roads are also maintained by Council.

[3] Road Management Plan CEO Request to Suspend ECM 2801956
[4] Road Management Plan CEO Request to Reactivate ECM 2801954

As well as the road assets, Council also maintains an extensive network of concrete, paved and asphalted footpaths in its townships. The length of registered paths (excluding paths surrounding buildings) totals 140 km.

Actual numbers, lengths and areas of assets vary annually due to ongoing subdivisional activity and Council works programs.

1.5 Key Stakeholders

Key stakeholders in the Road Management Plan are road users, the general public, adjoining owners/occupiers to the road, utilities, Council and other Road Authorities.

1.6 Obligations of Road Users

The *Road Safety Act 1986*, Section 17A now sets out the obligations of road users as follows:

(1) A person who drives a motor vehicle on a highway must drive in a safe manner, having regard to all relevant factors, including (without limiting their generality) the: -

(a) Physical characteristics of the road;
(b) Prevailing weather conditions;
(c) Level of visibility;
(d) Condition of the motor vehicle;
(e) Prevailing traffic conditions;
(f) Relevant road laws and advisory signs; and
(g) Physical and mental condition of the driver;

The *Road Safety Act 1986* also requires other road users (other than those driving a motor vehicle) to use a road in a safe manner, having regard to all the relevant factors.

Other obligations of road users are also set out in the *Road Safety Act 1986* in regard to relationships with other road users, and damage to road infrastructure.

1.7 Other Road Management Agencies

There are several other road authorities responsible for parts of the overall road network in Glenelg Shire. These are fully described in the Local Road Hierarchy and are summarised briefly as follows.

1.8 Department of Transport and Planning (DTP)

DTP is the responsible authority for managing the Arterial Road network in the Shire which includes all roads previously classified as Highways and Main Roads. These roads include:

Arterial Highways

- Princes Highway from Moyne SC Boundary to SA Border
- Glenelg Highway from Southern Grampians SC Boundary to SA Border
- Henty Highway from Southern Grampians SC Boundary to Heywood and from Princes Highway to the Port of Portland

Arterial Main Roads

- Portland Nelson Road from 0.0 Km to 69.42 Km
- Henty Highway from 0.0 Km to 6.13 Km;
- Woolsthorpe Heywood Road from 55.46 Km to 76.21 Km
- Bridgewater Road from 0.0 Km to 17.47 Km
- Casterton Edenhope Road from 0.0 to 24.49 Km
- Casterton Apsley Road from 0.0 Km to 27.04 Km
- Casterton Penola Road from 0.0 Km to 41.16 Km
- Dartmoor Hamilton Road from 0.0 Km to 46.96 Km
- Condah Coleraine Road from 0.0 to 34.52 Km
- Tyrendarra-Ettrick Road from 0.0 Km to 7.47 Km
- Madeira Packet Road from 0.0 Km to 9.94 Km
- Myamyn Macarthur Road from 0.0 Km to 10.30 Km
- Portland Casterton Road from 0.0 Km to 63.91 Km

1.9 Adjoining Municipalities

Council shares responsibility for managing roads on the boundaries of Glenelg Shire with the following abutting municipalities:

- Moyne Shire[5]
- Southern Grampians Shire[6]
- West Wimmera Shire[7]
- Wattle Ranges Shire[8] (SA)
- District Council of Grant[9] (SA)

Joint Boundary Road Agreements are in place to clarify maintenance responsibility for these roads.

Where roads are listed in Glenelg Shire's Register of Public Roads and are being inspected and maintained by an adjoining municipality under a Joint Agreement, Glenelg Shire's responsibilities under the Road Management Act are the same as Glenelg Shire contracting out the inspection and maintenance works. The reverse is for the cases where Glenelg Shire is inspecting and maintaining roads on behalf of the adjoining municipalities.

1.10 Department of Energy, Environment and Climate action (DEECA)

Many roads exist on Crown Land other than road reserves, for which DEECA have management responsibility (e.g. declared unused roads, forest and national park roads).

These roads are not included in Council's Road Hierarchy or in this plan.

[5] Joint Boundary Road Agreement ECM 1354644
[6] Joint Boundary Road Agreement ECM 1354646
[7] Joint Boundary Road Agreement ECM 1395055
[8] Joint Boundary Road Agreement ECM 748790
[9] Joint Boundary Road Agreement ECM 1354624

1.11 V/Line/Victrack/ARTC

ARTC is responsible for maintaining active railway level crossings in Glenelg Shire in the immediate vicinity (within 3.00m) of the railway line.

Council is responsible for maintaining the road approaches to the rail line (beyond 3.00m) and approach signage and markings on the local road network.

Respective responsibilities for railway level crossings and grade separated interchanges are described in the Safety Interface Agreement between Glenelg Shire Council, V/Line, VicTrack, DTP, Southern Grampians Shire Council and ARTC.

1.12 Portland Cable Trams Inc

Portland Cable Trams Inc. is responsible for maintaining Cable Tram level crossings in Portland in the immediate vicinity (within 3.00m) of the tram line.

Council is responsible for maintaining the road approaches to the tram line (up to 3.00m from the rail) and approach signage and markings on the local road network.

Respective responsibilities for road and tramway level crossings are described in the Safety Interface Agreement between Glenelg Shire Council and Portland Cable Trams Inc.

1.13 Coordination of Road Responsbilities

Most road reserves will contain assets that are managed by a number of different authorities and utility companies (e.g. roads, electricity supplies, and telecommunications).

For any road or section of road, there is only one nominated Coordinating Road Authority, even if more than one road authority has assets on this section of road. The Coordinating Road Authority for any situation is described in Section 36 of the *Road Management Act 2004* as follows:

Subject to sections 15 and 16 of the *Road Management Act 2004*, the coordinating road authority is as follows:

a) if the road is a freeway or arterial road, DTP;
b) if the road is a non-arterial State road, the relevant responsible authority under section 37(1)(c) or 37(1)(d); and
c) if the road is a municipal road, the municipal council of the municipal district in which the road or part of the road is situated.

For example, in a situation where an arterial highway passes through a town that also has service roads and many other assets and utilities, DTP will be the coordinating road authority.

Management responsibility for the various assets and utilities still lies with the owner of the particular asset (e.g. service road – Council, water – water authority etc.), however the

coordination of all works within the overall road reserve is the responsibility of the coordinating road authority.

2. Local Road Assets

2.1 Register of Public Roads

All asset data is housed in Glenelg Shire's electronic Asset Management System.

A comprehensive register of local roads and the core attributes that relate to these roads is contained within this system.

The asset management system also contains detailed data relating to the road elements (each are assets in their own right) such as formations, pavements and bitumen seals, culverts, signs etc.

The Register of Public Roads, as required under Section 19 of the *Road Management Act 2004*, is an electronic register which can be printed to hardcopy at any time.

Information which forms Glenelg Shire Council's Register of Public Roads, is housed in the data fields under each "Road Name" within the Asset Management System.

The roads within the register are grouped into categories that are fully described in the Local Road Hierarchy[10].

The Register of Public Roads identifies only the sections of roads that Glenelg Shire Council has maintenance responsibilities for, or those roads or bridges where Council has a shared responsibility for capital rehabilitation or renewal when these works are required.

The Register of Public Roads is reviewed on an 'as required' basis but not less than annually to ensure that it is accurate and up to date. As per S.17(4) of the *Road Management Act 2004*, a road authority must remove a road from its register of public roads if the road authority has made a decision that the road is no longer reasonably required for general public use.

Internal procedures have been developed that will ensure that new subdivision roads and other roads are added to the Register at the time when responsibility for such roads is determined to be Council's.

2.2 Footpath Hierarchy

All footpaths in the Glenelg Shire are sorted into a hierarchy that considers the pedestrian traffic that may be generated in an area. Categories are: -

[10] Local Road Hierarchy Vol 1 ECM 936620

Commercial Paths (High Use)	Footpaths that are in the vicinity of shopping precincts and higher use community centres and transport hubs.

Neighbourhood Link Paths (Medium Use)	Footpaths along arterial roads in urban areas, as well as urban link and urban collector roads. Typically linking one or more of the following: • Shopping Precincts • Community Facilities, Schools or Churches • Tourist Attractions • Transport Hubs; or • Commercial Parking Areas with >100 vehicle capacity.

Residential Paths (Low Use)	Footpaths in local road reservation that primarily service residential or industrial areas and connect to Neighbourhood Link footpaths.

Figure 5. Footpath Hierarchy

Footpath assets are described within Council's Asset Management System and are also shown in a spatial format in Council's live Geographic Information System (GIS).

For risk management purposes, commercial footpaths will be offered a higher service level than neighbourhood links, which in turn will be offered a higher level of service than residential paths.

Footpath inspection frequencies are detailed in Figure 3 in Section 3.2.2 of this document and service intervention levels are described in Appendix 1.

3. Inspection Routines

3.1 Standards for Inspections

Glenelg Shire Council undertakes a variety of inspections in accordance with this Plan.
Road and Footpath assets that are inspected shall have individual defects rated as being:
Above Intervention – The defect is worse than the predetermined intervention level that is established in Appendix 1. These defects are entered in Council's Defect Logging System.
Below Intervention – Condition is satisfactory or better than the predetermined intervention level that is established in Appendix 1. No work action is required at this time and will continue to be monitored.

3.2 Inspections types & Frequency

For local roads, there are routine proactive levels of inspections that are used. These are as follows:

3.2.1 Condition Inspection of Sealed Road Network

This work is typically done by an external service provider who can provide consistency of evaluation and some ability to evaluate relativities across the state.

This inspection provides data from which pavement rehabilitation and resealing programs can be drawn. The intention of this type of inspection is to assist with long term asset management planning and is a general assessment of the network. As such, individual defects are not measured against the intervention levels stated in Appendix 1 as part of these inspections.

3.2.2 Routine Proactive Road Safety Inspections

These inspections are conducted on a regular basis by road inspection staff and are aimed at identifying defects in the road infrastructure or road related infrastructure which may exceed the predetermined intervention level.

Routine road safety inspections shall be conducted in accordance with the following schedule. The frequency of inspections varies with road classification in the road hierarchy. Typical road inspection frequencies are shown in Figure 6.

Asset Type	Patrol Inspection Frequency
Rural Link Roads	4 inspections per calendar year
Rural Collector Roads	4 inspections per calendar year
Rural General Access Roads	2 inspections per calendar year (approx. once every 6 months)
Urban Link Roads	4 inspections per calendar year
Urban Collector Roads	4 inspections per calendar year
Urban General Access Roads	2 inspections per calendar year (approx. once every 6 months)
Urban/Rural Minor Access Roads	1 inspection per calendar year
Bridges & Major Culverts (level 1 Inspection)	1 inspection per calendar year
Bridges & Major Culverts (level 2 Inspection)	1 inspection per 2 to 5 calendar years in accordance with (DoT) Road Structures Inspection Manual
Commercial Footpaths (high use)	1 inspection per calendar year
Neighbourhood Link paths (medium use)	1 inspection per calendar year
Residential paths (low use)	1 inspection per 2 calendar years
Carparks	1 inspection per calendar year

Sealed Road Network	1 Condition inspection every 4 years (approx.)
Urban Underground Drainage Network	1 CCTV inspection per 5 calendar years

Figure 6. Routine Inspection Frequencies

3.2.3 Response Inspections

These inspections shall be carried out in response to service requests, reports of defects and complaints which are received in Council's Customer Request System.

Inspections of an asset shall be conducted by a responsible officer and are conducted within the designated action response time as defined in the following sections.

The inspecting officer will then arrange any required response action/s (work) in accordance with the severity of the situation and in compliance with the action responses specified in Appendix 1.

3.2.4 Night Inspections (Link and Collector Roads only)

Nighttime inspections of Link and Collector category roads shall be undertaken once every 2 years to review the effectiveness of lighting areas and to identify defective or missing signage, guideposts and pavement/guardrail delineators that offer road alignment and other guidance to drivers whilst driving at night.

4. Maintenance Targets

Road maintenance is the regular day-to-day work necessary to keep road assets operating including instances where portions of the asset fail and need immediate repair to make the asset operational again.

There are three categories of road maintenance that are carried out:
- Routine maintenance: Routine maintenance and repair work.
- Scheduled maintenance: Work carried out to pre-determined schedules.
- Response maintenance: Work carried out in response to reported problems or defects.

4.1 Routine and Scheduled Maintenance

Routine and scheduled maintenance works have a more predetermined and structured approach to them as distinct from response maintenance which can be unpredictable in nature.

Most routine and scheduled maintenance work programs result from the formal road and bridge condition inspections that are detailed in the previous sections.

Condition assessments that are conducted during the formal inspections are used to identify sections of road where routine or scheduled maintenance work is required.

Appendix 1 shows the condition intervention levels that are applied to determine whether maintenance work is required.

4.2 All Unsealed Roads – Programmed Grading

Grading of unsealed roads may be conducted on a regular programmed basis; however, roads that are in good trafficable condition will be excluded from the grading cycle. The frequency of programmed road grading is based upon the road classification within the hierarchy and is described in Figure 7.

Road Category	Patrol Grading Frequency
Rural Link Roads	Not applicable
Rural Collector Roads	Twice per calendar year
Rural General Access Road	Once per calendar year
Rural Minor Access Road	Once per calendar year
Urban General Access Road	Once per calendar year
Urban Minor Access Road	Once per calendar year

Figure 7. Road Grading Frequency

4.2.1 Programmed Grading

Road Grading is generally not conducted in response to customer requests but may be initiated in response to emergency situations or situations presenting unacceptable safety risks.

4.2.2 All Unsealed Roads – Programmed Grading

Fire access tracks maintenance shall be carried out, upon request from CFA. This will generally allow dry weather access by firefighting trucks.

5. Information Systems & Management

This section details the systems and processes for handling information about roads that is received from either road asset inspections or from reporting by road users and the general public.

5.1 Information Receival and Recording

Customer requests relating to roads or footpaths are entered into Council's Customer Request System (CRS). These requests are assigned to the appropriate unit/officer and, after an inspection (as with other routine inspections), any defects are logged in Council's Defect Logging System (DLS).

5.2 Resulting Works

Patrol maintenance teams, specific action teams or specialist contractors are issued with specific works instructions that contain the information from the defect action.

When the resulting work action has been completed, the works team shall advise the works officer that the work is completed, and the work instruction shall be signed off as completed. These works can be closed off in the field using the DLS which is updated in the AMS.

5.3 Completion of Process

The works officer then shall ensure that the original defect action is completed within the AMS, if not already completed by work crews in the field.

Council will monitor the response times and resulting actions from service requests to ensure that the required service delivery is maintained.

6. Road Management Plan Review

The Glenelg Shire Council Road Management Plan should be reviewed on a four-yearly basis in line with Council elections and changes adopted once approved by Council.

To ensure the relevance of service levels, future reviews should consider community expectations developed through technical evaluation, best value reviews, community forums and other customer feedback systems.

6.1 Changes Incorporated into Review – 2025

- *Reclassified High Use Carparks and Low Use Carparks to umbrella title Carparks and changed inspection frequency to 1 inspection per calendar year in Figure 3 – Routine Inspection Frequencies*
- *Removed FDA footpath defect from Appendix 1, section 9.1, as no response date required and DDA is used as a guideline and rectification is type and funding dependant.*
- *Added level 2 Bridge & Culvert Inspections to Figure 3, section 3.2.2.*
- *Defect SAP – Sapling added to Appendix 1, section 9.1.*
- *Included Roadside image and description in section 1.2 for further clarification.*

7. Records Management

All Council records created and managed as a result of implementing this policy will be managed in accordance with the Council's Records Management Policy.

The Records Management Policy assigns responsibilities for records management to employees, supervisors, volunteers and other specific positions.

No Council records are to be destroyed without consideration of the requirements of the Act(s) that govern the functions relevant to this policy. Prior to destruction, advice must be sought from the Records Management Unit, with consideration to the requirements of the appropriate Retention and Disposal Authority (RDA).

8. References

Legislation, Standards Codes of Practice, Guidelines, Council Strategies, Policies, Quality Plans and Procedures that are relevant to this Road Management Plan include:

- *Local Government Act 1989, 2020*
- *Road Management Act 2004*
- *Road Management (General) Regulations 2016*
- *Transport Act 1983*
- *Road Safety Act 1986*
- *Wrongs Act 1958*
- *Subdivisions Act 1988*
- International Infrastructure Management Manual 2020
- Code of Practice for Management of Infrastructure in Road Reserves
- Road Management (Works and Infrastructure) Regulations 2015
- Code of Practice for Operational Responsibility for Public Roads ECM 3143224
- Glenelg Shire Council Plan ECM 3001483
- Glenelg Shire Council Asset Management Policy ECM 1273164
- Glenelg Shire Council Register of Public Roads ECM 2784892
- Glenelg Shire Council Local Road Hierarchy Vol 1 ECM 936620
- Glenelg Shire Council Local Road Hierarchy Vol 2 ECM 936621
- Glenelg Shire Council Access to Rural Properties Policy ECM 940994
- Glenelg Shire Council Road Safety Strategy ECM 1025365
- Glenelg Shire Council Roadside Management Guidelines ECM 1014624
- Glenelg Shire Council Tracks & Trails Strategy ECM 2582227
- Glenelg Shire Council Transport Asset Management Plan ECM 1894900
- Glenelg Shire Council Urban Tree Policy ECM 3200734
- Glenelg Shire Council Works within Road Reserves (Minor Works) – Non-Utilities ECM 2430568
- Glenelg Shire Council Stormwater Discharge Point and Drainage Information Application. ECM 550894
- Glenelg Shire Council Road Hazard Defect Inspection Manual ECM 1466403
- Infrastructure Design Manual (IDM)
- Rail Safety Interface Agreement - Glenelg Shire Council and Portland Cable Trams Inc. ECM 1137989
- Rail Safety Interface Agreement between Glenelg Shire Council, VicTrack, and ARTC. ECM 1004308

9. Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1

Note #

Where, because of the nature of the repair required, level of resources required or workload, it is not possible to rectify within the time shown in tables below appropriate warning of the hazard is to be provided until the repair can be completed.

CARRIAGEWAY DEFECTS

Defect Code	Description of Defect (Intervention Level)	Response Code by Road Maintenance Category							
		RL	RC	RG	RM	UL	UC	UG	UM
	Obstructions and Substances in Traffic Lane								
OCC	Occasional issue on road requiring response - ponding of water >300mm deep, fallen trees, oil spills, stray livestock, debris.	7 days	7 days	7 days	14 days	7 days	7 days	7 days	14 days
	Pavement or surface defects								
POT	Potholes in traffic lane of a sealed pavement greater than 300mm in diameter and greater than 100mm deep or in the traffic lane of an unsealed pavement greater than 500mm diameter and 150mm deep.	7 days	7 days	14 days	1 month	7 days	7 days	14 days	14 days
COR	Corrugations in the traffic lane of a sealed pavement. Maximum depth under a 1.2m straightedge exceeds 50mm or on an unsealed pavement 100mm.	7 days	7 days	14 days	1 month	7 days	7 days	14 days	14 days
DEP	Depressions in the traffic lane of a sealed pavement. Maximum depth under a 1.2m straightedge exceeds 100mm or on an unsealed pavement 150mm.	7 days	7 days	14 days	1 month	7 days	7 days	14 days	14 days
RUT	Extended sections of longitudinal wheel rutting in a sealed pavement. Maximum depth under a 1.2m straightedge exceeds 100mm or on unsealed pavements 150mm.	1 month	3 months	N/a	N/a	1 month	3 months	N/a	N/a
SCO	Steep, irregular sided eroded channels on road surface, generally in the direction of maximum slope. Maximum depth under a 1.2m straightedge exceeds 100mm or on unsealed pavements 150mm.	7 days	7 days	7 days	3 months	7 days	7 days	7 days	1 month
SHO	Shoving of the surface in the traffic lane. Maximum depth under a 1.2m straightedge exceeds 100mm.	7 days	7 days	14 days	1 month	7 days	7 days	14 days	14 days

EDG	Edge breaks where width of seal is reduced by 150mm or more from general edge of seal.	1 month	1 month	3 months	N/a	1 month	1 month	3 months	N/a
SHG	Unsealed shoulder grading to correct pavement drop off 100mm, build-up or rutting.	7 days	14 days	1 month	N/a	7 days	14 days	1 month	N/a
DRO	Edge drops onto unsealed shoulder greater than 100mm.	1 month	1 month	3 months	N/a	1 month	1 month	3 months	N/a
DEL	Delamination of the upper bitumen surface layer where the affected area > .5m^2 or more than 3 delaminated areas in close proximity (< 10m apart)	7 days	7 days	14 days	1 month	7 days	7 days	14 days	14 days
SOF	Any incidence of soft or un-trafficable shoulders on Link or Collector Roads.	7 days	7 days	N/a	N/a	7 days	7 days	N/a	N/a
	Pavement markings								
MAR	Missing, illegible or confusing at a critical location [11]	1 month	1 month	3 months	N/a	1 month	1 month	3 months	N/a
	Drainage								
PIT	Damaged so as to obviously undermine its structural integrity or missing drainage pit lids, surrounds, grates, in pedestrian areas or traffic lanes.	7 days	7 days	7 days	14 days	7 days	7 days	7 days	14 days
BLO	Subsurface drains dirt/debris removal from outlets and pits, check rodent and flood flaps.	3 months	3 months	3 months	N/a	3 months	3 months	3 months	N/a
	Vegetation (trees, shrubs and grassed areas)								
VEG	Trees, shrubs or grasses that have grown to restrict design sight distance to intersections or restrict viewing of safety signs or long dry grass on a road shoulder where a vehicle is required to leave the paved surface of the road to overtake another vehicle.	6 months	6 months	6 months	6 months	6 months	6 months	6 months	6 months

[11] A critical location is a location where the road alignment and/or pavement width and/or geometry are identified by additional markings or furniture to guide the travelling public. E.g. on curves, at intersections, road narrowing's etc. Standard culvert crossings that do not cause a narrowing of the road are not considered to be critical locations.

SAP	Vegetation growing within the maintained road verge (shoulder to back of table drain) or within 2m of a road structure	12 months	12 months	12 months	12 months	12 months	12 months	12 months	12 months
INT	Vegetation intruding within an envelope over roadways from the back of shoulder and/or kerb and a minimum of 5m height clearance over pavement and the trafficable portion of shoulders or within 2m of a road structure.	6 months	6 months	6 months	6 months	6 months	6 months	6 months	6 months
	Safety signs [1]								
SSI	Safety signs missing, illegible or damaged making them substantially ineffective.	14 days	14 days	14 days	1 month	14 days	14 days	14 days	1 month
	Guideposts								
GUI	Missing or damaged at a critical location[11]making them substantially ineffective.	14 days	1 month	1 month	3 months	14 days	1 month	1 month	3 months
	Safety barriers and fencing								
BAR	Missing or damaged at a critical location [11]making them substantially ineffective.	1 month	3 months	3 months	N/a	1 month	3 months	3 months	N/a
	Structures (including bridges)								
STR	Damage affecting structural performance.	7 days	7 days	7 days	7 days	7 days	7 days	7 days	7 days

Footpath Defects

Defect Code	Description of Defect (Intervention Level)	Rectification Response Time by Footpath Category		
		Commercial (High Use)	Neighbourhood Link (Medium Use)	Residential (Low Use)
FOA	Defective pedestrian areas with a step greater than 20mm.	3 Months	6 Months	6 Months
OCC	Occasional issue on footpath requiring response - ponding of water >300mm deep, fallen trees, oil spills, debris.	7 Days	14 Days	14 Days
FOV	Vegetation over pedestrian, intruding into a clearance envelope between the edge of path and a minimum of 2.5m height clearance over path.	6 Months	6 Months	6 Months
FOP	Potholes in an unsealed path surface that are greater than 300mm diameter and 50mm deep	Not Applicable	12 Months	12 Months

Survey Responses

06 June 2016 - 07 October 2025

Draft Road Management Plan

Your Say Glenelg

Project: Road Management Plan

GRANICUS

VISITORS
16

CONTRIBUTORS			RESPONSES		
5			5		
1	0	4	1	0	4
Registered	Unverified	Anonymous	Registered	Unverified	Anonymous

Submission 1



Respondent No: 1
Login: Anonymous
Email: n/a

Responded At: Sep 02, 2025 12:25:50 pm
Last Seen: Sep 02, 2025 12:25:50 pm
IP Address: n/a

Q1. **Please use the space below to share your thoughts on the Draft Road Management Plan**

There needs to be more preventative maintenance done so the roads don't get further damaged. As a school bus driver, I travel many local back roads. The roadsides and roads themselves are not well maintained. Many are very dangerous. I am having to replace tyres frequently on my buses. Pot holes, sharp shoulders, corrugations, dirt built up on roadside not graded off so rain water cannot drain off road and so water gets in underneath and cracks it, trees and branches blown over and left (our family go to chsinsaw them off the bus route roads or they'd sit there til they rotted). I see many council vehicles parked in out of the way places, feet of drivers up on steering wheel, snoozing or dining and not much actually being done. It seems there is not much accountability from above or pride taken in their work by many road works employees locally. It makes us frustrated as rate payers, paying rates on multiple holdings but not seeing our rates well spent on crucial services such as roads, spent instead on fluffy wellbeing, arts, cultural, green, etc money sink holes.

Q2.	**Where do you live?(start typing the name of your town and select from the drop down when it appears)**	MYAMYN, VIC
Q3.	**How old are you?**	35-49
Q4.	**What is your gender?**	Female
Q5.	**We would love to hear how you heard about this project. This helps us to understand the best way to let community know how to Have Your say on Council projects.**	Facebook
Q6.	**If you would like to receive a response to your submission please provide your email below.**	not answered

Submission 2



Respondent No: 2
Login: Anonymous
Email: n/a

Responded At: Sep 02, 2025 13:16:44 pm
Last Seen: Sep 02, 2025 13:16:44 pm
IP Address: n/a

Q1. **Please use the space below to share your thoughts on the Draft Road Management Plan**

I am writing to urge the Council to make it a priority to address a long-standing and increasingly pressing matter: the state of our town's roads, road shoulders, footpaths, and drainage systems. Specifically, I strongly believe that the Council should commit to ensuring that all applicable roads within our town boundaries are upgraded to include sealed shoulders and properly constructed concrete footpaths. In addition, the outdated and unsightly open drainage ditches that still exist in many areas should be converted into modern, closed drainage systems. This is not simply a matter of aesthetics, although appearance certainly plays a role in the perception and pride of our community. This is fundamentally about safety, accessibility, long-term planning, and the dignity of the town's public infrastructure. 1. Unsealed Shoulders Undermine the Safety and Function of Our Roads Unsealed shoulders may once have been tolerated in a semi-rural or developing environment, but in an established town such as ours, they now represent a clear and ongoing hazard: Safety for all road users is compromised, especially for cyclists, pedestrians, and vehicles that may need to pull over in emergencies. Loose gravel, erosion, and dust pose real dangers. During periods of rain, unsealed shoulders quickly degrade into muddy, uneven surfaces that trap water, damage road edges, and lead to costly long-term maintenance. The current state discourages walking and cycling, two forms of transport the Council should be actively encouraging in line with sustainability and public health goals. 2. Concrete Footpaths Are a Basic Community Expectation Footpaths are not a luxury — they are an essential part of a well-functioning, inclusive community: Concrete footpaths ensure accessibility for all, including children, the elderly, people with disabilities, and parents pushing prams. Without proper pathways, pedestrians are often forced onto the road or unsealed shoulders, exposing them to unnecessary risk. Modern, well-planned footpaths help create connected neighbourhoods, encouraging walking, neighbourly interactions, and a stronger sense of local identity. Neglecting this basic infrastructure sends the message that pedestrians are not a priority in our town's planning — a message that stands in stark contrast to many of the values Council claims to uphold. 3. Open Drainage Ditches Are Outdated and Unsafe Open drainage systems are another legacy of a bygone era. In a contemporary, urbanised setting, they are: Unsafe — posing risks to children, pets, and motorists, especially in poor visibility or during heavy rain. Unsightly — a clear sign of underinvestment in public infrastructure, diminishing the appearance and appeal of our neighbourhoods. Environmentally problematic — open ditches collect debris and can quickly become breeding grounds for pests, creating health risks for residents. A closed drainage system not only removes these hazards but also supports better stormwater management, reduces erosion, and integrates more seamlessly with footpaths and road networks. 4. An Investment in Civic Pride and Long-Term Sustainability Infrastructure speaks volumes about what a town values. Well-maintained roads with sealed shoulders, safe and accessible footpaths, and modern drainage systems are hallmarks of a community that cares about its residents, invests in the future, and refuses to settle for mediocrity. When roads are bordered by crumbling gravel shoulders and open ditches, the message is clear: this place has been neglected. Conversely, when infrastructure is thoughtfully designed and uniformly upgraded, we cultivate civic pride, economic opportunity, and public safety. In Conclusion I ask the Council to prioritise the sealing of all road shoulders, the installation of concrete footpaths throughout the town, and the replacement of open drainage ditches with closed systems. This is not just about infrastructure — it is about vision. It is about creating a town that works for everyone, that looks to the future, and that stands as a model of what a thoughtful, caring, and well-managed community should be. Please consider this a sincere and urgent call to invest in the basic, visible, and impactful elements of our town's public infrastructure. I, along with many others in the community, believe it is time for our town to step forward into a higher standard of safety, function, and pride.

Q2.	**Where do you live?(start typing the name of your town and select from the drop down when it appears)**	CASHMORE, VIC
Q3.	**How old are you?**	35-49
Q4.	**What is your gender?**	Male

Q5.	**We would love to hear how you heard about this project. This helps us to understand the best way to let community know how to Have Your say on Council projects.**	Your Say Glenelg Email update
Q6.	**If you would like to receive a response to your submission please provide your email below.**	[redacted]

Submission 3

Respondent No: 3
Login: Anonymous
Email: n/a

Responded At: Sep 02, 2025 14:56:13 pm
Last Seen: Sep 02, 2025 14:56:13 pm
IP Address: n/a

Q1. **Please use the space below to share your thoughts on the Draft Road Management Plan**

Mount Clay road upgrade needed!!! This is a small farming road which now has become a very busy road due to navigation sending tourists and road trains on this road , narrow road with terrible edges especially in the most dangerous parts of the road Also that intersection in Heywood at the end of Mount Clay road is a fatality waiting to happen , trucks , vans parked so close to that intersection most days you are pretty much pulling out blindly - it's worse at school pick up times with busses also parked there

Q2.	**Where do you live?(start typing the name of your town and select from the drop down when it appears)**	HEYWOOD, VIC
Q3.	**How old are you?**	35-49
Q4.	**What is your gender?**	Female
Q5.	**We would love to hear how you heard about this project. This helps us to understand the best way to let community know how to Have Your say on Council projects.**	Facebook
Q6.	**If you would like to receive a response to your submission please provide your email below.**	[redacted]

Submission 4

Respondent No: 4
Login [redacted]
Email: [redacted]

Responded At: Sep 02, 2025 18:22:43 pm
Last Seen: Sep 02, 2025 07:03:33 am
IP Address: [redacted]

Q1. **Please use the space below to share your thoughts on the Draft Road Management Plan**

It all looks reasonable. My only issue (other than the poor surface quality) with the local roads (rural) is with the vegetation increased footprint, and condition of the trees due to poor soil quality or damage caused by koalas that the local road reserves contain. In the last 30 years, native fauna numbers (particularly koalas and kangaroos) have grown exponentially whilst wildlife corridoors along the roadside have crept closer to the road edges. I've recently resigned as a SES volunteer, and I can say that this was one of the reasons I quit. I felt as if we (volunteers) were being 'used' for free by council and our own service to maintain roadsides 'during and after the storms' whilst the authorities (local and State) continue to ignore the issues and hide behind native title and vegetation legislation. The roads need to be cleared well back from the raod edges for the safety of road users and willdlife.

Q2. **Where do you live?(start typing the name of your town and select from the drop down when it appears)**	PORTLAND, VIC
Q3. **How old are you?**	50-59
Q4. **What is your gender?**	Male
Q5. **We would love to hear how you heard about this project. This helps us to understand the best way to let community know how to Have Your say on Council projects.**	Your Say Glenelg Email update
Q6. **If you would like to receive a response to your submission please provide your email below.**	not answered

Submission 5

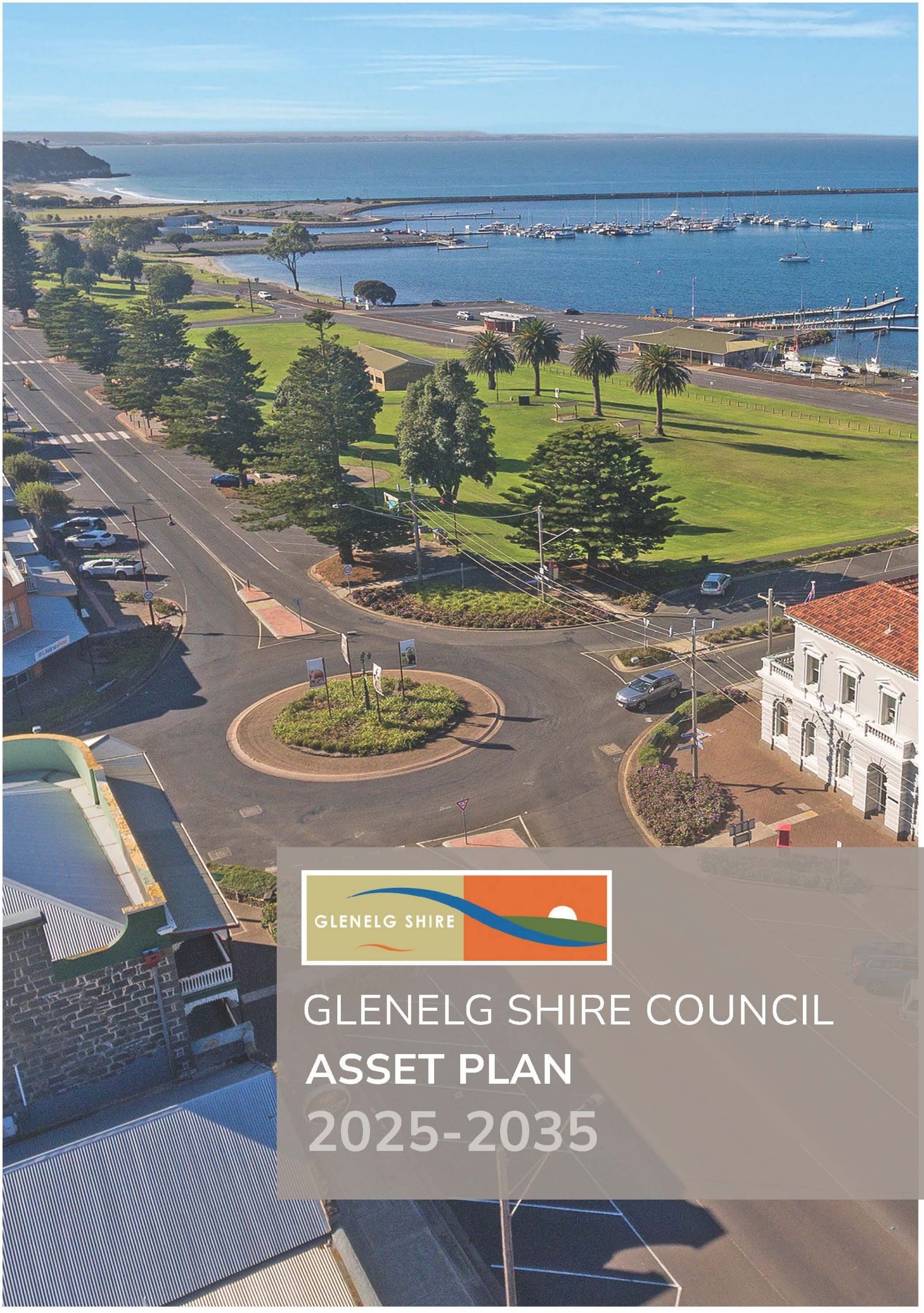
Respondent No: 5
Login: Anonymous
Email: n/a

Responded At: Sep 05, 2025 12:11:37 pm
Last Seen: Sep 05, 2025 12:11:37 pm
IP Address: n/a

Q1. **Please use the space below to share your thoughts on the Draft Road Management Plan**

In addition to roads I believe it is time Council also took responsibility for the trees and vegetation which are on the roadside verge. When trees collapse onto private property it should be the responsibility of Council to remove at least the portion that is on public land and to expect land owners to bear all of the costs and responsibility for clearing these trees is simply unfair. The trees were not planted by the landowner and yet when they fall it is random chance depending on the way they fall whether Council will remove them or simply pass the cost and responsibility on to the landowner without any form of redress. In many cases this can place a financial and physical burden on the landowner which should not be theirs to bear as the trees were not on their property or planted by them. Council should be responsible not only for the roads themselves but the maintenance and control of the verges as well.

Q2. **Where do you live?(start typing the name of your town and select from the drop down when it appears)**	HEYWOOD, VIC
Q3. **How old are you?**	60-69
Q4. **What is your gender?**	Male
Q5. **We would love to hear how you heard about this project. This helps us to understand the best way to let community know how to Have Your say on Council projects.**	**Other (please specify)** I have recently had trees from the roadside verge fall over my boundary fence and in following up a request for support, which was not forthcoming due to Council regulations, I was made aware of this project.
Q6. **If you would like to receive a response to your submission please provide your email below.**	[redacted]



GLENELG SHIRE

GLENELG SHIRE COUNCIL
ASSET PLAN
2025-2035

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Executive Summary

Introduction and Legislative Context

Glenelg Shire Council manages a diverse portfolio of infrastructure assets valued at approximately $767 million, spanning roads and bridges to community buildings, parks, and drainage networks across our rural municipality. These assets are fundamental to delivering quality services and maintaining the liveability of our communities.

This Asset Plan is prepared in accordance with Section 92 of the Victorian *Local Government Act 2020*, which mandates all Victorian councils to develop a ten-year strategic plan for infrastructure assets. The Act emphasises principles of deliberative community engagement and sustainable financial management, requiring integration with Council's Financial Plan and Budget processes.

The Plan forms part of Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework, directly connecting high-level community outcomes articulated in the Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 with practical asset management actions and financial provisions. It also ensures compliance with related legislation including the *Road Management Act 2004* and various safety and accessibility standards.

Community Priorities and Engagement

Community consultation conducted between January and March 2025 identified clear priorities that have helped shaped this Asset Plan. The community emphasised:

Primary Infrastructure Concerns:

- **Safety and basic infrastructure** - residents prioritised core assets including local roads (particularly fixing potholes on school bus routes), footpaths for pedestrian safety, and drainage systems to prevent flooding in townships
- **Road network improvements** - consistently identified as the top priority across all townships
- **Transport connectivity** - including footpaths, trails, and accessible transport options

Equity and Service Delivery:

- **Equitable service across towns** - ensuring smaller townships and rural areas receive fair attention, particularly for gravel road maintenance and bridge repairs
- **Maintaining community facilities** - strong support for preserving recreation assets like pools, sports grounds, and community halls that foster social connection

Governance Expectations:

- **Transparency in decision-making** - residents requested clearer communication about how Council prioritises asset renewal projects
- **Fiscal responsibility** - community expectations for Council to be transparent and accountable in asset investment decisions

Pools and other ageing recreation facilities were specifically highlighted for improvement where financially feasible, reflecting the community's commitment to maintaining social infrastructure that supports families and community connection.

Current State of Assets

Council's asset condition profile reveals a mixed picture requiring strategic intervention:

- **Overall condition** averages around Fair (Condition 3), with road assets performing better at Condition 2.6
- **Heritage assets** present challenges, rating poorly at Condition 4.2 and requiring significant investment
- **Critical infrastructure** including main roads, bridges, and drainage systems is generally maintained in fair condition or better, supporting effective risk management
- Approximately **12% of assets** are in very poor condition, representing a renewal backlog that must be addressed

The asset portfolio faces typical rural municipality pressures: ageing infrastructure-built decades ago, financial constraints from a small ratepayer base supporting an extensive asset network, and evolving community demands influenced by demographic changes and climate impacts.

Financial Strategy and Investment Approach

Council has developed a financially sustainable approach prioritising renewal over expansion or upgrade in the short-medium term, aligned with a 10-year Long Term Financial Plan:

Capital Works Program:

- **2025/26**: $15.8 million investment addressing urgent renewal needs
- **2026/27-2028/29**: Steady $9.6 – 9.8 million annually focused primarily on asset renewal
- **2028/29** A potential major capital project and new asset acquisition of $20M planned following successive years of a "consolidate and renew" strategy, allowing for robust project planning and asset consolidation to occur. This is not guaranteed and will be based on a suitable project opportunity and available funding, outlining Council's major project approach

Funding Sources:

- **External grants**: Expected to contribute $3.7-4.5 million annually (approximately 50% of capital funding), with a future $10 million grant identified aligning with a future major project opportunity
- **Council resources**: $3.8-6.37 million annually from rates and reserves
- **Strategic borrowing**: $3.0 million of the $7.0 million loan amount identified in 2025/26. A further $10 million loan has been identified in 2028/29 to support a future major capital project. The need for borrowings to cover asset expenditure (new, upgrade or renewal) is managed and assessed in accordance with Council's Borrowings Policy, Long Term Financial Plan and Annual Budget.

Demand Management: Council employs several strategies to control future financial obligations:

- Prioritising renewal before expansion
- Planning for and investing in multi-use facilities to maximise utilisation
- Service level reviews to consider assets with community needs
- Community engagement in major asset decisions

Improvement Initiatives

Council recognises the need for enhanced asset management maturity and has identified priority improvement areas:

Data and Systems (Short term):

- Establish Asset Management Steering Committee for strategic oversight
- Complete comprehensive condition assessments for all major asset groups
- Implement integrated Civica Altitude asset management system
- Develop detailed 10-year renewal forecasts using predictive modelling

Governance and Planning (Medium term):

- Create Community Asset Reference Group for ongoing engagement
- Develop formalised Level of Service frameworks with community input
- Implement risk analysis for critical assets with contingency planning

Sustainability Goals (Long-term):

- We will endeavour to reduce the -12% backlog to a reasonable target to be established once the existing data improves.

- Depreciation expenses will be better matched by renewal expenditure – a common sustainability indicator – moving toward or achieving the benchmark of 100% renewal vs depreciation ratio (currently, we are working to calculate this precisely as data improves).
- Establish mature asset management practices comparable to best-practice rural councils

Further detail regarding asset management improvements is available in the improvement timeline section at the end of this plan.

Conclusion and Next Steps

This Asset Plan provides a strategic roadmap for Council's sustainable infrastructure management that balances technical requirements with community values and financial realities. The approach prioritises maintaining existing assets over expansion, ensuring current service levels can be sustained within available resources.

Implementation begins immediately upon adoption of this Asset Plan in the short term, based on available resources, focusing on establishing governance structures and improving condition data and asset management systems. Regular community reporting will ensure transparency and accountability, while the Plan will be reviewed every four (4) years to maintain alignment with evolving community needs and Council strategic directions.

By implementing this framework, Council and the community will work together to ensure our infrastructure continues to support thriving, connected communities across the Shire for generations to come.

Introduction

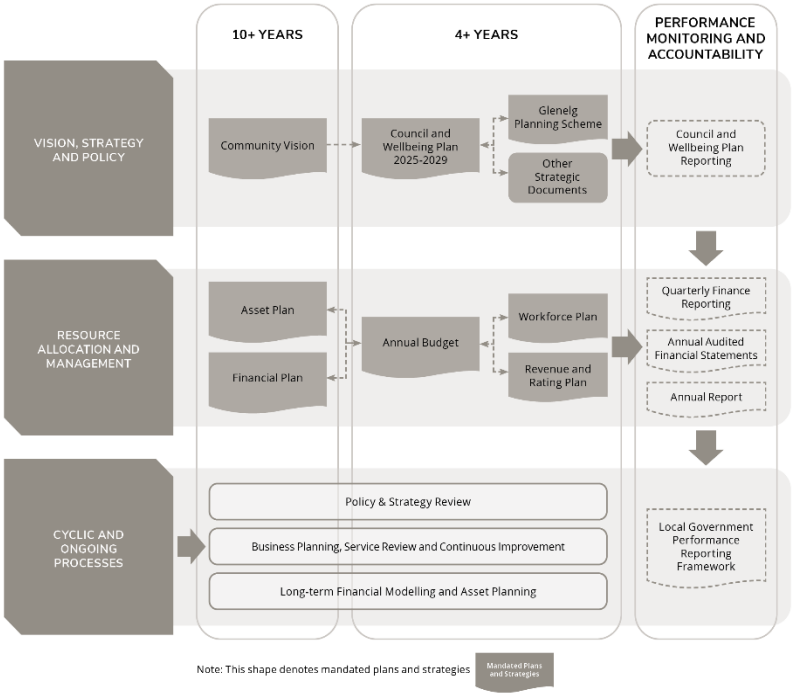
Glenelg Shire Council manages a diverse range of infrastructure assets that are essential for delivering quality services and amenities to the community. These assets – from roads and bridges to community buildings, parks, and drainage networks – enable daily life across our towns and rural areas.

Council's asset base is valued at approximately $767 million. Managing such a portfolio is a significant responsibility that Council approaches with a long-term perspective, guided by both community aspirations and statutory requirements.

Why an Asset Plan?

This Asset Plan is a strategic document required under Section 92 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, which mandates councils to prepare a ten-year plan for infrastructure assets. The plan outlines how Glenelg Shire will manage, maintain, and renew its assets to ensure they continue to support services in line with community needs and Council's broader vision.

It is part of an Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework, sitting alongside the Community Vision, Council and Wellbeing Plan, Long Term Financial Plan and other documents. In essence, the Asset Plan connects the high-level community outcomes in the Council and Wellbeing Plan with on-the-ground asset management actions and financial provisions.



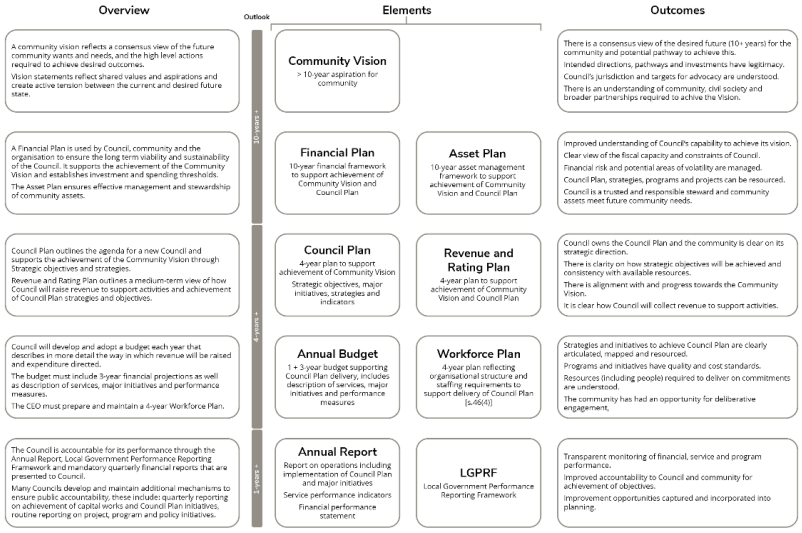


Figure 1: Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

Legislative and Strategic Context

The *Local Government Act 2020* emphasises principles of deliberative community engagement and sustainable financial management in asset planning. This plan has been developed to align with those principles – ensuring transparency, community input, and integration with Council's Long Term Financial Plan and Annual Budget. It also reflects Council's Asset Management Policy and frameworks.

The Plan considers related legislation such as the *Road Management Act 2004* (for road and footpath responsibilities) and other regulations that affect how we manage infrastructure (e.g. disability access standards, safety regulations). By complying with these requirements, Council aims to practice sound stewardship of public assets, balancing risk, cost, and service outcomes in the community's interest.

Scope of Assets

In this plan, 'assets' refers to the extensive portfolio of public infrastructure for which Council is responsible. Key asset groups covered include:

- **Roads and Carparks e.g.** sealed and unsealed local roads.
- **Bridges and Major Culverts e.g.** bridges and large drainage culverts
- **Pathways and Street Furniture e.g.** footpaths, benches, streetlights and signage.
- **Buildings and Structures e.g.** sports pavilions, community halls, civic halls and public toilets
- **Drainage Infrastructure** e.g. pipes, pits and channels.
- **Parks, Open Spaces and Recreation Assets e.g.** public parks, gardens, playgrounds, and sports fields.
- **Specialised Community Assets: e.g.** Portland's foreshore and marine assets, aerodrome facilities, Casterton Saleyards and waste management facilities.

By consolidating all of the above asset classes into a single high-level plan, Council can take an integrated approach to the management of theses asset.

Challenges and Opportunities

Council's assets, like those in many rural municipalities, face a variety of pressures:

- **Ageing Infrastructure:** Much of Council's asset base (e.g. roads, bridges and older buildings) was built decades ago. As they reach end of life, breakdowns increase, maintenance costs rise, and service can be impacted. Timely renewal and appropriate maintenance is essential to avoid sudden failures.

- **Financial Constraints:** Council has a relatively small ratepayer base and large asset network. Grant funding is competitive and not guaranteed. As a result, Council's budgets are extremely limited. Prioritisation activities and cost-effective maintenance is essential.
- **Changing Demand:** Population and demographic changes can alter how assets are used. For example, an aging population may demand better footpaths and improved accessibility, while economic changes (like growth in agriculture, renewable energy, housing or tourism) can put new pressures on roads and community facilities.
- **Climate Change:** More frequent extreme weather (heavy rains, flooding, bushfire, heatwaves, storm events) can damage infrastructure and shorten asset life. Coastal assets are also exposed to sea level rise and storm surge. We need to build resilience into asset management – e.g. upgrading drainage capacity and using climate-resilient materials and design.
- **Technology Shifts:** New technologies (for example, energy-efficient lighting, smart infrastructure sensors, electric vehicles) present opportunities to reduce costs or improve service but may require upgrades to existing assets.
- **Growth and Development:** While Glenelg's population growth is modest, any new development (residential or industrial) can lead to new assets being handed over to Council (e.g. new streets, drains or vegetation in subdivisions). Each new asset adds to future maintenance liability, so Council should carefully evaluate the long-term impacts before taking on new infrastructure.

This Asset Plan addresses these challenges by setting out strategies for responsible, forward-looking asset management – ensuring that we optimise available funding, prioritise critical needs, and make decisions with the long-term in mind.

Our Assets on a Page

Delivering Key Services

Health Check

$767m
Total Replacement Value

21,864
Individual assets managed by Council

$13.1 m
2025/26
Capital Investment

45%
Remaining life for our assets

69.8%
Proportion of assets in fair or better condition

Strategic Objectives

- Leadership and Engagement
- Thriving Towns and Communities
- Sustainable Environment
- Essential Services and Facilities
- Moving around Glenelg
- Growing Economy

Our Assets

- **Bridges & Major Culverts** $57.8M
- **Buildings & Structures** $127.7M
- **Recreation and Community** $50.6M
- **Roads and Carparks** $346.3M
- **Drainage** $90M
- **Aerodrome** $18M
- **Parks, Open Spaces & Streetscapes** $568K
- **Street Trees** 6,878 trees within Glenelg
- **Waste Management** $4.4M
- **Ports Facilities** $7.5M

Our Plan For The Assets

- Funding for Long-Term Sustainability
- Managing Asset Risks
- Transparent Decision-Making
- Balancing Community Needs With Infrastructure Spending
- Prioritising Renewal Spending over New and Upgrade
- Align Financial Planning with Infrastructure Needs
- Implement Robust Asset Management Processes

Asset Class by Replacement Value

The following charts represent the breakdown of each class into the asset types by replacement value.

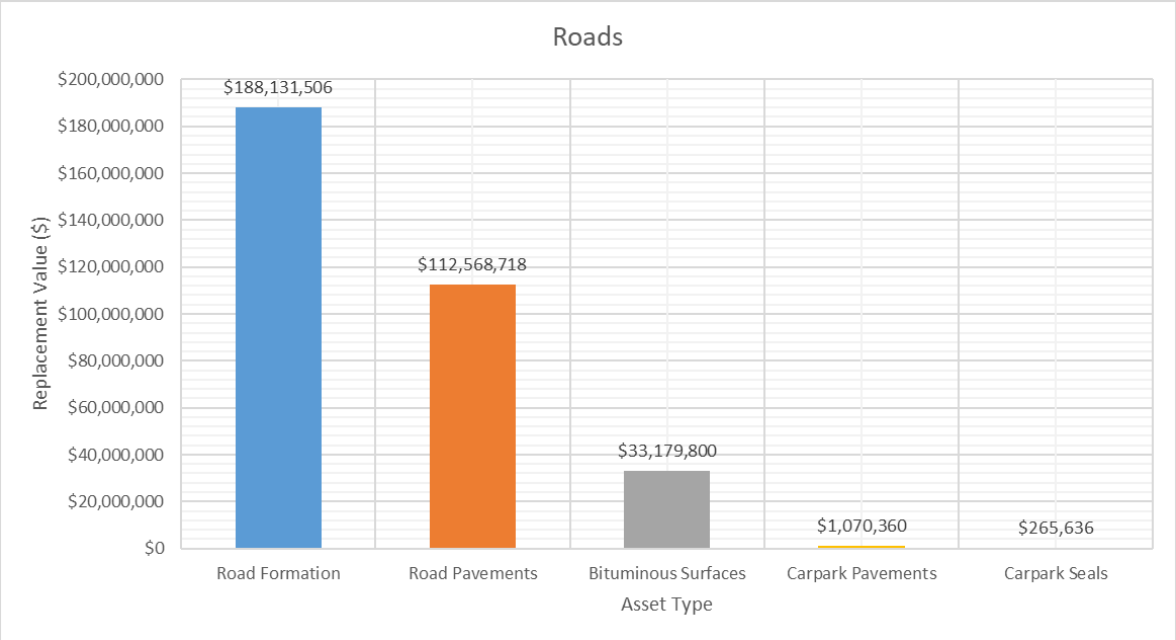


Figure 2: Road Asset Type by Replacement Value

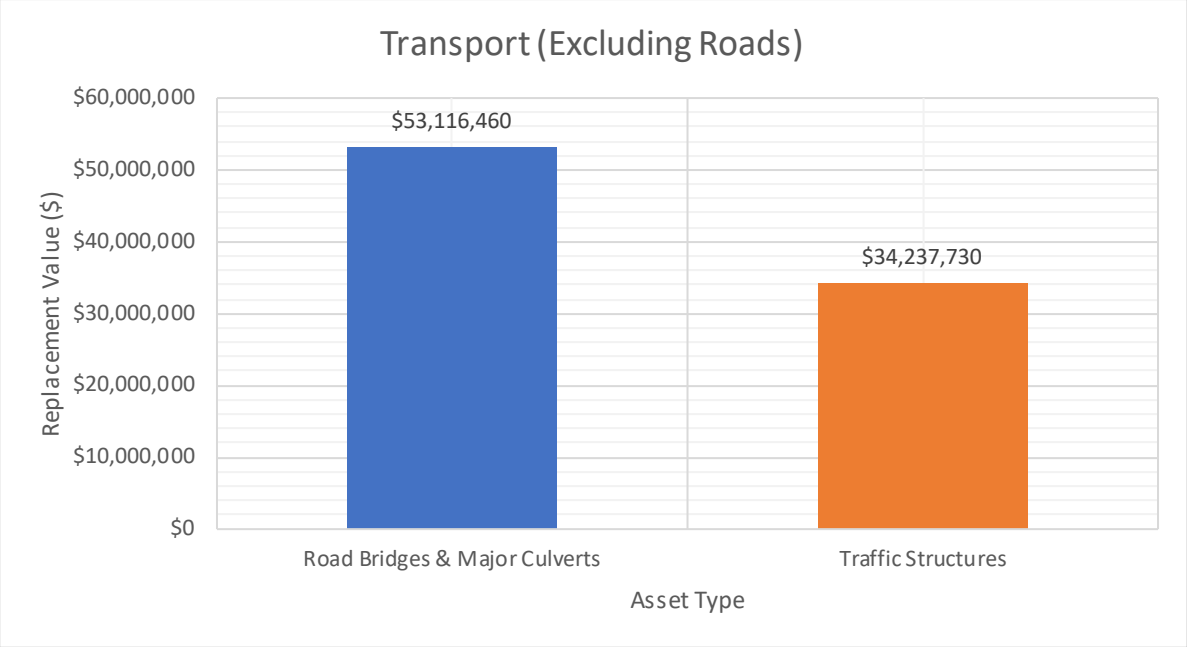


Figure 3: Transport Assets excluding Roads and Carparks

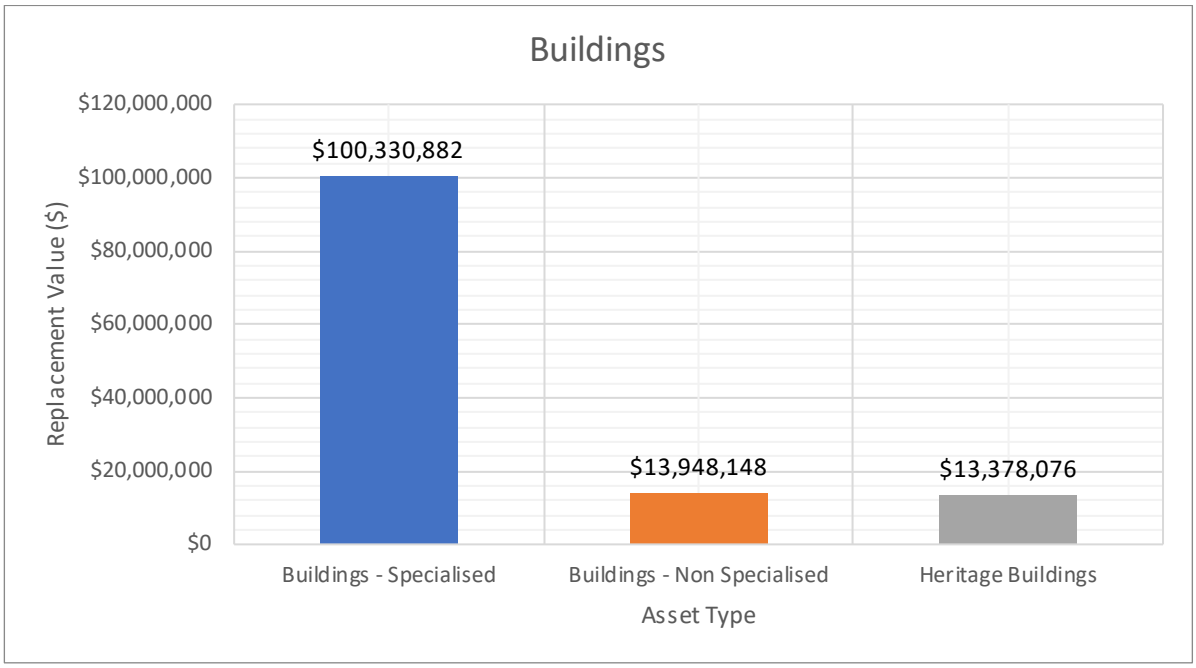


Figure 4: Buildings by Replacement Value

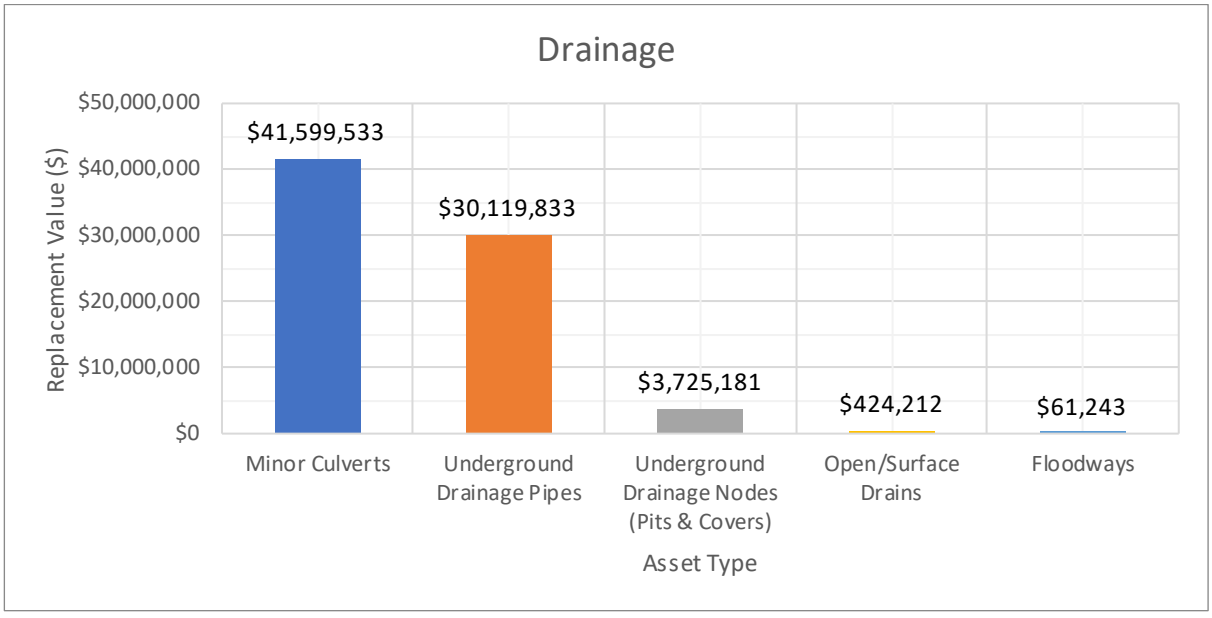


Figure 5: Drainage Assets by Replacement Value

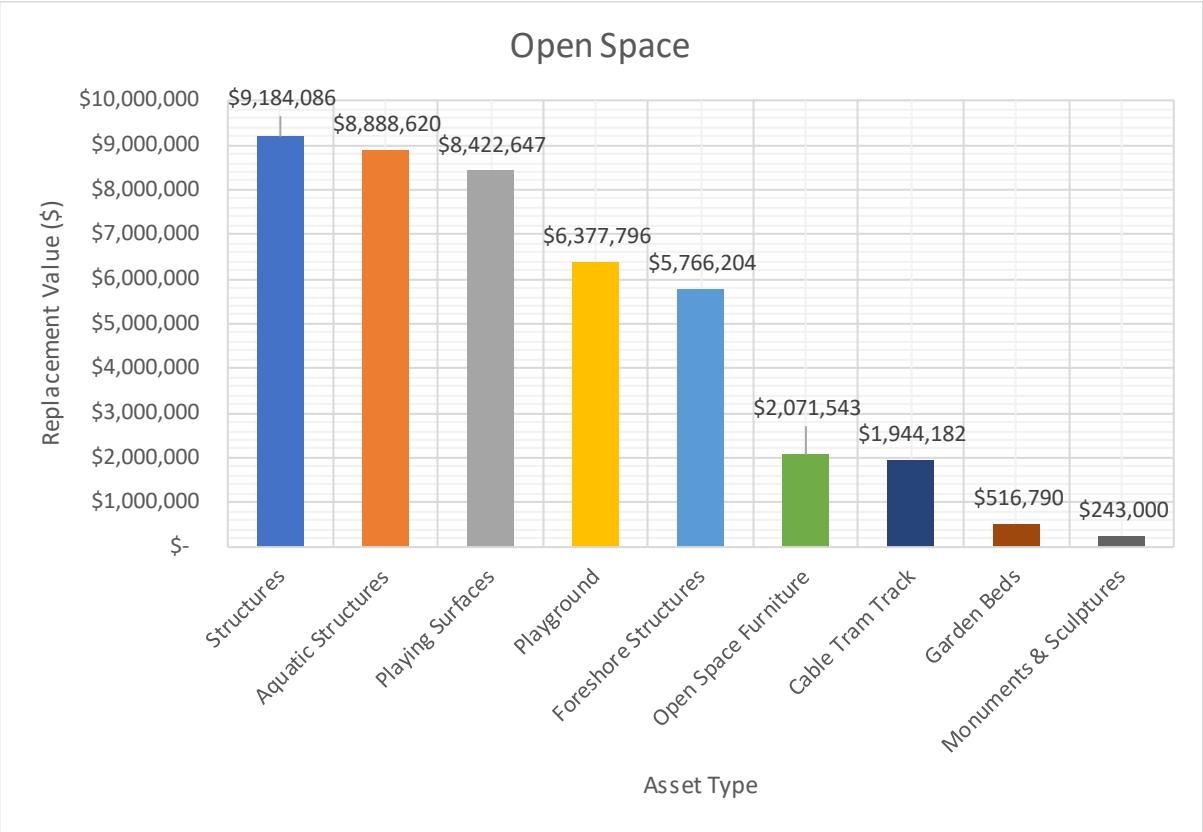


Figure 6: Open Space Assets by Replacement Value

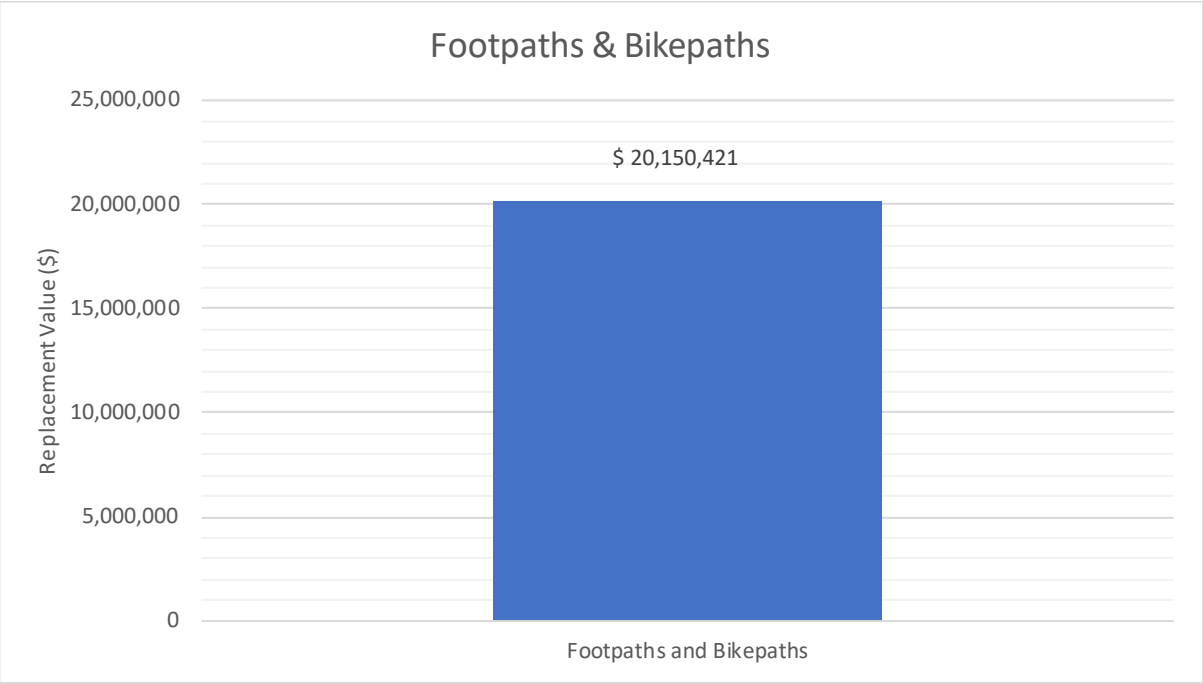


Figure 7: Asset type specific replacement value for Footpaths & Bikepaths

How Our Assets Support Services

Council's assets exist to support service delivery – they are not just bricks and mortar (or asphalt and concrete), but enablers of community services. Understanding the link between assets and services is key to making prudent investment decisions.

Service Impact

Nearly every Council service has a physical asset component:

- The road network allows residents, visitors, emergency services, and businesses to move safely and efficiently around the Shire. Reliable bridges and culverts ensure communities stay connected even over rivers and creeks.
- Footpaths, trails, and street lighting enable people to walk or cycle for leisure or errands, supporting active lifestyles and accessible townships.
- Parks, playgrounds, gardens, and sports facilities provide spaces for recreation, sport, and social connection – contributing to public health and community well-being.
- Community buildings (halls, arts venues, youth centres, senior citizen centres, libraries) host important programs, events, and services that bring people together and foster social inclusion.

- Drainage and stormwater systems protect properties and public spaces from flooding, ensuring that even during heavy rains our towns remain safe and functional.
- Waste management facilities (like transfer stations) underpin public health by enabling responsible disposal and recycling services.
- Unique assets such as the Local Port of Portland Bay infrastructure and foreshore amenities support local tourism and economic activity (fishing, boating), while facilities like saleyards support the agricultural economy and the aerodrome supports tourism and industry.

In short, well-managed assets translate directly into quality of life of Glenelg Shire residents and community. For example, a well-maintained local road means safer travel and less vehicle damage for users. A modern, accessible library or community centre means everyone – including people with disabilities or young families – can participate in community life. By investing in infrastructure, Council is investing in the services and outcomes those assets deliver to the community.

Levels of Service

To ensure assets meet community needs, Council defines Levels of Service (LOS) – essentially the performance standards that assets should achieve in supporting services. Levels of Service consider:

- **Functionality:** Does the asset meet users' needs in terms of capacity, design, and features? (e.g. Is a bridge width adequate for traffic, is a sports field equipped for night use?)
- **Quality/Condition:** Is the asset in good repair, safe, and presentable? (No potholes in roads, buildings are clean and structurally sound, etc.)
- **Reliability:** Can the asset be relied on to perform when needed without frequent breakdowns or closures?
- **Safety:** Is the asset compliant with safety standards and not posing undue risk to users?
- **Accessibility:** Can all intended users (including those with disabilities or young/old) access and use the asset?

Asset condition ratings are a primary measure used to gauge if service level targets are being achieved. However, condition alone doesn't tell the full story e.g. some assets might be in moderate condition but still not effectively serving the community due to capacity issues or outdated design. Thus, over time Council aims to incorporate more service-based metrics (e.g. usage levels, user satisfaction, capacity utilisation) into asset planning, alongside condition data.

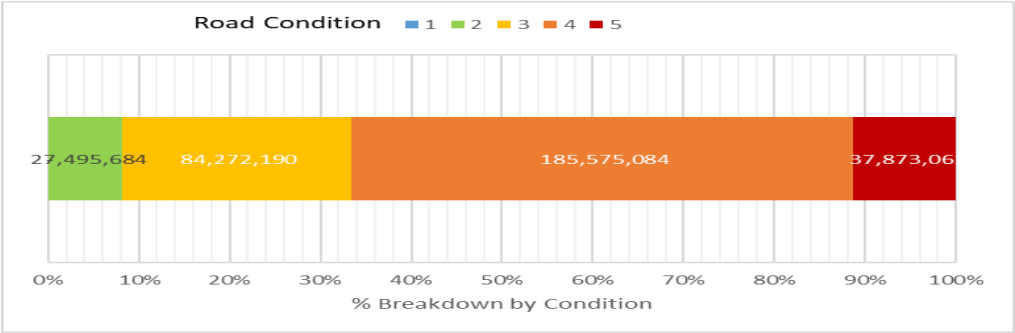


Figure 8: Example Service Level for Condition

Performance Indicator	Level of Service	Current Service Level	Target Service Level	Result	Action to meet performance Target
Quality	Average Condition	2.6	2.8	✓	-
Quality	% Road Network = condition 5	12%	8%	✗	Add Reconstruction program

Table 1: Sample Level of Service Review

Monitoring and reporting to Council the levels of service every 6 to 12 months will provide a sound basis for quantifying how the assets are performing against the target service level. This will then determine the actions required to meet the target e.g. improve treatments or increase budgets. It may also be that the target service level requires reduction as the target may have been aspirational rather than realistic.

Community Expectations

The community's input is crucial in defining acceptable Levels of Service. Council engages with residents to understand their expectations – for instance, which roads or footpaths they consider priorities for improvement, or what quality of recreation facilities they desire. Community feedback helps balance the technical standards with real-world expectations. This Plan has been informed by community engagement (detailed later), ensuring that our asset management decisions reflect what the community values most.

Service and Asset Planning Integration

Future service plans and asset management plans should be closely linked. If Council plans to introduce a new service or expand an existing service, the asset implications need to be considered. Conversely, if an asset is in poor condition or underutilised, Council may review whether the service it supports can be delivered differently.

In summary, Council views asset management as a service-driven practice. Investment is made in infrastructure not for its own sake, but to enable the services and community outcomes envisioned in our Council and Wellbeing Plan.

State of Our Assets

Understanding the current state of Council's assets is the foundation of effective asset management. This section provides an overview of our assets' condition, performance, and the challenges we face in maintaining them.

Overall Condition Profile

Every Council asset should be periodically assessed and rated on a condition scale from 1 (Very Good) to 5 (Very Poor), based on physical inspections and estimated remaining life. This is completed for the road assets annually but not for the other asset classes.

Bridges and major culverts are assessed every 2 to 3 years. Other asset classes are either assessed through inspections but not necessarily on a formal basis. It is essential that formal condition assessments are completed and recorded in the asset management system as condition enables the determination of long-term renewals, asset valuations and high-risk assets.

To enable Council to produce the condition profile in Figure 9: , the results of the recent revaluation and the annual road inspection report by consultants were used. The valuation data includes the year constructed, remaining life and expiry year. Using Table 2, which is an industry agreed table, a lookup table has been used to link condition ratings to remaining useful life as a percentage of total life.

Remaining Useful life %	Condition Rating
0%	5
25%	4
50%	3
75%	2
100%	1

Table 2: Calculation of the Condition rating:

This process enables condition ratings to be applied to all assets within the valuation records.

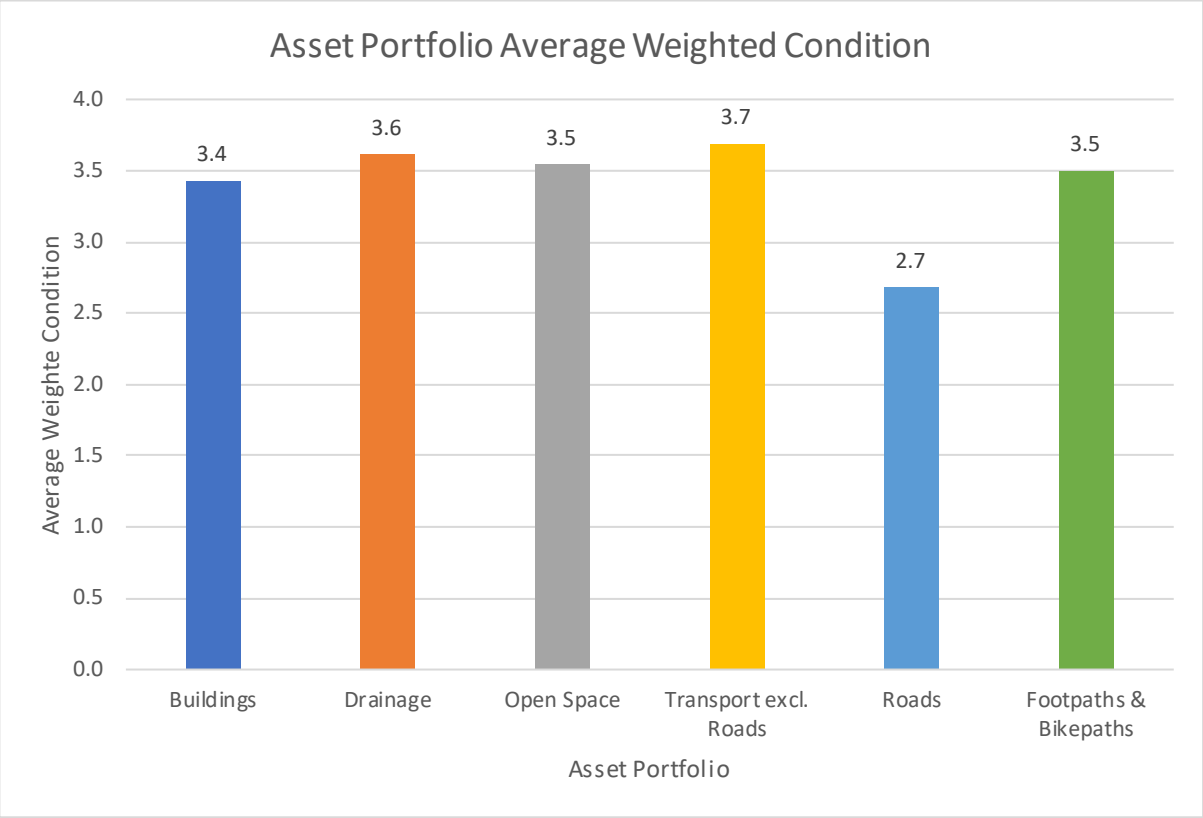


Figure 9: Condition Profile

- Council's Transport assets fall in the range (Condition 3–4), meaning they are in fair to poor condition and generally performing as intended. This excludes the road network consisting of the road wearing surface, pavement and road base, which is mostly rated 2–3, and key infrastructure like major bridges and drainage which are structurally sound.
- Heritage Assets are rated Condition 4.2 (poor). Assets in this category show clear signs of deterioration, are likely approaching end of life, and/or are not meeting service requirements. They are also concentrated in other categories:
    - Some older buildings (particularly historical or heritage structures that have not had recent renewals or upgrades) are in poor condition. They may have issues such as leaking roofs, outdated facilities, or non-compliance with modern standards. Heritage assets can be challenging to maintain due to restrictions on the materials used and the heritage requirements.
- Sections of the footpath network and other paved surfaces in towns that have aged badly or been impacted by tree roots, etc., are in very poor condition and need renewal to ensure safety and accessibility.

- Various open space assets (e.g. playground equipment, sports lighting, park furnishings) fall into the fair category.
- A portion of assets are Condition 1 (excellent) – typically newer infrastructure or recently renewed assets. For example, the Local Port jetties upgraded in the last few years are in very good condition, requiring only routine maintenance.

Overall, the average condition of Council's asset portfolio is around the Fair (3) mark but skewing towards good for high-value assets like roads (2.6), and poor for other asset classes. Notably, our critical infrastructure – main roads, bridges, drainage – is generally being kept in at least fair condition or better, which is important for risk management and safety. However, the presence of poor to very poor assets is a concern.

Lifecycle Planning

A disciplined lifecycle approach ensures Council gets the best value from every asset while safeguarding community safety and amenity. Each phase below builds on the previous one; taking decisions too late or in isolation almost always leads to higher costs or lost service.

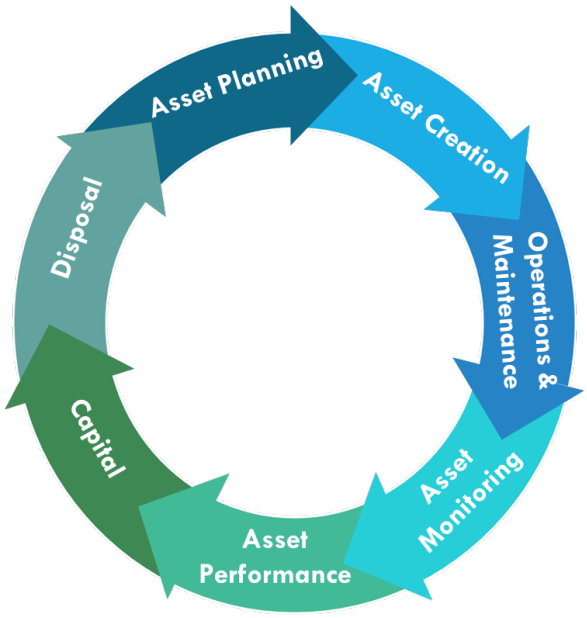


Figure 10: Asset Lifecycle Planning Framework

Planning & Design

Sound asset stewardship starts with clearly defining the service problem. Council works with the community to confirm needs and service gaps, explores all viable options, and selects solutions that strike the right balance between sustainability, equity, accessibility and whole-of-life cost. At this stage options are assessed where a scope and design features are confirmed, and the

funding pathway so that downstream decisions remain transparent and affordable. A business case or feasibility assessment is also undertaken at this stage.

Creation & Acquisition

New assets are delivered by building, buying, or partnering with other tiers of government, community groups or the private sector to meet a set service need or requirement. Contracts clearly define performance standards, handover documentation, and ongoing maintenance responsibilities, ensuring transparency and mitigating unforeseen risks. Council also weighs up non-asset options—such as shared-use agreements—to see if the same service can be provided at lower cost and risk.

Maintenance & Operation

Once in service, assets are regularly inspected, cleaned and serviced to keep them safe, functional and cost-effective. A risk-based maintenance program—combining routine tasks with condition-triggered interventions—reduces whole-of-life costs and prolongs useful life. Operational data gathered during this phase feeds back into the asset register, giving Council a clearer picture of how real-world performance compares with design assumptions.

Day-to-day maintenance plays a vital role in asset condition:

- Council conducts routine maintenance such as road patching, grading of unsealed roads, cleaning of drainage pits, painting and minor repairs on buildings, and servicing of park facilities. This preventive maintenance slows deterioration.
- Reactive maintenance is completed when unexpected issues arise (e.g. fixing potholes reported by the public, replacing a failed footpath segments). We track these to identify recurring problems that may need a larger fix.
- Cyclical programs are in place for activities like playground safety audits. These ensure each asset gets attention at appropriate intervals to keep it within an acceptable condition.

However, once an asset reaches a certain age, renewal or replacement is typically required. This Plan's capital works strategies are therefore focused on scheduling those renewals at the appropriate time: not so early as to waste remaining life, but not so late that the asset fails or service is compromised.

Glenelg's assets are generally holding up, but signs of strain are evident in aging components. The proportion of all asset classes in very poor condition, while currently around 12%, could grow if investment in renewal is insufficient.

Asset Capacity and Performance:

Beyond physical condition, some assets face capacity or performance gaps:

- Certain local roads experience increased heavy vehicle usage (timber/quarry trucks, etc.) beyond their original design, causing faster degradation.
- Some community facilities are not fully fit-for-purpose – e.g. an old hall that is too small or lacks modern amenities for current use, thus not meeting community expectations or standards even if the structure is sound.
- Drainage capacity in some growth areas may be inadequate for new development unless upgraded and provided with new infrastructure (this ties into planning for future demand).

Renewal & Upgrade

When inspections show that an asset can no longer deliver the agreed level of service, Council weighs up renewal and upgrade options. Renewals aim to restore original functionality at the optimal time—before failure but after the asset has delivered maximum value. Upgrades, by contrast, lift capacity, safety or resilience where demand, legislation or technology has evolved. Both pathways are evaluated against whole-of-life cost, service benefit and economic, social and environmental impacts.

Rationalisation & Disposal

Assets that are at the end of their life, no longer needed, or pose excessive risk are either rationalised or consolidated. Council may decommission, sell or repurpose them—always with a view to optimising value and reducing recurrent costs. Detailed exit plans ensure community, heritage, environmental and safety obligations are met, and that lessons learnt feed into future planning and design activities.

Risk and Critical Assets:

Council identifies "critical assets" by perception – those whose failure would have significant consequences (e.g. a major bridge on a key route, a drainage main under the town centre, or a community hub facility). These critical assets are given priority in inspections and maintenance. For example, Council has 46 bridges under management and while all are important, a subset on main roads carry the bulk of traffic and would be most disruptive if closed. Thus, those are watched closely to ensure any emerging issues are addressed promptly.

Financial Sustainability and Asset Investment

The expenditure categories used for the lifecycle plans are defined below. The capital budget process allocates capital works proposals into the categories below. These are defined by the Local Government (Reporting and Planning Regulations) 2014.

Expenditure Category	Activity	Funding Type	Description
Recurrent	Maintenance	Non-discretionary	Recurrent expenditure that is continuously required to operate the assets for service delivery.
Capital	Asset Renewal	Non-discretionary	Returns the service potential or the life of the asset up to that which it had originally.
	Asset Upgrade	Discretionary	Enhancements to an existing asset to provide a higher level of service or increase life to beyond its original life.
	Asset Expansion	Discretionary	Extends or expands an existing asset at the same standard as is currently enjoyed by residents, to a new group of users.
	New Assets	Discretionary	Creates a new asset that provides a service that does not currently exist.

Table 3: Maintenance and Capital Works Expenditure

Delivering the desired Levels of Service from our assets must be balanced with financial sustainability. Council operates under tight budget constraints, so careful planning is required to fund asset maintenance and renewal without over-burdening ratepayers or compromising

future financial stability. This section describes our approach to asset investment, including projected expenditures, funding sources, and strategies to manage demand and costs.

Long-Term Financial Alignment

The Asset Plan is developed in alignment with Council's 10-year Long Term Financial Plan. This ensures that the capital and maintenance expenditures identified for assets are reflected in long-term budgeting, and conversely that financial forecasts (e.g. revenue, grants, borrowing capacity) inform what is realistic for asset spending. Council's financial principles for asset management, include:

- Prioritising renewal of existing assets over building new assets, to address backlog and make the most of what we have.
- Only undertaking new asset investments and major capital projects when there is a compelling justified need and ideally external funding support (e.g. a significant government grant).
- Maintaining a responsible level of debt – borrowing only for long-lived assets and only when other funding is insufficient, to spread the cost between current and future beneficiaries.
- Planning for the full lifecycle cost of assets, including future maintenance, operations, and eventual disposal, not just the initial capital cost.
- Setting aside reserves when possible (such as a dedicated grant matching reserve, or for major community infrastructure) to leverage external funding opportunities for asset projects.

Capital Works Projections

Council will have a defined capital works program focused on renewing and upgrading existing assets in the short term, with an identified potential for the delivery of a major capital project in 2028/29 as a project evolves and both asset management and systems data improves. Table 4Table 4: and Figure 11 below summarise this year's capital budget (2025/26) and the projected capital expenditure in 2026/27 to 2028/29, in alignment with the LTFP. With further condition and asset data, the capital works programs will evolve. This also highlights an issue in that renewal expenditure isn't increasing and this will have a negative asset impact if not addressed further.

Table 4 represents a forecast with capital expenditure to evolve as annual budgets are developed.

Asset Group	Asset Sub-Class	Budget 2025/26 $'000	Projection 2026/27 $'000	Projection 2027/28 $'000	Projection 2028/29 $'000
Buildings	Building Improvements	5,005	1,375	1,375	1,375
	Total Property	5,005	1,375	1,375	1,375
Plant & Equipment					
	Total Plant & Equipment	**2,362**	**1,755**	**1,650**	**1,840**
Infrastructure	Roads	4,464	4,947	5,152	5,152
	Roads (LRCI)	-	-	-	-
	Bridges	350	171	178	178
	Footpaths and Cycleways	110	126	131	131
	Drainage	202	171	178	178
	Recreational, Leisure and Community facilities	1,681	200	200	200
	Waste Management	20	20	20	20

Asset Group	Asset Sub-Class	Budget 2025/26 $'000	Projection 2026/27 $'000	Projection 2027/28 $'000	Projection 2028/29 $'000
	Parks, Open Space and Streetscapes	40	240	240	240
	Aerodromes	99	50	50	50
	Local Port	-	50	50	50
	Off-Street Car Parks	50	57	59	59
	Other Infrastructure - LRCI	1,480	-	-	-
	Other Infrastructure	-	500	500	21,000
	Total Infrastructure	8,496	6,532	6,759	27,259
	Total Capital Works Expenditure	15,863	9,662	9,784	30,474

Table 4: Capital Works Expenditure[1]

[1] Glenelg Long Term Financial Plan 2025-2035, pg. 27

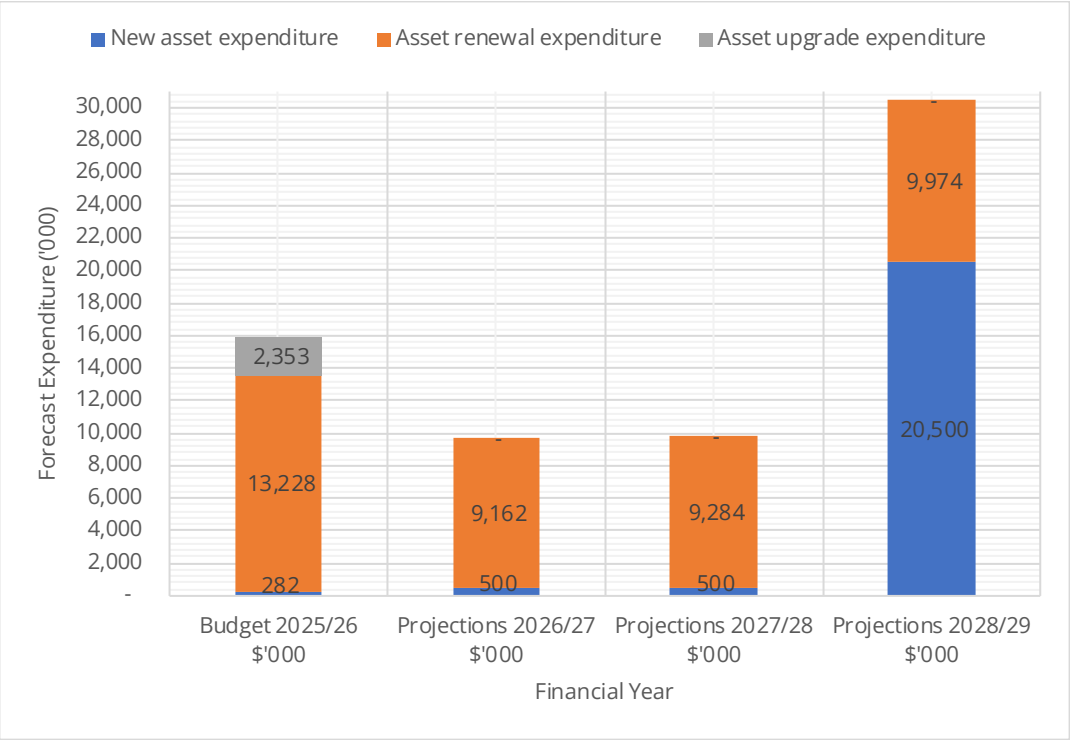


Figure 11: 2025/26 Budget and Forecast Expenditure by Year

Council is emphasising asset renewal in the short-term, with limited new or upgrade asset construction forecast in the near term. This will evolve ad project planning develops and any future major project funding arises.

As shown in Figure 11, renewal works form the bulk of spending each year. In 2025/26, a peak of approximately $15.8 million is planned for capital works, which includes $13.2 million in renewals and $2.3M in upgrades (*Note: this includes committed external government funding for capital infrastructure projects).

This high initial investment addresses some renewal needs (e.g. several building refurbishments and road rehabilitation projects) and includes a one-off upgrade for safety improvements. In the following two years, annual capital spending is around $9.6–9.8 million, almost entirely devoted to renewal of infrastructure (roads, footpaths, drainage, building renovations, etc.). Minimal new asset acquisitions are budgeted in that period, reflecting Council's short-term strategy to "consolidate and renew" rather than upgrade or expand – providing time for more robust planning on major new asset investment.

For 2028/29, a forecast $20 million has been identified (aligned with the LTFP) for new asset expenditure to deliver a major project, following further project planning and allowing for robust consideration of community and planning requirements.

Beyond 2028/29, Council anticipates continuing a steady renewal program. The exact amounts will depend on future budget settings, external funding and asset condition trends, but the intent is to gradually increase renewal funding to meet the long-term required renewal rate (proposed renewal budget for the next 10 years / forecast renewal costs for next 10 years).

This is called the Asset Renewal Funding Ratio which is an important indicator and illustrates that over the next 10 years we expect to have [Asset Renewal Funding Ratio] % of the funds required for the optimal renewal of assets. The expected ratio required by the State Government is 100% demonstrating that Council is funding its renewal requirements. This will be a target but is not achievable in the short-term.

Detailed modelling of 10-year renewal needs is being considered as asset data and systems improve. Early indications are that maintaining roughly the current level of renewal investment (around $9–10M per year, indexed for inflation) will keep most asset classes at stable condition, although some categories with backlog (e.g. community facilities, open space and other asset types.) may require periodic higher injections. This will become clearer as relevant asset management plans are developed.

Funding Sources

Funding for capital works will come from a mix of sources, balancing external and internal contributions:

- **Grants:** State and Federal infrastructure grants are a critical funding source, especially for roads and community facility projects. Glenelg Shire has had success in securing grants (e.g. Roads to Recovery, Local Roads and Community Infrastructure fund). Over the next four years, grants are expected to contribute between $3.7M and $4.5M, with a future $10 million grant identified aligning with the LTFP for a future major project opportunity. This is not set and will evolve further through project planning and funding availability. No new grants are presently forecast for the 2026/27-28 years, noting however this is variable, and Council will explore all available and appropriate funding opportunities. Any successful grants during this time are additional to current forecasting and planning and will be included within the updated LTFP and Annual Budget.
- **Council Cash (Rates/Reserves):** Council allocates a portion of annual rates revenue to capital works and may use accumulated asset renewal reserves. This funds the remainder of works not covered by grants. In 2025/26, Council plans to directly fund about $7.3M of capital works; in later years around $9.6M - $10.4M per year comes from Council's own cash resources.
- **Borrowings:** Council will use debt selectively. For 2025/26, the final $3.0M of the $7.0M loan amount will be accessed to help fund major projects. Borrowing is considered

appropriate for large-scale works with long lifespans, distributing the cost. Further borrowings are forecast ($10 million) for 2028/29 to fund investment in a new major capital project, aligned with the LTFP. The need for borrowings to cover asset expenditure (new, upgrade or renewal) is managed and assessed in accordance with Council's Borrowings Policy, Long Term Financial Plan and Annual Budget.

The stacked chart below illustrates the proportion of each funding source for the capital works program:

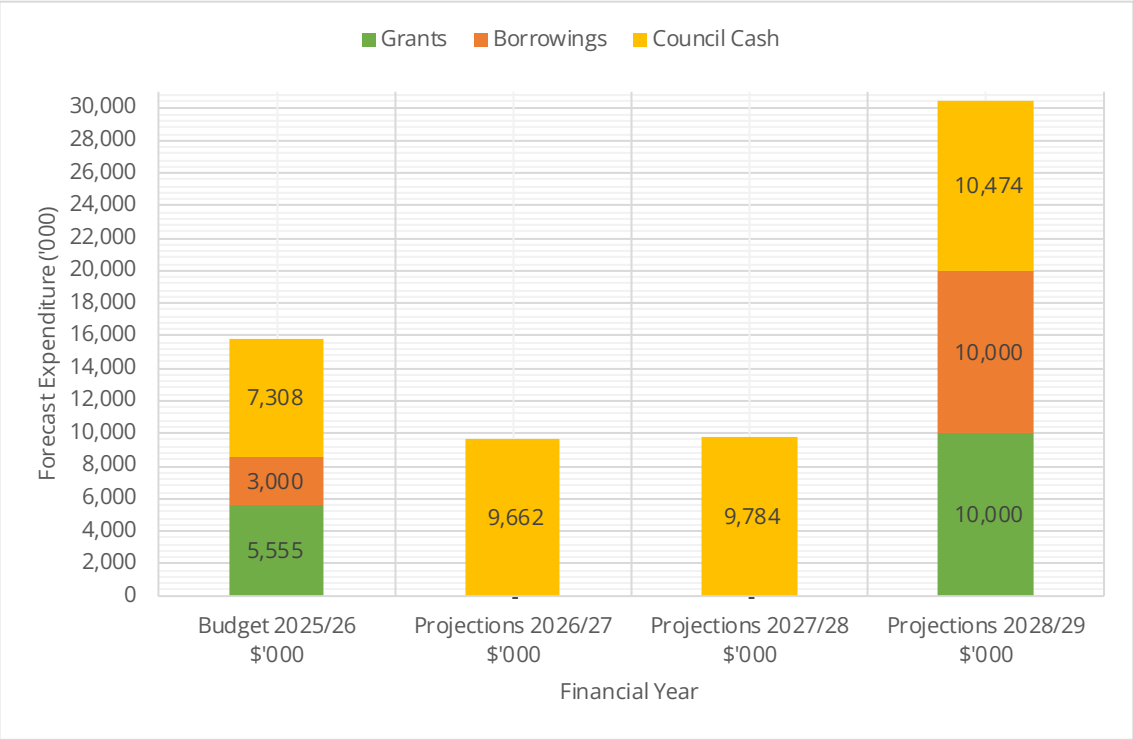


Figure 12: Funding Source Forecast Expenditure by Year

Council included $3 million in borrowings within the 2025/26 budget. This short-term loan will be current as opposed to non-current to take advantage of the receipt of Local Grants funding expected to be received in 2025. Capital works through the years are sustained by Council funds, with the availability of grants being variable and inconsistent. Council's commitment to financial sustainability includes pursuing all grants where available to relieve pressure on self-funding and improve financial sustainability, focusing on critical asset renewals early (even if it means some debt), then living within its means in subsequent years.

By focusing on renewal (which often has grants available) and avoiding new assets that would increase future maintenance costs, Council is containing its long-term liabilities.

Operations and Maintenance Funding

In addition to capital works expenditure, Council's annual budget allocates funds for ongoing maintenance and operations of assets (e.g. road grading, drainage maintenance, building cleaning, building maintenance, park maintenance crews). These recurrent costs – roughly $10–12 million per year across all asset categories (as per recent budgets) – are built into the Long-Term Financial Plan and are just as important as capital investments.

Adequate maintenance funding helps extend asset life and reduce lifecycle costs, a point reinforced by this Plan's strategy. Cutting maintenance to save money is counterproductive, as it leads to faster deterioration and bigger costs later. Thus, even under rate capping, Council strives to protect and increase maintenance budgets for essential infrastructure.

Demand Management

A key aspect of financial sustainability is managing the *demand* for new or expanded assets so that Council doesn't take on obligations it cannot afford long-term. Glenelg Shire employs several demand management approaches:

- **Renewal Before Expansion:** Priority is given to renewing or upgrading existing assets rather than building new ones, unless a clear service gap or demonstrated community need exists. This is reflected in zero new asset budget in coming years.
- **Multi-use Facilities:** Where possible, Council invests in multi-purpose facilities that serve many groups (e.g. a combined community or recreational facility rather than separate buildings). This maximises usage and reduces the number of assets to maintain.
- **Service Level Reviews:** Council will continue to review whether the current assets truly match community needs. If an asset is underutilised or not providing value relative to its upkeep cost, options include repurposing it, disposing of it (if appropriate), or finding a less costly way to meet that community need. Conversely, if a service need can be met without a new asset (for example, contracting a service or sharing a facility with a neighbouring shire), we will consider those alternatives.
- **Community Engagement in Demand Decisions:** We involve the community in consultation to gauge support and willingness to pay. This helps ensure we only embark on projects that have strong community backing, and even then, we explore external funding so that community expectations are balanced with realistic funding.

By curbing unnecessary asset expansion and focusing on efficient use of what we have, Council aims to reduce future financial pressures. This demand management, combined with the targeted renewal program and funding strategy described, puts Council on a path to maintain infrastructure within the available resources.

Forecast Outlook

Once the strategies in this Asset Plan are implemented, the gap between required renewal and actual renewal funding should gradually narrow. Over 10 years, we anticipate:

- Most asset classes will be maintained at current condition levels or improved slightly, as renewals catch up on the worst-condition items (e.g. replacing very poor assets will eliminate the condition 5 outliers).
- We will endeavour to reduce the ~12% backlog to a reasonable target to be established once the existing data improves.
- Depreciation expenses will be better matched by renewal expenditure – a common sustainability indicator – moving toward or achieving the benchmark of 100% renewal vs depreciation ratio (currently, we are working to calculate this precisely as data improves).

Financial sustainability is an ongoing journey. This Asset Plan will be reviewed regularly (at least every 4 years, in line with the Council and Wellbeing Plan cycle) to adjust the investment strategy as needed – whether that means ramping up spending if new issues emerge or finding efficiency gains if innovations allow us to do more with less.

Community Engagement in Asset Planning

The development and implementation of the Asset Plan involves active community engagement, recognising that the community are both the users of assets and key stakeholders in funding them. Council is committed to transparency and inclusion in how we plan for and manage our infrastructure.

Legislative Engagement Requirements

The *Local Government Act 2020* requires councils to use deliberative engagement practices in preparing their Asset Plans. In accordance with this:

- Council has sought community input while formulating this draft Asset Plan and will continue to do so before final adoption. An initial consultation and engagement campaign (aligned with the Council and Wellbeing Plan engagement) ran between January and March 2025 to raise public awareness and invite ideas regarding asset management priorities. This included community workshops, surveys (both online and via mailed forms), and discussions at township meetings. Residents shared their perspectives on which assets needed attention, the acceptable level of service, and how they'd like to be kept informed.
- The Draft Asset Plan (this document) will be released for public feedback, anticipated in September 2025. The draft will be made available on Council's website via Your Say Glenelg, on social media and hard copy, and community members will be invited to complete a survey and provide comments. Council will consider all feedback and refine the plan accordingly before final adoption by the Council.

Community Priorities Identified

Through engagement to date, the community has signalled a few clear priorities:

- **Safety and basic infrastructure:** Many residents emphasise that core assets like local roads (especially fixing potholes on school bus routes), footpaths (for pedestrian safety), and drainage (to prevent flooding in town streets) should be Council's focus. They want existing infrastructure to be safe and functional rather than seeing money spent on new "nice to have" projects.
- **Equitable service across towns:** Feedback highlighted that smaller towns and rural areas want to ensure they aren't left behind. For example, people in outlying districts

voiced that unsealed road maintenance and bridge repairs are crucial for them, even if these areas are less populated.

- **Recreation and community facilities:** There is strong community interest in maintaining facilities that support social connection – such as pools, sports grounds, stadiums and halls. In particular, the community is keen to see the Heywood Pool, PLACE and other aging recreation assets improved (where financially feasible) so they can continue to be used safely by families.
- **Transparency in decisions:** Residents have asked for clearer communication on how Council prioritises which assets get renewed first. This plan addresses that by articulating our criteria (safety, service impact, cost, etc.) and will be accompanied by outreach (e.g. infographics, community presentations) to explain the asset management approach in plain language.

With regards to Council's assets, the Council and Wellbeing Plan Consultation Report for 2025-2029 identifies the key priorities for the community are:

	Improving the road network.
	Transport availability and connectivity including public transport, tracks, trails and footpaths.
	Maintaining and improving community facilities and spaces including the upgrade and renewal of recreation and sporting facilities including an indoor multipurpose stadium.
	An engaged and connected community including supporting volunteering, increased community engagement, looking out for all in our community, building connections between people, groups, services and businesses.
	Growing the economy including supporting local industries and businesses, attracting new industries, promoting and encouraging tourism.
	Protecting the natural environment, green waste and food waste services, and responding to the impacts of climate change.

	Increasing understanding of health and wellbeing issues and needs and focusing on prevention initiatives and using existing levers to drive change.
	Being an inclusive community including opportunities for all ages and abilities, respecting the opinions of the elderly, supporting people in need, supporting people from all backgrounds and experiences.
	Improving access to services including healthcare, aged care, childcare, education, hospital and medical services, youth services, digital connectivity.
	Community activities and events to bring people together, celebrate our communities and attract visitors to spend time in Glenelg.
	Equity for smaller towns and communities including equal attention, and equal access to services and facilities.
	The appearance of towns and communities.
	Council being fiscally responsible, transparent, and clear about its role. Engaging more effectively with the community is a key priority.
	Housing availability, affordability and diversity.
	Young people including increasing year 12 attainment rates, providing opportunities and activities for young people and developing a youth hub in Portland.



Sustainable growth and development including protecting small communities, supporting residential development and attracting a new demographic.

Ongoing Engagement and Reporting

Council recognises that community engagement is not a one-off. We will continue to involve and inform the community throughout the life of this Asset Plan:

- **Regular Reporting:** We will publish an annual State of the Assets report to the community (either as part of the Annual Report or a standalone update). This plain-language report card will show key metrics – like what % of assets are in each condition band, which major projects were completed, and whether we are on track with our financial and service targets. By doing so, we keep the community informed on progress and accountable for results.
- **Customer Requests:** Council's customer request system and community interface on the website will continue to gather day-to-day feedback. If residents report asset issues (e.g. dangerous footpath, broken playground equipment), those are logged, inspected, and fed into our maintenance and works planning, in accordance with applicable asset management plans. Recurrent issues from the public can indicate where we need to invest more.
- **Deliberative Panels or Focus Groups:** For significant asset decisions, such as contemplating a major new project or a disposal of an asset, Council may convene community panels or focus groups. For example, if a proposal emerged to build a new multi-purpose community hub, we might establish a community or project reference group to co-develop the concept, ensuring it meets needs and has community buy-in.
- **Transparency:** The asset register, and associated data (within practical limits) will be made accessible via the GIS. Council has begun providing maps on its website showing asset information on a variety of layers so residents can see what works are planned in their area. This could be significantly enhanced to include data on the assets, proposed 5-year rolling works programs and works currently in progress. Budget documents also outline capital works and are open for public comment each year.
- **Education and Collaboration:** We also view engagement as a chance to educate the community about the realities of asset management – such as the costs involved and trade-offs required. This would be achieved through infographics illustrating where each $100 of rates goes (a portion to roads, etc.), and through community budgeting workshops. The better the public understands the constraints and rationale, the more

we can work together on solutions (like advocating for government funding or adjusting service expectations).

Council's overarching engagement commitment is to be open, accountable and responsive. In asset management, this means we won't plan major changes that affect the community's assets without consultation, and we will clearly communicate why certain projects are priorities. By involving community members as partners in stewardship of public assets, we build mutual trust and ensure that the Asset Plan ultimately reflects community values as well as sound engineering and financial practice.



Figure 13: Engagement Commitment

Figure 13: illustrates that Council working with the community is more likely to address the community needs through the maintenance and capital works planning and achieve a common goal.

Improving Asset Management Practices

Continuous improvement in asset management is essential for Council to meet future challenges. Glenelg Shire Council is focused on enhancing its asset management maturity – through better data collection, systems, processes, and skills – to support informed decision-making. This section outlines the key improvement initiatives and a timeline of next steps to strengthen asset management over the life of this plan.

Council has identified several priority improvement areas:

- **Data and Condition Knowledge:** We will expand and refine our asset condition assessments across all asset classes. Currently, some assets (e.g. bridges, roads) are well-inspected, but others (like buildings, open space and drainage assets) need more comprehensive condition surveys.

  We aim to complete updated condition assessments for asset classes such as buildings and open space, using specialists. We'll also incorporate condition rating as a standard part of routine inspections (e.g. when contractors or staff inspect an asset, they record a simple condition score). Improved data will enable more precise renewal planning and risk management.

- **Integrated Asset Management System:** Council is implementing a new Enterprise Resource Platform (ERP) and asset management software system (Civica Altitude) to centralise asset data and improve integration with finance and GIS.

  We plan to have all asset registers and maintenance schedules migrated to this modern management system. Staff will be trained to use the software for tracking work orders, updating asset conditions in real time, and generating lifecycle cost forecasts. This will break down data silos and ensure everyone is working off the same reliable information.

  We also aim to produce a detailed works program for the next decade, highlighting when key renewals (like a major bridge, road rehabilitation or facility replacement) will likely be due. This will allow early budgeting and possibly staging of works to smooth out spikes. Additionally, we'll enhance risk analysis – identifying assets that pose the highest risk of failure or high consequences and ensuring mitigation plans are in place. For example, critical buildings will be monitored and have contingency plans.

- **Strategic Long-Term Planning:** We will strengthen how asset management feeds into long-term financial and service planning. One improvement action is developing 10-year renewal forecasts for each asset category, using updated condition data and predictive modelling.

  Our goal is that every significant capital project is evaluated for climate resilience options. We'll also explore sustainable practices, like using recycled materials in road base or energy-efficient lighting in buildings, which can reduce long-term costs and environmental impact.

- **Community Engagement & Service Levels:** We intend to formalise how community input is used in asset management decisions. One improvement is to create a Community Asset Reference Group – a panel of community representatives to review and provide feedback on asset planning priorities annually. We'll also establish clearer Level of Service targets (with community consultation) and report against them.

- **Governance and Skills:** Internally, Council will be establishing an Asset Management Steering Committee comprising key staff across various departments. This committee will oversee implementation of the Asset Plan and ensure alignment between departments (engineering, finance, parks, community services). We will also invest in staff training – building asset management capability through courses and knowledge sharing, so that we maintain a skilled workforce to manage our complex asset base.

Improvement timeline – Key Actions

To implement these improvements, a phased timeline with prioritised steps has been developed. Prioritising improvement actions enables Council to strategically invest in assets that deliver the greatest community value, enhance service performance, reduce risk, and support long-term financial and organisational sustainability. Dependant on available resources and prioritisation, some improvement actions may be varied.

No.	Asset Management Improvement Action	Success Criteria	Responsible Lead
	Short Term (0 – 2 years)		
S1	Council to endorse the draft Asset Plan for public consultation.	Preparation for community response.	I.S.
S2	Release the draft Asset Plan for community feedback.	Sufficient community feedback to get acceptance from the community.	I.S.
S3	Review the draft Asset Plan based on customer feedback, adopt and publish the final Asset Plan.	Adopted Asset Plan.	I.S.
S4	Establish an internal Asset Management Steering Committee and Working Group to drive Plan actions.	AM Steering Committee and Working Group dedicated to drive the actions from this plan.	I.S., C.S., Com S.

No.	Asset Management Improvement Action	Success Criteria	Responsible Lead
S5	Review and document the Asset Hierarchy for all asset classes (in progress as part of data review for input into the new asset management system)	A sound robust asset hierarchy that will assist in the management of the assets.	I.S., CIO
S6	Review the required data for migration into Civica Altitude and document the Data Framework for each asset class	A data framework that articulates the data fields to be applied to assist council to achieve its end goal.	I.S.
S7	Produce a condition manual for all asset classes • Buildings • Open Space • Drainage • Roads	A condition manual that is consistent across asset classes and asset groups and can be readily applied.	I.S., TLDA
S8	Initiate a Shire-wide building condition audit (engage experts to assess all major buildings).	Quality data captured for buildings at the system level that can be readily analysed and incorporated into the asset register.	I.S., TLDA

No.	Asset Management Improvement Action	Success Criteria	Responsible Lead
S9	Initiate a Shire-wide open space condition audit (engage experts to assess all major open space assets).	Quality data captured for open space at the asset level that can be readily analysed and incorporated into the asset register.	I.S., TLDA, Com W
S10	Review collected asset condition data to establish ten-year renewal programs.	Using lifecycle analysis on the data to produce ten-year renewal programs and establish long-term capital programs.	Pro&Eng
S11	Complete a review of Council's overall asset planning and management framework, including gap-analysis.	Gap analysis identifies processes, data and systems to be improved allowing the improvement plan to be precise.	I.S.
S12	Review and update the AM Policy and procedures.	Updated and approved AM policy with procedures which relates to the policy.	I.S.
S13	Prepare a schedule for future Asset Management Plan reviews.	A schedule that will enable AM plans to be completed in an order required by Council.	I.S.

No.	Asset Management Improvement Action	Success Criteria	Responsible Lead
S14	Complete Asset Management Plans for all outstanding asset classes. 1. Buildings 2. Roads 3. Open Space 4. Drainage 5. Transport Consider an asset management plan for Bridges and Major Culverts.	Completed AM plans that will provide the information needed to produce the required information to a high degree of certainty after future upgrades.	I.S.
S15	Develop an annual 'State of the Assets' report to the Executive and Council covering asset condition, asset performance, levels of service monitoring and future financial sustainability options and consequences.	A document that will continually update and demonstrate improvements over time for the community and the Council.	I.S.
S16	Use a section of the intranet or within Civica Altitude ERP to provide progress reports on the asset management improvements and condition (internal marketing).	The people who have an interest or a responsibility to enhance asset management are fully aware of the status of the improvement plan.	I.T. Gov. I.S.

No.	Asset Management Improvement Action	Success Criteria	Responsible Lead
S17	Document agreed asset lives for each asset class. • Buildings • Open Space • Drainage • Roads	Documented asset lives to be agreed and used in all asset management functions e.g. valuations, asset planning, risk management etc.	TLDA
S18	Define a criticality framework and identify critical assets. • Buildings • Open Space • Drainage • Roads	A sound understanding of the critical assets in the asset portfolio to focus on during planning functions, maintenance, capital works etc.	I.S.
S19	Develop an asset risk framework and identify high risk assets within each core asset class. • Buildings • Open Space • Drainage • Roads	Develop a sound understanding of high-risk assets, how to manage them and to monitor them as they age and the risk increases.	I.S., C.S., Com S

No.	Asset Management Improvement Action	Success Criteria	Responsible Lead
S20	Via lifecycle planning, develop detailed 10-year renewal programs for critical roads, bridges, buildings and drainage, based on updated condition data. Identify any funding shortfalls early for Long Term Financial Plan consideration and budget planning.	Using risk and criticality and condition to complete long term renewal planning.	Pro&Eng, CFO
S21	Complete integration of the new asset management system (Civica Altitude) – migrate all asset data and train relevant staff. Begin using the system for maintenance scheduling and reporting (separate activity).	A working Civica with data migrated to the system and being used for maintenance, valuations.	I.T. C.S.
S22	Review and adopt an Asset Disposal policy for Council's infrastructure with established criteria.	A policy that articulates the desire to dispose of assets while seeking approval to apply asset disposal on redundant assets.	I.S.
S23	Establish an asset disposal register.	A generated list of assets to be earmarked for potential disposal.	TLDA

Table 5: Short-term Improvements

No.	Asset Management Improvement Action	Success Criteria	Responsible Service Unit
	Medium Term (3 – 5 years)		

No.	Asset Management Improvement Action	Success Criteria	Responsible Service Unit
M1	Complete a review of the asset management requirements for Council's Geographical Information System (GIS).	A roadmap to utilise the GIS to a high level to benefit from the GIS and its use.	TLDA
M2	Commence with the creation of condition and criticality layers on the GIS.	Graphical visualisation of the assets	TLDA, I.T.
M3	Develop heat maps for high-risk assets identifying areas where high risk assets group together.	Obtain a thorough understanding of hotspots around Shire to inform renewal strategies.	TLDA, I.T.
M4	Prioritise GIS improvements for Asset Management.	Develop a prioritised list of improvements to the function of the GIS and maximise decision making.	I.S.
M5	Document Council's services requiring service plans.	A list of services that will have service plans.	I.S, Com. S.
M6	Review maintenance practices for each asset class and produce maintenance plans based on asset criticality.	Produce a consolidated list of maintenance activities against assets of various criticality.	TLDA
M7	Complete Asset Handover process improvements and add clauses into capital delivery contracts and Project Management Framework.	Data capture will be part of the asset handover provided by	Pro&Eng

No.	Asset Management Improvement Action	Success Criteria	Responsible Service Unit
		contractors and within the Project Management Framework.	
M8	Implement formal Level of Service frameworks: define specific performance targets for each asset class (with community input) and establish annual monitoring (e.g. road roughness index targets, building user satisfaction surveys).	A knowledge of how assets are performing against defined levels of service	I.S., C.S. & Com S.
M9	Launch the Community Asset Reference Group and hold the first workshop to discuss service level expectations.	Community involvement in planning and decision making while obtaining an understanding of how the assets are performing and how you make decisions regarding the assets.	I.S.
M10	Perform a mid-term review of the Asset Plan. Using the improved data, update the asset renewal forecasts and re-prioritise projects if needed. Publish a State of Assets Report with 3-year trend data to Council and community.	A completed Asset Plan with far more confidence in the information and data Council has obtained.	I.S.
M11	Adopt a policy to address climate change impacts within Asset planning and design.	A developed policy that articulates how to best apply planning and design to offset the impacts of climate change.	I.S., Env&Fac

No.	Asset Management Improvement Action	Success Criteria	Responsible Service Unit
M12	Review design standards and amend for climate change resilience. Develop and implement asset planning and design processes to address climate change.	The development of design standards that will address the impacts of climate change.	Pro&Eng

Table 6: Medium-term improvements

No.	Asset Management Improvement Action	Success Criteria	Responsible Service Unit
	Long Term (5+ years)		
L1	Develop management plans using the Road Management Plan as a guide for the critical assets in each asset class.	Produce documents for assets other than roads for response times.	I.S.
L2	Complete random CCTV inspections of a sample of the drainage pipes and pits (every 4 years in line with the drainage AM Plan update).	Expand knowledge of underground assets to understand the condition of the assets.	TLDA
L3	Complete regular service level reviews to ensure value for money	A thorough understanding of how the assets are performing to deliver services.	I.S., C.S. & Com S.
L4	Initiate a critical asset failure impact study – scenario planning for failure of top 10 high risk assets (e.g. what if Bridge X fails – plan alternative routes, estimated cost, etc.) and integrate results into the Corporate Risk Register. The deliverable will be a contingency plan	Begin to address response to potential failures via contingency plans and emergency response plans.	I.S.
L5	Complete trend analysis for assets based on condition, service levels, risk to identify asset profile improvements, benefits to council, community satisfaction.	Sound understanding of your assets and how they are performing over time, and the benefits Council receives through the response.	I.S.

No.	Asset Management Improvement Action	Success Criteria	Responsible Service Unit
L6	Plan for the next Asset Plan (2035-2045) by evaluating successes and gaps of the current plan. Engage with the community on future asset priorities (this would tie into the next Community Plan and Vision refresh).	Preparation of a sound plan for the future in preparation for the next asset plan.	I.S.

Table 7: Long-term Improvements

Note:

B.M. – Building Maintenance

C.S. - Corporate Services

Com S. - Community Services

Com W – Community Wellbeing

CFO – Chief Financial Officer

CIO – Chief Information Officer

Env&Fac – Environment & Facilities

Gov - Governance

I.S. - Infrastructure Services

I.T. - Information Technology

Pro&Eng – Projects & Engineering

TLDA – Team Leader Design and Assets

By 2030, Council aims to have mature asset management practices comparable to best-practice rural councils. This means up-to-date asset data, fully integrated planning, a clear line of sight from community aspirations to on-ground works, and a robust financial strategy that underpins asset renewal. The next iteration of the Asset Plan will build on this foundation, with the goal of delivering infrastructure services that are reliable, affordable, and resilient for generations to come.

Next Steps

This Asset Plan provides a strategic roadmap for Council's sustainable infrastructure management that balances technical requirements with community values and financial realities. The approach prioritises maintaining existing assets over expansion, ensuring current service levels can be sustained within available resources.

Implementation begins immediately upon adoption of this Asset Plan in the short term, based on available resources, focusing on establishing governance structures and improving condition data and asset management systems. Regular community reporting will ensure transparency and accountability, while the Plan will be reviewed every four (4) years to maintain alignment with evolving community needs and Council strategic directions.

By implementing this framework, Council and the community will work together to ensure our infrastructure continues to support thriving, connected communities across the Shire for generations to come.

Project Report

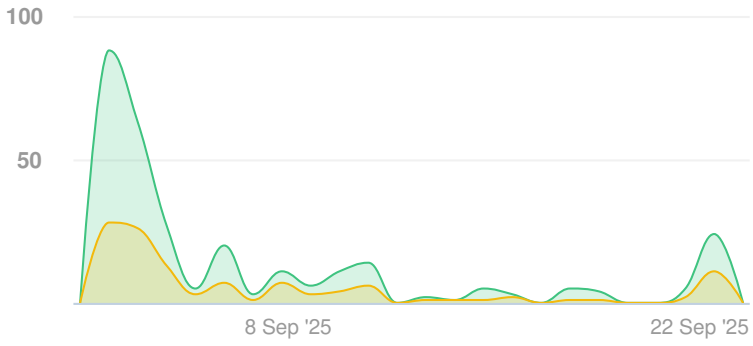
31 August 2025 - 23 September 2025

Your Say Glenelg

Glenelg Shire Draft Asset Plan 2025-2035

GRANICUS

Visitors Summary



Pageviews Visitors

Highlights

TOTAL VISITS 134

MAX VISITORS PER DAY 28

NEW REGISTRATIONS 0

ENGAGED VISITORS 8

INFORMED VISITORS 75

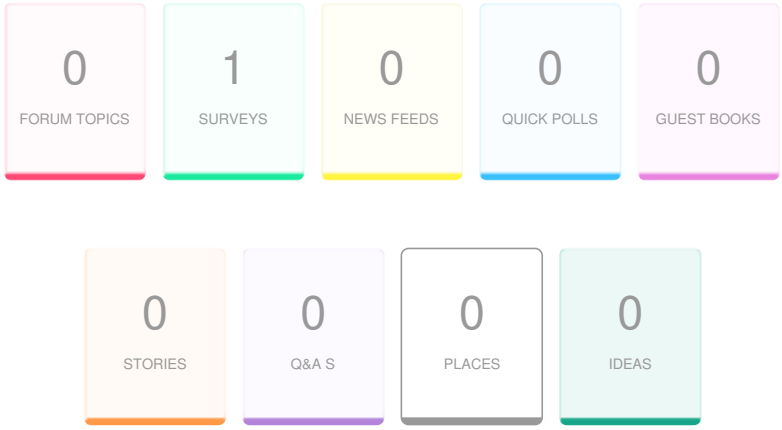
AWARE VISITORS 105

Aware Participants	105
Aware Actions Performed	Participants
Visited a Project or Tool Page	105

Informed Participants	75
Informed Actions Performed	Participants
Viewed a video	0
Viewed a photo	0
Downloaded a document	62
Visited the Key Dates page	0
Visited an FAQ list Page	0
Visited Instagram Page	0
Visited Multiple Project Pages	65
Contributed to a tool (engaged)	8

Engaged Participants	8		
Engaged Actions Performed	Registered	Unverified	Anonymous
Contributed on Forums	0	0	0
Participated in Surveys	1	0	7
Contributed to Newsfeeds	0	0	0
Participated in Quick Polls	0	0	0
Posted on Guestbooks	0	0	0
Contributed to Stories	0	0	0
Asked Questions	0	0	0
Placed Pins on Places	0	0	0
Contributed to Ideas	0	0	0

ENGAGEMENT TOOLS SUMMARY



Tool Type	Engagement Tool Name	Tool Status	Visitors	Contributors		
				Registered	Unverified	Anonymous
Survey Tool	Glenelg Shire Council Asset Plan 2025-2035	Archived	18	1	0	7

INFORMATION WIDGET SUMMARY

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DOCUMENTS	PHOTOS	VIDEOS	FAQS	KEY DATES

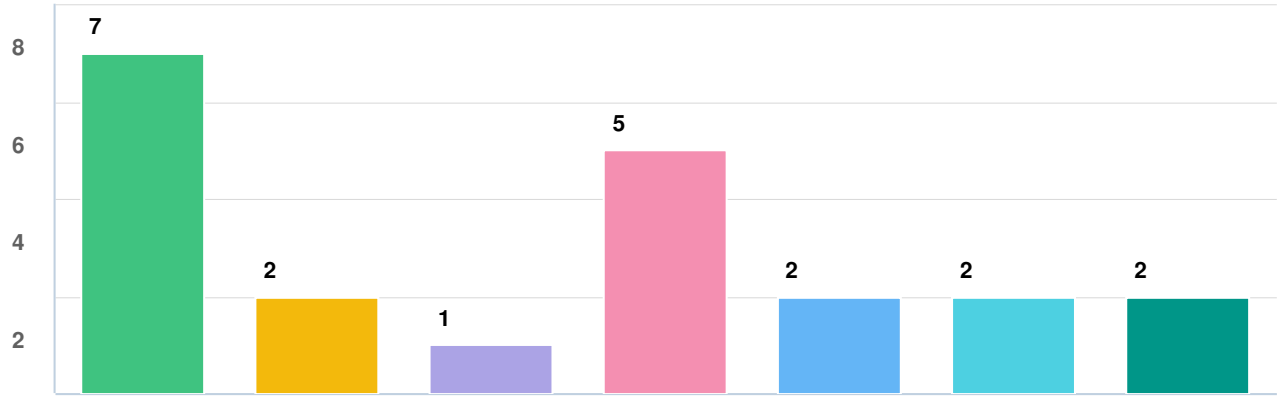
Widget Type	Engagement Tool Name	Visitors	Views/Downloads
Document	Glenelg Shire Council Draft Asset Plan 2025-2035	62	68

ENGAGEMENT TOOL: SURVEY TOOL

Glenelg Shire Council Asset Plan 2025-2035

Visitors 18	Contributors 8	CONTRIBUTIONS 8

Tell us the top 3 Council assets that you value most in your community



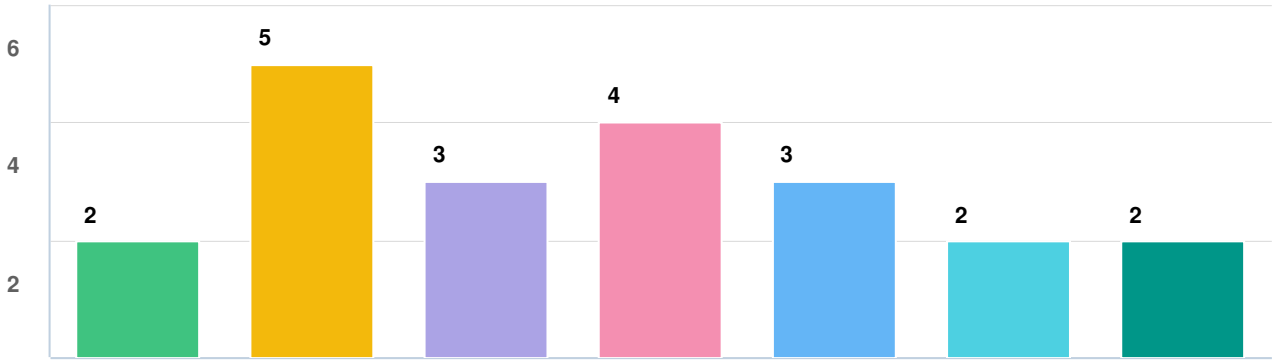
Question options

- Local roads and footpaths
- Parks, playgrounds and open space
- Community buildings and halls
- Sports and recreation facilities
- Public toilets and BBQs
- Transfer stations and waste facilities
- Other (please specify)

Optional question (8 response(s), 0 skipped)

Question type: Checkbox Question

What is most important to you when it comes to managing Council assets?You can select up to 3



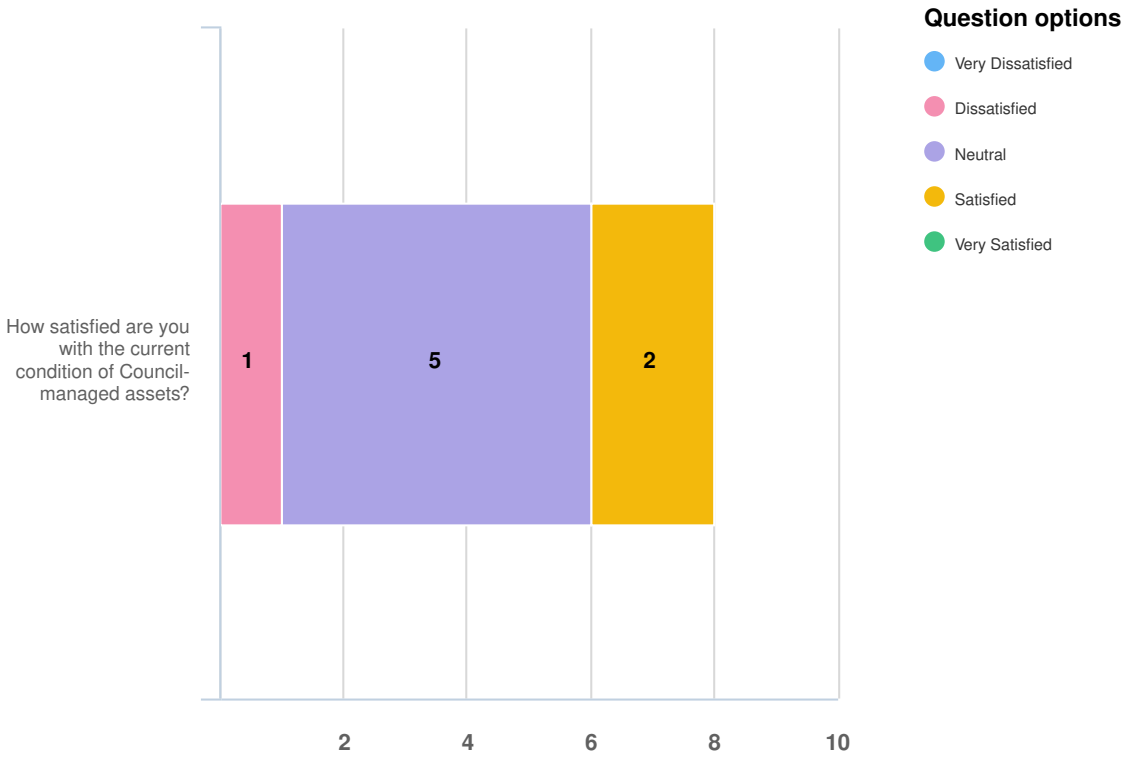
Question options

- Maintaining existing assets in good condition
- Upgrading assets to meet modern standards
- Investing in new assets to meet future growth
- Reducing costs and improving efficiency
- Ensuring accessibility and inclusion
- Minimising environmental impact and supporting sustainability
- Providing equitable services across the Shire

Optional question (8 response(s), 0 skipped)

Question type: Checkbox Question

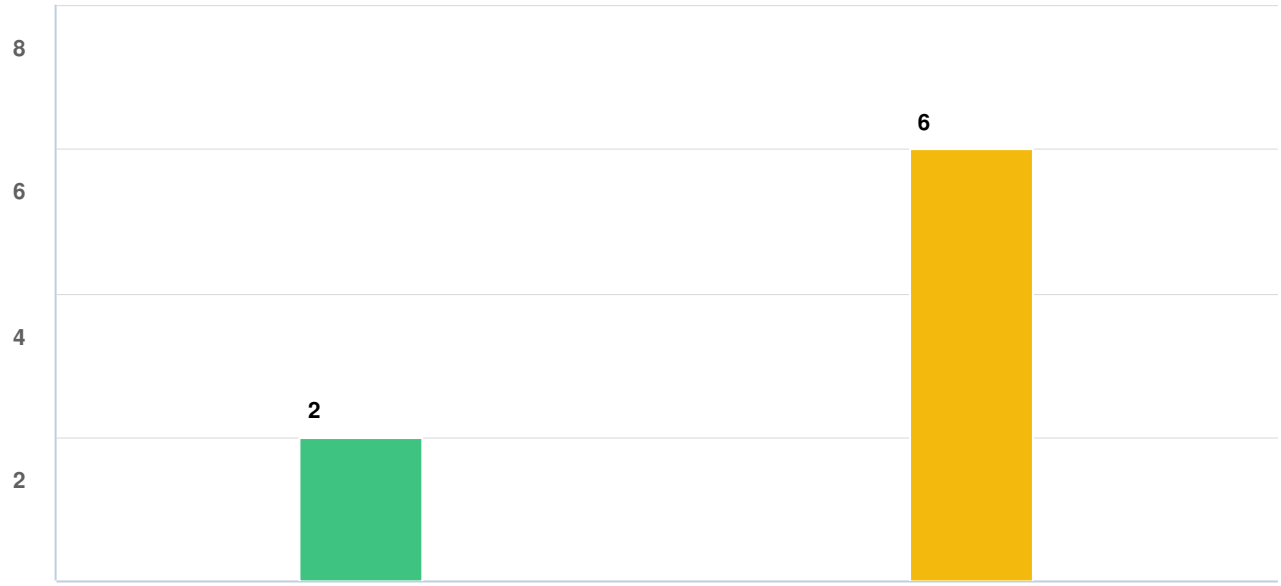
Thinking about the different community assets such as roads, buildings, parks, and facilities that Council manages.



Optional question (8 response(s), 0 skipped)

Question type: Likert Question

What are your thoughts on how Council should prioritise spending?



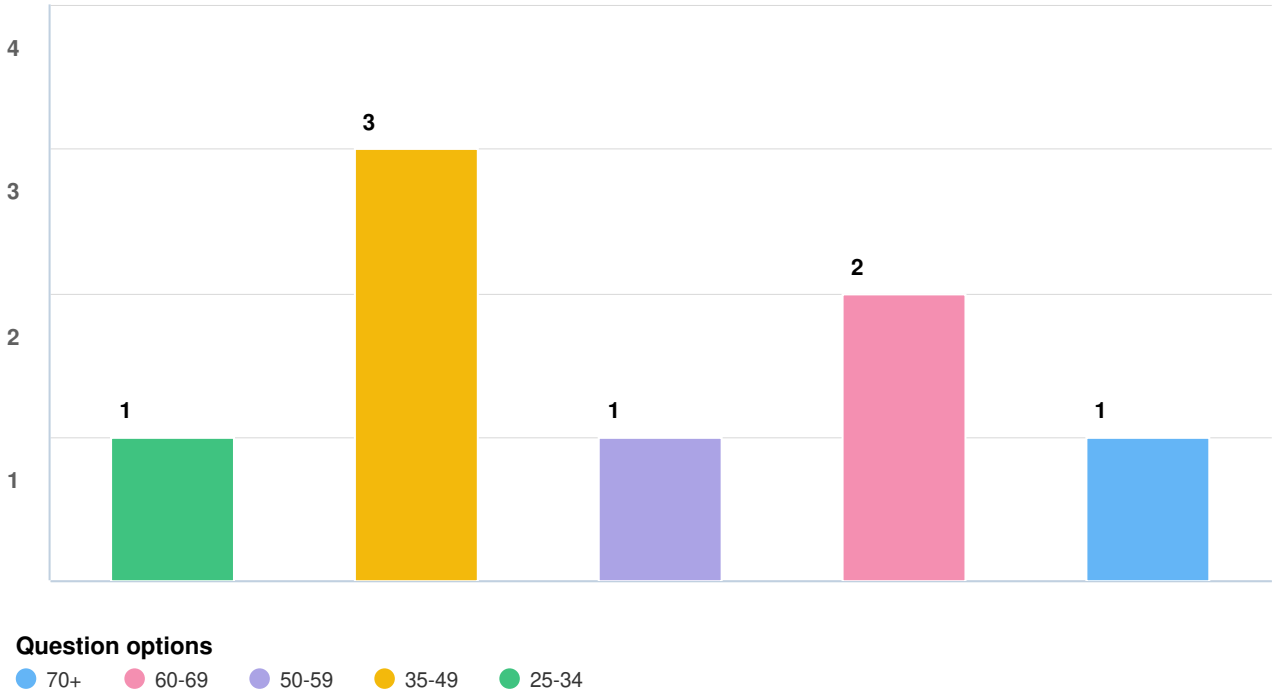
Question options

- Balance between maintaining and building new
- Focus on renewing existing infrastructure

Optional question (8 response(s), 0 skipped)

Question type: Checkbox Question

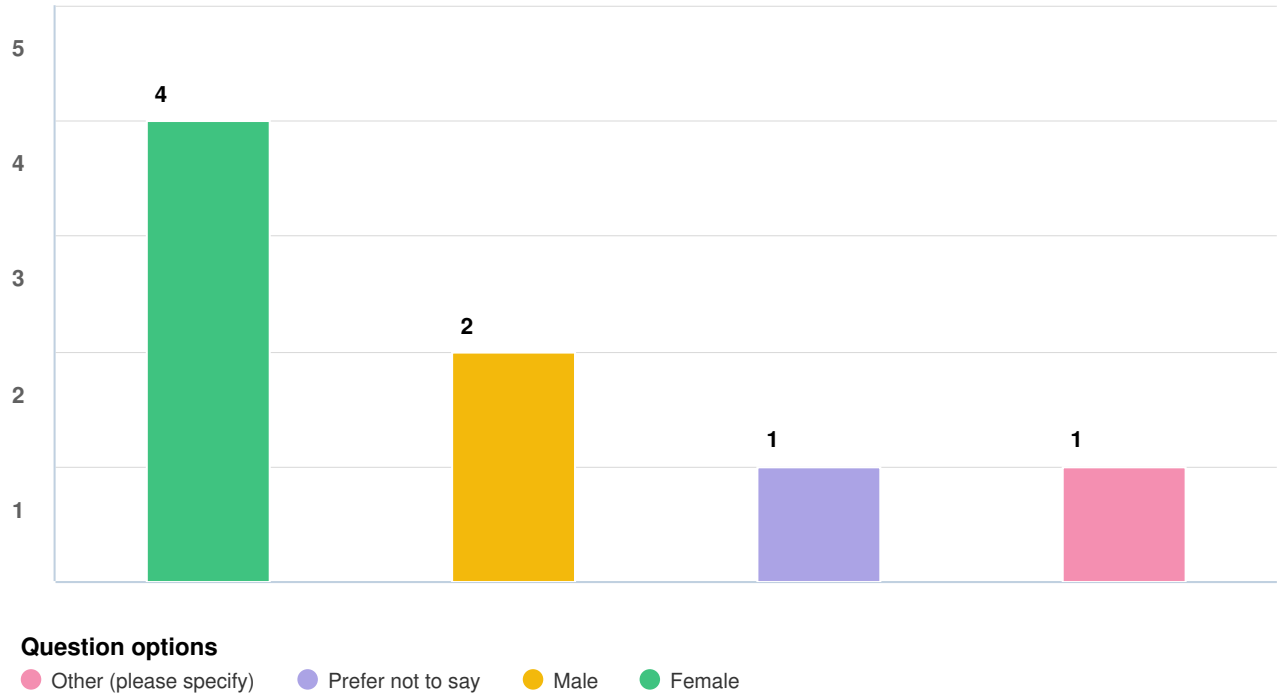
How old are you?



Optional question (8 response(s), 0 skipped)

Question type: Checkbox Question

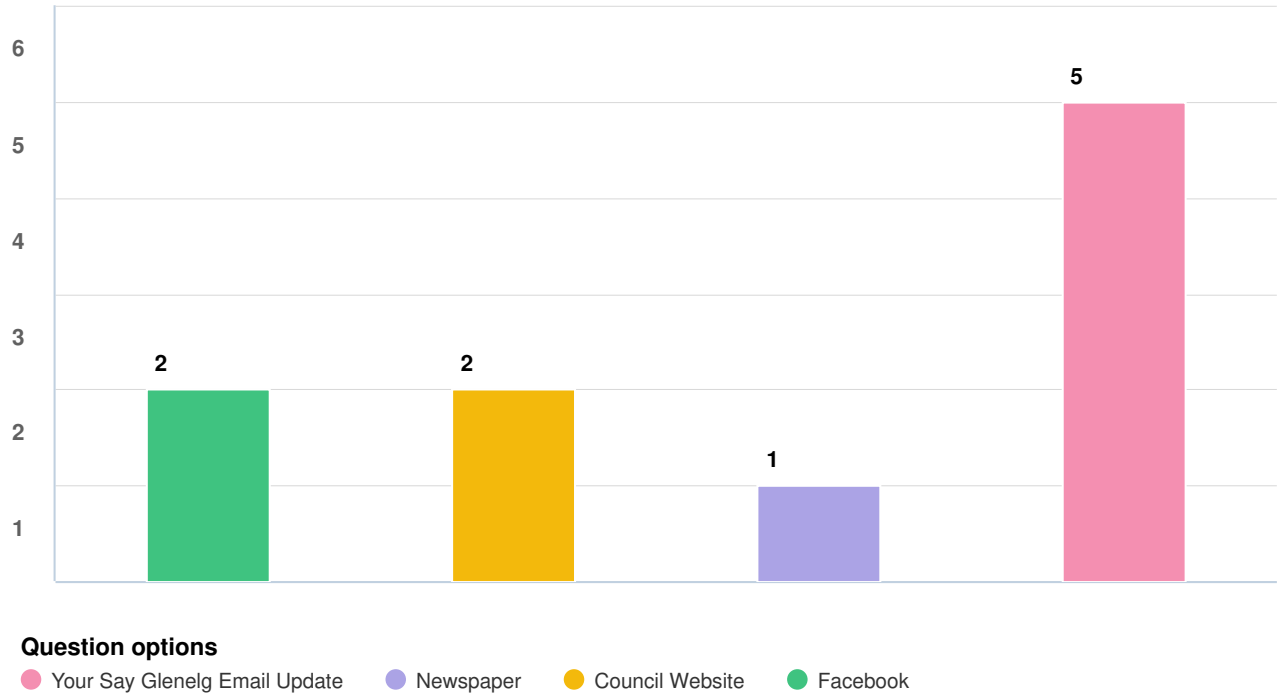
What is your gender?



Optional question (8 response(s), 0 skipped)

Question type: Checkbox Question

We would love to hear how you heard about this project. This helps us to understand the best way to let community know how ...



Optional question (8 response(s), 0 skipped)

Question type: Checkbox Question

Survey Responses

08 September 2025 - 07 October 2025

Glenelg Shire Council Asset Plan 2025-2035

Your Say Glenelg

Project: Glenelg Shire Draft Asset Plan 2025-2035

GRANICUS

VISITORS
20

CONTRIBUTORS			RESPONSES		
6			6		
1	0	5	1	0	5
Registered	Unverified	Anonymous	Registered	Unverified	Anonymous

Submission 1

Respondent No: 1
Login: [redacted]
Email: [redacted]

Responded At: Sep 08, 2025 09:29:13 am
Last Seen: Sep 07, 2025 23:21:31 pm
IP Address: [redacted]

Q1.	**Tell us the top 3 Council assets that you value most in your community**	Local roads and footpaths **Other (please specify)** Foreshore development
Q2.	**What is most important to you when it comes to managing Council assets?You can select up to 3**	Maintaining existing assets in good condition Reducing costs and improving efficiency
Q3.	**Thinking about the different community assets such as roads, buildings, parks, and facilities that Council manages.** How satisfied are you with the current condition of Council-managed assets?	Satisfied
Q4.	**If you'd like to, tell us more about why you chose that level of satisfaction**	The time taken to develop the yacht club and angling club is deplorable. The opportunity to beautify these buildings is quickly disappearing.
Q5.	**What are your thoughts on how Council should prioritise spending?**	Balance between maintaining and building new
Q6.	**If you'd like to, tell us why you think this is how we should prioritise spending.**	Because rate payers don’t have the money anymore
Q7.	**Are there any specific local assets or areas you think need improvement?**	Yacht club and angling club
Q8.	**Do you have any other comments or suggestions about how Council manages community assets?**	Generally very good
Q9.	**If you would like a formal response to your submission, please provide your email address.**	[redacted]
Q10.	**Where do you live? Start typing the name of your town and select from the drop down when it appears**	PORTLAND, VIC
Q11.	**How old are you?**	70+
Q12.	**What is your gender?**	Male
Q13.	**We would love to hear how you heard about this project. This helps us to understand the best way to let community know how to Have Your say on Council projects.**	Council Website Newspaper Your Say Glenelg Email Update

Submission 2

Respondent No: 2
Login: Anonymous
Email: n/a

Responded At: Sep 09, 2025 13:59:01 pm
Last Seen: Sep 09, 2025 13:59:01 pm
IP Address: n/a

Q1. **Tell us the top 3 Council assets that you value most in your community**

Local roads and footpaths
Community buildings and halls
Sports and recreation facilities

Q2. **What is most important to you when it comes to managing Council assets?You can select up to 3**

Maintaining existing assets in good condition
Upgrading assets to meet modern standards
Investing in new assets to meet future growth

Q3. **Thinking about the different community assets such as roads, buildings, parks, and facilities that Council manages.**

How satisfied are you with the current condition of Council-managed assets?

Neutral

Q4. **If you'd like to, tell us more about why you chose that level of satisfaction**

Portland's outdoor aquatic facilities are aging and there is uncertainty on their future. I'd like assurance that there is future planning for this important facility that it will be maintained or upgraded to ensure longevity for all community user groups including recreation and competitive swimming activities. Footpaths and curb and channel works are still needed in many parts of Portland. More safe access for bikes and scooters via footpaths and roads need consideration. Many of our community buildings and halls need attention for maintenance and more frequently due to the salt and weather affects.

Q5. **What are your thoughts on how Council should prioritise spending?**

Balance between maintaining and building new

Q6. **If you'd like to, tell us why you think this is how we should prioritise spending.**

Priority should be focusing on existing infrastructure as it is important to maintain these structures before they are too far gone and require complete rebuild. But I also believe there is always room for new buildings if funding is available to Council.

Q7. **Are there any specific local assets or areas you think need improvement?**

The Portland Leisure Aquatic Centre The Civic Hall The Portland Arts Centre Curb and Channel works on Town roads

Q8. **Do you have any other comments or suggestions about how Council manages community assets?**

I suggest Council conduct a review including feedback from public users, community groups and staff on how they feel that the Portland Leisure and Aquatic Centre management (Belgravia) manages the centre. I don't believe Belgravia are the right company to manage the PLACE and I don't believe that they are managing it in the best interests of the community. Their overall culture and values they run by internally in my option are not positive and genuine.

Q9. **If you would like a formal response to your submission, please provide your email address.**

[redacted]

Q10. **Where do you live? Start typing the name of your town and select from the drop down when it appears**

PORTLAND, VIC

Q11. **How old are you?**

35-49

Q12.	**What is your gender?**	Female
Q13.	**We would love to hear how you heard about this project. This helps us to understand the best way to let community know how to Have Your say on Council projects.**	Your Say Glenelg Email Update

Submission 3

Respondent No: 3
Login: Anonymous
Email: n/a

Responded At: Sep 22, 2025 09:27:55 am
Last Seen: Sep 22, 2025 09:27:55 am
IP Address: n/a

Q1.	**Tell us the top 3 Council assets that you value most in your community**	Local roads and footpaths Sports and recreation facilities Transfer stations and waste facilities
Q2.	**What is most important to you when it comes to managing Council assets?You can select up to 3**	Investing in new assets to meet future growth Reducing costs and improving efficiency Ensuring accessibility and inclusion

Q3. **Thinking about the different community assets such as roads, buildings, parks, and facilities that Council manages.**

How satisfied are you with the current condition of Council-managed assets? — Satisfied

Q4. **If you'd like to, tell us more about why you chose that level of satisfaction**

I think things could be better

Q5.	**What are your thoughts on how Council should prioritise spending?**	Balance between maintaining and building new
Q6.	**If you'd like to, tell us why you think this is how we should prioritise spending.**	not answered

Q7. **Are there any specific local assets or areas you think need improvement?**

the swimming pool needs to be bigger and the basketball stadium too

Q8. **Do you have any other comments or suggestions about how Council manages community assets?**

ok

Q9.	**If you would like a formal response to your submission, please provide your email address.**	not answered
Q10.	**Where do you live? Start typing the name of your town and select from the drop down when it appears**	PORTLAND NORTH, VIC
Q11.	**How old are you?**	35-49
Q12.	**What is your gender?**	Female
Q13.	**We would love to hear how you heard about this project. This helps us to understand the best way to let community know how to Have Your say on Council projects.**	Your Say Glenelg Email Update

Submission 4

Respondent No: 4
Login: Anonymous
Email: n/a

Responded At: Sep 22, 2025 09:32:52 am
Last Seen: Sep 22, 2025 09:32:52 am
IP Address: n/a

Q1.	**Tell us the top 3 Council assets that you value most in your community**	Local roads and footpaths Parks, playgrounds and open space Sports and recreation facilities
Q2.	**What is most important to you when it comes to managing Council assets?You can select up to 3**	Upgrading assets to meet modern standards Ensuring accessibility and inclusion Minimising environmental impact and supporting sustainability
Q3.	**Thinking about the different community assets such as roads, buildings, parks, and facilities that Council manages.** How satisfied are you with the current condition of Council-managed assets?	Neutral
Q4.	**If you'd like to, tell us more about why you chose that level of satisfaction**	not answered
Q5.	**What are your thoughts on how Council should prioritise spending?**	Focus on renewing existing infrastructure
Q6.	**If you'd like to, tell us why you think this is how we should prioritise spending.**	not answered
Q7.	**Are there any specific local assets or areas you think need improvement?**	not answered
Q8.	**Do you have any other comments or suggestions about how Council manages community assets?**	not answered
Q9.	**If you would like a formal response to your submission, please provide your email address.**	not answered
Q10.	**Where do you live? Start typing the name of your town and select from the drop down when it appears**	PORTLAND WEST, VIC
Q11.	**How old are you?**	25-34
Q12.	**What is your gender?**	Female
Q13.	**We would love to hear how you heard about this project. This helps us to understand the best way to let community know how to Have Your say on Council projects.**	Facebook

Submission 5

Respondent No: 5
Login: Anonymous
Email: n/a

Responded At: Sep 22, 2025 10:58:11 am
Last Seen: Sep 22, 2025 10:58:11 am
IP Address: n/a

Q1.	**Tell us the top 3 Council assets that you value most in your community**	Local roads and footpaths Parks, playgrounds and open space Sports and recreation facilities
Q2.	**What is most important to you when it comes to managing Council assets?You can select up to 3**	Upgrading assets to meet modern standards

Q3. **Thinking about the different community assets such as roads, buildings, parks, and facilities that Council manages.**

How satisfied are you with the current condition of Council-managed assets? — Dissatisfied

Q4. **If you'd like to, tell us more about why you chose that level of satisfaction**

Many local assets are due for upgrade and not enough action is taking place to meet the needs of our residents.

Q5.	**What are your thoughts on how Council should prioritise spending?**	Balance between maintaining and building new
Q6.	**If you'd like to, tell us why you think this is how we should prioritise spending.**	Lots of large council assets need major upgrades, it would be too expensive to rebuild them completely. Council should also always be weighing this up with what new assets are needed.

Q7. **Are there any specific local assets or areas you think need improvement?**

The Portland Leisure and aquatic centre needs much work to make it appropriate for the needs of of shire. It is highly used by many members and groups yet most issues seem to be fixed temporarily or aesthetically without upgrades and improvements to equipment and the like.

Q8. **Do you have any other comments or suggestions about how Council manages community assets?**

The management of Portland Leisure and Aquatic Centre contracted to Belgravia Leisure by council needs a thorough assessment. It would seem that Belgravia may meet financial targets how do they meet other targets? Do they contribute and give back to community through donations and volunteering etc? Do they support and provide a welcoming environment for local community and sporting groups? Does their staff act fairly and professionally? This is a large community asset run my a multi million dollar private trust which has made it all about charging money for services and not about looking after the Portland community and community groups.

Q9.	**If you would like a formal response to your submission, please provide your email address.**	not answered
Q10.	**Where do you live? Start typing the name of your town and select from the drop down when it appears**	PORTLAND, VIC
Q11.	**How old are you?**	35-49

Q12.	**What is your gender?**	Prefer not to say
Q13.	**We would love to hear how you heard about this project. This helps us to understand the best way to let community know how to Have Your say on Council projects.**	Facebook

Submission 6

Respondent No: 6
Login: Anonymous
Email: n/a

Responded At: Sep 22, 2025 13:05:11 pm
Last Seen: Sep 22, 2025 13:05:11 pm
IP Address: n/a

Q1. **Tell us the top 3 Council assets that you value most in your community**

Local roads and footpaths
Sports and recreation facilities
Public toilets and BBQs

Q2. **What is most important to you when it comes to managing Council assets?You can select up to 3**

Upgrading assets to meet modern standards
Ensuring accessibility and inclusion
Providing equitable services across the Shire

Q3. **Thinking about the different community assets such as roads, buildings, parks, and facilities that Council manages.**

How satisfied are you with the current condition of Council-managed assets?

Neutral

Q4. **If you'd like to, tell us more about why you chose that level of satisfaction**

I'm generally dissatisfied with the condition of the PLACE, but cant comment on other assets that Council manages so therefore I felt I could only put neutral.

Q5. **What are your thoughts on how Council should prioritise spending?**

Balance between maintaining and building new

Q6. **If you'd like to, tell us why you think this is how we should prioritise spending.**

Some assets may require maintenance while others are beyond repair and need to be renewed.

Q7. **Are there any specific local assets or areas you think need improvement?**

Portland Leisure and Aquatic Centre

Q8. **Do you have any other comments or suggestions about how Council manages community assets?**

I have been told by PLACE staff that the outdoor pool is not opening until December this year. Unfortunately frequent faecal incidents are leading to regular 24-hour closures in indoor pool, and with the outdoor pool not opening until December, members are left with no alternative swimming options. This significantly limits access, to these community assets, especially considering the already unreliable indoor pool availability. The community that rely on the centre appear to be overlooked, making it difficult to see this asset as truly serving the community's best interests.

Q9. **If you would like a formal response to your submission, please provide your email address.**

[redacted]

Q10. **Where do you live? Start typing the name of your town and select from the drop down when it appears**

PORTLAND, VIC

Q11. **How old are you?**

60-69

Q12. **What is your gender?**

Female

Q13.	**We would love to hear how you heard about this project. This helps us to understand the best way to let community know how to Have Your say on Council projects.**	Council Website



GLENELG SHIRE

GLENELG SHIRE COUNCIL
DOMESTIC ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

Traditional Owners

Glenelg Shire Council respectfully acknowledges the Gunditjmara, Jardwadjali and Boandik Peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands and waters across our Shire. We pay our respects to the Elders past and present, and recognise their deep and continuing connection to Country, community, and culture.

We acknowledge that animals have always held an important place in Aboriginal culture – from working alongside people in daily life to holding spiritual and cultural significance. In managing dogs, cats, and other animals today, we honour this long history of care, balance, and respect between people, animals, and the environment.

We also acknowledge and celebrate the ongoing contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to the prosperity, wellbeing, and cultural identity of Glenelg Shire.

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INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

Purpose of the Domestic Animal Management Plan - DAMP

The Domestic Animal Management Plan (The DAMP) aligns with Council's strategic objectives including safe and inclusive public spaces, community wellbeing and environmental sustainability. It recognizes the shared responsibility between Council, pet owners and the broader community.

Under Section 68A of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* (the Act), every council in Victoria is required to produce a Domestic Animal Management Plan which will be renewed every four years.

The purpose of The DAMP is to provide a structured, strategic approach to the management of domestic animals—primarily cats and dogs—within the Glenelg Shire by addressing the following:

Development and Review:

- Councils must develop The DAMP every four years in consultation with the Secretary.
- The DAMP must be reviewed annually and updated as needed.

Plan Requirements:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of current animal control services.
- Include training programs for authorised officers.
- Outline strategies to:
    - Promote responsible pet ownership.
    - Ensure compliance with relevant laws.
    - Reduce dog attacks.
    - Address overpopulation and high euthanasia rates.
    - Increase pet registration and identification.
    - Reduce nuisance caused by pets.
    - Identify and manage dangerous, menacing, and restricted breed dogs.
- Review existing local laws and orders and recommend changes if needed.
- Periodically review all strategies, programs, and services in the plan.

Reporting Obligations:

- Provide The DAMP and any amendments to the Secretary (DEECA).
- Report on the plan's implementation in the Council's annual report.

It outlines Council's efforts in animal management, detailing both ongoing and new initiatives aimed at improving compliance and education. It also highlights opportunities for collaboration between Council and the community to address challenges related to cats and dogs.

State government legislation requires Council to address issues related only to cats and dogs. However, Council acknowledges that many residents keep a variety of other animals as companions, including small mammals, reptiles, horses, and traditionally livestock species such as ducks and chickens.

Our Purpose

To build a community where people and pets thrive together—through responsible pet ownership, and collaborative, sustainable practices that protect animal welfare and enhance community wellbeing.

Our Vision

Glenelg Shire Council is committed to delivering a service that aligns with industry best practices in pet care and management. By working closely with the community, the Council aims to achieve the best possible outcomes for pets, the environment, and the broader community.

Associated Legislation

How the DAMP aligns with other Strategic Plans

The DAMP is developed in accordance with the relevant legislative and regulatory frameworks that govern the management of domestic animals. These laws provide the legal basis for animal registration, identification, welfare, enforcement, and education strategies.

1. Primary Legislation

- Domestic Animals Act 1994
    - Governs the registration, control, breeding, desexing, microchipping, and welfare of domestic cats and dogs.
    - Empowers local councils or governing bodies to develop and enforce Domestic Animal Management Plans.

2. Supporting Legislation and Regulations

- Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986 – Sets minimum standards for the treatment and care of animals.
- Local Government Act 1989/2020 – Grants councils the authority to implement and enforce local laws related to animal control.
- Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 – Relates to disease prevention and health risks from stray or unmanaged animals.
- Planning and Environment Act 1987– May influence where animal facilities (e.g., shelters, dog parks) can be located.

3. Local Laws and By-laws

- Glenelg Shire Council General Local Law 2018 Part 3 Animals - Relates to the keeping, control, and management of animals within the municipality, including provisions for registration, number of animals permitted, standards of care, and measures to protect community amenity and safety.

4. Enforcement Powers

Under the above legislation, council local laws officers are delegated and have the powers to:

- Issue fines or infringements
- Seize animals when necessary
- Investigate complaints and incidents
- Conduct routine inspections and patrols

5. Council Strategies, Policies and Guidelines

This DAMP aligns with internal council strategies or plans, including:

- Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029
- Gender Equality Plan 2021 - 2025
- Glenelg Shire Open Space Strategy 2019 – 2040
- Local Laws Suite of policies and procedures
- Emergency Management Plans (particularly for pets during disasters)

Demographic and Profile of Glenelg Shire Council

Glenelg Shire Council is in southwestern Victoria, approximately 360 kilometres from Melbourne. In 2024, the estimated resident population was 20,379, however projection estimate by 2036 could reach 21,646.

The Shire encompasses a total area of 6,212 square kilometres and includes a diverse range of localities such as Portland, Heywood, Casterton, Nelson and Dartmoor.

The community is served by 10,172 dwellings, with an average household size of 2.21 people. The median age of residents is 47 years, with 16.2% of the population aged 0 to 14 years and 22.2% aged 65 years and over.

The area is rich in Indigenous heritage, with the Gunditjmara, Jardwadjali, and Boandik peoples recognised as the Traditional Owners of the land.

Domestic Animal Registration 2025 in the Glenelg Shire





Based on the above demographics we applied a national average pet ownership rate for the number of dogs and cats per household.

Pet Type	Estimated Average per Household	Estimated Total Across 10,172 Dwellings
Dogs	1.3	~13,224
Cats	1.6	~16,275

The data indicates that a significant number of animals within our Shire remain unregistered. This insight informs Council's strategies to improve compliance, protect community safety, State led education programs and strengthen animal management services.

Process of preparing the Plan

The development of The DAMP 2026–2029 was supported through its integration with the community consultation process for the Council and Wellbeing Plan. This approach included:

- A broad and inclusive community engagement program
- A review of local, regional, and state policies and planning frameworks
- Consideration of Council's legislative obligations
- Analysis of demographic, health, and economic trends

How we engaged and who was involved



What we learnt



The investigations the Glenelg Shire Council undertook in preparing the plan are summarised in below table.

Area of interest	Investigation
Legislation, regulations, codes of practice	Council's animal management services are governed by the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, which forms the foundation of our approach. The development of this plan provides an opportunity to review these services and identify ways to improve outcomes.
Local laws and orders	The Council's local laws and the animal-related orders are outlined in this plan. This plan includes provisions for their review.
Animal management data	Council's pet registration and customer request data were analysed to identify trends, issues, and potential priorities, which are referenced throughout this plan.
Existing services	Preparing this plan provides an opportunity to reflect on Council's current animal management services and consider potential improvements. References to the existing services are included throughout the plan.
Glenelg Shire Council profile	Understanding the community profile ensures the plan reflects the unique attributes of the municipality, as outlined.
Community and stakeholder feedback	Community and stakeholder input was central to developing this plan, with extensive feedback incorporated where appropriate. The engagement process and feedback are detailed below.
The planning context	Glenelg Shire Council reviewed relevant plans and strategies, along with their implications for this plan.
Research and best practice	Glenelg Shire Council reviewed the latest research and best practice in animal management.
Funding	This Plan has been prepared on the basis that actions will be funded within existing budgets, however any infrastructure actions will be subject to securing external funding.
Partnerships	In preparing the plan, Council explored opportunities to partner with others to improve outcomes and make better use of resources. Current and potential partners include but not limited to the State Government, neighbouring councils, animal welfare organisations, veterinarians, domestic animal businesses, obedience clubs, and animal trainers.

Our Team

The Animal Management & Welfare (including rangers) primarily focuses on:

- Enforcing state legislation and Council policies related to cats and dogs
- Responding to escaped pets, with a priority on reuniting them with their owners
- Transferring unclaimed animals to rescue and rehoming organisations
- Maintaining the cat and dog registration database and collecting registration fees
- Conducting inspections of Domestic Animal Businesses and animals requiring special registration
- Investigating complaints and incidents, and managing associated legal proceedings
- Responding to animal welfare concerns and referring cases to the appropriate authorities
- Participating in community events and promotional activities
- Support the delivery in State-led educational programs
- Managing partnerships with the community, including collaborations with rehoming groups
- Promoting pet-related opportunities and community networks
- Overseeing the management of designated dog off-lead areas

THE PLAN

This action plan outlines 12 key focus areas, highlighting what we're working towards, the actions we'll take, and how we plan to get there.

While we've identified target timeframes for each action, priorities may shift over time in response to changing community needs, evolving demands on Animal Management services, other Council commitments, new partnership opportunities, or the availability of external funding.

Council's Role in implementing the Domestic Animal Management Plan

To make the most of Council resources and deliver the best outcomes for the community, Council may take on different roles when implementing the recommendations in this Action Plan. These roles include:

- Providing infrastructure
- Managing services
- Offering advice and information
- Engaging in partnerships
- Advocating on behalf of the community
- Driving innovation

The Action Plan clearly identifies the primary role Council will take for each recommendation, ensuring a flexible and effective approach to meeting community needs.

Monitoring and Reviewing the Plan

In line with the requirements of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994 (Vic)*, Council is committed to keeping the Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) responsive and effective. To ensure the Plan remains relevant and achievable within available resources:

- Council will conduct an annual review of the DAMP to assess progress, adjust priorities, and confirm that actions continue to align with community needs.
- A comprehensive review of the Plan will be undertaken in the fourth year, as required by the Act, to guide the development of the next four-year strategy.

OWNERSHIP & REGISTRATION

FOCUS: Responsible Pet Ownership

What we're working towards: A community that understands and practices responsible pet ownership.

Key things we will do:

- Promote responsible ownership of dogs and cats.
- Encourage compliance with laws and regulations.
- Deliver educational programs relating to pet care, registration, and control.

How we'll get there:

Activity	When	Evaluation – How we will achieve
Share simple tips and real pet stories through social media and the Council website.	Annual	Increase in the number of social media posts or other media content.
Place easy-to-read posters and flyers in vet clinics, pet shops, libraries, and community spaces.	2026	Communication material created and displayed in locations.
Run free pet care talks at schools and community events.	2028	Number of sessions implemented

FOCUS: Animal Registration and Identification

What we're working towards: **All pet owners register their pets to ensure compliance and community safety.**

Key things we will do:

- Improving registration systems and public awareness.
- Using microchip data to identify unregistered pets.
- Conduct home / property inspections

How we'll get there:

Activity	When	Evaluation – How we will achieve
Use microchip registry data to identify and follow up with pet owners whose animals are not registered in the Shire.	2026 - 2028	Increase in the number of pets registered in Glenelg Shire.
Review the process and systems used to deliver the annual pet registration renewal process and implement improvements.	2027	Number of pet registration renewals paid on time Reduced number of enquiries from pet owners requiring assistance with their renewal. Time taken to complete annual registration renewal process.
Partner with vets and shelters to promote registration, desexing, and adoption.	2026	Vet Agreement
Run focused campaigns and registration drives in areas where pet registrations are low.	Annually	Number of new registrations received.

COMMUNITY, WELFARE & SAFETY

FOCUS - Diversity, Inclusion and Vulnerable Populations

What we're working towards: Pets in vulnerable households are safe and supported.

Key things we will do:

- Recognising the presence of pets in homelessness / family and domestic violence

How we'll get there:

Activity	When	Evaluation – How we will achieve
Identify the needs and available services for pet owners experiencing homelessness or family violence.	2027	Review undertaken.
Provide officers with training to respond appropriately to cases involving vulnerability.	2026	Process developed. All officers trained to deal with and manage matters relating to family and domestic violence.
Create and share an information pack to support pet owners facing homelessness or family violence.	2026	Information pack produced, given to support agencies and disseminated to pet owners experiencing homelessness.

FOCUS: Managing Pet-related Issues

What we're working towards: A community with fewer nuisance pets, responsible pet containment, and improved supporting infrastructure.

Key things we will do:

- Address barking, roaming, and trespassing animals.
- Promote cat curfews and containment rules.
- Enhancing infrastructure such as pathways, signage and waste bins.

How we'll get there:

Activity	When	Evaluation – How we will achieve
Review and update information on preventing excessive barking and managing barking dog complaints.	2026	Review the barking dog guidelines and improvements implemented where applicable.
Explore new technology to help manage barking dog issues more effectively	2027	Investigate appropriate technology options to improve evidence and make it easier for customer.
Deliver an education program to support responsible pet ownership in high-density living areas.	2027 - 2028	Program developed and implemented.
Review dog on / off-leash areas, rules for dogs in public places, and update where needed.	2028	Review completed and presented to Council. Update Schedule 29.
Develop guidelines and update infrastructure for dog-friendly spaces, including signage in parks.	2027	New guidelines approved and being embedded into practice for new infrastructure.
Review the management of dog waste facilities in public areas.	2027	Review completed.
Investigate and implement programs to manage unowned and semi-owned cats in the community.	2026-2028	Investigation completed and program implemented.

Research options for mandatory desexing of cats.	2028	Present a report to Council about mandatory desexing of cats.
Run campaigns to improve awareness and compliance with cat containment laws.	2027	Information and material published on the website and communicated through social media and other mechanisms.

FOCUS: Dangerous and Restricted Breeds

What we're working towards: **Owners of declared dangerous and/or restricted breeds are compliant, ensure public safety, and responsibly manage their dogs**

Declared dogs are managed safely and in compliance with legislation.

Key things we will do:

- Monitoring and managing declared dogs.
- Enforcement of mandatory compliance for owning a declared dog.

How we'll get there:

Activity	When	Evaluation – How we will achieve
Review and strengthen the system for identifying and auditing declared dogs within the municipality.	Annual	Review undertaken and improvements implemented Any declared dogs identified are registered in accordance with requirements of the Act.
Work with neighbouring councils to share information about declared dogs near municipal boundaries.	2028	Engagement with neighbouring councils.

FOCUS: Dog Attacks and Public Safety

What we're working towards: Dog owners act responsibly and support community safety. Reduced dog attacks and improved public safety

Key things we will do:

- Reducing dog attacks through education, patrols, and enforcement.
- Supporting victims and managing aggressive dogs.

How we'll get there:

Activity	When	Evaluation – How we will achieve
Enhance patrols in Portland's public spaces to ensure dogs are under proper control.	2026 - 2028	Program reviewed and evaluation implemented Number of hours patrolled Number of non-compliances observed.
Analyse dog attack data to understand causes and take steps to prevent future incidents.	2027	Review and report on data concerning dog attacks.
Promote dog safety education programs, including those run by Animal Welfare Victoria.	Ongoing	Programs promoted and delivered to community groups.
Create easy-to-understand information packs for both owners of attacking dogs and victims of incidents.	2027	Information pack produced and distributed to stakeholders and used where required.
Review and improve the information provided to customers reporting dog attacks to support better service and data collection.	2026 - 2027	Review completed (2026). Implemented improvements (2027).

FOCUS: Overpopulation and Euthanasia Reduction

What we're working towards: A community to practice responsible pet ownership, manage unowned cats, and reduce overpopulation

Reduce stray/unowned animals and lower euthanasia rates

Key things we will do:

- Promoting desexing and responsible pet acquisition.
- Managing semi-owned and unowned cat colonies.
- Strengthen rehoming and rescue partnerships to reduce euthanasia rates

How we'll get there:

Activity	When	Evaluation – How we will achieve
Return stray or lost registered animals directly to their owners whenever possible.	Ongoing	Increase in the number of animals returned to their owner without having to go to the pound.
Partner with local vets to transfer unclaimed animals to the Animal Welfare Centre for rehoming.	Ongoing	Number of animals referred and / or collected from local veterinary clinics (stray / lost).
Provide education that highlights the lifelong commitment of pet ownership to reduce preventable surrenders.	2027 - 2028	Review numbers to hopefully see a downward trend in number of animals surrendered.
Update education materials on the impacts of cat overpopulation and promote adoption from approved shelters.	2026	Review completed and information updated.
Collaborate with shelters, pounds, and rescue groups to encourage adoption and make it more accessible to the community.	2027	Programs implemented.

ACCOUNTABILITY & REPORTING

FOCUS: Domestic Animal Businesses

What we're working towards: **All domestic animal businesses operate responsibly and are compliant.**

Key things we will do:

- Ensuring compliance with registration and codes of practice.
- Conducting audits and responding to complaints.
- Promoting registered businesses.

How we'll get there:

Activity	When	Evaluation – How we will achieve
Use established guidelines to identify and follow up on unregistered domestic animal businesses.	Annual	Compare number of registered domestic animal businesses before and after the search.
Publish and regularly update a list of compliant animal businesses on the Council website.	Annual	List maintained and updated where required.
Register all newly identified domestic animal businesses and ensure compliance with codes of practice	As required	New domestic animal businesses are registered, or action is taken for failing to register a business.
Investigate and respond to community reports of non-compliance.	Ongoing	All reports are promptly investigated.
Carry out regular audits of registered animal businesses.	Annual	Audits undertaken as required.
Review and improve application and renewal processes to make them simpler and easier to use.	2027	Review undertaken.

FOCUS: A Skilled and Resourced Team

What we're working towards: A capable and adequately resourced team delivering effective animal management services.

Key things we will do:

- Ensure the team is suitably resourced and skilled.
- Review resourcing levels.

How we'll get there:

Activity	When	Evaluation – How we will achieve
Provide regular training to staff to strengthen skills and improve service to the community.	Annually	Completion of annual goals and performance appraisals All staff undergo required training in accordance with the Local Laws Training Plan.
Support officers to attend industry training and seminars to keep their knowledge up to date.	Ongoing	Completion of State Government provided training Attendance at industry-related events
Regularly review staffing and resources to ensure the team can deliver services effectively.	2026 - 2028	Team capacity consistently meets service delivery needs.

FOCUS - Legal Requirements

What we're working towards: Animal management aligned with legislation and best practice.

Key things we will do:

- Align local laws practises with state legislation and community needs.

How we'll get there:

Activity	When	Evaluation – How we will achieve
Keep staff abreast of legislative changes.	Ongoing	Staff attendance at state conference. Memberships and subscriptions to peak bodies / organisation's

FOCUS: Emergency Management

What we're working towards: A Prepared and Resilient Community.

A community prepared for emergencies involving animals.

Key things we will do:

- Review Emergency Management Plans including animals
- Providing resources and communication to support our community to be prepared in the case of an emergency.
- Collaborating with other councils and agencies.

How we'll get there:

Activity	When	Evaluation – How we will achieve
Gather and share clear information to help the community plan and care for pets during emergencies.	2026	Information collated and made available as appropriate.
Support animals in emergency situations.	Ongoing	Gaps identified, reviewed, and appropriate actions implemented.
Review and keep Emergency Management Plans up to date to include animal needs.	Annual	Review to be undertaken

FOCUS: Annual Review and Reporting

What we're working towards: A transparent, accountable, and continually improving approach to domestic animal management.

Key things we will do:

- Commitment to annual evaluation and updates.
- Transparent reporting to the community and government.
- Continuous improvement based on performance and feedback.

How we'll get there:

Activity	When	Evaluation – How we will achieve
Set an annual timeline and program to review and evaluate the plan.	2025	The annual timeline and program for reviewing and where necessary updating the plan is appropriate and will ensure reporting requirements are met.
Promote and publish the plan to the community.	2025	Plan designed and produced Plan promoted via various platforms.
Review all programs and activities each year to assess their relevance, performance, and outcomes.	Annual	The annual reviews are completed and are effective.
Record and address any activities not completed or not meeting expectations.	Annual	The annual reviews are completed and are effective.
Complete a formal evaluation, update the plan as needed, and submit for Council approval.	Annual	Evaluation completed.
Report on implementation in the Council's annual report and provide amended plans to the Secretary where required.	Annual	Evaluation published in the Council's annual report. Amended plan submitted where required.

Tax Invoice

MAV WorkCare
Level 5, 1 Nicholson Street
East Melbourne, VIC, 3002
Phone: 03 9667 5555
ABN#: 24326561315

BILL TO:

Glenelg Shire Council
P O Box 152
Portland VIC 3305
AUSTRALIA

Invoice #:	W000470
Date:	30-Jun-2025
Due Date:	30-Sep-2025
Your Order #:	
Terms:	Net 30 Days

DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
MAV WorkCare 3-year collection as per Worksafe Victoria	237,432.00

Kindly pay by EFT into the following bank account:
BSB: *083-004*
Account #: *41 875 4459*
Account Name: *MAV WorkCare*

Sub Total:	237,432.00
GST:	0.00
Total (AUD):	**237,432.00**

ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025



GLENELG SHIRE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY



Budj Bim Cultural Landscape

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The Glenelg Shire Council respectfully acknowledges the Gunditjmara, Jardwadjali and Boandik people as the Traditional Owners of the land that the Glenelg Shire encompasses and we pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

We recognise that Aboriginal people have cared for and protected this land we call home since the dreaming. Their connections to the land, animals, seas and waterways was, and continues to be, a part of their being and we thank them for their significant contributions to life in Glenelg.

If you would like to receive this publication in an accessible format please contact Glenelg Shire Council Customer Service on 1300 GLENELG or email: enquiry@glenelg.vic.gov.au

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INTRODUCTION



Narrawong

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WELCOME

Glenelg Shire Council is pleased to present the 2024-2025 Annual Report, to celebrate our achievements during the year, and our progress towards the completion of the measures and commitments within the Council Plan 2021-2025.

This report is presented to a wide audience of stakeholders, including ratepayers, local businesses and their employees, government agencies and departments, and those who call the Glenelg Shire home.

COUNCIL SNAPSHOT

Encompassing an area of 6,212 square kilometres, the Glenelg Shire has many different towns with unique characteristics to make them special including Portland, Heywood and Casterton and many other small townships and localities. Rolling hills and rich agricultural land to the north give way to a scenic and secluded river region to the west. Pine and blue gum plantations line the roads through the hinterland, while a huge expanse of coastal beaches and rugged cliffs form the southern perimeter, making the Glenelg Shire a place with something for everyone.

The Glenelg Shire is located in south-western Victoria, approximately 360 kilometres from the Melbourne CBD.

INTRODUCTION

OUR VISION

> We are leaders, change makers setting ambitious targets and making them happen for our community. We acknowledge and embrace local Aboriginal culture, building a more inclusive future. We are forward thinking. We value each other in a safe, inclusive, and caring way. We celebrate the rich creativity and natural environment that co-exists with our vibrant and resilient economy.

OUR FOCUS

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OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

We aim to enhance our environmental responsibility, encourage and maintain all aspects of sustainable practices, ensure responsible management of waste recycling, and work together to address and mitigate the effects of climate change.

OUR EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND INDUSTRY

We aim to support our local businesses to increase their vitality and prosperity, explore alternative and innovative business practices, support our youth and retain our population, capitalise on economic growth through tourism and encourage diverse employment opportunities.

OUR HEALTH AND WELLBEING

We aim to maintain the strong sense of community and connection, ensure our community is healthy, safe and supported, support volunteerism and foster a well-equipped and prepared community.

OUR LIFESTYLE, NEIGHBOURHOOD AND CULTURE

We aim to invest in our appearance and protect our history, ensure our facilities are well maintained and enable possibilities in the use of land while protecting the natural environment.

OUR ACCESS, TRANSPORT AND TECHNOLOGY

We aim to ensure our roads are safe for our community, industry and tourists, enhance our digital connectivity and telecommunications opportunities, expand on methods for getting around and improve connections to other regional centres.

YOUR VOICE, OUR SHARED ACTION

We aim to improve transparency and close the loop, maintain a shared decision-making frame of mind and strengthen our regional townships to enhance collective prosperity.

ORGANISATIONAL VALUES



RESPECT

Respect is defined as consideration and having due regard for the rights and feelings for self and others. Respect is shown by treating people with politeness, courtesy, and kindness. Encourage co-workers to express opinions and ideas, and include all co-workers in meetings, discussions, training, and events.



INTEGRITY

Integrity is defined as being honest, trustworthy, and having strong moral principles. Integrity means following our moral or ethical convictions and doing the right thing, even if no one is watching you. Live and maintain commitment to our organisation's values.

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TEAMWORK

Teamwork is defined as a cooperative or coordinated effort by a group of people acting together in the interests of a common cause. Teamwork will contribute to greater speed and efficiency of work; healthy, trusting employee relationships; and improvement in the organisation's productivity.



SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Service Excellence is defined as quality work performed for or on behalf of others. It is the ability to consistently meet and manage our internal and external customer expectations. We need to keep our customers internally and externally in mind in what we do.



INNOVATION

Innovation is defined as a change that brings value. Innovation generally refers to changing processes or creating more effective processes, products, and ideas. This could mean implementing new ideas, creating dynamic products, or improving our existing services. Challenge the, 'This is how we do things around here' and ask 'Why'. Is there a better solution?

FAST FACTS

14
TOWNSHIPS

4,490
TICKETS SOLD AT PORTLAND ARTS CENTRE

125,671
VISITS TO AQUATIC FACILITIES

5470
REGISTERED ANIMALS

29
NUMBER OF PUBLIC PLAYGROUNDS

4,974
REGISTERED LIBRARY MEMBERS MADE 106,125 LOANS

38,628
ITEMS IN THE LIBRARY COLLECTION

160
PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

10,163
STOCK SOLD AT THE CASTERTON SALEYARDS

162
BIRTH NOTIFICATIONS RECEIVED

13
COUNCIL MANAGED RECREATION RESERVES

31
NEW CITIZENS

4,971
TONNES OF GARBAGE, RECYCLABLES AND GREEN WASTE COLLECTED

146
FOOD SAFETY ASSESSMENTS UNDERTAKEN

138
BUILDING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

1,488 KM
OF SEALED AND UNSEALED ROADS

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HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR 2024-25

QUARTER 1 - JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2024

Portland Arts Centre Turns 50
On 20 July, the Portland Arts Centre celebrated its 50th anniversary with two special events, marking five decades since it first opened in 1974.

Support for Farmers
In response to ongoing feed shortages and financial challenges from low rainfall, Council waived grazing permit fees to help local farmers through this tough period. Council's advocacy is ongoing.

Safety Upgrades at Trawler Wharf
Thanks to funding from the Department of Transport and Planning, new boom gates were installed at Portland Trawler Wharf to improve safety for both the public and workers.

Community Grants Boost Local Groups
More than $83,000 was awarded to 34 local clubs and organisations in the first round of the Community Grants program.

QUARTER 2 - OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2024

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New Council Elected
In November, the Victorian Electoral Commission confirmed seven newly elected Glenelg Shire Councillors, who will serve for the next four years.

Community Emergency Events
Council partnered with local emergency services to host movie nights in Dartmoor and Casterton, featuring displays, kids' activities, giveaways, and a free BBQ—helping residents connect with emergency crews and prepare for fire season.

Youth Mental Health Campaign
Live4Life crews across the shire created a short film and social media campaign in November, promoting self-care and supporting those helping others through mental health challenges.

Upgrades for Local Clubs
Council approved refurbishments to the two existing buildings on the Portland Foreshore to boost community spaces in the Shire.

Cruise Ship Season Begins
December welcomed the Norwegian Sun and 1,800 passengers, the first of four cruise ship visits this season, giving a welcome boost to local tourism.



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR 2024-25

QUARTER 3 - JANUARY TO MARCH 2025

Shaping the Future
A six-week community engagement kicked off to help shape the 2025-2029 Council Plan, including the integrated Health and Wellbeing Plan.

WorkSafe Award Winner
Council's Michael Puche was honoured as Health and Safety Representative of the Year at the 2024 WorkSafe Victoria Awards in February.

New Grants Database
Council launched a customised grants search tool on its website, making it easier for the community to find government, philanthropic, and corporate funding opportunities.

Heywood Old School Roof Project
In March, Council approved roof replacement works to make the Heywood Old School building watertight, with work scheduled for May.

Merino Barbecue Shelter Opening
Council and the Merino Digby Lions Club celebrated the official opening of the new Merino barbecue shelter in March, highlighting the success of community-led projects.

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QUARTER 4 - APRIL TO JUNE 2025

Community Grants Support Local Groups
Round two of the Community Grants program saw 37 clubs and organisations share over $78,000 in funding to support local initiatives.

School Holiday Programs
Glenelg Libraries, Portland Arts Centre, and Glenelg Shire Youth teamed up to offer free events for families during the April school holidays.

Honouring Volunteers
During National Volunteer Week in May, Council hosted Volunteer Recognition Receptions in Heywood, Portland, Casterton, and Nelson to celebrate the vital contributions of local volunteers.

Nyamat Mirring Gallery Opens
The new Nyamat Mirring Gallery officially opened at the Portland Maritime Museum, co-curated by Gunditj Mirring and Council, and supported by the National Maritime Museum's Project Support Scheme.

CBD Amenities Upgrade Begins
Demolition and construction began on the long-awaited upgrade of the CBD amenities block in Portland, aiming to improve community safety, accessibility and convenience.

Ceremonial Dance Space and Foreshore Lighting Upgrade Completed
The Portland Foreshore pathways and Ceremonial Dance Space projects were completed marking a milestone in the 2021-2025 Council Plan initiatives.

CHALLENGES AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

NAVIGATING FINANCIAL PRESSURES

Council continued to manage significant financial pressures driven by rising costs for materials, services, and inflation. Reduced grant opportunities and constrained revenue streams further amplified the challenge, requiring disciplined budget management and a careful reassessment of service priorities to provide for long-term financial sustainability.

DELAYS TO INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

While progress was made on several fronts, some major infrastructure projects experienced delays due to planning, consent, and other external factors. A key example is the Portland Foreshore Multipurpose Facility project, which underwent a revised scope following difficulties in securing landowner consent. The project now focuses on refurbishing existing buildings, with completion expected in the 2026-2027 financial year.

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GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP TRANSITIONS

In 2024 council welcomed Helen Havercroft to the role of Chief Executive Officer providing a stable platform to governance and leadership growth. The October 2024 local government elections brought about changes in Council leadership bringing fresh perspectives and renewed energy.

LOOKING AHEAD

Despite these challenges, Glenelg Shire is entering a period of transformation and opportunity. The development of the Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 is central to this future vision. Built in collaboration with the community, this plan reflects local aspirations and will guide Council's decisions and investments over the next four years - whether in infrastructure, environment, economic growth, or community wellbeing.

With a newly elected Council, a settled and experienced leadership team, and a strong focus on customer centric service delivery, transparency, collaboration and engagement, Glenelg Shire is well-positioned to meet the future with confidence and purpose.



Portland Airport

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

As we conclude the term of the 2021–2025 Council Plan, I want to take this opportunity to reflect on the significant progress we've made together and the deep sense of pride I feel in what we have achieved as a Shire. Over the past four years, we have faced our share of challenges both expected and unforeseen but we have responded with resilience, innovation and a united commitment to serving our community.

This past year in particular has been a celebration of our Shire's identity and strength. In July, we proudly marked the 50th anniversary of the Portland Arts Centre a cultural milestone that speaks to our rich creative history and enduring community spirit. From investing in infrastructure and public safety, such as the boom gate upgrades at Trawler Wharf, to supporting those doing it tough like waiving grazing fees for local farmers, Council has remained firmly focused on the needs of our people.

Our Community Grants Program injected more than $160,000 across two rounds into local clubs and groups supporting grassroots initiatives and the heart of our towns, and we celebrated the arrival of cruise ships and the success of our iconic events, bringing continued energy and economic activity to our region.

Importantly, this has also been a year of looking forward. The development of our 2025–2029 Council and Wellbeing Plan began with an extensive period of community engagement. My fellow Councillors and I relished in the opportunity to connect with community during the engagement process and share the aspirations that are shaping a plan that will guide our next four years ensuring every voice is heard as we plan for a sustainable, inclusive and thriving Glenelg Shire.

As Mayor, it has been an honour to represent this vibrant, resilient and forward-thinking community. I am incredibly proud of all we have achieved under the 2021–2025 Council Plan and am genuinely excited for what lies ahead. Thank you to everyone who has contributed our staff, volunteers, Councillors, and most importantly, our community. Together, we move into the next four years with confidence, optimism and a shared commitment to making Glenelg Shire the best it can be.

Karen Stephens
Mayor

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THE YEAR IN REVIEW

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

As we look to the future, we do so with clarity and optimism. The development of the Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025–2029 marks a new chapter. Built through deep community consultation, this plan will shape our priorities across infrastructure, environment, economic development and social wellbeing for the next four years.

Operationally, we navigated leadership changes in our Executive Team and following the 2024 Local Government elections. While transitions of this kind can briefly impact momentum, they also bring renewal fresh ideas, perspectives, and energy. I'm proud of the way our organisation has supported the incoming Council and continued to progress strategic objectives without losing focus on day-to-day community service delivery.

Throughout this period of change and challenge, our organisation values of respect, Integrity, Teamwork, Service Excellence and Innovation have remained our anchor.

Respect for our communities and for one another continues to be central to how we operate and engage. Integrity guides our decision-making, ensuring that transparency, fairness and accountability are embedded in everything we do. Teamwork has been vital in navigating both internal and external pressures and collaboration has enabled us to overcome obstacles and achieve shared goals.

Our commitment to service excellence remains a priority and is reflected daily, from the front line of customer service to the long-term strategic planning that shapes our future. We will continue to use innovation as a key to how we adapt to new challenges, refine our delivery models, and harness digital solutions to deliver better outcomes for our community.

These values are not just words on a page, they are reflected in our culture, our decisions, and our service to the Glenelg Shire community.

Every year presents a range of challenges that test resilience and adaptability, but we continue to remain committed to supporting the community through effective service delivery and transparent decision-making despite complex and evolving conditions.

As we enter this period of transformation and opportunity, I want to thank all staff, Councillors, community partners and residents for your ongoing commitment and trust. Together, we will strive to build a strong, connected and forward-thinking Shire.

Helen Havercroft
CEO

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COMMUNITY GRANTS

The Community Grants Program continues to support a wide range of local initiatives that strengthen, connect, and enrich our communities. The program offers targeted funding across several key categories, helping community groups and individuals to deliver meaningful projects that align with Council's strategic goals, including health and wellbeing, cultural engagement, and community development.

GRANT CATEGORIES

RECREATION

Grants support projects such as upgrading facilities for all abilities access, purchasing equipment, or enhancing club development. Projects must align with Council's Health and Wellbeing Plan.

PUBLIC HALLS

Funding supports maintenance and improvement efforts to ensure these facilities remain central gathering places for residents.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

These grants assist with developing and expanding local events that promote participation, diversity, and local talent, in line with Council's Strategic Tourism and Events Strategy.

ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE

Support is given to initiatives that increase local participation, celebrate identity, encourage collaboration, and involve skilled artists. Partnerships between individual artists and community groups are welcomed.

COMMUNITY STRENGTHENING

Funding assists with initiatives such as mental health education, volunteer training, first aid workshops, and activities that promote community connections, such as walking groups.

Through these grants, Glenelg Shire Council continues to invest in the resilience, creativity, and wellbeing of our communities, helping to create a more inclusive and connected region for all residents.

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COMMUNITY AWARDS

The Community Awards are an opportunity to pay tribute to outstanding local achievers. The awards were presented at the Volunteer Recognition Events that took place across the Shire during the annual Volunteer Week events that honoured the contribution that volunteers make to our communities.

Nominations were open to community groups and individuals that provide outstanding contribution in any field including education, health, fundraising, charitable and voluntary services, sport, arts, environment, or any other area that contributes to the advancement and well-being of a community.

A total of 28 nominations were received for the 2024-2025 Awards with the following community members and group recognised for their outstanding achievements this year.



Mayor Cr Karen Stephens (middle)
Outstanding Achievement Award Adam Robertson (right)
Volunteer of the Year Award Kaye Annett (left)

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Citizen of the Year, Nea Barclay



Arts & Culture Awards, Julia Street Creative Space



Diversity and Inclusion Award, Portland and District Therapy Dogs



Senior Citizen of the Year, Shirley Menz



Youth Citizen of the Year, Teddy Riddell



Community Group of the Year, Heywood Men's Shed

TOURISM AND EVENTS

Glenelg Shire features some of Australia's most spectacular natural landscapes, history and Indigenous heritage sites.

Council continued to focus on strategic tourism growth and development, working with local business and regional tourism bodies to market, advocate and promote the rich diversity of tourism product in the region.

4
CRUISE SHIPS THIS FINANCIAL YEAR

56,300
PORTLAND VISITOR CENTRE VISITORS

10,050
NELSON VISITOR CENTRE VISITORS

13,260
CASTERTON VISITOR CENTRE VISITORS

159
TOTAL EVENT APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

Major events continued to be a significant driver of tourism growth in 2024-2025. Both Wood, Wine and Roses and The Australian Kelpie Muster were impacted by severe weather conditions (heat and rain respectively) but they remained leading events with significant community impact.

This financial year the estimated economic impact of the Shires Major Events:

$193,000
UPWELLING FESTIVAL
NOVEMBER 2024

$3M
HOOKED ON PORTLAND
JANUARY 2025

$890,000
WOOD, WINE AND ROSES
FEBRUARY 2025

$1.9M
AUSTRALIAN KELPIE MUSTER
JUNE 2025

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FINANCIAL SUMMARY

The Financial Performance Summary in Council's Annual report provides information on Council's Financial performance compared to Budget for the reporting period.

For 2024-2025, Council had expected a loss of $2M but finished the year with a net profit of $9M. The contributing factors for the positive result were an early payment of $6M from the Commonwealth Government for 2025/26 grant funding and $10M of unbudgeted capital grant income. This income was offset by an increase in depreciation expenditure of $5M. Council reported a loss of $2M for the same period in 2023/24.

Council outlaid $15.1M on Capital works projects for 2024/25. Expenditure on new assets was $1.4M and renewal and upgrade expenditure was $13.7M. Expenditure on Capital works projects in the prior period was $14M.

Council's cash balances increased from $6.5M in 2023/24 to $13.9M at 30 June 2025. This favourable result is due to additional funds received in June 2025 - the early payment of the 2025/26 Commonwealth Grant funding of $5.8M, and $4M of loan funding temporary savings due to the delay in completion of some capital works projects. At 30 June 2025, Council had $8.6M of unfinished Capital works to be carried forward into 2025/26.

FINANCIAL MEASURES

Long term financial sustainability is a key financial objective of Council. Financial measures demonstrate Council's financial sustainability to fund the aspirations of the Community Vision and Council Plan. To achieve financial sustainability, it is important that:

- Revenue, expenses, assets, liabilities, investments and financial transactions are managed in accordance with Council's financial policies and strategic plans;
- Financial risks are managed to ensure the financial viability of Council and management of current and future liabilities;
- Financial policies and strategic plans are designed to provide financial stability and predictability for the community; and
- Council maintains accounts and records that explain its financial operations and financial position.

The Victorian Auditor-General reports to Parliament each year. The following indicators measure the short and long-term financial sustainability position of a Council:

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ADJUSTED UNDERLYING RESULT

Risk Rating = Medium

This measure determines if enough revenue is being generated to cover operating costs and should be 0% or greater (Note: it includes the cost of replacing assets reflected by the depreciation expense and excludes capital grant income). Council's adjusted underlying result for 2024/25 was -1.3% and is a significant improvement when compared to 2023/24 Actuals. This result means that Council was very close to generating enough income to cover its operating costs for the year. Council's favourable result is due mainly to the early payment of 2025/26 Commonwealth Grant funding of $5.8M. If the $5.8M of early Grant funding was excluded, Council's Adjusted Underlying result would be approx -11.3%. Council is working towards reducing the underlying deficit in the longer term.

LIQUIDITY

Risk Rating = Medium

The Working Capital measure of Liquidity indicates if Council's cash position is sufficient cash to meet daily operational requirements and the payment of current liabilities ie pay the bills when they fall due. Council's Liquidity ratio improved for 2024/25 and increased to 117% compared with 51% in the year before. Council's favourable result is due mainly to the higher cash balances outlined earlier. If we excluded the additional $5.8M of Grant funding, Council's Liquidity result would still have improved but would have been approx 81%. Council is working towards maintaining strong liquidity of at least 100%.

INDEBTEDNESS

Risk Rating = Low

Indebtedness measures how reliant Council is on debt to fund capital programs. This measure compares Non-current liabilities to own-source revenue. Total loan liability should not be greater than 60% of Own Source revenue which is deemed a high risk level as by VAGO.

Council's level of Indebtedness increased to 24% in 2024/25 from 16% in 2023/24. It is expected to increase to 29% in 2025/26 once the remainder of the $7M loan has been utilised to finalise some carried forward capital works projects, before starting to reduce again. An important premise for Council in its financial planning is to ensure that any debt incurred can be repaid within a reasonable term to ensure the organisation does not inherit generational debt.

ASSET RENEWAL

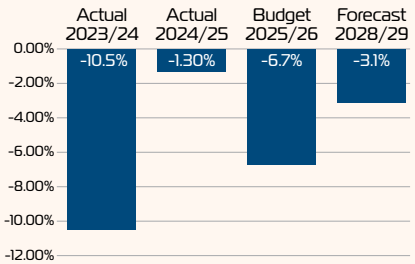
Risk Rating = Medium

The Asset renewal ratio measures Councils allocation of funds towards asset renewal to replace assets and infrastructure as they reach the end of their service life. This measure compares Asset Renewal and Upgrade Compared costs in a period to the Depreciation expense for the same period.

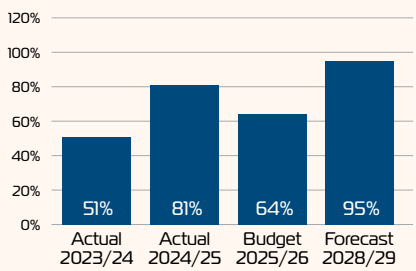
Council's Asset renewal rate improved in 2024/25 increasing from 58% in 2023/24 to 88% due to the completion of some fully funded projects. It is expected to increase further again in 2025/26 to 113% once a large carried forward capital works project is completed.

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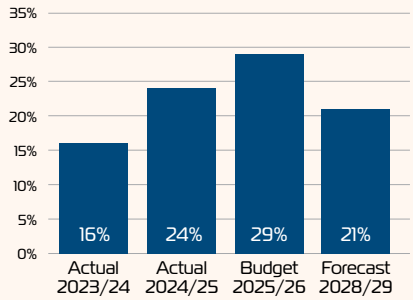
Adjusted Underlying Result



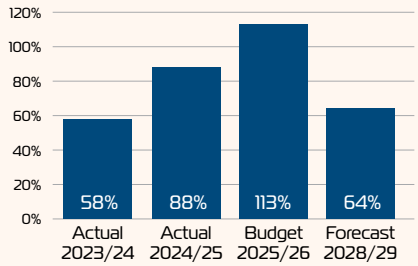
Liquidity - Working Capital



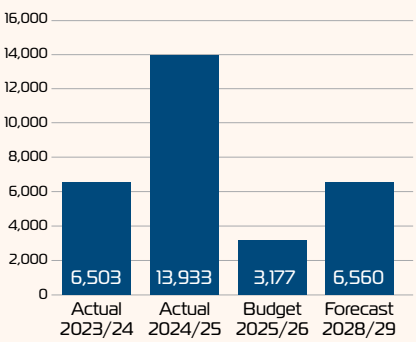
Indebtedness



Asset Renewal



Cash Position



YOUR INVESTMENT IN GLENELG SHIRE

Your property rates and charges play a vital role in Council's ability to provide services to our community.

For every $100 of rates in 2024-2025, Council allocated:



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DESCRIPTION OF OPERATIONS

Glenelg Shire Council is responsible for a broad range of community services and infrastructure for residents to support the wellbeing and prosperity of our community.

Council's vision, strategic objectives and strategies are described in our Council Plan 2021-2025 and the associated Budget 2024-2025 and reported upon in this document. Refer to the section on Our Performance for more information about council services.

The delivery of services, facilities, support and advocacy to achieve the Strategic Objectives is measured by a set of service performance indicators and measures. Council also has a wide range of responsibilities under Victorian and Australian legislation.

ECONOMIC FACTORS

Council faced a range of economic pressures this financial year that significantly influenced our financial planning and service delivery. A key challenge was the rising costs of materials and services that exceeded the constraints of the rate cap. Inflationary pressures impacted both operational and capital expenditure, while a reduction in available grant funding limited the ability to invest in major infrastructure and community projects.

MAJOR CHANGES

Council reviewed the project scope and approved changes under Phase 4 of the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure (LRCI) funding program to ensure timely and effective project delivery. These changes included adjustments to the Cape Bridgewater Amenities Upgrade, the Casterton Little Athletics and Cricket Pavilion Project, and the addition of a new project, within Ceremonial Dance Space – Stage 2. The variations aim to fully utilise allocated LRCI funding and maximise community benefit.

As part of a strategic realignment, the composition of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) was revised to strengthen its focus on strategic operations. The ELT now comprises the Chief Executive Officer, Director Community Services, Director Corporate Services, and Director Infrastructure Services. A new Senior Leadership Team (SLT), including the Chief Financial Officer, Chief Information Officer, Executive Manager Governance, Executive Manager People & Culture, and other senior leaders, has been established to focus on operational delivery.

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Bridgewater Boardwalk

DESCRIPTION OF OPERATIONS

MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

The following initiatives reflect Council's commitment to enhancing infrastructure, promoting sustainability, supporting community well-being, and ensuring transparent governance.

Major Projects Completion: The following Major projects of the 2021-2025 Council Plan were completed this financial year:

- Portland Foreshore - Ceremonial Dance Space and Pathway Lighting Activation
- Portland Employment Precinct
- Local Freight Roads Project - Fitzgerald St Portland
- Bentinck Street Rehabilitation

2024-2025 Infrastructure Renewal Program

Council successfully delivered a broad range of renewal projects across the Shire as part of its 2024-2025 Annual Renewal Program totalling $4m supporting the ongoing maintenance and renewal of Council's assets, improving community safety, accessibility, and service levels across the municipality. Some of the works completed as part of the program include:

- *Road Rehabilitation on West Strathdownie Rd, Strathdownie - Border Rd, Lake Mundi - Ridge Rd Nth, Henty.*
- *Resealing and Asphalt Renewal across 78 road segments totalling 44km.*
- *Gravel Road Resheeting across 9 roads throughout the shire.*
- *Major Road Patches across 12 locations throughout the shire.*
- *Kerb & Channel Renewal on Calvert St and Must St Portland.*
- *Footpath Renewal on Gawler St and within the Portland Botanical Gardens.*
- Other Miscellaneous Works including underground and rural drainage renewal, traffic facilities and carparks.

Resource Recovery Strategy: The implementation of the Resource Recovery, Waste Minimisation and Recovery Strategy progressed. One of the major milestones achieved was the Council resolution to roll out a FOGO service in the 2025-2026 financial year, aligning the objective of "Reduction of organics to landfill" within the strategy and the Victorian Government's "A New Economy" Policy.

Accessibility Projects: Ongoing funding of $25,000 was allocated for accessibility projects throughout the Shire, enhancing inclusivity for all residents. Projects this financial year included:

- Paving renewal – level paving reinstated at the base of Norfolk island tree Bentinck St and Gawler St
- Upgrades to the Portland Library Toilets
- Automatic door installation – Flinders Park Netball Pavillion
- Playground Communication Boards – Pulambeet Play Space Portland and Island Park Casterton

Council Plan 2025-2029 Development:
An extensive six-week community engagement campaign was conducted to inform the development of the 2025–2029 Council Plan, ensuring alignment with community priorities.



Infrastructure renewal program

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MAJOR CAPITAL WORKS

During 2024/2025 the major capital works included the following:

We're proud to share the great work happening across our community thanks to the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure (LRCI) Program, funded by the Australian Government.

The LRCI Program is an Australian Government initiative designed to support local councils in delivering priority projects that improve road safety, enhance community infrastructure, and stimulate local economies.

Since receiving LRCI funding, our Council has undertaken several significant projects that address community needs and contribute to the long-term liveability and accessibility of our region.

LOCAL ROADS AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE - PHASE THREE:

PROJECT	LOCATION	STATUS
Thermal Loop Upgrade	Portland	COMPLETED

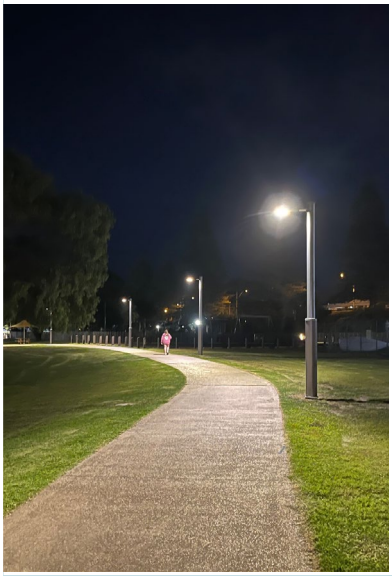
LOCAL ROADS AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE - PHASE FOUR:

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PROJECT	LOCATION	STATUS
Amenities Upgrade	Cape Bridgewater	IN PROGRESS
Casterton Little Athletics and Cricket Club Upgrade	Casterton	COMPLETED
Ceremonial Dance Space	Portland	COMPLETED
Maretimo to Cavendish Street Connecting Path	Portland	COMPLETED
CBD Amenities Upgrade	Portland	IN PROGRESS
Transfer Station Upgrade	Heywood	IN PROGRESS
Water Tower and Railway Precinct Path	Casterton	IN PROGRESS
Community BBQ Shelter	Merino	COMPLETED
Bentinck St Rehabilitation	Portland	COMPLETED

MAJOR PROJECTS

PORTLAND FORESHORE



TOTAL COST: $6,438,732
STATE GRANT FUNDING: $3,964,000
COMMONWEALTH GRANT FUNDING: $1,430,185
COUNCIL CONTRIBUTION: $1,044,547

The Portland Foreshore project in the 2021-2025 Council Plan, is part of the Portland Foreshore Masterplan, and was for the design and construction of fully integrated and all abilities accessible pathways, over water boardwalks and a jetty connecting all open space and facilities of the Portland Foreshore

The Ceremonial Dance Space and lighting along the newly installed pathways from the Trawler Wharf to Nuns Beach were completed this financial year finalising the Portland Foreshore project within the 2021-2025 Council Plan.

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PORTLAND EMPLOYMENT PRECINCT



TOTAL COST: $2,500,000
GRANT FUNDING: $2,500,000

The project purpose was to improve access to industrial sites within the Portland North Employment Precinct, as well as enhancing connectivity between the precinct and Portland's main road-freight route – the Henty Highway. These industry-enabling infrastructure upgrades will facilitate business investment, support job creation, and stimulate economic activity in Portland and the region.

The construction of the corner of New St and Henty Hwy intersection, and enabling new infrastructure was completed this financial year. Bunnings Warehouse was officially opened in June 2025 as initial development utilising the space and we look forward to supporting future expansion and development of the area.

MAJOR PROJECTS

CAPE BRIDGEWATER MASTER PLAN INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADE



TOTAL COST: $5,100,943
STATE GRANT FUNDING: $1,500,000
COMMONWEALTH GRANT FUNDING: $1,050,973
COUNCIL CONTRIBUTION: $2,550,000

The Cape Bridgewater Masterplan Infrastructure upgrade was to improve accessibility and amenities through the resurfacing of parking facilities at the area of the Café and Surf Life Saving Club, and the installation of a new pathway and boardwalk creating pedestrian linkages along Bridgewater Bay beach to help protect the sensitive dues by creating designated beach entrance points. These works, which are stage 2 of works under the masterplan are now complete.

Stage 3 of the works will see the upgrade of the existing public amenities building in 2025 – 2026.

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PORTLAND FORESHORE MULTIPURPOSE FACILITY



TOTAL BUDGET: $6,200,000
GRANT FUNDING: $4,000,000
COUNCIL CONTRIBUTION: $2,200,000

**Note: The scope and cost of this project is under review, with a funding variation request submitted to State Government for approval.*

The original plan for the Portland Foreshore Multipurpose Facility involved constructing a custom-designed two-storey community pavilion. This new building was to include shared clubrooms, social spaces, kitchen facilities, outdoor areas, ramp and lift access, function spaces with ocean-facing balconies, and a café and fresh seafood market highlighting local produce.

However, due to challenges the project scope has been revised and will now shift focus to the refurbishing of the two existing foreshore buildings that were originally slated for demolition.

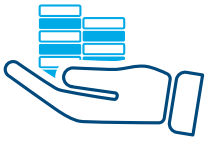
Council officers are currently working to finalise the necessary details and are in discussions with the funding body to secure a variation to the funding agreement to push the project forward to completion.

OUR COUNCIL

SHIRE PROFILE

$1.36 BILLION

Glenelg Shire's Gross Regional Product (GRP) is estimated at $1.36 billion*



20,119

The Glenelg Shire population forecast for 2025 is 20,119**[2]



8,820

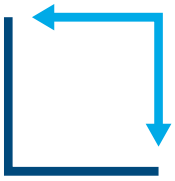
At the end of June 2024, there were 8,820 jobs located in the Glenelg Shire ***[4]



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6212KM²

(621,471 Hectares) Land Area[1]



2.21

Average Household[3]



1,913

Local Businesses[1]



8,193

Employed Residents[1]



14,110

Rateable Properties



1 Source: National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR) ©2025. Compiled and presented in economy.id by .id (informed decisions). Retrieved June 2025 from economy.id.com.au

2 Population and household forecasts, 2021 to 2046, National Forecasting Program, .id (informed decisions), October 2024. Retrieved June 2025

3 Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 2016 and 2021. Compiled and presented by .id (informed decisions). Retrieved June 2025

4 Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) – Census 2016 & 2021 – by place of work. Retrieved June 2025

* Which represents 0.23% of the state's GSP (Gross State Product).

** And is forecast to grow to 20,320 by 2046, which is an increase of 1.00%.

*** Health Care and Social Assistance is the largest employer in Glenelg Shire, making up 15.4% of total employment local jobs.

OUR LOCATION



- Casterton, Merino, Lake Mundi, Henty, Digby and Dunrobin
- Narrawong, Allestree and Tyrendarra
- Heywood, Dartmoor, Condah, Hotspur, Drumborg, Drik Drik, Wallacedale, Homerton and Mumbannar
- Portland, Cape Bridgewater, Dutton Way, Cashmore, Mount Richmond, Bolwarra and Gorae
- Nelson

COUNCIL OFFICES



CONTACT US

PO Box 152 Portland 3305

1300 GLENELG (1300 453 635)

enquiry@glenelg.vic.gov.au

www.glenelg.vic.gov.au

CUSTOMER SERVICE LOCATIONS

PORTLAND

71 Cliff Street, Portland

Range of services including;

- All Glenelg Shire enquiries
- Issue and collection of sharps containers
- Waste collection lost or replacement bins, animal registration, general property and debtor enquires.
- Drop off centre for print cartridges and small E-waste
- Planning and Building services appointments

HEYWOOD

77 Edgar Street, Heywood

Range of services including;

- All Glenelg Shire enquiries
- Issue and collection of sharps containers
- Waste collection lost or replacement bins, animal registration, general property and debtor enquires
- Drop off Centre for Mobile Muster and print cartridges
- Vic Roads Agency: trailer registrations, learners permit testing, photo point for licences
- Maternal and Child Health services
- Hall/meeting room bookings
- Library services

CASTERTON

67 Henty Street, Casterton

Range of services including;

- All Glenelg Shire enquiries
- Issue and collection of sharps containers
- Waste collection lost or replacement bins, animal registration, general property and debtor enquires
- Drop off Centre for Mobile Muster, print cartridges and small E-waste
- Vic Roads Agency: trailer registrations, learners permit testing, photo point for licences, work diaries
- Hall/meeting room bookings
- Library services

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OUR COUNCILLORS

The Glenelg Shire is an unsubdivided municipality consisting of seven (7) Councillors. A local election was held on 25 October 2024, following which four (4) new Councillors and three (3) incumbents were elected to office to serve a four (4) year term, having taken the Oath of Office under section 30 (1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* on 11 November 2020.

At a Statutory Meeting held on 20 November 2024, Cr Karen Stephens was elected as Mayor and Cr Robyn McDonald was elected Deputy Mayor of Glenelg Shire Council for the 2024/2025 Mayoral Year.



CURRENT GLENELG SHIRE COUNCILLORS

NAME	EMAIL	CONTACT NUMBER
Cr Karen Stephens, Mayor	karen.stephens@cr.glenelg.vic.gov.au	0488 900 645
Cr Robyn McDonald , Deputy Mayor	robyn.mcdonald@cr.glenelg.vic.gov.au	0461 352 289
Cr Duane Angelino	duane.angelino@cr.glenelg.vic.gov.au	0439 867 989
Cr Michael Carr	michael.carr@cr.glenelg.vic.gov.au	0437 788 034
Cr Matt Jowett	matt.jowett@cr.glenelg.vic.gov.au	0436 105 205
Cr Mike Noske	mike.noske@cr.glenelg.vic.gov.au	0428 311 657
Cr John Pepper	john.pepper@cr.glenelg.vic.gov.au	0484 369 050

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COUNCIL MEETINGS

13
COUNCIL MEETINGS

136
RESOLUTIONS

32
RESOLUTIONS
MADE AT CLOSED TO PUBLIC MEETINGS

1
STATUTORY COUNCIL MEETING

OUR PEOPLE

EXECUTIVE TEAM

The Executive Team of Glenelg Shire is headed by the Chief Executive Officer. They handle the day-to-day management of Council activities and services, execute Council decisions and ensure accountability.



HELEN HAVERCROFT

Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Glenelg Shire Council is the principal advisor to the Mayor and Councillors, providing strategic leadership and high-level guidance to support sound decision-making and long-term planning. The CEO plays a pivotal role in translating Council policies and decisions into actionable outcomes and ensuring effective and efficient delivery of services through the organisation's day-to-day operations.



DAVID HOL

Director Corporate Services

The Director of Corporate Services provides strategic leadership and oversight of a diverse range of corporate and regulatory functions, ensuring effective service delivery and alignment with Council's strategic objectives. The Director supports strong governance, financial sustainability, and organisational compliance while delivering on customer service excellence.

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AARON MOYNE

Director Infrastructure Services

The Director of Infrastructure Services provides strategic and operational leadership across a broad portfolio of services essential to the delivery, maintenance, and enhancement of Council's physical assets and community infrastructure. Responsible for aligning infrastructure services with the Council Plan, the Director ensures high-quality service delivery, effective capital works management, and a strong focus on sustainability, safety, and community outcomes.



BRETT JACKSON

Director Community Services

The Director of Community Services provides strategic leadership across a broad portfolio of services that support the social, cultural, and economic wellbeing of the Glenelg Shire community. Focused on enhancing liveability, inclusion, and community engagement, the Director ensures that programs and initiatives are aligned to the council Plan 2021-2025 actions and Council's strategic direction. The role contributes to the development of vibrant, connected, and sustainable communities across the region.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE



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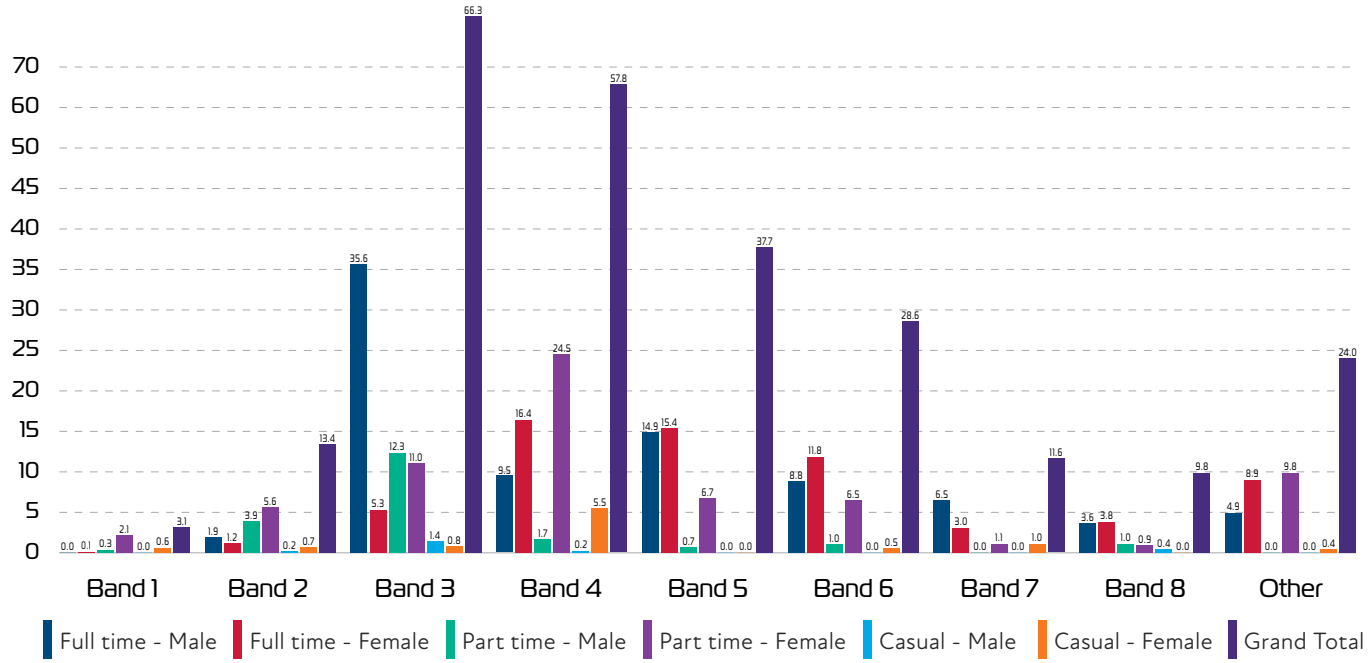
COUNCIL STAFF

A summary of the number of full time equivalent (FTE) Council staff employed by organisational structure, employment type and gender are set out below.

SUM OF EMPLOYEE TYPE/GENDER	CEO	COMMUNITY	CORPORATE	GLENELG FUTURES	INFRA SERV	TOTAL
Casual	**1.1**	**3.6**	**4.8**		**2.3**	**11.8**
Female	1.1	3.2	4.8		0.5	9.6
Male		0.3	0.0		1.8	2.2
Full Time	**6.9**	**38.7**	**25.3**	**9.6**	**71.0**	**151.5**
Female	5.9	29.3	18.3	4.8	7.6	65.9
Male	1.0	9.3	7.0	4.8	63.4	85.6
Part Time	**4.3**	**41.1**	**1.[illegible]**	**3.3**	**22.4**	**89.0**
Female	4.3	40.1	14.3	3.3	6.1	68.2
Male		1.0	3.5		16.4	20.8
TOTAL	**12.3**	**83.4**	**47.9**	**12.9**	**95.7**	**252.2**

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COUNCIL STAFF



RECOGNITION OF STAFF & THANK YOU WEEK

Glenelg Shire Council is committed to establishing a strong culture of recognition where employees' efforts are appreciated, and contributions valued.

Council's staff recognition event was held on Thursday 20 March 2025 at the Heywood Community Hall. Around 120 staff from across Council attended the event, coming together for the opportunity to catch up with colleagues and congratulate those who achieved service milestones and other special achievements.

5 YEARS OF SERVICE

Charley Bunting, Kristy Hutchins, Sophie Plowman-Hintz, Hannah Baker, Virginia Winter, Simone Gottwaltz, Rachael Healey, Darren Elshaug, Helen Kellett, Jesse Smith, Michelle Larsen, Georgina Meyrick-Garnier, Jemma Dillon, Jade Tozer, Bree Phillips, Michael Skinner, Scott Reiffel, Dean Munro and Will Kerr.

10 YEARS OF SERVICE

Linda Owen, Michael Risk, Melanie Hen[illegible]ke, Megan Benbow, Suzanne Fielden, Shauna Schultz, Toni Jackson, Cherrie McIlroy, Stephanie Schultz, Melissa Buckland, Natasha Galpin, Alana Wilson, Lynette Avery, Adam Taylor, Greg Healey, Duncan Wishart and Drew Hawker.

15 YEARS OF SERVICE

Hannah Anderson, Corinna Bell, Tanya Flockhart, John Inman, Rachael Dawson, Gary Brooker and Paul Le Roy.

20 YEARS OF SERVICE

Gradyn Bell, Tanya Beavis, Patrick Jones and Loren Park.

25 YEARS OF SERVICE

David Hol, Janelle Hoggan, Rhianwen Maddox and Andrew Garnier

30 YEARS OF SERVICE

Simone Scott

40 YEARS OF SERVICE

K[illegible] Hill

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RECOGNITION OF STAFF & THANK YOU WEEK

STAFF ACHIEVEMENTS

Karen Paterson	*Cert IV in Human Resources*
Adam Taylor	*Advanced Diploma of Building Surveying*
Chris Saunders	*IPWEA Professional Certificate in Asset Management Planning*
Brett Wortman	*Cert III in Horticulture*
Kris Moore	*Cert III Parks & Gardens*
Adam May	*ISA Tree Risk Assessment Qualification*
Rachel Brough	*Registered Practitioner with the VBA as a Building Inspector (Pool Safety)*
Will Kerr	*Completion of the Great South Coast Leadership Program*
Rebecca Campbell	*Completion of the Great South Coast Leadership Program*
Charlie Bunting	*Bachelor of Early Childhood Education*
Jessica Niewand	*Diploma of Early Childhood Education & Care*
Noni Mason	*Diploma of Early Childhood Education & Care*
Caitlin Muecke	*Diploma of Early Childhood Education & Care*
Brittany Parsons	*Diploma of Early Childhood Education & Care*
Ebony Pumpa	*Diploma of Early Childhood Education & Care*
Greg Healey	*Milestone of testing & tagging 30,000 items (April 2024)*
Mick Puche	*Finalist (and winner) 2024 WorkSafe Awards Health & Safety Representative of the year*

A PASSION FOR SAFETY

Council congratulates Michael Puche for a state-level recognition and the example he has set to make safety a priority in our organisation. Winning the Health and Safety Representative of the Year at the WorkSafe award in 2025.

The Awards annually celebrate excellence in workplace health and safety and return to work. More than 140 nominations were received from workplaces from across Victoria, including government, private business and not-for-profit.

Michael is a Plant Operator based at the Heywood Works Depot was one of six finalists and was recognised for his unwavering dedication to OH&S and embedding a culture of safety across the organisation. He is a committed voice for workplace safety issues - continually listening to his peers, mitigating risks and recommending improvements.

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Michael Puche, Health & Safety Representative of the Year Award Winner 2025.

OTHER STAFF MATTERS

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Council remains committed to enriching employee roles by investing in professional development, leadership opportunities, on-the-job learning, and wellbeing initiatives. Staff are encouraged to continually build their skills and knowledge, contributing to both personal growth and the organisation's ongoing success.

A range of development opportunities were provided throughout the year, including short-term projects and acting roles. Six employees attended the 2025 LGPro Conference, representing Council and engaging with sector peers to address the challenges and opportunities facing local government. Council also supported students undertaking formal study placements in areas such as Horticulture and Early Years education, providing valuable learning experiences for both the students and their mentors.

Council's commitment to workforce capability was further demonstrated through a comprehensive training calendar focused on compliance, safety, and organisational culture. Training topics included workplace behaviour, staff conduct, human rights, cyber security, and family violence awareness. Mandatory OHS training such as first aid, emergency warden, and health and safety representative training was also delivered, with the addition of new online safety modules to support flexible access for staff across the organisation.

BUILDING OUR LEADERSHIP CAPABILITY

We endeavour to continuously enhance and expand our capabilities, with a particular emphasis on leadership development for all employees. This year twenty-five current and emerging leaders participated in Councils' leadership development program 'Lead to Succeed'. Through development of effective leadership skills, knowledge, tools and techniques, this program ensures that all our leaders are capable of inspiring, motivating, and engaging their teams.

EMPLOYEE HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Several new initiatives were launched this year which continue Council's strong focus on employee health and wellbeing.

This included:

Dedicated Men's Health Day in July 2024 and a Women's Health Day in September 2024 where local Health Services and professionals provided information to staff on a range of health topics and how they can access services.

An employee wellbeing survey provided opportunity for staff to provide feedback on how the organisation can continue to strengthen new initiatives and deliverables to support staff wellbeing.

The Employee "Wellbeing Corner" program continued providing educational information and wellbeing events calendar.

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EQUAL OPPORTUNITY & HUMAN RIGHTS

Council is committed to fostering, cultivating, and preserving a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion. It is Council's mission to lead a workplace culture that promotes and embeds dignity, respect, and fairness, ensuring the same rights, rewards and opportunities for all individuals.

Council promotes and encourages equal opportunities through:

- Fostering a workplace culture in which the principles of gender equality, inclusion and respect underpin Council's policies, processes, and organisational values; and where all employees work in a way that respects human rights.
- Making reasonable adjustments to the workplace to enable equal participation in and/or access to services provided by Council.
- Flexible work arrangements to encourage full participation in the workplace.
- Creating an environment that leads to higher performance and greater employee engagement and satisfaction.
- Taking proactive, reasonable, and proportionate measures to eliminate all forms of bullying, harassment, discrimination, sexual harassment, and victimisation in the workplace.

OTHER STAFF MATTERS

CHILD SAFE

As a child safe organisation under the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Act 2015*, Council is committed to the ongoing adherence to the Victorian Child Safe Standards and has adopted a policy that requires all staff, volunteers and councillors hold a valid Working with Children's Check

Council acknowledges that part of maintaining a culture of child safety is that everyone working at Glenelg Shire Council is responsible for the care and protection of children and reporting child abuse. Equipping those working at Council with training, skills, and knowledge to support and empower children and young people in our community.

Ongoing Child Safety and Wellbeing Awareness continues through the support of the Child Safe Working Group, Children's Services, Risk & Safety and People and Culture units.

GENDER EQUALITY

Council has an important role in leading and advocating for equality, diversity, and inclusion. We are committed to creating an inclusive, safe, and diverse community where all individuals are valued equally regardless of their gender. It is Council's mission to lead a workplace culture that promotes and embeds dignity, respect and fairness, ensuring the same rights, rewards and opportunities for all individuals.

In 2020 the Victorian Government introduced new reforms through the *Gender Equality Act*. The Act commenced on 31 March 2021 and requires Council to report on what we are doing to progress gender equality in the workplace. Our Gender Equality Action Plan 2021-2025 is in its fourth year of implementation, driving our leadership and advocacy role in addressing gender inequities as an employer, service provider and community stakeholder.

In September Gender Equality Commissioner Dr Niki Vincent came to Glenelg to empower staff and speak to the Gender Equality Act and the positive impact of undertaking Gender Impact Assessments on our key policies and plans.

In preparing for the development of Council's second Gender Equality Action Plan and next progress report during the 2025-2206 financial period, employees have participated in the 2025 People Matter Survey for Gender Equality reporting. This survey is conducted by the Victorian Public Service Commission (VPSC) and provided vital employee experience data as part of Council's reporting obligations.

Council has undertaken Gender Impact Assessments on several policies and projects this year, including -

- Form Development Guide
- Casterton Heritage Precinct
- Integrated Council Plan 2025-2029 Communication Plan
- Portland Gymnastics Facility
- Privacy Policy
- Place and Street naming policy

PREVENTING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

The prevention of violence against women is embedded across Council through a strong organisational commitment to gender equity and respectful relationships. This is reflected in Council's ongoing partnerships with regional bodies such as Respect 2040 and Women's Health and Wellbeing Barwon South West, which support the delivery of evidence-based initiatives and collaborative campaigns.

Council actively participates in community engagement efforts, including the coordination of events such as 16 Days of Activism campaign and programs in schools. These activities are designed not only to raise awareness but also to foster a culture of respect and inclusion within the wider community.

Internally, Council continues to strengthen its systems and practices to align with gender equity principles. The internal Gender Equality Working Group meets monthly to guide and support the integration of these principles across all areas of the business. Gender Impact Assessments are applied to relevant projects, policies and plans to ensure decision-making processes are inclusive and equitable. This approach ensures that gender considerations are embedded from the outset and carried through implementation, reinforcing Council's commitment to addressing factors that may contribute to gender-based violence through structural and cultural change.

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OTHER STAFF MATTERS

ENTERPRISE AGREEMENT

An enterprise agreement outlines employment terms and conditions between Glenelg Shire Council and its employees.

The Glenelg Shire Council's current Enterprise Agreement (EA) No 8 has a nominal expiry date of 30 June 2024. Enterprise bargaining for a successor agreement, EA No 9 2024-2027, commenced in March 2024 and good faith bargaining continued throughout the year. The agreement, EA No 9, received a favourable staff vote in early June 2025 and is awaiting approval from the Fair Work Commission.

The parties to the agreement are Council (via the CEO), employees covered by the EA and the three relevant unions, namely the Australian Services Union (ASU), APESMA (trading as Professionals Australia) and the Australian Nursing & Midwifery Federation (ANMF). The new Enterprise Agreement continues to provide terms and conditions of employment that are fair, sustainable, and affordable.

Council is also a signatory employer to the Early Education Employees Agreement (EEEA) which provides employment terms and conditions for kindergarten staff. The current 2020 agreement has a nominal expiry date of 30 September 2024 and enterprise bargaining for a successor multi-employer cooperative agreement formally commenced in July 2024. Bargaining with the 22 other signatory Councils and the Australian Education Union (AEU) continues.

MENTORS AND MENTEES

As the host employer trainees and apprentices are paired with experienced employees as mentors in an informal workplace mentoring system. This arrangement helps new trainees, often recent school graduates, adapt to the work environment and supports their ongoing development.

Mentoring benefits both mentees and mentors by fostering professional growth and transferring organisational knowledge and skills. This year, council's apprentice Mechanic and Early Childhood Educator trainee successfully obtained their qualifications and secured ongoing employment in their chosen careers.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Our aim is to maintain a strong safety culture that supports an incident and injury-free workplace for all employees, Councillors, contractors, visitors, and members of the public.

We are committed to continually improving our Safety Management System, which is actively monitored and enhanced to ensure best practices are upheld. In 2024-2025, this commitment led to several significant improvements, further strengthening our safety performance and workplace well-being. In 2024-2025, we introduced several key improvements to our Safety Management System, including:

- Digitisation of our safe processes and forms
- Maturity of our audit, inspection, and training processes
- Health Monitoring checks and well-being days were completed
- Review after testing of Business Continuity Plan
- Register reviews completed, including Strategic and Organisational risk registers
- Safety and Risk KPIs achieved
- Quarterly reports provided to Executive Team and Audit and Risk committee

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OUR PERFORMANCE

INTEGRATED STRATEGIC PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

Part 4 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires councils to prepare the following:

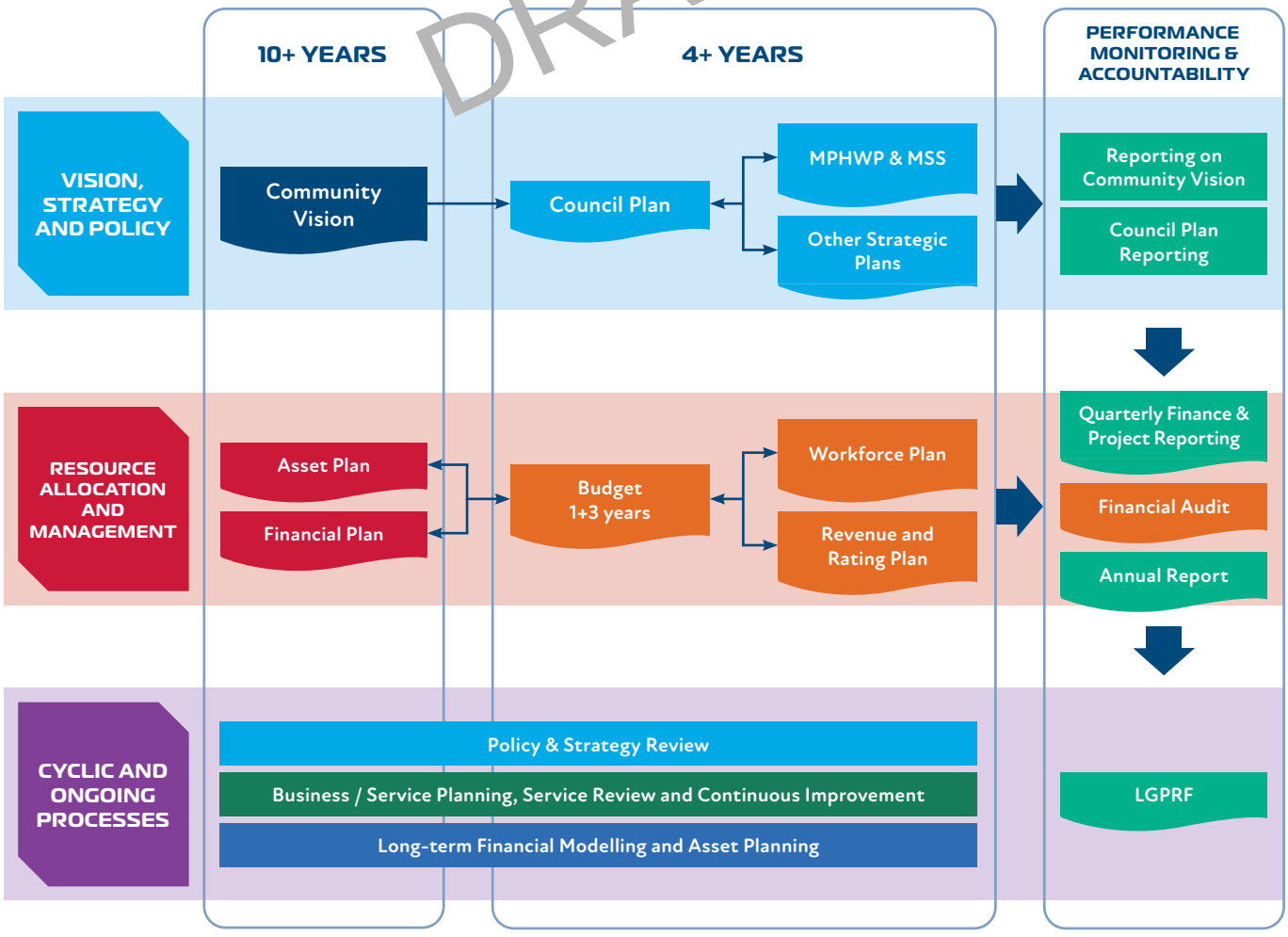
- A Community Vision (for at least the next 10 financial years);
- A Council Plan (for at least the next 4 financial years);
- A Financial Plan (for at least the next 10 financial years);
- An Asset Plan (for at least the next 10 financial years);
- A Revenue and Rating Plan (for at least the next 4 financial years);
- An Annual Budget (for the next 4 financial years);
- A Quarterly Budget Report;
- An Annual Report (for each financial year); and
- Financial Policies.

The Act also requires councils to prepare:

- A Workforce Plan (including projected staffing requirements for at least 4 years);

The following diagram shows the relationships between the key planning and reporting documents that make up the Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework (ISPRF) for local government.

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REPORT OF OPERATIONS

COUNCIL PLAN

The Council Plan 2021-2025 concluded in the 24/25 financial year. It was a key document of Council and set the strategic direction of the Shire during the four-year period. It outlined the community's long-term vision and Council's response to supporting the delivery of this.

The Plan focused on six key themes that reflect what our community values most: our environment, wellbeing, local economy, culture, infrastructure, and good governance.

OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Striving towards a carbon neutral future to protect and enhance the natural environment for future generations.

OUR EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND INDUSTRY

Adapting and growing a diverse economy to embrace employment of the future and educational opportunities.

OUR HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Supporting the Glenelg community to thrive by being healthy, inclusive, and well.

OUR LIFESTYLE, NEIGHBOURHOOD AND CULTURE

Creating enriched and vibrant lives through experiences, safe and well planned neighbourhoods.

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OUR ACCESS, TRANSPORT AND TECHNOLOGY

Making it easier for people to connect in and around the Glenelg Shire.

YOUR VOICE OUR ACTION

A highly engaged and capable Local Government, leading Glenelg to ensure the needs and aspirations of our community are realised.

PERFORMANCE REPORTING

The icons below were used in quarterly and annual reporting throughout the 2021-2025 Plan to represent the progression stages of each initiative.

ACHIEVED

The Achieved icon will be used when a project/plan has been successfully completed

DELAYED

The Delayed icon will be present in this report when a project/plan has been identified as postponed, not on track or redefined.

IN PREPARATION

The In Preparation icon will be used in this report when a project /plan is in its planning stage and the details are being prepared.

ON TRACK

The On Track icon will be used when a project/plan is progressing and is likely to achieve what is required within the time identified in the scheduling plan.

AHEAD OF SCHEDULE

The Ahead of Schedule icon will be used when a project/plan is likely to be completed earlier than planned.

The following performance report provides a four-year snapshot of the achievements, progress and highlights of the 4-year plan.

COUNCIL PLAN PROGRESS

MAJOR PROJECTS AND PRIORITY PROJECTS

Council committed to eleven Major and Priority Projects and Plans in the 2021-2025 Council Plan that linked directly to the strategic priorities in the Plan:

PROJECT	STRATEGIC PRIORITY LINK	STATUS
Portland Foreshore		
Cape Bridgewater Infrastructure		
Portland Employment Precinct		
Multi-Purpose Facility - Portland Foreshore		
Alexandra Park Upgrade		
Multi-Purpose Sporting Facility		
Aquatic Strategy Implementation		
Art and Culture Strategy Implementation		
Portland Renewable Energy Project – Civic Precinct Construct		
Tracks and Trails Construct		
Local Freight Roads		

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COUNCIL PLAN PROGRESS

SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS

PORTLAND FORESHORE

The Portland Foreshore project was completed, meeting its strategic objectives and funding obligations while incorporating extensive stakeholder consultation and environmental approvals.

All planned components, pathways, boardwalks, lighting, bollards, and the ceremonial dance space have been delivered as envisioned.

The project has enhanced cultural representation, improved safety and accessibility.

CAPE BRIDGEWATER INFRASTRUCTURE

The Cape Bridgewater Infrastructure upgrade project steadily progressed over the past four years, delivering major improvements to public amenity, access, and environmental resilience in the Cape Bridgewater area. The project has been delivered in stages, with Stage 1 (revetment works) and Stage 2 (car parks, boardwalks, landscaping, and BBQ areas) now fully completed. The final component, Stage 3 (refurbishment of the amenities block) is currently in the approvals and procurement phase, with completion expected in the first half of the 2025–26 financial year.

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PORTLAND EMPLOYMENT PRECINCT

The Portland Employment Precinct project has reached successful completion after four years of strategic planning, stakeholder engagement, and civil infrastructure delivery. The project was designed to unlock industrial and commercial land in Portland, providing critical infrastructure to support business development, investment attraction, and long-term job creation in the Glenelg Shire. Bunnings Warehouse is the first development to use the space and officially opened in the fourth quarter of Year 4.

MULTI-PURPOSE FACILITY PORTLAND FORESHORE

The Multi-purpose Facility Portland Foreshore project progressed over the last four years through extensive planning, design, consultation, and statutory approvals. While early progress was in line with agreed milestones, a change in project direction during Year 4 resulted in a shift from a new-build to a refurbishment of existing facilities, requiring funding agreement amendments and further stakeholder engagement.

COUNCIL PLAN PROGRESS

SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS CONTINUED

ALEXANDRA PARK UPGRADE

The Alexandra Park Upgrade was a major infrastructure project aimed at revitalising one of the region's key recreational and community hubs. Over a span of four years, the project successfully progressed from design and procurement to construction and handover. The project delivered enhanced infrastructure that now supports increased community activity and sport participation, and improved venue accessibility and usability for local groups and events at Alexandra Park.

The Alexandra Park precinct has become a vibrant hub for the community, hosting major events such as the South West Football Netball League Grand Final and the Tri-State Games. It also supports a wide range of inclusive community activities for all ages and abilities, including "Play Your Way" – a program designed to encourage youth participation in sport – and celebrations for the International Day of Persons with a Disability. These events highlight the precinct's growing role as a welcoming and accessible space for sporting, cultural, and community engagement.

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MULTI-PURPOSE SPORTING FACILITY

Due to the significant scale of the project, progress during this Council Plan period was limited due to funding availability.

The project will now be reintegrated into Council's long-term planning framework, informed by updated feasibility and community needs analysis, and reactivated when aligned funding becomes available.

AQUATIC STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

The Aquatic Strategy Implementation project has been a key priority for Council over the 2021–2025 Council Plan cycle, focusing on the long-term viability and renewal of aquatic facilities across the Glenelg Shire, particularly the Heywood Pool and the Portland Leisure and Aquatic Centre (PLACE). While major works have not yet been delivered, critical planning, technical assessments, and funding applications have positioned the project for future progression.

Given the aging infrastructure and facilities this project remains a high priority and will continue into the next strategic cycle as Council seeks to secure investment and deliver long-term, sustainable aquatic facilities for the Shire.

COUNCIL PLAN PROGRESS

SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS CONTINUED

ARTS AND CULTURE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

The Arts and Culture Strategy Implementation project has made strong. The project has focused on activating the Arts and Culture Strategy 2022–2026 through staged action plans, staffing investment, collection care, and creative infrastructure planning. The project is on track, with multiple milestones delivered and future-focused planning embedded.

PORTLAND RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECT – CIVIC PRECINCT CONSTRUCT

Over the 2021–2025 Council Plan cycle, the Portland Renewable Energy project has focused on the staged design and construction of a District Heating Loop Upgrade in the Civic Precinct. The project aims to support energy efficiency and sustainability in public infrastructure through renewable energy technology. After progressing through comprehensive design and procurement phases, Stages 1 to 3 construction were completed in Year 4.

The project reflects Council's commitment to sustainable infrastructure and energy efficiency and is set to deliver lasting environmental and operational benefits for the Civic Precinct.

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TRACKS AND TRAILS CONSTRUCT PROJECT

The Tracks and Trails Construct project has successfully delivered improved active transport infrastructure through the staged development of the Portland North Pathway. Delivered in two well-planned stages with strong community engagement and cultural heritage consideration, the project now provides lasting benefits to residents and visitors, promoting healthy, safe, and sustainable mobility options. The project focused on enhancing pedestrian and cycling connections, promoting community health and accessibility, and aligning with long-term urban connectivity goals.

LOCAL FREIGHT ROADS PROJECT

The Local Freight Roads project delivered strategic road improvements for Fitzgerald Street Portland, Wilson Road Portland, Heathfield Lindsay Road and Mumbannar Wanwin Road, supporting the region's transport infrastructure upgrading key freight routes to improve safety, capacity, and connectivity for heavy vehicle movement within the region, directly supporting local industry and economic growth. Initiated in Year 2 and fully completed in Year 4, the project is a major achievement for Council, enhancing safety and reliability for freight operators and local industry across the network.

COUNCIL PLAN PROGRESS

SNAPSHOT: COUNCIL PLAN 2021–2025 PROGRESS AND HIGHLIGHTS

To share our achievements and maintain transparency with the community, timely progress reports were presented to Council and approved for publication on Council's website.

Each year detailed reporting was provided and featured a status icon providing a snapshot of where progress was at for each of the annual actions.

The table below provides a year by year summary of action plan progress using the status icons, and the following provides highlights of the reporting under each of the six key themes.

TOTAL	Achieved	On Track	Ahead of Schedule	In Preparation	Delayed
Year One	31	62	0	7	10
Year Two	55	52	0	1	3
Year Three	46	56	1	0	8
Year Four	56	49	0	0	6

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COUNCIL PLAN PROGRESS

SNAPSHOT: COUNCIL PLAN 2021–2025 PROGRESS AND HIGHLIGHTS



OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

A number of initiatives enabled Councils response to Victorian Circular Economy Policy, including the use of natural and recycled materials in infrastructure projects, such as safety bollards and boardwalks along the Portland Foreshore and Cape Bridgewater highlighting Council's innovative approach to environmentally conscious construction.

A major milestone was the finalisation and endorsement of the Waste Transition Plan, paving the way for the introduction of Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) collection, a significant step towards reducing landfill waste.

To protect our natural environment strong partnerships were maintained with Glenelg Hopkins CMA, Gunditjmara Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation, and local groups such as the South West Environmental Education Group that supported ongoing efforts to protect the region's natural waterways, wetlands, estuaries, and cultural heritage. Targeted funding also enabled annual weed and pest control programs, helping to manage priority areas and preserve biodiversity.

The Domestic Animal Management Plan was developed and implemented throughout the Plan period, with initiatives including the review of dog control areas, implementation of cat curfews, community education on responsible pet ownership, collaboration with veterinary groups and neighbouring councils, and annual desexing programs, all contributing to harmonious coexistence between residents and their environment.

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SERVICES

The following statement provides information in relation to the services funded in the 2024-2025 Budget and the persons or sections of the community who are provided the service.

SERVICE AREA	DESCRIPTION	2024-2025 $'000	
Emergency Response	Emergency Management Act 1986 and 2013 requires councils to play a key role in emergency management, providing support to lead agencies in relief and to lead emergency recovery on behalf of communities.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	(81) **157** **(76)**
Public Health	Ensure health and safety of the community in accordance with statutory requirements of the Food, Public Health and Wellbeing, Environment Protection and Residential Tenancies Acts. Inspection and liaison of premises registered under the Acts are undertaken to ensure appropriate food safety and public health standards are maintained. Approval and inspection services for installation of domestic wastewater systems, infectious disease investigations, pool water quality compliance for public swimming pools and investigation of public and/or environmental health complaints.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	191 **280** **(89)**
Environmental and Sustainability Services	Strategic direction, advice and implementation on environmental and sustainability issues and actions of council's operations. Includes climate change, flora and fauna protection, coastal management, utility management and carbon footprint reduction in areas such as waste minimisation, renewable energy and water use.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	299 **319** **(20)**
Waste Management - Waste Reforms	Initiatives implemented by Council to adhere to the requirements from the Circular Economy Act which was introduced to minimise waste, increase recycling and divert waste from landfill.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	126 **118** **8**
Thermal Loop	Managing Council's Thermal Loop system as a cost effective environmentally friendly alternative heating source.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	0 **50** **(50)**
Grand Total		Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	697 **924** **(227)**

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COUNCIL PLAN PROGRESS

SNAPSHOT: COUNCIL PLAN 2021–2025 PROGRESS AND HIGHLIGHTS



OUR EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND INDUSTRY

Over the four-year Plan, decisive steps were taken to foster education, support employment, and strengthen local industry, helping to build a resilient and innovative community.

Council actively supported small business resilience by offering targeted training, digital tools, and one-on-one assistance, including a valued partnership with Small Business Victoria through the Small Business Bus program. This hands-on approach helped local businesses adapt and grow in a difficult economic landscape.

The development and endorsement of the Food & Fibre Strategy, set a clear direction for strengthening the region's economic contribution through agriculture while promoting resilience and innovation across key sectors. The strategy will guide implementation and investment in the next Council Plan period.

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Tourism infrastructure was enhanced with the completion of the Dartmoor Rail Trail in Year Two, a key project under the Tracks and Trails Strategy that continues to attract visitors and support local economies.

Educational pathways were supported through the expansion of Council's trainee and apprenticeship programs in line with the Workforce Plan, recruiting apprentices and trainees in diverse areas such as Children's Services, IT, Business Administration, Parks and Gardens, and Works Units, building skills and creating career pathways for local residents.

Glenelg Libraries played a vital role by supporting educational programs and events for all ages, strengthening community learning and engagement. A highlight was the expansion of the library outreach services with the Library Outreach Van hitting the road in year one, providing library resources and programs to smaller community such as Nelson, Merino and Dartmoor.

To help small businesses revitalise their presence, the Retail Façade Improvement and Return to Business Support grants were rolled out early in the Plan and completed by Year Three, enabling upgrades that boosted local economic vibrancy.

OUR EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND INDUSTRY

SERVICES

The following statement provides information in relation to the services funded in the 2024-2025 Budget and the persons or sections of the community who are provided the service.

SERVICE AREA	DESCRIPTION	2024-2025 $'000	
Chief Executive Office and Leadership Team	Oversee administrative function of council ensuring good governance practices, providing advice to both the Mayor and Councillors. The Executive Team provide strategic direction and high level advice to enable polices and decisions of council to be implemented in to the day to day operations.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	1,897 **1,992** **(95)**
People & Culture (Formerly Organisational Development)	Oversees the recruitment process and also provides strategic advice to the Leadership Team, managers, and coordinators on a range of staffing matters. These include employee relations, industrial relations, learning and development, as well as performance management.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	1,137 **1,084** **53**
Economy and Investment	Manages development and business enquiries, acts as a central support for local business capability and employment, and advocates for new initiatives and projects for the region.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	145 **175** **(30)**
Grants Management	Source external grant funding opportunities to assist in delivery of council projects.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	0 **0** **0**
Tourism & Events Management	Manages tourism marketing initiatives and projects, supports local event organisers with event planning and delivers Council's annual community events calendar.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	627 **684** **(57)**
Contracts and Procurement	Administers Council Contracts, lease agreements and procurement protocols.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	141 **213** **(72)**
Childrens Services	Family orientated support services including kindergarten, long day care, occasional care, maternal and child health, immunisation and playgroup support.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	269 **588** **(319)**

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OUR EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND INDUSTRY

SERVICES

The following statement provides information in relation to the services funded in the 2024-2025 Budget and the persons or sections of the community who are provided the service.

SERVICE AREA	DESCRIPTION	2024-2025 $'000	
Library Services	To provide user-friendly accessible library services across the Shire, through our branches in Casterton, Heywood and Portland and our Library Outreach services. We care about our community and strive to ensure that every person's library experience – in our libraries, online or at community events – is the best it can be.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	618 **432** **186**
Youth Services	Co-design and implement programs and events with, and for young people to support their development, and positive mental wellbeing and connection to community.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	233 **220** **14**
Community Grants & Support	Council grants and contributions for various categories and projects including recreation, public halls, tourism, events funding, arts and culture and community support.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	327 **411** **(84)**
Casterton Saleyards	Operation of saleyards, hosting up to 6 store cattle sales plus a summer sheep sale per year.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	49 **12** **37**
Grand Total		Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	5,443 **5,810** **(367)**

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COUNCIL PLAN PROGRESS

SNAPSHOT: COUNCIL PLAN 2021–2025 PROGRESS AND HIGHLIGHTS

OUR HEALTH AND WELLBEING

From the very start of the four-year Plan, Council committed to enhancing the health and wellbeing of our community through collaboration, innovation, and inclusion.

In Year One, the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan was developed and endorsed, guiding action with input from over 40 health partners. Alongside this, the Ageing Well in Glenelg Framework was launched, focusing on supporting older residents to live active, connected lives.

Council strengthened its commitment to equity by forming an internal working group to implement Gender Impact Assessments across services, policies and assets, ensuring inclusivity shapes all aspects of community life.

Raising awareness and prevention of family violence was a priority, with annual 16 Days of Activism events delivered in partnership with Portland Rotary Club, uniting the community around this vital cause.

Community safety was enhanced through practical projects like upgraded lighting in recreation reserves and community spaces, erection of shelter and shade in community spaces, improved connecting pathways, traffic management signage at transfer stations and the installation of bollards and wheel stops in public spaces, making everyday environments safer and more welcoming.

Youth wellbeing was supported through initiatives in Heywood funded by Vic Health. Programs such as Live4Life, Engage and FReeZa empowered young people to lead peer events, while local organisations were supported to host community gatherings that foster social connection and engagement.

Healthy living was further encouraged through partnerships with sporting clubs to offer nutritious food options during training and on game day, supported by the Vic Kids East Well Health Program and Council's Incentivisation Policy.

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OUR HEALTH AND WELLBEING

SERVICES

The following statement provides information in relation to the services funded in the 2024-2025 Budget and the persons or sections of the community who are provided the service.

SERVICE AREA	DESCRIPTION	2024-2025 $'000	
Risk Management	Risk management and insurance advice, management of principles and best practice in order to minimise council's exposure to liability. Management of insurance portfolio, claims and work cover obligations.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	1,602 **1,906** **(304)**
Local Laws & Animal Control	Education, regulation and enforcement of General Local Law and relevant State legislation. Conducts reactive and proactive inspections including footpath trading, litter control, fire prevention, issue and management of permits and offence prosecutions. Provides resources for supervision of school crossings and animal management.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	1,079 **1,147** **(68)**
Maternal Child Health	Family orientated support services including maternal and child health, immunisation and playgroup support.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	180 **141** **39**
Access & Inclusion	Provide information, advocacy and resources to support access and inclusion across the shire.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	93 **87** **6**
Community Development and Wellbeing	Key facilitator of community strengthening activities and strategic planning. Initiating and partnering with agencies to address disadvantage, inequity, resilience, wellbeing and public health.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	240 **319** **(79)**
Sports and Recreation	Provide access and opportunities to a range of activities and sporting facilities, playgrounds and open space recreation areas.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	866 **507** **359**
Grand Total		Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	4,060 **4,108** **(48)**

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COUNCIL PLAN PROGRESS

SNAPSHOT: COUNCIL PLAN 2021–2025 PROGRESS AND HIGHLIGHTS



OUR LIFESTYLE, NEIGHBOURHOOD AND CULTURE

Over the past four years, Council has taken meaningful steps to create vibrant neighbourhoods and enrich the cultural fabric of the community, ensuring that lifestyle and wellbeing remain at the heart of local planning.

Recognising evolving housing needs, Council engaged in comprehensive preparation and planning. This included important Planning Scheme amendments, active participation in the Barwon South West key worker housing project, and the development and adoption of key documents such as the Portland Strategic Framework Plan, Rural Land Strategy, and Portland Rural Living Assessment. These efforts are guiding sustainable growth and diverse housing options for the future.

Council also championed outdoor recreation and active lifestyles by expanding opportunities for community connection and nature-based play. The creation and enhancement of playgrounds, skate parks, and pump tracks, from the Portland pump track to new play facilities in Casterton, Heywood, and Narrawong have all contributed to creating connected neighbourhoods and lifestyle.

Arts and culture were woven into the community through public art initiatives embedded in infrastructure projects, enriching public spaces and reflecting the Shire's unique identity.

To support lifelong learning and community connection, a new Libraries Strategy was adopted, ensuring library services evolve to meet the diverse needs of residents now and into the future.

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SERVICES

The following statement provides information in relation to the services funded in the 2024-2025 Budget and the persons or sections of the community who are provided the service.

SERVICE AREA	DESCRIPTION	2024-2025 $'000	
Facilities Maintenance	Ensuring Council facilities are kept to a standard, ensuring safety and appropriate maintenance for the community keeping them clean, safe and hygienic.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	1,515 **1,344** **171**
Heritage Planning	Assistance and support for community in implementation of legislative requirements related to heritage places.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	0 **0** **0**
Planning Services	Statutory planning services including assessment of planning permits, associated customer service and compliance with the Planning and Environment Act 1987. Strategic planning services including local policy development, amendments to the Glenelg Planning Scheme and representation at Panels and Tribunals.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	709 **751** **(43)**
Building Services	Responsible for compliance with Building Act 1993 and Building Regulations 2018. This is includes assessment of Building permit applications, report and consents, undertake building audits, swimming pool and essential safety measure inspections.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	396 **296** **100**
Arts and Culture	Delivery of a range of creative experiences for the Community and support of local not-for-profit arts organisations. Council provides an annual program of professional touring performances with support from State Government, as well as promoting the development of our creative economy and community outcomes.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	573 **451** **122**
Collection Conservation	Coordination, administration and support of conservation, storage and display of cultural and heritage artefacts. Council holds approximately 10,000 collection items, conserving and displaying these works of art and historical objects for the benefit of current and future audiences. The service also supports tourism in the area with management and displays in History House, Maritime Discovery Centre, Portland Rocket Shed and Portland and Casterton Customer Service Centres.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	0 **0** **0**
Caravan Parks	Manage and maintain the council owned caravan park at Casterton. A long term lease has been entered into with a national caravan park operator to manage the caravan park in Portland.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	(20) **(168)** **148**

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SERVICES

The following statement provides information in relation to the services funded in the 2024-2025 Budget and the persons or sections of the community who are provided the service.

SERVICE AREA	DESCRIPTION	2024-2025 $'000	
Aboriginal Partnership	Ongoing partnership between Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation, Dhauwurrd Wurrung Elderly and Community Health Services, Winda Mara Aboriginal Corporation and Glenelg Shire Council providing place based responses through leadership, engagement, advocacy, and education to strengthen the voices of Aboriginal people living in the far Southwest of Victoria.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	21 **24** **(3)**
Visitor Information Centre	Manage three Visitor Information Centres; Portland, Casterton and Nelson. Provide local and Regional tourist advice.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	574 **522** **52**
Aquatic Facilities	Swimming Pools are located at Portland, Heywood, Merino and Casterton allowing a range of leisure activities.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	1,824 **1,438** **386**
Infrastructure, Management and Planning	Design, tender and project management of a broad range of council capital works.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	928 **793** **134**
Waste Management	Kerbside and Public Place collection of waste and recyclables from most urban and selected rural areas. Includes the operation of 6 Waste Transfer Stations.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	915 **884** **31**
Management of Engineering Services	Management of Assets to ensure service requirements of council assets are met.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	379 **570** **(191)**
Public Buildings & Foreshore Management	Council provides a large range of services many utilising a council building or facility.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	1,345 **2,081** **(736)**
Parks and Gardens	Upkeep of playgrounds, recreation reserves, garden beds, street and park trees including crown land reserves.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	2,328 **2,541** **(213)**
Grand Total		Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	11,488 **11,528** **(40)**

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COUNCIL PLAN PROGRESS

SNAPSHOT: COUNCIL PLAN 2021–2025 PROGRESS AND HIGHLIGHTS



OUR ACCESS, TRANSPORT AND TECHNOLOGY

Throughout the four-year Plan, Council made significant strides in enhancing transport infrastructure and embracing technology to improve connectivity and community access.

A key achievement was the strong advocacy which assisted in successfully securing funding in Year Four to upgrade the vital Maroona to Portland rail line, strengthening freight capacity and regional economic growth.

The Portland Bayswater front saw exciting developments with the completion of the Marina extension, Trawler wharf extension, and the new Town jetty, boosting tourism and local industry. Meanwhile, the Portland Employment Precinct took shape, with design and construction phases completed, paving the way for future job opportunities.

Council also prioritised road improvements, upgrading critical routes such as Wilson's Road and Fitzgerald Street to enhance freight movement and everyday access for residents.

On the technology front, the Digital Glenelg Implementation Plan remained on track, delivering back-office solutions that streamline Council operations and support better service delivery.

Transport programs continued to empower local residents, with the Glenelg L2P initiative exceeding targets, connecting learner drivers and mentors across Heywood, Portland, and Casterton, helping more young people gain their independence behind the wheel.

To encourage active lifestyles, walking trails and recreational paths were expanded in Portland North and Cape Bridgewater, and the historic Merino Stock Route, further enriching the Shire's network of accessible outdoor spaces.

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SERVICES

The following statement provides information in relation to the services funded in the 2024-2025 Budget and the persons or sections of the community who are provided the service.

SERVICE AREA	DESCRIPTION	2024-2025 $'000	
Digital Glenelg	Digital Glenelg leads the implementation of Councils Business Transformation program. Engendering change across people, process and technology to affect outcomes that benefit community and increase operational effectiveness in the provision of Council services to residents.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	944 **1,438** **(494)**
Information Technology	Support and maintain reliable and cost effective communications and computing systems, facilities and infrastructure. This enables council staff to deliver services in an efficient manner.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	2,000 **2,425** **(424)**
School Crossings	Provision of School Crossings across the shire.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	105 **96** **9**
Information & Data	Document, archival and information management including compliance with relevant legislation. Provides advice and support in development and promotion of records and information management systems, standards and procedures.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	379 **483** **(104)**
Quarries	Management of Limestone quarry for material to maintain and construct Roads.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	(289) **50** **(339)**
Aerodromes	Council owned and operated airport at Portland. Users include Royal Flying Doctor, charter, private and emergency services. The Casterton Airfield is used strategically for aerial fire operations and air ambulance.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	274 **268** **5**
Local Port	Management of multiple maritime facilities within the Portland Harbour including commercial and recreational fishing and boating.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	373 **13** **359**
Asset Management & Maintenance	Sustainably maintain assets and ensure service requirements of council assets are met. Manage rolling replacement of heavy plant and light plant, including fleet vehicles.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	1,123 **895** **228**
Road Infrastructure Maintenance	Regulatory compliance of Road infrastructure with in a Road Reserve.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	4,147 **5,283** **(1,136)**
Grand Total		Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	9,055 **10,952** **(1,897)**

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COUNCIL PLAN PROGRESS

SNAPSHOT: COUNCIL PLAN 2021–2025 PROGRESS AND HIGHLIGHTS

YOUR VOICE, OUR ACTION

Over the past four years, Council has committed to bringing governance closer to its community and ensuring every voice is heard and valued. Recognising that meaningful engagement is the foundation of good decision-making, Council made a conscious effort to reach beyond traditional boundaries.

Council meetings weren't confined to the chambers in Portland alone, with the commitment to two meetings being held in different locations each year across the Shire, making it easier for residents in smaller towns to witness and participate in local democracy firsthand. This commitment to accessibility was further strengthened with the introduction of live-streaming, starting in Year Two. After reviewing the service, Council took ownership of the live-streaming platform, embedding it as an ongoing tool to enhance transparency and allow residents to engage with meetings from anywhere at any time.

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Understanding the importance of digital engagement, Council expanded its online presence through the rebrand of the "Your Say Glenelg" website and integrating it with the main corporate website. The digital platform enabled community input, making it simpler for people to share their ideas, concerns, and feedback on projects shaping their Shire.

To ensure the community stayed informed, Council developed a reporting platform that transparently showcased the type and progress of infrastructure projects across the region. This initiative gave residents real-time insight into developments affecting their neighbourhoods, fostering trust and accountability.

Listening closely remained at the heart of the Council's approach. The Listening Post sessions were reinstated in year three and four, with Councillors and Executive Team travelling throughout the Shire to gather firsthand community perspectives. Development of the new Council Plan was directly influenced by the community engagement undertaken proving that community voices truly guide Council's actions.

Behind the scenes, the adoption of a comprehensive Asset Plan ensured that Glenelg's infrastructure investments are strategically planned for the long term, aligning with community needs and aspirations.

YOUR VOICE, OUR SHARED ACTION

SERVICES

The following statement provides information in relation to the services funded in the 2024-2025 Budget and the persons or sections of the community who are provided the service.

SERVICE AREA	DESCRIPTION	2024-2025 $'000	
Mayor & Council	The role of the Mayor and Councillors is to provide good governance and strategic direction to achieve the best outcomes for the benefit of the community, including future generations.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	536 **512** **24**
Communication & Media	Provide timely information and promotion on council activities and programs, both internally and externally.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	179 **159** **20**
Corporate Governance	Statutory and corporate support to council. This includes coordinating business papers, minutes of council meetings, maintenance of statutory registers and the conduct of municipal elections.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	452 **243** **209**
Customer Service	First line response for customer enquiries at the 3 customer service centres at Portland, Heywood and Casterton. Request for works taken directly from customers recorded and sent to the relevant service units. Casterton and Heywood centres also provide library services.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	741 **724** **17**
Finance	Development of the annual Council Budget, annual Financial Report and the Strategic Financial Plan. Co-ordination of external auditors and input into the audit committee requirements. Administer the accounts payable and accounts receivables services for the council. Supports all units in financial analysis of variances to budget.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	864 **803** **62**
Rating / Property Services	Rating and valuation services including raising and collection of rates and charges and valuation of properties through the shire. Assist Victorian Electoral Commission in preparation for the Voters Roll for council elections.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	331 **294** **37**
Internal Audit	Council's Internal Audit function provides assurance on the effectiveness of internal controls, systems and processes by improving performance, reducing risk and increasing accountability.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	177 **221** **(45)**
Community Engagement & Planning	Provision of the Your Say Engagement Platform, ensuring Principles of Engagement are adhered to, and the voice of community is incorporated into planning and strategic development across the business, including Council Plan Development, annual action planning, quarterly reporting and annual report development.	Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	222 **226** **(4)**
Grand Total		Net Cost Actual **Budget** **Variance**	3,502 **3,182** **320**

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OUR PERFORMANCE

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	RESULTS 2022	RESULTS 2023	RESULTS 2024	RESULTS 2025
1	Community Satisfaction with Community Consultation and Engagement	57	45	42	43
2	Community Satisfaction with Decisions made in the interest of the Community	58	44	39	42
3	Average rates and charges per assessment	$2,050	$2,080	$2,146	$2,184
4	Average residential rates and charges per assessment	$1,333	$1,606	$1,668	$1,722
5	Average operating expenditure per assessment	$4,533	$4,461	$3,830	$3,567
6	Average capital expenditure per assessment	$1,091	$996	$997	$1,080
7	Average liabilities per assessment	$2,448	$2,089	$2,049	$1,816
8	Operating result per assessment	-$192	$195	-$136	$1,741

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REPORT OF OPERATIONS

SERVICE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The following statement provides the results of the prescribed service performance indicators and measures including explanation of results in the comments.

	RESULTS				
Service / ***Indicator*** / measure	2022	2023	2024	2025	COMMENTS
Aquatic Facilities					
Service standard					
Health inspections of aquatic facilities [Number of authorised officer inspections of Council aquatic facilities / Number of Council aquatic facilities]	0.50	1.00	1.00	1.00	
Utilisation					
Utilisation of aquatic facilities [Number of visits to aquatic facilities / Population]	2.10	3.73	4.03	6.28	Increased number of centre visits has been due to the investment made by the contractor into programs and asset improvements under the contract. Increased use by schools and learn to swim promotions have also benefitted.
Service cost					
Cost of aquatic facilities [Direct cost of aquatic facilities less income received / Number of visits to aquatic facilities]	$27.63	$19.22	$18.64	$13.43	Increased facility improvement costs to facilitate contractor performance and KPI's.

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Service / *Indicator* / measure	RESULTS 2022	2023	2024	2025	COMMENTS
Animal Management					
Timeliness					
Time taken to action animal management requests [Number of days between receipt and first response action for all animal management requests / Number of animal management requests]	2.40	2.63	1.25	1.25	
Service standard					
Animals reclaimed [Number of animals reclaimed / Number of animals collected] x100	26.33%	36.44%	13.28%	34.06%	
Animals rehomed [Number of unclaimed collected animals rehomed / Number of unclaimed collected animals] x100	50.66%	57.30%	97.28%	0.00%	GSC is unable to report the number of animals rehomed for the period. Animals collected are then transferred by arrangement to Warrnambool City Council facilities for processing and rehoming.
Service cost					
Cost of animal management service per population [Direct cost of the animal management service / Population]	$27.28	$38.85	$40.15	$39.42	

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Service / *Indicator* / measure	RESULTS 2022	2023	2024	2025	COMMENTS
Animal Management					
Health and Safety					
Animal management prosecutions [Number of successful animal management prosecutions / Number of animal management prosecutions] x 100	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	75.00%	The decline in successful prosecutions during the period is attributed to one matter on appeal and another matter being witdrawn.
Food Safety					
Timeliness					
Time taken to action food complaints [Number of days between receipt and first response action for all food complaints / Number of food complaints]	1.00	2.25	1.00	1.93	Increased response time due to a range of factors including timing of complaints (those lodged on a Friday afternoon may not be actioned until Monday - 3 days). Council had limited Environmental Health Officer resources due to a restructured Managerial role coming into effect in 2024.

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Service / *Indicator* / measure	RESULTS 2022	2023	2024	2025	COMMENTS
Food Safety					
Service standard					
Food safety assessments [Number of registered class 1 food premises and class 2 food premises that receive an annual food safety assessment in accordance with the Food Act 1984 / Number of registered class 1 food premises and class 2 food premises that require an annual food safety assessment in accordance with the Food Act 1984] x100	83.44%	100.00%	98.63%	100.00%	
Food safety samples [Number of food samples obtained / Required number of food samples] × 100	New	New	130.56%	118.42%	
Service cost					
Cost of food safety service [Direct cost of the food safety service / Number of food premises registered or notified in accordance with the Food Act 1984]	$382.77	$569.92	$542.57	$666.04	The cost of providing the food safety service has increased by 5%, whilst the number of premises registered has decreased by 14% when compared to the prior year.

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Service / *Indicator* / measure	RESULTS 2022	2023	2024	2025	COMMENTS
Food Safety					
Health and safety					
Critical and major non-compliance outcome notifications [Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance notifications about a food premises followed up / Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance notifications about a food premises] x100	60.87%	100.00%	95.00%	91.67%	
Governance					
Transparency					
Council decisions made at meetings closed to the public [Number of Council resolutions made at meetings of Council, or at meetings of a delegated committee consisting only of Councillors, closed to the public / Number of Council resolutions made at meetings of Council or at meetings of a delegated committee consisting only of Councillors] x100	3.73%	3.48%	26.00%	23.53%	

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REPORT OF OPERATIONS
CONTINUED

Service / *Indicator* / measure	RESULTS 2022	2023	2024	2025	COMMENTS
Governance					
Consultation and engagement					
Satisfaction with community consultation and engagement [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how Council has performed on community consultation and engagement]	57.00	45.00	42.00	43.00	
Attendance					
Councillor attendance at council meetings [The sum of the number of Councillors who attended each Council meeting / (Number of Council meetings) × (Number of Councillors elected at the last Council general election)] x100	96.70%	97.62%	94.29%	90.48%	
Service cost					
Cost of elected representation [Direct cost of the governance service / Number of Councillors elected at the last Council general election]	$59,851.43	$59,910.05	$93,779.29	$75,445.71	Prior year costs included Municipal Monitors, CEO recruitment costs and Interim CEO expenditure.
Satisfaction					
Satisfaction with council decisions [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how council has performed in making decisions in the interest of the community]	58.00	44.00	39.00	42.00	

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Service / *Indicator* / measure	RESULTS 2022	2023	2024	2025	COMMENTS
Libraries					
Resource currancy					
Recently purchased library collection	43.58%	43.78%	48.48%	46.91%	
[Number of library collection items purchased in the last 5 years / Number of library collection items] x100					
Service cost					
Cost of library service per population	$33.33	$34.59	$34.65	$40.48	General cost of operations and staffing has increased across in 2024-25.
[Direct cost of the library service / Population]					
Utilisation					
Loans per head of population	New	New	5.55	5.30	
[Number of library collection item loans / Population]					
Participation					
Library membership	New	New	24.14%	24.86%	
[Number of registered library members / Population] x100					
Library visits per head of population	New	New	5.40	4.95	
[Number of library visits / Population]					
Maternal and Child Health (MCH)					
Service standard					
Infant enrolments in the MCH service	101.09%	100.00%	101.45%	100.00%	
[Number of infants enrolled in the MCH service (from birth notifications received) / Number of birth notifications received] x100					

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Service / *Indicator* / measure	RESULTS 2022	2023	2024	2025	COMMENTS
Maternal and Child Health (MCH)					
Service cost					
Cost of the MCH service	$115.29	$130.64	$117.75	$71.00	The cost of the service was inflated in 23-24 when compared to the current year due to additional support funding passed on to the Contractor totalling $99k.
[Cost of the MCH service / Hours worked by MCH nurses]					
Participation					
Participation in the MCH service	87.18%	87.00%	87.19%	89.67%	
[Number of children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of children enrolled in the MCH service] x100					
Participation					
Participation in the MCH service by Aboriginal children	84.68%	81.58%	93.18%	90.34%	
[Number of Aboriginal children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of Aboriginal children enrolled in the MCH service] x100					
Satisfaction					
Participation in 4-week Key Age and Stage visit	94.02%	99.39%	100.00%	98.15%	
[Number of 4-week key age and stage visits / Number of birth notifications received] x100					

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Service / *Indicator* / measure	RESULTS 2022	2023	2024	2025	COMMENTS
Roads					
Satisfaction of use					
Sealed local road requests [Number of sealed local road requests / Kilometres of sealed local roads] x100	4.20	9.37	8.84	4.12	A decrease in this measure is reflective of the increased maintenance response time by Council, leading to decreased requests over the period.
Condition					
Sealed local roads maintained to condition standards [Number of kilometres of sealed local roads below the renewal intervention level set by Council / Kilometres of sealed local roads] x100	93.52%	93.52%	9[illegible].75%	93.00%	
Service cost					
Cost of sealed local road reconstruction [Direct cost of sealed local road reconstruction / Square metres of sealed local roads reconstructed]	$53.25	$41.44	$38.34	$48.78	Increases in the cost of road construction is attributed to rising material prices.
Service Cost					
Cost of sealed local road resealing [Direct cost of sealed local road resealing / Square metres of sealed local roads resealed]	$3.22	$6.44	$5.37	$6.29	Increases in the cost of road resealing is attributed to rising contractor prices.

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Service / *Indicator* / measure	RESULTS 2022	2023	2024	2025	COMMENTS
Roads					
Satisfaction					
Satisfaction with sealed local roads [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how council has performed on the condition of sealed local roads]	42.00	32.00	31.00	34.00	
Statutory Planning					
Timeliness					
Time taken to decide planning applications [The median number of days between receipt of a planning application and a decision on the application]	47.00	55.00	[illegible]	36.00	This financial year experienced a greater proportion of Vicsmart Applications combined with a lesser amount of regular applications, that has driven down median timeframe.
Service standard					
Planning applications decided within required time frames [(Number of regular planning application decisions made within 60 days) + (Number of VicSmart planning application decisions made within 10 days) / Number of planning application decisions made] x100	73.23%	71.36%	89.17%	88.30%	

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Service / *Indicator* / measure	RESULTS 2022	2023	2024	2025	COMMENTS
Statutory Planning					
Service cost					
Cost of statutory planning service [Direct cost of the statutory planning service / Number of planning applications received]	$1,728.54	$2,228.83	$2,375.78	$2,741.76	Additional reviews to Tribunal and Supreme court have incurred larger legal costs increasing overall costs as well slight drop in permit applications received.
Decision making					
Council planning decisions upheld at VCAT [Number of VCAT decisions that did not set aside council's decision in relation to a planning application / Number of VCAT decisions in relation to planning applications] x100	66.67%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	
Waste Management					
Service standard					
Kerbside collection bins missed [Number of kerbside garbage and recycling collection bins missed / Number of scheduled kerbside garbage and recycling collection bin lifts] x10,000	0.87	0.51	0.57	0.00	A change in reporting systems during 2024-25 meant this data has not been captured for the period. This has now been rectified with the Contractor and data will be reported for 2025-26.

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REPORT OF OPERATIONS
CONTINUED

Service / *Indicator* / measure	RESULTS 2022	2023	2024	2025	COMMENTS
Waste Management					
Service cost					
Cost of kerbside garbage bin collection service	$136.00	$161.78	$144.30	$199.10	An increase in gate fees passed on by the Contractor has increased the overall cost of kerbside collection in 2024-25.
[Direct cost of the kerbside garbage bin collection service / Number of kerbside garbage collection bins]					
Service cost					
Cost of kerbside recyclables collection service	$91.99	$91.44	$ 1.73	$110.52	
[Direct cost of the kerbside recyclables bin collection service / Number of kerbside recyclables collection bins]					
Waste diversion					
Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill	32.33%	30.40%	28.65%	27.28%	
[Weight of recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins / Weight of garbage, recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins] x100					

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PERFORMANCE STATEMENT

GLENELG SHIRE COUNCIL

Encompassing an area of 6,215 square kilometres, the Glenelg Shire includes Portland, Heywood and Casterton and many other small townships and localities. Rolling hills and rich agricultural land to the north give way to a scenic and secluded river region to the west. Pine and blue gum plantations line the roads through the hinterland, while a huge expanse of coastal beaches and rugged cliffs form the southern perimeter, making the Glenelg Shire a thriving tourist destination.

SERVICE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

Service / *Indicator* / Measure [Formula]	RESULTS 2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Target as per budget	2025 Actual	COMMENTS
Aquatic Facilities						
Utilisation						
Utilisation of aquatic facilities [Number of visits to aquatic facilities / Municipal population]	2.10	3.75	4.03	N/A	6.28	Increased number of centre visits has been due to the investment made by the contractor into programs and asset improvements under the contract. Increased use by schools and learn to swim promotions have also benefitted.
Animal Management						
Health and safety						
Animal management prosecutions [Number of successful animal management prosecutions / Number of animal management prosecutions] x 100	100%	100%	100%	N/A	75%	The decline in successful prosecutions during the period is attributed to one matter on appeal and another matter being withdrawn.

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PERFORMANCE STATEMENT
CONTINUED

Service / *Indicator* / Measure [Formula]	2022	2023	2024	2025		COMMENTS
		Actual	Actual	Target as per budget	Actual	
Food Safety						
Health and safety						
Critical and major non-compliance outcome notifications	60.87%	100.00%	95.00%	N/A	91.67%	
[Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance notifications about a food premises followed up / Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance notifications about a food premises] x100						
Governance						
Consultation and engagement						
Satisfaction with community consultation and engagement	57	45	42	58	43	
[Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how Council has performed on community consultation and engagement]						
Libraries						
Participation						
Library membership	N/A	N/A	24.14%	N/A	24.86%	
[Number of registered library members / Population] x100						

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PERFORMANCE STATEMENT
CONTINUED

Service / *Indicator* / Measure [Formula]	RESULTS 2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Target as per budget	2025 Actual	COMMENTS
Maternal and Child Health (MCH)						
Participation						
Participation in the MCH service [Number of children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of children enrolled in the MCH service] x100	87.18%	87.60%	87.19%	N/A	89.67%	
Participation in the MCH service by Aboriginal children [Number of Aboriginal children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of Aboriginal children enrolled in the MCH service] x100	84.68%	81.58%	93.18%	N/A	90.34%	
Roads						
Condition						
Sealed local roads maintained to condition standards [Number of kilometres of sealed local roads below the renewal intervention level set by Council / Kilometres of sealed local roads] x100	93.52%	93.52%	94.75%	94.90%	93.00%	

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PERFORMANCE STATEMENT
CONTINUED

Service / *Indicator* / Measure [Formula]	RESULTS 2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Target as per budget	2025 Actual	COMMENTS
Statutory Planning						
Service standard						
Planning applications decided within required time frames [(Number of regular planning application decisions made within 60 days) + (Number of VicSmart planning application decisions made within 10 days) / Number of planning application decisions made] x100	73.23%	71.36%	89.17%	74.00%	88.30%	
Waste Management						
Waste diversion						
Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill [Weight of recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins / Weight of garbage, recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins] x100	32.33%	30.40%	28.65%	32.33%	27.28%	

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PERFORMANCE STATEMENT
CONTINUED

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

	RESULTS					FORECASTS				
Dimension / ***Indicator*** / Measure	2022	2023	2024	2025		2026	2027	2028	2029	COMMENTS
[Formula]	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target as per budget	Actual	Forecasts	Forecasts	Forecasts	Forecasts	
Efficiency										
Expenditure level										
Expenses per property assessment	$4,533.38	$4,440.01	$3,814.92	$4,240.98	$4,683.70	$4,687.18	$4,766.47	$4,849.66	$4,939.18	Accounting Adjustments to the Landfill and Gravel Pit Provisions in 2023-24 led to a decrease in Expenditure for Council. Actual operational expenditure (excluding depreciation and accounting adjustments) remains consistent between periods.
[Total expenses / Number of property assessments]										
Revenue level										
Average rate per property assessment	$1,438.40	$1,720.49	$1,784.47	N/A	$1,851.55	$1,905.79	$1,963.59	$2,022.39	$2,082.96	
[Sum of all general rates and municipal charges / Number of property assessments]										

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PERFORMANCE STATEMENT
CONTINUED

Dimension / Indicator / Measure	RESULTS 2022	RESULTS 2023	RESULTS 2024	RESULTS 2025		FORECASTS 2026	FORECASTS 2027	FORECASTS 2028	FORECASTS 2029	COMMENTS
[Formula]	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target as per budget	Actual	Forecasts	Forecasts	Forecasts	Forecasts	
Liquidity										
Working capital										
Current assets compared to current liabilities [Current assets / Current liabilities] x100	85.00%	94.14%	51.16%	73.70%	117.36%	64.25%	71.91%	82.53%	95.45%	This ratio indicates Council's ability to pay its bills as they fall due. Council's Working Capital ratio improved in 2024/25 and can be attributed to receiving $5.8M of 2025/26 General Purpose funding for early. A reduction in Unspent Capital Grant funds at 30 June 2025 of $5M has also had the effect of improving this ratio.
Unrestricted cash										
Unrestricted cash compared to current liabilities [Unrestricted cash / Current liabilities] x100	71.88%	25.27%	29.03%	N/A	86.59%	28.84%	36.15%	46.86%	59.86%	An increase in Unrestricted cash can be attributed to $5.8M in General Purpose funding for 2025-26 being received in the 2024-25 financial year. Unspent Capital Grant funds as at 30 June 2025 are $5M less than the prior period.

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PERFORMANCE STATEMENT
CONTINUED

	RESULTS					FORECASTS				
Dimension / Indicator / Measure	2022	2023	2024	2025		2026	2027	2028	2029	COMMENTS
[Formula]	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target as per budget	Actual	Forecasts	Forecasts	Forecasts	Forecasts	
Obligations										
Loans and borrowings										
Loans and borrowings compared to rates [Interest bearing loans and borrowings / Rate revenue] x100	5.64%	2.54%	1.02%	N/A	13.93%	21.50%	19.83%	18.20%	16.59%	Council has increased it's borrowings for 2024-25 by drawing down a $4M loan. An additional $3M of borrowings will be accessed in 2025-26 as Council expects to complete its carried forward capital works program.
Loans and borrowings repayments compared to rates [Interest and principal repayments on interest bearing loans and borrowings / Rate revenue] x100	33.65%	2.22%	1.02%	N/A	1.02%	2.18%	2.11%	2.05%	1.99%	
Indebtedness										
Non-current liabilities compared to own source revenue [Non-current liabilities / Own source revenue] x100	33.26%	29.71%	16.38%	N/A	23.90%	29.01%	26.23%	23.57%	20.94%	Council's Non Current liabilities increased in 2024-25 due to borrowing $4M. An additional $3M of borrowings will be accessed in 2025-26 as Council expects to complete its carried forward capital works program.

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PERFORMANCE STATEMENT
CONTINUED

	RESULTS					FORECASTS				
Dimension / Indicator / Measure	2022	2023	2024	2025		2026	2027	2028	2029	COMMENTS
[Formula]	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target as per budget	Actual	Forecasts	Forecasts	Forecasts	Forecasts	
Obligations										
Asset renewal and upgrade										
Asset renewal and upgrade compared to depreciation	50.92%	55.97%	57.96%	59.57%	87.89%	113.27%	61.98%	62.90%	64.35%	Council's renewal and upgrade expenditure has increased in 2024-25 due to increased expenditure on Roads and Drainage. It is expected to remain high for 2025-26 due to the recategorisation of the Foreshore Multipurpose Project from New to Renewal/ Upgrade.
[Asset renewal and asset upgrade expense / Asset depreciation] x100										
Operating position										
Adjusted underlying result										
Adjusted underlying surplus (or deficit)	-18.20%	-7.63%	-10.74%	N/A	-1.32%	-6.72%	-4.79%	-3.66%	-3.14%	Council's adjusted underlying deficit for 2024-25 has reduced but has been impacted by the early payment of $5.8M. Had Council not received the early payment, the underlying deficit for 2024-25 would have been approx. 12%.
[Adjusted underlying surplus (deficit)/ Adjusted underlying revenue] x100										

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PERFORMANCE STATEMENT
CONTINUED

	RESULTS					FORECASTS				
Dimension / Indicator / Measure	2022	2023	2024	2025		2026	2027	2028	2029	COMMENTS
[Formula]	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target as per budget	Actual	Forecasts	Forecasts	Forecasts	Forecasts	
Stability										
Rates concentration										
Rates compared to adjusted underlying revenue	42.22%	46.17%	57.26%	61.69%	44.45%	50.54%	50.28%	50.35%	50.66%	The fluctuation in this measure is attributed to the timing of General Purpose Grant funding payments across the past two financial years with Council receiving early payment in 2024-25 of $5.8M.
[Rate revenue / Adjusted underlying revenue] x100										
Rates effort										
Rates compared to property values	0.40%	0.33%	0.30%	N/A	0.33%	0.33%	0.34%	0.35%	0.36%	
[Rate revenue / Capital improved value of rateable properties in the municipality] x100										

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PERFORMANCE STATEMENT
CONTINUED

SUSTAINABLE CAPACITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

Indicator / Measure [Formula]	RESULTS 2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Actual	COMMENTS
Population					
Expenses per head of municipal population [Total expenses / Municipal population]	$3,218.72	$3,101.55	$2,672.46	$3,270.66	Expenses per head of municipal population have increased for 2024-25 due to increased depreciation as a result of Asset revaluations of $5M. Accounting adjustments to Provisions in 2023-24 further contribute to the change in expenditure across the period.
Infrastructure per head of municipal population [Value of infrastructure / Municipal population]	$23,522.73	$21,7[illegible]2.19	$26,697.06	$27,743.84	
Population density per length of road [Municipal population / Kilometres of local roads]	7.43	7.62	7.61	7.61	
Own-source revenue					
Own-source revenue per head of municipal population [Own-source revenue / Municipal population]	$1,681.83	$1,876.84	$1,906.26	$1,951.69	
Recurrent grants					
Recurrent grants per head of municipal population [Recurrent grants / Municipal population]	$887.37	$840.40	$351.91	$1,107.21	The increase in this measure is due to receiving a $5.8M early payment of Federal Assistance funding.This will likely also distort the variance % for 2025-26.

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PERFORMANCE STATEMENT
CONTINUED

Indicator / Measure [Formula]	RESULTS 2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Actual	COMMENTS
Disadvantage					
Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage [Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage by decile]	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	
Workforce turnover					
Percentage of staff turnover [Number of permanent staff resignations and terminations / Average number of permanent staff for the financial year] x100	11.6%	11.8%	22.2%	12.2%	Councils' decision to cease operating Aged Care Services during 23-24 resulted in redundancies of staff providing these services. This extraordinary event gave rise to a temporary increase in this measure.

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BASIS OF PREPARATION

Council is required to prepare and include a performance statement within its annual report. The performance statement includes the results of the prescribed, service performance, financial performance and sustainable capacity indicators and measures together with a description of the municipal district, an explanation of material variations in the results and notes to the accounts. This statement has been prepared to meet the requirements of the Local Government Act 2020 and *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.

Where applicable the results in the performance statement have been prepared on accounting bases consistent with those reported in the Financial Statements. The other results are based on information drawn from council information systems or from third parties (e.g., Australian Bureau of Statistics or the Council's satisfaction survey provider).

The performance statement presents the actual results for the current year and the previous three years, along with the current year's target, if mandated by the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*. Additionally, for the prescribed financial performance indicators and measures, the performance statement includes the target budget for the current year and the results forecast for the period 2024-25 to 2027-28 by the council's financial plan.

The *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* requires explanation of any material variations in the results contained in the performance statement. Council has adopted materiality thresholds relevant to each indicator and measure and explanations have not been provided for variations below the materiality thresholds unless the variance is considered to be material because of its nature.

DEFINITIONS

KEY TERM	DEFINITION
Aboriginal children	means a child who is an Aboriginal person
Aboriginal person	has the same meaning as in the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006
adjusted underlying revenue	means total income other than: » non-recurrent grants used to fund capital expenditure; and » non-monetary asset contributions; and » contributions to fund capital expenditure from sources other than those referred to above
adjusted underlying surplus (or deficit)	means adjusted underlying revenue less total expenditure
annual report	means an annual report prepared by a council under section 98 of the Act
asset renewal expenditure	means expenditure on an existing asset or on replacing an existing asset that returns the service capability of the asset to its original capability
asset upgrade expenditure	means expenditure that— (a) enhances an existing asset to provide a higher level of service; or (b) extends the life of the asset beyond its original life
critical non-compliance outcome notification	means a notification received by council under section 19N(3) or (4) of the Food Act 1984 , or advice given to council by an authorized officer under that Act, of a deficiency that poses an immediate serious threat to public health
current assets	has the same meaning as in the Australian Accounting Standards
current liabilities	has the same meaning as in the Australian Accounting Standards
food premises	has the same meaning as in the Food Act 1984
intervention level	means the level set for the condition of a road beyond which a council will not allow the road to deteriorate and will need to intervene
local road	means a sealed or unsealed road for which the council is the responsible road authority under the Road Management Act 2004
major non-compliance outcome notification	means a notification received by a council under section 19N(3) or (4) of the Food Act 1984, or advice given to council by an authorized officer under that Act, of a deficiency that does not pose an immediate serious threat to public health but may do so if no remedial action is taken

| KEY TERM | DEFINITION |

MCH	means the Maternal and Child Health Service provided by a council to support the health and development of children within the municipality from birth until school age
non-current liabilities	means all liabilities other than current liabilities
own-source revenue	means adjusted underlying revenue other than revenue that is not under the control of council (including government grants)
population	means the resident population estimated by council
rate revenue	means revenue from general rates, municipal charges, service rates and service charges
relative socio-economic disadvantage	in relation to a municipal district, means the relative socio-economic disadvantage, expressed as a decile for the relevant financial year, of the area in which the municipal district is located according to the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage of SEIFA
restricted cash	means cash, cash equivalents and financial assets, within the meaning of the Australian Accounting Standards, not available for use other than for a purpose for which it is restricted, and includes cash to be used to fund capital works expenditure from the previous financial year
SEIFA	means the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas published from time to time by the Australian Bureau of Statistics on its Internet site
unrestricted cash	means all cash and cash equivalents other than restricted cash

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PERFORMANCE STATEMENT
CONTINUED

CERTIFICATION OF THE PERFORMANCE STATEMENT

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GOVERNANCE

Glenelg Shire Council is constituted under the *Local Government Act 2020* to provide leadership for the good governance of the municipal district and the local community. Council has a number of roles including:

- Taking into account the diverse needs of the local community in decision-making
- Providing leadership by establishing strategic objectives and monitoring achievements
- Ensuring that resources are managed in a responsible and accountable manner
- Advocating the interests of the local community to other communities and governments
- Fostering community cohesion and encouraging active participation in civic life

Council is committed to effective and sustainable forms of democratic and corporate governance as the key to ensuring that Council and its administration meet the community's priorities.

The community has many opportunities to provide input into Council's decision-making processes including community consultation, public forums, Listening Post Sessions and the ability to make submissions.

Council's formal decision-making processes are conducted through Council meetings. Council delegates the majority of its decision-making to Council staff. These delegations are exercised in accordance with adopted Council policies.

MEETINGS OF COUNCIL

Council conducts open public meetings on the fourth Tuesday of each month. Members of the community are welcome to attend these meetings and observe from the gallery or via live streaming.

Council meetings also provide the opportunity for community members to submit a question to Council. The following table provides a summary of Councillor attendance at Council meetings for the 2024-2025 financial year. This is made up of 13 Council Meetings, 1 Statutory Meeting and 1 Unscheduled Meetings.

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OUTGOING COUNCILLORS	COUNCIL MEETINGS ATTENDED	UNSCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING ATTENDANCE	TOTAL	APPROVED LEAVE OF ABSENCE
Cr Scott Martin	3		3	1
Cr Alistair McDonald	4		4	
Cr John Northcott	4		4	
Cr Gilbert Wilson	4		4	

CURRENT COUNCILLORS	COUNCIL MEETINGS ATTENDED	UNSCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING ATTENDANCE	TOTAL	APPROVED LEAVE OF ABSENCE
Cr Duane Angelino	8	1	9	1
Cr Michael Carr	13	1	14	
Cr Matt Jowett	9	1	10	
Cr Robyn McDonald	13	1	14	
Cr Mike Noske	9	1	10	
Cr John Pepper	8	1	9	1
Cr Karen Stephens	13	1	14	

GOVERNANCE

DELEGATED COMMITTEES

The Act allows councils to establish one or more delegated committees consisting of:

- Councillors
- Council staff
- Other persons
- Any combination of the above.

Currently, Glenelg Shire Council has no delegated committees.

MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT

The Model Councillor Code of Conduct (Model Code) incorporates the statutory requirements specified for a Model Code of Conduct in accordance with Section 139 of the *Local Government Act 2020* ("The Act"), became effective on 11 November 2024.

The Model Code is an agreed standard for Councillors about acceptable behaviour to help them deliver good governance with integrity, diligence and respect.

The Model Code:

- aims to foster good working relationships to enable Councillors to work together in the best interests of the local community; and
- sets out the standards of conduct required of Glenelg Shire's elected representatives to build and maintain public confidence in the integrity of Local Government.

Upon declaration, Councillors declared that they would abide by the Model Councillor Code of Conduct whilst taking the Oath of Office on Friday 11 November 2024.

INTEGRITY, CONFIDENTIALITY AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

All Councillors are subject to the requirements of the Governance Rules adopted under section 60 of the *Local Government Act 2020*. These Governance Rules outline the requirements around misuse of position, confidentiality, and the process for conflict of interest declarations.

Councillors are required to:

- Avoid situations that may give rise to conflicts of interest, where practicable.
- Identify any conflicts of interest.
- Disclose or declare conflicts of interest.

Councillors must not participate in discussion or decision making on a matter in which they have a conflict of interest. Councillors must disclose the conflict of interest in writing and in the form determined by the Chief Executive Officer and when disclosing a conflict of interest, Councillors must clearly state their connection to the matter.

All disclosures of conflicts of interest are recorded in the minutes of a Council. For the 2024-2025 year there were 11 Conflict of Interests declared.

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GOVERNANCE

COUNCILLOR ALLOWANCES

In accordance with Section 39 of the Act, councillors are entitled to receive an allowance while performing their duty as a councillor.

The Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal is responsible for setting the values of allowances payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors. The Determination sets a base allowance for each Council member, the value of which varies according to the role (Mayor, Deputy Mayor or Councillor) and the allowance category to which the Council has been assigned.

Councils are divided into three allowance categories based on the income and population of each council. In this instance Glenelg Shire is recognised as a category two council.

The following table contains details of current allowances paid to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors during the year.

OUTGOING COUNCILLORS	SUM OF AMOUNT
Cr Scott Martin	$8,054
Cr Alistair McDonald	$8,054
Cr John Northcott	$8,054
Cr Gilbert Wilson	$8,054

CURRENT COUNCILLORS	SUM OF AMOUNT
Cr Duane Angelino	$21,740
Cr Michael Carr	$28,492
Cr Matt Jowett	$21,740
Cr Robyn McDonald	$43,169
Cr Mike Noske	$21,740
Cr John Pepper	$21,740
Cr Karen Stephens	$95,205

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GOVERNANCE

COUNCILLOR EXPENSES

In accordance with Section 40 of the Act, council is required to reimburse a councillor for expenses incurred whilst performing their duties as a councillor. Council is also required to adopt and maintain a policy in relation to the reimbursement of expenses for councillors. The policy provides guidance for the payment of reimbursements of expenses and the provision of resources, facilities and other support to the mayor and councillors to enable them to discharge their duties. Council also publishes in its Annual Report the details of the expenses, including reimbursement of expenses for each councillor and member of a council committee paid by the council. The details of the expenses including reimbursement of expenses for each councillor and member of a council committee paid by the council for the 2024-2025 year are set out in the following table.

Note: No expenses were paid by council including reimbursements to members of council committees during the year

OUTGOING COUNCILLORS	CT	IC	TR	CM	CC	TOTAL
Cr Scott Martin	$110	$532	$327			$969
Cr Alistair McDonald	$2,414	$541				$2,954
Cr John Northcott		$582				$582
Cr Gilbert Wilson	$786	$64[illegible]	[illegible]149	$180		$1,758

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CURRENT COUNCILLORS	CT	IC	TR	CM	CC	TOTAL
Cr Duane Angelino	$1,106	$1,323	$48	$203		$2,680
Cr Michael Carr	$3,255	$1,865	$608	$213		$5,941
Cr Matt Jowett	$1,019	$1,323	$18			$2,361
Cr Robyn McDonald	$3,356	$1,865				$5,220
Cr Mike Noske	$942	$1,332				$2,274
Cr John Pepper	$1,019	$1,333				$2,343
Cr Karen Stephens	$4,590	$2,224	$26,771			$33,586

KEY

CT Conference, Training and Other Expenses

IC Information and Communication Expenses

TR Travel Expenses

CM Car Mileage

CC Child Care

MANAGEMENT

AUDIT AND RISK

The Glenelg Shire Council's Audit and Risk Committee is a Committee of Council, established under Section 53 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

The Glenelg Shire Council Audit and Risk Committee is a skill-based group where independent members will possess a range of skills and significant expertise in financial management, risk, and public sector management.

The Audit and Risk Committee's role is to support Council in discharging its responsibilities related to financial and performance reporting, risk management, fraud prevention systems and control, maintenance of a sound internal control environment, assurance activities including internal and external audit of Council's performance with regard to compliance with its policies and legislative and regulatory requirements.

In 2024-2025 the Audit and Risk Committee consisted of five independent members, along with three Councillors including the Mayor. The term of each Independent Members is four years. The Chairperson is appointed by the Committee annually. Audit and Risk Committee Members receive an allowance per meeting.

The Committee met on five occasions during 2024-2025, providing advice to the Council on a wide range of issues including:

- Internal Audit Program.
- Risk Management.
- Business Continuity.
- Internal control processes.
- Monitoring of Statutory Compliance; and
- Monitoring of Council's financial and performance reporting.

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ATTENDANCE AT AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETINGS 01/07/2024 – 30/06/2025

MEMBER NAME	MEETING 1 12/09/2024	MEETING 2 18/10/2024	MEETING 3 05/12/2024	MEETING 4 06/03/2025	MEETING 4 05/06/2025
David Stafford	P	P	P	P	P
Philip Saunders	P	P	P	Tenure Expired 28/02/2025	-
Bonnie Holmes	P	A	P	P	P
Greg Tremewen	P	A	P	Resigned 10/03/2025	-
Anthony Oxford	A	A	P	P	A
John Duffield	-		Appointed 28/02/2025	P	P
Samantha Sharp	-		-	Appointed 11/03/2025	
Karen Stephens	P	A	P	P	P
Cr Michael Carr	P	A	(2020 – 2024 Council term)	-	-
Cr John Northcott	P	A	(2020 – 2024 Council term)	-	-
Cr Robyn McDonald	Appointed 26/11/2024		P	P	P
Cr Matt Jowett	Appointed 26/11/2024		P	P	A

P = Present A = Apology received

MANAGEMENT

INTERNAL AUDIT

Council's Internal Audit function provides independent and objective assurance that the appropriate processes and controls are in place across Council. This function is performed by an external contracted provider. AFS & Associates are Council's contracted provider and commenced as Council's internal auditor in the 2023-2024 financial year.

Council adopted a risk based Strategic Internal Audit Program for the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025, which is reviewed annually to ensure the audit resources remain focused on the appropriate areas.

The internal audit program is determined through consultation with the Audit and Risk Committee Members and senior management. Primarily, an internal audit program is designed to review the areas of highest risk, but consideration is also given to ensure a periodic review of Council processes.

During 2024/2025 an internal audit was completed on 'Long Term Financial Planning' and commenced on 'Capital Project Management' and 'Contract Management'.

Recommendations are made as a result of internal audit findings and are assigned to the responsible officers. Quarterly status updates are reported to the Executive Team and the Audit and Risk Committee. All findings are risk rated.

The internal auditor attends each Audit and Risk Committee Meeting to report on the status of the Internal Audit Program, provide an Industry update and present findings of completed internal audits.

LONG TERM FINANCIAL PLANNING

The internal auditor attends each Audit and Risk Committee Meeting to report on the status of the Internal Audit Program, provide an Industry update and present findings of completed internal audits.

EXTERNAL AUDIT

The Local Government Act 2020 requires each Council to prepare financial statements and a performance statement and submit them to the Auditor-General for audit each financial year. *The Audit Act 1994* requires the Victorian Auditor General's Office (VAGO) to audit these and issue an opinion thereon.

The Audit Act 1994 authorises VAGO to appoint an audit service provider to assist in the conduct of the audit. For 2024-2025, KPMG have been appointed to assist with the audit of Glenelg Shire Council. KPMG provide an auditor's report on the financial and performance statements and present to the Audit and Risk Committee

RISK MANAGEMENT

Council acknowledges that risk management is a crucial component of effective management practices. Council is committed to risk management and to creating an organisational culture that ensures that effective risk management is embedded in all activities and business processes. Council's Risk Management Framework aims to identify areas of risk, assess existing controls, and implement actions to further minimise risk exposure.

Council has adopted the Risk Management Framework and Strategy in line with current AS/NZS 31000 guidelines. The Risk Management Framework addresses items such as:

- Risk management objectives
- Roles and accountabilities
- Risk management process
- Monitoring and review
- Integration with Operations

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GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST

Council has implemented a number of statutory and better practice items to strengthen its management framework. Having a strong governance and management frameworks leads to better decision making by Council. The Act requires council to undertake an assessment against the prescribed Governance and Management checklist and include this in its report of operations. Council's Governance and Management Checklist results are set out in the section below.

The following are the results in the prescribed form of Council's assessment against the prescribed governance and management checklist.

	GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT ITEMS	ASSESSMENT
1	**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY** (Policy outlining Council's commitment to engaging with the community on matters of public interest)	Adopted in accordance with section 55 of the Act. Date of adoption: 23/02/2021 Reviewed 23/12/2024
2	**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GUIDELINES** (Guidelines to assist staff to determine when and how to engage with the community)	Current guidelines in operation. Date of commencement: 01/01/2022 Reviewed 01/02/2024
3	**FINANCIAL PLAN** (Plan under section 91 of the Act outlining the financial and non-financial resources required for at least the next 10 financial years)	Adopted in accordance with section 91 of the Act. Date of adoption: 26/10/2021 2021-2031 Draft 2025-2035 Plan out for public consultation until 15 October 2025
4	**ASSET PLAN** (Plan that sets out the asset maintenance and renewal needs for key infrastructure asset classes for at least the next 10 years)	Adopted in accordance with section 92 of the Act. Date of adoption: 22/06/2022 2021-2025
5	**REVENUE AND RATING PLAN** (Plan setting out the rating structure of Council to levy rates and charges)	Adopted in accordance with section 93 of the Act. Date of adoption: 24/06/2021 2025-2029
6	**ANNUAL BUDGET** (Plan setting out the services to be provided and initiatives to be undertaken over the next 12 months and the funding and other resources required)	Budget adopted in accordance with section 94 of the Act. Date of adoption: 24/06/2025
7	**RISK POLICY** (Policy outlining Council's commitment and approach to minimising the risks to Council's operations)	Current policy in operation Date of commencement: 01/09/2020 Reviewed 01/07/2024

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GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST CONTINUED

	GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT ITEMS	ASSESSMENT
8	**FRAUD POLICY** (Policy outlining Council's commitment and approach to minimising the risk of fraud)	Current policy in operation Date of commencement: 24/10/2023 Reviewed 24/08/2025
9	**MUNICIPAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANNING** (Participation in meetings of the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee)	Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC) meetings attended by one or more representatives of Council (other than the chairperson of the MEMPC) during the financial year. Dates of MEMPC meetings attended: 15/08/2024 21/11/2024 [illegible]/02/2025 15/05/2025
10	**PROCUREMENT POLICY** (Policy outlining the principles, processes and procedures that will apply to all purchases of goods and services by the Council)	Adopted in accordance with section 108 of the Act. Date of commencement: 14/12/2021 Currently under review
11	**BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN** (Plan setting out the actions that will be taken to ensure that key services continue to operate in the event of a disaster)	Current plan in operation Date of commencement: 21/08/2024
12	**DISASTER RECOVERY PLAN** (Plan setting out the actions that will be undertaken to recover and restore business capability in the event of a disaster)	Current plan in operation Date of commencement: 20/02/2024
13	**COMPLAINT POLICY** (Policy under section 107 of the Act outlining Council's commitment and approach to managing complaints)	Policy developed in accordance with section 107 of the Act. Date of commencement: 14/12/2021 Currently under review
14	**WORKFORCE PLAN** (Plan outlining Council's commitment and approach to planning the current and future workforce requirements of the organisation)	Plan developed in accordance with section 46 of the Act. Date of commencement: 14/12/2021 Reviewed 06/2025
15	**PAYMENT OF RATES AND CHARGES HARDSHIP POLICY** (Policy outlining Council's commitment and approach to assisting ratepayers experiencing financial hardship or difficulty paying their rates)	Current policy in operation Date of commencement: 25/07/2023

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GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST
CONTINUED

	GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT ITEMS	ASSESSMENT
16	**RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK** (Framework outlining Council's approach to managing risks to the Council's operations)	Current framework in operation Date of commencement: 17/09/2020 Reviewed 01/07/2025
17	**AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE** (Advisory committee of Council under section 53 and 54 of the Act)	Established in accordance with section 53 of the Act. Date of commencement: 25/08/2020 2025-2027 Charter Adopted 22/07/2025
18	**INTERNAL AUDIT** (Independent accounting professionals engaged by the Council to provide analyses and recommendations aimed at improving Council's governance, risk and management controls)	Internal auditor engaged Date of engagement: 26/08/2022 Contract expires 26/08/2026
19	**PERFORMANCE REPORTING FRAMEWORK** (A set of indicators measuring financial and non-financial performance, including the performance indicators referred to in section 98 of the Act)	Current framework in operation Date of adoption: 07/04/2015 Last Amendment to Framework - 24/10/2020
20	**COUNCIL PLAN REPORT** (Report reviewing the performance of the Council against the Council Plan, including the results in relation to the strategic indicators, for the first six months of the financial year)	Current report Date of report: 27/05/2025 Next report - 26/08/2025
21	**QUARTERLY BUDGET REPORTS** (Quarterly reports to Council under section 97 of the Act, comparing actual and budgeted results and an explanation of any material variations)	Quarterly reports presented to Council in accordance with section 97(1) of the Act. Date of report: 25/06/2024 24/10/2024 25/02/2025 29/04/2025
22	**RISK REPORTING** (Six-monthly reports of strategic risks to Council's operations, their likelihood and consequences of occurring and risk minimisation strategies)	Risk reports prepared and presented Dates of reports: 29/04/2025 22/07/2025
23	**PERFORMANCE REPORTING** (Six-monthly reports of indicators measuring the results against financial and non-financial performance, including performance indicators referred to in section 98 of the Act)	No reports. Reason for no reports: 31/12/2024 Not required under Act

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GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST
CONTINUED

	GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT ITEMS	ASSESSMENT
24	**ANNUAL REPORT** (Annual report under sections 98 and 99 of the Act containing a report of operations and audited financial and performance statements)	Annual report presented at a meeting of Council in accordance with section 100 of the Act. Date of presentation: 22/10/2024
25	**COUNCILLOR CODE OF CONDUCT** (Code setting out the standards of conduct to be followed by Councillors and other matters)	Code of conduct reviewed and adopted in accordance with section 139 of the Act. Date reviewed and adopted: 11/11/2024
26	**DELEGATIONS** (Documents setting out the powers, duties and functions of Council and the Chief Executive Officer that have been delegated to members of staff)	Delegations reviewed in accordance with section 11(7) of the Act. and a register kept in accordance with sections 11(8) and 47(7) of the Act. Date of review: S5 - Delegation to CEO - 28/01/2025 S6 - Council to Staff - 25/09/2024, 22/07/2025 S7 - Sub-delegation by CEO - 25/09/2024, 22/07/2025 S13 - CEO to Staff Members - 25/09/2024
27	**MEETING PROCEDURES** (Governance Rules governing the conduct of meetings of Council and delegated committees)	Governance Rules adopted in accordance with section 60 of the Act. Date rules adopted: 23/01/2024

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STATUTORY INFORMATION

The following information is provided in accordance with legislative and other requirements applying to Council.

DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION

In accordance with section 57 of the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act), Glenelg Shire Council must adopt and maintain a Public Transparency Policy. Council adopted a revised Public Transparency Policy on 28 January 2025

This Public Transparency Policy outlines that the Council will, at a minimum, have the following records available on the Council's website:

- Council meeting agendas;
- Reporting to Council;
- Minutes of Council meetings;
- Reporting from Advisory Committees to Council;
- Audit and Risk Committee Performance Reporting;
- Terms of Reference or Charters for Advisory Committees;
- Register of gifts, benefits and hospitality offered to Councillors or Council staff;
- Registers of travel undertaken by Councillors or Council staff;
- Registers of Conflict of Interest disclosed by Councillors or Council staff;
- Submissions made by Council;
- Register of donations and grants made by Council;
- Registers of leases entered into by Council, as lessor and lessee;
- Register of Delegations;
- Register of Authorised officers;
- Register of Election campaign donations.
- Summary of Personal Interests;
- Any other registers or records required by legislation or determined to be in the public interest.

The above documents are prepared in accordance with the Council's Public Transparency Policy and are updated and uploaded to the Council's website on a quarterly basis where appropriate.

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CONTRACTS

Council conducts strategic reviews for contracts greater that a value of $200,000 to determine:

- whether the service is still required
- the strategic approach for delivering and providing the service
- how the service aligns to Council's strategic objectives
- analysis of the supplier market
- the best procurement methodology and delivery.

Council issued 68 tenders in 2024-25, covering the following service categories:

- consultancy and other work
- capital and infrastructure works
- operational services
- technology

Council entered into one contract valued at $200,000 or more for goods or services without engaging in a competitive process.

- Provision of Software Systems to Glenelg Shire Council

From July 1, 2024 to 30 June 2025 Council entered into the following contracts valued at more than $200,000

- Glenelg Shire Road Resealing Program 2024/2025
- Kentinck Street Rehabilitation and Asphalt Works
- Essential Safety Measures Inspections and Works for Council Buildings
- Supply and Delivery of Bituminous Products
- Hire of Plant & Equipment to the Glenelg Shire Council
- Glenelg Shire Ridge Road (South) Rehabilitation Program 2024-2025
- Provision of Electric Line Clearance Service
- Collection of E-Waste from Glenelg Shire Transfer Stations
- Collection and Haulage of Tyres from Portland Transfer Station
- Supply & Delivery of One New Twin Engine Centre Broom Suction Street Sweeper
- 2024-2025 Glenelg Shire Road Rehabilitation Program - West Strathdownie Rd
- Glenelg Shire Data Migration Stage 2
- Thermal Loop Pipeline Replacement
- Glenelg Shire 2024/2025 Road Rehabilitation Program - Border Rd Lake Mundi
- Provision of Quarry Product Services to the Glenelg Shire Council
- Provision of Asphalt and Sealing Services to the Glenelg Shire Council
- Provision of Various Concreting Works to Glenelg Shire Council
- Provision of Pavement Marking Services to Glenelg Shire Council

STATUTORY INFORMATION

DISABILITY ACTION PLAN

In accordance with section 38 of the *Disability Act 2006* Council has integrated its Disability Action Plan into this Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and aims to achieve the following for people with disabilities:

- Reduce barriers to accessing goods, services and facilities
- Reduce barriers to employment
- Promote inclusion and participation in the community
- Achieve changes in attitudes and practices which may discriminate

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council prepared and adopted the Glenelg Shire Council Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 (endorsed 26 October 2021). The Plan is informed by the Victorian Health and Wellbeing Plan and is underpinned by the Glenelg Shire 2040 Community Plan and Vision.

DOMESTIC ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

In accordance with Section 68A of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, Council is required to prepare a Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) at four yearly intervals and evaluate its implementation in the Annual Report.

The DAMP identifies Council's direction with regard to domestic animal management, services and policies. Many of the items identified in the 2021-2025 Plan have been undertaken including low cost desexing program, continued management of Facebook page for the Glenelg Shire Animal Welfare Centre to ensure communications on services and information, review of dog controls and management across the Shire. Streamlining of internal processes to ensure continued responsible domestic animal ownership.

A review of the DAMP is required annually with updates submitted to the Secretary of the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources.

FOOD ACT MINISTERIAL DIRECTIONS

In accordance with Section 7E of the *Food Act 1984*, Council is required to publish a summary of any Ministerial Directions received during 2024-2025. No such Ministerial Directions were received by Council during the financial year.

PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE

The *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012* (Vic) provides protections for people who make discloses about improper conduct in the public sector. It also provides protection from detrimental action in reprisal, together with providing confidentiality of the content of disclosures and the identity of the persons whom make disclosures.

Council has adopted a Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblower) Procedures document. A copy can be downloaded from the Glenelg Shire website.

During the 2024-2025 year no disclosures were notified to council officers appointed to receive disclosures, or to the Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission (IBAC).

https://www.glenelg.vic.gov.au/Our-Council/Governance-Transparency-and-Accountability/Public-Interest-Disclosure-Procedures

There were no protected disclosures reported to Council during the period.

INFORMATION PRIVACY

The Glenelg Shire Council is committed to protecting people's right to privacy and the responsible and fair handling of personal information, consistent with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* and *Health Records Act 2001*. Our Privacy Policy was updated this period and sets out our requirements for the managing and handling of personal information and is available by request, or on Council's Website.

https://www.glenelg.vic.gov.au/Our-Council/Governance-Transparency-and-Accountability/Privacy

There were no privacy complaints received in 2024-2025.

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STATUTORY INFORMATION

ROAD MANAGEMENT ACT MINISTERIAL DIRECTION

In accordance with section 22 of the *Road Management Act 2004*, a Council must publish a summary of any Ministerial Direction in its Annual Report. No such Ministerial Directions were received by Council during the 2024-2025 financial year.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS

In accordance with sections 46GM and 46QM of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, a Council must, in its Annual Report, publish a report of any infrastructure or development contributions received during the year. No such contributions were received in the 2024-2025 financial year.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

The *Freedom of Information Act 1982* was created to promote openness, accountability and transparency in Victorian Government agencies by giving members of the public the right to access government information. The Act allows people to request access to documents created by Glenelg Shire and those supplied to Glenelg Shire by external organisations and individuals.

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FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACTIVITY DURING 1 JULY 2024 AND 30 JUNE 2025

During 2024-2025 Glenelg Shire's Freedom of Information (FOI) Officer responded to a total of eleven (11) Freedom of Information enquiries and processed five (5) valid requests under Freedom of Information legislation provisions. One (1) request reported as outstanding from the the previous reporting period (ie not finalised as at 30 June 2024) was finalised in the 2024/2025 reporting period.

Outcomes of 'Valid' Requests Outstanding from the Previous Outcomes of 'Valid' Requests Outstanding from the Previous Reporting Period: Reporting Period:

VALID REQUESTS	2023-2024
Access granted in part	1
TOTAL	**1**

Outcomes of 'Valid' Requests Outstanding from the Previous Reporting Period:

VALID REQUESTS	2024-2025
Access granted in full	0
Access granted in part	0
Access denied in full	2
Documents do not exist	0
Not yet finalised	3
TOTAL	**5**

Of the remaining requests in the current reporting period, the FOI Officer was able to satisfy two (2) applicants outside of the FOI process, prior to the formalisation of a valid FOI Request and four (4) of the requests lapsed.

Outcomes of other requests:

OTHER REQUESTS	2024-2025
Documents provided outside of the FOI process or request satisfied outside of FOI process	7
Request Lapsed (did not become valid)	3
Not yet finalised	1
TOTAL	**11**

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS REPORT

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INDEPENDENT AUDITORS REPORT

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GLENELG SHIRE

PORTLAND CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRE

71 Cliff Street, Portland

CASTERTON CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRE

67 Henty Street, Casterton

HEYWOOD CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRE

77 Edgar Street, Heywood

PO Box 152 Portland 3305

1300 GLENELG (1300 453 635)

enquiry@glenelg.vic.gov.au

www.glenelg.vic.gov.au

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OUR REF: MB:BJ
YOUR REF:

31 October 2025

Alistair Parker
Chief Executive Officer
VicGrid
Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Change

Sent by email: vicgrid@deeca.vic.gov.au

Dear Mr Parker

Re: Victorian Access Regime

Glenelg Shire Council (Council) welcomes the opportunity to provide this submission on the *Victorian Access Regime* (the Plan) as released by VicGrid for public consultation.

This submission is made to supplement and build upon previous submissions made by Council associated with renewable planning and development, including community benefits, elevating key strategic issues and priorities, along with specific comments on the Plan and renewable future in Glenelg Shire.

In this there are three documents for public feedback setting out how access and connections are proposed to be managed inside and out of renewable zones.

This submission will be divided into four sections of feedback on:

- General Comments
- Access and Connections Consultation Paper
- Draft Grid Impact Assessment Guidelines
- Draft Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines for Renewable Energy and Transmission Projects.

General Comments

Council has previously provided submissions in June 2025 and August 2024 regarding the Victorian Transmission Plan and Renewable Energy Zones (REZ). These submissions were made within the context of existing transmission infrastructure and industry, location, renewable resources (principally wind) and previous significant interest from the private sector in establishing a presence in the region.

Glenelg Shire also presents a major opportunity for large-scale utility battery storage given established transmission infrastructure and industry assets.

However, upon review, the latest mapped REZ, only incorporates a small section within the Northern area of Glenelg Shire, despite the evident opportunity for renewable

energy growth. In addition, the area as a key node within the National Electricity Market, with access to South Australia via the interconnector and 220kV line, and 500kV to the La Trobe Valley, which connects with Portland Aluminium.

This places Glenelg Shire in a position to significantly build upon and promote both renewable energy generation (onshore and offshore) and grid storage opportunities It is also well positioned to attract other forms of renewable investment such as solar, thermal, gas and potentially, wave energy, green hydrogen & biofuel production (from timber plantation waste).

Council holds concern for future projects now located outside of the REZ, which will now be required to undergo a full Grid Impact Assessment process.

In summary, Glenelg Shire hosts and expects further renewable projects outside of designated REZ boundaries. Without direct access to infrastructure risks potential for significant conflict and further local and community impacts. Further detailed comment is provided below on aspects Council would like to see in this process to help manage these matters.

Access and Connections Consultation Paper

In Glenelg Shire Council there will be uncertainty for almost all new developments in renewable energy, as almost every project will require a Grid Impact Assessment (GIA). This is due to the absence of REZ coverage in the municipality, despite extensive infrastructure as outlined in this and previous submissions.

With a GIA, the guidelines need to establish whether connection can be sought prior to any planning consent. Otherwise, new renewable energy projects simply wont proceed if there is no certainty that they could connect to the grid prior to seeking planning consents.

The market-based qualitative assessment for Criterion 1 that do not meet the Excessive Curtailment Test 1 requirement is considered essential, as it's not a realistic notion that worst case scenarios of generation will be achieved in the REZ over time.

Of further consideration in Criterion 1 is the capacity proposed in the REZ areas. Based on these areas and current calculations for electrical load, it is unclear whether any further capacity generation exists for projects outside of a REZ. Would the 'test 1' for a GIA fail every time with the 'worst case' already predicted for the corresponding REZ.

Council believes their needs to be capacity to allow for market to drive projects outside of the REZ. This is so that municipalities like Glenelg, that have extensive infrastructure in place can actually benefit from new projects, rather than have no realistic prospect if the REZ has already been designed to anticipated full capacity. The other conundrum for Council is the dichotomy which exists between the Victorian Transmission Plan (VTP) that forecast no generation outside a REZ, yet projects within Glenelg either have approval or are advancing through this process.

It is noted there is a separate process for battery energy storage systems (BESS). The paper outlines that these are meant to be encouraged with a modified assessment under criterion 1 but note there is no detail provided on this. Given the high level of interest within Glenelg Shire for these types of projects, including the recent planning

approval for a large-scale BESS in Portland, the provision of the detail is important in order to encourage future investment of these.

In considering the timeframe permitted when assessing GIA's, whilst Council supports a rigorous process, it believes there is also a need for timely decision making. Council considers 100 business days, or over 5 months to be excessive and that efficiencies need to be achieved to provide confidence for project proponents.

Draft Grid Impact Assessment Guidelines

Council supports the intent of the GIA guidelines to ensure renewable generation and storage projects are rigorously assessed for their community impacts, particularly where located outside a REZ, before being granted with grid access.

Community engagement programs should also be factored into early project planning and not wait until after a planning approval when formalising this, when community engagement has already been undertaken. There is a need to avoid a two-stage, disconnected process.

Council plays a key and central role in planning, community engagement and development of projects – this must be recognised and embedded in the GIA process. The guidelines are currently quite vague mentioning 'Communities, Landholders and Traditional Owners' but not specifically Council. The guidelines need to recognise Council's role where:

- Councils should be identified as a key stakeholder in the GIA process, and therefore be consulted with, and informed of GIA applications.
- There is opportunity for the development of a standard protocol for this following release of the guidelines.

Integration with Planning Process

As identified, there needs to be clarification around the GIA and planning consent process. On one hand a project proponent will need certainty on connecting to the grid prior to investing into a planning process. Yet at the same time there needs alignment to ensure consistency.

In summary Council have several key recommendations for the GIA process for consideration:

- The GIA process needs to be aligned with planning and environmental approval to ensure consistency and avoid speculative projects which may lead to significant community impact where the project may have no opportunity for grid access.
- GIA approvals need to be aligned with community engagement and planning processes, where early project scoping and a planning application usually involves major community engagement and consultation.
- GIA submissions must be embedded with minimum community engagement standards.
- Proponents need to be able to demonstrate community and project benefits aligned with the Glenelg Shire Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025, along with any advocacy and strategic local priorities.

- GIA should include the public disclosure of community engagement and benefits plans.
- Promote the opportunity for the establishing of a local community benefits fund with appropriate governance.
- GIA process should introduce mandatory local content and employment targets based on project type and scale.

The guidelines already include some direction towards these recommendations listed above which is supported.

Draft Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines for Renewable Energy and Transmission Projects

Council supports the equal treatment of projects located outside of a REZ in achieving a high standard approach in community engagement and social value.

It is also strongly supported that local governments (councils) are identified and reinforced as a core partner in the planning and community engagement process. Councils need to have a central role in the planning and development of community engagement and benefits programs, which align with strategic local and regional priorities.

The following detailed feedback is provided for consideration:

- Grid access and project development must be conditional upon community and social performance. This should include a monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanism to hold project developers accountable.
- Councils must be identified and reinforced as a core partner in the planning and community engagement process, with this role upgraded to a 'minimum requirement' for early, ongoing and resourced engagement.
- Local industry, workforce and social values should be measured and monitored.
- Community benefits programs need to be targeted to the community directly affected and the council area and not be absorbed through a community benefits fund which directs funding away from impacted communities or outside of Council areas they are located within.
- Road and infrastructure contributions are not community benefits, and the plan must clearly identify that these are minimum requirements for a project to proceed.
- Community benefit planning needs to be balanced around economic, environmental and social factors with Councils having the ability to play a key role in benefits and funding allocation.
- The dispersal of community benefits funding should also have strong governance and funding contributions should be aligned with State, regional and local policy direction and priorities.

We trust this submission will be given due consideration in planning and preparation of the 2025 Victorian Access Regime.

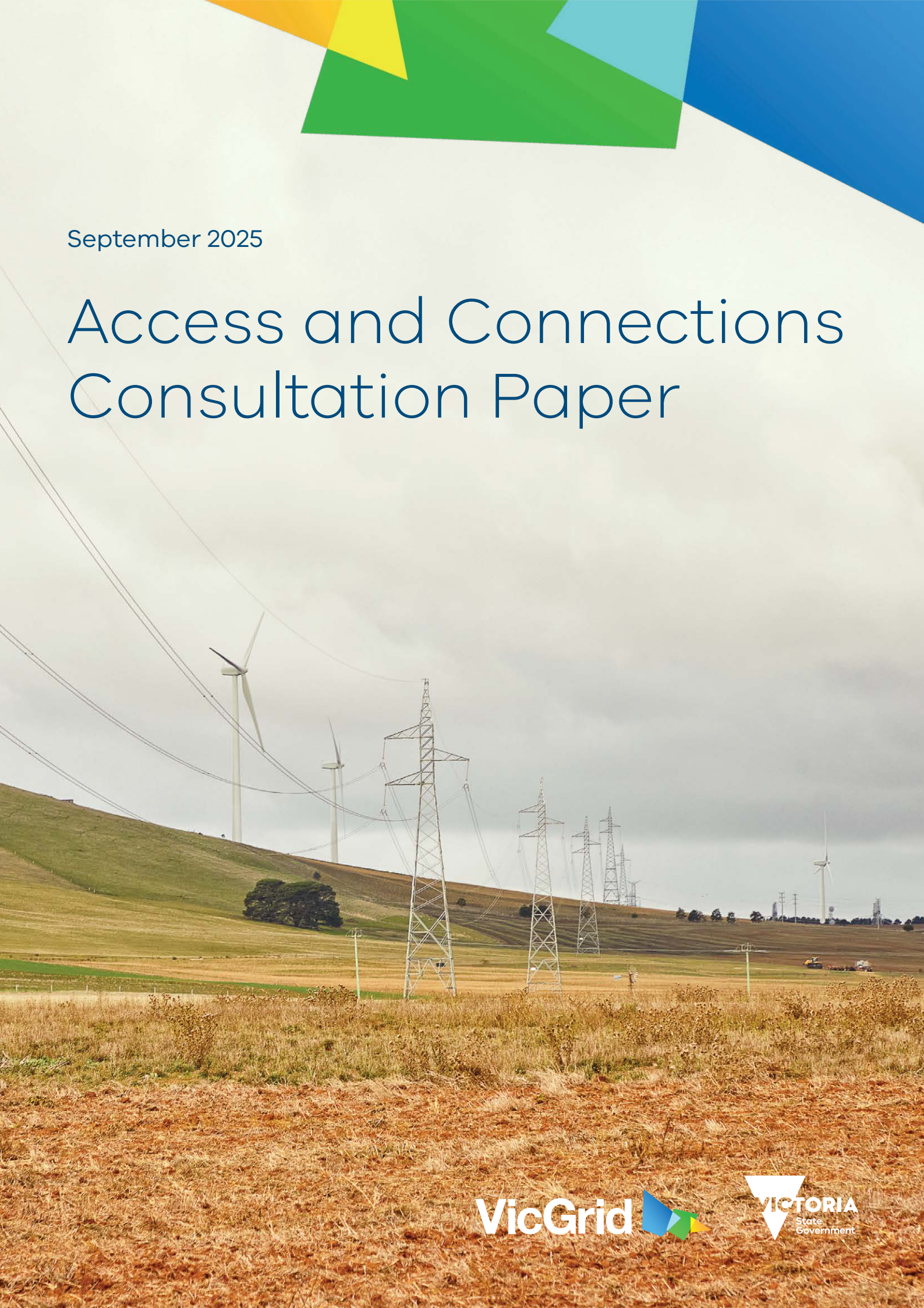
Please contact Brett Jackson, Director Community Services, on 5522 2335 or by email bjackson@glenelg.vic.gov.au on should you have any questions or require further information.

Yours faithfully

Cr Karen Stephens
Mayor

September 2025

Access and Connections Consultation Paper



VicGrid

VICTORIA State Government

Disclaimer

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While VicGrid and the State of Victoria have made reasonable efforts to ensure the accuracy or completeness of information in this publication, strictly for the purposes of consultation, neither VicGrid nor the State of Victoria or its employees guarantee that the publication is without flaw of any kind or is appropriate for your particular purposes. This document sets out VicGrid's proposed approach and parameters in relation to new transmission network access arrangements. No guarantee is given that actual curtailment, generation, or other operational outcomes will match those forecast, planned or otherwise set out in this document. Outcomes may vary due to operational requirements, system conditions, market factors, environmental conditions, or other circumstances. The document may also include information obtained from other government or non-government entities which neither VicGrid nor the State of Victoria endorse or guarantee for its currency, accuracy or completeness. To the extent permitted by law, VicGrid and the State of Victoria disclaim all liability for any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from you relying on any written or implied information or representations in this publication.

This document does not include all of the information that a participant or potential participant in the National Electricity Market might require, and does not amount to a recommendation of any investment.

Anyone proposing to utilise this publication (which may include information and forecasts from third parties) should:

- note that there may be material differences between estimated and actual results or outcomes, as well as between this draft and final publication of the access and connections arrangements and the Grid Impact Assessment Guidelines;
- note that information in this document is based on certain assumptions and may be subject to change;
- independently verify its accuracy, completeness and suitability for their intended purpose, and obtain independent and specific advice from suitably qualified experts.

Acknowledgment of Traditional Owners

We acknowledge and respect Victoria's Traditional Owners as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and deep spiritual connection to it. We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of culture and traditional practices.

We are committed to genuinely partnering and meaningfully engaging with Victoria's Traditional Owners and First Peoples to support the protection of Country, the maintenance of spiritual and cultural practices and their broader aspirations in the 21st century and beyond.

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Explanatory note and consultation notice

VicGrid has released the Victorian Transmission Plan, which has identified the location of proposed renewable energy zones (REZs) across the state of Victoria. This paper discusses the design of how access and connections to the declared shared network (DSN) will be managed inside and outside these REZs. The paper is designed to support public consultation as we work towards finalising the new Victorian Access Regime. We are undertaking consultation to ensure the proposed access and connections design is fit-for-purpose and achieves its aims of supporting project development within REZs and minimising impacts on Victorian communities.

We are inviting feedback via written submissions on the issues identified in this consultation paper and the draft Grid Impact Assessment (GIA) Guidelines to ensure the new access and connections arrangements are designed in a way that meets the Victorian Access Regime objectives.

Questions appear in each section to prompt industry thinking and feedback. For a full list of consultation questions, see page 12. A separate community summary has been developed, which sets out questions for landholders, Traditional Owners and communities.

How to participate in this consultation



We invite written submissions from interested persons on the issues identified in this consultation paper and the draft GIA Guidelines. To take part in the consultation:

- upload a submission via Engage Victoria at **engage.vic.gov.au/victorian-access-regime**
- email a submission to **vicgrid@deeca.vic.gov.au**
- send a written submission to **VicGrid, PO Box 500, East Melbourne VIC 8002.**

Submissions close at 11:59pm (AEDT) on Wednesday 5 November 2025.

Before making a submission, please read and take note of VicGrid's privacy collection statement at **engage.vic.gov.au/victorian-access-regime**

For information about the Victorian Access Regime, read the June 2024 public paper and an accompanying factsheet at **energy.vic.gov.au/renewable-energy/vicgrid/for-businesses-and-developers.**

For information on the GIA, read the draft GIA Guidelines released alongside this paper at **engage.vic.gov.au/victorian-access-regime**

Please note, all submissions will be treated as public documents and will be published online unless clearly identified as being confidential. To promote transparency in VicGrid's development of highly significant reforms, confidential submissions will not be given as much weight as those that are published. Submissions are encouraged to be made on a publicly available basis. Submissions received after the closing date and time will not be valid, and VicGrid is not obliged to consider them.



Executive summary

VicGrid is introducing new network access arrangements to better facilitate the development of renewable energy generation and storage projects in Victoria.

We are giving projects a clear pathway to access the grid, reducing the risk of excessive network curtailment and supporting efficient and coordinated investment. We are also setting clear expectations for how developers engage with and create value for communities, Traditional Owners and landholders.

We know this is a big change to how access and connections have worked in Victoria. We are inviting feedback to ensure that the new regime will foster investor and community confidence and facilitate timely project delivery. The paper outlines our current positions on key elements of the Victorian Access Regime and includes questions throughout for your feedback.

Victoria's energy system is changing rapidly. Coal-fired power stations are becoming unreliable and closing down. At the same time, electricity demand is increasing. Victoria requires a significant amount of new renewable energy generation and storage capacity, supported by upgrades to the transmission network, to replace coal and meet local energy needs.

Currently, developers seeking to connect a new energy project, such as wind, solar and large-scale batteries, to Victoria's transmission network, known as the declared shared network (DSN), apply under the National Energy Market (NEM) 'open' access regime. VicGrid has heard from the market that the current open access regime creates a number of challenges, including unclear locational investment signals and significant risks of project network curtailment. We have also heard from landholders, communities and Traditional Owners that the current regime results in uncoordinated renewable energy development, which has a range of impacts on local communities. We are working to address these challenges, while building a transmission network that meets the future needs of Victoria.

To support a smooth transition to renewables, the Victorian Government is introducing the Victorian Transmission Investment Framework (VTIF), including comprehensive reforms that change the way transmission infrastructure and renewable energy generation are planned in the state.
These include:

- a new Victorian Access Regime with objectives of supporting new investment in renewable energy zones (REZs), improving coordination, promoting community acceptance and ensuring compatibility with national reforms (see June 2024 public paper)
- a new long-term strategic plan for transmission development called the Victorian Transmission Plan (VTP), which outlines proposed REZs and required transmission infrastructure.

Together, the VTIF reforms provide a pathway to coordinate generation and transmission investment through the establishment of REZs as the most suitable areas for renewable energy generation and storage development. REZs will provide clear locational signals to industry, with corresponding transmission upgrades planned to unlock new network capacity and support investment. REZs will also deliver new benefits for local communities and make clear the limits on the amount of renewable energy that can be developed. Under the new access regime, developers in REZs will have greater certainty on network curtailment risk and clearer expectations for how they engage with and create value for communities, Traditional Owners and landholders.

The 2 key features of the new Victorian Access Regime are:

- **REZ access schemes**[1] that will govern access for eligible renewable energy generation, energy storage systems (storage) and hybrid projects inside REZs
- **A Grid Impact Assessment (GIA)** that will govern access for proposed generation, storage and hybrid projects outside REZs, and technologies that are not specified in REZ access schemes inside REZs.

The next step is to design the details of the REZ access schemes and the GIA, so they achieve their stated objectives to support investment in REZs, improve coordination, promote community acceptance and support compatibility with national reforms. We want to give developers in Victoria a clear pathway for obtaining grid access within their development timelines and greater confidence they can supply their energy into the market. Ultimately, we aim to provide long-term certainty on the pathway forward for developing renewable energy generation, storage, and transmission assets in a coordinated manner.

[1] This is referred to as a REZ scheme in the National Electricity (Victoria) Amendment (VicGrid Stage 2 Reform) Bill 2025.



Designing a new access regime to provide long-term certainty and locational signals

We are committed to fostering an investment-ready environment to meet Victoria's energy targets. As such, we are introducing a capacity-based access regime that is responsive to the market. REZ access schemes will place a cap on connections (known as an access limit) within each declared REZ, and will work together with the GIA to reduce the risk of excessive network curtailment in REZs.

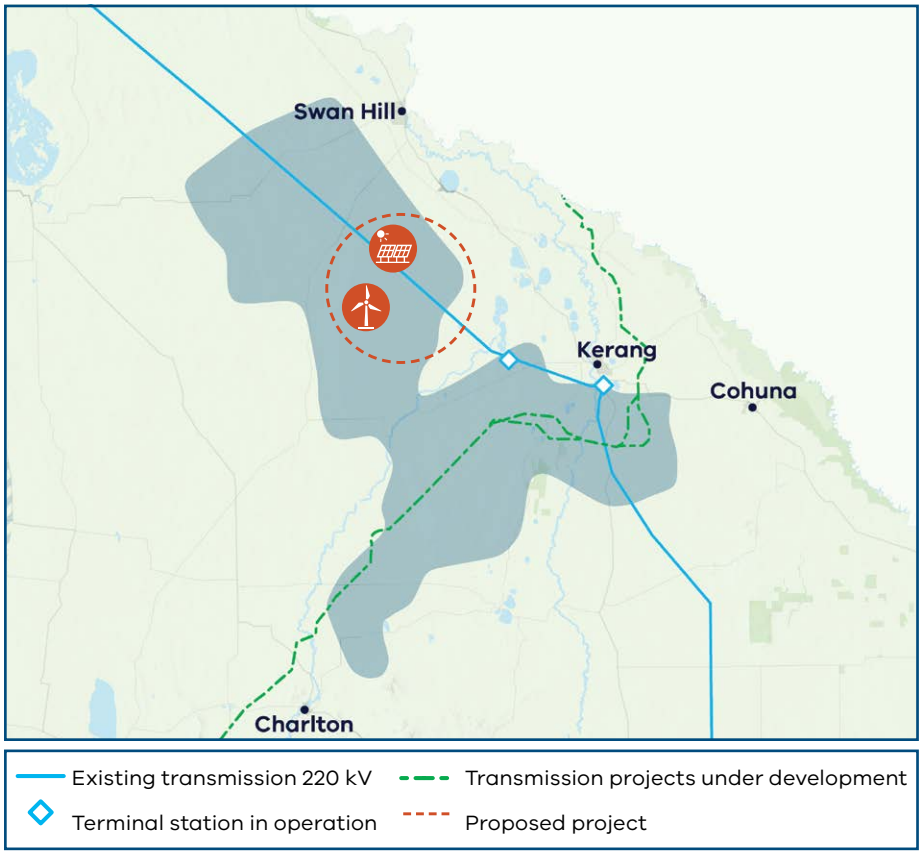
Under the new regime, a developer seeking to connect any new energy project to Victoria's transmission network will need to apply for access. The process to gain access will depend on whether the project is eligible to apply under a REZ access scheme or the GIA:

- Eligible projects inside a declared REZ will be required to apply for a **REZ scheme authority** before they can receive an offer to connect, under a competitive application process.
- Projects outside of a declared REZ (or not covered by the REZ access scheme) will be required to apply for a **grid impact authority** before they can receive an offer to connect. The GIA involves a network curtailment test.

Both application processes will operate in parallel with the current connections process to ensure project development critical path timelines are not negatively impacted. All projects under both processes will need to demonstrate they are meeting Victorian Government expectations for engaging with and creating value for communities, Traditional Owners and landholders. Figure 1 shows when a project is eligible to apply for a REZ scheme authority.



Figure 1 - REZ scheme authority project eligibility



- ✓ The REZ has been declared
- ✓ The REZ access scheme has been declared
- ✓ The project technology type (e.g. wind, solar) is specified in the REZ access scheme
- ✓ At least half of the geographic footprint of the project is within the boundary of the REZ
- ✓ The capacity of the REZ has not already been allocated

Under a REZ access scheme

If a developer has an eligible project under a REZ access scheme they will be required to apply for a REZ scheme authority via a competitive application process.

We expect all REZs proposed in the 2025 VTP will be declared concurrently, allowing developers to consider which REZ(s) to apply to. Each REZ access scheme will set out access limits, access allocation process, access fees and access conditions.

Access limits place a cap on how much renewable energy capacity can connect in a REZ over time. We propose access limits be based on the hosting capacity of the transmission network as planned in the 2025 VTP, over a 15-year horizon (2025-2040). That is, the maximum amount of generation capacity that can be connected within the REZ, without violating technical constraints or surpassing efficient levels of network curtailment forecast for the REZ.

Access limits will be estimated and provided in the REZ access schemes for declaration by the Minister. However, preliminary modelling indicates access limits will be higher than the modelled generation capacity in the 2025 VTP. This is because our proposed approach sets access limits based on the planned transmission network hosting capacity, not the modelled generation capacity, in the 2025 VTP.

Aligning access limits with the planned transmission hosting capacity allows the market to respond to supply and demand signals and identify where transmission capacity can be most effectively and efficiently utilised across Victoria. This is important to ensure reliable, secure and affordable energy supply in an evolving market.

It is proposed that the competitive **access allocation process** will formally commence with a request for proposal (RFP) that will document the scope and requirements applicants must respond to.

The access allocation process will allow for applications up to the access limit for each REZ over a 10-year period (2025-2035). However, this does not mean access will be allocated up to the access limit for each REZ.

We propose to balance a range of factors to determine the amount of access allocated in each REZ, including market interest, modelled generation and storage capacity in the VTP, and density of development. We will also carefully assess each application against a range of eligibility and merit criteria. This includes:

- meeting government expectations for community, landholder and Traditional Owners engagement and providing meaningful social value and economic benefits
- delivery capacity and capability of the applicant
- commercial and technical readiness of the proposed project
- contribution to meeting the Victorian Access Regime and VTP objectives.

Under this approach, the amount of access allocated in each REZ will be known once the competitive application process is complete, which is expected in mid-late 2026. Any future access allocations after this point would be subject to a periodic assessment, with the first assessment proposed to take place with the 2027 VTP.

If a developer's application is successful, we will issue a REZ scheme authority, which will be subject to **conditions** tailored to the specific characteristics of the project, for example milestone dates.

REZ scheme fees will also apply to applicants (in addition to connection charges) and will be used to cover the cost of administering the relevant REZ access scheme, REZ Community Energy Funds and Traditional Owners Fund. More information about REZ scheme fees will be published later in 2025.

Outside a REZ access scheme

If a developer has a project outside a REZ access scheme they will be required to submit a GIA application. If successful, a grid impact authority will be issued, subject to conditions tailored to the specific characteristics of the project, for example milestone dates.

Under the proposed methodology for the GIA set out in the draft GIA Guidelines, when considering GIA applications, VicGrid will look at the following:

1. **Criterion 1:** Whether the proposed connection is unlikely to result in excessive network curtailment of existing and planned REZ scheme generators in Victoria. This criterion will be assessed using a 2-test approach, where GIA applicants can choose which test to undertake (or both). The steady-state test uses worst case boundary conditions specified by VicGrid and informed by the VTP. The market-based test provides a detailed quantification of the forecast impact of the GIA applicant on the network (with a threshold for excessive network curtailment proposed in the draft GIA Guidelines).
2. **Criterion 2:** Whether the GIA applicant meets government expectations for community, landholder and Traditional Owner engagement, and provides meaningful social value and economic benefits.

Note, excessive network curtailment is defined as a proportional increase in network curtailment above the efficient network curtailment forecast per REZ, as set out with access limits in the REZ access scheme. For most cases, we propose to set the threshold for proportional increase at 20% increase above the efficient network curtailment forecast for a REZ. For example, if the efficient network curtailment forecast for a REZ was 2%, then the threshold would be 2.4%.

Stand-alone storage projects are required to submit a GIA application if they are located outside a REZ, or not specified as an eligible technology within a REZ access scheme. Because they can alleviate congestion and increase the hosting capacity of the transmission network, we propose stand-alone storage will be subject to a modified criterion 1 assessment, to demonstrate it will operate in a manner which does not exacerbate congestion in REZs.

GIA applicants who do not pass the GIA will not be issued a grid impact authority and we will provide a statement of reasons with our decision. These applicants will not be able to receive an offer to connect but are able to reapply for the GIA.

Ensuring a timely commencement of the new access regime

The new regime is expected to come into effect in mid-March 2026, following the anticipated declaration of REZs. From this point, the GIA will commence for issuing grid impact authorities, REZ access schemes will be declared and the process for issuing REZ scheme authorities will commence.

Facilitating a smooth and fair transition to the new access regime

There is a strong pipeline of projects in development in Victoria, and we are currently reviewing the arrangements for transitioning to the new regime. We want to **ensure projects in advanced development can continue to connect without disruption to their critical path timelines** when we implement the new reforms. This enables a fair transition that minimises impacts of the change for projects in advanced development. Importantly:

- projects that are **connected** or operational before the commencement of the regime will not be required to apply for a REZ scheme authority or grid impact authority
- projects in receipt of an **offer to connect**, or acceptance of a submission to alter an existing facility, from Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) or VicGrid before commencement of the regime will not be required to apply for a REZ scheme authority or grid impact authority in order to connect.

In addition, we are developing transitional arrangements that provide a streamlined access application process (both inside and outside of REZs) for projects that are at advanced stages of development, and projects that have received specific government support under an assessment process. This process will provide early certainty about which projects are eligible to submit a streamlined application by the date the GIA and REZ access scheme application processes commence. To inform an effective design of the process, we plan to engage with all current project developers to seek credible information on their project timelines.

The transitional arrangements are intended to provide fairness and certainty to eligible projects, and to protect against delays to project delivery programs, while also seeking that these projects align with the Victorian Government's expectations on engagement, social value and economic benefits.

The introduction of the Victorian Access Regime has different implications depending on whether projects are under a REZ access scheme or subject to the GIA.

For **projects outside a REZ access scheme** where the GIA would apply, transitional arrangements may be needed for projects in advanced stages of development to give confidence they are able to proceed, given the new excessive network curtailment assessment criterion. As such, a lower threshold for eligibility is appropriate. The specific eligibility criteria are currently under review, as we are considering different combinations of indicators, including:

- planning permit received (i.e. obtained all relevant environmental, planning and licensing approvals from relevant authorities)
- project is well advanced in planning approvals, for example Environment Effects Statement (EES) on exhibition
- connection application submitted
- alignment with generation technologies modelled in the 2025 VTP, for example prioritising wind projects for transitional arrangements.

For **projects under a REZ access scheme** there is the opportunity to obtain access under the competitive access allocation process, meaning every project potentially has a pathway to gain access. However, the outcomes of this process would not be known until mid-late 2026, so projects that have planned to execute connection agreements (or equivalent contracting-stage milestone) prior to that time would need transitional arrangements in order to avoid delays to project delivery. The specific eligibility criteria are currently under review, but we are considering criteria that focus on identifying the projects for which there is a genuine risk of delay if they are required to wait for the access allocation process to conclude before proceeding into delivery.

For projects that are successful in either the May or November 2024 **Capacity Investment Scheme (CIS)** tenders, transitional arrangements will also apply, whether they are inside or outside a REZ.

Ultimately, we need to ensure a balanced pipeline of wind, solar and storage projects, and we recognise development timelines and milestones can differ by technology type. As such, we are considering technology-specific indicators, including for wind and wind hybrid projects in earlier stages of development, particularly those located outside of the proposed REZs.

How will the new regime apply to offshore wind projects?

The 2025 VTP includes the Gippsland Shoreline REZ, which is designed to support offshore wind development in the region and ensure the first 2 GW of offshore wind projects that are successful in the Victorian Government's offshore wind auction can access the transmission network in Gippsland via a REZ access scheme. We propose transitional arrangements will apply to offshore wind projects successful in the auction to ensure they can access the grid at their nameplate capacity without duplicating assessment requirements.

How will projects connect in REZs?

We are committed to the efficient and coordinated development of network infrastructure and to minimising impacts on landholders, communities and Traditional Owners. Consequently, we will play a role in collaborating and working with connection applicants located inside REZs to identify and determine how projects will connect into the network, either at an existing terminal station or through the development of a new terminal station or other connection infrastructure (connection hub options). We propose to develop a REZ Infrastructure Plan to establish connection hub options and determine the preferred connection infrastructure arrangements in each REZ. The REZ access schemes will use this process to provide guidance for developers seeking to apply for access in the relevant REZ. Once access is granted, we will work with developers to ensure a coordinated approach to transmission connections within REZs that limits community and environmental impacts and keeps costs low.

Taking a consultative approach to designing the new access regime

We want your input to help design and shape the transmission network access arrangements to ensure the new regime fosters investor and community confidence and supports effective project development in Victoria. We are seeking feedback on this consultation paper from all stakeholders, industry, communities, landholders and Traditional Owners. We want to ensure the additional processes being introduced are well designed and provide the intended benefits we are aiming to achieve.

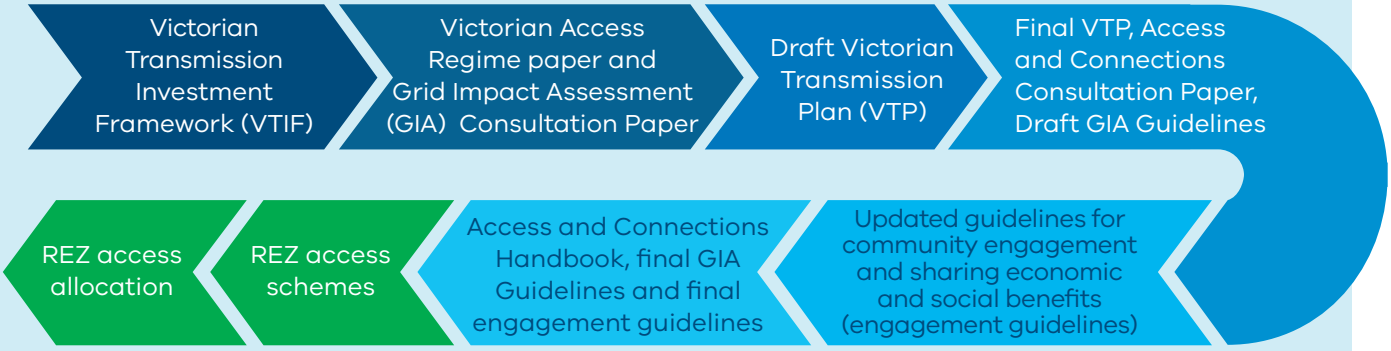
We recognise we are only part-way through the detailed design process, and do not have all the answers yet. Consistent with VicGrid's commitment to engaging stakeholders and rights holders throughout the VTIF reform process, we are dedicated to collaborating closely at every stage. We value your input and seek specific feedback on the access regime and coordinated development of connection assets to help shape the design.

Questions for industry appear throughout this document to prompt thinking and feedback on this consultation paper. We equally want to hear from local communities, landholders and Traditional Owners and have developed a separate community summary, which simplifies the technical content and sets out specific community-focused questions **engage.vic.gov.au/victorian-access-regime**

Your feedback will help inform subsequent VicGrid access and connections publications, including the Access and Connections Handbook and final GIA Guidelines, as well as individual draft REZ access schemes.

Framework and timeline for access and connections publications







Access and Connections Consultation Paper

We are seeking feedback on this consultation paper from all stakeholders, industry, communities, landholders and Traditional Owners. We want to ensure the new arrangements for access and connections to the grid inside and outside Victoria's REZs are effective in achieving their objectives, including fostering investor and community confidence.

Draft GIA Guidelines

We are seeking feedback on the draft GIA Guidelines, which detail the process and assessment criteria to apply for access to the grid, for projects located outside of Victoria's REZs (and outside eligible technology types specified in REZ access schemes).

Updated guidelines for community engagement and sharing economic and social benefits

The access and connections documents refer to Victorian Government expectations on community engagement and sharing economic and social benefits, as set out in updated guidelines for community engagement and sharing economic and social benefits. We have released draft Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines for feedback alongside this consultation paper. Once finalised, these guidelines will set out the government's current expectations for how energy project developers engage with and create value for communities, Traditional Owners and landholders. The guidelines will set the benchmark for our assessment of access applications by project developers under the GIA and REZ access schemes. We are inviting feedback on the draft from industry, landholders, Traditional Owners and communities.

Timeline for release of key consultation and policy documents

Quarter 1 2025

Grid Impact Assessment Consultation Paper

We invited feedback about the proposed criteria and conceptual design of the Grid Impact Assessment (GIA).

We heard feedback about the scope of the assessment, the proposed criteria, suggestions for new criteria, the application process and transitional arrangements.

Feedback shaped the draft Grid Impact Assessment Guidelines and Access and Connections Consultation Paper.

Quarter 3 2025

Access and Connections Consultation Paper

Draft Grid Impact Assessment Guidelines

Draft guidelines for community engagement and sharing economic and social benefits (engagement guidelines)

We are inviting feedback on:

- proposed criteria and conceptual design for renewable energy zone access, including transitional arrangements
- detailed design of the GIA
- community engagement and benefits expectations that will set the benchmark for assessing access applications

Quarter 4 2025

Access and Connections Handbook

Grid Impact Assessment Guidelines

Engagement guidelines

We will respond to feedback and provide information on:

- detailed design of the renewable energy zone (REZ) access process, including timeframes and transitional arrangements
- detailed design of the GIA process, including timeframes, indicative fees and conditions – these will be binding guidelines
- expectations for how project developers engage with and deliver social value and economic benefits to communities, landholders and Traditional Owners.

Draft REZ Orders

Draft REZ access schemes

We will invite feedback on:

- draft REZ Orders
- draft REZ access schemes, setting out proposed:
  - access limits
  - access allocation and application process
  - eligible technologies
  - conditions.

Quarter 1 2026

Declared REZ Orders

Declared REZ access schemes

We will respond to feedback and provide information on:

REZ access schemes declared concurrently – will set out proposed:

- access limits
- access allocation and application process
- eligible technologies
- conditions and REZ scheme authority template
- REZ scheme fees (in REZ access schemes or published on the VicGrid website)

GIA

- Fees
- Application form(s) and data pack
- Grid impact authority template

Victorian Access Regime will commence, and we will confirm eligible projects for transitional arrangements.

Summary of questions considered in this paper

As noted above, we want your input to help design and shape the network access arrangements to ensure the new regime fosters investor and community confidence and supports effective project development in Victoria. We have included the following questions throughout the sections of this paper to prompt thinking and feedback.

Please note these questions are industry-focused. Landholder-, community- and Traditional Owner-focused questions are provided in the community booklet that accompanies this paper. We are also seeking to partner with Traditional Owners through separate and ongoing consultation on the approach to their participation in the new access arrangements.

Access and connections

- How should the proposed transitional arrangements, including the eligibility criteria, be defined to address the level of certainty for projects in development?
- Does the proposed approach for setting access limits within a REZ provide sufficient certainty to invest inside a declared REZ?
- How should new and different renewable energy technologies be included and considered within REZ access schemes?
- How should the access allocation approach respond to changes in market conditions and attrition of eligible projects over time?
- What preparatory information on the REZ and the REZ access allocation process would be necessary prior to the release of a RFP?
- Are there any considerations in developing REZ scheme authority conditions which should be taken into account to provide value to developers and/or investors?
- How should stand-alone or hybrid storage projects be treated within REZs, and how does this decision influence the investment case for renewable energy projects?
- How could storage be operationally managed within a REZ to support renewable energy generation?
- How should the development of connection hubs and connection assets be coordinated between developers to create value and improve overall efficiency?
- What key features or mechanisms would be needed for VicGrid to develop an efficient and effective complaints and issue system for REZ scheme authorities and grid impact authorities?

Grid Impact Assessment

- Does the proposed approach to the GIA and assessment of network curtailment provide sufficient value to developers and investors within a REZ?
- Do the GIA guidelines provide enough certainty and clarity to developers and investors outside a REZ?

1. Introduction

This consultation paper is structured as follows:

Section 1: Introduction to the Victorian Access Regime and VicGrid's role in access and connections

Section 2: Implementation and application of transitional arrangements

Section 3: Access arrangements under REZ access schemes

Section 4: Access arrangements under the Grid Impact Assessment (GIA)

Section 5: Connecting to the transmission network, including how VicGrid proposes to manage and coordinate connections in REZs

1.1 Purpose

This Access and Connections Consultation Paper provides an overview of the new access and connections arrangements under the Victorian Access Regime, and our proposed approach to managing and coordinating connections in REZs. It also provides consultation topics for input.

1.2 Context

Victoria's energy system is changing. Coal-fired power stations are retiring, and Victoria requires a significant amount of new renewable energy generation and storage capacity to replace coal and meet local energy needs.

To support a smooth transition to renewables, the Victorian Government is implementing the Victorian Transmission Investment Framework (VTIF), which has been in development since 2022. The VTIF introduces comprehensive reforms that change the way transmission infrastructure and renewable energy generation is planned in the state.
The VTIF includes:

- a new long-term strategic plan for transmission development called the Victorian Transmission Plan (VTP)
- new benefits arrangements for landholders, Traditional Owners and communities
- a new Victorian Access Regime.

VicGrid is the Victorian Government agency responsible for implementing these reforms and overseeing the planning and development of the new REZs and transmission infrastructure. In doing so, we are seeking to address challenges experienced under the current open access regime operating in the National Energy Market (NEM), including unclear locational investment signals and significant risks of project curtailment. See Attachment 1 for more information on challenges associated with the current open access regime and how VicGrid seeks to address them through the VTIF reforms.

Victorian Access Regime

The Victorian Access Regime introduces new requirements to manage how generation and energy storage system (storage) projects access Victoria's electricity transmission network, also called the declared shared network (DSN), inside and outside REZs. It is designed to coordinate generation, storage and transmission assets, reduce the risk of excessive network curtailment in REZs, and ensure projects engage with and create value for communities, Traditional Owners and landholders in accordance with government expectations.

The Victorian Access Regime will set an important foundation for attracting investment and improving coordination in Victoria's REZs. It will give renewable energy generators and investors in REZs greater confidence they can supply their energy to the market, and provide certainty on the pathway forward for developing renewable energy generation, storage, and transmission assets in a coordinated way that fosters effective community engagement. It will also give communities, landholders and Traditional Owners confidence in REZs as the areas most suitable to host new generation and storage facilities, and in the engagement and benefits expected from developers in Victoria.

The Victorian Access Regime is the result of the VTIF consultation process from 2022-2024. In June 2024, we published a Victorian Access Regime paper, which described key aspects of the regime and clarified its ability to integrate with national reforms if they are ultimately adopted. It also described the objectives of the Victorian Access Regime, which are set out in Figure 2. These follow from the overarching **Victorian transmission planning objective** to promote the efficient investment in, and efficient operation and use of, electricity services for the long-term interests of electricity consumers.[2] This means ensuring electricity is provided reliably, securely and affordably to homes and businesses across Victoria.

In 2025 we released a Grid Impact Assessment (GIA) consultation paper, which noted the GIA was being designed to safeguard projects inside a REZ from excessive network curtailment, which increases incrementally as new generation is added to the DSN.

Recently, the 2025 VTP was released, following public consultation on a draft. The 2025 VTP outlines Victoria's renewable energy generation, proposed renewable energy zones (REZs), and the transmission infrastructure needed in Victoria to support a smooth energy transition over the next 15 years.

We are now seeking feedback on the detailed design of the Victorian Access Regime, which will manage how capacity in the DSN is taken up by new generation and storage to reduce the risk of excessive network curtailment in REZs. We recognise we are just part-way through the detailed design process, and do not have all the answers yet. Consistent with VicGrid's commitment to engaging stakeholders and rights holders throughout the VTIF reform process, we are dedicated to collaborating closely at every stage. We value your input and seek specific feedback on the access regime and coordinated development of connection assets to help shape the design.

Note, the Victorian Access Regime is a 'physical' access regime focused on connections to the DSN inside and outside of declared REZs. It does not provide fully firm access, nor financial compensation for curtailment.

Figure 2 - Objectives of the Victorian Access Regime



Support new investment

Attracting new renewable energy investment into Victorian REZs by reducing future transmission curtailment risk.

Improve coordination

Improving coordination between generation and network development – providing a system that works better than the National Electricity Market's open access regime.

Promote community acceptance

Support community acceptance of energy networks and generation investments that are feasible to implement and do not introduce undue complexity.

Compatible with national reforms

The access regime should operate in conjunction with, or independently of, national access and pricing reform measures, and be able to transition to the national framework.

[2] See *National Electricity (Victoria) Act 2005*, section 56(1).

1.3 VicGrid's role in access and connections

Connections

The responsibility for planning Victoria's DSN, and the declared network functions currently performed by the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO), are transferring to VicGrid from AEMO. This will end AEMO's Victorian transmission network service provider role.

We are taking a carefully considered approach in close consultation with AEMO to enable an orderly transfer of responsibilities.

As part of this transfer, VicGrid will become responsible for managing connections to the DSN across Victoria inside and outside REZs.

Access

We will also be responsible for coordinating the planning and development of Victoria's REZs and transmission infrastructure to support the transition to renewable energy. As the GIA commences and REZ access schemes are declared, our role and responsibilities within the REZs and across Victoria will continue to evolve.

We will have a central role in strategic planning, coordination and collaboration across REZs. This approach aims to deliver value to developers within REZs by protecting them from excessive network curtailment while providing clear opportunities and expectations for engaging communities, Traditional Owners, landholders and neighbours.

Our responsibilities will include:

- administering the Victorian Access Regime
- managing connections to the DSN, once AEMO's declared network functions transfer to VicGrid
- coordinating connection assets of developers within REZs to minimise the potential 'spaghetti effect' of multiple powerlines crossing the landscape within REZs
- being the source of impartial and transparent information within REZs, including issues raised by community members, landholders, Traditional Owners and other stakeholders
- monitoring compliance with REZ scheme authorities and grid impact authorities, with the ability to revoke these authorities in instances of non-compliance.



2. The Victorian Access Regime

The new Victorian Access Regime is a 'physical' access regime that introduces new controls on who can connect, modify or alter their connection to the declared shared network (DSN), and does this via 2 key mechanisms:

- Renewable energy zone (REZ) access schemes
- Grid Impact Assessments (GIA).

These mechanisms will operate in parallel to the connections process, and an access authority (REZ scheme or grid impact authority) will be a prerequisite to receiving an offer to connect to the DSN.

REZ access schemes govern access for eligible renewable energy generation, energy storage systems (storage) and hybrid projects inside REZs (eligible projects), tailored to the requirements of each REZ. Whereas the GIA governs access for generation, storage and hybrid projects outside REZs and technologies that are not specified in REZ access schemes inside REZs.

REZ access schemes will place a cap on connections (known as an access limit) within each declared REZ, and will work together with the GIA to reduce the risk of excessive network curtailment in REZs. REZ access schemes and the GIA will also contain, among other criteria, an assessment of how developers are engaging with and creating value for community, Traditional Owners and landholders, to ensure access is granted to projects that meet government expectations in this area.

Once the new regime commences, all projects seeking to establish, modify or alter a connection to the DSN will need to apply for a REZ scheme or grid impact authority via the REZ access schemes or the GIA respectively, subject to transitional arrangements. For more details, see Section 3.

An access authority is a form of licence to connect to the DSN, and will be a pre-condition to receiving an offer to connect.

To determine whether a REZ access scheme or GIA applies to a project, the following must be considered:

- Whether a project is inside or outside a declared REZ, which will be based on:
  - the geographical REZ boundaries (REZ boundary) – determined via a REZ Order declared by the Minister
  - the electrical connection points to the DSN (connection point)
  - the geographical footprint of the project (proposed geographical area of the project site, i.e. site boundary)
- Whether a project is specified in a REZ access scheme as an eligible technology (see Section 4.1).

Inside a declared REZ

A project is located inside a declared REZ if at least half of its geographical footprint (including connection point) is within the REZ boundary.

REZs are areas identified as most suitable to host new onshore renewable generation and storage, providing clear locational signals to guide investment. However, there may be variation around the margins of the REZ boundaries for specific project sites because REZ boundaries are based on desktop analysis, not detailed site-specific studies. As such, there may be scenarios where it is not clear whether a project will be classified as inside a declared REZ.[3] In these scenarios, developers will be required to provide rationale as to why their project should be classified as inside a declared REZ. We will then review and determine whether the project is classified as inside a declared REZ, and will consider factors such as proximity to terminal stations, land use constraints and/or impacts on communities, landholders and Traditional Owners in our decisions.

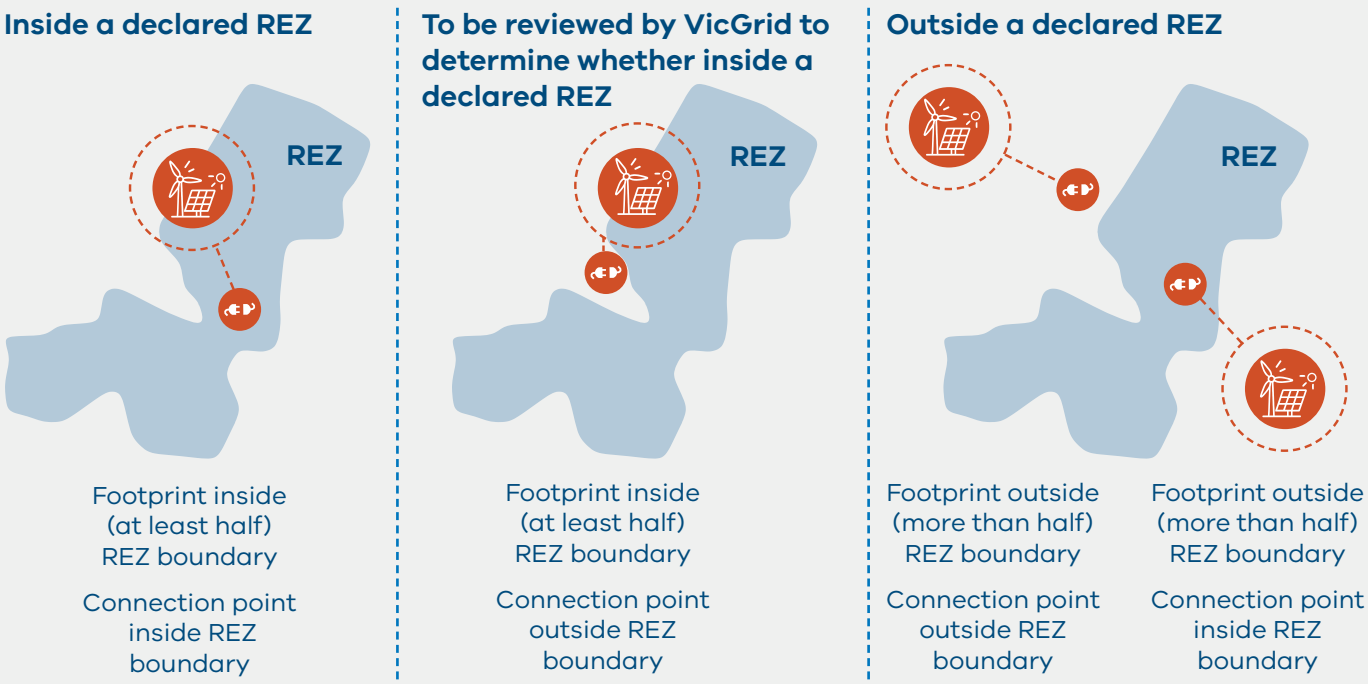
Offshore wind projects will also be considered as inside the onshore REZ where their connection point is located. This is because Victorian REZ boundaries cannot be defined offshore in Commonwealth waters.

Outside a declared REZ

A project is located outside a declared REZ if more than half its geographical footprint is outside of the REZ boundary. This holds even if the connection point is within the REZ boundary.

As above, there may be scenarios where it is not clear whether a project will be classified as outside a declared REZ. In these scenarios, we will review and decide whether a project is classified as outside a declared REZ through the GIA application process, using the same approach as for inside of REZs.

Figure 3 - Classification of projects

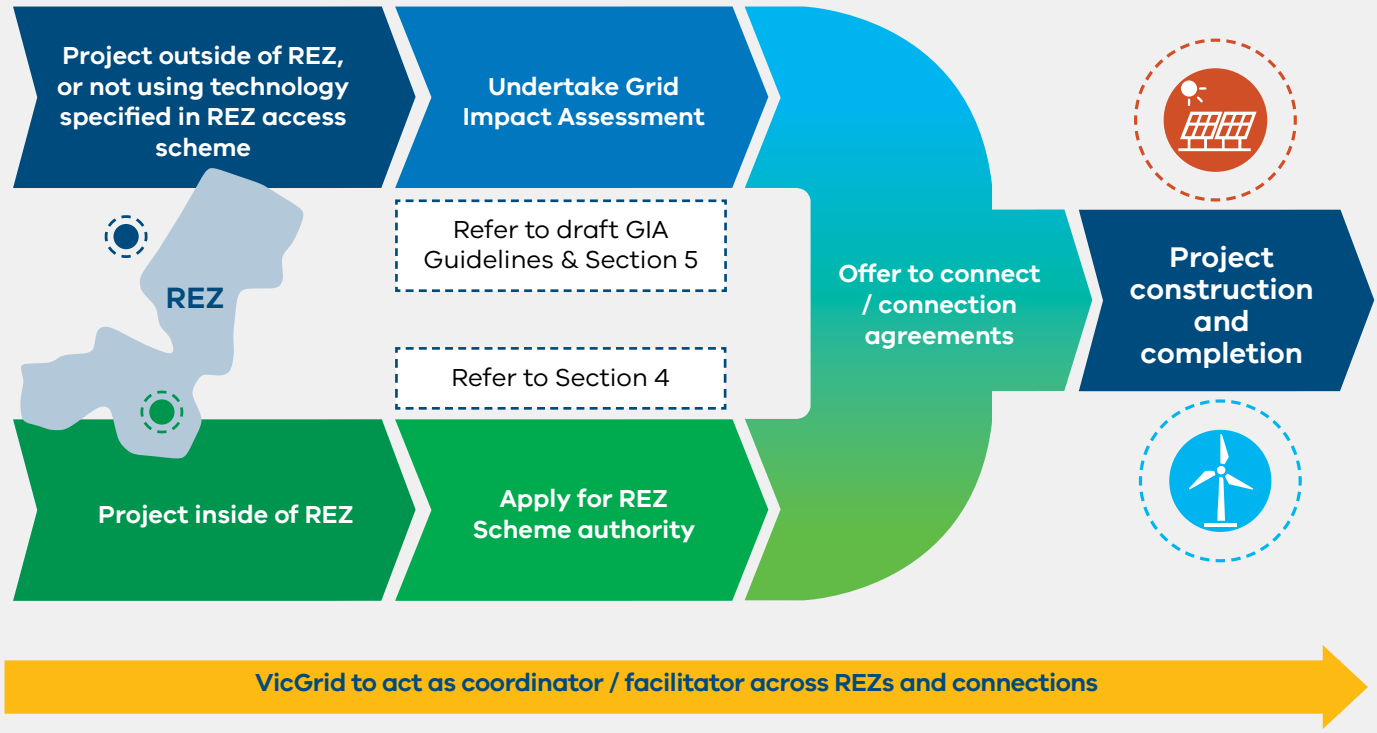


[3] For example, if a project is located inside a REZ but connecting into the DSN just outside of the REZ boundary, or if a project is marginally less than half inside the REZ boundary, or if the access applicant needs to adjust its project site due to information revealed through the project development process (e.g. site studies)

Victorian Access Regime overview

Figure 4 provides an overview of the access and connections processes for projects located inside or outside of a REZ, noting activities can be completed in parallel. For a project to connect into the DSN, a prerequisite is to have been granted access either through a REZ scheme authority or a grid impact authority.

Figure 4 – Victorian Access Regime summary



Note, the connections process is assumed to be completed in parallel.

Note, if a project is advanced in its development process, see Section 3 to understand transitional arrangements for both inside and outside a REZ.

3. When and how the new reforms will take effect

The Victorian Government has introduced legislation to give effect to the Victorian Access Regime. The new regime is proposed to commence in mid-March 2026, and we want to hear from you on how this impacts your project(s) under development in Victoria.

We recognise there will be developers that have generation and energy storage system (storage) projects in various stages of planning and development in Victoria. As such, we understand the importance of setting transitional arrangements that minimise impacts of the change for projects in advanced development when the new regime takes effect. We also understand the importance of delivering on reforms to facilitate the energy transition and improve outcomes for consumers, landholders, Traditional Owners and communities through the development of renewable energy zones (REZs). **A key principle and aim of our proposed approach is to retain the critical path development timeframes of eligible projects (all else equal)**.

Consultation question

How should the proposed transitional arrangements, including the eligibility criteria, be defined to address the level of certainty for projects in development?

3.1 When the Victorian Access Regime will commence

The Victorian Government has introduced legislation (National Electricity (Victoria) Amendment (VicGrid Stage 2 Reform) Bill 2025) to give effect to the Victorian Access Regime as part of the Victorian Transmission Investment Framework (VTIF) and establish VicGrid as the Victorian transmission planner, responsible for administering the regime. The Victorian Access Regime is proposed to commence across Victoria in mid-March 2026. This means:

- **Grid Impact Assessment (GIA)** – The GIA will come into effect on the commencement date. From this date, GIA applicants will be required to apply for a GIA (subject to transitional arrangements) and be awarded a grid impact authority before they can receive an offer to connect. For more detail on the GIA and the grid impact authority application process, see Section 5.
- **Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) access scheme** – Once a REZ access scheme is declared, eligible projects looking to connect inside that REZ will need a REZ scheme authority before they can receive an offer to connect (subject to transitional arrangements). The REZ access schemes associated with the proposed REZs in the 2025 Victorian Transmission Plan (VTP) are expected to be declared in early 2026. For more detail on REZ access schemes and the REZ scheme authority application process, see Section 4.1.

We acknowledge industry feedback suggesting a later commencement date due to impacts on projects under development. However, we consider the above timing is important to facilitate the energy transition and provide certainty to communities, landholders, Traditional Owners and investors so they can begin to see the benefits of the VTIF reforms. We consider the feedback can be addressed through the proposed transitional arrangements outlined in this section, which aim to reduce the impacts of transitioning to the new Victorian Access Regime and provide earlier certainty to eligible projects.

3.2 Projects exempt from the Victorian Access Regime

Projects that are connected or operational on or before commencement of the Victorian Access Regime will not be required to apply for a REZ scheme authority or grid impact authority.[4]

Projects in receipt of an offer to connect[5], or acceptance of a submission to alter an existing facility, from the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) or VicGrid on or before commencement of the Victorian Access Regime will not be required to apply for a REZ scheme authority or grid impact authority in order to connect to the declared shared network (DSN).

Note, the Victorian Access Regime only applies to the transmission network, so does not apply to projects seeking to connect to the distribution network.

3.3 Projects that may be eligible for transitional arrangements

To minimise impacts of the changing access arrangements on projects in development, we are developing transitional arrangements that provide a streamlined application process for eligible projects. This will provide early certainty for eligible projects, including confirmation of which projects are eligible by the date each application process (GIA and REZ access scheme) commences. Projects that may be eligible include:

- successful projects from select Capacity Investment Scheme (CIS) tenders
- successful projects from the Victorian Government's proposed auction for the first 2 GW of offshore wind energy capacity
- projects that have not yet received an offer to connect but are in advanced stages of development.

In designing the proposed transitional arrangements, we have applied the following principles:

- enable a fair transition to the new regime that minimises impacts of the change for projects in advanced stages of development under the current regime
- provide timely decisions and processes that are not expected to impact critical path project development timelines (all else equal)
- prospective assessment of any new requirements that would not be reasonably expected of projects in development under the current regime.

We are still in the process of designing these transitional arrangements, including the application process and criteria for project eligibility and these positions may change following consultation. We will provide more detailed information in the Access and Connections Handbook, final GIA Guidelines and REZ access schemes.

To inform our design of the streamlined application process in accordance with the principles above, we plan to establish a procedure to engage with all current project developers to seek information on their project status and timelines. We will prioritise information where its credibility can be demonstrated, to ensure our design of the process is informed by credible information. We will also strictly manage the procedure to ensure all project developers have the opportunity to engage with us, are treated equally, and have confidence that any confidential information shared will be securely managed.

[4] Note these projects will be required to obtain a relevant access authority if they seek to increase the capacity of their projects (i.e. system change) once the regime has commenced (via modification or alteration of their system).

[5] Note offer to connect to the DSN is currently considered to have the same meaning as the term in clause 5.3.6 of the National Electricity Rules (NER), and the equivalent to acceptance of a submission under clause 5.3.10. This will be confirmed in legislation to amend the NER to require an access authority before an offer to connect or acceptance of a submission to alter a connection. More detail will be provided in the Access and Connections Handbook.

How to apply for transitional arrangements

We will set eligibility criteria that projects will be required to demonstrate. Eligible projects will still need to apply for access, either via the REZ access scheme or GIA. However, they will be subject to a streamlined application process that will be detailed in the GIA Guidelines and REZ access schemes.

We propose to assess the eligibility of applicants before we commence the GIA and REZ scheme application processes. This will provide early certainty on which projects will be eligible for a streamlined application process.

These projects will then submit applications for the relevant access authority, with streamlined information requirements based on demonstrating the project meets targeted assessment criteria (see below). Note, GIA application fees and REZ scheme fees will apply.

Eligible projects will still need to meet targeted assessment criteria, so these transitional arrangements will not 'automatically pass' applicants. However, as detailed below, we will not refuse applications on the basis of past actions that would not be a reasonable expectation of projects in development under the current regime. Further, this change from the GIA consultation paper is complemented by consideration of broader eligibility criteria. Figure 5 illustrates the proposed process.

Who is eligible for transitional arrangements

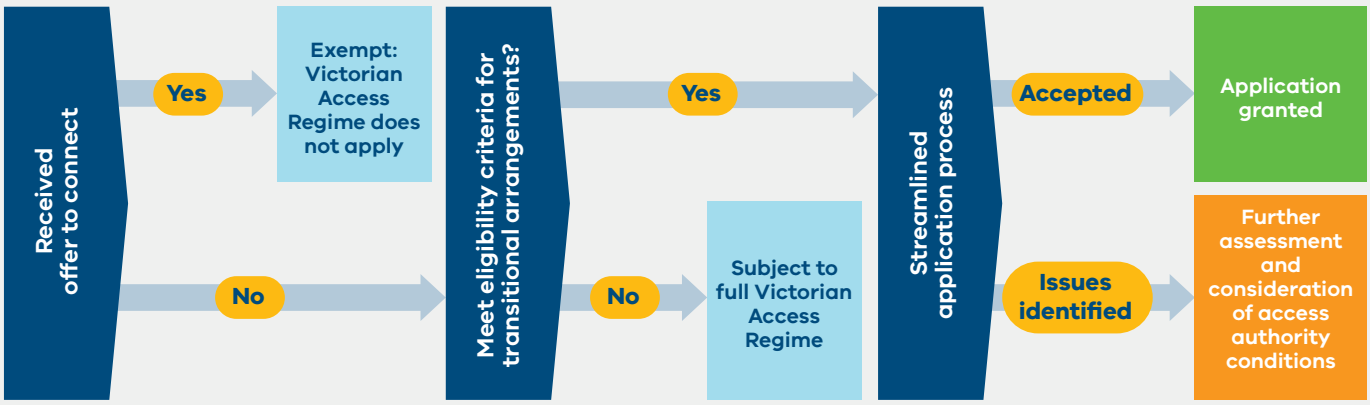
Potential applicants will need to demonstrate their project(s) meets the eligibility criteria on or before a date that will be specified in the Access and Connections Handbook. We are considering different combinations of eligibility criteria that are earlier than the offer to connect stage of the project development process, with a preference for criteria that are unambiguous and simple to demonstrate.

We are also considering different eligibility criteria for the GIA and REZ schemes, with a lower eligibility threshold applied to projects subject to the GIA. This is because the GIA introduces a new excessive network curtailment assessment criterion that could not be reasonably expected to be planned for by projects in development under the current regime. Conversely, REZ access schemes provide an opportunity for all projects to obtain access under the competitive access allocation process.

The different combinations of eligibility criteria we are considering include:

- **for the GIA** – indicators based on identifying projects in advanced development, such as planning permit received (i.e. obtained all relevant environmental, planning and licensing approvals from relevant authorities), connection application submitted, and/or potential indicator(s) for projects well advanced in planning approvals for example environment effects statement (EES) on exhibition).

Figure 5 – Illustration of proposed streamlined application process



- **for REZ access schemes** – indicators based on identifying projects at contracting stages of development, with plans to execute connection agreements or contracts with suppliers and/or delivery partners prior to completion of the REZ access allocation process in mid-late 2026 (see section 4.4). This aims to avoid delays to project development timelines. The specific eligibility criteria are currently under review, but we are considering criteria that focus on identifying the projects for which there is a genuine risk of delay if they are required to wait for the access allocation process to conclude before proceeding into delivery (e.g. 5.3.4A (generator performance standards) approval).
- projects that are in receipt of **government support** based on a competitive assessment against similar criteria before key information on the new access regime is released. For example, successful projects from select CIS tenders and the first offshore wind auction.

We are also considering different indicators for specific technology types based on modelled generation in the 2025 VTP. For example, the 2025 VTP identifies onshore wind projects as a key part of the modelled generation mix. However, the current Victorian project pipeline data shows more solar and storage projects are in advanced stages of development[6]. This means the transitional arrangements could have unintended consequences that disadvantage wind projects. Wind projects also typically have longer development timelines than solar and storage projects. As such, we have identified that wind and wind hybrid projects in earlier stages of development may need to be eligible for transitional arrangements, particularly those located outside of the proposed REZs.

Capacity Investment Scheme

The Commonwealth Government's CIS provides underwriting to encourage investment in renewable energy generation and storage to connect to the grid by 2030. The Commonwealth Government is holding competitive tenders every 6 months, with the first held in May 2024.

Successful tenderers from select CIS tender(s) will be eligible for transitional arrangements, based on the information available on the new regime at the time of the tender. Successful tenderers from the May 2024 CIS tender will be eligible for transitional arrangements as the tender was completed in December 2024. Successful tenderers from the November 2024 CIS tender(s) will also be eligible for transitional arrangements as the evaluation is expected to be complete in September/October 2025, prior to the expected Victorian Access Regime commencement date. This is the case regardless of if a project is inside or outside a REZ.

Offshore wind projects (from the Victorian Government's first auction)

The Victorian Government has identified an auction as the most suitable approach to procure the first tranche of 2 gigawatts (GW) of offshore wind projects in Victoria.

Offshore wind developers that are successful in securing a financial support package through this auction will be eligible for transitional arrangements. This will ensure these projects receive REZ access for their nameplate capacity (and associated protection from forecast excessive network curtailment) without duplicative assessment criteria.

[6] Based on analysis of projects classified by AEMO as committed or anticipated, projects with planning approval, successful CIS May 2024 projects, etc.

What will be the main elements of the streamlined assessment

Once an eligible project developer has submitted its application, we then propose to undertake a rapid assessment of the application against the targeted assessment criteria. We expect this to be complete before each applicant receives an offer to connect under the connections process, **to avoid impacts on critical path project timelines,** and will tailor our assessment accordingly.

We are currently developing the targeted assessment criteria, but propose they include consideration of the following:

- minimum required criteria from the full GIA and REZ access scheme application processes (with a modified, streamlined assessment of these)
- demonstrating a credible near-term delivery pathway (e.g. by 2030)
- demonstrating community, landholder and Traditional Owner engagement and social and economic benefits planning – noting this can be informed by, but is not required to meet, government expectations as set out in the draft Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines[7].

We will also assess each application against the cumulative generation capacity taken up by transitional arrangements, to ensure there is sufficient remaining transmission capacity to allow for the REZ access allocation process and GIA to operate.

In order to do this effectively, we expect that applications will be prioritised, and a merit assessment and/or portfolio assessment against the targeted assessment criteria may be required.

We propose to conduct the rapid assessment on a primarily prospective basis so that applications are not penalised on the basis of past actions that would not be reasonably expected of projects in development under the current regime. However, we consider core elements of community, landholder and Traditional Owner engagement, as referenced in the Victorian Government's Community Engagement and Benefit Sharing for Renewable Energy Projects guide published in July 2021 and/or other publicly available resources, would be a reasonable expectation.

If significant issues are identified in the assessment, then we expect further assessment will be required, and we may request further information from the applicant. VicGrid may also request additional commitments to address the identified issues, and incorporate these into conditions in the relevant access authority if the application is ultimately granted. It is possible that an application will be refused if we cannot be satisfied it meets the requirements, or there is insufficient remaining transmission capacity to allow for the REZ access allocation process and GIA to operate.

If an application is granted, an access authority (grid impact authority or REZ scheme authority) will be issued, subject to conditions. These conditions are expected to include, at a minimum:

- achievement of project development milestones, to ensure the project is genuinely proceeding in accordance with the credible near-term delivery pathway put forward in its application
- community, landholder and Traditional Owners engagement and social and economic benefit requirements, including commitments to align with government expectations as set out in the Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines.

We propose a different verification-style assessment for eligible projects that are, or will be, in receipt of government support based on a competitive assessment against similar criteria before key information on the new access regime is released. This involves a comparison of assessment criteria and methodologies, and check on the current status of the project. Any gaps are expected to be incorporated into conditions in the relevant access authority, unless major gaps are identified.

We note the process and timeframes outlined in this section assume 'all else equal'. For example, this assumes each applicant provides the required information in its application that demonstrates the project meets the criteria. If we need to request clarifications or identify significant issues with the application, then the streamlined application process is expected to take longer. This also assumes project development timelines are based on a point in time under the current regime, and there are external factors that may impact those timelines.

[7] The Victorian Government's draft Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines reflect current expectations and provide clearer guidance to energy project developers (including REZ scheme authority applicants) on community, landholder and Traditional Owners engagement, and the design and delivery of discretionary social and economic benefits. The new draft guidelines are an update on the government's Community Engagement and Benefit Sharing Guide for Renewable Energy Developers, which was published in July 2021.



3.4 Projects eligible to apply for a renewable energy zone scheme authority

Projects that are not exempt and do not qualify for transitional arrangements will need to apply for a REZ scheme authority via a REZ access scheme, if eligible to apply.

To apply for a REZ scheme authority, once a REZ is declared and the REZ scheme is declared by the Minister for Energy and Resources, a project will need to be:

- a generator, storage or hybrid project connection applicant located inside the relevant declared REZ and of a technology type specified in the REZ access scheme
- an existing generator, storage or hybrid project (integrated resource provider) seeking to increase the capacity of its project (i.e. system change)[8], located inside the relevant declared REZ and of a technology type specified in the REZ access scheme.

For more details about REZ scheme eligibility requirements, see Section 2.

What if a project is unsuccessful in its application for a REZ scheme authority?

If an eligible project applies for a REZ scheme authority via the REZ access scheme and is unsuccessful, it can reapply following the same process detailed in the REZ access scheme. This may mean waiting until a subsequent round of access is opened for application. Note, an unsuccessful project will not be eligible for the GIA as it is in a REZ and is of an eligible technology type in the REZ access scheme.

Without a REZ scheme authority, a project will not be able to receive an offer to connect to the DSN.

We are considering whether it is appropriate to introduce an avenue to raise issues or complaints with REZ scheme authority applications and assessments, before an application is formally granted or refused.



Consultation question

What key features or mechanisms would be needed for VicGrid to develop an efficient and effective complaints and issue system for REZ scheme authorities?

[8] A system change can occur via an existing project seeking to modify its connection or alter its system, under clause 5.3 or 5.3.9 of the NER.



3.5 Projects that can apply for a grid impact authority

Projects that are not exempt, do not qualify for transitional arrangements, and are not eligible for a REZ access scheme will need to apply for a grid impact authority via the GIA.

To apply for a grid impact authority via the GIA, a project will need to be:

- a generator, storage or hybrid project connection applicant located outside a declared REZ or of a technology type not specified in a REZ access scheme
- an existing generator, storage or hybrid project (integrated resource provider) seeking to increase the capacity of its project (i.e. system change)[9], located outside a declared REZ or of a technology type not specified in a REZ access scheme.

For more details about GIA eligibility requirements, see Section 2.

What if a project is unsuccessful in its application for a grid impact authority?

If a project applies for a grid impact authority via the GIA and is unsuccessful, it can reapply.

Without a grid impact authority, a project will not be able to receive an offer to connect to the DSN.

Note, we are considering whether it is appropriate to introduce an avenue to raise issues or complaints with GIA applications and assessments, before a GIA application is formally granted or refused.

Consultation question

What key features or mechanisms would be needed for VicGrid to develop an efficient and effective complaints and issue system for grid impact authorities?

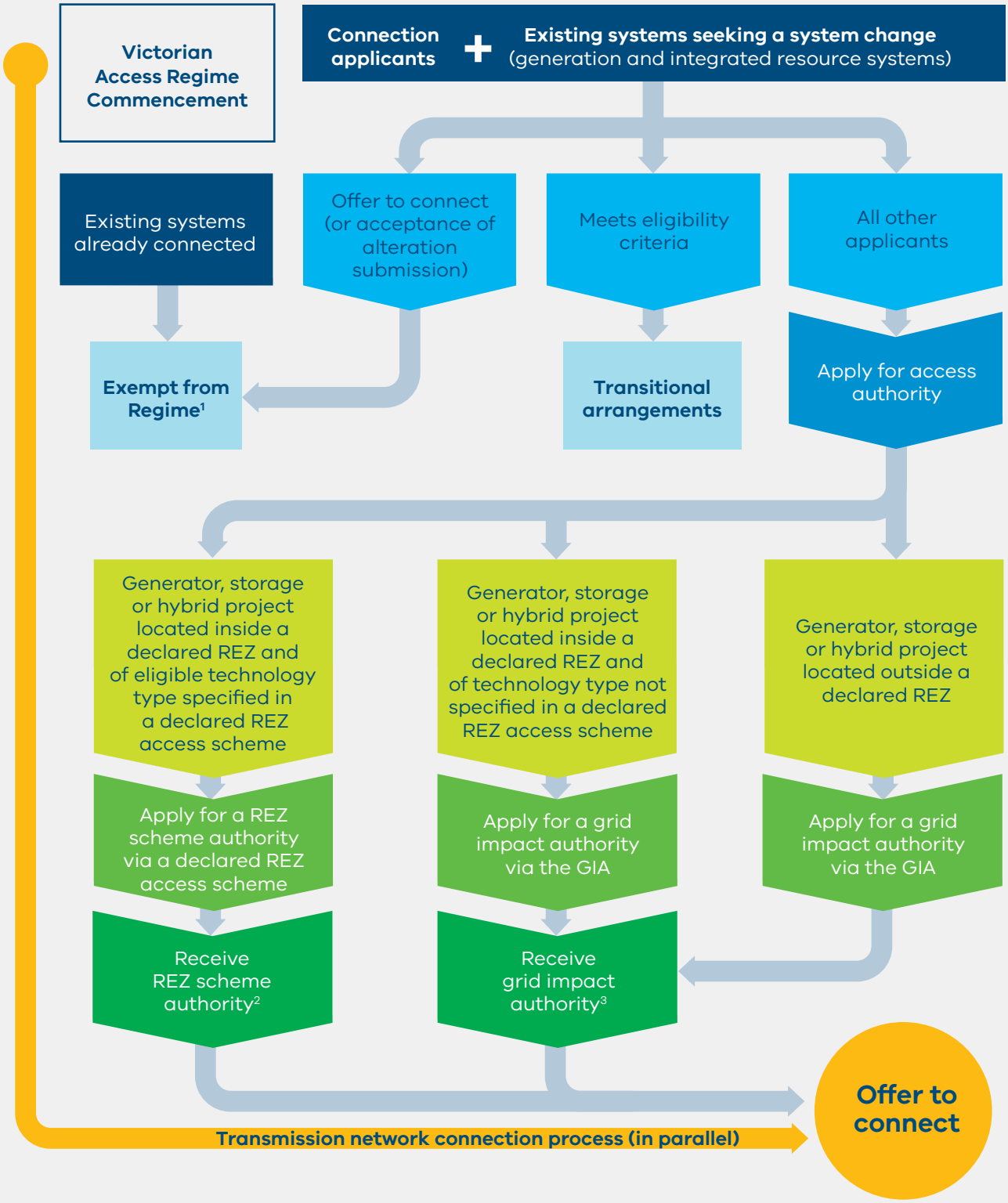
[9] A system change can occur via an existing project seeking to modify its connection or alter its system, under clause 5.3 or 5.3.9 of the NER.



3.6 Summary of Victorian Access Regime application

Figure 6 below provides a summary of the proposed access arrangements, noting a more detailed version will be provided with the Access and Connections Handbook. Applications for access are intended to progress in parallel with the connections process, avoiding adding time to typical project development programs.

Figure 6 - Summary of Victorian Access Regime application



[1] Note if an existing system is connected however seeks to modify after their project following the commencement of the regime, the project will be required to obtain a relevant access authority.

[2] Note if a project is unsuccessful in obtaining a REZ scheme authority it can reapply following the same process detailed in the REZ access scheme. This may mean waiting until a subsequent round of access is opened for application.

[3] Note if a project is unsuccessful in obtaining a grid impact authority it can reapply.

Please note for both REZ scheme authorities and grid impact authorities we are considering whether it is appropriate to introduce an avenue to raise issues or complaints for the applications and assessments, before an application is formally granted or refused.

4. How access will be granted under renewable energy zone access schemes

Renewable energy zone (REZ) access schemes will place a cap on connections (known as an access limit) within each declared REZ, and will work together with the Grid Impact Assessment (GIA) to reduce the risk of excessive network curtailment in REZs. The REZ access process will also contain an assessment of community, landholder and Traditional Owners engagement and benefits, among other criteria.

We want your input to help design and shape the REZ access arrangements to ensure the new regime fosters investor and community confidence. Note, the proposed access arrangements do not represent final or binding positions and are subject to change following consultation.

4.1 Overview of renewable energy zone access schemes

Renewable energy zone (REZ) access schemes will govern how an eligible project can gain access to the declared shared network (DSN) inside a REZ. A REZ access scheme will set out:

- eligible renewable energy technologies located inside the declared REZ
- access limits inside the declared REZ for eligible projects seeking connection to the DSN or seeking a system change
- REZ scheme fees to be paid by applicants and REZ scheme authority holders[10]
- types of access conditions REZ scheme authority holders will be subject to
- a description of the process to allocate and issue REZ scheme authorities (application process).

Note, REZ access schemes are referred to as REZ schemes in the National Electricity (Victoria) Amendment (VicGrid Stage 2 Reform) Bill 2025.

The REZ access process

Following consultation, the Minister will declare the final REZ access scheme. Access will be allocated in accordance with the process set out in the REZ access scheme, within the framework proposed in Section 4.4. Eligible projects that are successful in the access allocation process will be issued a REZ scheme authority.

Once a REZ scheme authority is issued, the eligible project may proceed through the offer to connect process.

Figure 7 provides an overview of how a REZ access scheme will be established and how an eligible project will apply for and, if successful, be issued a REZ scheme authority. Note this process will be the same for all REZs across Victoria.

Eligible technologies

REZ access schemes will specify the types of renewable energy technologies that are eligible. This will include technology such as solar, onshore wind and offshore wind. Note, non-renewable technologies are not eligible under a REZ access scheme. As such, if a technology is not listed in the REZ access scheme, then any project using that technology will be subject to the GIA, regardless of the project's location (for example gas-powered generation). In determining this, we will consider the differences between variable renewable energy (VRE) and firming technology types, and how they take up capacity on the network in different ways.

We understand the energy industry is constantly evolving and we will ensure that new and other types of renewable technology can also be accommodated in REZ access schemes as required. We also recognise more gas peaking capacity is expected to be needed in Victoria, and the Victorian Government is considering further policy development to enable its development and integration into the electricity system.

[10] The REZ scheme fee is expected to be set out in the relevant REZ access scheme or will be published on the VicGrid website.

Figure 7 - Overview of REZ access scheme process



4.2 Approach to setting access limits

Access limits set out how much renewable energy capacity can connect inside a declared REZ, and are proposed to be set at the maximum amount of generation capacity that can be connected within a REZ without violating technical constraints or surpassing efficient levels of network curtailment forecast for the REZ. This will have a 15-year forward-looking horizon in line with the 2025 Victorian Transmission Plan (VTP).

Consultation questions:

1) Does the proposed approach for setting access limits within a REZ provide sufficient certainty to invest inside a declared REZ?

2) How should new and different renewable energy technologies be included and considered within REZ access schemes?

What is an access limit?

An access limit is a maximum cap (in megawatts) on how much renewable energy capacity may connect to the DSN within a REZ over time. Access limits will be decided by the Minister via the REZ access scheme (and REZ Order) declaration.

Access limits help give effect to the locational signals provided through the VTP's transmission and REZ planning.

How will access limits be set?

We propose to set access limits in megawatts at the maximum amount of generation capacity that can be connected within a REZ without violating technical constraints or surpassing efficient levels of network curtailment forecast for the REZ (REZ hosting capacity).[11] This will be over the 15-year 2025 VTP modelling period (2025-2040), until a subsequent VTP is released.

In estimating the access limit for each REZ, we will consider the following key inputs:

1. future network state based on the VTP, including transmission upgrades in the VTP, renewable energy generation and forecasts for future electricity demand patterns
2. an efficient level of network curtailment forecast for the REZ (see page 32)
3. network technical constraints such as thermal limits, voltage constraints and variation in transmission line thermal ratings with ambient temperature – noting we consider it is impractical to fully consider all future technical limits on the Victorian transmission network
4. power system operational limits to maintain system security
5. diversity of generation patterns between different technology types (e.g. wind and solar).

[11] Subject to the Minister's decision on access limits in each REZ through the declaration of each REZ access scheme

Note, these inputs will be informed by the VTP and by the Victorian transmission network characteristics such as line ratings and thermal capacity. A detailed methodology on access limits calculation will be provided in the Access and Connections Handbook.

This calculation approach will be applied consistently across Victorian REZs, although the resulting access limit (in megawatts) will likely be different for each REZ.

Access limits can be revised through an amendment to the REZ access scheme. We will review access limits as subsequent VTPs are published, which will identify if there are delays or changes to transmission projects or if new transmission projects are identified.

What is an efficient network curtailment forecast?

In each REZ, we will determine an efficient network curtailment forecast that corresponds to the access limit, and we will include this in the REZ access scheme.[12] This will be protected (within an excessive curtailment threshold and on a forecast basis) through the GIA tests, noting actual outcomes may differ from forecast.

While we consider the efficient network curtailment forecast for each REZ will be informed by the network curtailment forecast associated with the transmission projects included in the optimal development pathway and modelled generation capacity in the VTP, it may not equal it.

For example, it is not efficient to set a network curtailment forecast for each REZ at 0%, and VicGrid will also seek to align any network curtailment levels specified in State Agreements associated with generation, storage and/or hybrid projects (e.g. offshore wind).

Also note, our access limits approach does not set a network curtailment standard or target that must be met through transmission planning, because we have adopted a probabilistic transmission planning standard. Further, the Victorian Access Regime operates on an ex-ante forecast basis, and does not guarantee network curtailment outcomes ex-post.

How access limits relate to the 2025 Victorian Transmission Plan

It is expected that access limits will be higher than the modelled generation capacity in the 2025 VTP, at least under scenario 1. This is because our proposed approach sets access limits based on the planned transmission network hosting capacity[13], not the modelled generation capacity in the 2025 VTP.

The VTP is a long-term plan for REZs and transmission, based on modelled generation and storage capacity to meet Victoria's needs under a future scenario(s). It does not represent the actual amount of generation and storage that could be built in each REZ, as this is based on a range of market factors and the hosting capacity of the transmission network.

It is important to align access limits with the planned transmission hosting capacity to ensure we are providing the opportunity for the market to identify where transmission capacity can be most effectively and efficiently utilised across Victoria; and to avoid overbuilding the transmission network. This will also ensure that the market can operate to respond to supply and demand signals, and deliver electricity reliably, securely and affordably to homes and businesses across Victoria.

Table 1 provides a preliminary indication of the potential difference between access limits and 2025 VTP modelled generation capacity, on an order of magnitude basis. Note these numbers do not represent access limits, rather an order of magnitude indication of potential transmission hosting capacities based on group constraints in the network. The access limits for each REZ will be estimated as part of a separate process (see below).

[12] Subject to the Minister's decision on access limits in each REZ through the declaration of each REZ access scheme.
[13] With consideration of efficient network curtailment forecasts per REZ.

Table 1 – 2025 VTP modelled generation and indicative potential transmission hosting capacity

Group	2025 VTP existing generation (GW)[A]	2025 VTP committed generation (GW)[A]	2025 VTP new modelled generation range (GW)[A]	2025 VTP indicative hosting capacity, with estimated exceedance (GW)[B]
	How much generation we are planning for			The space on the transmission network
Eastern Victoria (includes Gippsland Renewable Energy Zone and Gippsland offshore wind area)	0.1 GW	0.2 GW	7.9 – 8.6 GW	11.2 GW
Northern Victoria (includes the Central North Renewable Energy Zone)	0.5 GW	1.5 GW	0 – 2.4 GW	2.2 GW
Western Victoria (includes Central Highlands, South West, Western and North West renewable energy zones and the Southern Ocean offshore wind area)	4.2 GW	2.7 GW	4.6 – 12.2 GW	15.3 GW
Total	4.8 GW	4.4 GW	12.5 – 23.2 GW	28.7 GW[C]

Important caveats for Table 1 include:

A. the figures presented in the table are indicative only. Generation includes wind and solar including offshore as well as existing and committed projects outside of REZs

B. hosting capacity includes allowance for illustrative network curtailment forecast between 2% to 4% - this is for illustrative purposes and does not represent VicGrid's view of efficient network curtailment forecast

C. these indicative hosting capacity estimates treat wind and solar generation the same and do not consider specific technical network constraints, which is a simplification. The final access limit estimates will include detailed modelling, based on the approach set out above, which may result in more or less hosting capacity.

Why this approach was selected

Because access limits place a cap on the amount of energy that can connect in each REZ, it is crucial they enable the energy generation needed to keep the lights on. We have selected an approach for setting access limits that balances the following:

- providing the capability to ensure sufficient generation and storage capacity to reliably, securely and affordably meet electricity demand and Victoria's renewable energy targets
- providing the opportunity for the market to guide where transmission capacity can be best used
- allocating access in a way that can adapt to unexpected market changes and attrition of eligible projects (i.e. projects in development that do not make it through to construction and operations)
- enabling market innovation and technological development.

Access limits also need to have regard to the VTP optimal development pathway and transmission planning standard because the VTP is a mechanism for providing locational signals, and planning for coordinated transmission and generation development. We have also adopted a probabilistic transmission planning standard as it meets the VTP objective, and is based on a least-cost optimisation that assesses the impact of network curtailment on the total cost of electricity in Victoria.

Technology-specific access limits

Access limits for each REZ will also be set by technology type, to enable prioritisation of a renewable energy mix that promotes reliable, secure and affordable energy supply in Victoria. This means there will likely be different access limits for solar, onshore wind, offshore wind technology, and potentially storage[14] and other renewable energy technologies[15].

However, we recognise the importance of enabling market innovation and technological development, and as such we are considering ways to set access limits to facilitate new technological development and innovation in the access allocation process. As at 30 June 2024, Victoria's energy mix consisted of brown coal (24%), rooftop solar (24%), wind (20%), gas (12%), hydro (11%), solar farms (5%), and battery storage (3%).[16] We recognise there are a number of emerging energy technologies that could enter the Victorian market in the future (e.g. marine energy, bioenergy, etc.), and we will work with industry to understand and allow for the latest market developments.

When will access limits be set?

We are developing the detailed methodology for estimating access limits. Once we have considered any feedback on the approach set out in this consultation paper, we will finalise the detailed methodology and provide it in the Access and Connections Handbook in late 2025.

Access limits will be estimated and set out in each draft REZ access scheme, to be finalised through a formal declaration by the Minister. Final REZ access schemes associated with the proposed REZs in the 2025 VTP are expected to be declared in early 2026.

Note, access limits will also be included in the REZ Orders expected to be declared by the Minister in early 2026.



What does this mean for communities, Traditional Owners and landholders?

We are committed to minimising impacts on landholders, communities and Traditional Owners. We have proposed to set access limits in line with the planned transmission capacity in each REZ in the 2025 VTP, which is expected to be above modelled generation capacity in most REZs in the 2025 VTP.

While the access limits provide an upper bound for the amount of generation capacity that can connect in each REZ, they do not determine which projects are allocated access in each REZ (via REZ scheme authorities). How much access we allocate, and which projects are allocated access will be based on a careful assessment against a range of factors and criteria, including how project developers engage with communities, landholders and First Peoples, and provide meaningful social value and economic benefits. For more details, see Section 4.3.

[14] Our approach to storage is still in development, so we may not set access limits for storage technologies, see section 4.7.

[15] As set out in section 4.1, we will consider the differences between variable renewable energy (VRE) and firming technology types in determining the eligible technologies to specify in a REZ access scheme.

[16] See AER, State of the energy market report 2024, section 2.7 (and data pack). Generation capacity at 30 June 2024. Loads and non-scheduled generation have been excluded.

4.3 Access allocation amount and timing

When the access allocation process commences, we propose to make the maximum amount of access available for allocation – up to the access limit for each REZ over a 10 year period (2025-2035). This does not mean we will allocate access up to the access limit for each REZ.

We will also undertake periodic assessments to determine whether additional access needs to be allocated in REZs in the future to maintain reliable, secure and affordable electricity supply. The first review is proposed to take place with the 2027 VTP.



Consultation question:

How should the access allocation approach respond to changes in market conditions and attrition of eligible projects over time?

How much access will be initially allocated and over what period?

Initially, we expect all REZ access schemes (for the 2025 VTP REZs) to be declared concurrently to enable the access allocation process to commence across all REZs. This encourages efficient investment in REZs and provides upfront certainty and clarity on access to investors. This will enable an access allocation process that ensures sufficient renewable energy can connect to the DSN to reliably, securely and affordably meet electricity demand and Victoria's renewable energy targets.

When the access allocation process commences, we propose to make the maximum amount of access available for allocation – up to the access limit for each REZ over a 10-year period (2025-2035).[17] This does not mean we will allocate access up to the access limit for each REZ.[18]

We propose a competitive access allocation process to determine the amount of access allocated in each REZ, and which projects are issued a REZ scheme authority. Through this process we will carefully assess and balance a range of factors, including the:

- applications received in each REZ (i.e. market interest)
- eligibility and merit criteria for assessing applications
- modelled generation and storage capacity in the 2025 VTP, and factors that informed the 2025 VTP
- electricity supply risk factors, including attrition of eligible projects and market changes
- portfolio-level considerations within and across REZs.

This approach recognises the importance of the competitive generation and storage market in responding to supply and demand signals, and technological developments. The VTP is a long-term plan for REZs and transmission projects, and provides an important signal to the market. However, it is not intended to determine the exact generation mix and amount of capacity that will be needed in the future.

[17] The proposed 10-year period also aligns with the Victorian Annual Planning Report (VAPR) as developed by AEMO. The VAPR reiterates the need to progress key transmission projects to deliver the necessary infrastructure to enable the energy transition and assesses the adequacy of the DSN over a 10-year planning horizon to ensure the DSN meets the network performance requirements.

[18] Note, access cannot be allocated beyond the access limit for any REZ.

Under this approach, the amount of access allocated in each REZ will be known once the competitive application process is complete, which is expected in mid-late 2026. For details about the access allocation process, see Section 4.4.

Note, our approach to allocating access over a 10-year period means early-stage projects that plan to connect in 5 to 10 years could successfully apply for access and be issued a REZ scheme authority. We will monitor the progress of these early-stage projects against development milestones set out in their REZ scheme authority conditions. We may revoke the authority if the projects are not compliant with these conditions. For details, see Section 4.5.

Note, any access allocated and REZ scheme authority issued during this process will be for the life of the project, or until disconnection.

Future access allocations

After the initial REZ access allocation, there may need for subsequent allocations of additional renewable energy capacity as the market evolves, developers progress their projects and to account for some project attrition.

We will undertake periodic assessments to determine whether additional access needs to be allocated in REZs to maintain reliable, secure and affordable electricity supply. The first review is proposed to take place with the development of the 2027 VTP.



What does this mean for communities, Traditional Owners and landholders?

We propose a competitive access allocation process to determine how much generation / storage capacity we allocate, and who we allocate access to, in each REZ. We will carefully assess and balance a range of factors to decide which projects will be allocated access and issued a REZ scheme authority to connect to the grid.

In considering how much access to allocate in each REZ under this approach, we will be responsive to the market because industry needs to decide where they locate (within REZs) and what types of projects they develop, in consultation with communities, landholders and Traditional Owners. However, we will assess each REZ access application against a set of criteria, including demonstrating the applicant meets government expectations for community, landholder and Traditional Owners engagement and provides meaningful benefits (see section 4.4). Successful projects will be required to follow through with what they put forward in their application under conditions in their REZ scheme authorities.

In considering how much access to allocate in each REZ under this approach, we will also consider the modelled generation and storage capacity in the 2025 VTP, and other factors that informed the 2025 VTP (e.g. density considerations).

Considering different time periods

We considered 2 options for the timeframe over which access will be allocated, which have the following trade-offs:

- **Shorter time periods (e.g. 2-5 years):** do not provide long-term signals to the market or capture projects in early development, which reduces visibility over the potential pipeline for Victorian REZs. However, shorter time periods enable access to be allocated to well-developed eligible projects, and on the basis of more certain transmission hosting capacity.
- **Longer time periods (e.g. 10-25 years):** provide long-term signals to the market and capture projects in early development, which increases visibility over the potential pipeline for Victorian REZs. However, longer time periods would also likely result in more attrition from early-stage projects, and less certain transmission hosting capacity.

Managing market changes and attrition of eligible projects

We are also designing our access allocation approach to ensure that, over time, REZ access allocation:

- can accommodate eligible projects at various stages of development (i.e. projects in early and advanced development stages)
- is agile and/or proactive in responding to changes in market conditions and attrition of eligible projects
- can accommodate innovative and new access applications put forward by developers
- retains market interest and project investment following the initial allocation of access
- can accommodate changes in the VTP over time (including transmission projects and timing), and the corresponding development expectations of communities, landholders and Traditional Owners
- does not result in over-allocation and potential withdrawal of REZ scheme authorities, or increased network curtailment risk beyond efficient forecasts. For details, see Section 4.2.

We are currently considering a range of options to manage this, including:

- conditions on REZ scheme authorities relating to project development milestones
- re-allocating access when a REZ scheme authority holder does not progress or meet specific development milestones
- additional 'tranches' of access to be allocated over time or at regular intervals
- an additional 'provisional' allocation(s) of access to early-stage projects with provisional conditions that may lead to a full REZ scheme authority later.

4.4 Access allocation process

Access will be allocated through a competitive application process, requiring eligible projects to submit a response to a request for proposal (RFP). We seek to design the process in a way that does not affect critical path project development timelines, by operating in parallel with the connections process.

Consultation question:

What preparatory information on the REZ and the REZ access allocation process would be necessary prior to the release of a RFP?

How access will be allocated

We are proposing to issue REZ scheme authorities within each REZ through a non-price competitive application process,[19] following declaration of the relevant REZ access schemes.

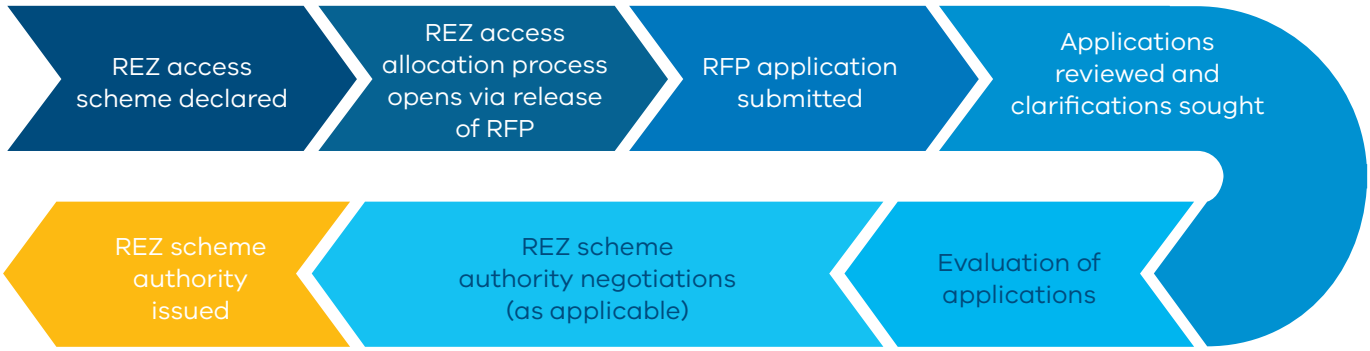
An eligible project seeking to connect to the DSN, and existing eligible projects seeking a system change, will be required to respond to a request for proposal (RFP). This access allocation process will be the same across all REZs and will be detailed in each REZ access scheme. Please note if there are subsequent allocations, these are expected to follow the same process.

Access allocation process (application process)

The RFP process will comprise the following steps: REZ access scheme declared, release of the RFP, applications reviewed with clarifications sought, an evaluation of applications submitted in response to the RFP, negotiations (as applicable) and issuing of REZ scheme authorities. Note the allocation approach outlined in this example is designed to be conducted in parallel with the connections process.

Figure 8 below outlines the application process upon which we will base the allocation of REZ scheme authorities. **We seek to design the process in a way that does not affect critical path project development timelines, by operating in parallel with the connections process.**

Figure 8 - Indicative allocation process[20]



[19] This is referred to as a competitive tender process in the National Electricity (Victoria) Amendment (VicGrid Stage 2 Reform) Bill 2025.

[20] Note REZ scheme authority conditions are not required to be negotiable.



The RFP will document the scope and requirements applicants must respond to for a REZ scheme authority. This will include the relevant eligibility and merit criteria upon which responses must be based, as well as application requirements.

VicGrid will be responsible for assessing and evaluating the responses and subsequently issuing the REZ scheme authorities.

The application process will aim to be completed by mid-late 2026, with more information on the specific timeframes associated with this process to be provided in the Access and Connections Handbook.

How eligible projects will be assessed

Firstly, we will review the applications against the eligibility criteria to determine which, if any, of the projects are eligible. The merit of each response will also be evaluated against the merit criteria and assessed comparatively.

In evaluating applications, we propose to consider and assess portfolio-level considerations to ensure that projects as a portfolio, within and across the REZs, will not result in adverse outcomes or outcomes not aligned with Victorian Access Regime or Victorian transmission planning objectives. Assessments potentially will include the proposed technology mix of eligible projects or consideration of delivery and supply chain risks. Further detail on these proposed assessments will be included in the Access and Connections Handbook.

VicGrid will also take into account the size, technology and location of the proposed project, or other factors as VicGrid considers relevant to undertaking a fit-for-purpose, balanced and fair assessment.

Table 2 and Table 3 provide a list of indicative eligibility and merit criteria respectively. Following consultation and feedback received, we will outline the final criteria in the Access and Connections Handbook. Our design of the assessment process will consider the planning approvals processes to reduce any duplication and avoid potential inconsistencies.



Table 2 – Indicative eligibility criteria

Indicative eligibility criterion	Description
Eligible project	Project must be an eligible project and of a technology type specified in the REZ access scheme. This means it must involve generation from an eligible renewable energy source, and/or be an eligible project with an energy storage system, and must be located inside a REZ.
Eligible applicant	The applicant must hold an Australian Business Number (ABN), be an Australian entity duly incorporated under the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth) and hold and comply with all necessary authorisations that are material to the conduct of the business of the applicant. If the applicant is a consortium, partnership or joint venture, the applicant must demonstrate that each member holds an ABN, be an Australian entity duly incorporated under the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth) and hold and comply with all necessary authorisations that are material to the conduct of the business of the member.
Financial status	The applicant must not be or become bankrupt or insolvent, or be in or enter into administration, receivership or liquidation, or take advantage of any statute for the relief of insolvent debtors at any time.
Corporate governance and ethical conduct	The applicant must demonstrate a strong commitment to corporate governance and ethical conduct by providing evidence of established governance frameworks, adherence to ethical business practises, and a track record free from significant legal or regulatory violations.



Table 3 – Indicative merit criteria

Indicative merit criterion	Description
Delivery capacity and capability of the applicant	This criterion would assess the capacity, capability and track record of the applicant to deliver the project.
Commercial and technical readiness of the proposed project	This criterion would assess the likelihood of the project being able to achieve commercial operations, including the project development status and strategy to reach operations. This criterion will also assess the technical capability and readiness of the project and may consider both the nameplate capacity and proposed energy output.
Community and Traditional Owners engagement and benefits	The criterion would assess how the applicant meets government expectations for community, landholder and Traditional Owner engagement and provides meaningful social value and economic benefits. The assessment would be based on the Victorian Government's Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines and be undertaken in a similar way to the assessment outlined for the equivalent assessment criterion in the draft GIA Guidelines. We are inviting feedback on a draft of the Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines. Once finalised, the guidelines will set current expectations and provide clearer guidance to energy project developers (including REZ scheme authority applicants) on community, landholder and Traditional Owners engagement, and the design and delivery of discretionary social and economic benefits.
Contribution to meeting Victorian Access Regime and Victorian Transmission Planning objectives	This criterion would assess how the project meets and contributes to meeting the Victorian Access Regime and Victorian Transmission Planning objectives, including how the project considers coordinated connection infrastructure inside a REZ.



4.5 Proposed renewable energy zone scheme authority conditions

A REZ scheme authority will be issued to successful eligible projects. The REZ scheme authority will include a list of enforceable conditions, based on the information put forward in their application.

Consultation question:

Are there any considerations in developing REZ scheme authority conditions which should be taken into account to provide value to developers and/or investors?

A REZ scheme authority will be issued subject to conditions.

Conditions are required to ensure the certainty and viability of the developer as well as the project, and to ensure that capacity within the REZ is maximised for the benefit of energy consumers. Conditions are also important for landholders, communities and Traditional Owners to have confidence developers will follow through with the engagement and benefits approach put forward in their application.

The types of conditions will be set out in the REZ access schemes and regulations made under the *National Electricity (Victoria) Act 2005*. However, the conditions included within each REZ scheme authority will be tailored and specific to the eligible project, based on the application submitted during the RFP process.



Proposed conditions under consideration

Some of the conditions under consideration include:

- type of technology and nameplate capacity of the eligible project
- maximum amount of electricity in megawatts (MW) that will be permitted to be generated or connected to the DSN
- achievement of project development milestones where projects maintain access once they reach a specific date (e.g. planning consent received, connection application submitted, financial investment decision, construction commenced, commissioning achieved)
- provision of information and data as required for VicGrid to appropriately monitor compliance with REZ scheme authority
- requirements for planning, developing, constructing, operating and maintaining eligible project assets
- community, landholder and Traditional Owners engagement and social and economic benefit requirements, in accordance with activities put forward in the REZ scheme authority application
- date when the project must be operational
- requirements relating to technical or operational performance
- payment of REZ scheme fees
- requirements relating to transmission connection assets (to the DSN), including coordination activities.

Note, a full list of the types of conditions will be provided in the relevant REZ access scheme. A REZ scheme authority template will also be published prior to commencement of the regime.

Compliance and enforcement

We will monitor compliance with the REZ scheme authorities. Failure to comply with REZ scheme authority conditions may result in penalties during operation, and the potential for revocation of the REZ scheme authority if conditions are breached before connection.

Note, the compliance and enforcement framework is under development, and more detail will be provided in the Access and Connections Handbook, Victorian Transmission Investment Framework (VTIF) legislation and associated regulations.

4.6 Renewable energy zone scheme fees

All projects seeking to connect inside a REZ will be required to pay an annual REZ access scheme fee to VicGrid, which is proposed to be calculated based on the modelled benefits to a project locating in a REZ.

All eligible projects applying for a REZ scheme authority will be subject to an annual REZ scheme fee. The REZ scheme fee is expected to be set out in the relevant REZ access scheme or will be published on the VicGrid website. The fees are expected to be payable for 25 years.

Please note, REZ scheme fees will apply in addition to the connection charges currently applicable to projects.

Approach to calculate REZ scheme fees

The REZ scheme fees will be set in accordance with regulations. REZ scheme fees are proposed to be calculated based on modelled benefits an eligible project receives from locating in a REZ (i.e. access to new transmission capacity and reduced risk of network curtailment). We are proposing to set REZ scheme fees on a $/MW basis.

How REZ scheme fees will be used

REZ scheme fees are intended to be used for the following:

- the cost of administering the REZ access schemes
- REZ Community Energy Funds and Traditional Owners Fund
- the costs of reviewing community benefit arrangements.

The REZ Community Energy Funds and Traditional Owners Fund will receive a portion of REZ scheme fees from multiple developers and use these pooled funds to provide lasting benefits to REZ communities and Traditional Owners.

Note the REZ Community Energy Funds and Traditional Owners Fund are separate to the discretionary community benefit sharing programs or payments an individual project may choose to offer.

More information about REZ scheme fees will be published later in 2025.

4.7 Access arrangements for energy storage systems

We are considering different approaches for how energy storage systems (storage) located inside a declared REZ should be treated. We recognise this is a departure from our position outlined in the June 2024 Victorian Access Regime public paper, and as such, we welcome feedback on the proposed approaches. The approach to storage will be further refined following feedback, and the final approach will be outlined in the Access and Connections Handbook



Consultation question:

1) How should standalone or hybrid storage projects be treated within REZs, and how does this decision influence the investment case for renewable energy projects?

2) How could storage be operationally managed within a REZ to support renewable energy generation?

Treatment of standalone storage

Standalone storage located outside declared REZs will be subject to the GIA. However, standalone storage located inside a declared REZ, may either be subject to the REZ access scheme or GIA.

For standalone storage located inside a declared REZ, we are currently considering the following approaches:

- allowing the GIA to apply to all standalone storage regardless of location, with a modified assessment under criterion 1 based on submission of plans, such as operational strategies, for desktop assessment. For more details, see Section 5 and the draft GIA Guidelines
- specifying standalone storage as eligible technology type(s) in REZ access schemes, and applying an access limit(s) based on expected dispatch profiles, to reduce the risk of standalone storage exacerbating network curtailment
- specifying standalone storage as eligible technology type(s) in REZ access schemes and not applying a corresponding access limit(s) – this is the position outlined in the June 2024 Victorian Access Regime public paper.

We would like to hear feedback on these different approaches, including whether they are equally applicable to short and long duration energy storage, and whether there are any unintended impacts on the services standalone storage projects can provide that have potential system benefits (e.g. system strength, Frequency Control Ancillary Services (FCAS), etc.).

Following consultation, we will consider the feedback received to determine the most appropriate approach for treatment of standalone storage located inside and outside REZs. The final approach will be outlined in the Access and Connections Handbook and GIA Guidelines.



Why storage is treated differently

Storage technologies (such as batteries) provide a different but valuable service to renewable generation, as they can act as either a generator or a load depending on their state of charge and the market conditions.

Inside a REZ, if incentivised correctly, storage can increase the hosting capacity of a transmission network, soaking up surplus renewable generation by charging when the network is congested and reducing the need for transmission projects.

Outside of a REZ, storage technologies can better balance demand in our network and reduce the need for expensive generators to dispatch during peak demand. In addition to this, storage technologies can provide several other key services which are important in keeping our grid stable and operating in a safe manner, such as provision of FCAS and network support.

However, there is a risk when there is a high wholesale price period, as storage technologies (particularly standalone storage) may compete with renewable energy generation for REZ transmission capacity to maximise their revenue. This may result in added congestion in the network which reduces the value proposition for renewable energy generators. This is particularly true in REZs where transmission capacity is limited and there are a large number of wind projects, which are more likely to be generating during these peak price periods (typically in the evening).

It is important that the Victorian Access Regime takes an approach to storage that encourages its development; while ensuring it does not create these sub-optimal scenarios in the network.

Treatment of hybrid storage projects

Hybrid storage projects (where storage is located alongside a renewable energy generator) tend to behave slightly differently to standalone storage projects. Rather than maximise the revenue for a standalone storage project, hybrid projects are expected to seek to maximise revenue for the combined portfolio. This means that hybrid projects may have a lower risk of increasing congestion in the network, as they may take into consideration whether the renewable component of the project is being curtailed and charge during this time (rather than dispatch).

We propose hybrid projects are to be treated the same as renewable energy generation projects. As such hybrid projects located inside a declared REZ will be subject to the relevant REZ access schemes. Note, hybrid projects will be subject to the access limit(s) based on the generator component(s) of the hybrid project, and the size of access allocated to the project may be based on the generator component(s). This is to discourage oversizing of storage which may result in the perverse outcomes outlined above.

We would like to hear feedback on this proposed approach, including how it may apply to and affect hybrid projects with a small generator component(s), or generation projects that seek to add storage unit(s) via a system change.

5. How access will be granted outside renewable energy zone access schemes

The Grid Impact Assessment (GIA) is designed to reduce the risk of excessive network curtailment in renewable energy zones (REZs). The GIA will assess the potential REZ network curtailment impact of GIA applicants, as well as assess their community, landholder and Traditional Owner engagement and benefits plan(s).

Consultation question:

1) Does the proposed approach to the GIA provides sufficient value to developers and investors within a REZ?

2) Do the GIA guidelines provide enough certainty and clarity to developers and investors outside a REZ?

The GIA application process has been designed to:

- allow GIA applicants to informally engage with us prior to making a GIA application, which could occur together with pre-feasibility engagement stage that occurs as part of the connections process
- enable a clear process for GIA applicants that is aligned (and can parallel) with the connections process, with the aim of avoiding impacts on project development critical path timeframes – a GIA application can be submitted once a connection enquiry is submitted, and is expected to be completed before a connection application is complete
- allow GIA applicants to revise their GIA application in response to VicGrid feedback at set points in the process
- allow GIA applicants to undertake a self-assessment prior to submitting a formal application.

Projects that need to apply for a grid impact authority via the GIA are outlined in Section 3.5.

The GIA application process is described in detail in the draft GIA Guidelines and summarised in Figure 9 and Table 4. The GIA criteria are:

- **Criterion 1:** The proposed connection is unlikely to result in excessive network curtailment of existing and planned REZ scheme generators in Victoria.
- **Criterion 2:** The GIA applicant meets government expectations for community, landholder and Traditional Owner engagement, and provides meaningful social value and economic benefits.

Note, the draft GIA Guidelines have been released for feedback with this document. What we heard on the GIA consultation paper is summarised below and detailed in Attachment 2.

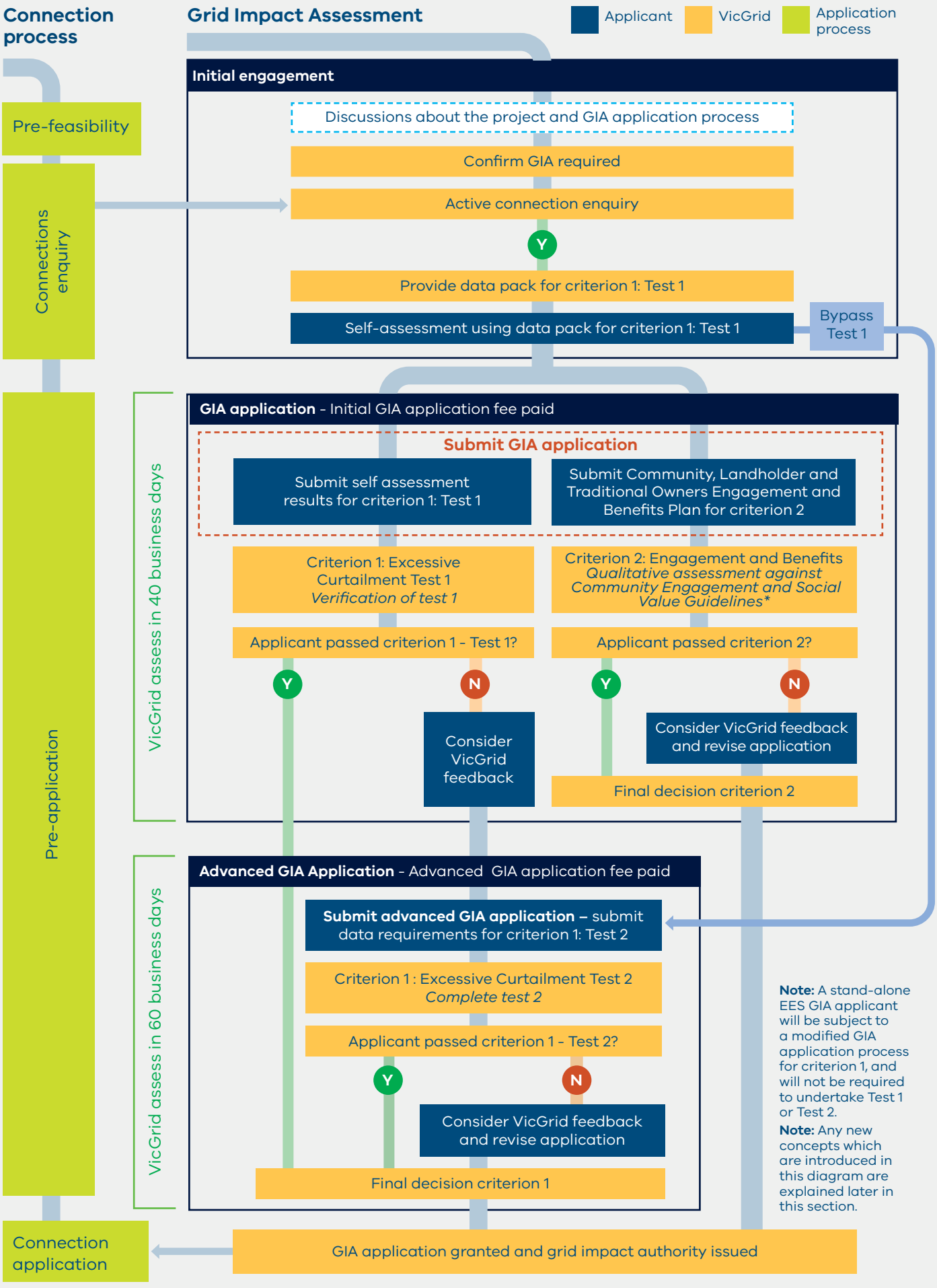
What we heard

In January 2025 we published a GIA consultation paper. During the 5-week consultation process we received 40 submissions with 6 key themes arising. Feedback themes include:

- scope of the GIA
- excessive curtailment criterion
- community and Traditional Owner engagement and benefits criterion
- GIA process
- transitional arrangements
- suggestions for additional criteria.

Details on how we have responded to feedback can be found in Attachment 2. We also acknowledge feedback requesting further consultation and engagement with industry, and welcome additional feedback on this consultation paper and the draft GIA Guidelines.

Figure 9 - Summary of GIA process



*We are inviting feedback on a draft of the Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines. Once finalised, the guidelines will set current expectations and provide clearer guidance to energy project developers (including REZ scheme authority applicants) on community, landholder and Traditional Owners engagement, and the design and delivery of discretionary social and economic benefits.

Table 4 – Key topics in draft GIA Guidelines

Key topic	Description
Process to apply for GIA	The GIA application process consists of multiple stages: • **Initial engagement:** This stage is an opportunity for VicGrid and GIA applicant to have early discussions prior to submitting a GIA application, to determine whether the proposed project will require a GIA to proceed. • **GIA application:** GIA applicants submit their GIA application and pay an initial GIA application fee. We will assess the GIA application and provide a response with feedback to the GIA applicant. • **Advanced GIA application:** This step is only relevant to criterion 1 and will be required if additional analysis is requested by VicGrid, or if the GIA applicant opts to undergo this specific assessment. The advanced GIA application includes market modelling of the project to determine the potential network curtailment impact on REZ scheme generators over time.
GIA application form	The draft GIA Guidelines sets out the information GIA applicants will be required to submit with their GIA application. The GIA application form templates will be published on our website prior to the commencement of the GIA.
GIA decisions	We will decide whether to grant or refuse each GIA application, based on our assessment against the criteria. GIA applications which: • meet both criteria will pass the GIA and will be issued a grid impact authority. • do not meet one or both criteria will fail the GIA and will not be issued a grid impact authority. We will provide a statement of reasons with our decision. Note, GIA applicants who fail will be unable to receive an offer to connect but can still reapply for the GIA. We expect there will be areas of subjectivity in the assessment and in these scenarios, we will use our discretion to assess the materiality of any variance and explain our rationale.
Criterion 1 assessment	To pass the GIA under criterion 1, a GIA applicant must pass either one of two tests. Note a GIA applicant can select which test it would like to be assessed against for criterion 1. • **Test 1 – Steady-state test:** the steady-state test (using Power System Simulation for Engineering (PSS/E)), requires the GIA applicant to carry out load flow power system studies using worst case(s) boundary conditions specified by VicGrid and informed by the Victorian Transmission Plan (VTP). The aim is to demonstrate there will be no material impact on forecast network curtailment of REZ scheme generators in a REZ during the worst case(s). We will provide a data pack composed of a set of PSS/E cases that reflect boundary conditions that enable a robust assessment of whether the GIA applicant is likely to add to the network curtailment of REZ scheme generators. The GIA applicant will conduct this assessment, and we will verify the results. If a GIA applicant fails this test, it can choose to undertake Test 2. • **Test 2 – Market-based test:** The market-based test (using PLEXOS), provides for a more detailed quantification of the forecast impact of the GIA applicant on the network (technical) curtailment of REZ scheme generators. The aim is to quantify the impact on forecast REZ generation network curtailment and determine whether the impact is within the threshold for excessive curtailment (see below). We will conduct this assessment, and if an applicant fails Test 2 it will fail the GIA. Both tests will model existing and planned REZ scheme generators, consistent with the access limit. Both tests will also account for projects that have been granted a grid impact authority through the GIA process (or are exempt from the GIA, see Section 3.2).

Key topic	Description
Definition of excessive network curtailment	It is currently proposed excessive network curtailment will be defined as a proportional increase in network curtailment above the efficient network curtailment forecast per REZ provided with access limits (see Section 4.2), and based on the network curtailment per REZ modelled in the VTP (but may not exactly equal these forecasts). Defining a proportional increase threshold for excessive curtailment is only relevant to Test 2. For most cases, we propose to set the threshold for proportional increase at 20% increase above the efficient network curtailment forecast for a REZ, assessed in each calendar year, and cumulatively assessed. We consider this protects the efficient network curtailment forecast for each REZ from material increases, while still making the GIA possible to pass and assess with a reasonable level of accuracy. As an illustrative example, if the efficient network curtailment forecast for a REZ was 2%, then the threshold would be 2.4%. Note this approach is subject to further analysis and testing and will be confirmed in the final GIA Guidelines. We expect there will be areas of subjectivity in the assessment and in these scenarios, we will use our discretion and explain our rationale.
Constraints considered in criterion 1 assessment	The proposed GIA criterion 1 assessment is based on network curtailment and does not consider economic curtailment. The assessment will consider existing and new thermal constraints, and some existing voltage constraints during system normal operation. We are considering whether grid impact authorities should be amended if there are changes made through the connection application stage which either create new constraints or materially alter existing constraints.
Criterion 2 assessment	To pass criterion 2, GIA applicants must submit a community, landholder and Traditional Owners engagement and benefits plan (engagement and benefits plan) as part of their GIA application, along with other supporting information. We will assess the GIA application to determine whether it meets government expectations for engaging with and creating value for communities, landholders and Traditional Owners. To do this, we will assess the application against the Victorian Government's Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines. Note this assessment will not require specific benefit sharing or local economic development initiatives or payments, as these are discretionary. The assessment may also take into account differences in project size and characteristics, understanding this may lead to different engagement and benefits approaches. While our assessment must be on the GIA application, it is important to cross check aspects where needed so the assessment does not become a 'tick box' exercise. In conducting its assessment, we may consult with impacted landholders, neighbours and/or community members to cross check engagement activities that have already been undertaken. We are also working with Traditional Owner groups to understand how Traditional Owner groups can input into VicGrid's assessment of this criterion with respect to Traditional Owner engagement.

Key topic	Description
Application of the GIA to storage projects	All standalone energy storage system (storage) projects will be required to submit a GIA application if they are classified as located outside a declared REZ or not specified as an eligible technology within a REZ access scheme. We propose that a modified assessment under criterion 1 will apply. This is to encourage storage development in Victoria while ensuring storage projects will operate in a manner which does not exacerbate congestion. Storage projects will be required to submit plans, such as operational strategies. A desktop assessment will be completed on the plans submitted. If in our reasonable opinion, the operation of the storage is likely to have a negligible impact to REZ scheme generators within a REZ, the storage project will pass criterion 1. The storage will also be subject to the full criterion 2 assessment. If the storage project passes both criteria, we will grant the GIA application and issue a grid impact authority. The grid impact authority will include conditions which reflect the operational strategies submitted in the GIA application. Note this modified assessment only applies to standalone storage. Hybrid projects are to be subject to the standard GIA process, using the nameplate capacity of the hybrid project's generator component(s). This approach is under development, and more detail will be provided in the final GIA Guidelines.
GIA application fees	GIA applicants will be required to pay application fee(s). One application fee is payable on submission of the GIA application with another fee payable upon submission of an advanced GIA application, if required. The application fee(s) will cover costs for the administration of the GIA. Fees will be determined and published on our website and are expected to be updated annually. Note we may request additional fees as necessary. Note the GIA application fee methodology is still in development. More detail will be provided in the final GIA Guidelines, and the GIA application fees will be published on our website prior to the commencement of the GIA.
System changes and amendments to grid impact authorities	Where an existing project or grid impact authority holder seeks a system change, the GIA application process set out in this Section 3 of the draft GIA Guidelines is expected to apply. However, this approach is under development, and more detail will be provided in the final GIA Guidelines. We will consider feedback on instances where system changes provide system benefits and are not expected to result in excessive network curtailment of existing and planned REZ scheme generators in Victoria, or significant impacts on communities, landholders or Traditional Owners.

Key topic	Description
Concurrent GIA applications	VicGrid proposes to assess GIA applications in the order in which they are received and validated. VicGrid expects to publish the approximate number of applications under consideration, or the approximate aggregate capacity of applications, or both. Note this approach is under development, and more detail will be provided in the final GIA Guidelines.
Conditions on grid impact authority	Grid impact authorities will be subject to conditions, including conditions related to the specific GIA application under both criteria. Failure to comply may result in penalties during operation, and the potential for revocation of the grid impact authority if conditions are breached prior to connection. Note the conditions are under development, and more detail will be provided in the final GIA Guidelines. A grid impact authority template may also be published prior to the commencement of the GIA.
Compliance and enforcement	We will monitor compliance with the grid impact authorities and if required revoke the grid impact authority pre-connection. Post-connection an appropriate regulatory entity will enforce penalties. Note the compliance and enforcement framework is under development, and more detail will be provided in the final GIA Guidelines, Victorian Transmission Investment Framework (VTIF) legislation and associated regulations.

Please note: Detailed information on the GIA can be found in the draft GIA Guidelines here at **engage.vic.gov.au/victorian-access-regime**

Note any feedback on the draft GIA Guidelines should be included as part of your submissions to this paper.



6. Connecting into the declared shared network

We are proposing to work with developers to promote, where possible, a coordinated approach to connection infrastructure within renewable energy zones (REZs) that limits community and environmental impacts and keeps costs low. We are seeking to consult on how connections will be managed and coordinated in REZs, as well as how we will manage the connection process inside and outside of REZs.



Consultation question:

How should the development of connection hubs and connection assets be coordinated between developers to create value and improve overall efficiency?

6.1 Connection process and system strength arrangements

As part of the Victorian Transmission Investment Framework (VTIF) reforms, responsibility for planning Victoria's declared shared network (DSN) and all associated declared network functions will transfer from the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) to VicGrid in 2025. From this point, connection applicants will engage directly with us for all matters related to the transmission network connections process. For further information please visit: **energy.vic.gov.au/renewable-energy/vicgrid/about-vicgrid**

Connections process

At this stage, we do not propose to substantially modify the process currently used to manage DSN connections in Victoria. That is, connection applications both inside and outside of REZs will be progressed and assessed using the process set out in Chapter 5 of the National Electricity Rules (NER).

In addition, no changes are proposed to the technical standards outlined in the NER that form the basis for connection negotiations. We will monitor the process once the reforms are implemented and may consider opportunities to enhance connection processes in future. Note, connection agreements may need to be amended to cater for the Victorian Access Regime.

System strength

We do not propose any changes to system strength, which will continue to be managed under the national system strength framework set out in the NER consistently across Victoria inside and outside REZs.

6.2 Connecting within a declared renewable energy zone

Within REZs, eligible projects will need to connect to the DSN either at an existing terminal station or through the development of a new terminal station.

We are committed to the efficient and coordinated development of network infrastructure and to minimising impacts on landholders, communities and Traditional Owners. Consequently, there may be times when we will take a more active role in determining how eligible projects connect to the DSN than has been the case to date under the existing arrangements. The current NER process works well for single connection applicants, but less well in more complex situations, for instance when multiple parties are seeking to connect.

We propose to take a role in collaborating and working with connection applicants located inside a REZ to identify and determine how eligible projects are to connect into the network, either at an existing terminal station or through the development of a new terminal station (connection hubs).

Connection hub options

The proposed approach enables VicGrid to establish a 'menu' of connection hub options that can be tailored to ensure that the connections to the DSN are fit for purpose.

The potential options available under this approach are set out in Table 5 below. Assessment of which option is best suited to a REZ will be considered based on the portfolio of projects applying for REZ access. Under this approach, the preferred option for connecting to the DSN in each REZ will be set out in the proposed REZ Infrastructure Plan (see page 57).

Table 5 - Connection options

Connection option	Description	Delivered through current NER framework
Option 1 – Status quo	Where individual developers are responsible for connecting into the DSN either through a new or existing terminal station.	Facilitated through use of the existing NER framework, where the developer has the option of appointing a Declared Transmission System Operator (DTSO) or requesting VicGrid to conduct a tender for a DTSO to undertake augmentations to the DSN.
Option 2 – Shared connection	Where 2 developers are seeking to connect to the DSN in the same area, at the same time (or reasonably closely over time).	Facilitated through use of the existing NER framework and cost allocation guidelines. Access conditions may be used to facilitate sharing, for example the appointment of a common DTSO by VicGrid. This may also be completed through future Victorian Transmission Plan (VTP) planning or future initiatives or reforms.
Option 3 – VicGrid-led connection hubs	Where there are multiple developers expected to connect in the same area, over a prolonged period.	VicGrid would take on responsibility for developing connection hubs, determining the most viable technical solution with the connecting parties, and driving design and DTSO appointment. Further consideration will be given to implementation arrangements.

6.3 Connections to the terminal stations

We intend to work with connection applicants in a declared REZ to identify opportunities to coordinate the development of connection assets linking projects to terminal stations. This will be outlined in the REZ Infrastructure Plan.

Why coordination is important

A key objective for connections in REZs is to ensure that connection assets and other network augmentations required, where possible, are developed on a coordinated and efficient basis. This is to avoid the 'spaghetti effect' of powerlines criss-crossing the landscape and reducing impacts on people's homes and livelihoods.

How this may be achieved?

In some cases, it may be appropriate for developers to continue to be responsible for developing their own connection assets. In other cases, it may be more efficient for such assets to be shared, and in these circumstances, we may look to seek an outcome where these assets form part of the DSN.

We anticipate some level of coordination of connection assets is likely needed across all REZs with the development of multiple eligible projects. This might take the form of working with access and connection applicants to identify areas where connection assets could be co-located or located near each other.

As with terminal stations, we intend for the preferred design option for the coordination of connection assets to be determined through the REZ Infrastructure Plan. The preferred option will ensure the specific characteristics of the REZ are considered.

The REZ Infrastructure Plan

To best promote the development of efficient and coordinated network infrastructure within REZs, we are proposing to develop a REZ Infrastructure Plan for each REZ, which will set out a preferred design and delivery strategy of the proposed assets to enable connection to the DSN.

The REZ Infrastructure Plan will ensure the specific technical needs of each REZ are captured while supporting efficient generation and storage project development and helping to reduce impacts on communities, landholders and Traditional Owners.

We will develop each REZ Infrastructure Plan on a collaborative and consultative basis to best capture the needs and preferences of developers, communities, landholders and Traditional Owners, and leverage work already done by developers.

We will work closely with developers through the access allocation process to understand their proposed connection asset locations and specifications, to minimise any impacts on development timelines and work already done.

We also will design the REZ Infrastructure Plan process in an iterative manner, where:

- preliminary information can be fed into the access allocation process to guide applications by eligible project developers
- merit criteria related to coordinated connections can guide our evaluation of responses
- access conditions relating to transmission connection infrastructure are aligned with the REZ Infrastructure Plan process and help facilitate the preferred design and delivery strategy
- the REZ Infrastructure Plan is tailored to the eligible projects that are successful in the access allocation process and issued REZ scheme authorities.

We intend to release a 'roadmap' to commence the process for developing each REZ Infrastructure Plan. This will outline the process and approach for developing the plan, and opportunities for engagement.



7. Next steps and glossary

7.1 Next steps for consultation

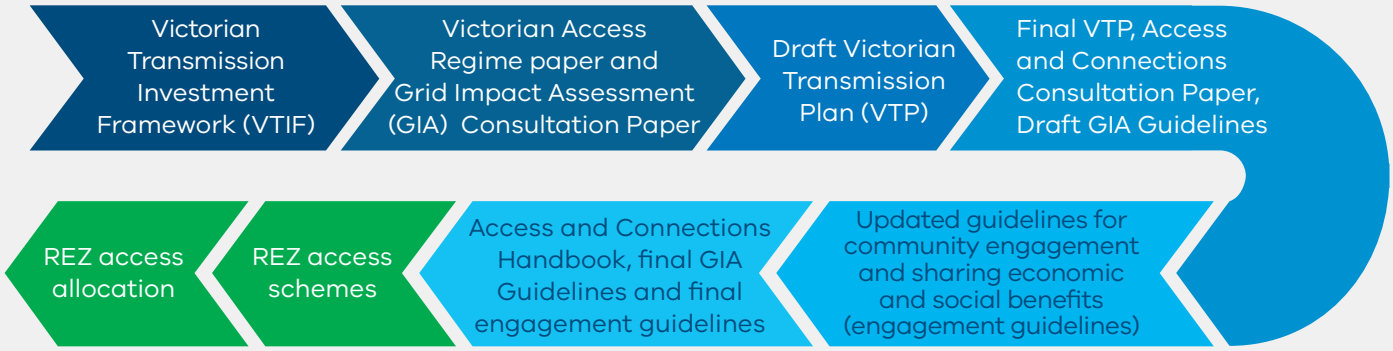
We welcome feedback on this Access and Connections Consultation Paper via submissions.

For more information about how to provide a submission and other engagement opportunities, visit **engage.vic.gov.au/victorian-access-regime**

For information about the Victorian Access Regime, read VicGrid's June 2024 public paper and an accompanying factsheet at **energy.vic.gov.au/renewable-energy/vicgrid/for-businesses-and-developers**

Please refer to the Engage Victoria website for the closing date to provide submissions about this consultation paper.

In the coming phases of access and connections design and delivery, we will seek key information and feedback to ensure they are suitable, simple and designed to foster a successful renewable energy sector. The key steps are noted below, and we welcome your input throughout.





Acronyms

Term	Definition
ABN	Australian Business Number
AEMO	Australian Energy Market Operator
CIS	Capacity Investment Scheme
DSN	Declared shared network
DTSO	Declared Transmission System Operator
FCAS	Frequency Control Ancillary Services
EES	Environment effects statement
GIA	Grid impact assessment
MW	Megawatts

Term	Definition
NEM	National energy market
NER	National Energy Rules
REZ	Renewable energy zone
RFP	Request for Proposal
VAPR	Victorian Annual Planning Report
VRE	Variable renewable energy
VTIF	Victorian Transmission Investment Framework
VTP	Victorian Transmission Plan

7.2 Glossary

The terms provided in the glossary below include those defined in legislation (e.g., the National Energy Rules and National Electricity Law) as well as new concepts introduced as part of the Victorian access reforms. Please note that if a term is defined in legislation, the legislative definition will take precedence.

Term	Definition
Access applicant (applicant)	A party who wants to establish or modify a connection to the DSN, and applies for access under the Grid Impact Assessment (GIA) or renewable energy zone (REZ) access scheme.
Access authority	A form of licence (either REZ scheme authority or grid impact authority) allowing a generation, storage or hybrid project to connect to the DSN via the REZ access schemes or GIA, subject to conditions including a cap (in megawatts) on the nameplate capacity of the connection.
Access limit	A cap (in megawatts) on the capacity of renewable energy that can connect and generate inside a declared REZ at a particular point in time. This limit will be declared by the Minister in a REZ Or der and REZ access scheme, and Gazetted. Each REZ may have a different access limit for different types of renewable energy technologies.
Access regime	An access regime comprises policies, regulations and/or conditions that govern the terms on which energy developers can gain access to the transmission network.
Advanced GIA application	A stage in the GIA application process that is only relevant to the market based test under criterion 1, and will be required if additional analysis is requested by VicGrid, or if the GIA applicant opts to undergo this specific assessment.
Augmentation	These are improvements or additions made to the existing electricity transmission network to increase its capacity, efficiency, or reliability. This can involve upgrading current infrastructure or building new components to handle increased demand or integrate new generation sources. Note augmentation also has the same meaning as defined in the National Electricity Law. Augmentation of a transmission or distribution system means work to enlarge the system or to increase its capacity to transmit or distribute electricity.
Capacity Investment Scheme (CIS)	The Australian Government's Capacity Investment Scheme provides underwriting to encourage investment in renewable energy generation and storage to connect to the grid by 2030.

Term	Definition
Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines	The Victorian Government's Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines for Renewable Energy and Transmission Projects. The guidelines have been released as a draft for feedback alongside this consultation paper. Once finalised, the guidelines will set current expectations and provide clearer guidance to energy project developers (including grid impact authority applicants) on community, landholder and Traditional Owners engagement, and the design and delivery of discretionary social and economic benefits.
Connection applicant	Connection applicant has the same meaning as defined in the National Electricity Rules. A subset of which is a person who wants to establish or modify connection to a transmission network and who makes a connection enquiry as described in clause 5.3.2 or clause 5.3A.5 of the National Electricity Rules.
Connection hubs	Designated connection points within the DSN or DTS, i.e. terminal station, where multiple projects connect to the transmission network inside a REZ.
Connection process	The process to connect a generator, energy storage system, hybrid system or large load to the DSN, as outlined in Chapter 5 of the National Electricity Rules.
Declared REZ	A designated geographical area that has been declared by Order of the Minister for Energy and Resources, having been identified by VicGrid as having high potential for renewable energy generation.
Declared shared network (DSN)	The Victorian interconnected high-voltage power lines and shared terminal stations that transport large amounts of electricity from where it is generated to where it is needed across the state. It allows multiple electricity providers to share the infrastructure for transporting electricity. Sometimes wind and solar developments need to build their own private lines to connect their project to the shared network.
Energy storage system or storage	Energy storage system. Any system which stores energy and dispatches it into the electricity network. Note DSN also has the same meaning in National Electricity Law, which is a jurisdiction's declared transmission system excluding any part of it that is a connection asset within the meaning of the National Electricity Rules.

Term	Definition
Excessive curtailment	Referring to network curtailment due to excessive network congestion, which increases incrementally as new generation is added to the network. It is defined as a proportional increase in network curtailment above the 'efficient' network curtailment forecast per REZ provided with access limits in the REZ access scheme.
Geographical footprint of a project	The proposed geographical area of the project site (i.e. site boundary)
Grid Impact Assessment (GIA)	The application process for a grid impact authority, which will be required by generation, storage and hybrid projects outside REZs, and technologies that are not specified in REZ access schemes inside REZs, seeking to connect to the DSN (or seeking a system change).
GIA applicant	A party who wants to establish or modify a connection to the DSN, and applies for access under the Grid Impact Assessment.
GIA application	A stage in the GIA process where a GIA applicant submits its application for a grid impact authority demonstrating how it meets the specified assessment criteria.
Grid impact authority	A form of licence allowing a generation, storage or hybrid project to connect to the DSN via the GIA, subject to conditions including a cap (in megawatts) on the nameplate capacity of the connection.
Grid impact authority holder	A person to whom a grid impact authority has been issued.
Hybrid project or storage	An energy system connected to the DSN which combines energy generation and energy storage into a single system.
Inside a declared REZ	At least half of a proposed project's geographical footprint (including connection point) is within the REZ boundary.
Landholder	An individual or organisation eligible to receive landholder benefits under the *National Electricity (Victoria) Act 2005*, for the siting of transmission infrastructure on land where they are the freehold landholder or, in relation to Crown Land, where they are a Traditional Owner, or long-term lease or licence holder who is materially impacted.
Minister	Minister for Energy and Resources.
Nameplate capacity	The maximum rated electrical output that a project can produce or consumer under specific nameplate conditions, typically expressed in megawatts (MW), as defined by the manufacturer and registered with AEMO or VicGrid.

Term	Definition
National Energy Market or NEM	The interconnected electricity network which services most areas of Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia.
Optimal Development Pathway	The optimal mix of transmission projects needed to connect REZs with Victoria's declared shared network over the next 15 years, taking into account economic cost-benefit and robustness analysis across different scenarios, as well as power system security and reliability. For the 2025 VTP, the optimal development pathway sets out proposed projects and sequencing over the next 15 years. Future VTPs will take a 25-year timeframe.
Outside a declared REZ	More than half of the development footprint of a proposed generation system or hybrid system is located outside the declared boundaries of a REZ. This applies even if the electrical connection point is inside the REZ boundary.
Proposed REZ	The draft areas proposed to be considered for REZ declaration that will be finalised following industry and community consultation. These were presented in the draft 2025 VTP.
Renewable Energy Zone (REZ)	An area declared in a renewable energy zone Order where a REZ access scheme and special benefits arrangements will apply.
REZ access scheme	A scheme, under the proposed Victorian Access Regime, declared by the Minister for Energy and Resources, which sets out arrangements governing applications for a REZ scheme authority by eligible generation, storage or hybrid projects seeking connection to the DSN (or seeking a system change). A REZ access scheme will include eligible technologies, access limits for each technology, access fees, access conditions, and the process for allocating access.
REZ boundary	The proposed geographical area of a REZ.
REZ Infrastructure Plan	The proposed strategic document outlining the planning, development, and operation of REZ infrastructure.
REZ scheme authority	A form of licence allowing a generation, storage or hybrid project to connect to the DSN via a REZ access scheme, subject to conditions including a cap (in megawatts) on the nameplate capacity of the connection.

Term	Definition
REZ scheme authority holder	A person to who, a REZ scheme authority has been issued.
System Strength	This describes the ability of the power system to maintain and control the voltage waveform at a given location, both during steady state operation and following a disturbance. System strength is often approximated by the amount of electrical current available during a network fault (fault level), however the concept also encompasses a collection of broader electrical characteristics and power system interactions.
Traditional Owner	Traditional Owner Corporations representing Traditional Owners, having the meaning set out in the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010*. Traditional Owners have rights that must be upheld as laid out under the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*, the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010*, *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* and *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth).
Transmission planning standard	A set of criteria and guidelines that aims to ensure the development and maintenance of a reliable, efficient and sustainable transmission system to meet current and future electricity demands, in this case for the transmission system in Victoria. The transmission planning standard VicGrid has adopted for the transmission system in Victoria is a probabilistic planning standard.
Victorian Access Regime	The proposed set of new rules, to be defined under the National Electricity (Victoria) Act 2005, for how new projects can connect to the Declared Shared Network, both within and outside of REZs. Under the Victorian Access Regime, the Minister will declare REZ access schemes. All new generation, ESS and hybrid projects which connect to the DSN will do so under either a REZ access scheme or a grid impact assessment process
Victorian Transmission Investment Framework (VTIF)	A set of reforms being implemented to transmission planning in Victoria, including: a new transmission planning objective; a new planning process through the Victorian Transmission Plan; the Victorian Access Regime; new community and Traditional Owners benefit arrangements; and new approaches to procuring transmission infrastructure.
Victorian Transmission Plan (VTP)	A document setting out an optimal set of transmission projects that address the planning and development needs over the following periods related to new major electricity transmission infrastructure to facilitate connection of renewable energy zones to the declared shared network: (a) 15 years for the first Victorian transmission plan (b) 25 years for each subsequent Victorian transmission plan.

Attachment 1

Challenges associated with the current open access regime

Currently, the National Energy Market (NEM), including Victoria, is operating under an 'open' access regime. An access regime comprises policies, regulations and/or conditions that govern the terms on which energy developers can gain access to the transmission network.

Anyone seeking to connect electricity infrastructure to Victoria's DSN must go through the connection application process in Section 5 of the National Electricity Rules (NER) and submit an application to connect under clause 5.3.4 of the NER. Under NER clause 5.3.6, a connection applicant cannot connect its facilities to the DSN until it has executed its connection agreement.

Open access gives a generator or storage a right to connect to the grid, but not necessarily to be dispatched and paid. Dispatch is managed through the NEM spot market, where generators submit the price and quantity offers to the system operator (Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO)). AEMO's central dispatch engine orders the generators' offers, from least to most expensive, and determines which generators will be dispatched and the "spot" price at which dispatch will occur.

The current open access regime creates a number of challenges, including:[23]

- **Unclear locational investment signals** – it can be difficult for generation and storage projects to identify the areas where they can best utilise the network. This can lead to multiple generators connecting in areas of the network not designed to support that level of capacity, resulting in congestion-prone areas of the network. It can also lead to storage facilities locating in areas that do not make the best use of their services.
- **Risk of curtailment** – a new generator can connect to the network in a congestion-prone area and cannibalise the network capacity available to a pre-existing generator, increasing curtailment risk. Network curtailment occurs when the system operator (AEMO) limits the output of certain generators because the network, or parts of it, reach capacity.
- **Inefficient dispatch** – inefficient and counterintuitive dispatch outcomes can occur when there is congestion, including race-to-the-floor (disorderly) bidding[24] that that can increase generating costs.

These challenges are expected to increase as the renewable energy transition progresses due to increasing number of variable renewable energy (VRE) connections to the DSN, and it is not economic to build out the transmission network to remove all congestion.

The VTIF seeks to address these issues through the Victorian Access Regime, alongside a refreshed approach to transmission and REZ planning. Through the Victorian Transmission Plan (VTP), VicGrid will identify REZs and the VRE capacity needed in each REZ to reliably and securely meet forecast demand. The VTP will also identify the transmission needed to provide an efficient level of hosting and transfer capacity for the generation in REZs. This provides improved locational investment signals.

The Victorian Access Regime complements this by governing the amount of generation capacity connecting to the DSN both within and outside of REZs to reduce the risk of excessive network curtailment risk in REZs.

[23] For more information, see AEMC, Transmission access reform: Final Report, September 2024, section 2. Note open access is often considered alongside regional pricing in the NEM, which refers to generators and storage being paid the same regional reference price (RRP) regardless of where they are located within Victoria. This exacerbates the issues associated with open access. The Victorian Access Regime is focussed on access and connection to the transmission network and does not consider changes to the regional pricing arrangements.

[24] For more information on disorderly bidding see AEMC, Fact Sheet – disorderly bidding. Note disorderly bidding refers to generators strategically offering electricity at prices that are lower than their cost to ensure dispatch during congested periods. See: https://www.aemc.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-03/Fact%20Sheet%20disorderly%20bidding.pdf

Attachment 2

Feedback on Grid Impact Assessment Consultation Paper

The Grid Impact Assessment (GIA) Consultation Paper was released on 8 January 2025 followed by a 5-week submission process through the Engage Victoria website. During the submission process, a series of peak body and regulator briefings were held along with an energy industry webinar. The purpose of these briefings and webinar was to provide an overview of the GIA and answer questions in preparation for submissions.

We conducted:

- 11 briefings with peak bodies and regulators
- 1 webinar attended by 163 people from 84 organisations
- 40 submissions were received during the consultation period.

The draft GIA Guidelines build upon feedback received from the GIA consultation paper published in January 2025. Our response to feedback received is summarised by key theme in the table below. We also acknowledge feedback requesting further consultation and engagement with industry, and welcome additional feedback from industry on this consultation paper and the draft GIA Guidelines.

Table 6 – Feedback on Grid Impact Assessment Consultation Paper and how it has been addressed

No.	Topic raised	Description	How has this been addressed?
1	**Scope of the GIA**	Feedback received through submissions expressed concern about the introduction of the Victorian Access Regime, and the move away from open access arrangements. Submissions highlighted impacts to investment certainty, market efficiency, and renewable energy project development as key results of the change. Some submissions raised concern that restricting access outside of REZs through the GIA could hinder the state's energy transition. Feedback emphasised the need for clear, transparent, and objective assessment criteria to avoid regulatory uncertainty and ensure efficient network usage. The importance of avoiding duplicative assessments required under other frameworks was also raised.	We have retained the proposed physical access regime in the draft GIA Guidelines. The current stage of development of the Victorian Access Regime is the result of the Victorian Transmission Investment Framework (VTIF) consultation process from 2022-2024, where we considered feedback from industry and other stakeholders, the majority of which supported a physical access regime. In June 2024, we also published a Victorian Access Regime paper which described key aspects of the regime. This framework is included in the National Electricity (Victoria) Amendment (VicGrid Stage 2 Reform) Bill 2025. We consider the Victorian Access Regime will support the renewable energy transition, safeguarding renewable energy generators in renewable energy zones (REZs) from excessive network curtailment and giving communities, landholders and Traditional Owners confidence in the REZs identified through the Victorian Transmission Plan (VTP). We consider the draft GIA Guidelines provides clear, transparent, and objective assessment criteria and assessment processes. It follows from the consultation paper and provides additional detail and clarity.

No.	Topic raised	Description	How has this been addressed?
2	**Excessive curtailment criterion**	Feedback received through submissions highlighted the need for clear, transparent, and objective criteria for excessive curtailment in the GIA process. This is needed to mitigate uncertainty for industry in the GIA assessment. There were suggestions in some submissions that absolute limitations on curtailment risk were becoming less relevant with the increase in battery storage. Conversely, there was also feedback supporting the protection of REZ generation and calls to restrict access to projects located within REZs only (with no projects allowed outside of REZs). It was noted that REZ developers should have confidence their projects would not be adversely affected by external projects. It was also highlighted that not requiring projects outside of REZs to pay an access fee created an uneven playing field for investment.	The draft GIA Guideline provides further information on the scope of the criterion 1 assessment, along with a clear application process and assessment methodology. The assessment methodology is explained in detailed in Appendix B of the draft GIA Guideline, including a definition for excessive curtailment, the constraints considered, and the responsibilities of applicants and VicGrid in conducting each test. While projects outside of REZ access schemes are not required to pay a REZ scheme fee, they will pay a GIA application fee. They will also need to pass the GIA, including criterion 2 which requires the applicant to meet government expectations for community and Traditional Owners engagement and provide meaningful benefits.
3	**Community and Traditional Owners engagement and benefits criterion**	The importance of meaningful engagement with local communities and Traditional Owners was a recurring theme throughout the submissions. However, the submissions highlighted that the process for demonstrating compliance with criterion 2 needed to be clear for industry. A theme throughout submissions raised separating criterion 2 requirements from the overall GIA process to avoid delays. There were also points raised to ensure criterion 2 complemented existing assessments under other frameworks, such as the planning permit process.	The draft GIA Guidelines retains criterion 2, and provides more detail and clarity about the application and assessment approach. The approach requires applicants submit a community, landholder and Traditional Owners engagement and benefits plan, which we will assess against the Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines. This approach does not require the applicant to undertake specific engagement activities or community benefit initiatives, so the applicant can ensure there is no duplication of activities in their plan. Overall, ensuring a commitment to early and meaningful engagement with landholders and local communities, and partnerships with Traditional Owners, is an important part of the Victorian Access Regime, and the process for developing and delivering energy projects in Victoria.

No.	Topic raised	Description	How has this been addressed?
4	**GIA process**	Several submissions highlighted the need for further clarity on the full GIA assessment processes. There were suggestions for this to be supported through the provision of standardised tools, clear roles and responsibilities and a technical methodology. There was feedback about the length of the 120-day review time and how this would impact commercial risk and commercial viability, suggesting that 30-60 days would be a more appropriate timeline. There was also some feedback suggesting more clarity on the treatment of battery energy storage systems and other storage projects through the GIA. In relation to the required information needed for criterion 1, there was some concern raised about the degree of modelling required. There were some recommendations made to address this, including to publish indicative constraint sets, provide standardised modelling tools, and establish a dedicated channel for technical clarifications.	The draft GIA Guidelines include a technical methodology which details our approach to Criterion 1 assessment, including modelling tools, data requirements and roles and responsibilities. We will also provide GIA application forms prior to commencement of the GIA, and will provide a data pack for the Criterion 1 assessment as part of the application process. The proposed treatment of storage projects has also been further considered in the draft GIA Guidelines. The draft GIA Guidelines includes updated timings for each stage of the application process. These balance the required time needed for assessment (considering the new information added for the technical methodology) with the feedback for faster timeframes. We note this is a new process, so the timelines are not mandated, and are subject to change.
5	**Transitional Arrangements**	Submissions frequently raised the need for transitional arrangements to accommodate projects already in progress, and flexibility in regulatory requirements. Submissions advocated for realistic development milestones, flexibility in revocation of access authorisations, and consideration of advanced projects in setting transitional arrangements. Robust transitional arrangements were viewed as key to maintaining investor confidence. Concerns were raised about the ability of VicGrid and industry to process the initial bottleneck of assessments given unfamiliarity with the new framework. It was noted this could cause delays through the entire development pipeline. There was also feedback that more frequent reviews of the GIA guidelines might be beneficial, especially in the early stages to achieve best-practice outcomes.	This paper sets out our view on the commencement date and application of transitional arrangements for the Victorian Access Regime, for continued consultation with stakeholders. We are seeking to ensure continuity of the connections process and investor confidence in Victoria, while delivering on reforms to facilitate the energy transition and improve consumer, landholder, Traditional Owner and community outcomes through the identification and development of REZs.

No.	Topic raised	Description	How has this been addressed?
6	**Suggestions for additional criteria**	A few submissions raised the need to expand the assessment criteria to include environment, biodiversity and agriculture considerations. One submission expressed concern that the proposed GIA does not adequately assess or protect agricultural land. There were also a few submissions highlighting the importance of battery storage (and potential to use electric vehicle batteries), network stability and energy loss concerns, and finding alternative ways to reduce congestion to make best use of renewable energy (e.g. initiatives to shift energy demand).	While we acknowledge the importance of environment, biodiversity and agriculture considerations in renewable energy development, we have retained the two criteria in the GIA consultation paper. This is because the GIA is not intended to duplicate or interfere with the approvals process under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*. This approvals process assesses strategic land use and development impacts, alongside impacts to the environment, biodiversity and agricultural land use.

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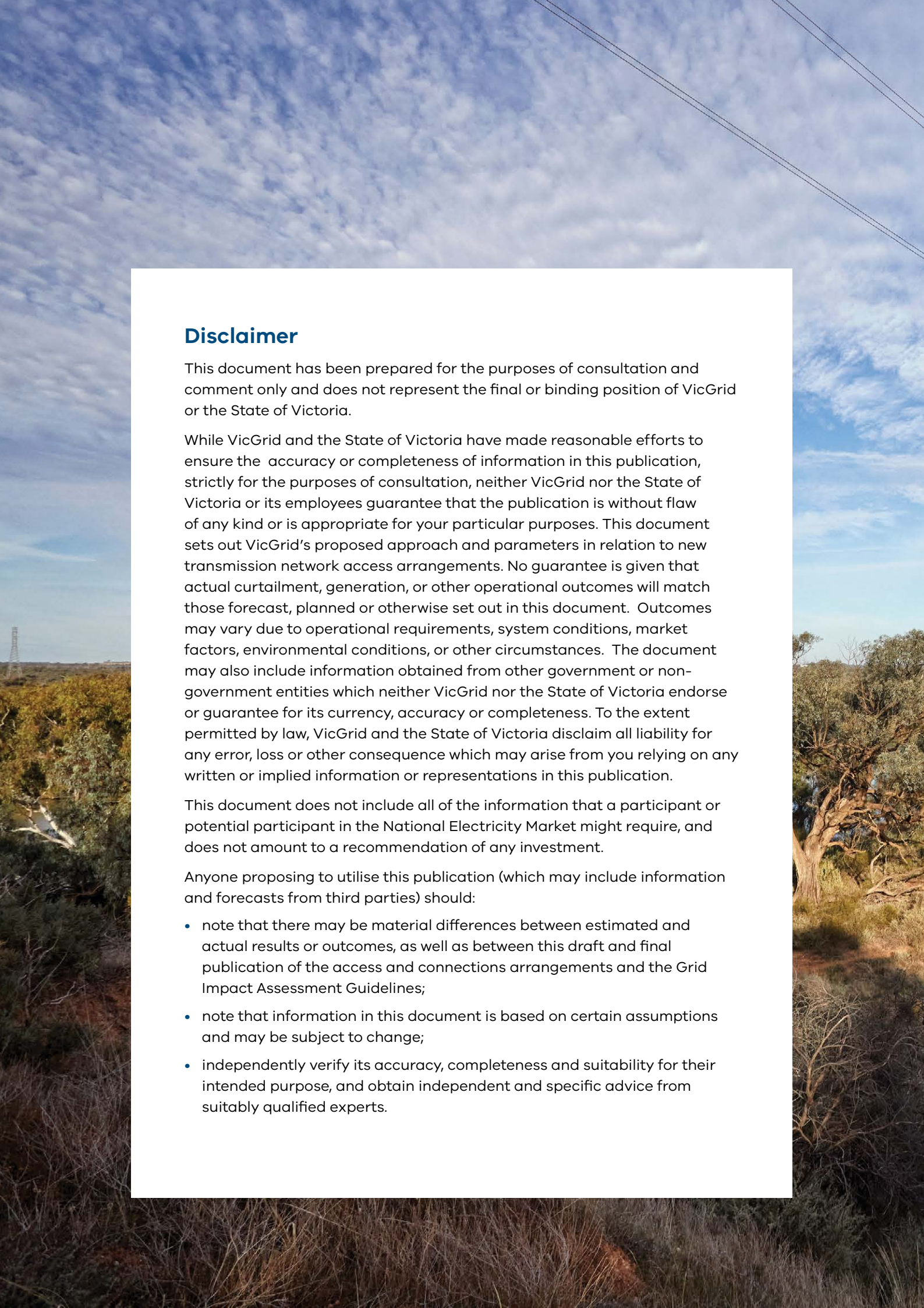
September 2025

Draft Grid Impact Assessment Guidelines



VicGrid

VICTORIA State Government



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Anyone proposing to utilise this publication (which may include information and forecasts from third parties) should:

- note that there may be material differences between estimated and actual results or outcomes, as well as between this draft and final publication of the access and connections arrangements and the Grid Impact Assessment Guidelines;
- note that information in this document is based on certain assumptions and may be subject to change;
- independently verify its accuracy, completeness and suitability for their intended purpose, and obtain independent and specific advice from suitably qualified experts.

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Acknowledgment of Traditional Owners

We acknowledge and respect Victoria's Traditional Owners as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and deep spiritual connection to it. We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of culture and traditional practices.

We are committed to genuinely partnering and meaningfully engaging with Victoria's Traditional Owners and First Peoples to support the protection of Country, the maintenance of spiritual and cultural practices and their broader aspirations in the 21st century and beyond.

Explanatory note and consultation notice

This document is the draft of Victoria's Grid Impact Assessment (GIA) Guidelines. The purpose of the GIA Guidelines is to set out the scope, criteria and application process for the GIA, including the requirements for GIA applicants, and for VicGrid's assessment of GIA applications.

The GIA forms an integral part of the new Victorian Access Regime, which will govern connections to Victoria's transmission network (referred to as the declared shared network, or DSN). It has been designed to reduce the risk of excessive network curtailment in renewable energy zones (REZs) for generators connected via a REZ access scheme. It has also been designed to reinforce Victorian Government expectations for how developers engage with and create social and economic value for communities, landholders and Traditional Owners.

The Access and Connections Consultation Paper released alongside the draft GIA Guidelines provides more detail on the overall approach to the Victorian Access Regime. It also provides a summary of key topics in the draft GIA Guidelines and VicGrid's response to feedback on the GIA Consultation Paper released in January 2025.

VicGrid is consulting on this draft version of the GIA Guidelines, ahead of preparing the final GIA Guidelines. Feedback from the energy industry, landholders, communities, Traditional Owners and other stakeholders will help inform the final GIA Guidelines, to ensure the GIA can achieve the Victorian Access Regime objectives and provide suitable guidance for GIA applicants.

Assumptions regarding the commencement of the Victorian Access Regime

The Victorian Access Regime is proposed to commence, across Victoria, in mid-March 2026.

These draft GIA Guidelines have been developed concurrently with legislation to enact the Victorian Transmission Investment Framework (VTIF) reforms. As such, it does not use language or definitions from the legislation or associated regulations currently being developed to enact the Victorian Access Regime and GIA. This will be updated for the final GIA Guidelines.

For further information regarding upcoming VicGrid publications, please refer to the Access and Connections Consultation Paper.



How to participate in this consultation

VicGrid invites written submissions from interested persons. To take part in the consultation:

- upload a submission via Engage Victoria at **engage.vic.gov.au/victorian-access-regime**
- email a submission to **vicgrid@deeca.vic.gov.au**
- send a written submission to **VicGrid, PO Box 500, East Melbourne VIC 8002.**

Submissions close at **11:59pm (AEDT)** on **5 November 2025**. Before making a submission, please read and take note of VicGrid's privacy collection statement at **engage.vic.gov.au/victorian-access-regime**

For information about the Victorian Access Regime, read VicGrid's June 2024 public paper and an accompanying factsheet at **energy.vic.gov.au/renewable-energy/VicGrid/for-businesses-and-developers**

Please note, all submissions will be treated as public documents and will be published online unless clearly identified as being confidential. To promote transparency in VicGrid's development of highly significant reforms, confidential submissions will not be given as much weight as those that are published. Submissions are encouraged to be made on a publicly available basis. Submissions received after the closing date and time will not be valid, and VicGrid is not obliged to consider them.



1. Authority and structure

This document sets out VicGrid's Grid Impact Assessment (GIA) Guidelines for:

- generator, energy storage system (ESS) or hybrid project connection applicants located outside a declared renewable energy zone (REZ) or of a technology type not specified in a REZ access scheme.
- existing generator, ESS or hybrid projects seeking to increase the capacity of their projects (i.e. system change), located outside a declared REZ or of a technology type not specified in a REZ access scheme.

These projects are required to apply to VicGrid for a grid impact authority before they can complete their connection to Victoria's declared shared network (DSN).

1.1. Authority

The role of the Grid Impact Assessment Guidelines (GIA Guidelines) will be set under the *National Electricity (Victoria) Act 2005*.

The GIA Guidelines set out the GIA scope, application and assessment process, including the manner, form and matters to be included in applications for a grid impact authority. GIA applications will be required to be prepared in accordance with the GIA Guidelines.

The GIA Guidelines must be developed in accordance with consultation procedures that will be set out in the legislation. The publication of draft GIA Guidelines and public consultation represent the intended formal process prior to developing and publishing final GIA Guidelines.

1.2. Interaction with the Victorian transmission connection application process

The GIA process is closely related to the application process for connection to the Victorian DSN. Details of the connection process are set out in Chapter 5 of the National Electricity Rules (NER).[1]

The GIA process is designed to run in parallel to the early stages of the transmission connection process (i.e. the pre-feasibility, enquiry and pre-application stages). The GIA application can be commenced from the time of the connection enquiry and should be completed prior to completing a connection application.

1.3. Interaction with the Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines

The GIA Guidelines refer to the Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines for Renewable Energy and Transmission Projects, which provides guidance on the Victorian Government's expectations on community, landholder and Traditional Owner engagement, social value and economic benefits.

The guidelines have been released as a draft for feedback, and are expected to be finalised in late 2025.

The document provides updated expectations and builds on the government's previous Community Engagement and Benefit Sharing in Renewable Energy Development in Victoria guide, which was published in July 2021. **energy.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0026/580625/community-engagement-and-benefit-sharing-guide.pdf**

The Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines will set current expectations and provide clearer guidance to energy project developers, (including grid impact authority applicants) on community, landholder and Traditional Owners engagement, and the design and delivery of discretionary social and economic benefits.

1.4. Definitions and interpretation

In the GIA Guidelines, select words have the meaning given to them in:

- the *National Electricity (Victoria) Act 2005* and associated regulations
- if not defined in the above, the glossary.

1.5. Process for revision

The GIA Guidelines will be reviewed one year after coming into effect to ensure they support the implementation of the Victorian Access Regime. From then, they will be reviewed every 2 years, to ensure they continue to be fit for purpose and respond to evolving circumstances.

As part of these reviews, any required updates to the technical methodology will be considered.

Amendments to the GIA Guidelines will be made in accordance with consultation procedures that will be set out in the *National Electricity (Victoria) Act 2005*.

1.6. Version history and effective date

A version number will identify every version of the GIA Guidelines.

Version 1.0 of the GIA Guidelines will come into effect on the date the Victorian Access Regime commences. Subsequent versions will come into effect on the date they are published on VicGrid's website.

1.7. Structure of the guidelines

The remainder of the draft GIA Guidelines comprise the following sections:

- **Section 2** sets out which projects will be required to submit a GIA application.
- **Section 3** sets out the GIA application process.
- **Section 4** sets out VicGrid's assessment approach for the excessive network curtailment criterion, expanded in more technical detail in Appendix B.
- **Section 5** sets out VicGrid's assessment approach for the community, landholder and Traditional Owners engagement and benefits criterion.
- **Section 6** sets out the approach to setting conditions on grid impact authorities, and compliance and enforcement of the conditions.

[1] National Electricity Rules Version 232, Australian Energy Market Commission, Available at **energy-rules.aemc.gov.au/ner/660**

2. Projects subject to a Grid Impact Assessment

This section sets out which generation, energy storage system (ESS) and hybrid projects (collectively, projects) will be required to submit a grid impact assessment application (GIA application) once the Victorian Access Regime commences.

It covers:

- exemptions and transitional arrangements
- projects required to submit a GIA application.

Figure 1 includes an overview of the GIA applicability factors.

2.1. Overview

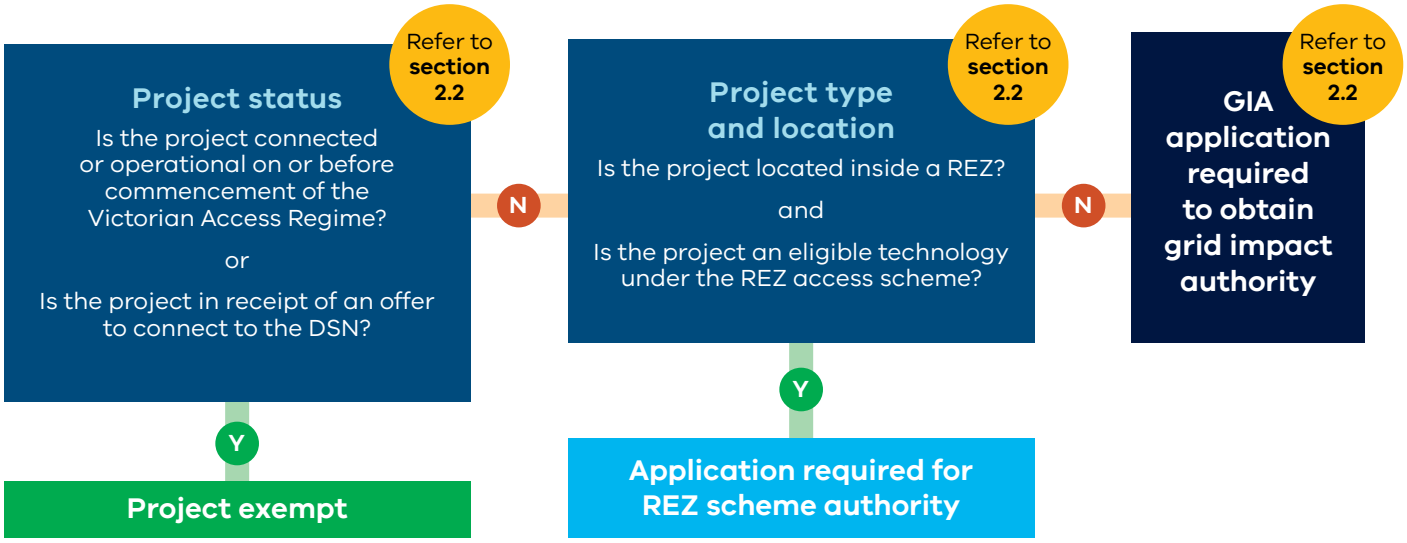
The Victorian Government has introduced legislation (National Electricity (Victoria) Amendment (VicGrid Stage 2 Reform) Bill 2025) to give effect to the Victorian Access Regime as part of the Victorian Transmission Investment Framework (VTIF) and establish VicGrid as the Victorian transmission planner, responsible for administering the regime. The Victorian Access Regime is proposed to commence across Victoria in mid-March 2026. From this date, subject to exemptions (see Section 2.2), the Victorian Access Regime requires all generation, ESS and hybrid projects that are connection applicants or seeking a system change to obtain one of the following authorities to receive an offer to connect:

- a renewable energy zone (REZ) scheme authority issued under a REZ access scheme
- a grid impact authority issued under the Grid Impact Assessment (GIA).

What is a grid impact authority?

A grid impact authority is a licence that allows a generation, ESS or hybrid project to locate outside a REZ, or a project using technology that are not specified in a REZ access scheme to connect into the declared shared network (DSN). A grid impact authority is issued by VicGrid and is subject to conditions, including a cap in megawatts (MW) on the nameplate capacity of the connection.

Figure 1 - Projects subject to a Grid Impact Assessment



2.2. Exemptions and transitional arrangements

Exempt projects

Projects that are connected or operational on or before commencement of the Victorian Access Regime are not required to apply for a grid impact authority.[2]

Projects in receipt of an offer to connect to the declared shared network (DSN), or acceptance of a submission to alter an existing facility, from the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) or VicGrid on or before commencement of the Victorian Access Regime are not required to apply for a grid impact authority.

Note: Offer to connect is considered to have the same meaning as the term in clause 5.3.6 of the National Electricity Rules (NER), and is equivalent to acceptance of a submission under clause 5.3.10. This will be confirmed in legislation to amend the NER to require a grid impact authority before an offer to connect or acceptance of a submission to alter or modify a connection or system.

Projects eligible for transitional arrangements

The Access and Connections Consultation Paper sets out a proposed approach to transitional arrangements for eligible projects in an advanced development stage seeking to apply for a grid impact authority.

The final GIA Guidelines will set out the modified 'streamlined' GIA application process that will be applied to projects eligible for transitional arrangements. This includes a modified application process and assessment of criterion 1, and criterion 2 (see Section 4).

Projects required to undergo a GIA that meet the eligibility criteria for transitional arrangements must apply for a grid impact authority under the modified process set out in the final GIA Guidelines.

2.3. Projects that require a Grid Impact Assessment

Projects that will be required to apply for a grid impact authority must be:

- a generator, ESS or hybrid project connection applicant located outside a declared REZ
- a generator, ESS or hybrid project connection applicant using a technology type not specified in a REZ access scheme, regardless of its location inside or outside a declared REZ
- an existing generator, ESS or hybrid project[3] seeking to increase the capacity of its project (i.e. system change), located outside a declared REZ
- an existing generator, ESS or hybrid project[4] seeking to increase the capacity of its project (i.e. system change) of a technology type not specified in a REZ access scheme, regardless of its location inside or outside a declared REZ.

Examples of projects that are subject to the GIA are detailed in Appendix A.

Guidance on project status

A GIA applicant must be a connection applicant seeking to connect to the DSN or an existing project seeking to carry out a system change to increase the capacity of its project.

A connection applicant is a person who wants to establish or modify a connection to a transmission network and/or who makes a connection enquiry as described in clause 5.3.2 or clause 5.3A.5 of the NER. This is further defined in Chapter 10 of the NER.

An existing project can carry out a system change by modifying its connection or altering its system, under clause 5.3 or 5.3.9 of the NER.

[2] Note these projects will be required to obtain a relevant access authority if they seek to increase the capacity of their projects (i.e. system change) once the regime has commenced (via modification or alteration of their system).

[3] A generator or integrated resource provider

[4] As above



Guidance on project location

GIA applicants must be located outside a declared REZ, unless their project is of a technology type not specified in the relevant REZ access scheme.

Whether a project is outside a declared REZ will be based on:

- the geographical REZ boundaries (REZ boundary) – determined via a REZ Order declared by the Minister
- the electrical connection points to the DSN (connection point)
- the geographical footprint of the project (proposed geographical area of the project site, i.e. site boundary).

A project is located outside a declared REZ if more than half its geographical footprint is outside of the REZ boundary. This applies even if the electrical connection point is inside the REZ boundary.

There may be scenarios where it is not clear whether a project will be classified as outside a declared REZ. In these scenarios, GIA applicants must provide rationale as to why their project should be classified as inside or outside a declared REZ. VicGrid will then review and determine whether the project is classified as outside a declared REZ. VicGrid will have regard to factors such as proximity to terminal stations, land use constraints and/or impacts on local communities, landholders and Traditional Owners.

Guidance on renewable energy zone access scheme technology types

REZ access schemes will specify the types of renewable energy technologies that are eligible. If a technology is not specified in the REZ access scheme, any project using that technology will be subject to the GIA, regardless of the project's location (for example gas-powered generation).[5]

This includes existing projects seeking a system change in a REZ, where the system change is of a technology type not specified in the relevant REZ access scheme.

Treatment of energy storage systems and hybrid projects

Stand-alone ESS located outside a declared REZ will be required to submit a GIA application. However, these projects will be assessed using a modified GIA application process. For details, see Section 4.5.

Hybrid projects that are required to submit a GIA application will be treated as generation projects. This means the GIA will be based on the nameplate capacity of the generator component(s).

[5] VicGrid recognises more gas peaking capacity is expected to be needed in Victoria, and the Victorian Government is considering further policy development to enable its development and integration into the electricity system.

3. Grid Impact Assessment application process

This section sets out the process for applying for a grid impact authority

It covers:

- an overview of the application process, including the relationship between the Grid Impact Assessment (GIA) process and the connection application process
- a step-by-step guide to the GIA application process
- an overview of GIA application fees.

3.1. Grid Impact Assessment process overview

Summary of the GIA application process

An overview of the GIA application process can be seen in Figure 2, which will operate in parallel to the connections process and within project development timelines.

The GIA application process can commence once a connection enquiry is submitted, and is expected to be complete before a connection application is completed. The GIA consists of a multi-stage process including the opportunity for early consultation and self-assessment prior to the GIA applicant submitting their GIA application to VicGrid. Details of each step in the GIA application process are provided in subsequent sub-sections.

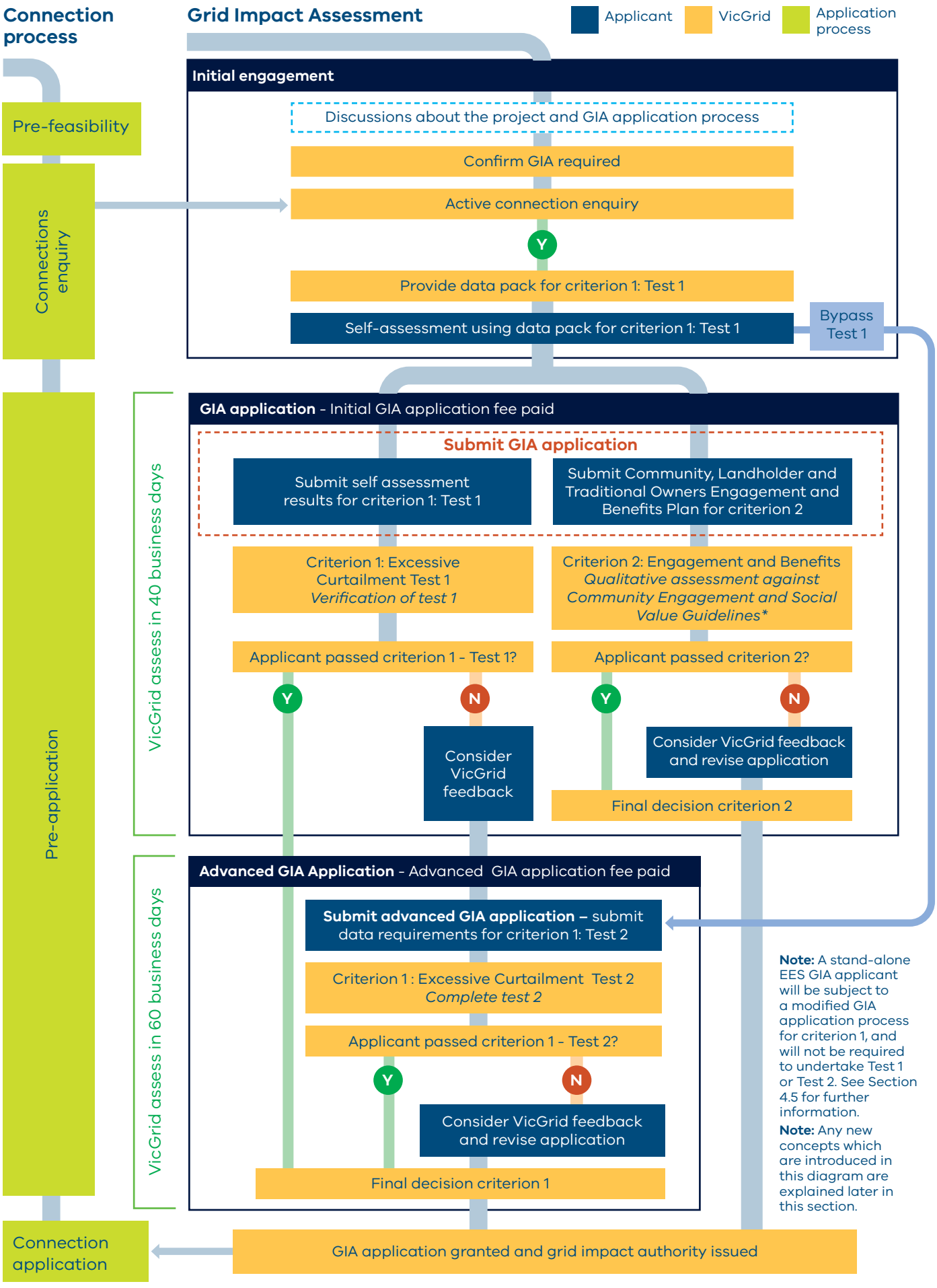
- **Initial engagement:** This stage is an opportunity for VicGrid and the GIA applicant to conduct early discussions and determine whether the project will require a GIA to proceed. VicGrid and the GIA applicant may also identify issues that need to be considered in the GIA application. In addition, VicGrid will provide a data-pack that the GIA applicant can use in the preparation of their GIA application. For details about this step, see Section 3.2.
- **GIA application:** GIA applicants will submit general project details and a site map, and pay an initial GIA application fee to initiate their GIA application. In the GIA application, the GIA applicant must demonstrate how it meets the GIA assessment criteria (see below). VicGrid will assess the GIA application and provide a response and feedback to the GIA applicant. Note the GIA applicant has only one opportunity to revise its application in response to VicGrid's feedback.
- **Advanced GIA application:** This step is only relevant to criterion 1, and will be required if additional analysis is requested by VicGrid, or if the GIA applicant opts to undergo this specific assessment. The advanced GIA application includes market modelling of the GIA applicant's project to determine the potential network curtailment impact on existing and planned REZ scheme generators in Victoria over time (conducted by VicGrid). The GIA applicant will be required to pay the additional advanced GIA application fee and submit detailed information demonstrating the project meets criterion 1. The GIA applicant has only one opportunity to revise its application in response to VicGrid feedback, before VicGrid makes its final decision on the GIA.

If the GIA applicant is successful, VicGrid will grant the GIA application and issue a grid impact authority.

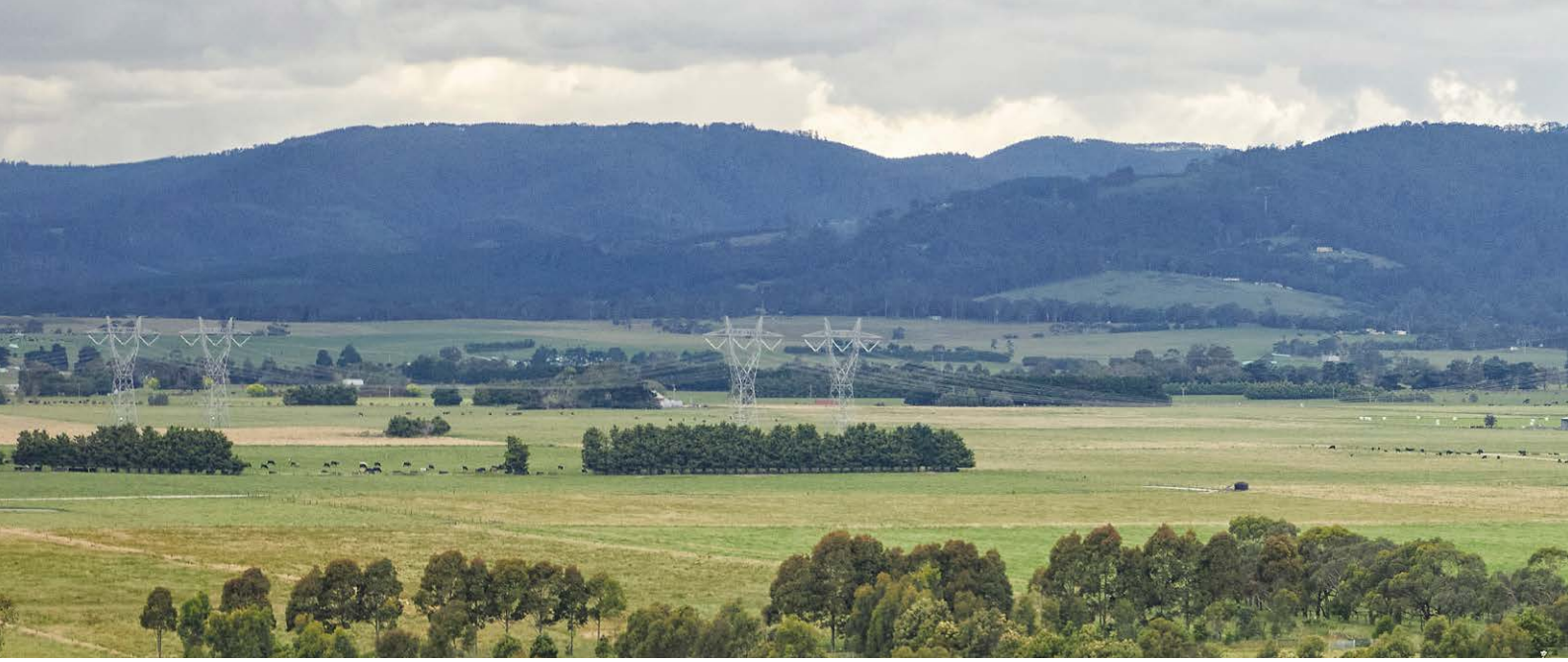
If the GIA applicant is unsuccessful, VicGrid will refuse the GIA application, set out its reasons, and will not issue a grid impact authority. The GIA applicant may then reapply. Note, without a grid impact authority, a project will not be able to receive an offer to connect to the DSN.

Note that for stand-alone ESS, only the initial engagement and GIA application stages apply, with a modified process for demonstrating whether the applicant meets criterion 1.

Figure 2 - Grid Impact Assessment application process overview



*We are inviting feedback on a draft of the Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines. Once finalised, the guidelines will set current expectations and provide clearer guidance to energy project developers (including REZ scheme authority applicants) on community, landholder and Traditional Owners engagement, and the design and delivery of discretionary social and economic benefits.



Assessment criteria

GIA applicants must demonstrate they meet 2 criteria:

- **Criterion 1 – network curtailment:** The proposed connection is unlikely to result in excessive network curtailment of existing and planned REZ scheme generators in Victoria (REZ scheme generators).
- **Criterion 2 – engagement and benefits:** The applicant meets government expectations for community, landholder and Traditional Owner engagement, and provides meaningful social value and economic benefits.

VicGrid will assess GIA applications against each criterion. Details of the assessment process and requirements for each criterion are provided in Sections 4 and 5.

Note: the legislation to amend the *National Electricity (Victoria) Act 2005* specifies criterion 1 using different terminology. Clause 33B(2)(b) states that 'the operation of the relevant system, or facility after the relevant system change, will not have the effect of substantially constraining the output of electricity generated or planned to be generated by eligible generating systems or eligible integrated resource systems connected to the declared transmission system within a renewable energy zone.'

VicGrid considers the description of criterion 1 in these draft GIA Guidelines provides an accessible interpretation of the legislation, and will provide more detail in the final GIA Guidelines.

Concurrent Grid Impact Assessment applications

VicGrid will assess GIA applications in the order in which they are received and validated. For details, see Section 3.3.

VicGrid will publish the approximate number of applications under consideration, or the approximate aggregate capacity of applications, or both.

When a GIA application is granted, all GIA applications that are new or under assessment will be required to consider the newly approved project and any cumulative effects on the assessment of criterion 1. For more details, see Section B.6 of Appendix B.

Where VicGrid has responded to one GIA applicant requesting further information or submission of an advanced GIA application, it will proceed with processing the next GIA application and re-commence processing of the first application when it has received and validated the further information or advanced GIA application.

Grid Impact Assessment application confidentiality

GIA applications will be treated as confidential, subject to any requirements under law.

More specific information about confidentiality related to the criterion 1 assessment is set out in Section B.3.1 and B.4.1 in Appendix B.

VicGrid will publish aggregated statistics on GIA applications and may publish a successful GIA applicant's project name and key characteristics (e.g. technology type, capacity, etc.) once their GIA application has been granted and grid impact authority issued.



3.2. Initial engagement

Before submitting a GIA application, VicGrid encourages potential GIA applicants to request an initial meeting with VicGrid to consider their project. While this is not a formal requirement, this step allows for early discussions on the GIA application and ensures that the potential GIA applicant is aware of issues arising under the GIA that could shape the project design and GIA application. This step can also occur concurrently with the pre-feasibility stage of the connections process.

The initial engagement stage allows for the following:

- VicGrid to provide early advice on whether a project is likely to require a GIA application, based on information provided by a potential GIA applicant and the factors outlined in Section 2.[6] If a GIA application is not required, VicGrid will direct the project proponent to the appropriate pathway, such as applying for a REZ scheme authority via a REZ access scheme.
- VicGrid and the potential GIA applicant to clarify application requirements and potential issues to be considered. Interactions with the connections process can also be discussed, to ensure a smooth and efficient end-to-end process.
- VicGrid to provide a data pack comprised of Power System Simulation for Engineering (PSS/E) models, once the potential GIA applicant has completed a connection enquiry for a project.[7] This data pack is required for the GIA application if an applicant uses Test 1 to demonstrate a project meets criterion 1. For more details, see section 3.3. The data pack will include the specific information set out in Section B.3.4 of Appendix B. Potential GIA applicant can use the data pack to undertake a self-assessment against criterion 1, and decide whether to submit a GIA application.
- VicGrid to discuss status of community, landholder and Traditional Owners engagement and benefits (social and economic) with a potential applicant, to understand the activities undertaken to date and/or government expectations set out in the Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines (see Section 1.3). This can assist the potential GIA applicant to identify any areas that may require further development.

[6] Note this advice is preliminary, and may not eventuate if different information is provided in a subsequent GIA application.

[7] As the data pack includes data derived from AEMO snapshots, the data pack contains confidential information that can only be provided with the consent of intending participants.



3.3. Grid Impact Assessment application

The purpose of the GIA application is to enable VicGrid to assess whether the GIA applicant meets the requirements of the GIA. This sub-section sets out the information required in the GIA application and summarises how VicGrid will assess the GIA application. More detail on VicGrid's assessment approach for criterion 1 and criterion 2 is set out in Section 4 and 5.

Application and fee

To initiate the GIA application, the GIA applicant will be required to:

A. Complete and submit a GIA application form. This form will require the GIA applicant to provide information on:

- the size (nameplate capacity, in MW), technology type(s) and configuration of the proposed project
- a site plan that accurately describes the location of the project and the surrounding area – this must show a map of the geographical footprint of the project (proposed geographical area of the project site, i.e. site boundary) with GPS coordinates
- the intended connection point location for the proposed project
- milestone dates applying to the development and construction of the project
- how the GIA applicant demonstrates it meets criterion 1 (see below)
- how the GIA applicant demonstrates it meets criterion 2, including providing a community, landholder and Traditional Owners engagement and benefits plan (see below)
- connection enquiry form (as an attachment).

The GIA application form template will be published on VicGrid's website prior to the GIA coming into effect.

B. Pay the initial GIA application fee. For more details, see Section 3.6.

GIA applications will be submitted via a portal or email address provided on VicGrid's website. Once a GIA application is submitted, VicGrid will confirm receipt.



Information required in Grid Impact Assessment application for criterion 1 (network curtailment)

The GIA applicant must demonstrate its proposed connection is unlikely to result in excessive network curtailment of REZ scheme generators.

The information expected in the GIA application is set out in this section, with more detail on the requirements and assessment set out in Section 4 and Appendix B.

A generation or hybrid GIA applicant can choose between 2 tests to assess whether its project meets criterion 1:

1. **Test 1** - A steady-state PSS/E test
2. **Test 2** - A market-based PLEXOS test

More information about each test is provided in Section 4 and Appendix B.

The GIA application is based on Test 1, while the advanced GIA application is based on Test 2. For details on the advanced GIA application, see Section 3.4. However, if a GIA applicant wants to bypass Test 1 and move straight to Test 2, it can request its GIA application be assessed using Test 2.

A GIA application using Test 1 will need to include the results of the steady-state test. The GIA applicant will perform the test themselves using the data pack provided by VicGrid. The submission will include:

- the data pack spreadsheet filled out by the GIA applicant
- PSS/E cases developed by the GIA applicant with the proposed project added
- a signed declaration form.

Note, a stand-alone ESS GIA applicant will be subject to a modified GIA application process for criterion 1. It will not need to undertake Test 1 or Test 2. Instead, it will be required to demonstrate its connection is unlikely to result in material impacts on constraints experienced by REZ scheme generators. This includes submission of plans, such as operational strategies[8], to limit the impact of the stand-alone ESS project on network curtailment of REZ scheme generators.

[8] Operational strategies include details of how the applicant intends to schedule periods when energy will be drawn from the network and when energy will be supplied to the network, if they intend to participate in the essential system services market, and if there is any possibility of generating during periods when high generation output is occurring within the REZ schemes.

Information required in Grid Impact Assessment application for criterion 2 (engagement and benefits)

The GIA applicant must demonstrate it meets government expectations for community, landholder and Traditional Owner engagement, and provides meaningful social value and economic benefits. The information expected in the GIA application is set out in this section, with more detail on the requirements and assessment set out in Section 5.

The GIA application will need to contain a community, landholder and Traditional Owner engagement and benefits plan (engagement and benefits plan) developed in accordance with requirements set out in the *National Electricity (Victoria) Act 2005* and guidance set out in the Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines. This includes additional documentation and/or tools that will need to be attached to the plan.

The GIA application will also need to:

- identify the activities in the engagement and benefits plan that have already been undertaken, and provide evidence of these
- provide evidence of early engagement with Traditional Owners, landholders, neighbours and impacted communities, including in the development of the engagement and benefits plan.

Note the legislation to amend the *National Electricity (Victoria) Act 2005* uses different terminology for the engagement and benefits plan.

Clause 33A(2)(b) states that a GIA application must be 'accompanied by a plan, prepared in accordance with the grid impact assessment guidelines, under which the grid impact authority applicant, if issued a grid impact authority, will consult, and engage with, communities and traditional owners that will be impacted by: the planning for the construction of, and the construction and operation of, the generating system or integrated resource system in respect of which the applicant wishes to establish a connection to the declared transmission system; or the planning for, and the carrying out of, the system change that the applicant wishes to carry out.'

VicGrid considers the description of the engagement and benefits plan in this GIA Guideline provides an accessible interpretation of the legislation, and will provide more detail in the final GIA Guidelines.

VicGrid validation of Grid Impact Assessment application

Before assessment, VicGrid will validate the GIA application contains the required information and will request, in writing, resubmission of any GIA application that is incomplete or requires substantial clarification, in VicGrid's reasonable opinion.

VicGrid assessment of Grid Impact Assessment application

VicGrid will assess the GIA application in accordance with Sections 4, 5 and Appendix B. In assessing the GIA application, VicGrid may take into account the size, technology and location of the proposed project, or other factors as VicGrid considers relevant.

VicGrid will seek to respond within 40 business days of receipt of a GIA application and payment of the initial GIA application fee. The written response will include VicGrid's assessment on whether the GIA application meets criterion 1 and criterion 2. For each criterion, VicGrid may:

- accept the GIA application meets that criterion
- not accept the GIA application meets that criterion, and the GIA application requires amendment. Note VicGrid will provide its reasons and feedback for the GIA applicant to consider
- request further information from the GIA applicant as required to assess the GIA application.

Where additional information is requested VicGrid will notify the GIA applicant, and the GIA application process will be paused until the information is submitted.

For each criterion VicGrid will assess the GIA application based on the information supplied and any other data VicGrid considers relevant. This includes:

- **Criterion 1** – VicGrid will verify the results of Test 1 provided by the GIA applicant. For more details, see Section 4. If verified Test 1 results show the proposed project:
  - does not create additional network curtailment of REZ scheme generators, then VicGrid will accept the GIA applicant meets criterion 1
  - creates additional network curtailment of REZ scheme generators, then VicGrid will provide feedback to the GIA applicant on why it does not meet criterion 1. In this case, the GIA applicant can choose to undertake an advanced GIA application (Test 2) if it wants further consideration and assessment of criterion 1 (see Section 3.4, and note if the GIA applicant then fails Test 2 it will have one more opportunity to revise its application, taking into account VicGrid's feedback).
- **Criterion 2** – VicGrid will assess the information provided in the GIA application, including the engagement and benefits plan, against the Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines. For more details, see section 5. If the assessment shows the GIA applicant:
  - meets government expectations for community, landholder and Traditional Owner engagement, and provides meaningful social value and economic benefits, then VicGrid will accept the GIA applicant meets criterion 2
  - does not meet government expectations for community, landholder and Traditional Owner engagement, and provides meaningful social value and economic benefits, then VicGrid will provide feedback to the GIA applicant on why it does not meet criterion 2. In this case, the GIA applicant will have one opportunity to revise its GIA application, taking into account VicGrid's feedback.

If a GIA application is assessed to have met both criteria, the GIA application will proceed to authorisation.

If a GIA application is assessed to have not met criterion 2, even after revising its GIA application, the GIA application will be rejected. For more details about application decisions, see Section 3.5.

3.4. Advanced Grid Impact Assessment application

The purpose of the advanced GIA application is to allow for a more detailed assessment of criterion 1 where Test 1 indicates that the proposed project may result in excessive network curtailment of REZ scheme generators, or a GIA applicant opts not to undertake Test 1. Note, Test 1 is not a prerequisite for Test 2.

This stage uses Test 2, the market-based PLEXOS test, to assess criterion 1. Test 2 provides more detailed quantification of the forecast impact of the proposed project on the network curtailment of REZ scheme generators.

The GIA applicant will be required to provide additional detail to enable VicGrid to understand and assess the network curtailment impact of the project on REZ scheme generators. More detail on the requirements and assessment is set out in Section 4 and B.1 of Appendix B.

VicGrid may request an advanced GIA application in complex cases where sufficient clarity on network curtailment impacts was not supplied in the GIA application. The GIA applicant is not obliged to comply.

The advanced GIA application can also consider in more detail possible actions to reduce network curtailment impacts for REZ scheme generators, including bidding behaviour and potential mitigating actions.

Note, the advanced GIA application is part of the single overall GIA application process set out in Section 3.

Application and fee

To initiate an advanced GIA application, the GIA applicant will be required to:

A. Complete and submit an advanced GIA application form. This form will require the GIA applicant to provide:

- data for both PLEXOS and PSS/E representation of the proposed project, which is set out in detail in Section B.3.2 of Appendix B[9]
- possible actions to mitigate the network curtailment impact of the proposed project on REZ scheme generators (mitigating actions).

An advanced GIA application form template will be published on VicGrid's website prior to the GIA coming into effect.

B. Pay the advanced GIA application fee. For details, see Section 3.6.

Possible mitigating actions to reduce network curtailment impacts for REZ scheme generators

As part of an advanced GIA application, the GIA applicant may provide actions to mitigate the network curtailment impact of its project on REZ scheme generators. Possible mitigating actions include but are not limited to:

- reducing the size of their project to lower the curtailment impact
- altering the connection location to a different location in the network that would result in amended flow path
- funding minor network augmentations to alleviate network congestion
- developing control schemes that allow for improved network capacity
- introducing static VAR compensators (SVCs) or impedance control devices
- including or upsizing co-located ESS in project design.

When submitting mitigating actions, the GIA applicant must explain why and how it considers the mitigating action will result in reduction of any identified or potential excessive network curtailment of REZ scheme generators. This will then be assessed through VicGrid's assessment of the advanced GIA application.

[9] Data related to both PLEXOS and PSS/E are required because in order for VicGrid to represent the proposed project in PLEXOS, network constraint equations will be derived from PSS/E steady state studies.

VicGrid assessment of advanced Grid Impact Assessment application

VicGrid will assess the advanced GIA application in accordance with Section 4 and Appendix B. In assessing the advanced GIA application, VicGrid may take into account the size, technology and location of the proposed project, or other factors VicGrid considers relevant.

VicGrid will seek to respond within 60 business days of receipt of an advanced GIA application and payment of the advanced GIA application fee. The written response will include VicGrid's assessment of whether the advanced GIA application meets criterion 1. VicGrid may:

- accept the advanced GIA application meets criterion 1
- not accept the advanced GIA application meets criterion 1, and the advanced GIA application requires amendment. VicGrid will provide its reasons and feedback for the GIA applicant to consider
- request further information from the GIA applicant as required to assess the advanced GIA application.

Where additional information is requested, VicGrid will notify the GIA applicant, and the process will be paused until the information is submitted.

VicGrid will undertake Test 2, based on the data provided in the advanced GIA application, by inputting the proposed project with its relevant mitigating actions into the market model. More detail on Test 2 is provided in Section 4 and Appendix B.

If VicGrid's Test 2 results show the proposed project:

- does not result in a forecast excessive amount of network curtailment for any REZ scheme generator (as defined in Section 4.1), then VicGrid will accept the GIA applicant meets criterion 1
- does result in a forecast excessive amount of network curtailment for any REZ scheme generator (as defined in Section 4.1), then VicGrid will provide feedback to the GIA applicant on why it does not meet criterion 1. In this case, the GIA applicant will have one opportunity to revise its advanced GIA application, taking into account VicGrid's feedback.

If a GIA application is assessed to have met both criteria once the advanced GIA application is complete, the GIA application will proceed to authorisation.

If a GIA application is assessed to have not met criterion 1, even after the advanced GIA application, the GIA application will be rejected. For more details about application decisions, see Section 3.5.





3.5. Decision on Grid Impact Assessment application

Once VicGrid's assessment of the GIA application is complete, it will make a decision and provide a final written notice to the GIA applicant that either grants or refuses the GIA application. VicGrid will provide this written notice as soon as practicable after making the decision.

Granting a Grid Impact Assessment application

VicGrid will grant a GIA application if, at the end of the assessment process (including any amendments or advanced GIA application), it is satisfied the GIA application meets criterion 1 and criterion 2. In granting the GIA application, VicGrid may also approve the GIA applicant's engagement and benefits plan.[10]

Once the GIA application is granted, VicGrid will issue a grid impact authority to the GIA applicant. The grid impact authority will be issued subject to conditions based on:

- any requirements set out in the *National Electricity (Victoria) Act 2005* and associated regulations
- select activities or commitments put forward in the GIA application
- other conditions reasonably required by VicGrid (see Section 6).

For stand-alone ESS the grid impact authority will include conditions related to the plans (e.g. operational plans) put forward in the GIA application.

Refusing a Grid Impact Assessment application

VicGrid will refuse a GIA application if, at the end of the assessment process (including any amendments or advanced GIA application), it is not satisfied the GIA application meets criterion 1 and/or criterion 2.

If the GIA application is refused, the GIA applicant will not be issued a grid impact authority.

VicGrid's written notice will include an attachment outlining the reasons for its decision.

3.6. Grid Impact Assessment application fees

VicGrid charges fees to assess a GIA application. Fees include an initial GIA application fee and, if applicable, an advanced GIA application fee (for an advanced GIA application assessment).

These fees are payable to VicGrid upon submission of the relevant GIA application, and are not refunded in the event a GIA application is refused at the end of the process.

A GIA fee schedule will be published on the VicGrid website before the GIA comes into effect.

Table 1 - Grid Impact Assessment application fee summary

Stages	Fee	Timing
GIA application	Initial GIA application fee	Paid upon submission of the GIA application
Advanced GIA application	Advanced GIA application fee	Paid upon submission of the advanced GIA application

3.7. Amendment of a grid impact authority

A grid impact authority holder can apply to VicGrid to amend their grid impact authority, including the conditions the authority is subject to.

Where a grid impact authority holder is seeking a system change, the GIA application process set out in Section 3 applies, with modifications as needed to reduce duplication. Where an authority holder is seeking a change to conditions, a different application process will apply, where the authority holder must detail the amendments being sought, and corresponding rationale, for VicGrid's assessment.

A grid impact authority holder may also be required to amend its grid impact authority if its project changes materially between issuance of the grid impact authority and completion of its connection application. The circumstances under which this may occur is described further in Section B.5 of Appendix B.

The final GIA Guidelines will include a detailed process for amending a grid impact authority.

[10] See Clause 33B(3) of the National Electricity (Victoria) Amendment (VicGrid Stage 2 Reform) Bill 2025.

4. Assessment of criterion 1 – network curtailment

This section sets out the approach for determining if a Grid Impact Assessment (GIA) application meets criterion 1. That is, the proposed connection is unlikely to result in excessive network curtailment of existing and planned renewable energy zone (REZ) scheme generators in Victoria (REZ scheme generators).

It covers:

- the 2-test approach for assessing criterion 1
- detail on how excessive network curtailment is defined
- summary of Test 1 – steady-state test
- summary of Test 2 – market-based test
- approach for assessing stand-alone energy storage systems (ESS).

More detail is provided in the technical appendix, at Appendix B.

4.1. Two-test approach

2 tests are proposed to assess criterion 1, and passing either test is sufficient to demonstrate the GIA application meets criterion 1. The tests are summarised below and in Table 2:

Test 1 – Steady-state test

The steady-state test, using Power System Simulation for Engineering (PSS/E), requires the GIA applicant to carry out load flow power system studies using worst case(s) boundary conditions specified by VicGrid and informed by the Victorian Transmission Plan (VTP). The aim is to demonstrate there will be no material impact on forecast network curtailment of REZ scheme generators during the worst case(s). VicGrid will provide a data pack composed of a set of PSS/E cases that reflect boundary conditions that enable a robust assessment of whether the proposed project is likely to add to the network curtailment of REZ scheme generators. If a GIA applicant fails, it can choose to undertake Test 2.

Test 2 – Market-based test

The market-based test, using PLEXOS, provides for a more detailed quantification of the forecast impact of the GIA applicant on the network curtailment of REZ scheme generators. The aim is to quantify the impact on forecast REZ generation network curtailment, and determine whether the impact is within the threshold for excessive network curtailment. If a GIA applicant fails it will not meet criterion 1. For more details on the threshold for excessive curtailment, see Section 4.2.

Table 2 - Outline of the Grid Impact Assessment criterion 1 tests

Details	Test 1 - steady-state test	Test 2 - market-based test
Aim	Demonstrate that there will be no material impact on network curtailment during the worst case(s).[11]	Quantify the impact on REZ generation network curtailment based on VTP assumptions.
Type of assessment	• Worst cases (per REZ) • In PSS/E • Steady-state studies with no time component	• Market-based time series modelling • In PLEXOS • Considers technology type and dispatch patterns
Requirements	• Initial GIA application fee paid • AEMO Market Participant or Intending Participant status • PSS/E expertise (scripting strongly recommended) • High level PSS/E model of plant (aggregated generator likely to be sufficient)	• Advanced GIA application fee paid • AEMO Market Participant or Intending Participant status • Plant data for representation in PLEXOS
Work undertaken by	GIA applicant	VicGrid
Possible Outcomes	**1.** Pass and meet criterion 1 **2.** Fail Test 1 and undertake Test 2, informed by PSS/E inputs and results **3.** Fail Test 1 and not meet criterion 1 or withdraw GIA application	**1.** Pass and meet criterion 1 **2.** Fail Test 2 and withdraw GIA application **3.** Fail Test 2 on the first pass and revise[12] **4.** Fail Test 2 and not meet criterion 1 (on first or second pass)

For both tests:

1. Any project that has been approved through the GIA application process or is exempt from GIA (see Section 2.2), will be included in the modelling.
2. Each REZ will be modelled as the sum of:
   a. existing generators within the REZ
   b. additional generation capacity up to the maximum amount of access available in the REZ (REZ access limit).

[11] Refer to Appendix B for a description of the worst case(s).

[12] Applicants will be permitted to revise one additional market-based modelling application after receiving an initial fail result.

4.2. Defining excessive network curtailment

Excessive network curtailment is defined as a proportional increase in network curtailment above the efficient network curtailment forecast per REZ provided with access limits in the REZ access scheme.

The proportional increase threshold differs for each test:

- For Test 1, a proportional increase is not relevant due to the nature of the test, but is effectively 0.5%.[13]
- For Test 2, a proportional increase is 20%, assessed in each calendar year, and cumulatively assessed (i.e. the threshold will be progressively 'taken up' by successful GIA applicants).

VicGrid will determine the network curtailment forecast for each REZ, and will provide these alongside the access limits set for each REZ in the relevant REZ access scheme (subject to the Minister's decision and declaration). The efficient network curtailment forecast per REZ will be informed by the network curtailment forecast per REZ generated from the VTP, but may not equal it.

In the context of Test 1, any material impact on network curtailment of modelled REZ scheme generators will result in failure of the test, as Test 1 is simpler but harder to pass. This leads to the more advanced Test 2, which can quantify the impact on REZ scheme generator network curtailment over time.

In the context of Test 2, excessive network curtailment would occur where the modelled incremental impact from the introduction of a proposed project results in REZ scheme generators experiencing network curtailment above the efficient network curtailment forecast for a REZ, by greater than the 20% threshold outlined above.

More information on excessive network curtailment is provided in Section B.7.3 of Appendix B. We expect there will be areas of subjectivity in the assessment where there may be unintended outcomes from strictly applying the methodology. In these circumstances, we will use our reasonable discretion and clearly explain our rationale in a written notice to the GIA applicant. For example, we may need to make adjustments to mitigate the risk of different effective thresholds in applying the same methodology where different REZs have different efficient network curtailment forecasts.

Note the capacity available in the REZ and the GIA criterion 1 test does not provide a guarantee that REZ generation output will always be dispatched. It also does not provide a guarantee of a particular level of network curtailment. The efficient network curtailment forecast for a REZ is what will be protected via access limits and the GIA criterion 1 test, but the protection is on a forecast basis.

[13] If the worst case(s) already entail some curtailment then a very small margin of error will be allowed, in the order of 0.5% of base case values.

Box 4.1: Constraint types that are considered in the assessment of criterion 1

VicGrid considers the following constraints as part of the GIA criterion 1 assessment:

- Expected thermal constraints that may bind REZ generation after the addition of a proposed project, especially considering expected time of operation against nearby REZs.
- Selected voltage constraints that may bind REZ generation after the addition of a proposed project.

The following is **not** considered through the GIA criterion 1 assessment:

- System strength impact of the proposed project, as this is managed through the connection process and requirements in clause 5.3.4B of the National Energy Rules (NER).
- Economic curtailment, where available generation capacity is not dispatched because total demand is less than total available generation capacity. This is a national energy market (NEM) wide risk that cannot be managed by one jurisdictional access regime and is most appropriately owned by generators.
- Constraints caused by network outages (planned and unplanned).

In addition, marginal loss factors will not be considered as part of the GIA criterion 1 assessment.

4.3. Test 1 – steady-state test

Test 1 is a steady-state PSS/E test that will be undertaken as part of a GIA application. It is described in detail in Section B.3 of Appendix B, which includes:

- confidentiality requirements on VicGrid and the GIA applicant
- components of the data pack the GIA applicant will be required to input for test 1 and the data the GIA applicant will need to complete test 1
- methodology for the test
- results and how they will need to be included in the GIA application
- VicGrid's verification and assessment of the results provided in the GIA application.

VicGrid steady-state data pack

VicGrid will compile and maintain a data pack to provide GIA applicants with the technical information they may use to assess the potential impact of their proposed project on one or more REZs during worst case condition(s). This data pack will be available to all potential GIA applicants.

The data pack will be largely composed of a set of PSS/E models that represent the power system as set out in the VTP optimal development pathway under a series of specifically chosen cases. The cases chosen by VicGrid will represent the worst case(s) for constraints within REZs. This includes periods of high wind or sun, where REZs are most likely to be constrained over the forecast period.

The data pack will initially be based on the 2025 VTP and draft or final REZ access schemes. It will be updated at regular intervals to account for REZ access scheme declarations and system changes. Examples of system changes that could lead to data pack revisions include network augmentations and asset replacements, new project load and changes in network conditions interstate.

The data pack will also be updated regularly to account for the addition of successful GIA projects, due to the cumulative nature of the criterion 1 assessment. For more details, see Section B.6 of Appendix B.

The data pack supplied to the GIA applicant from VicGrid for the purpose of the GIA assessment is for information only and does not represent VicGrid's view in relation to any future GIA application or REZ scheme authority.



4.4. Test 2 – market-based test

Test 2 is a market-based (market modelling) test that will be undertaken as part of an advanced GIA application. The modelling will assess the potential impact of the proposed project on network curtailment of REZ scheme generators and will not assess any economic curtailment impact. It is described in detail in Section B.4 of Appendix B, which includes:

- confidentiality requirements on VicGrid who will undertake the test
- the data the GIA applicant will need to provide to VicGrid to complete Test 2
- methodology for the test
- results and how they will be provided to the GIA applicant
- threshold and other considerations for passing the test.

PLEXOS market model

After the GIA applicant has submitted the required data via the advanced GIA application, VicGrid will add the proposed project into the latest VTP PLEXOS model.

VicGrid will use PLEXOS to quantify network curtailment for REZ scheme generators for the period between the proposed project commercial operation date and the end of the VTP planning horizon (unless the proposed project is scheduled to end commercial operation before that date). VicGrid will quantify the network curtailment with and without the proposed project. The difference will be assumed to be caused by the proposed project.

After VicGrid has completed PLEXOS modelling and assessed the results, VicGrid's written response back to the GIA applicant will include a report that contains:

- a pass or fail assessment
- the quantified impact on each REZ from the proposed project
- summarised details of the maximum impact, including:
  - time of day and year summaries
  - quantification of the maximum impact expressed as additional network curtailment differentiated by type of REZ scheme generator (e.g. wind or solar).

Test 2 results will also be attached, in the form of tables in a Microsoft Excel compatible spreadsheet.

After receiving results from VicGrid, the GIA applicant may amend their proposed plant details and make one revision to their advanced GIA application for Test 2.



4.5. Stand-alone energy storage systems

Stand-alone energy storage systems (ESS) that connect to the declared shared network (DSN) can dispatch and import energy in a controlled way. The patterns of dispatch and import will be the main factors in how stand-alone ESS may impact the output of REZ scheme generators.

A stand-alone ESS GIA applicant will be subject to a modified GIA application process for criterion 1. Stand-alone ESS GIA applicants will not be required to undertake Test 1 or Test 2. For a stand-alone ESS to meet criterion 1, the GIA application will be required to include plans, such as operational strategies, to limit the project's impact on network curtailment of REZ scheme generators. For example, a stand-alone ESS may only intend to operate at particular times, and could submit this strategy as part of a GIA application.

VicGrid will carry out a desktop assessment of the proposed plans. If, in VicGrid's reasonable opinion, the plans are likely to result in negligible impact to network curtailment of REZ scheme generators, VicGrid will accept the GIA applicant meets criterion 1.

Note, stand-alone ESS GIA applicants may choose to undertake Test 1 themselves before submitting the GIA application to assess whether the proposed project may impact REZ scheme generators. Passing Test 1 would indicate the proposed project is unlikely to result in excessive network curtailment of REZ scheme generators under worst case(s) conditions.

Further information and detail on the GIA process for stand-alone ESS will be included in the final GIA Guidelines. The intent of the GIA is to support the continued development of storage in areas where it is needed. The proposed approach seeks to balance the need for firming services with managing any potential impact on REZ scheme generators.

This only applies to stand-alone ESS. Hybrid projects will be subject to the standard 2-test approach for criterion 1. The assessment will be made on the nameplate capacity of the generator component(s) of the hybrid project.

5. Assessment of criterion 2 – engagement and benefits

This section sets out the approach for determining if a Grid Impact Assessment (GIA) application meets criterion 2. That is, the GIA applicant meets government expectations for community, landholder and Traditional Owner engagement, and provides meaningful social value and economic benefits.

It covers:

- the objectives of criterion 2
- expectations for GIA applications related to criterion 2
- VicGrid's assessment of criterion 2.

Note this section refers to the Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines, which have been released as a draft for feedback. Once finalised, the guidelines will set current expectations and provide clearer guidance to energy project developers (including REZ scheme authority applicants) on community, landholder and Traditional Owners engagement, and the design and delivery of discretionary social and economic benefits.

5.1. Objectives of criterion 2

VicGrid's criterion 2 assessment aims to ensure GIA applicants meet government expectations for community, landholder and Traditional Owner engagement, and provide meaningful social value and economic benefits to these groups.

For clarity, criterion 2 is relevant to community members, landholders, neighbours and Traditional Owners directly impacted by the planning, construction and/or operation of the proposed project.

Key objectives for GIA applicants to consider in conducting engagement and benefits include:

- ensure engagement activities respect self-determination of Traditional Owner groups and First Peoples of Victoria
- focus on empowering communities, landholders and Traditional Owners by building their capacity to engage meaningfully and early in the decision-making processes
- engagement and the provision of social value and economic benefits should not be viewed as short-term actions, and should demonstrate a commitment to long-term collaboration and sustainable development
- identify new and innovative ways to promote community, landholder and Traditional Owners engagement and to deliver social value and economic benefits to these communities.

5.2. Expectations for Grid Impact Assessment applications

The GIA application must contain a community, landholder and Traditional Owners engagement and benefits plan (engagement and benefits plan) developed in accordance with the guidance set out in the Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines. This sets out guidance for energy project developers on best practice engagement methods and how to tailor and value community benefit programs. The engagement and benefits plan must also include a:

- process for consultation and engagement with communities and Traditional Owners
- complaint handling system and process, and a dispute resolution process, to deal with any complaints.

In addition to the engagement and benefits plan, the GIA application must:

- identify the activities in the engagement and benefits plan that have already been undertaken, and provide evidence of these
- provide evidence of early engagement with Traditional Owners, landholders, neighbours and communities, including in the development of the engagement and benefits plan.

Guidance to prepare the engagement and benefits plan

The GIA applicant must consult with impacted communities, landholders, neighbours and Traditional Owners in developing the engagement and benefits plan. The engagement and benefits plan must include a clear engagement process, measurable activities and supporting documentation.

Early and ongoing engagement
The Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines provides guidance on community engagement, and highlights that a clear engagement process should be continued through the early planning, construction, and operational phases of the project. Community engagement applies to community members, landholders and neighbours directly impacted by the planning, construction and/or operation of the proposed project.

Benefit sharing
The Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines provides guidance on how a benefits program can be tailored to meet the needs of communities and Traditional Owners. It also provides guidance on local economic development.

Collaborating with Traditional Owners
The Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines provides guidance on engagement with Traditional Owners in line with the Victorian Government's commitment to the self-determination of Traditional Owner groups and First Peoples of Victoria by genuinely partnering with them to support the protection of Country, the maintenance of spiritual and cultural practices and their broader aspirations in the 21st century and beyond.

Traditional Owners are rights holders, and should have the opportunity to shape the design of the engagement and benefits plan in a way that responds to their needs and aspirations.

Clear documentation and reporting
The Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines provides guidance on community engagement documentation, which GIA applicants should provide with their engagement and benefits plan.

GIA applicants must document engagement activities undertaken and planned, including the issues raised and how feedback has been incorporated into the project development.

5.3. VicGrid assessment of criterion 2

VicGrid will assess the GIA application against criterion 2 using an assessment form based on Table 3 below. This will include assessment of the information provided for each element, and how it reflects guidance provided in the Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines. VicGrid may take into account differences in project size and other characteristics, understanding this may lead to different engagement and benefits approaches.

VicGrid will conduct an initial assessment based on the information provided in the GIA application. If any material issues are identified, VicGrid will conduct a more detailed assessment of the specific issues. It will notify the GIA applicant of this and may request additional information to support its detailed assessment.

In conducting an initial assessment and/or detailed assessment, VicGrid may consult with impacted landholders, neighbours and/or community members to cross check engagement activities that have already been undertaken.

VicGrid is currently working with Traditional Owner groups to ensure Traditional Owner groups can inform VicGrid's assessment of this criterion with respect to First People's engagement. VicGrid recognises that its transmission planning activities must involve genuine partnerships with Traditional Owners through dedicated and ongoing consultation.

With respect to social value and economic benefits, VicGrid will assess the rationale for the proposed benefits program, and whether it considers the size of the project and the impacts on affected communities (including landholders and neighbours). Note, there is no requirement to undertake specific benefit sharing or local economic development programs or initiatives, and no requirement to spend a specific dollar amount.

Table 3 - Assessment approach for criterion 2

Element	Description	Assessment
Community, landholder and Traditional Owners engagement and benefits plan	An engagement and benefits plan has been submitted with the GIA application.	Yes/no
Consultation in developing the engagement and benefits plan	Evidence of consultation with impacted communities, landholders, neighbours and Traditional Owners in developing the engagement and benefits plan.	Qualitative assessment
Engagement and consultation process	Engagement and benefits plan contains a transparent process for engagement and consultation with community members, landholders, neighbours and Traditional Owners directly impacted by the planning, construction and/or operation of the proposed project.	Qualitative assessment
Complaint handling system and process, and dispute resolution process	Engagement and benefits plan includes a complaint handling system and process, and dispute resolution process, which covers the lifecycle of the project. It also includes clear steps on how to raise concerns, timelines for response, and actions to resolve issues in a manner that is transparent and accountable.	Qualitative assessment

Element	Description	Assessment
Community engagement	GIA application demonstrates community, landholder and neighbour engagement in accordance with expectations set out in the Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines. This includes early engagement with impacted communities, landholders and neighbours. Activities undertaken to date have been evidenced and are in accordance with expectations set out in the Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines.	Qualitative assessment
Traditional Owner engagement	GIA application demonstrates Traditional Owners engagement in accordance with expectations set out in the Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines. Activities undertaken to date have been evidenced and are in accordance with expectations set out in the Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines. VicGrid's engagement with the relevant Traditional Owner group(s) has informed the assessment.	Qualitative assessment
Benefits program (social and economic)	GIA application demonstrates a benefits program in accordance with expectations set out in the Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines. Activities undertaken to date have been evidenced and are in accordance with expectations set out in the Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines. Note there is no requirement to undertake specific benefit or local economic development programs or initiatives, and no requirement to spend a specific dollar amount.	Qualitative assessment, as applicable
Documentation and reporting (expectations in Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines)	GIA application includes documentation and reporting in accordance with expectations set out in the Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines.	Qualitative assessment

An assessment form for criterion 2 will be developed prior to the commencement of the GIA, and will be made available on request.

Once VicGrid has completed its assessment of the GIA application, it will provide a written response to the GIA applicant, as described in Section 3.3. Where VicGrid determines the GIA applicant does not meet expectations it will provide its reasons using the Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines as the basis. Note, GIA applicants may make one revision to their engagement and benefits plan.

6. Conditions and enforcement

If VicGrid grants a Grid Impact Assessment (GIA) application, it will issue a grid impact authority to the GIA applicant for the proposed project. The grid impact authority will be subject to enforceable conditions.

This section sets out how VicGrid will monitor and ensure compliance with the conditions of grid impact authorities, as well as how the conditions will be enforced.

6.1. Grid impact authority conditions

VicGrid will issue grid impact authorities subject to conditions. Failure to comply with the conditions may result in penalties during operation, and potentially revocation of the grid impact authority if conditions are breached before connection.

Grid impact authority conditions will be based on:

- any requirements that will be set out in the *National Electricity (Victoria) Act 2005* and associated regulations
- select activities or commitments put forward in the GIA application
- other conditions reasonably required by VicGrid.

Types of conditions will include, but will not be limited to:

- type of technology and nameplate capacity of the project
- maximum amount of electricity in megawatts (MW) that will be permitted to be generated or connected to the declared shared network (DSN)
- achievement of project development milestones, including date when the project must be operational
- commitment to the approved community, landholder and Traditional Owners engagement and benefits plan (engagement and benefits plan) and undertaking proposed measures to resolve issues with impacted landholders, community members and Traditional Owners[14]
- ensuring operation of the project in a way that does not result in excessive network curtailment of existing and planned renewable energy zone (REZ) scheme generators in Victoria (REZ scheme generators)
- provision of information and data as required for VicGrid to appropriately monitor compliance with grid impact authority
- requirements for planning, developing, constructing, operating and maintaining project assets
- other conditions as determined by VicGrid.

VicGrid will take a pragmatic approach when setting and defining specific grid impact authority conditions, taking into account factors that are within and outside the project's control.

Stand-alone energy storage system (ESS) grid impact authorities will include a condition(s) that the project operates in accordance with its GIA application.

The final GIA Guidelines will contain more detailed information on grid impact authority conditions.

[14] Note this(ese) condition(s) is separate to requirements for a planning permit, such as a construction management plan.

Note, the legislation to amend the *National Electricity (Victoria) Act 2005* specifies the conditions associated with criterion 1 and criterion 2 using different terminology.

Clause 33C(1)(a) states that 'the grid impact authority holder must not operate a generating system, integrated resource system or facility to which the grid impact authority they hold relates in a way that will have the effect of substantially constraining the output of electricity generated or planned to be generated by eligible generating systems or eligible integrated resource systems connected to the declared transmission system within a renewable energy zone.'

Clause 33C(1)(b) states that 'the grid impact authority holder must comply with any requirement on the holder under an approved consultation and engagement plan.'

VicGrid will provide detail to assist with interpretation of these conditions in the final GIA Guidelines.

6.2. Monitoring, compliance and enforcement of conditions

VicGrid will monitor compliance with the grid impact authorities and will have the power to revoke a grid impact authority where a condition(s) has not been met, prior to connection.

VicGrid will not enforce penalties, as an appropriate regulatory entity will be responsible for enforcing penalties.

VicGrid will provide more details of its monitoring and revocation framework in the final GIA Guidelines.

For stand-alone ESS, VicGrid will monitor compliance with the grid impact authority conditions related to the operational plans put forward in the GIA application. Serious or continuing breaches of these conditions are enforceable.

Revocation of a grid impact authority

If VicGrid, through its monitoring of grid impact authorities, finds an authority holder has not complied with a condition in its grid impact authority, it will review the non-compliance and may initiate a process to revoke the grid impact authority. VicGrid will only initiate this process prior to connection to the DSN.

In this case, VicGrid will provide the grid impact authority holder a written notice to revoke the grid impact authority with the grounds for the revocation.

It will also invite the grid impact authority holder to make a written submission(s) to VicGrid, within 28 days of receipt of the notice, as to why VicGrid should not revoke the grid impact authority.

In making its decision, VicGrid will take into account the submission(s) made by the grid impact authority holder. As soon as practicable after making its decision, VicGrid will give written notice to the grid impact authority holder of the decision, including the:

- reasons for its decision
- date on which the revocation takes effect, which will not be earlier than 20 business days after the date of the notice.

Note, the legislation to amend the *National Electricity (Victoria) Act 2005* provides the requirements for revoking a grid impact authority.

Specifically, clause 33F states that 'VicGrid may revoke a grid impact authority if VicGrid is of the view that the grid impact authority holder has not complied with a condition to which the grid impact authority is subject.'



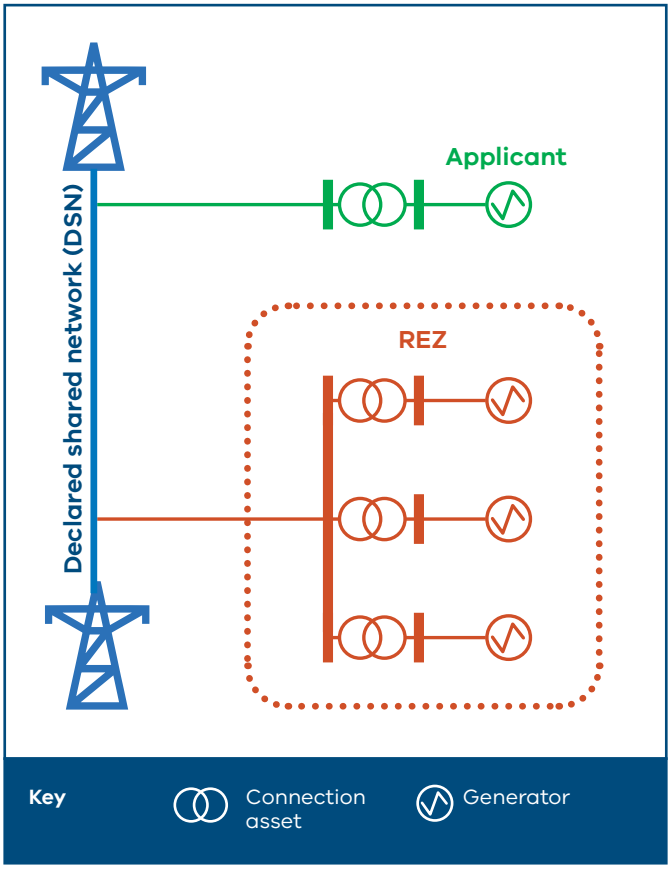
Appendix A

Examples of projects that will be subject to the Grid Impact Assessment

A.1.1 Project and connection assets outside a renewable energy zone (REZ)

Figure A. 1 shows a generation project seeking connection to the declared shared network (DSN) outside a declared REZ. In this example, all assets incorporated in the generation facility are outside a REZ. Therefore, the connection applicant will be required to undertake a Grid Impact Assessment (GIA). The same would also apply if the generation project was seeking a system change to increase its capacity outside the REZ.

Figure A. 1: Proposed project locating outside a REZ



A.1.2 Project outside a REZ and connection assets within the REZ

Figure A. 2 shows generation outside a REZ seeking connection to a point on the transmission network located within a REZ. In this case more than half of the project's footprint is outside the REZ boundaries. As such, this project would be subject to the GIA regardless of the fact that its connection point is inside a REZ.

A.1.3 Expansion within a REZ for a technology type not included in the REZ access scheme

Figure A. 3 shows a generation project inside a declared REZ seeking a system change to increase its generation capacity via a technology type not specified in the relevant REZ access scheme. Because the technology type is not specified in the relevant REZ access scheme, a GIA is required regardless of the project's location in a REZ.

Figure A. 2: Proposed project outside a REZ using REZ connection asset

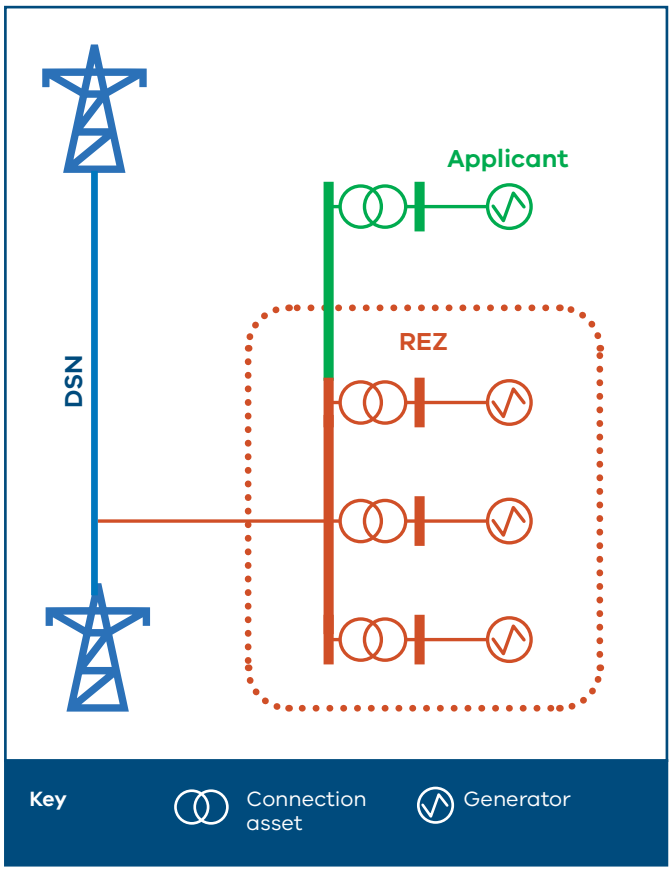
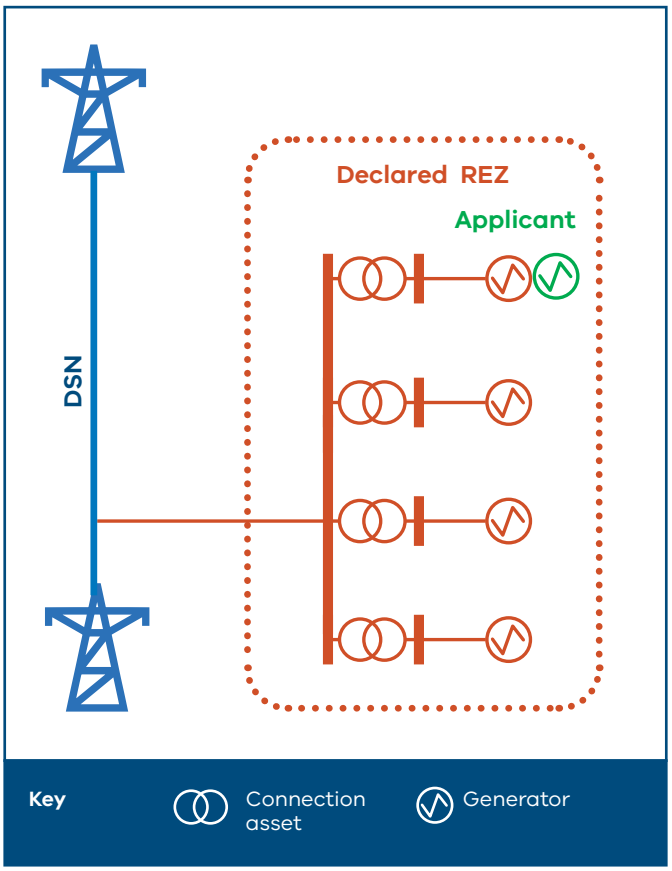


Figure A. 3: Existing generation increasing its capacity in a REZ for a technology not included in the REZ access scheme





Acronyms

Term	Definition
AEMO	Australian Energy Market Operator.
BESS	Battery energy storage system.
DSN	Declared shared network
EES	Energy storage system
GIA	Grid Impact Assessment
GPS	Global Positioning System

Term	Definition
ISP	Integrated System Plan
MW	Megawatts
NEM	National energy market
NER	National Energy Rules
NEVA	*National Electricity (Victoria) Act 2005*

Term	Definition
REZ	Renewable energy zone
TNSP	Transmission network service provider
VTIF	Victorian Transmission Investment Framework
VTP	Victorian Transmission Plan
VTPO	Victorian Transmission Planning Objective

Glossary

Term	Definition
Advanced GIA application	A stage in the GIA application process that is only relevant to the market based test under Criterion 1, and will be required if additional analysis is requested by VicGrid, or if the GIA applicant opts to undergo this specific assessment.
Advanced GIA application fee	A fee charged by VicGrid upon submission of an advanced Grid Impact Assessment (GIA) application.
Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines	The Victorian Government's Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines for Renewable Energy and Transmission Projects. The guidelines have been released as a draft for feedback alongside this consultation paper. Once finalised, the guidelines will set current expectations and provide clearer guidance to energy project developers (including grid impact authority applicants) on community, landholder and Traditional Owners engagement, and the design and delivery of discretionary social and economic benefits.
Connection applicant	Connection applicant has the same meaning as defined in the National Electricity Rules. A subset of which is a person who wants to establish or modify connection to a transmission network and who makes a connection enquiry as described in clause 5.3.2 or clause 5.3A.5 of the NER.
Connection process	The process to connect a generator, energy storage system, hybrid system or large load to the DSN, as outlined in Chapter 5 of the National Electricity Rules.
Declared shared network (DSN)	The Victorian interconnected high-voltage power lines and shared terminal stations that transport large amounts of electricity from where it is generated to where it is needed across the state. It allows multiple electricity providers to share the infrastructure for transporting electricity. Sometimes wind and solar developments need to build their own private lines to connect their project to the shared network. Note DSN also has the same meaning in National Electricity Law, which is a jurisdiction's declared transmission system excluding any part of it that is a connection asset within the meaning of the National Electricity Rules.
Excessive curtailment	A proportional increase in network curtailment above the efficient network curtailment forecast per REZ provided with access limits in the REZ access scheme, and based on the network curtailment per REZ forecast in the Victorian Transmission Plan (VTP) (but may not exactly equal these forecasts).
Geographical footprint of a project	The proposed geographical area of the project site (i.e. site boundary).
Grid Impact Assessment (GIA)	The application process for a grid impact authority, which will be required by generation, storage and hybrid projects outside REZs, and technologies that are not specified in REZ access schemes inside REZs, seeking to connect to the DSN (or seeking a system change).

Glossary

Term	Definition
GIA applicant	A party who seeks to establish or modify a connection to the DSN, and applies for a grid impact authority under the Grid Impact Assessment.
GIA application	A stage in the GIA process where a GIA applicant submits its application for a grid impact authority demonstrating how it meets the specified assessment criteria.
GIA application fee	A fee charged by VicGrid for conducting the GIA application stage.
Grid impact authority	A form of license (grid impact authority) allowing a generation, storage or hybrid project to connect to the DSN via the GIA, subject to conditions including a cap (in megawatts) on the nameplate capacity of the connection.
Grid impact authority holder	A person to whom a grid impact authority has been issued.
Hybrid project	An energy system which combines energy generation and energy storage into a single system. Also referred to as hybrid project.
Integrated System Plan (ISP)	An integrated 20-year plan for the efficient development of the National Electricity Market (NEM), prepared every 2 years by the Australian Energy Market Operator.
Minister	Minister for Energy and Resources in Victoria.
Mitigating action	An action proposed or enacted by a GIA applicant to mitigate the likely impact of their connection on the network curtailment faced by existing and planned REZ scheme generators.
National Energy Market or NEM	The interconnected electricity network which services most areas of Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia.
Outside a REZ	A project is located outside a declared REZ if more than half its geographical footprint is outside of the REZ boundary.
Optimal development pathway	The optimal mix of transmission projects needed to connect REZs with Victoria's Declared Shared Network over the next 15 years, taking into account economic cost-benefit and robustness analysis across different scenarios, as well as power system security and reliability. For the 2025 VTP, the optimal development pathway sets out proposed projects and sequencing over the next 15 years. Future VTPs will take a 25-year timeframe.
Outside a declared REZ	More than half of the development footprint of a proposed generation system or hybrid system is located outside the declared boundaries of a REZ. This applies even if the electrical connection point is inside the REZ boundary.
Renewable Energy Zone (REZ)	An area declared in a renewable energy zone Order where a REZ access scheme and special benefits arrangements will apply.
REZ Access limit	A cap (in megawatts) on the capacity of renewable energy that can connect and generate inside a declared REZ at a particular point in time. This limit will be declared by the Minister in a REZ Order and REZ access scheme, and Gazetted. Each REZ may have a different access limit for different types of renewable energy technologies.

Glossary

Term	Definition
REZ access scheme	A scheme, under the proposed Victorian Access Regime, declared by the Minister for Energy and Resources, which sets out arrangements governing applications for a REZ scheme authority by eligible generation, storage or hybrid projects seeking connection to the DSN (or seeking a system change). A REZ access scheme will include eligible technologies, access limits for each technology, access fees, access conditions, and the process for allocating access.
REZ scheme authority	A form of licence allowing a generation, storage or hybrid project to connect to the DSN via a REZ access scheme, subject to conditions including a cap (in megawatts) on the nameplate capacity of the connection.
REZ boundary	The proposed geographical area of a REZ.
REZ scheme generator	A VRE generating system connected, or intending to connect, within a REZ access scheme in Victoria.
System strength	This describes the ability of the power system to maintain and control the voltage waveform at a given location, both during steady state operation and following a disturbance. System strength is often approximated by the amount of electrical current available during a network fault (fault level), however the concept also encompasses a collection of broader electrical characteristics and power system interactions.
Traditional Owner	Traditional Owner Corporations representing Traditional Owners, having the meaning set out in the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010*. Traditional Owners have rights that must be upheld as laid out under the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*, the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010*, *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* and *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth).
Victorian Access Regime	The proposed set of new rules, to be defined under the *National Electricity (Victoria) Act 2005*, for how new projects can connect to the Declared Shared Network, both within and outside of REZs. Under the Victorian Access Regime, the Minister will declare REZ access schemes. All new generation, ESS and hybrid projects which connect to the DSN will do so under either a REZ access scheme or a grid impact assessment process.
Victorian Transmission Investment Framework (VTIF)	A set of reforms being implemented to transmission planning in Victoria, including: a new transmission planning objective; a new planning process through the Victorian Transmission Plan; the Victorian Access Regime; new community and Traditional Owners benefit arrangements; and new approaches to procuring transmission infrastructure.
Victorian Transmission Plan (VTP)	A document which describes an optimal set of transmission projects for Victoria which address the planning and development needs over the following periods related to new major electricity transmission infrastructure to facilitate connection of renewable energy zones to the declared shared network: (a) 15 years for the first Victorian transmission plan (b) 25 years for each subsequent Victorian transmission plan.

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Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines for Renewable Energy and Transmission Projects



September 2025

VicGrid

VICTORIA State Government | Energy, Environment and Climate Action



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Acknowledgment of Traditional Owners

We acknowledge and respect Victoria's Traditional Owners as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and deep spiritual connection to it. We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of culture and traditional practices. We are committed to genuinely partnering and meaningfully engaging with Victoria's Traditional Owners and First Peoples to support the protection of Country, the maintenance of spiritual and cultural practices and their broader aspirations in the 21st century and beyond.



Explanatory note and consultation notice

These draft guidelines detail the minimum expectations of renewable energy and transmission project developers when engaging and creating social value and economic benefits for communities, Traditional Owners and landholders in Victoria. They build on the 2021 Community Engagement and Benefit Sharing in Renewable Energy Development in Victoria: A guide for renewable energy developers.

These draft guidelines have been designed to support consultation and invite feedback for consideration prior to the publication of the final guidelines in late 2025.

VicGrid, on behalf of the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), is undertaking consultation to ensure guidance on community engagement and sharing of economic and social benefits is fit-for-purpose for the Victorian Access Regime and transmission procurement processes.

Questions appear in each section to prompt your thinking on key areas. A full list of consultation questions is provided in the section below.

Additionally, these draft guidelines include case studies that demonstrate exemplary practice in how projects deliver engagement, share economic benefits and create social value. We invite examples of existing projects that showcase best practice for inclusion in the final guidelines.

Your feedback will be taken into account as we prepare the final guidelines, which are expected to be published later in 2025 alongside additional information about participating in the Victorian Access Regime.

Victorian Access Regime

The Victorian Government is setting new rules to manage how renewable energy projects gain access to the state's transmission network. The new approach, known as the **Victorian Access Regime**, aims to encourage development in renewable energy zones and give developers more confidence they can supply energy into the market. The regime will increase transparency about what projects must do to gain access, including expectations to engage with and deliver benefits to landholders, communities and Traditional Owners.

Eligible projects inside a declared renewable energy zone will be required to apply for and receive a renewable energy scheme authority (a licence) before they can connect. All other projects, both inside and outside of a declared renewable energy zone, will be required to apply for a grid impact authority before they can receive an offer to connect to the transmission network.

How to participate in this consultation:

VicGrid invites written submissions from interested persons on the issues identified in this paper.

To take part in the consultation:

- upload a submission via Engage Victoria at **engage.vic.gov.au/victorian-access-regime**
- email a submission to vicgrid@deeca.vic.gov.au
- send a written submission to VicGrid, GPO Box 527, Melbourne VIC 3001.

Submissions close at 11:59pm (AEST) on Wednesday 5 November 2025.

Before making a submission, please read and take note of VicGrid's privacy collection statement at **engage.vic.gov.au/victorian-access-regime**

Please note, all submissions will be treated as public documents and will be published online unless clearly identified as being confidential. Submissions are encouraged to be made on a publicly available basis.

Submissions received after the closing date and time may not be acknowledged or considered in the design of the final guidelines, however where possible VicGrid will consider late submissions in any future updates to the guidelines. Any late submissions should explain the reason for lateness and the detriment to you if VicGrid does not consider your submission.

Consultation questions

We have included the following questions throughout the sections of these draft guidelines for your consideration in preparing a submission.

- Do you think the proposed guidelines will help create social value and economic benefits for communities, Traditional Owners and landholders?
- Of the proposed requirements on project developers, what are the most important requirements for you?
- How prescriptive should the guidelines be in formalising agreements and the timing of those agreements with communities?
- Should the guidelines provide guidance on the valuation of or budgeting for social value and economic benefit initiatives? If so, what amount or range should be considered for solar, wind and large-scale battery projects (expressed in dollars per megawatt)?
- Do you have examples of project developers and community working together to share information, coordinate engagement, and scale impact in social value and economic benefits?
- Do you have comments on how VicGrid should assess projects against the outcomes and expectations detailed in these draft guidelines?

Introduction

Ensuring Victorians have a voice through the energy transition

Victoria is moving away from ageing coal-fired power stations to cheaper renewable energy sources, such as wind and solar. This change is bringing unprecedented new investment in renewable energy generation, transmission and storage projects.

While the move to renewable energy can provide economic growth opportunities for communities, local businesses and industries, it also presents challenges and impacts.

The Victorian Government is committed to ensuring that Traditional Owners, local communities and landholders have a genuine say in the planning and development of renewable energy and transmission projects, thereby guiding better decision-making and achieving real, lasting benefits from their development.

About these guidelines

These guidelines set the Victorian Government's minimum expectations for how renewable energy and transmission developers engage with and create social value and economic benefits for communities, Traditional Owners, landholders and neighbours through their projects in Victoria.

Community engagement definition: The process through which a developer builds meaningful relationships with Traditional Owners, local communities and landholders to shape the development of a renewable energy or transmission project. It is a general term used to refer to various engagement approaches, including communication, consultation, participation and co-development. Approaches vary depending on the context, history and priorities of each community.

Social value and economic benefit creation definition: The positive social and economic outcomes that a project can create by investing in communities, Traditional Owners and landholders. A project developer can drive social and economic development through a program of initiatives. Initiatives can take various forms, including investments in local infrastructure, community projects, community capacity building, community benefit funds or collaborative projects. Section 3 provides further examples of possible initiatives.

What these guidelines mean for:

Communities, Traditional Owners and landholders

More agency in shaping how the energy transition impacts them and benefits their communities. This is especially important in contrast to the practice of providing inadequate benefit programs with little input from the community.

Project developers

Greater clarity of government expectations for community engagement and creating social value and economic benefits, along with increased accountability to deliver on their commitments.

The Victorian Government

A framework for defining outcomes and minimum expectations regarding engagement and the creation of social value and economic benefits, by which the government can measure, evaluate and monitor developer performance.

Who should use these guidelines

Developers of energy projects, such as wind, solar and large-scale batteries, seeking to connect to the transmission network

The new Victorian Access Regime will be implemented and administered by VicGrid. Under the new regime, a developer seeking to connect to Victoria's transmission network – known as the declared shared network (DSN) – will need to apply for access. Through the new application process, developers will be required to demonstrate how they meet the expectations in these guidelines.

VicGrid will monitor and enforce compliance through the renewable energy zone scheme authorities and grid impact authorities. Failure to comply with the conditions may result in the potential for access to be revoked or penalties to apply.

Transmission developers tendering and approved to partner with VicGrid to deliver transmission projects as part of the declared shared network

Through its procurement of transmission delivery partners, VicGrid will require partners to comply with these guidelines where relevant, alongside other relevant government policies, such as the Local Jobs First Policy and Social Procurement Framework, which VicGrid will detail in project-specific tender documents.

How these guidelines have evolved

Initially published in 2021, these guidelines are being revised to address the evolving needs of the Victorian energy landscape. In response to community and industry feedback, the revisions aim to provide clearer guidance on engagement and the design and delivery of social and economic benefits.

Once updated, these guidelines will be a vital element of the new Victorian Access Regime, which will ensure project developers meet the Victorian Government's minimum expectations for engagement and the creation of social value and economic benefits.

Additionally, the guidelines, along with the processes for allocating access to the grid and procuring transmission delivery partners, are designed to encourage developers to go beyond the minimum expectations to ensure the social value and economic benefits created by their projects have a lasting impact on Traditional Owners, communities and landholders.

It is expected that these guidelines will be updated at regular intervals to reflect changes in industry practice, community expectations and the regulatory environment.

To note, these guidelines are one component of the Victorian Government's broader approach for driving the creation of social value and economic benefits through the energy transition. For details, see Figure 1.

Figure 1: The ways the Victorian Government is driving the creation of social value and economic benefits through the energy transition

Renewable Energy Zone Community Benefits Plan

Includes new additional payments for landholders hosting new transmission, new payments for significantly impacted neighbours of new transmission, a Renewable Energy Zone Community Energy Fund, and dedicated benefits for Traditional Owners.

Currently a draft. The final plan is set to be released in the coming months.

Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines for Renewable Energy and Transmission Projects

Includes minimum expectations of project developers for community engagement and the design and delivery of additional discretionary social and economic benefits.

This draft document, which we are currently seeking feedback on.

Government policies on local jobs, inclusion and sustainability

This includes mandatory requirements laid out in existing Victorian Government policies and frameworks, and VicGrid's own procurement of delivery partners.

Using these guidelines

An overview of each section

Section 1 sets out expectations for how project developers will engage with the community and landholders.

Section 2 sets out expectations for how project developers will recognise the rights of Traditional Owners and form respectful, collaborative relationships with Traditional Owners.

Section 3 sets out expectations for how project developers will develop and deliver long term social value and economic benefit initiatives.

Section 4 sets out the documents that the Victorian Government expects to receive, what they will contain as a minimum, and where to find more guidance, if needed.

Policy context and industry standards

Legislation and policy

Existing policies and legislation require a range of activities relevant to community engagement and the creation of social value and economic benefit from generation and transmission developers. Different legislation and policies will apply to projects in different ways and at different stages.

Project developers should give consideration to the following policies and legislation in the development and delivery of their approaches:

- *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- *Environment Effects Act 1978*
- Essential Services Commission (2024) **Land Access Code of Practice**
- *Land Acquisition and Compensation Act 1986*
- *Native Title Act 1993*
- *Planning and Environment Act 1987*
- *Offshore Electricity Infrastructure Act*
- *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010*

Best practice and industry standards

These guidelines have been developed to guide best practice. They build on existing industry-recognised guidelines and standards listed below. Developers should refer to these relevant resources during planning.

Government resources

- Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner (2022) **Commissioner's Observations and Recommendations (updated)**
- Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (2025) **Managing the biodiversity impacts of renewable energy – guidance and draft handbook**
- Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (2025) **Traditional Owner and Aboriginal Community Engagement Framework**
- Energy and Climate Change Ministerial Council (2024) **National Guidelines: Community Engagement and Benefits for Electricity Transmission Projects**
- Regional Development Victoria's Regional Economic Development Strategies (REDS)

First Peoples resources

- First Nations Clean Energy Network (November 2022) **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Best Practice Principles for Clean Energy Projects**
- First Nations Clean Energy Network, Clean Energy Council, KPMG (2023) **Leading Practice Principles: First Nations and Renewable Energy Projects**
- The Energy Charter (2024) **First Nations Better Practice Community Engagement Toolkit**
- Traditional Owner Corporation documentation such as Whole of Country Plans, organisational strategies, engagement, benefit sharing and negotiation protocols, and renewable energy statements/strategies/plans

Community resources

- Community Power Agency (2025) **Guide to Regional Benefit Sharing**
- Country Fire Authority (2023) **CFA Design Guidelines and Model Requirements for Renewable Energy Facilities, v4**
- Country Fire Authority (2025) **CFA Fire Safety Studies for Battery Energy Storage Systems Guidelines, v1**
- Renewable Energy Alliance (2025) **Refurbishment, repowering or retirement. What happens when renewables approach end of life?**

Industry resources

- Clean Energy Council (2019) **A Guide to Benefit Sharing Options for Renewable Energy Projects**
- Infrastructure Sustainability Council (2023) **Legacies that last: Creating social value through Australia's infrastructure and built environment**
- The Energy Charter (2023) **Better Practice Social Licence Guideline: Co-existence and shared value opportunities for transmission and agricultural landholders**

International Association of Public Participation resources

- **Public participation spectrum**
- **Core values**
- **Quality assurance standards**

Key terms used in these guidelines

The table below provides plain English definitions of key terms commonly used in these guidelines. These definitions are to ensure consistency and clarity in the application of these key terms and to promote a shared understanding.

Table A: Definitions of key terms

Term	Definition
Declared shared network (DSN)	The interconnected high-voltage powerlines and shared terminal stations that transport large amounts of electricity from where it is generated to where it is needed across Victoria. The DSN is often referred to in this document as the 'transmission network'.
First Peoples	First Peoples or First Nations people refers to peoples or nations of people connected to an area prior to colonisation. These terms have some general acceptance but may not be the term preferred by individuals or specific groups of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.
Grid Impact Assessment	The process under the Victorian Access Regime that applies to proposed connections to the DSN outside a renewable energy zone, and those within a renewable energy zone but not of a technology listed in the associated renewable energy zone scheme.
Project developer	A company developing a renewable energy generation, storage, connection or transmission project.
Registered Aboriginal Party	Under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* (Vic), Registered Aboriginal Parties are appointed by the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council. They are the primary custodians and keepers of Indigenous ecological knowledge, and are responsible for protecting and managing Aboriginal cultural heritage.
Renewable energy project	Renewable energy generation and storage projects, including private transmission and connection assets, needed to connect the generation or storage project to the shared network.
Renewable energy zone	An area declared in a renewable energy zone Order, and where a renewable energy zone access scheme and special benefits arrangements will apply.
Renewable energy zone access scheme	The arrangements governing network connections for new renewable generation and storage projects located in a renewable energy zone.
Social performance	How well a project developer is delivering on community expectations for social, environmental and economic value.
Traditional Owners	An Aboriginal person who has traditional connections to an identified geographical area of Country. Traditional Owners may or may not have formal recognition under relevant Victorian and Commonwealth legislation.
Transmission project	New transmission infrastructure under development that is considered part of the declared shared network.
Victorian Access Regime	The proposed set of rules for how new generation projects can connect to the declared shared network. This includes renewable energy zone access schemes and the Grid Impact Assessment.

Expected engagement outcomes

These draft guidelines propose minimum expectations for how energy generation and transmission projects should engage and create economic and social value. The guidelines have been informed by feedback from communities, Traditional Owners and landholders about what is important to them.

The minimum expectations have been designed to promote the delivery of the following outcomes. These outcomes will vary in appearance, and the extent to which they are achieved will be different for each group: Traditional Owners, landholders, neighbours and the community. These differences reflect the extent of impact and interest in individual projects.

Project developers will be required to deliver on the minimum expectations and will also have their performance assessed against these outcomes.

Consultation questions:

Q. Do you think the proposed guidelines will help create social value and economic benefits for communities, Traditional Owners and landholders?

Q. Of the proposed requirements on project developers, what are the most important requirements for you?



Table B: Expected engagement outcomes

Outcome	Description
Stronger, longer-term relationships	Establishing early and ongoing dialogue and building empathetic relationships between stakeholders leads to mutual respect and understanding, paving the way for more collaboration.
Enhanced knowledge sharing	Through forming partnerships with communities, Traditional Owners and landholders a greater exchange of knowledge and expertise benefits all parties involved and leads to better project outcomes.
Increased participation	Engagement opportunities that are diverse and meet community needs encourage greater participation in discussions, ensuring a wide range of voices and perspectives are heard and considered.
Informed decision-making	Timely and transparent information enables the community, Traditional Owners and landholders to have a clear understanding of projects, leading to better-informed feedback and decisions during project planning and delivery.
Tailored solutions	Projects address specific local needs and concerns, resulting in developments that are beneficial and relevant to community and Country and minimise negative impacts.
Effective communication	Effective communication leads to a better understanding of the project and associated processes. This includes a well-established process for enquiries, complaints management and dispute resolution, allowing community members to raise questions, concerns and resolve issues effectively and in a timely way.
Risk mitigation	Addressing local concerns regarding environmental hazards, such as fire risks and flooding, helps communities to feel safer and more secure about the development.
Fair and transparent negotiations	Transparent and fair negotiations between project developers, landholders and neighbours give all parties clearer insights into the terms and benefits. They can discuss them openly with each other, which enhances collective understanding and cohesion.
Empowerment and self-determination	Traditional Owners have a stronger voice in the decision-making processes that affect them, Country and community, leading to greater agency and control over their cultural heritage and land management.
Equitable relationships between developers, community, Traditional Owners and landholders	Community, Traditional Owners and landholders are empowered to make decisions that are in their best interest and are provided assurance regarding developer accountabilities and the long-term impacts of projects on community and Country.
Increased collaboration and collective impact of social and economic benefit opportunities	Collaboration and partnerships between project developers and other organisations to improve coordination of engagement, enhance knowledge sharing, increase the collective impact of social and economic benefits and better manage cumulative impacts.

Section 1

Engagement expectations

This section sets out expectations for how project developers will engage with the community, landholders and neighbours.

Effective, considered community engagement is fundamental to community support for renewable energy development projects and is expected by Victorian communities.

Defining your project's community

The Victorian Government expects developers to engage with the following groups, at a minimum:

- communities surrounding the project
- host landholders
- neighbouring and nearby landholders
- Traditional Owners.

The following sub-sections detail the minimum requirements for each of these groups, aside from Traditional Owners. For details on Traditional Owner engagement, see Section 2.

Engaging with communities surrounding the project

Communities are the people who live and work within, and identify with, the geographic area surrounding a proposed renewable energy project. They also include organisations and peak bodies that represent community interests and needs.

Developers are expected to identify the groups and stakeholders making up their project's surrounding community as part of engagement planning. Project developers should engage the following groups at a minimum:

- communities surrounding the project, including First Peoples communities, culturally and linguistically diverse groups and other diverse community cohorts
- cross-organisation and government partnerships
- civic and representative groups
- local government
- governance bodies of Renewable Energy Zone Community Energy Funds[1]
- Country Fire Authority brigades
- commercial fishing and other marine users in the context of offshore wind.

1 Subject to the draft Renewable Energy Zone Community Benefits Plan being finalised and released later this year



Minimum expectations for engaging with communities surrounding the project

Developers must demonstrate how they are meeting the following Victorian Government expectations when engaging with communities.

- Engage early in the planning process, before the submission of planning permit applications.
- Integrate community feedback, concerns and interests into project development and plans for creating social value and economic benefits.
- Provide diverse, regular and ongoing engagement opportunities.
- Establish a regional presence with locally accessible engagement staff.
- Provide transparent information about the project's negotiables and non-negotiables, as well as the role of consultation.
- Tailor engagement for local context, priorities and needs.
- Respond to community concerns about environmental hazards, particularly fire risks, flooding and biosecurity.
- Establish processes for enquiries, complaints management and dispute resolution.
- Ensure that communities know how their contributions have been used to influence outcomes.

The International Association for Public Participation's (IAP2s) Spectrum of Public Participation (see Appendix A) is an industry-recognised tool that can support developers in determining the role of consultation.

Engaging local government

The Victorian Government considers it best practice for developers of renewable energy generation and transmission projects to engage with local government on project planning and initiatives that deliver social and economic benefits.

Engaging local government is important because:

- Local governments can facilitate engagement, helping developers connect with key local stakeholders and contributing local context to the design of community benefit initiatives.
- Councils can advocate for local priorities and help ensure that developments contribute meaningfully to more strategic and regionally significant initiatives, and deliver broader social outcomes such as economic participation, equity and long-term regional resilience.
- Local governments have land-use planning roles related to residential land, workforce housing and industrial land.
- The Minister for Planning provides local governments with the opportunity to comment on and make recommendations to the Minister regarding applications.
- Local governments are generally responsible for enforcing planning permit conditions, even if the Minister for Planning issued the permit.

Case study:

The Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Energy Collaboration

The Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Energy Collaboration is hosted by Wimmera Southern Mallee Development with councils, Traditional Owner partners, local businesses and energy proponents, and supported by The Energy Charter.

The collaboration brings industry, community and local government to one table to drive economic development across the Wimmera Southern Mallee and ensure the region benefits from the energy transition. Through a 6-month co-design process, partners agreed a Collaboration Framework and are delivering Collective Action Projects.

Current workstreams include research and development, fire safety and response, workforce development and youth career pathways, and local energy constraints and opportunities.

By working together, energy organisations are focused on minimising impacts on farming and neighbours, improving collective engagement and information sharing, coordinating delivery of community benefits with councils and community groups, and strengthening transparency and accountability through a public Commitments Register that tracks what is promised and delivered. Wimmera Southern Mallee Development hosts the collaboration and tracks commitments. It does not allocate company benefits or advocate for any project.



Engaging with host landholders

Host landholders play a crucial role in the energy transition. Host landholders, in the context of these guidelines, are those who host generation and transmission infrastructure (private or as part of the transmission network).

The expectations in this section apply to all host landholder negotiations and agreements related to hosting generation infrastructure, transmission line easements, construction access and road access.

Developer requirements and landholder rights can vary by project type and are subject to various legislation and regulations. These guidelines are designed to complement legislation and regulations that govern engagement and contractual arrangements between developers and landholders, such as the *Land Acquisition and Compensation Act 1986*.

Minimum expectations for host landholder engagement

Developers must demonstrate how they are meeting the following Victorian Government expectations when engaging with landholders.

- Negotiate fair and reasonable commercial agreements for hosting renewable energy and transmission projects.
- Negotiate transparently with and between landholders.
- Promote transparency and open communication by preventing contractual clauses from unfairly restricting landholders from discussing agreement terms with other community members.
- Allow adequate time for consideration of commercial agreements.
- Cover reasonable costs incurred by landholders in accessing independent legal, financial, tax and insurance advice before entering into any agreement.
- Provide timely and transparent information about key project features and potential impacts to enable landholders to make informed contributions and decisions about the project design and how impacts are managed.
- Ensure preliminary commercial agreements do not place long-term obligations on landholders beyond what was originally intended. For example, preliminary licence agreements should not commit landholders to host the infrastructure.
- Ensure agreements are clear and fair regarding renewals or extensions, and include provisions that allow landholders to terminate the agreement for valid reasons once the agreed-upon term has ended.
- Clarify who is responsible for paying increased costs or new costs associated with hosting the infrastructure, such as insurance premiums, rates, levies, land taxes or duties.
- Specify the developer's responsibilities and commitments on decommissioning, remediation and any other end-of-life arrangements through host landholder agreements. This process should include negotiation of landholder protections and financial safeguards.

Engaging with neighbours and nearby landholders

The Victorian Government recognises that neighbouring and nearby landholders can be impacted by generation and transmission infrastructure. Engaging with neighbouring and nearby landholders early can mean increased opportunities to minimise impacts through project design and identify appropriate mitigations for unavoidable impacts.

Minimum expectations for neighbouring and nearby landholder engagement

Developers must demonstrate how they are meeting the following Victorian Government expectations when engaging with neighbouring and nearby landholders.

- Provide timely and transparent information about project details to enable informed participation in discussions about impacts and risks.
- Consult with neighbouring and nearby landholders on the impacts and risks (environmental, physical or operational) and the ways to minimise, mitigate and manage them.
- Seek to address risks and concerns, including those relating to amenity and land use, raised by neighbours and nearby landholders in the design and delivery of the project.
- Consult with neighbouring landholders on addressing insurance matters, and provide transparent information on any perceived or potential implications and risks.
- Inform neighbours about planning scheme requirements and discuss any implications and impacts.
- Consider offering to develop agreements with neighbours that outline how impacts will be managed and provide certainty about benefits.
- Engage with neighbours to determine an appropriate methodology for developing neighbour agreements or benefits.
- Consider sourcing neighbour goods and services.



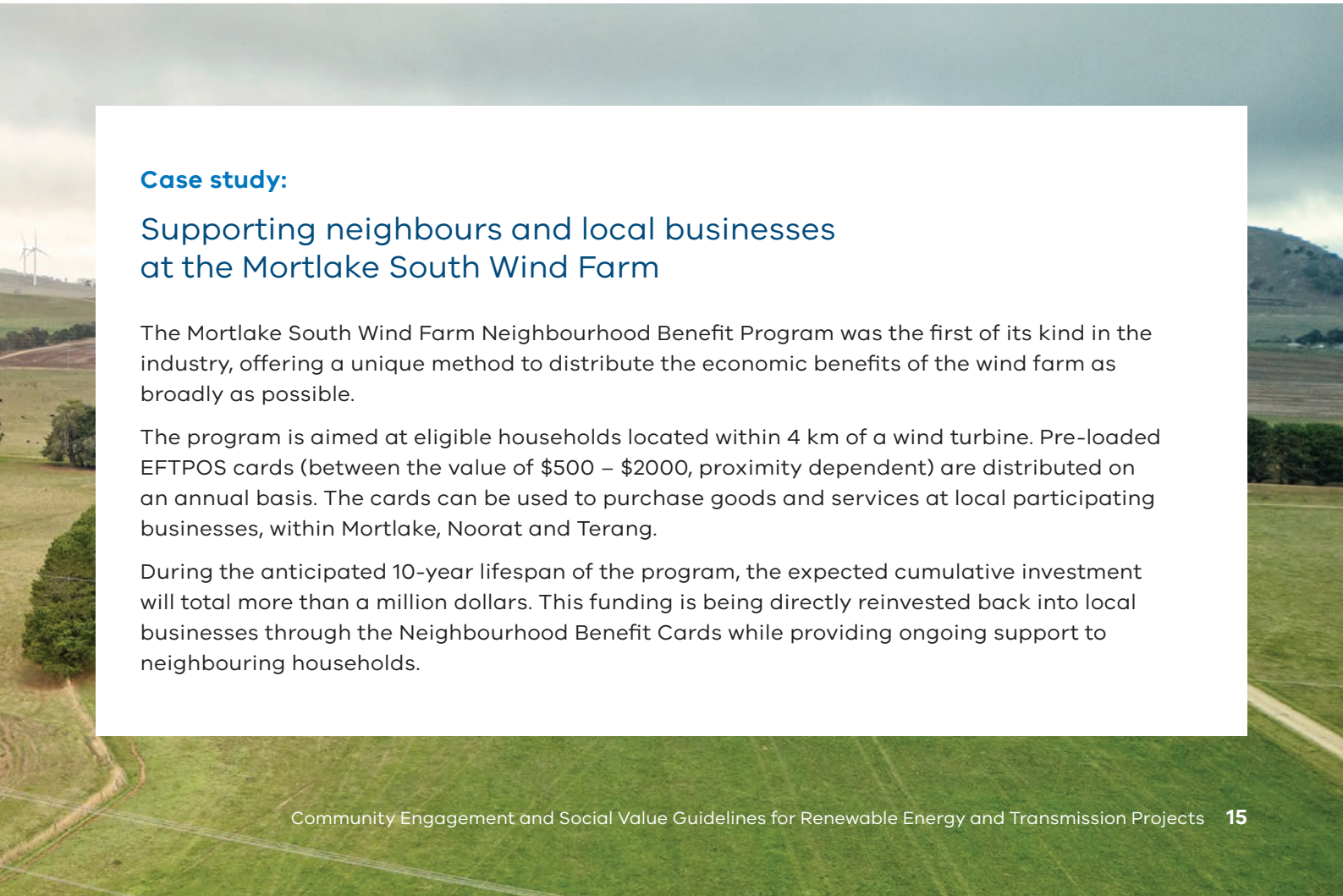
The Victorian Government is aware of landholders' concerns about public liability insurance risk. We are currently developing options to address this issue. Additional guidance may be incorporated into the final guidelines following targeted stakeholder consultation. Developers may be required to take additional actions.

Developer Rating Scheme

The Commonwealth Government is in the process of establishing a Developer Rating Scheme for renewable energy developers, as recommended by the Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner's 2024 Community Engagement Review.

The voluntary scheme aims to improve industry standards and provide local communities with greater transparency about companies that are proposing renewable energy and transmission projects in their area.

When the Developer Rating Scheme comes into effect, VicGrid will consult with developers to discuss the scheme's requirements, with the aim of encouraging developers to provide the rating information where practicable for their respective projects.



Case study:

Supporting neighbours and local businesses at the Mortlake South Wind Farm

The Mortlake South Wind Farm Neighbourhood Benefit Program was the first of its kind in the industry, offering a unique method to distribute the economic benefits of the wind farm as broadly as possible.

The program is aimed at eligible households located within 4 km of a wind turbine. Pre-loaded EFTPOS cards (between the value of $500 – $2000, proximity dependent) are distributed on an annual basis. The cards can be used to purchase goods and services at local participating businesses, within Mortlake, Noorat and Terang.

During the anticipated 10-year lifespan of the program, the expected cumulative investment will total more than a million dollars. This funding is being directly reinvested back into local businesses through the Neighbourhood Benefit Cards while providing ongoing support to neighbouring households.



Section 2

Engaging with Traditional Owners

Traditional Owners have distinct rights and responsibilities for Country. All partnerships and engagement activities should be carried out in a meaningful and culturally safe way so they can shape, participate in and benefit from the renewable energy transition, as determined by them.

This section sets out minimum expectations for how project developers will recognise the rights of Traditional Owners and engage respectfully and genuinely. We are proposing these expectations based on feedback we have heard through engagement with Traditional Owners.

Traditional Owners may hold their own expectations of project developers, which may be expressed through renewable energy strategies, statements and dialogue. It is up to Traditional Owners to determine whether, how and at what level they wish to engage with developers.

Rights of Traditional Owners

Traditional Owners' cultural and legal rights must be upheld under the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010,* the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006,* the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006,* and the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth). Furthermore, Article 32 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples describes the rights of Indigenous peoples in relation to developments affecting their lands or resources.

Registered Aboriginal Parties are responsible for managing and protecting Aboriginal cultural heritage within their appointed areas under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* (Vic), including carrying out duties such as the review and approval of Cultural Heritage Management Plans and Cultural Heritage Permits. Where proposed projects overlap with areas where rights exist under the *Native Title Act 1993* or the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010,* Traditional Owners may hold procedural rights and rights to compensation. Project developers must address these rights before a project may proceed. These rights are separate from any social and economic benefit initiatives expected in these guidelines.

Project developers should negotiate with Traditional Owners as rights holders, establishing a dialogue between equal parties to address concerns and interests, arrive at solutions or come to an agreement that all parties are satisfied with.

Minimum expectations for Traditional Owner engagement

Project developers must demonstrate how they are meeting the following expectations when engaging with Traditional Owners.

- Research the rights, interests, aspirations and protocols of Traditional Owner groups as expressed through Whole of Country Plans, organisational strategies, renewable energy statements, and engagement protocols.
- Undertake cultural safety training and education appropriate to the Traditional Owners on whose lands the project is intended to be developed.
- Engage early to understand the level of engagement, collaboration and participation that Traditional Owners seek. Engage broadly, including with non-formally recognised Traditional Owners who assert rights and interests in the area.
- Recognise and uphold the legislated rights of Traditional Owners.
- Enable self-determination by placing Traditional Owners at the centre of decision-making on issues that affect their lives, including cultural heritage, caring for Country, and social and economic initiatives.
- Establish a dialogue with Traditional Owners to understand and address concerns and interests, arrive at solutions or come to an agreement that all parties are satisfied with.
- Engage in dialogue on non-tangible cultural heritage and values.
- Undertake engagement and knowledge sharing with Traditional Owners in alignment with principles of data sovereignty.
- Appropriate remuneration for engaging Traditional Owners for their contribution of knowledge, expertise and time.
- Explore opportunities with the Traditional Owner representative bodies for collaboration on social value and economic benefits within broader First Peoples communities, including local community-controlled organisations, chambers of commerce, health organisations, support services or education, training and employment providers.

Section 3

Creating social value and economic benefits

Social value and economic benefits in renewable energy projects are created by investing in communities, Traditional Owners and landholders. They are delivered through a program of initiatives and supporting local economic development. Initiatives can take various forms, including investments in local infrastructure, community projects, community capacity building, community benefit funds or collaborative projects.

Delivering social value and economic benefit initiatives

This section sets out expectations for how project developers will develop and deliver initiatives that contribute to long-term social value creation and economic benefits for local communities.

Determining the reach of social value and economic benefits

Project developers should consider to whom and how far their social value and economic benefits should extend. To determine this, developers should consult on the needs and priorities of the communities where the project is proposed and consider the scale, impact and nature of the initiatives.

Developers should consider the various levels of geographic and social communities relating to a particular area. Initiatives may be designed for landholders immediately adjacent to a renewable energy project, the neighbouring townships and population centres, and/or the broader region in which the project is being developed. In the context of offshore wind development, consideration needs to be given to commercial fishing and other marine users.

Minimum expectations for creating social value and economic benefits

Developers must demonstrate how they are meeting the following expectations in the design and delivery of social value and economic benefits.

- Design initiatives that deliver strategic or long-term social value and economic benefits for the community.
- Develop community capacity by identifying opportunities that build on local strengths, assets, capabilities and resources.
- Align benefits with the needs, priorities and strategies already identified by local communities, government, industry and research.
- Collaborate with industry and community to achieve collective impact, including coordinating on resourcing, initiatives, information sharing and engagement, and leveraging shared networks.
- Provide transparent information to the community about the project's social value and economic benefit commitments, including by publishing a Social Value and Economic Benefits Plan.

Consultation question:



Q. How prescriptive should the guidelines be in formalising agreements and the timing of those agreements with communities?

Examples of social value and economic benefit initiatives

A project developer's social value and economic benefits program may include the following types of initiatives.

- **Community energy initiatives:** supporting initiatives that improve energy affordability, efficiency, reliability, access and resilience.
- **Community-owned energy investments:** designing co-ownership schemes that enable community members to invest in renewable energy projects.
- **Community infrastructure:** contributing to building community resilience through investment in housing, healthcare, recreational or other legacy infrastructure.
- **Community benefit funds:** delivering grants, sponsorships or donations to community organisations.
- **Caring for Country, biodiversity and climate:** supporting Traditional Owners and community projects to care for Country, protect and restore ecosystems and biodiversity, and support community climate action initiatives.
- **Skilled and professional services:** providing pro bono or discounted technical skills and expertise for community projects, including engineering, planning, business cases and feasibility studies.
- **Community capability and capacity building:** support community capacity and resourcing in areas such as local leadership, community planning and organising, emergency response, volunteerism, energy literacy, collaboration, governance and innovation.

Consultation question:



Q. Do you have examples of project developers and community working together to share information, coordinate engagement, and scale impact in social value and economic benefits?

Existing compensation, fees and rates

The social value and economic benefits initiatives developed under these guidelines are in addition to, not in place of, the following statutory compensation, mandatory fee or rates payments:

- Compensation payments to landholders under the *Land Acquisition and Compensation Act 1986*.
- Compensation arrangements for Traditional Owners under the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010 and the Native Title Act 1993* (Cth).
- Cultural heritage works and management plans contracted to fulfil obligations under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*.
- Access fees paid from renewable energy zone generation projects that have been applied to Renewable Energy Zone Community Energy Funds and Traditional Owner benefits[2].
- Transmission easement fees paid by transmission network service providers that have been applied to Renewable Energy Zone Community Energy Funds and Traditional Owner benefits[3].
- Payments in Lieu of Rates (PiLoR) stipulated by or negotiated under the *Electricity Industry Act 2000* and the guidelines stipulated in the Order in Council under Section 94, published in the Government Gazette Issue G9, 29 February 2024.
- Negotiated outcomes where fishing operations are materially affected under the *Offshore Electricity Infrastructure Act 2021*.

2 Subject to the draft Renewable Energy Zone Community Benefits Plan being finalised and released later this year
3 Subject to the draft Renewable Energy Zone Community Benefits Plan being finalised and released later this year

Determining an appropriate budget for social value and economic initiatives

Developers will need to determine an appropriate budget for the social value and economic benefits initiatives.

There is no prescriptive model for developing this budget.

The budget may depend on various factors such as the technology type, scale, local context, community interests and commercial considerations. Some initiatives may also take the form of in-kind contributions through skilled volunteerism and technical assistance.

The value of the initiatives should exclude project expenditure that a development would need to incur to receive approvals and run its operations. These may include engagement activities, mandatory fees, compensation or upgrades and repairs to infrastructure, such as road upgrades.

Consultation question:



Q. Should the guidelines provide guidance on the valuation of or budgeting for social value and economic benefit initiatives? If so, what amount or range should be considered for solar, wind, and large-scale battery projects (expressed in dollars per megawatt)?

For transmission project delivery partners

Social value and economic benefit budgets for state-procured transmission infrastructure will be determined in collaboration between a transmission developer and VicGrid project by project, according to the specific requirements, impacts and scale.

Since the 2021 *Community Engagement and Benefit Sharing in Renewable Energy Development* in Victoria guidelines were issued, industry practice on benefit sharing has evolved. In NSW, the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) has published updated guidance for community benefit sharing in renewable energy projects. These approaches are outlined in the table below. The final version of these guidelines may include similar such guidance for social value initiatives.

Table C: Examples of social value and economic benefit initiative budgeting guidance

Technology	DEECA (2021) Community Engagement and Benefit Sharing Guidelines	DPHI (2024) Benefit-Sharing Guideline
Solar	$130-$800/MW/a	<$850/MW/a
Wind	$500-$1,500/MW/a	<$1,050/MW/a
Standalone battery energy storage systems (BESS)	N/A	<$150/MW/a



Supporting local economic development

Supporting local industry is an important way projects can deliver social value and economic benefits. Local economic development is about growing the economic capacity of the communities where a project is located, particularly through local industry participation and workforce development.

This section sets out expectations for how project developers will engage local industries and workforces.

For transmission project delivery partners

Transmission infrastructure procured by the state will be required to apply all mandatory government policies, including but not limited to the Local Jobs First Policy and Social Procurement Framework, in delivering social value for their respective projects. Therefore, the relevant mandatory policies will supersede any guidance provided here.

Minimum expectations for local industry engagement

Developers must demonstrate how they are meeting the following expectations.

- Research local capabilities and identify opportunities for procuring local content.
- Engage engineering, procurement and construction contractors on local procurement opportunities.
- Identify social procurement and First Peoples' procurement opportunities.
- Communicate early with the community and relevant stakeholders about procurement and workforce opportunities that will be available at each stage of the development cycle.
- Support local suppliers' capacity to participate through collaboration and engagement activities, including with other developers.
- Collaborate with stakeholders on vocational education and business development programs.

Case study:

Industry collaboration to build an offshore wind workforce in Gippsland

Several offshore wind project developers are collaborating with the Gippsland community to support workers transitioning from coal-fired electricity generation and to provide career pathways for the next generation of energy workers.

Initiatives include:

- partnering with the Asia Pacific Renewable Energy Training Centre to establish a Gippsland campus at Federation University
- scholarships for energy-related studies through Federation University
- participation in the Jobs Victoria New Energy Project to help priority jobseekers gain work in the energy sector
- partnering to establish the Australian Renewables Academy to train and mentor renewable energy workers, and to advocate for workforce development in renewable energy
- publishing a series of jobs guides to engage workers and suppliers about workforce opportunities in offshore wind
- supporting the establishment of the Australian Centre for Offshore Wind Energy to Gippsland's workforce pipeline
- supporting the development of a Clean Energy Workforce Course Guide with TAFE Gippsland.



Local workforce development activity expectations

Local workforce development refers to a variety of activities aimed at building a renewable energy workforce in the community where the project is located.

Developers should describe any workforce development activities undertaken, whether as part of new or existing initiatives.

These may include:

- collaborating with secondary, vocational and tertiary education providers
- sharing information on career pathways and requirements
- supporting job-readiness and employment of priority and disadvantaged jobseekers
- planning and recruiting for inclusive workforces, including First Peoples employment
- providing support or scholarships for vocational and tertiary education students.

Social and First Peoples procurement expectations

Project developers should use their buying power to generate social impact above and beyond the value of the goods, services or construction being procured.

In planning for social procurement, developers should consider setting targets, designing accessible contract packages, engaging sub-contractors, designing accountability methods and building the capacity of social enterprise partners.

Developers can search the following directories to identify social enterprises, Victorian First Peoples businesses and disability enterprises:

- Social Traders
- Kinaway Chamber of Commerce
- Supply Nation
- BuyAbility
- Indigenous Business Australia
- Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations
- Industry Capability Network Victoria
- Relevant local First Peoples business and social procurement networks and directories

Section 4

Evidence and documentation

This section outlines the documents that the Victorian Government expects to receive from project developers applying to access the transmission network through the Victorian Access Regime, what they will contain as a minimum, and where to find more guidance, if needed.

For transmission project delivery partners

The documents you will need to prepare in line with these guidelines will be outlined in the project-specific tender documents.

As a state procurer of transmission projects and a party to public-private partnerships, VicGrid will ensure that transmission project developers are accountable for community engagement and social and economic benefit commitments made to communities affected by transmission projects. This includes publication of social and economic benefit commitments, social performance assessment during procurement, and social performance reporting through state economic development policy frameworks.

Documentation requirements

Projects applying to access the transmission network will have their social performance assessed on the design and delivery of their community engagement, social value and economic benefit initiatives.

As part of a renewable energy project's application, the following documents are required:

1. social impact assessment
2. community, landholder and Traditional Owner engagement strategies
3. social value and economic benefits program
4. local industry engagement plan
5. monitoring, evaluation and reporting plan.



Accountabilities and compliance

Where VicGrid grants access to the grid, project developers will receive an access authority. The commitments made in the submitted documents will inform the project's access authorisation conditions.

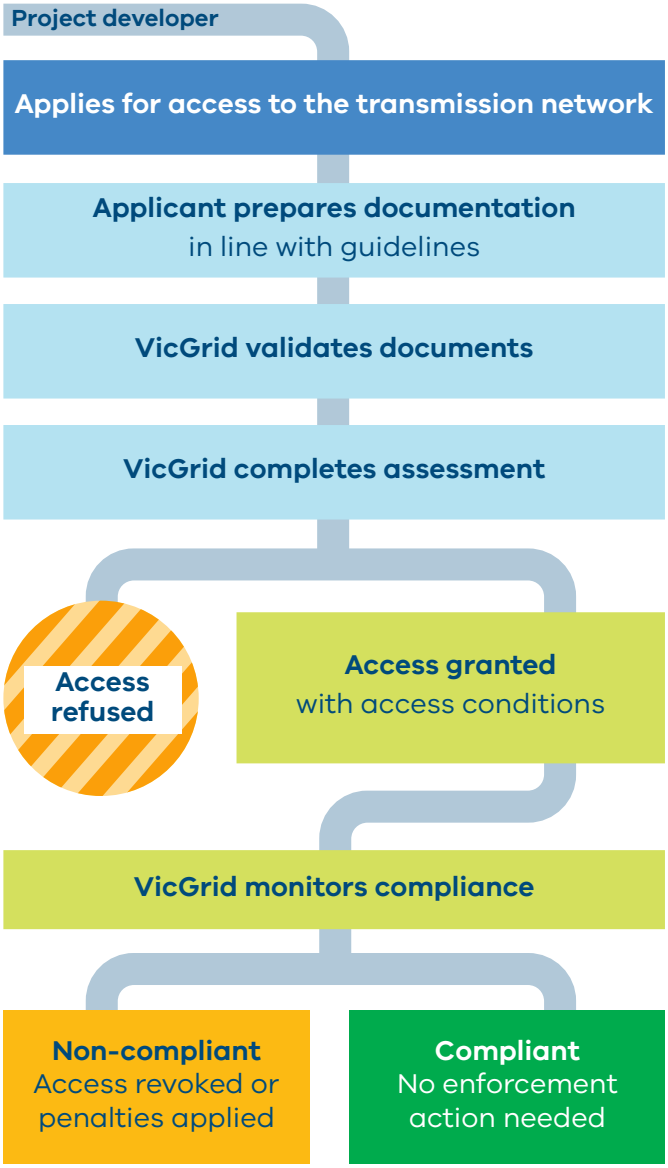
VicGrid may reject an application for an access authority (within or outside a renewable energy zone) if the applicant is unable to demonstrate that it has applied these guidelines in developing its application.

Access conditions are enforceable, and penalties may apply. An access authority can also be revoked if conditions are breached, for example, if the project is not meeting its community, landholder and Traditional Owner commitments. Before considering revocation of access or imposition of penalties, VicGrid will give notice to the project developer and consult with Traditional Owners and stakeholders. Compliance and enforcement of access conditions will be implemented through additional regulations under the *National Electricity (Victoria) Act 2005,* and VicGrid will release further guidance on how they will be applied.

In assessing social performance, VicGrid will also reserve the right to verify the information submitted in documents, including consulting with community, Traditional Owners, landholders and local government. Should the process of verification invalidate evidence provided by project developers, VicGrid may refuse access to the grid.

Figure 2 provides a graphical representation of how project developers will be held accountable for commitments made to communities.

Figure 2:
Social performance accountability framework



Additional evidence of social performance

In addition to the required documents, developers may choose to provide relevant information from external sources regarding their company or project's social performance.

These may include:

- agreements, letters of support, letters of engagement, or other evidence of support provided by community organisations and local governments
- Infrastructure Sustainability Rating Scheme certifications
- Clean Energy Council Best Practice Charter signatory submissions and reports
- information relating to ratings obtained through the Commonwealth Government Developer Rating Scheme (upon commencement of the scheme)
- social value certifications, including B-Corp certification, Social Traders certification
- Reconciliation Action Plan, formally endorsed by Reconciliation Australia
- pre-assessment certificate issued by the Fair Jobs Code Unit.

Exemptions

To avoid duplication with other government social performance assessments, projects that have successfully tendered under the Commonwealth Government's Capacity Investment Scheme are exempt from submitting the required documentation on the proviso that those processes include requirements that are consistent with, or exceed, the expectations detailed in these guidelines.

VicGrid will undertake a comparison of assessment criteria and methodologies and check on the current status of the project. Any gaps are expected to be incorporated into conditions in the relevant access authority, unless major gaps are identified.

While these projects are exempt from repeated assessment of social performance, VicGrid may request the submission of documentation to verify developer commitments and monitor compliance where required.

Social performance assessments do not apply to existing projects or projects that are not required to apply for access under the Victorian Access Regime.

While existing projects are exempt from applying to access the grid, the expectations described in these guidelines should be understood as the minimum benchmark for community engagement and social value and economic benefit creation while in operation. Operators of existing projects are encouraged to review their approach for consistency with these guidelines.

Social impact assessment

What is a social impact assessment?

A social impact assessment is the process of analysing, monitoring and managing the intended and unintended social consequences, both positive and negative, of a project[7].

The development of a social impact assessment should be considered as an iterative process, allowing community to identify impacts and support the development of mitigation and management responses.

Social impact assessment document requirements

A social impact assessment is intrinsically linked to community engagement approaches and the development of social value and economic benefits. As such it is expected that the documents are related and align.

In line with international and Australian social impact assessment guidance, it is expected that project developers include the information listed in Table D as part of the social impact assessment.

Additional resources:
More information on social impact assessments can be found in the International Association for Impact Assessment Social Impact Assessment Guide.

New South Wales and Queensland have also developed social impact assessment guides that can provide additional guidance:

- New South Wales Government Social Impact Assessment Guideline
- Queensland Government Social Impact Assessment Guideline

Table D: Required information to be submitted in a social impact assessment

1. Community context and profile

- The methodology used (including desktop research and consultation)
- Description of relevant communities and regional characteristics
- Important community values (including social, cultural, natural and land use values)
- A baseline of current social conditions for project impacts to be measured against
- Summary of main issues

2. Community map

- Map(s) of the project location, geographical considerations, natural assets, Traditional Owner lands, LGAs, impacted facilities and infrastructure and landholders impacted.

3. Social impact stakeholder identification

- List of impacted stakeholders and rights holders

4. Identifying impacts

- List of likely direct and indirect social impacts (both positive and negative, real and perceived)

5. Evaluating impacts

- The extent, nature, duration and significance of each social impact in relation to the baseline of current conditions
- Analysis of who is impacted
- Likelihood of each impact occurring
- Cumulative impacts
- Potential alternatives

6. Documenting measures to address/manage impacts

- Identification of measures/actions to minimise, mitigate or manage negative impacts, including reference to how these will deliver against the outcomes and expectations listed in this guide
- Measures to enhance positive benefits and opportunities

7. Ongoing plans/next steps

- Details of additional assessment activities and consultation planned in relation to the social impact assessment.

7 Vanclay, F., Esteves, A. M., Aucamp, I., & Franks, D. (2015). Social impact assessment: Guidance for assessing and managing the social impacts of projects and ask projects to assess social impacts.

Community, landholder and Traditional Owner engagement strategies

What are engagement strategies?

A community, landholder and Traditional Owner engagement strategy communicates how the project developer will involve each of these groups in designing and developing the project. They clearly articulate objectives, stakeholders, activities, timelines, risks, roles and responsibilities and budget.

Additional resources:

The International Association of Public Participation Quality Assurance Standard for Community and Stakeholder Engagement should be considered by developers as an essential tool in guiding the development of engagement plans.

Engagement strategies document requirements

A community, landholder and Traditional Owner engagement strategy must be prepared in line with the expectations as set out in Section 1 and 2 of these guidelines.

Separate strategies are required for:

- community, landholder and neighbour engagement
- Traditional Owner engagement.

Required information for community, landholder and Traditional Owner engagement strategies is presented in Table E.



Table E: Required information to be submitted in community, landholder and Traditional Owner engagement strategies

1. General

- Purpose and objectives of engagement
- Use of the IAP2 public participation spectrum (see Appendix A) to communicate commitment to engagement at various project stages and by stakeholder group
- Description of community considerations and interests in relation to the development
- Engagement negotiables and non-negotiables (relevant to project stages)
- How the outcomes and expectations listed in these guidelines will be delivered as they relate to community, Traditional Owners and landholders

2. Stakeholder identification

- Analysis of stakeholders and Traditional Owners, as identified in the Social Impact Assessment – with consideration for influence, impact and interests
- Details of Traditional Owner group(s) and First Peoples groups
- Description of Traditional Owner considerations and interests in relation to the development, including consideration of Traditional Owner Whole of Country Plans, organisational strategies, renewable energy statements and engagement protocols

3. Summary of stakeholder engagement completed to date

- Activities undertaken to date and community and landholder responses (positive and negative)
- Evidence of project responsiveness to key issues raised by community and landholders
- Activities undertaken to date to engage Traditional Owner group(s)
- Verification of Traditional Owner engagement, which may include agreements, letters of engagement, letters of support or other evidence

4. Planned communication and engagement approaches

- Details of project phases and engagement opportunities
- Details of planned activities, tools and channels for each key stakeholder group identified in these guidelines (and any others specific to the project)
- Key contact points and channels for the public, landholders and Traditional Owners
- Enquiries, complaints and dispute resolution systems and processes

5. Budget and resourcing

- Detail budget and resourcing for the delivery of the engagement plan, and associated activities
- Outline approach for ensuring sufficient and appropriately skilled delivery teams

Social value and economic benefits program

What is a social value and economic benefits program?

A social value and economic benefits program outlines how the project developer intends to create positive social, economic, environmental and cultural outcomes for individuals, communities and regions.

Social value and economic benefits program document requirements

A social value and economic benefits program must be prepared in line with the minimum expectations of these guidelines.

Required information for a social value and economic benefits program is presented in Table F.

Table F: Required information to be submitted in a social value and economic benefits program

1. Program overview

- Overview of the approach to developing the initiatives (including the role of engagement)
- Community needs and aspirations (with consideration for social impact assessment outcomes)
- Summary of any engagement to date to inform initiatives

2. List of social and economic benefit initiatives

- Description of existing or planned community and landholder social value and economic benefit initiatives
- Description of Traditional Owner social value and economic benefit initiatives
- Indication of value (budget or in-kind)
- Description of beneficiaries and outcomes
- Status and timing of initiatives
- How they deliver against the expectations and outcomes listed in these guidelines

3. Governance

- Information on governance model(s), delivery and administration



Local industry engagement plan

What is a local industry engagement plan?

A local industry engagement plan describes the project developer's approach to providing opportunities for local businesses and workers.

Local industry engagement plan document requirements

A local industry engagement plan must align with the expectations set out in Section 3 of these guidelines. In preparing their plan, developers should consult with Regional Development Victoria before engaging local industry. Regional Development Victoria is the Victorian Government's lead agency responsible for rural and regional economic development.

Required information in a local industry engagement plan is presented in Table G.

Table G: Required information to be submitted in local industry engagement plan

1. Local industry consultation

- Description of identified local industry engagement opportunities
- Description on how local industry will be engaged on project supply opportunities (including any engagement to-date)

2. Local industry and workforce activities

- Details on local industry and workforce activities
- Details of any partnerships (existing or planned) to deliver local industry and workforce activities

3. Local industry commitments, and how they deliver against the expectations and outcomes described in these guidelines.

Initiatives may include:

- employing local workers
- procuring from local enterprises
- social procurement and First Peoples procurement
- inclusive workforce (for example, First Peoples workers, women workers, trainees, and apprentices).





Monitoring, evaluation and reporting plan

What is a monitoring, evaluation and reporting plan?

Monitoring and evaluating community engagement, social value and economic benefits, and local industry participation throughout the project's lifecycle identifies where success has been achieved and where improvements and or modifications need to be made.

Monitoring, evaluation and reporting plan document requirements

Monitoring, evaluation and reporting plans should be regularly reviewed and updated in line with any changes to the community, landholder and Traditional Owner engagement strategy, and the social and economic benefits program.

Required information for a monitoring, evaluation and reporting plan is presented in Table H.

Table H: Required information for a monitoring, evaluation and reporting plan

1. Methodology

- Description of monitoring and evaluation framework
- Description of the measures and tools
- Outline the role of engagement in monitoring and evaluation activities
- Frequency and timing
- Roles and responsibilities
- How transparency and accountability will be enabled
- Approach to ensuring the plan can be adapted over time

2. Monitoring metrics

- Key performance indicators (quantitative or qualitative)

Consultation question:

Q. Do you have comments on how VicGrid should assess projects against the outcomes and expectations detailed in these draft guidelines?

Appendix A: IAP2 Public participation spectrum

The International Association for Public Participation's (IAP2s) public participation spectrum positions community engagement approach along a spectrum from 'informing' through to through to 'empowering' as described in Table I.

The Victorian Government expects that project developers will view the 'involve' level as the minimum for eligibility, and developers are strongly encouraged to move beyond this and demonstrate community 'collaboration' and 'empowerment.'

Table I: Approaches for community engagement

Increasing impact on the decision

	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Promise to the public	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
Public participation goal	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision. We will seek your feedback on drafts and proposals.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work together with you to formulate solutions and incorporate our advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

Minimum requirement

Note: Stronger levels of engagement are encouraged and will be assessed favourably.

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