# Glenelg Shire Council

## Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Tuesday 23 June 2026 at 5:30 pm at Glenelg Shire Offices 71 Cliff Street, Portland

## 1. PRESENT

Mayor Cr Karen Stephens, Deputy Mayor Cr Matt Jowett, Cr Duane Angelino, Cr Robyn McDonald, Cr John Pepper, and Cr Dr Mary Picard.

Also in attendance were the Chief Executive Officer (Ms Helen Havercroft), Director Corporate Services (Mr David Hol), Director Community Services (Mr Brett Jackson), Acting Director Infrastructure Services (Ms Jemma Dillon), Chief Finance Officer (Ms Rebecca Campbell), Business Support Officer CEO Department (Ms Robbie Lane), and Business Support Officer Corporate Services Department (Ms Louise Haluska).

## 2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Mayor read the Acknowledgement of Country.

## 3. RECORDING OF MEETINGS

To those present in the gallery today, by attending a public meeting of the Council you are consenting to your image, voice and comments being recorded and published. Council meetings may be livestreamed and the Chief Executive Officer will enable a copy of the recording to the public.

## 4. RECEIPT OF APOLOGIES

Councillor Michael Carr
Aaron Moyne, Director Infrastructure Services

## 5. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

### 5.1. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Recommendation

That the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 26 May 2026, as circulated, be confirmed.

**MOTION**

**MOVED Cr McDonald**

**That the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 26 May 2026, as circulated, be confirmed.**

**SECONDED Cr Angelino**

**CARRIED**

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| **FOR:** | Cr Angelino, Cr Jowett, Cr McDonald, Cr Stephens and Cr Pepper |
| **AGAINST:** | Nil |

*Cr Dr Picard was not in attendance at the May Council Meeting.*

## 5.2. RECORD OF COUNCILLOR BRIEFINGS

David Hol, Director Corporate Services

### Summary

This report provides for Council to receive a record of any recent Councillor Briefing sessions undertaken since last reported at a Council meeting.

### Background

The Glenelg Shire Council Governance Rules as adopted on the 23 January 2024 require that a record is kept of each Councillor Briefing and that the record is tabled at an open Council meeting (excluding any confidential matters).

The record is to include a list of matters presented and any Conflict-of-Interest declarations together with any actions taken to resolve declared conflicts.

The objective of submitting the record to a Council meeting is to ensure public transparency in Council decision making processes.

### Council Plan and Policy Linkage

Leading and Engaging – Being an active and transparent leader set up to deliver on our priorities.

### Recommendation

That Council receives the record of the Councillor briefing held on 26 May 2026, 2 June 2026, 9 June 2026 and 16 June 2026.

**MOTION**

**MOVED Cr McDonald**

**That Council receives the record of the Councillor briefing held on 26 May 2026, 2 June 2026, 9 June 2026 and 16 June 2026.**

**SECONDED Cr Jowett**

**CARRIED**

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| **FOR:** | Cr Angelino, Cr Dr Picard, Cr Jowett, Cr McDonald, Cr Stephens and Cr Pepper |
| **AGAINST:** | Nil |

**Attachment List**

1. Councillor Briefing Record 26 May 2026 [**5.2.1** - 1 page]
2. Councillor Briefing Record 2 June 2026 [**5.2.2** - 1 page]
3. Councillor Briefing Record 9 June 2026 [**5.2.3** - 1 page]
4. Councillor Briefing Record 16 June 2026 [**5.2.4** - 1 page]

# 6. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

## 6.1. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Nil.

## 7. COUNCILLOR ACTIVITY REPORTS

**Cr STEPHENS, MAYOR**

| Date | Meeting/Event | Location | Comments (Optional) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 01.05.2026 | Meet with Lions Club of Heywood | Heywood | Met with Heywood Lions Club members to discuss projects of importance to their group. |
| 01.05.2026 | Funeral of John Hurt | Portland | John Hurt was a valued Glenelg Shire staff member, a former President of the Lions Club of Portland and an incredible community volunteer valued by many – paying our respects to John and his family with myself, were Deputy Mayor, CEO and Acting Director Infrastructure Services, amongst other staff. |
| 05.05.2026 | Australian Citizenship Ceremony | Portland | Always a happy occasion the conferring of our local resident's as Australian Citizens. At this ceremony we had 12 new citizens in attendance. |
| 05.05.2026 | Councillor Briefing | Portland | Regular Council Briefing session to discuss matters of strategic importance. |
| 11.05.2026 | Hardwood Manufacturing Hub meeting | Online | Regular meeting of Project Reference Group |
| 11.05.2026 | Glenelg Shire Community Grants presentation | Heywood | Glenelg Shire Round Two 2025-26 Community Grants presentation ceremony. |
| 12.05.2026 | Portland Foreshore Community Infrastructure Refurbishment | Portland | Regular meeting of Project Reference Group. |
| 12.05.2026 | Councillor Briefing | Portland | Regular Council Briefing session to discuss matters of strategic importance. |
| 13.05.2026 | Timber Towns Victoria (TTV) Victorian Parliament House | Melbourne | TTV met with Members of Parliament advocating for our priorities leading into the forthcoming State Government election - *Priority 1* – Road repairs and Roads & Bridges funding |

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| | | | *Priority 2* – Fire Camera for Community Safety, Forest Protection & Plantation Industry Resilience.<br>*Priority 3* – National Forest Policy Reform. |
| 15.05.2026 | Aboriginal Partnership meeting | Portland | Opportunity to meet with CEO traditional owner partners to discuss councils Position Statement. |
| 15.05.2026 | All Saints Debutante Ball | Portland | Attended the All Saints Debutante Ball greeting students and congratulating them on their achievement. |
| 17.05.2026 | Casterton Cup | Casterton | Annual Racing event on Victorian calendar. |
| 18.05.2026 | Glenelg Shire National Volunteer Week event | Heywood | The Glenelg Shire celebration for our amazing local volunteers and the awarding of the annual Volunteer Recognition Awards.<br>In Heywood we awarded<br>• Braydon Saunders – Outstanding Achievement Award<br>• Saige Bell the Arts & Culture Award. |
| 19.05.2025 | Councillor Briefing | Portland | Regular Council Briefing session to discuss matters of strategic importance. |
| 19.05.2026 | Glenelg Shire National Volunteer Week event | Portland | The Glenelg Shire celebration for our amazing local volunteers and the awarding of the annual Volunteer Recognition Awards.<br>In Portland we awarded<br>• Bruce Elijah, Citizen of the Year<br>• Helena Lucas, Senior Citizen of the Year<br>• Jaylan Tomlin Youth of the Year |
| 20.05.2026 | Glenelg Shire National Volunteer Week event | Casterton | The Glenelg Shire celebration for our amazing local volunteers and the awarding of the annual Volunteer Recognition Awards.<br>In Casterton we awarded |

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| | | | • Royal Children's Hospital Good Friday Appeal Organising Committee the Community Group of the Year award. |
| 21.05.2026 | Glenelg Shire National Volunteer Week event | Nelson | The Glenelg Shire celebration for our amazing local volunteers and the awarding of the annual Volunteer Recognition Awards.<br>There were no awards presented in Nelson this year. |
| 22.05.2026 | Budj Bim Cultural Tour | Tyrendarra | Budj Bim Cultural Tour with Reuben as our passionate and knowledgeable guide. |
| 26.05.2026 | Council Meeting | Portland | Monthly Council meeting. |

**Cr JOWETT, DEPUTY MAYOR**

| Date | Meeting/Event | Location | Comments (Optional) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 01.05.2026 | Funeral for John Hurt | Portland | |
| 05.05.2026 | Australian Citizenship Ceremony | Portland | It's always great to attend these events to witness new Australians take their pledge and become Australian citizens. |
| 05.05.2026 | CEO & Councillor Briefing | Portland | We had an open and frank discussion on many topics vital to our community |
| 11.05.2026 | Community Grants Presentation Evening | Heywood | A great evening where we councillors had the privilege to present community grants to numerous Glenelg Shire Community groups |
| 12.05.2026 | Councillor Briefing | Portland | Regular Council Briefing session to discuss matters various topics of importance to our community |
| 18.05.2026 | 2026 Glenelg Shire Community Awards | Heywood | The Glenelg Shire Community Awards would have to be one of the high points of the year |
| 19.05.2026 | Councillor Briefing | Portland | Regular Council Briefing session to discuss matters various topics of importance to our community. |
| 19.05.2026 | 2026 Glenelg Shire Community Awards | Portland | Councillors presented awards to amazing community minded people. |

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| 20.05.2026 | 2026 Glenelg Shire Community Awards | Casterton | Councillors presented awards to amazing community minded people. |
| 21.05.2026 | 2026 Glenelg Shire Community Awards | Nelson | Councillors presented awards to amazing community minded people. |
| 22.05.2026 | Budj Bim Cultural Tour | Tyrendarra | Our Councillor group had the amazing opportunity to get a guided tour through various First Nations sites within our Shire |
| 26.05.2026 | Councillor Briefing | Portland | Regular Council Briefing session to discuss matters various topics of importance to our community |
| 26.05.2026 | May Council Meeting | Portland | The Monthly Council Meeting Is always a fantastic opportunity for Councillors to openly discuss and vote on topics of importance to our community, in front of a gathering of our residents |

**Cr MCDONALD**

| Date | Meeting/Event | Location | Comments (Optional) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 05.05.2026 | Citizenship Ceremony | Portland | Some, now official, new citizens who have resided with us with for 40+ years. |
| 05.05.2026 | Councillor briefing | Portland | |
| 11.05.2026 | Community Grants R2 | Heywood | Another round of grants distributed to a diverse range of successful applicants from our active community groups, who provide such amazing opportunities for our residents. |
| 12.05.2026 | Portland Foreshore Community Infrastructure Refurbishment | Portland | Continued engagement with stakeholders |
| 12.05.2026 | Councillor briefing | Portland | |
| 18.05.2026 | Volunteer Awards | Heywood | A week of recognition of both the award recipients and all volunteers within our shire who give of their time without any expectation of acknowledgement. |
| 19.05.2025 | Councillor briefing | Portland | |
| 19.05.2026 | Volunteer Awards | Portland | |

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| 20.05.2026 | Inspection of new playground | Casterton | |
| 20.05.2026 | Volunteer Awards | Casterton | |
| 21.05.2026 | Volunteer Awards | Nelson | |
| 22.05.2026 | Cultural Awareness Tour | Budj Bim | |
| 26.05.2026 | Council Meeting | Portland | |
| 29.05.2026 | Reconciliation Week Exhibition Launch – Jason Walker | Portland | |

**Cr PEPPER**

| Date | Meeting/Event | Location | Comments (Optional) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 05.05.2026 | Councillor briefing | Portland | |
| 11.05.2026 | Grants Presentation Evening | Heywood | |
| 12.05.2026 | Councillor briefing | Portland | |
| 18.05.2026 | Glenelg Shire Community Awards | Heywood | |
| 19.05.2026 | Councillor briefing | Portland | |
| 19.05.2026 | Glenelg Shire Community Awards | Portland | |
| 20.05.2026 | Glenelg Shire Community Awards | Casterton | |
| 21.05.2026 | Glenelg Shire Community Awards | Nelson | |
| 22.05.2026 | Budj Bim Cultural Tour | | |
| 26.05.2026 | Council Meeting | Portland | |

**Cr CARR**

| Date | Meeting/Event | Location | Comments (Optional) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 05.05.2026 | Councillor briefing | Portland | |
| 05.05.2026 | Rail Freight Alliance Finance Meeting | Online | |
| 08.05.2026 | Rail Freight Alliance Meeting | Online | |
| 11.05.2026 | Community Grants | Heywood | |
| 12.05.2026 | Councillor briefing | Portland | |
| 14.05.2026 | CEO / Councillor update | Online | |
| 18.05.2026 | 2026 Glenelg Shire Community Awards - Heywood | Heywood | |
| 19.05.2025 | Councillor briefing | Portland | |

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| 19.05.2026 | 2026 Glenelg Shire Community Awards - Portland | Portland | |
| 21.05.2026 | 2026 Glenelg Shire Community Awards - Nelson | Nelson | |
| 22.05.2026 | Budj Bim Cultural Tour | Tyrendarra | |
| 26.05.2026 | Council Meeting | Portland | |
| 29.05.2026 | Two Rivers Partnership Exhibition featuring Jason Walker | Portland | |

**Cr ANGELINO**

| Date | Meeting/Event | Location | Comments (Optional) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 05.05.2026 | Councillor briefing | Portland | |
| 05.05.2026 | Australian Citizenship Ceremony | Portland | A great day for new citizens in the Shire. |
| 05.05.2026 | Jacinta Ermacora | Heywood and Portland | The Labour Govt has allocated $200K for Heywood Women's Changerooms and $40k for Alexandra Park goal nets. |
| 11.05.2026 | Shire Grants event in Heywood | Heywood | A great night to share the Grants to groups in the Shire |
| 12.05.2026 | Councillor briefing | Portland | |
| 18.05.2026 | Community awards | Heywood | Saige Bell and Braydon Saunders awarded and met with other volunteer groups |
| 19.05.2026 | Community awards | Portland | Bruce Elijah received the award for citizen of the Year for the Shire and Helena Lucas for Senior of the Year for the Shire |
| 19.05.2025 | Councillor briefing | Portland | |
| 20.05.2026 | Cancer Council Biggest morning tea | Heywood Anglican church | A great time to share morning tea and guest speaker Carol shared her experiences with cancer in her family |
| 20.05.2026 | Community Awards | Casterton | The good Friday team in Casterton received the group award for 80 years of raising money for the Royal children's hospital |
| 21.05.2026 | Community Awards | Nelson | A night to catch up with members of the Nelson community |

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| 22.05.2026 | First nations On Country Tour | Tyrendarra IPA and Tae Rak | A great time on country with councillors and guides to learn of aboriginal history and culture |
| 26.05.2026 | Council Meeting | Portland | |
| 28.05.2026 | Eating with friends | Heywood Men's Shed | The Lions Club has a monthly lunch for community. |
| 29.05.2026 | Two Rivers Event | Portland Pac | Jason Walker displayed his art exhibition a great event for first nations. |

Recommendation

That Council notes the Councillor Activity Reports for 1 May 2026 to 31 May 2026.

**MOTION**

**MOVED Cr McDonald**

**That Council notes the Councillor Activity Reports for 1 May 2026 to 31 May 2026.**

**SECONDED Cr Angelino**

**CARRIED**

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|---|---|
| **FOR:** | Cr Angelino, Cr Dr Picard, Cr Jowett, Cr McDonald, Cr Stephens and Cr Pepper |
| **AGAINST:** | Nil |

# 8. PETITIONS

## 8.1. PETITION - FOGO BIN SCHEME

Director: David Hol, Director Corporate Services

### Summary

This report is to advise Council that a petition was received on 11 June 2026, requesting that consideration be given to providing an ‘opt–out’ choice for those not wishing the Food Organics Green Organics (FOGO) kerbside bin collection service.

### Key Information

On 11 June 2026, Council received a petition from petition organiser Mr Ray Dalziel, containing approximately 155 signatures.

The petition requests information from Council as to why an opt-out choice was not provided for the introduction of the FOGO kerbside bin collection service.

The Governance Rules outline that a petition received is to be tabled at the next available Council meeting. Council may then resolve to receive the petition, refer it for a report at the next available Council meeting, or refer the matter to the CEO for consideration and action.

It is recommended that the matter be the subject of a Council report at the next appropriate Council meeting to outline the relevant information.

### Risk

Section 57 of the Governance Rules outlines the process for assessing, receiving and actioning a petition.

In accordance with Council's privacy obligations and commitment to protecting personal information, only a summary of the issues raised in the petition and the number of signatories are included in the public Council Meeting Agenda. The petition itself is not included in the public Agenda.

### Finance

The budget contains information surrounding waste Collection costs. A Council report will articulate the economic impact involved with service options relating to FOGO.

### Consultation

The petition has been tabled for Councillor consideration.

### Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 Alignment

Leading and Engaging – Being an active and transparent leader set up to deliver on our priorities.

<u>Conclusion</u>

In accordance with the adopted Governance Rules, clause 57(2), it is recommended that Council refer the Petition for a report to be provided at the next appropriate Council meeting for consideration.

<u>Recommendation</u>

That Council:

1. Receives the Petition in accordance with clause 57(1) of Council's Governance Rules; and

2. Refers the Petition for a report at the next appropriate Council meeting in accordance with Clause 57(2) of the Governance Rules.

**<u>MOTION</u>**

**MOVED Cr Angelino**

**That Council:**

1. **Receives the Petition in accordance with clause 57(1) of Council's Governance Rules; and**

2. **Refers the Petition for a report at the next appropriate Council meeting in accordance with Clause 57(2) of the Governance Rules.**

**SECONDED Cr Pepper**

**CARRIED**

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| **FOR:** | Cr Angelino, Cr Dr Picard, Cr Jowett, Cr McDonald, Cr Stephens and Cr Pepper |
| **AGAINST:** | Nil |

**Attachment List**

*Separately circulated as a Confidential attachment.*

## 9. NOTICES OF MOTION

Nil.

*Cr McDonald moved the following Procedural Motion:*

**MOTION**

**MOVED Cr McDonald**

**That item 12 Question Time, including 12.1 and 12.2, be moved to the first item under Management Reports for tonight's meeting.**

**SECONDED Cr Angelino**

**CARRIED**

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| **FOR:** | Cr Angelino, Cr Dr Picard, Cr Jowett, Cr McDonald, Cr Stephens and Cr Pepper |
| **AGAINST:** | Nil |

## 12. QUESTION TIME

### 12.1. QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE AT PREVIOUS MEETING

Nil.

### 12.2. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY

Mr Ray Dalziel of Portland asked the following questions:

1. *If only approximately 75% of Victorian councils have implemented this scheme thus far due to various factors such as compliant processing facilities, contamination risks to local flora and fauna, the high costs associated with the waste and the logistic hurdles created for residents what are the financial benefits to council in relation to the FOGO bin scheme?*

When the Government introduced the *Circular Economy Act* in 2021, they gave all councils until 2030 to implement them. There's a really important nuance there that the bins themselves are made here in Victoria and it's basically our turn to roll it out.

There are 79 councils across Victoria. At the moment, Swan Hill and Wellington Councils are also rolling out their green bins. As you say, only 75% of councils have rolled them out. They are all required to do that by 2030 but they will come in a system. We needed over 8,000 bins.

The introduction of the Food Organics and Garden Organics, or FOGO, service is expected to deliver long term financial and environmental benefits by diverting food and garden waste away from landfill. This benefits not just Council. The processing of organics will also reduce our overall cost as well organics are added to landfill, we also pay a landfill levy to the State for every tonne we put through So, if we can reduce that, we know from our audit that 40% of our general waste was contaminated with organics, we can reduce our overall costs which is a benefit to everybody.

2. *How can other councils eg: Moyne Shire and City of Bendigo, Yarra, Whittlesea, Wyndham are absorbing the associated costs from this scheme whereas we are charged yearly for the use of an unwanted item?*

Some councils include part of the cost in general rates, while others, including Glenelg Shire Council, use a separate Waste Service Charge. For example, Moyne Shire Council has a single fee that includes the cost of a four bin collection service. That fee has increased as new services have been added.

Glenelg Shire's Waste Service Charge is designed to cover the cost of providing kerbside waste, recycling and FOGO services. This includes collection, processing, disposal, education and other operating costs.

Mr Howard Templeton of Tahara Bridge asked the following questions:

I wish to ask the following questions at the next Glenelg Shire Council meeting on June 23/2026. I understand that under your policy regarding questions to council that I do not get to ask the questions but they will be read out by the Chairperson and answered by the appropriate person. My questions are below.

1. *Since the immoral rate rise of the 2022/23 we have seen the resignation of 4 councillors, had 4 different CEO's and had the State appoint 2 Monitors. At that 2022/23 meeting, current councillors Cr Stephens and Cr Carr voted against the divisive rate increase rate increase of over 19% ( $3.5 Million) as against the rate cap of 1.75%. After the 2024 elections two councillors Cr Noske and Cr Pepper were elected on a platform of returning the $3.5 million to the rate payers. Given that 4 councillors would be a majority of the council , why hasn't action been taken to return the $3.5 million to the rate payers?*

Every year, the annual budget is prepared and submitted to Council for resolution by 30 June, which is a requirement under the *Local Government Act*. Council then votes on the budget, with a majority vote, or casting vote if required, needed to carry the motion. Tonight, Councillors again have the opportunity to deliberate and vote on the budget for 2026/27.

2. *After the 2024 election councillors were promised a report into the 2022/23 rate rise. In his last council meeting Cr Noske commented on it. Why is this report confidential, what is it council considers not fit to release to the public?*

Councillors are often provided with background information to assist with their deliberations. There has not been a confidential report listed for Council decision on this matter.

3. *In 2023 Glenelg Shire Council stopped delivering Aged and Disability services. I believe this amounted to 27 EFT employees. Why is it that council still collects rates to fund for between 20 to 30 people that are not employed?*

The Council budget does not include an allocation for this service. All the HACC service staff were made redundant when we vacated that service when the Commonwealth changed the criteria on what Council had to supply for that service. Some of those staff picked up employment in our in-house cleaning service.

Mrs Cheryle Wilson of Portland asked the following questions:

1. *Please explain how the 2016-17 budget passed the Rate Cap test when, by changing what they called their declared Rate from a differential rate to a uniform rate, they effectively increased their Total Rate Income by 16.5% from 2015-16 when the rate cap was 2.5%.*

The Essential Services Commission, or ESC, is the authority responsible for overseeing rate capping compliance. No compliance issues have been raised.

2. *Tourism/Promoting Portland. In late 2025 the Glenelg Shire Council decided that Promoting Portland through the Great Ocean Road campaigns that it could be done cheaper by doing it yourselves. Please explain where has this money gone? (I believe it was to be approx. $80 - $100k advertising).*

Following Council's decision to withdraw from the Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism, or GORRT, board, the 2025/2026 Glenelg Shire Council Budget redistributed the previous $80,000 subscription fee. We've used this to rebrand, advertise and to promote the Shire.

3. *Has the Glenelg Shire Council considered communicating with the Portland Small Business Network or the community for any suggestions?*

We went through a really big consultation period in developing the Draft Tourism Strategy 2026–2031 which is on tonight's agenda. We took some key feedback from that. We will expand our advertising from that and have allocated a budget for that in the 2026-2027 Annual Budget.

Mr Colin Smith of Portland, Ms Jill Smith of Grassdale, Ms Debra Arthur, Mr Samuel Cook of Tahara, Ms Fiona Marson of Grassdale, asked the following questions:

1. *Could Council explain why it increased the rate collection by $3.5 million more that the allowed rate cap in 2022-23 year?*

The rates system was restructured in line with the Revenue and Rating Plan 2021. This resulted in the removal of a rebate and the introduction of a differential. This process was compliant with the rate cap.

2. *Why does Council continue to collect the extra $3.5 million in rates when the projected 10 year financial plan shows that it is not necessary?*

The Long Term Financial Plan highlights that Council's financial position is far from secure. It commits Council to increasing its cash position to within acceptable financial ratios. Continued efforts to cut spending and maximise the value from every dollar collected will be required. This will help ensure that services can continue and assets can be maintained.

Mr Scott McLachlan, Ms Megan Stokes, Ms Kristina Sherwell asked the following question:

1. *After providing feedback to the draft 2026-27 budget, I have a question for Council. As mentioned by a previous council member, how did Council legally justify to increase general rates from $18.8 million in 2016 to $24 million in 2023-2024 when the governments rate cap should have limited then to $21.5 million?*

The Essential Services Commission, or ESC, is responsible for overseeing rate capping compliance. No compliance issues have been raised.

Ms Megan Stokes asked the following question:

1. *Why have the submissions placed by Glenelg Shire residents requesting GSC's collection of the $3.5 million in extra rates not been addressed?*

The draft budget was prepared to ensure the continuation of current services and service levels. This would not have been possible if rates income had been materially reduced. All feedback that was not abusive has been considered as part of Councillors' deliberations to arrive at an adopted budget position this evening.

Ms Kristina Sherwell asked the following question:

1. *FOGO bins. explain why council stated to every lucky rate payer that got one, saying it cost $284 per quarter, and it was stated by a councillor that price was wrong its only $282.80 hmmm is that not a profit to the council every quarter, and we the rate payers have not been told about this.*

I can guarantee that all ratepayers that in 2026/27, the waste fee for FOGO will be $113 for the full year's service.

Mr Kevin Stark of Lake Mundee asked the following questions:

1. *Why won't the council release the report into 2022/2023 3.5 million rate increase for the farm community?*

Councillors are often provided with background information to assist with their deliberations. There has not been a confidential report listed for Council decision on this matter.

2. *Where does the Glenelg Shire rank in shires across Victoria for the level of farm rates collected?*

Primary Production land includes timber plantation, as required by the Act, so it's very hard to strip it out. I can tell you that we collected $9.91 million in 2025-2026 for primary productions land. There is an increase of $261,000 this year, which will take it up to $10.271 million in 2026-2027. We have not undertaken an analysis of where Glenelg Shire ranks against other councils.

3. *If we are one of the highest rates collected for farmers why is this so and do all councillors feel it's fair and equitable?*

This question is dependent on the previous answer. We need time to strip that answer out from the primary production category. Glenelg Shire is considered a large rural shire within the scope of the 79 councils across Victoria and we're on par with a number of those. We will try to do some analysis if we can strip plantation timber out of primary production figures.

Mr Mike Noske of Narrawong asked the following questions:

1. *Council's 2015-16 budget states Council operated a differential rating structure meaning rate revenue collected after applying the PPL discount was Council's Total Rate Income.*

That is incorrect. Council's total rate income was nearly $26 million. After the rebate was applied, it was $23 million. In 2015/16, total rates and general rates were used interchangeably, which can be confusing.

2. *In the 2016-17 budget, although calculating a differential rate, Council stated it was declaring a Uniform Rate, meaning revenue generated before applying the PPL discount was Council's Rate Revenue, an increase of ~16% on 2015-16 when the Rate Cap was 2.5%. Later in the document it intimated that Council*

*changed to a uniform rating structure in 2015-16 fixing the problem. Did Council ever inform the ESC that Council operated a uniform rate structure in 2015-16?*

There is no rationale for Council to review data from 10 years ago. However, I want to spend a little time explaining the difference between a uniform rate and a differential rate. This is important because some ratepayers appear to be interpreting these terms as meaning that Council collects a different total amount of rates. That is not the case. The terminology relates to how rates are collected, not the total amount collected.

Let's use an example of $100. With a uniform rate, that $100 might be collected equally, with $10 from each of 10 ratepayers. With a differential rate, that same $100 is still collected, but it may be collected differently across different property classes. For example, $30 may be collected from farmers and $70 from industry because different rates have been applied. It might appear that industry is paying more so that farmers can pay less. However, the overall amount collected remains the same. What changes is the class of property the rates are collected from.

Mr Gary Humm, asked the following question:

1. *Council committed when it was announced that FOGO bins would be introduced in the 2025 budget, that FOGO bins would be supplied along with a 12month supply of bin liners. Please explain WHY council has failed to provide the bin liners and WHERE that money that was budgeted for, and which the council has retained, has gone as a result of this broken promise?*

When FOGO was introduced, it did not include a caddy liner. This is because caddy liners are not accepted by the company that receives and processes the FOGO material because people were using their shopping bags and the wrong kinds of plastics to line their kitchen caddies, contaminating the FOGO. When FOGO was first being discussed, it had been anticipated that the costs would include a liner. However, this was not included or charged for in the final figures adopted by Council before the service was introduced in April 2026.

2. *The draft budget made available to the community for comment does not show the expenditure items in itemised detail.* In the interests of transparency and accountability*, can you point me to the item that identifies the "full costs passed on to ratepayers" for the executive privileges of using cars and fuel cards that specifically apply to covering costs for around 4000kms per week for the purpose of travelling to and from work for those executives who choose to live outside the Shire. Please read out that amount as shown in the budget document?*

By virtue of their contract with Council, some staff are provided with a full private use vehicle. This forms part of their remuneration package and is a matter for the CEO. The cost of staff, including benefits and superannuation, is included in Council's salary costs. Vehicle costs are included within materials and services. This year, those salary costs have been reduced by 2.5 percent and budgeted at 95 percent.

*3.* *In 2022, former CEO Paul Phelan confirmed that EFT loads within each department were indexed to executive salary, hence the lack of incentive to trim employee numbers.* Again, we are looking at a generously increased EFT figure for the forthcoming year. I seek clarity regarding if the current EFT aligns with the 2025 budget number and therefore will ratepayers receive a rebate for the shortfall between actual compared to budgeted employee EFT numbers, or will council at least explain in detail to ratepayers what has happened to that money IF no rebate is to be paid?

In 2026/27, Council is showing a slight reduction in FTE numbers. It is incorrect to suggest that FTE numbers are linked to executive pay. Council budgets for FTE based on the number of staff required to maintain current service levels.

Ms Fiona Marson of Grassdale asked the following question:

1. *Where is all the extra money going that has been collected from this rate increase? And has it gone to Council Wages?*

All rates collected by Council are accounted for annually in Council's Annual Report. The last published Annual Report relates to the year ending June 2025 and is available on Council's website.

Mr David & Mrs Rab Headlam asked the following questions:

1. *Council has experienced a period of unstable governance over the last few years having had Monitors appointed, resignations of CEO's and councillors and losing the faith and trust of ratepayers in the shire. Under the State Government's "Rate Cap" we saw Council impose a 0% rate increase which gave ratepayers the impression that the finances of Council were well under control - BUT NOT SO! A couple of years later Council schemed to charge an increase of 20% ($3.5 m) Why is Council so opposed to trying to keep its budgets within the rate cap?*

Since the Essential Services Commission commenced reviewing rate cap compliance in 2016, Glenelg Shire Council has been deemed compliant each year.

2. *Given the community involvement in the dubious and underhanded rate increase and the public knowledge for 18 months or more of the intention to get the CEO to do a report into the 20% rate increase, why is this report being kept confidential?* With the Shire espousing the values of integrity, inclusiveness, transparency and accountability, the cover up seems to put another cloud of secrecy and distrust over the 20% issue.

During the normal course of Council business, Councillors are provided with information to support their decision making process. That information is not necessarily made available to the public. There has been no work shared with Council about a 20 percent increase in rates.

3. *The average annual increase in rates in this Shire in the ten years prior to the introduction of the rate cap was the second highest in the State at 8% a year.* This was a totally unsustainable rate burden on ratepayers. To then make a 20% increase in rates taken from ratepayers during the rate cap period shows total disregard for the ratepayers. As ex councillor Mike Noske pointed out at the April Council meeting, the average household rates in this Shire are the

highest compared to like Shires, and the average household income the lowest. Does Council believe this is sustainable?

Assertions that Council rates in Glenelg are the highest compared to like shires are incorrect.

Ms Gerri Torpy of asked the following questions:

1. *How many submissions in total, including ones considered inappropriate, were received?*

We received 491 submissions. A number of those, other than 19, provided their name. We took all submissions into account, but we can only respond to those 19 in writing.

2. *Every single submission you received is saying I'm not happy with the amount of fees you are proposing for the 26/27 budget. They don't care what type they are, just that they are being increased. So how can you say, there was very little commentary about the type or amount of fees that are proposed for the 2026/27 budget?*

The Fees and Charges Schedule is unrelated to the setting of Council rates. No feedback was received that was specific to the Fees and Charges Schedule for 2026/27.

3. *I note you have included links to Financial Hardship and Payment Plans in the Agenda. Do you consider this information may not be needed, if Council didn't unnecessarily collect the extra fees?*

Financial hardship assistance and a policy around that is something that every council across Victoria has. It's a service that Council has provided for many years. We encourage anyone experiencing financial hardship to reach out.

## 10. MANAGEMENT REPORTS

### 10.1. COUNCILLOR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER LEAVE OF ABSENCE REGISTER

CEO: Helen Havercroft, Chief Executive Officer

Summary

The purpose of this report is to enable Council to consider the Councillor and Chief Executive Officer Leave of Absence Register.

Background

Council Governance Rules adopted on 23 January 2024 set out in Section 19 Apologies and 19 (6) sets out that Council will not unreasonably withhold its approval of a leave of absence request.

Key Information

In accordance with Section 35 (1) (e), (4), and (6) of the *Local Government Act 2020* Councillors are entitled to take Leave of Absence.

Section 35 (1) (e), (4) and (6) of the *Local Government Act 2020* states:

35 Councillor ceasing to hold office

(1) A Councillor ceases to hold the office of Councillor and the office of the Councillor becomes vacant if the Councillor:

(e) subject to this section, is absent from Council meetings for a period of 4 consecutive months without leave obtained from the Council.

(4) The Council must grant any reasonable request for leave for the purposes of subsection (1)(e).

(6) A Councillor is not to be taken to be absent from Council meetings during the period of 6 months after the Councillor or their spouse or domestic partner:

(a) becomes the natural parent of a child; or

(b) adopts a child under the age of 16 years

and the Councillor has responsibilities for the care of the child during that period.

Risk

Section 35 of the *Local Government Act 2020.*

Finance

Nil.

Consultation

Councillors are required to submit Leave of Absence requests in writing to the Chief Executive Officer.

The Chief Executive Officer is required to submit his Leave of Absence requests in writing to Council through the Councillor and Chief Executive Officer Leave of Absence Register.

A register will be held by the Chief Executive Officer and reported to Council as required.

Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 Alignment

Leading and Engaging – Being an active and transparent leader set up to deliver on our priorities.

Recommendation

That Council approves the Councillor and Chief Executive Officer Leave of Absence Register presented as a confidential circulation under Section 35 (1) (e) (4) (6) of the *Local Government Act 2020.*

**MOTION**

**MOVED Cr McDonald**

**That Council approves the Councillor and Chief Executive Officer Leave of Absence Register presented as a confidential circulation under Section 35 (1) (e) (4) (6) of the *Local Government Act 2020.***

**SECONDED Cr Angelino**

**CARRIED**

| | |
|---|---|
| **FOR:** | Cr Angelino, Cr Dr Picard, Cr Jowett, Cr McDonald, Cr Stephens and Cr Pepper |
| **AGAINST:** | Nil |

**Attachment List**

*Separately circulated as Confidential attachments.*

## 10.2. ANNUAL BUDGET CONSULTATION: KEY THEMES AND COUNCIL RESPONSES

Director: Helen Havercroft, Chief Executive Officer

### Summary

This report shares the broad themes that came in response to the Draft Budget 2026-27 and Draft Fees and Charges 2026-27 during the public exhibition period.

### Background

Council acknowledges that the draft Budget 2026-27 received a lot of commentary when it was placed on public exhibition in late April/early May 2026. This level of commentary is unusual when compared to the level of engagement this time last year.

The draft Budget was endorsed for public exhibition against the backdrop of a Councillor resignation. This event garnered media interest and a high level of discussion on numerous non-Council Facebook accounts.

Whilst this report will not be exploring any social media messaging or campaign activity it discusses the key areas that emerged from the feedback on the Your Say Glenelg website.

### Key Information

*1. Cost of Living*

Like many communities across Australia it was clear from the feedback that there are many in our community finding the current cost of living crisis difficult. To support the impact that fees and charges from Council may have, a range of time to pay and hardship measures are available. Details of those can be here: Financial Hardship and Payment Plan | Glenelg Shire Council. Please reach out early to discuss with Council if you are struggling.

Feedback also indicated that the financial pressure being experienced is impacting the mental health and wellbeing of some of our community There are many resources available to you in the community. Please consider reaching out to24/7 Mental health services infographic | healthdirect or through the Rural Financial Counselling Service.

*2. Setting of Rates*

The introduction of the Victorian Government's Fair Go Rates System in 2016-17 established annual limits on the amount councils can increase their total rate revenue by, commonly referred to as rate capping. For most years since 2016 Council has elected to increase rates by the capped amount, with rate increases ranging from 0% to 3.5%. For 2026-27 the proposed rate increase is 2.75% as set by the State Government. For the average assessment this equates to a little over $1 a week.

The rates system at Local Government level is based on the value of a property (CIV – Capital Improved Value) and not on what services a property owner may or may not use.

Council recognises that this small increase comes at a time of global uncertainty and anxiety. Council is working hard to ensure that the impact of that global uncertainty is minimised in relation to the Council service delivery.

*3. Cutting Expenditure*

As required under legislation, Council adopted the Long Term Financial Plan 2025-35 in October 2025 which sets out the key principles to support prudent financial management over the medium term. For 2026-27 this included a 2.5% reduction in both employee costs and material & services costs. This has led to a $1.2M saving.

Our commitment to reducing spending, before considering any changes to outward facing community service delivery has been a key part of the drafting process for 2026-27.

Following the adoption of the 2026-27 budget, an update to the Long Term Financial Plan will take place.

*4. Waste Management including Food Organics Green Organics (FOGO)*

There was a moderate theme within the feedback on the opposition to compulsory charges for FOGO.

Since the State Government's *Circular Economy (Waste Reduction & Recycled) Act 2021* Council has planned to ensure its meets the requirements of the legislation.

The decision to proceed with the FOGO rollout was endorsed by Council for rollout in April 2026 as part of the budget setting for 2025-26. People who are on the mandatory kerbside collection service have had this service rolled out.

The full cost for Domestic Waste Collection for each property under the mandatory kerbside collection service will be $512 in 2026-27 or less than $9.85 per week for the three-bin system. Council will continue to work with the community and provide information to support the kerbside collection transition and education around improved waste management practices.

*5. Dutton Way*

The property owners that are affected by the proposed changes to the charging of rates along Dutton Way will receive responses to their correspondence. This change means that Council will treat all vacant land equitably across the Shire.

*6. Fees and Charges*

There was very little commentary about the type or amount of fees and charges that are proposed for 2026-27.

*7. New Capital and Asset Maintenance*

The initial consultation on the budget earlier in 2026 proposed significant additional spending on asset maintenance with a split between building renewal and works to the

Casterton Saleyards being a focus area. The budget as drafted aligns with that commitment.

Several responses to the draft budget also supported the investment in renewal and maintaining Council facilities.

There were some submissions detailing additional expenditure needs on new assets and infrastructure. Council is unable to fund these initiatives within this budget, however, the feedback received may assist in informing future pipeline projects and planning.

*8. Disagreement and Abuse*

Council recognises that some community members hold strong views regarding the setting of rates.

Some submissions contained commentary that was inappropriate, including personal attacks, abusive and defamatory comments. It is never acceptable to resort to rude, aggressive, abusive and defamatory commentary. Staff at Council had to read all the comments and the impact on their psycho-social safety has been taken seriously. There is never a place for this language and abuse.

Submissions containing inappropriate or abusive language were not considered as part of the feedback analysis.

Most of the submissions provided were anonymous so no direct response can be provided to them.

*9. Ongoing Engagement with Council*

In 2026–27, Council will develop a new Communications Strategy. This work will include consideration of how Councillors engage with the community in ways that are accessible, transparent and inclusive, supporting community voices to inform Council’s strategy and policy development.

<u>Risk</u>

There is a risk of unsustainable financial management from not collecting rates and the compounding impact this has on the rates base across the shire. A diminished rate base makes it harder to maintain current service delivery levels.

<u>Finance</u>

There was no direct cost to the collection of the feedback or the provision of this report.

<u>Consultation</u>

Council will reply directly to each of those who provided relevant contact details and respond to any questions posed in the feedback.

Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 Alignment

Leading and Engaging – Being an active and transparent leader set up to deliver on our priorities.

Conclusion

Council acknowledges and thanks community that took the time to provide feedback on the draft budget. The focus of the budget remains on meeting the adopted Long Term Financial Plan 2025-2035 and maintaining service delivery. Council will continue to seek external funding to boost the delivery options to provide well maintained facilities to our community in line with the Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029.

Recommendation

That Council considers and notes the major themes arising from the feedback received on the Draft Budget 2026-27 and Draft Fees and Charges Schedule 2026-27.

**MOTION**

**MOVED Cr McDonald**

**That Council considers and notes the major themes arising from the feedback received on the Draft Budget 2026-27 and Draft Fees and Charges Schedule 2026-27.**

**SECONDED Cr Jowett**

**CARRIED**

| | |
|---|---|
| **FOR:** | Cr Angelino, Cr Dr Picard, Cr Jowett, Cr McDonald and Cr Stephens |
| **AGAINST:** | Cr Pepper |

**Attachment List**

Nil

## 10.3. ADOPTION OF THE GLENELG SHIRE COUNCIL BUDGET 2026-2027, FEES & CHARGES, AND DECLARATION OF RATES AND SERVICE CHARGE

Director: David Hol, Director Corporate Services

### Summary

This report presents the Glenelg Shire Council 2026-27 Budget for adoption. It includes the Fees and Charges and the Declaration of Rates and Service Charge in accordance with Section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

### Background

#### *Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-29*

Combined consultation on the Council and Wellbeing Plan and budget planning was undertaken during 2025. Feedback received at this time strongly highlighted a need to allocate funds to maintain Council assets (such as buildings and roads) in fit for purpose condition, leveraging what we have more effectively and doing fewer things well.

#### *Long Term Financial Plan 2025-35*

Furthermore, the feedback from the Council and Wellbeing Plan and budget planning influenced the development of the Long Term Financial Plan 2025-35 (LTFP). In response, Council determined to allocate an additional $1M for renewal of existing infrastructure whilst introducing expenditure on new projects to $500k. It also set a significant savings target of approximately $731k on materials costs and $2.1M on employee costs.

#### *Draft Budget Preparation 2026-27*

The deliberative community engagement process included a series of Community Information Sessions held across the Shire in February 2026 to enable public input into the budget process. These sessions were highly informative and offered a valuable contribution to budget development.

Thank you to everyone who contributed their time and and provide input. The community provided direct input into determining what new projects should be prioritised with the $500k allocation for new capital projects. The oval lighting at Flinders Park and new footpath in Dartmoor were the preferred projects selected for project delivery in the coming financial year.

To build the budget some key budget principles were followed. These centered around financial sustainability, budget consolidation, asset renewal and project planning and delivery, including:

- Strategic Alignment
    - Alignment with the Long-Term Financial Plan and Asset Plan
- Service Delivery
    - Maintaining existing service levels
- Monetary Impact

- Supporting an improved cash position
- Not exceeding the rate cap for 2026/27 (2.75%)
- Delivering 2.5% savings in both Materials and Services and Employee Cost expenditure (totalling approximately $2.1M)
- Working towards service cost recovery where applicable (including fees and charges)

- Capital Works
    - Prioritising and increasing asset renewal - $1M increased expenditure
    - Limited delivery on new projects - $500K new expenditure
    - Prioritising strategic projects, targeting funding and developing improved project planning
    - Use of further debt for generational capital projects only

With this information a draft budget was built and released for further public consultation during late April / early May 2026.

<u>Key Information</u>

Budget 2026-27 documentation includes:

- Budget Financial Statements, including the Comprehensive Income Statement, Balance Sheet, Statement of Changes in Equity, Statement of Cash Flows and Statement of Capital Works, for the year ended 30 June 2027
- Fees and Charges for the year ended 30 June 2027
- Rates & Charges for the year ended 30 June 2027
- Summary of Planned Human Resources Expenditure
- Capital Works Program for the year ended 30 June 2027
- Estimated financial projections for the subsequent three (3) financial years

The budget document also outlines the specific details of the financial position and the proposed inclusions for the budget.

*<u>Fees and Charges</u>*

Glenelg Shire Council provides a wide range of services to the community, often for a fee or charge. User fees and charges are a significant source of income for Glenelg Shire Council at approximately $3M.

In accordance with Section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Glenelg Shire Council is required to prepare and adopt a budget for each financial year by the 30 June. Included in this process is the setting of the fees and charges for the coming financial year.

The Fees and Charges 2026-27 schedule has been prepared following review, analysis and benchmarking. Fees and charges are reviewed annually with the approach to most fees being an adjustment in line with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and service delivery costs.

Changes have also been applied where:

- Service costs have increased
- Fees are identified as below other Councils following a benchmarking exercise

- New services, activities, functions or fee gaps are identified
- Services are no longer subsidised or
- Simplification of fee structures.

Council's approach in establishing its fees and charges includes aiming for a cost recovery approach, whilst focusing on equity for users and ratepayers, and maintaining access to services and facilities.

Statutory Fees set by Government have not been included in the Schedule as Council has no control over these charges.

The draft fees and charges schedule was released for community consultation, alongside the draft budget. A review of the feedback did not identify any specific submissions relating to fees or charges.

*Rates Charge*

As part of the budget process, Council must declare in respect of the upcoming Financial Year:

a) The amount which Council intends to raise General Rates, Municipal Charges, Service Rates and Service Charges and the time period that the General Rate applies; and

b) Whether the General Rates will be raised by application of a Uniform Rate; Differential Rate; or an Urban Farm Rate, Farm Rate or a Residential use rate (if the Council is permitted to raise such rates under section 161A).

The Essential Services Commission Fair Go Rates System set the rate cap at 2.75% for 2026-2027 financial year. This would be an increase on Council's rate base and provide for an increase in general rate revenue of approximately $738k for 2026-27.

For the average assessment this equates to an increase of just over $1 per week.

Rate agreements, and Cultural & Recreational Land assessments are calculated outside of the rate cap.

*Kerbside Collection Charge*

As part of the budget process, Council must declare in respect of the upcoming Financial Year its applicable Waste Service Charge, as outlined below:

- General Waste Charge for 2026-27 has been calculated at $287.37,
- Recycling Charge for 2026-27 has been calculated at $111.51, and
- Food Organic Green Organic Charge for 2026-27 has been calculated at $113.49.

A total of $4.309M is expected to be raised from Kerbside Collection Charges. This represents a decrease from 2025/26 and is still approximately $300K less than reaching a full cost recovery basis.

*Declaration of Rates and Service Charge*

The declaration of rates has been calculated as follows:

| Category | No of Assessments | Proposed Income |
|---|---|---|
| General Land | 9,497 | $14,754,553 |
| Vacant Land | 849 | $547,045 |
| Commercial Land | 679 | $1,217,602 |
| Industrial Land | 296 | $764,033 |
| Primary Production Land | 2,752 | $10,270,743 |
| Cultural and Recreational Land | 30 | $29,957 |
| Rating Agreements | 6 | $4,723,279 |
| Waste Management Charge – Kerbside Collection | | $4,309,318 |
| Supplementary Rates | | $40,000 |
| **Total** | | **$36,656,530** |

Additional supplementary valuations are estimated to contribute an additional $40,000 of Rate income during 2026-27 and this amount has been included in the total Rates and Charges revenue.

Additional Rates Information

*Municipal Charge*

Unlike many similar Municipalities, the Glenelg Shire Council does not levy an additional Municipal Charge.

*Valuation Data*

Valuation data has been received for Glenelg Shire assessments by independent valuers. Essentially valuations have remained steady across the board. Demand for industrial land resulted in increased valuations by 5.03% and vacant land reduced by a very similar margin.

The majority of assessments are in general land which influenced an overall minor increase in Capital Improved Value (CIV) of 0.6% across the Shire.

| Category | No of Assessments | Valuation Change |
|---|---|---|
| General Land | 9,497 | **0.44%** |
| Vacant Land | 849 | **-5.86%** |
| Commercial Land | 679 | **-0.79%** |
| Industrial Land | 296 | **5.03%** |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Primary Production Land | 2,752 | **1.71%** |

As the rate cap is calculated on the total figure of ratable income and not at a property level, individual ratepayers will see a fluctuation on their rates either greater or lower than the rate cap based on any individual valuation movement of their property.

*Rating Structure*

For 2026-27, General Rates will be calculated by applying a Differential Rate to the Capital Improved Value (CIV) in line with previous years.

Under Section 161 (2) of the *Local Government Act 1989*, by declaring a differential rate, Council must specify the objectives of the differential rate by including a definition, identification of the types of classes and specific characteristics of the land.

| Differential Rates Schedule | |
|---|---|
| General Land | 100% |
| Vacant General Land | 100% |
| Commercial Land | 100% |
| Industrial Land | 100% |
| Primary Production Land | 70% |
| Cultural and Recreational Land | 50% |

General Land

Definition: Any rateable land which does not have the characteristics of Primary Producer land, Commercial Land, Industrial Rate Land and Vacant Land.

Objectives: To ensure that Council has adequate funding to undertake its strategic, statutory, service provision and community services obligations and to ensure that any differential rate in the dollar declared for defined general rate land properties is fair and equitable, having regard to the cost and the level of benefits derived from provision of Council services

Types and Classes: Rateable land having the relevant characteristics described below:
- used primarily for residential purposes; or
- any land that is not defined as Vacant land, Commercial land, Industrial land or Primary Production land.

Geographical Location**:** Wherever located within the Shire.

Vacant General Land

Definition: Any land that does not have the characteristics of Primary Production land, Commercial land or Industrial Land and has no buildings or permanent structures erected on it

Objectives: To ensure that Council has effective tools to encourage the construction of new houses or units by making vacant land less financially attractive to hold onto helping to address housing demand

- ensures that all rateable land makes an equitable financial contribution to the cost of carrying out the functions of the Council.

Types and Classes: Vacant land having the relevant characteristics described below:

- Land that is unused or not currently developed, meaning it does not contain residential, commercial, industrial, or buildings or improvements
- any land that is not defined as General land, Commercial land, Industrial land or Primary Production land.

Geographic Location: Wherever located within the Shire.

<u>Commercial Land</u>

Definition: Any land, which is used primarily for commercial purposes and/or for the sale of goods or services.

Objectives: To ensure that Council has adequate funding to undertake its strategic, statutory, service provision and community services obligations and to ensure that the rate in the dollar declared for defined Commercial Rate land properties is fair and equitable, having regard to the cost and the level of benefits derived from provision of Council services. The commercial businesses of Glenelg Shire Council benefit from ongoing significant investment by Council in services and infrastructure. Council also notes the tax deductibility of Council rates for commercial properties which is not available to the residential sector, and the income generating capability of commercial based properties. The Commercial differential rate is applied to recognise the economic development objectives for the Glenelg Shire Council as outlined in the Council Plan. These objectives include an ongoing significant investment to create a vibrant economy.

Types and Classes: Commercial having the relevant characteristics described below:

- used primarily for commercial purposes; or
- any land that is not defined as General Land, Vacant General land, Industrial land or Primary Production Land.

Geographic Location: Wherever located within the Shire.

<u>Industrial Land</u>

Definition: Any land that does not have the characteristics of General land, Primary Production land, Vacant land or Commercial land. Industrial land is used predominantly for industrial purposes including manufacturing, repairing, servicing, re/processing or warehousing.

Objectives: The Industrial businesses of Glenelg Shire Council benefit from ongoing significant investment by Council in services and infrastructure. Council also notes the tax deductibility of Council rates for commercial properties which is not available to the residential sector, and the income generating capability of commercial based properties. The Commercial differential rate is applied to recognise the economic development objectives for the Glenelg Shire Council as outlined in the Council Plan.

These objectives include an ongoing significant investment to create a vibrant economy.

Types and Classes: Industrial land having the relevant characteristics described below:

- Land that does not have the characteristics of General Land, Primary Production land, Vacant land or Commercial land and is used predominantly per the definition above.

Geographic Location: Wherever located within the Shire.

Primary Production Land

Definition: Properties being defined as greater than 40 hectares (with some specified exceptions such as horticulture, viticulture etc).

Objectives: To ensure that Council has adequate funding to undertake its strategic, statutory, service provision and community services obligations and to ensure that the rate in the dollar declared for defined Primary Production land properties is fair and equitable, having regard to the cost and the level of benefits derived from provision of Council services with considerations to maintain agriculture as a major industry in the municipal district and achieve a balance between providing for municipal sustainability and retaining the important agricultural economic base.

Types and Classes: Primary Production land having the relevant characteristics described below:

- used primarily for primary production purposes; or
- any land that is not defined as General Land, Commercial land or Industrial Land.

Geographic Location: Wherever located within the Shire.

Cultural and Recreational Land

*Cultural and Recreational Lands Act 1963* which has the purpose of providing or promoting cultural or sporting recreational or similar facilities for outdoor use. Land which falls within the definition of the *Cultural and Recreational Lands Act 1963* which has the purpose of providing or promoting cultural or sporting recreational or similar facilities for outdoor use for wider community benefit.

Specific Rating Agreements

Land that is ratable and where specific rating agreements have been approved by relevant parties. Council is proposing six (6) such agreements in 2026-27.

*Concession of Rates – Dutton Way Properties*

For many years, in accordance with section 169 of the *Local Government Act 1989*, Glenelg Shire Council has granted a rate concession of 100% to specific property owners along Dutton Way. There have been approximately 87 properties with a rate concession of 100% applied against their Rates assessments. The value of these waivers has been approximately $15K per year.

The parcels of land that attract these concessions are mostly located between Dutton Way Road and Keirana Avenue.

It should be noted that these properties are valued and rated appropriately for land that is unable to be used for development.

Properties that are located between Keirana Avenue and Moore Drive are not rateable so not considered as part of any consideration of concession of rates.

A waiver of rates in this area is inconsistent with the approach for other parcels of vacant land throughout the Shire that are unable to be developed.

The rate concession initially commenced when a planning amendment (Special Use Zone) was imposed by the State Government on a specified area that restricted any further development due to a potential risk of land erosion by the sea.

This Special Use Zone was reviewed during the recent structure plan discussions for the area to see if it could be removed to enable development. Unfortunately, this outcome was not able to be achieved.

Council sought feedback from relevant property owners on the equity of continuing to grant a concession of rates for this land. Understandably, those that responded were not in favour of the concession being removed. Several of the respondents assumed that lifting the development restriction was within Councils power. Unfortunately, the power to remove the zone rests with the relevant State Government Department.

Section 169 (1A) of the *Local Government Act 1989* requires a Council Resolution be passed granting the concession and specifies that the concession must benefit the community as a whole.

A continued concession for a select group of property owners appears not to benefit the whole of the community and subsequently it is considered appropriate to discontinue this practice.

<u>Risk</u>

Under the Act, Part 4 Division 2 - Budget Process and specifically section 94, Council is required to prepare and adopt an annual budget and subsequent three (3) financial years.

Financial sustainability is a key consideration for the budget process, along with alignment with Council's Long Term Financial Plan and Asset Plan.

The Glenelg Shire Council budget 2026-27 has been prepared based on current assumptions and available information at the time of development. Council acknowledges the ongoing uncertainty associated with the current Middle East conflict, volatility in fuel prices, and broader economic conditions. These factors may impact costs, revenue assumptions and project delivery as the next financial year unfolds.

Section 158 (1) of the *Local Government Act 1989* requires Councils to declare the amount that it wishes to raise in general rates, municipal charges, service rates and service charges, and which method the general rates will be raised such as a uniform rate or a differential rate. This is required to be undertaken at least once in respect of each financial year, by 30 June.

In accordance with Section 161 (3) of the Act Council must ensure that copies of the information in this report are available on its website and for public inspection at the Council office.

Finance

All known current and future budget implications are outlined in the Budget 2026-27 as presented together with assumptions based on unknown aspects. Key factors such as future setting of the Rate Cap are unknown at this time.

Council has received advice that 80% of the Federal Assistance Grants are to be received prior to June 30 and subsequently, as Council must declare this income in the year that it is received, will adjust the budget figures accordingly based on this allocation percentage.

The Budget is a key component of Council's integrated strategic planning framework, and links closely with the Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029, Long Term Financial Plan 2025-2035, Asset Plan and Revenue and Rating Plan.

Projections in the Budget for the subsequent three (3) financial years provides a high-level, medium-term view on how Council intends to utilise its resources to achieve the strategic objectives and strategies adopted in the Council and Wellbeing Plan. These assumptions are subject to change as circumstances affecting the financial position of Council develop.

Following adoption a review and update of the Long Term Financial Plan will also be undertaken and presented to Council to ensure budget alignment and to update financial projections.

Consultation

This section outlines the Council actions undertaken to ensure due consideration and feedback was received from relevant stakeholders.

- All feedback and submissions reviewed following engagement processes undertaken in 2025 in the development of the Council and Wellbeing Plan, Long Term Financial Plan, Asset Plan and Rating and Revenue Plan.
- Phase 1 community engagement and draft budget information sessions conducted throughout the Shire during February 2026.
- Draft Budget 2026/27 prepared by officers.
- Multiple Councillor briefings held through March/April covering budget principles, overview and approach. This includes a review of draft Fees and Charges.
- Unit managers and budget responsible officers were engaged to review operational budget and respective fees and charges. The Executive Leadership Team has also undertaken a comprehensive review of all Draft Budget aspects to ensure accuracy and alignment with Council's integrated strategic planning framework.
- Draft Budget and Fees and Charges 2026/27 released for community feedback following the 28 April Council Meeting.

- Public exhibition of the Draft Budget occurred for three (3) weeks through May 2026.
- Community feedback reviewed and the final 2026-27 Budget presented for adoption.

Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 Alignment

Leading and Engaging – Being an active and transparent leader set up to deliver on our priorities.

Conclusion

The Draft Budget 2026/27 has been developed through a structured process, aligning with Council's Long Term Financial Plan, Asset Plan and Council and Wellbeing Plan, while balancing financial sustainability with continued service delivery and targeted investment in asset renewal and local priorities.

The Draft Budget, Draft Fees and Charges and Declaration of Rates are now presented for Council consideration and adoption.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Declares to raise an amount of $36,656,530 for Total Rates and Charges, including Annual Kerbside Collection charges, for the period 1 July 2026 to 30 June 2027.

2. Declares that the General Rate amounts will be raised by applying the capital improved value of the land at a differential rate of 100% to General land, 100% to Commercial land, 100% to Industrial land, 100% to Vacant land, 70% for Primary Production land, and 50% for Cultural and Recreational land in accordance with the definitions and objectives as outlined in the budget document.

3. Adopts the 2026-27 Fees and Charges Schedule prepared in accordance with Section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020*. provided as an attachment to this report.

4. Adopts the 2026-27 Budget prepared in accordance with Section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020* provided as an attachment to this report.

**MOTION**

**MOVED Cr Jowett**

**That Council:**

1. **Declares to raise an amount of $36,656,530 for Total Rates and Charges, including Annual Kerbside Collection charges, for the period 1 July 2026 to 30 June 2027.**

2. **Declares that the General Rate amounts will be raised by applying the capital improved value of the land at a differential rate of 100% to General land, 100% to Commercial land, 100% to Industrial land, 100% to Vacant land, 70% for Primary Production land, and 50% for Cultural and Recreational land in accordance with the definitions and objectives as outlined in the budget document.**

3. **Adopts the 2026-27 Fees and Charges Schedule prepared in accordance with Section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020*. provided as an attachment to this report.**

4. **Adopts the 2026-27 Budget prepared in accordance with Section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020* provided as an attachment to this report.**

**SECONDED Cr McDonald**

**CARRIED**

| | |
|---|---|
| **FOR:** | Cr Angelino, Cr Dr Picard, Cr Jowett, Cr McDonald and Cr Stephens |
| **AGAINST:** | Cr Pepper |

**Attachment List**

1. Fees and Charges Schedule 2026-2027 [**10.3.1** - 48 pages]
2. Annual Budget 2026-2027 [**10.3.2** - 68 pages]

## 10.4. COUNCIL AND WELLBEING PLAN 2025-2029 YEAR TWO ACTION PLAN

Director: Brett Jackson, Director Community Services

### Summary

This report presents the Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025–2029 Year Two Action Plan for Council's consideration.

Aligned with the Plan's six strategic themes, the Action Plan focuses on enhancing community wellbeing, supporting economic growth, maintaining essential infrastructure, and ensuring long-term sustainability.

The Year Two Action Plan has been developed through a cross-functional organisational approach, ensuring alignment with the 2026-27 Budget and informed by the outcomes of community engagement undertaken during the development of the Council and Wellbeing Plan.

### Background

The Glenelg Shire Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025–2029 (the Plan) establishes the strategic direction and priorities for the current four-year Council term. The Plan incorporates the Community Vision and Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan and was developed through an extensive community consultation and engagement process.

Development of the Plan was informed by a review of local, regional and state policy and planning frameworks, Council's legislative responsibilities, and analysis of demographic, health and economic data.

The Plan is structured around six strategic themes:

- Leading and Engaging
- Thriving Towns and Communities
- Sustainable Environment
- Essential Services and Facilities
- Moving Around Glenelg
- Growing Economy

These themes reflect Council's commitment to meeting community needs, strengthening health and wellbeing outcomes, supporting economic growth, responsibly managing assets and the environment, and ensuring long-term financial sustainability.

### Key Information

The Year 2 Action Plan provides the roadmap for delivering the second year of the Council and Wellbeing Plan and outlines the key actions Council will undertake to progress the strategic objectives adopted by Council for the 2025–2029 period.

Some highlights of the action plan include:

- Implementation of the new Tourism Strategy focusing on digital content and marketing
- Development *Sporting Infrastructure Needs* paper to inform future capital works programs and advocacy for external funding and grants.
- Delivery of capital projects and renewal works selected by community during the 2026/27 Annual budget process including:
    - New footpath in Dartmoor
    - Lighting Upgrades at Flinders Park
    - Priority renewal works, including investment into the Casterton Saleyards

*Reporting*

Council will maintain transparency by regularly reporting to the community on the implementation of the Action Plan through a six-monthly progress report and the Annual Report 2026-27.

Risk

Failure to develop and implement an annual action plan may result in Council being unable to effectively deliver, monitor, and report on the strategic objectives of the Council and Wellbeing Plan. Mitigation is the establishment of the annual action plan with defined actions, responsibilities, performance measures, and progress reporting to ensure accountability and alignment with strategic priorities.

Finance

Key activities in the Year Two Action plan have funding allocated in the Glenelg Shire Council Budget 2026-27 or will be subject to further advocacy.

Consultation

The Year Two Action Plan was developed through internal consultation across the organisation and is informed by the priorities identified in the Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025–2029, which was shaped through extensive community consultation in 2025.

Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 Alignment

Leading and Engaging – Being an active and transparent leader set up to deliver on our priorities.

Conclusion

The Year Two Action Plan provides a clear and practical framework for delivering the priorities of the Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025–2029. It outlines the key actions, projects and initiatives that will advance Council's strategic objectives while responding to community priorities and needs.

Endorsement of the Year Two Action Plan will support effective implementation, monitoring and reporting of Council's commitments, ensuring continued progress towards achieving the Community Vision and enhancing the wellbeing of Glenelg Shire communities.

Recommendation

That Council endorses the Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 Year Two Action Plan for implementation and approves publication on Council's website pending endorsement of the 2026/27 Annual Budget.

**MOTION**

**MOVED Cr Angelino**

**That Council endorses the Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 Year Two Action Plan for implementation and approves publication on Council's website pending endorsement of the 2026/27 Annual Budget.**

**SECONDED Cr Jowett**

**CARRIED**

| | |
|---|---|
| **FOR:** | Cr Angelino, Cr Dr Picard, Cr Jowett, Cr McDonald, Cr Stephens and Cr Pepper |
| **AGAINST:** | Nil |

**Attachment List**

1. Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 Year 2 Action Plan [**10.4.1** - 8 pages]

## 10.5. GLENELG SHIRE COUNCIL TOURISM STRATEGY 2026-2031

Director: Brett Jackson, Director Community Services

### Summary

The purpose of this report is to present the Glenelg Shire Tourism Strategy 2026-2031 for Council consideration and adoption following community consultation.

The Strategy provides a clear framework to guide tourism development across the Glenelg Shire over the next five years, supporting a coordinated approach to destination development, visitor experience, industry collaboration and tourism investment.

### Background

The Draft Glenelg Shire Tourism Strategy 2026-2031 was endorsed for community consultation at the February 2026 Council Meeting.

Community consultation has now been completed and the final Strategy is presented to Council for consideration and adoption.

### Key Information

The community consultation period for the Draft Glenelg Shire Tourism Strategy 2026-2031 was undertaken over four weeks and concluded on 31 March 2026. During this period, a total of 19 submissions were received, comprising 16 submissions through Your Say Glenelg and three written submissions.

Feedback broadly supported the strategic direction of the Draft Strategy and reinforced the relevance of the key themes identified through earlier community and industry engagement. Common themes raised through consultation included infrastructure and access, destination identity and promotion, visitor experience and amenity, governance and partnerships, and the desire for greater implementation detail.

Feedback highlighted the importance of addressing infrastructure challenges, including transport, accessibility and visitor facilities. Respondents also identified opportunities to strengthen destination promotion and place-based identity, while recognising the importance of partnerships and industry collaboration in supporting tourism growth across the Shire.

Several submissions sought greater detail regarding actions, timelines and project priorities. These matters are intended to be addressed through future Destination Action Plans, which will support implementation of the Strategy and provide flexibility to respond to changing opportunities, community priorities and funding availability.

In response to feedback and further internal review, several minor amendments have been made to the Draft Strategy to improve clarity and strengthen alignment with community expectations. These amendments include:

- Strengthening place-based language within the Vision.

- Improving clarity regarding the role of the Strategy as a long-term framework supported by future Destination Action Plans.
- Reinforcing key themes relating to infrastructure, destination identity and visitor experience.

Overall, feedback indicates strong alignment between community priorities and the strategic direction proposed within the Draft Glenelg Shire Tourism Strategy 2026-2031. The consultation process has informed minor refinements to improve clarity while maintaining the Strategy's role as a high-level framework to guide tourism development across the Shire.

Risk

It is important now that Council is no longer in GORRT that it establishes a high-level direction for tourism. This ensures a strategic approach that minimises governance risk, through strong accountability, policy alignment, and clear direction.

This in turn maximises opportunities for external funding to improve infrastructure and tourism experience, effective spending and tourism marketing, minimising risks of missed opportunities, and inadvertent impacts to the existing tourism sector.

The strategy also assists in balancing the needs of increased visitation with protection of our natural environment (greatest asset).

Finance

There is budget to develop and implement initial phasing of the tourism strategy. The financial implication of developing the strategy is positive, with clearer direction on future spending.

Action plans need to be carefully crafted to manage local community expectations.

Consultation

A public review period was undertaken over four weeks, concluding on 31 March 2026. In addition, targeted engagement was undertaken with key stakeholder groups. During this period, a total of 19 submissions were received, comprising 16 via YourSay Glenelg, and three written submissions.

Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 Alignment

Growing Economy - Striving to be a vibrant place to live, work, and invest, with a strong economy and diverse opportunities.

Conclusion

That Council receives the community feedback and adopts the proposed amendments to the Glenelg Shire Tourism Strategy 2026-2031, and that action plans progressively be developed to promote tourism in line with the strategy.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Considers the community feedback received on the Glenelg Shire Council Tourism Strategy 2026-2031.

2. Adopts the Glenelg Shire Council Tourism Strategy 2026-2031 in its entirety.

3. Revokes the Glenelg Tourism Strategy 2019-2026 endorsed by Council on 28 May 2019.

**MOTION**

**MOVED Cr McDonald**

**That Council:**

1. **Considers the community feedback received on the Glenelg Shire Council Tourism Strategy 2026-2031.**

2. **Adopts the Glenelg Shire Council Tourism Strategy 2026-2031 in its entirety.**

3. **Revokes the Glenelg Tourism Strategy 2019-2026 endorsed by Council on 28 May 2019.**

**SECONDED Cr Angelino**

**CARRIED**

| | |
|---|---|
| **FOR:** | Cr Angelino, Cr Dr Picard, Cr Jowett, Cr McDonald, Cr Stephens and Cr Pepper |
| **AGAINST:** | Nil |

**Attachment List**

1. Glenelg Shire Tourism Strategy 2026-2031 [**10.5.1** - 17 pages]
2. Survey Responses Tourism Strategy Redacted [**10.5.2** - 18 pages]
3. Submitter 1 Tourism Strategy Response Redacted [**10.5.3** - 3 pages]
4. Submitter 2 Tourism Strategy Response Redacted [**10.5.4** - 3 pages]
5. Submitter 3 Tourism Strategy Response Redacted [**10.5.5** - 4 pages]

## 10.6. VICGRID ANSMISSION GUIDELINES SUBMISSION

Director: Brett Jackson, Director Community Services

### Summary

VicGrid have released a Draft Victorian Transmission Plan Guidelines (Guidelines) for public comment.

A review of the Guidelines has been undertaken and a submission prepared on behalf of Council, which raises specific comments on assessing new renewable energy zones, demand and future engagement with community.

### Background

VicGrid has released the draft Guidelines for public consultation. This follows the previous Transmission Plan developed in 2025 for Renewable Energy Zones (REZ) earlier this year. These Guidelines will inform the new 2027 Victorian Transmission Plan being developed by VicGrid.

Submission to the Guidelines is due by 26 June 2026.

### Key Information

The Guidelines released for comment propose to:

- Determine how much energy Victoria needs;
- Assess if the declared renewable energy zones can accommodation Victoria's future energy needs and, if required identify potential new areas for investigation;
- Identify what new or upgraded transmission infrastructure is needed and where;
- Partner with Traditional Owners and engaged with landholders, communities and industry on the development of the plan.

The attached submission is made to supplement and build upon previous submissions made by Council associated with renewable planning and development.

This provides strong support for ongoing consultation and reiterates opportunities outlined in previous submissions to consider further REZ within appropriate locations of the Glenelg Shire.

### Risk

The Guidelines do not pose any risk to the Council.

### Finance

Preparation and release of the submission on the Guidelines has no direct financial impact to Council. However, constraints on new renewable energy development will reduce potential for income sources into the future from these developments that sit outside rate cap from Council. In this future consultation about REZ areas will be vitally important to advocate for these opportunities.

Consultation

VicGrid have released the Guidelines for public exhibition and have met with officers recently regarding the Transmission Plan.

Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 Alignment

Leading and Engaging – Being an active and transparent leader set up to deliver on our priorities.

Conclusion

It is recommended Council support the submission and authorises it to be submitted by the Mayor to VicGrid for consideration.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Adopts the Glenelg Shire Council Submission 'Draft Victorian Transmission Plan Guidelines'

2. Authorises the Mayor to make the submission on behalf of Council.

**MOTION**

**MOVED Cr McDonald**

**That Council:**

1. **Adopts the Glenelg Shire Council Submission 'Draft Victorian Transmission Plan Guidelines' with the removal of paragraphs two, three and four from page two of that submission.**

2. **Authorises the Mayor to make the submission on behalf of Council.**

**SECONDED Cr Dr Picard**

**CARRIED**

| | |
|---|---|
| **FOR:** | Cr Angelino, Cr Dr Picard, Cr Jowett, Cr McDonald, Cr Stephens and Cr Pepper |
| **AGAINST:** | Nil |

**Attachment List**

1. VicGrid Transmission Plan Submission [**10.6.1** - 3 pages]

## 10.7. LETTER OF SUPPORT - LIFEBLOOD

CEO: Helen Havercroft, Chief Executive Officer

### Summary

The purpose of this report is to present Council with a request to provide a letter of support for the reinstatement of Lifeblood's blood donor service in Portland.

### Background

Australia's Red Cross Lifeblood blood donor service in Portland ceased operating in early 2025. A Portland resident undertook a campaign seeking the reinstatement of the service. The campaign received broad community support including local State and Federal Members of Parliament.

Mayor Cr Stephens was approached seeking a letter of support from Glenelg Shire Council for the reinstatement of a blood donor service in Portland.

### Key Information

The nearest permanent donor centre is located in Warrnambool, and mobile donor facilities do not currently travel to Portland.

### Risk

A letter of support is a low-cost advocacy action that aligns with community interest in improving access to blood donation services.

### Finance

There is no financial impact in providing a letter of support.

### Consultation

None

### Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 Alignment

Essential Services and Facilities - Quality, fit for purpose facilities, infrastructure and services that support our community.

### Conclusion

Providing a letter of support is the preferred next step as it enables Council to acknowledge the campaign and advocate for improved access to blood donation services without committing Council to funding.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Receives the Letter of Support for the return of Lifeblood Mobile Blood Donor Services to Portland.

2. Approves the Letter of Support for the return of Lifeblood Mobile Blood Donor Services to Portland.

**MOTION**

**MOVED Cr Dr Picard**

**That Council:**

**1. Receives the Letter of Support for the return of Lifeblood Mobile Blood Donor Services to Portland.**

**2. Approves the Letter of Support for the return of Lifeblood Mobile Blood Donor Services to Portland.**

**SECONDED Cr Jowett**

**CARRIED**

| | |
|---|---|
| **FOR:** | Cr Angelino, Cr Dr Picard, Cr Jowett, Cr McDonald, Cr Stephens and Cr Pepper |
| **AGAINST:** | Nil |

**Attachment List**

1. Letter of Support GSC to Lifeblood [**10.7.1** - 2 pages]
2. Letter to Mayor Stephens ' Return of Mobile Blood Donor Centre'_ Redacted [**10.7.2** - 2 pages]

## 10.8. STATE ELECTION ADVOCACY STRATEGY

Director: Brett Jackson, Director Community Services

### Summary

This report sets out the key election projects that will form the basis of Council seeking funding commitments from Government or Opposition in the lead into the November State Election.

### Background

Following an advocacy workshop held in March 2026 between advocacy partner, The Agenda Group and Councillors, a draft narrative, a set of key messages, and revised list of key election projects has been developed.

Together the attached material reflects the outcomes of workshop discussions and incorporates Councillor feedback on strategic direction and local priorities.

Once approval is secured, the next phase will focus on translating the detail in the attached document into a streamlined and accessible advocacy platform. This will involve distilling the current content and framing it in clear, politically effective language suitable for engagement with MPs and the public. It will be designed to maximise impact and support consistent, compelling communication across all advocacy activities.

### Key Information

The platform narrative focuses on this simple message;

Open for business: practical investment, real outcomes

Located at the heart of the Green Triangle, anchored by the deep water Port and connected across coastal, rural and township communities, Glenelg plays a critical role in Victoria’s regional freight network and both export and visitor economies.

The opportunity is clear: with the right investment, Glenelg can strengthen its position as a key economic gateway for western Victoria - while also building on its natural assets, established events and emerging tourism experiences to drive visitation, local spending and business growth.

However, realising this opportunity depends on addressing a set of practical, well-defined constraints - across infrastructure, community facilities, tourism activation and supply chain coordination.

Council’s advocacy agenda is therefore framed around two integrated pillars:

1. Strengthening communities and growing the visitor economy

A strong regional economy depends on vibrant communities, active town centres and a compelling visitor offer. In Glenelg, this means addressing gaps in community infrastructure, while building on existing tourism and lifestyle strengths.

Glenelg Shire Council is prioritising:

- Delivery of the Portland Recreation and Community Facility to meet strong local demand and to provide a hub for regional sporting activity
- Construction of female change facilities at Heywood Recreation Reserve to support equitable access and growing female participation in community sport
- Development of the Casterton to Branxholme Rail Trail to connect communities and unlock nature-based tourism opportunities
- The establishment of a Glenelg Signature Events Growth Fund to scale existing events and increase visitation

These projects deliver practical, visible improvements - making communities more active, inclusive and attractive to residents and visitors alike.

Over time, this strengthens local participation, supports small businesses and builds a more resilient and diversified regional economy.

2. Enhancing export infrastructure and economic capacity

Glenelg is the export powerhouse of western Victoria - supporting freight and major industries - but its ability to grow is constrained by infrastructure gaps and fragmented investment. Targeted upgrades and coordination will unlock immediate economic value and position the region for long-term growth.

Glenelg Shire Council is prioritising:

- Targeted road upgrades to the Henty Highway and Princes Highway to improve freight efficiency and safety on nationally significant export corridors
- Delivery of a fit-for-purpose Bridgewater Road / Henty Highway overpass to support growing freight volumes and access to and from the deep water Port
- Establishment of a Western Victoria Critical Minerals Coordinator to align freight, infrastructure and investment across the emerging supply chain
- Progression of enabling industrial and port-linked projects that are already attracting private investment and jobs growth

Together, these initiatives remove key bottlenecks – improving productivity, lowering costs for industry and ensuring that the Port can operate as a globally competitive export gateway.

By focusing on coordination and enabling infrastructure, this approach delivers immediate economic returns, while setting up the conditions for sustained private sector investment.

These projects will be formed up with key information, a narrative together with packs of information to support the advocacy by Councillors and Officers.

This information will also be available on our website for other partners to use to back up their own advocacy messaging.

Risk

A comprehensive advocacy platform focused on securing funding from November's State election is a key strategy in supporting the ongoing development and liveability of the Shire. Many of the community infrastructure projects complement planning and feasibility work that has already taken place or is scheduled in the financial year ahead.

This is not a comprehensive list of all items that Council will seek State or Federal funding for through external grants. This is focused on the election, based on the current understanding of what is likely to be funded and provides Council the best opportunity for success.

Finance

The budget for 2025-26 and 2026-27 provides for supported advocacy work.

Consultation

In 2022 a priority project document was prepared that formed part of the key projects contained in the Council Plan 2021-2025. This document helped inform the attachment, as did a Councillor workshop in March 2026 together with the feedback provided as part of the preparation of the Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 and Budget setting for 2026-27.

Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 Alignment

Leading and Engaging – Being an active and transparent leader set up to deliver on our priorities.

Conclusion

The key message is that Council is open for business – we're advocating for State government investment in practical projects which will deliver real outcomes for our regional community.

State government investment in Glenelg will deliver immediate, visible outcomes - more jobs, more tourists and stronger regional economies - by fixing real barriers on the ground.

The next phase of work will focus on translating the detail in the attached document into a streamlined and accessible advocacy platform. This will involve distilling the current content and framing it in clear, politically effective language suitable for engagement with MPs and the public. The refined platform will be designed to maximise impact and support consistent, compelling communication across all advocacy activities.

Recommendation

That Council endorses the narrative and key projects in the attached 'Glenelg Advocacy Strategy' to form the basis of Council's State Government Election campaign.

**MOTION**

**MOVED Cr McDonald**

**That Council endorses the narrative and key projects in the attached 'Glenelg Advocacy Strategy' to form the basis of Council's State Government Election campaign.**

**SECONDED Cr Angelino**

**CARRIED**

| | |
|---|---|
| **FOR:** | Cr Angelino, Cr Dr Picard, Cr Jowett, Cr McDonald, Cr Stephens and Cr Pepper |
| **AGAINST:** | Nil |

**Attachment List**

1. Glenelg Advocacy Strategy [**10.8.1** - 17 pages]

## 11. URGENT BUSINESS

Nil.

## 13. CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS

Recommendation

That the Council Meeting be closed to members of the public pursuant to Section 66 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, to consider the following reports:

13.1 Contract 2024-25-07 Hire of Plant & Equipment to the Glenelg Shire
13.2 Contract 2025-26-47 RC Pipes, Environmental Protection Products, Grates Access Covers Stormwater Pipes and Assoc Products
13.3 Contract 2025-26-52 Provision of Crushing Services
13.4 Contract 2025-26-44 Provision of Internal Audit Services to the Glenelg Shire

**MOTION**

**MOVED Cr Dr Picard**

**That the Council Meeting be closed to members of the public pursuant to Section 66 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, to consider the following reports:**

**13.1 Contract 2024-25-07 Hire of Plant & Equipment to the Glenelg Shire**
**13.2 Contract 2025-26-47 RC Pipes, Environmental Protection Products, Grates Access Covers Stormwater Pipes and Assoc Products**
**13.3 Contract 2025-26-52 Provision of Crushing Services**
**13.4 Contract 2025-26-44 Provision of Internal Audit Services to the Glenelg Shire**

**SECONDED Cr Pepper**

**CARRIED**

| | |
|---|---|
| **FOR:** | Cr Angelino, Cr Dr Picard, Cr Jowett, Cr McDonald, Cr Stephens and Cr Pepper |
| **AGAINST:** | Nil |

## 14. RESUMPTION OF PUBLIC MEETING

Following the consideration of confidential items, the Council Meeting will be re-opened to members of the public.

**MOTION**

**MOVED Cr Jowett**

**That the Council Meeting be opened to members of the public and that the details of items 10.1, 13.1, 13.2, 13.3 and 13.4 be released as deemed appropriate by the Chief Executive Officer.**

**SECONDED Cr Pepper**

**CARRIED**

| | |
|---|---|
| **FOR:** | Cr Stephens, Cr Jowett, Cr McDonald, Cr Angelino, Cr Pepper and Cr Dr Picard |
| **AGAINST:** | Nil |

## 15. CLOSURE OF COUNCIL MEETING

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE MAYOR DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 7:48 pm.

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