



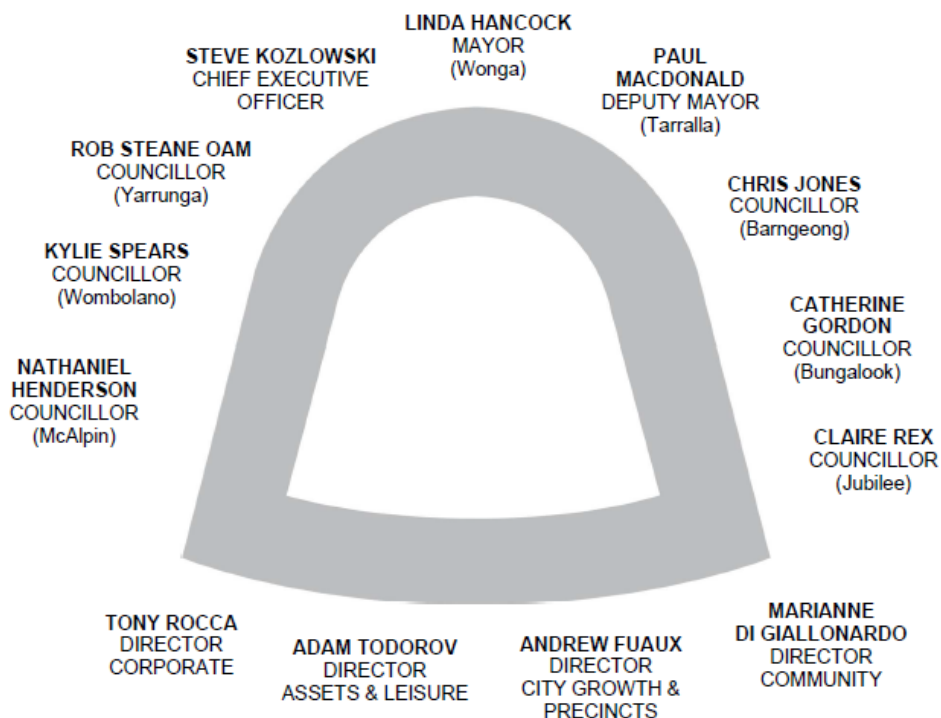
Council Meeting Agenda

Monday 18 May 2026

Commencing at 7:30pm

Realm - Council Chamber
Level 2, 179 Maroondah Highway
Ringwood

Council Chamber Seating



LEAVE OF ABSENCE
DANIELLA HEATHERICH COUNCILLOR (Wicklow)

Public Gallery



Note:

***This meeting is being streamed live on the internet and recorded.
Every care is taken to maintain privacy and attendees are advised they may be recorded.***

This meeting of Council can be viewed on Council's website via:

<https://www.maroondah.vic.gov.au/Live-Council-Meetings>

COUNCIL CHAMBER
IS FITTED WITH A HEARING AID INDUCTION LOOP
SWITCH HEARING AID TO 'T' FOR RECEPTION



ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Prayer and Councillor Pledge
2. Acknowledgment of Country
3. Apologies
4. Declaration of Interests
5. Confirmation of Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on Monday 27 April 2026.
6. Public Questions
7. Officers' Reports
 - Director Corporate
 1. Attendance Report 4
 2. Reports of Councillor Briefings 6
 3. Adoption of Draft Council Plan 2025-2029 (2026/27 Update), the updated Financial Plan 2026/27-2035/36 and Proposed Budget 2026/27 8
 4. Council Plan 2025-2029 - Priority Action Progress Report - Quarter 3, 2025/26 21
 5. Local Government Performance Reporting Framework - Service Performance Indicator Report - Quarter 3, 2025/26 23
 6. Financial Report: Nine Months Ending March 2026 25
 7. Rates Collection and Financial Hardship Policy 28
 - Director Assets & Leisure
 1. Capital Works Report: Third Quarter 2025/26 Financial Year 32
8. Documents for Sealing
9. Motions to Review
10. Late Items
11. Requests for Leave of Absence

ATTENDANCE REPORT

ITEM 1

PURPOSE

To provide an opportunity for Councillors to report on Council activities undertaken since the last Ordinary Meeting of Council and forthcoming ward activities.

STRATEGIC / POLICY ISSUES

The following directions contained in *Maroondah 2050 - Our Future Together* and the *Council Plan 2025-2029* provide the strategic framework that underpins the purpose of this report.

Outcome area: A well governed and empowered community.

Our Community's aspiration: Council continues to be a transparent, accountable, and future-focused leader that collaborates locally and regionally and actively champions local needs. Everyone in Maroondah is informed about matters that affect them and are provided with opportunities to meaningfully engage regarding Council decision making.

Key directions 2025 – 2029:

- 5.1 Ensure transparent and accountable governance, including balanced and sustainable decision making that is evidence informed and is in the best interests of the community.

BACKGROUND

Not applicable

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

It is intended that the Mayor and Councillors be given the opportunity to present a verbal or written report updating Council on the activities they have undertaken since the last Ordinary Meeting of Council on 27 April 2026 in their role as Councillors and forthcoming ward activities.

FINANCIAL / ECONOMIC ISSUES

Not applicable

ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES

Not applicable

SOCIAL / COMMUNITY ISSUES

Not applicable

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Not applicable

CONCLUSION

It is appropriate that Councillors formally report to Council upon the activities they have undertaken in their role as Councillors.

ATTENDANCE REPORT Cont'd

ITEM 1

ATTACHMENTS

Not applicable

CONFIDENTIALITY

Not applicable

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL RECEIVES AND NOTES THE REPORTS AS PRESENTED BY COUNCILLORS

PURPOSE

To present the 'Public Record' of Councillor Briefings which are attended by Councillors and generally held on Monday evenings at Realm, usually two weeks prior to the formal Council Meeting, and to note the issues discussed.

STRATEGIC / POLICY ISSUES

The following directions contained in *Maroondah 2050 - Our Future Together* and the *Council Plan 2025-2029* provide the strategic framework that underpins the purpose of this report.

Outcome area: A well governed and empowered community.

Our Community's aspiration: Council continues to be a transparent, accountable, and future-focused leader that collaborates locally and regionally and actively champions local needs. Everyone in Maroondah is informed about matters that affect them and are provided with opportunities to meaningfully engage regarding Council decision making.

Key directions 2025 – 2029:

- 5.1 Ensure transparent and accountable governance, including balanced and sustainable decision making that is evidence informed and is in the best interests of the community.

BACKGROUND

As part of decision-making processes at Maroondah, it is essential that Councillors are briefed on a range of issues which come before Council for consideration. As a means of providing this information, Councillor Briefings are conducted.

Councillor Briefings are also attended by Council Officers, and sometimes other specific advisors, to provide Councillors with a detailed knowledge and understanding of issues under consideration to a level of detail that would inhibit timely decision-making, that would not be possible in an open Council meeting, where decision-making related debate is governed by strict meeting procedures.

A Councillor Briefing is a non-decision-making forum, and as per past good governance practice, is deemed to be a scheduled or planned meeting comprising a majority of Councillors (at least 5) and one (1) Council employee, for the purpose of discussing matters that are intended or likely to be:

- the subject of a decision of the Council; or
- subject to the exercise of a delegated function, duty or power of Council.

Examples of a Councillor Briefings may include:

- On-site inspections,
- Consultative Meetings with residents, developers, consultants
- Meetings with local organisations, Government Departments, statutory authorities, and local politicians.

REPORTS OF COUNCILLOR BRIEFINGS Cont'd

ITEM 2

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

Councillor Briefings are generally held twice a month, on Monday evenings at Realm, usually two (2) weeks prior to, and on the night of a formal Council meeting.

The intent of this report is to present a 'Public Record' of those Councillor Briefings which are generally attended by all Councillors and typically held on Monday evenings, and to note the items discussed. The 'Public Record' of the Councillor Briefings held on 27 April 2026 and 4 May 2026 are attached for information.

FINANCIAL / ECONOMIC ISSUES

Not applicable

ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES

Not applicable

SOCIAL / COMMUNITY ISSUES

Not applicable

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Not applicable

CONCLUSION

Councillor Briefings are important forums for advice and discussion, on what are often complex issues facing the municipality, in the lead up to formal decisions being made by Councillors at Council Meetings. At Councillor Briefings, or outside them, Councillors also have the opportunity of requesting additional information to assist in the decision-making process. It is appropriate that the 'Public Record' of those Councillor Briefings, which are attended by a majority of Councillors, i.e., at least five (5) Councillors and one (1) employee of Council, be noted.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 2026 April 27 - Councillor Briefing Public Record
2. 2026 May 04 - Councillor Briefing Public Record

CONFIDENTIALITY

Not applicable

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL RECEIVES AND NOTES THE PUBLIC RECORD OF THE COUNCILLOR BRIEFINGS HELD ON 27 APRIL 2026 AND 4 MAY 2026

ADOPTION OF DRAFT COUNCIL PLAN 2025-2029 (2026/27 UPDATE), THE UPDATED FINANCIAL PLAN 2026/27-2035/36 AND PROPOSED BUDGET 2026/27

ITEM 3

PURPOSE

To enable Council to formally adopt the Year 2 update to the *Council Plan 2025-2029, the updated Financial Plan 2026/27-2035/36 (2026/27 Update) and the Proposed Budget 2026/27 (along with associated fees and charges schedule)*.

STRATEGIC / POLICY ISSUES

Maroondah 2050 - Our Future Together and the *Council Plan 2021-2025* provide the strategic framework that underpins the purpose of this report.

Outcome Area: A well governed and empowered community

Our Community's Aspirations: Council continues to be a transparent, accountable, and future-focused leader that collaborates locally and regionally and actively champions local needs. Everyone in Maroondah is informed about matters that affect them and are provided opportunities to meaningfully engage regarding Council decision making.

Key Directions 2025 – 2029:

- 5.1 Ensure transparent and accountable governance, including balanced and sustainable decision making that is evidence informed and is in the best interests of the community.
- 5.2 Prioritise responsible, sustainable and timely management of Maroondah's financial resources, assets, infrastructure and the natural environment.

BACKGROUND

Under the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act), Council is required to:

- prepare and adopt a Council Plan for a period of at least the next four financial years after a general election;
- develop, adopt and keep in force a Financial Plan that is for a period of at least the next 10 financial years; and
- prepare and adopt a Budget for each financial year and the subsequent three financial years.

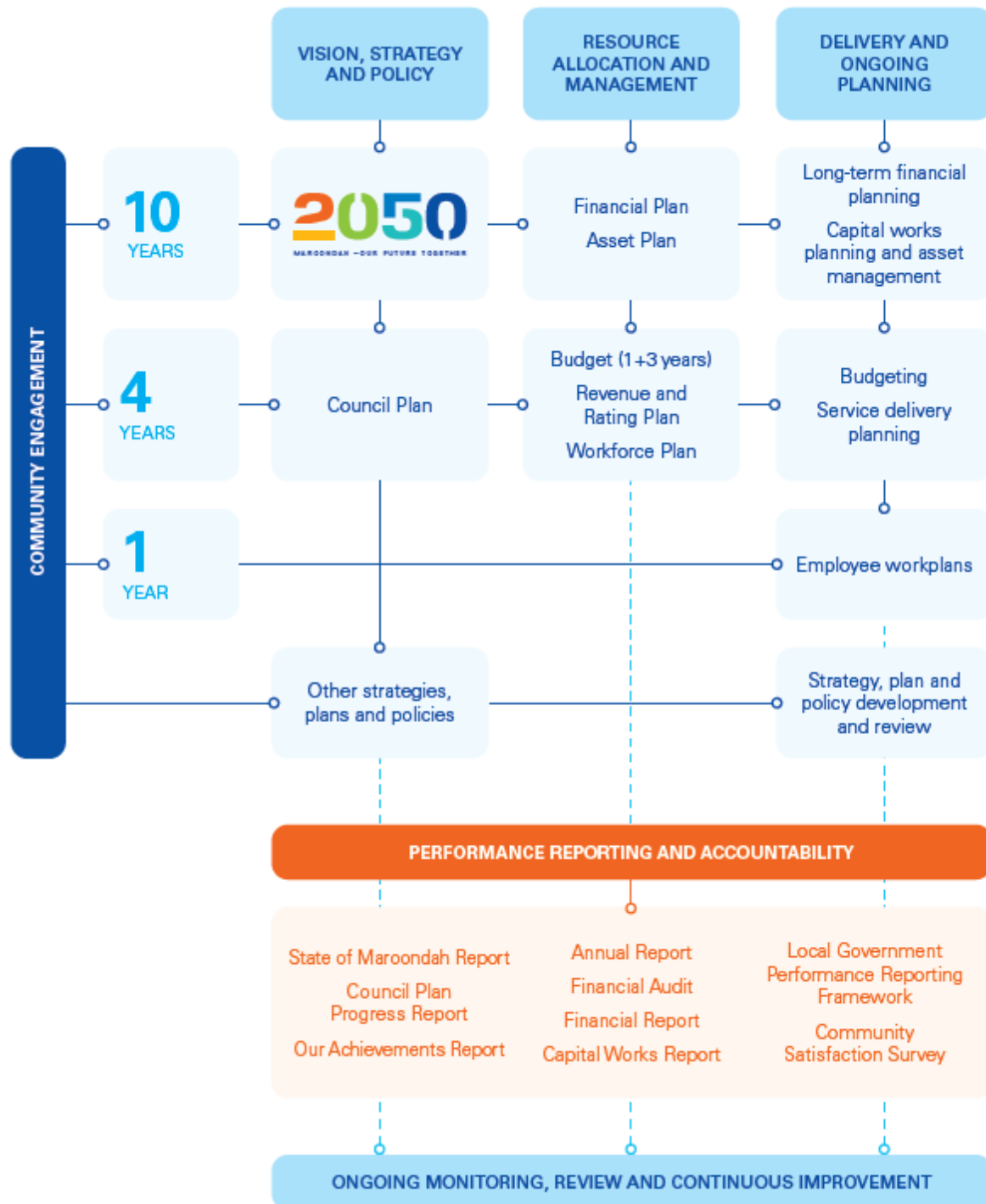
These, and other strategic documents of Council, are linked by an Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (refer to Figure 1), which seeks to ensure Council's activities and resources are aligned to meet the aspirations, needs and expectations of the Maroondah community as outlined in the Maroondah 2050 Community Vision.

While the Council Plan 2025-2029 and Financial Plan were formally developed and adopted following the 2024 general election, Council undertakes annual reviews and updates of these strategic documents to ensure they remain responsive to emerging priorities, service demands, financial assumptions and delivery timeframes.

ADOPTION OF DRAFT COUNCIL PLAN 2025-2029 (2026/27 UPDATE), THE UPDATED FINANCIAL PLAN 2026/27-2035/36 AND PROPOSED BUDGET 2026/27 Cont'd

ITEM 3

Figure 1: Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework



ADOPTION OF DRAFT COUNCIL PLAN 2025-2029 (2026/27 UPDATE), THE UPDATED FINANCIAL PLAN 2026/27-2035/36 AND PROPOSED BUDGET 2026/27 Cont'd

ITEM 3

Council Plan

Under the Act (Section 90), Council must prepare and adopt a Council Plan for a period of at least the next four financial years after a general election in accordance with its deliberative engagement practices. Council must adopt the Council Plan by 31 October in the year following a general election.

Reporting against the Council Plan is undertaken quarterly to Council. Reporting on annual achievements is undertaken through the Annual Report and the 'Our Achievements' document.

Council Plan 2025-2029

The *Council Plan 2025-2029* was adopted by Council on 30 June 2025 and is Maroondah City Council's medium-term strategy linking the local community's aspirations and priorities for the future of Maroondah, as detailed in the community vision *Maroondah 2050 – Our Future Together*, to the current and future work of Council.

The four-year *Council Plan 2025-2029* is structured around the five future outcome areas of the Maroondah 2050 Community Vision. Extending across the period from 2025/26 to 2028/29 the document outlines Council's goals and key directions, priority actions, strategic indicators, services, and supporting strategies, plans and policies.

Development of the *Council Plan 2025-2029* was informed by an extensive community engagement process which resulted in over 9800 inputs from our diverse Maroondah community; recommendations from the Maroondah 2050 Community Panel; and research into emerging trends, opportunities and challenges to set the future direction for Maroondah.

Draft Council Plan 2025-2029 (2026/27 Update)

At Maroondah City Council, the Council Plan 2025-2029 is reviewed and updated annually to ensure priority actions, timing and deliverables remain aligned with emerging community needs, legislative requirements, service delivery priorities and organisational capacity.

The Draft Council Plan 2025-2029 (2026/27 Update) does not represent a full redevelopment of the Council Plan. Rather, it provides a Year 2 update to the existing adopted Council Plan 2025-2029 by:

- acknowledging progress achieved during 2025/26.
- updating the phasing and wording of selected priority actions; and
- identifying revised and proposed actions for the remaining three financial years of the Plan.

Financial Plan

Under the Act (Section 91), Council must develop or review the Financial Plan in accordance with its deliberative engagement practices and adopt the Financial Plan by 31 October in the year following a general election. The scope of a Financial Plan is a period of at least the next 10 financial years

ADOPTION OF DRAFT COUNCIL PLAN 2025-2029 (2026/27 UPDATE), THE UPDATED FINANCIAL PLAN 2026/27-2035/36 AND PROPOSED BUDGET 2026/27 Cont'd **ITEM 3**

The Financial Plan, originally adopted following the 2024 general election, is reviewed and updated annually to reflect revised financial assumptions, service priorities, capital delivery timing, external economic conditions and strategic initiatives.

The Proposed Financial Plan 2026/27-2035/36 (2026/27 Update) represents an update to Council's existing long-term financial framework rather than the preparation of a wholly new Financial Plan.

Budget

Under *Division 2 - Budget Process - Section 94* of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council must prepare a budget for each financial year and the subsequent 3 financial years.

The Budget is one of Council's high-level strategic documents. The 2026/27 budget is aligned to the vision outlined in the Council Plan 2025-2029. It seeks to maintain and improve services and infrastructure as well as deliver projects and services that are valued by our community within the capped rate increase mandated by the Victorian Government. This Budget projects a surplus of \$21.62 million for the 2026/27 financial year.

The Budget is a critical planning and resource tool of Council and is vital to the ongoing operational and financial viability of Council. It sets out the expected income and expenditure for the next four years and also incorporates Council's rates and charges as well as estimating the net worth of the municipality at the end of each year. It is the culmination of detailed preparation by employees and management, including consultation with Councillors.

The 2026/27 Budget is aligned to the updated priority actions and initiatives contained within the Council Plan 2025-2029 (2026/27 Update) and forms part of Council's integrated planning and reporting framework.

The 2026/27 Budget contains 41 major initiatives as identified in the Council Plan. These initiatives will contribute to the achievement of the key directions identified in the four-year Council Plan and ultimately the outcomes as outlined in the Maroondah 2050 Community Vision.

Statutory requirements

The Act defines the legislative requirements for the Council Plan, Financial Plan, Budget and Revenue and Rating Plan.

Council Plan

In terms of the Council Plan, several sections of the Act are relevant.

- Section 90 of the Act requires Council to prepare and adopt a Council Plan for a period of at least the next 4 financial years after a general election in accordance with its deliberative engagement practices. Council must develop or review the Council Plan in accordance with its deliberative engagement practices and adopt the Council Plan by 31 October in the year following a general election, with effect from 1 July in the year following a general election.

ADOPTION OF DRAFT COUNCIL PLAN 2025-2029 (2026/27 UPDATE), THE UPDATED FINANCIAL PLAN 2026/27-2035/36 AND PROPOSED BUDGET 2026/27 Cont'd

ITEM 3

- Section 89 of the Act requires preparation of the Council Plan to be in accordance with the strategic planning principles of the Act which require:
 - (a) an integrated approach to planning, monitoring and reporting;
 - (b) addressing of the Community Vision;
 - (c) taking into account the resources needed for effective implementation;
 - (d) identifying and addressing the risks to effective implementation; and
 - (e) providing for ongoing monitoring of progress and regular review.
- Section 90(2) of the Act also requires Council to include in the Council Plan:
 - (a) the strategic direction of Council;
 - (b) strategic objectives for achieving the strategic direction;
 - (c) strategies for achieving the objectives for a period of at least the next 4 financial years;
 - (d) strategic indicators for monitoring the achievement of the objectives;
 - (e) a description of Council's initiatives and priorities for services, infrastructure and amenity; and
 - (e) any other matters prescribed by the regulations.

Financial Plan and Revenue and Rating Plan, and Budget

In terms of the Financial Plan, Revenue and Rating Plan, and Budget, a number of sections of the Act are relevant.

- Section 93 of the Act requires Council to prepare and adopt a Revenue and Rating Plan by the next 30 June after a general election for a period of at least the next four financial years;
- Section 91 of the Act requires Council to develop, adopt and keep in force a Financial Plan in accordance with its deliberative engagement practices and is for a period of at least 10 financial years;
- Section 94 of the Act requires Council to prepare and adopt a budget for each financial year and subsequent 3 financial years. It must adopt its budget by 30 June each year or such other date fixed by the Minister;
- Section 96 of the Act provides that Council must develop the budget in accordance with the financial management principles and its community engagement policy;
- Section 158 of the *Local Government Act 1989* remains in force at this time in relation to the declaration of rates and charges and requires Council to declare, for each financial

ADOPTION OF DRAFT COUNCIL PLAN 2025-2029 (2026/27 UPDATE), THE UPDATED FINANCIAL PLAN 2026/27-2035/36 AND PROPOSED BUDGET 2026/27 Cont'd **ITEM 3**

year, the amount which the Council intends to raise by general rates, service rates and service charges by 30 June; and

- Section 39 of the Act provides that A Mayor, Deputy Mayor or Councillor is entitled to receive from the Council an allowance as a Mayor, Deputy Mayor or Councillor in accordance with a Determination of the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal under the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal and Improving Parliamentary Standards Act 2019.

While the Act requires Council Plans and Financial Plans to be developed following a general election, Council also undertakes annual reviews and updates to these documents to ensure they remain contemporary, financially sustainable and responsive to emerging priorities.

Community consultation

A number of sections of the Act are relevant in terms of community consultation for the Council Plan, Financial Plan and Budget.

- Sections 90(3) and 91(4) of the Act require that the Council Plan and Financial Plan are prepared in accordance with Council's deliberative engagement practices.
- Section 96(1)(b) of the Act requires that the Budget is prepared in accordance with Council's community engagement policy.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

Council Plan

The *Draft Council Plan 2025-2029 (2026/27 Update)* retains the overall strategic direction of the existing adopted Council Plan, while updating the phasing, wording and delivery timing of selected priority actions.

The Year 2 update includes:

- two (2) new priority actions;
- wording amendments to five (5) existing priority actions; and
- revised phasing adjustments to 18 existing actions.

The table below summarises the status of the 45 Council Plan priority actions, noting 41 will either continue into, or commence in, the 2026/27 financial year.

| Completed in 2025/26 | Continue / commence in 2026/27 | Commence in 2027/28 | Commence in 2028/29 | Total |
|--------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|
| 2 | 41 | 2 | 0 | 45 |

ADOPTION OF DRAFT COUNCIL PLAN 2025-2029 (2026/27 UPDATE), THE UPDATED FINANCIAL PLAN 2026/27-2035/36 AND PROPOSED BUDGET 2026/27 Cont'd

ITEM 3

The 41 proposed Council Plan priority actions for 2026/27 are:

A healthy, inclusive and connected community

- 1) Develop, implement and embed Council's positive ageing service model.
- 2) Review, update and implement the *Maroondah Liveability, Wellbeing and Resilience Strategy 2021-2031* (including the Health and Wellbeing Action Plan).[^]
- 3) Develop and implement Council's Reconciliation Plan.
- 4) Undertake the staged redevelopment of the Croydon Community Wellbeing Precinct.
- 5) Work in partnership with a broad range of service providers and community organisations and groups to develop and deliver services, activities and experiences in the Croydon Community Wellbeing Precinct.
- 6) Work in partnership with the Victorian Government to support the construction of a new hospital in Maroondah to ensure the location and construction maximises community benefit.
- 7) Plan and design the redevelopment of The Rings and Ringwood Golf (subject to funding).
- 8) Design and construct the Quambee Reserve tennis redevelopment.
- 9) Work in partnership to support the Victorian Government kindergarten reforms, including advocating for funding at all levels of government for new and redeveloped facilities that optimise the capability and capacity of kindergarten assets for free three- and four-year-old kindergarten services in Maroondah.
- 10) Design and construct the Croydon North Early Learning Centre (subject to funding).

[^] Action incorporates the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan as required under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*

A safe and liveable community

- 11) Develop and implement a liveable neighbourhoods strategy.
- 12) Work in partnership with the Victorian Government to implement the objectives of Victoria's Housing Statement for the Ringwood Metropolitan Activity Centre.
- 13) Undertake staged enhancements of the Ringwood Metropolitan Activity Centre including Maroondah Highway Boulevard (subject to funding).
- 14) Design and construct the Croydon Main Street Revitalisation project.
- 15) Develop and implement masterplans for the Croydon and Ringwood East activity centres.
- 16) Work in partnership to implement road improvement works at:
 - Eastfield Road, Railway Avenue and Morinda Street, Ringwood East.
 - Holloway Road, Croydon North.

ADOPTION OF DRAFT COUNCIL PLAN 2025-2029 (2026/27 UPDATE), THE UPDATED FINANCIAL PLAN 2026/27-2035/36 AND PROPOSED BUDGET 2026/27 Cont'd

ITEM 3

- Glenvale Road, Ringwood North.
- 17) Implement technological advancements for car parking management within Maroondah.
- 18) Undertake footpath construction in the Principal Pedestrian Network and progress renewal of the Mullum Mullum Creek shared trail.
- 19) Advocate to the Australian and Victorian Governments for the provision of new and upgraded transportation infrastructure in Maroondah.

A green and sustainable community

- 20) Work in partnership to advocate to the Victorian Government to postpone the mandatory implementation of the glass only bin service to households, as well as the expansion of the Container Deposit Scheme.
- 21) Implement Council's *Sustainability Strategy 2022-2031*, including the development of a Climate Change Plan.
- 22) Review, update and implement Council's *Waste, Litter and Resource Recovery Strategy 2020-2030*.
- 23) Develop and implement a series of Biolink Action Plans that implement the Maroondah Habitat Connectivity Study.
- 24) Work in partnership to deliver the staged implementation of the *Reimagining Tarralla Creek* project.
- 25) Undertake flood mitigation works at:
 - San Remo Road, Ringwood North
 - Possum Lane, Heathmont
 - Erica Crescent, Heathmont.
- 26) Implement Council's annual streetscape enhancement program.

A vibrant and prosperous community

- 27) Develop and implement Council's Creative Maroondah Strategy.
- 28) Construct the staged redevelopment of Karralyka (subject to funding).
- 29) Work in partnership to implement the *Bayswater Business Precinct Transformation Strategy* and investigate and implement innovative opportunities to enhance business capability, skill development, employment and education pathways for the manufacturing sector.
- 30) Identify and facilitate co-working opportunities and spaces in Maroondah.
- 31) Work in partnership to explore, plan and implement a regional women in business program.
- 32) Work in partnership to explore, plan and implement a regional business awards program.

ADOPTION OF DRAFT COUNCIL PLAN 2025-2029 (2026/27 UPDATE), THE UPDATED FINANCIAL PLAN 2026/27-2035/36 AND PROPOSED BUDGET 2026/27 Cont'd

ITEM 3

A well governed and empowered community

- 33) Implement the Maroondah 2050 Community Vision.
- 34) Develop and implement Council's *Customer Experience Strategy 2025-2029*.
- 35) Develop and implement Council's *Communications Strategy 2025-2029*.
- 36) Implement Council's *Property Management Strategy 2025-2029*.
- 37) Review a range of Council's core technological systems and undertake the phased implementation of enterprise-wide replacement systems.
- 38) Evolve organisational capacity and implement systems to minimise risks to cybersecurity impacts.
- 39) Partner and advocate regionally with the Eastern Region Group of Councils to address common challenges and progress shared priorities.
- 40) Advocate on key local issues on behalf of the Maroondah community in the lead up to the Victorian and Australian Government elections.
- 41) Engage the community in undertaking a refresh of the Maroondah 2050 Community Vision and prepare the Council Plan 2029-2033 following election of a new Council.

FINANCIAL / ECONOMIC ISSUES

These are contained within the *Council Plan 2025-2029* at an aggregated level and articulate Council's current policy directions.

The adoption of the *Annual Budget 2026/27* (and associated documents) contributes to compliance with the financial planning and reporting requirements of the Act, along with providing an important tool to monitor and control the detailed financial performance and directions of Council over the next 10 years.

ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES

These are contained within the *Council Plan 2025-2029* at an aggregated level and articulate Council's current policy directions.

SOCIAL / COMMUNITY ISSUES

These are contained within the *Council Plan 2025-2029* at an aggregated level and articulate Council's current policy directions.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

The extensive community and stakeholder engagement undertaken to inform the development of the Maroondah 2050 Community Vision and the original Council Plan 2025-2029 continues to provide the strategic foundation for the annual 2026/27 update process.

The 2026/27 update process has focused on reviewing progress, delivery timing, organisational priorities and emerging issues within the framework of the existing adopted Council Plan 2025-2029 and Financial Plan.

ADOPTION OF DRAFT COUNCIL PLAN 2025-2029 (2026/27 UPDATE), THE UPDATED FINANCIAL PLAN 2026/27-2035/36 AND PROPOSED BUDGET 2026/27 Cont'd **ITEM 3**

The previous engagement was undertaken in a number of stages between August 2023 and May 2025 and included:

- **Broad community and stakeholder engagement** undertaken between August and December 2023 using surveys, workshops, pop-up event activities, and online activities.
- **Targeted engagement** with harder to reach and under-represented population cohorts undertaken between February and April 2024 using surveys, workshops and pop-event activities; and Maroondah advisory committee input was captured between May and June 2024
- **Deliberative engagement** with the Maroondah 2050 Community Panel undertaken between February and May 2024.
- **Public exhibition** of the Council Plan 2025-2029 in April and May 2025.

CONCLUSION

The *Draft Council Plan 2025-2029 (2026/27 Update)* updated *Financial Plan 2026/27-2035/36* and Proposed Annual Budget 2026/27, reflect Council's ongoing annual review process and reaffirm Council's commitment to responsible long-term planning, financial sustainability and responsive service delivery for the Maroondah community.

To meet Council's legislative obligations under the *Local Government Act 2020*, the *Draft Council Plan 2025-2029 (2026/27 Update)*, updated *Financial Plan 2026/27-2035/36*, and *Proposed Annual Budget 2026/27* are presented for Council adoption.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft Council Plan 2025-2029 (Y2 2026/27 Update)
2. Updated Financial Plan 2026-27 to 2035-36
3. Proposed Budget Document 2026-27
4. 2026-2027 Fees and Charges

CONFIDENTIALITY

Not applicable

RECOMMENDATION

A. COUNCIL PLAN

THAT COUNCIL

1. **ADOPTS THE UPDATED COUNCIL PLAN 2025-2029 (2026/27 UPDATE)**
2. **IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 57 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2020 AND COUNCIL'S PUBLIC TRANSPARENCY POLICY 2020 AUTHORISE**

ADOPTION OF DRAFT COUNCIL PLAN 2025-2029 (2026/27 UPDATE), THE UPDATED FINANCIAL PLAN 2026/27-2035/36 AND PROPOSED BUDGET 2026/27 Cont'd **ITEM 3**

OFFICERS TO MAKE THE COUNCIL PLAN AVAILABLE ON COUNCIL'S WEBSITE AND AT COUNCIL OFFICES

3. AUTHORISES OFFICERS TO ARRANGE FOR THE SUITABLE PUBLICATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF THE COUNCIL PLAN TO COMMUNITY GROUPS AND RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS

B. FINANCIAL PLAN

THAT COUNCIL

1. ADOPTS THE UPDATED FINANCIAL PLAN 2026/27 - 2035/36
2. IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 57 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2020 AND COUNCIL'S PUBLIC TRANSPARENCY POLICY 2020 AUTHORISE OFFICERS TO MAKE THE FINANCIAL PLAN AVAILABLE ON COUNCIL'S WEBSITE AND AT COUNCIL OFFICES

C. BUDGET

THAT COUNCIL

1. ADOPTS THE ANNUAL BUDGET 2026/27, AS PRESENTED
2. ADOPTS THE SCHEDULE OF USER FEES AND CHARGES, TO BE EFFECTIVE FROM 1 JULY 2026 (EXCEPT AS OTHERWISE INDICATED)
3. APPLIES DIFFERENTIAL RATING USING CAPITAL IMPROVED VALUE (CIV) AS THE BASIS OF VALUATION TO ALL RATEABLE LAND TO RAISE RATES BY 2.75 PER CENT IN 2026/27
4. APPLIES THE FINAL CONFIRMATION TO THE VALUATION DATA PROVIDED BY THE VALUER GENERAL AND SIGNED BY THE MINISTER IN ORDER TO COMPLY WITH THE MINISTER'S RATE CAP DETERMINATION
5. APPLIES A SERVICE CHARGE FOR THE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL OF REFUSE AS DETAILED IN THE ANNUAL BUDGET 2026/27
6. ENDORSES THAT THE RATES WILL BE SEPARATELY LEVIED IN RESPECT TO EACH PORTION OF RATEABLE LAND FOR WHICH COUNCIL HAS AS A SEPARATE VALUATION (UNLESS COUNCIL HAS DETERMINED A CHARGE IN LIEU OF RATES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL LANDS ACT 1963)
7. IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 167 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1989, DECLARES THE RATES AND CHARGES MUST BE PAID:

7.1 IN A LUMP SUM ON OR BEFORE 15 FEBRUARY 2027 OR

7.2 BY FOUR INSTALMENTS ON OR BEFORE:

ADOPTION OF DRAFT COUNCIL PLAN 2025-2029 (2026/27 UPDATE), THE UPDATED FINANCIAL PLAN 2026/27-2035/36 AND PROPOSED BUDGET 2026/27 Cont'd

ITEM 3

- **30 SEPTEMBER 2026**
- **30 NOVEMBER 2026**
- **28 FEBRUARY 2027**
- **31 MAY 2027 OR**

7.3 BY NINE MONTHLY DIRECT DEBIT INSTALMENTS DUE:

- **30 SEPTEMBER 2026**
- **31 OCTOBER 2026**
- **30 NOVEMBER 2026**
- **31 DECEMBER 2026**
- **31 JANUARY 2027**
- **28 FEBRUARY 2027**
- **31 MARCH 2027**
- **30 APRIL 2027**
- **31 MAY 2027**

8. IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 57 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2020 AND COUNCIL'S PUBLIC TRANSPARENCY POLICY 2020 AUTHORISE OFFICERS TO MAKE THE ADOPTED BUDGET 2026/27 AVAILABLE ON COUNCIL'S WEBSITE AND AT COUNCIL OFFICES

9. IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 4 (4) OF THE CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL LANDS ACT 1963, THE FOLLOWING RATEPAYERS HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED AS SUBJECT TO THE ACT IN RESPECT TO THEIR RATEABLE LAND, AS LISTED BELOW:

- **HEATHMONT CLUB INC.**
- **BAYSWATER NORTH TENNIS CLUB**
- **EASTWOOD GOLF CLUB**

10. WILL APPLY INTEREST TO OVERDUE RATES AND CHARGES PAYMENTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 172 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1989, NOTING THAT THE RATE OF INTEREST IS PAYABLE ON THE RATES AND CHARGES WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN PAID BY THE DATES DECLARED, IS FIXED

ADOPTION OF DRAFT COUNCIL PLAN 2025-2029 (2026/27 UPDATE), THE UPDATED FINANCIAL PLAN 2026/27-2035/36 AND PROPOSED BUDGET 2026/27 Cont'd **ITEM 3**

IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 2 OF THE PENALTY INTEREST RATES ACT 1983

D. GENERAL

THAT COUNCIL

- 1. AUTHORISES THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER TO MAKE ANY IMMATERIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REVISIONS AS REQUIRED TO ALL STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS**

**COUNCIL PLAN 2025-2029 - PRIORITY ACTION PROGRESS
REPORT - QUARTER 3, 2025/26**

ITEM 4

PURPOSE

To provide an update to Council on the progress made towards the implementation of 2025/26 priority actions identified in the *Council Plan 2025-2029*, as at 31 March 2026.

STRATEGIC / POLICY ISSUES

The following directions, which are detailed in *Maroondah 2050 - Our Future Together and the Council Plan 2025-2029*, provide the strategic framework that underpins the purpose of this report.

Outcome Area: A well governed and empowered community

Our Community's Aspiration: Council continues to be a transparent, accountable and future-focused leader that collaborates locally and regionally, and actively champions local needs. Everyone in Maroondah is informed about matters that affect them and provided with opportunities to meaningfully engage regarding Council decision making.

Key Directions 2025 - 2029:

- 5.1 Ensure transparent and accountable governance, including balanced and sustainable decision making that is evidence informed and is in the best interests of the community.
- 5.2 Prioritise responsible, sustainable and timely management of Maroondah's financial resources, assets, infrastructure and the natural environment.

BACKGROUND

The Council Plan is Council's medium-term strategy describing the objectives, strategies, initiatives, services, and performance indicators of Council, in working toward the long-term community vision outlined in *Maroondah 2050 - Our future together*.

The *Council Plan 2025-2029* is structured around the five outcome areas of the Maroondah 2050 Community Vision, highlighting how Council will work towards the realisation of that vision. It plays a vital role in shaping Maroondah's future over the four-year period, identifying the challenges and opportunities for our community, at both the local and regional levels, and informs Council's decision making regarding resources and priorities.

The *Council Plan 2025-2029* is implemented through service delivery activities and initiatives across Council, and the outcomes are measured and reported to Council and the community regularly.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

For each year of the *Council Plan 2025-2029*, Council presents to the Maroondah community, an updated set of priority actions which implement the key directions of the Council Plan. This helps to ensure that the Plan continues to be aligned with the Maroondah 2050 Community Vision and is responsive to community needs and expectations. Several of these priority actions are implemented over multiple years, and are scheduled for completion in future years.

COUNCIL PLAN 2025-2029 - PRIORITY ACTION PROGRESS REPORT - QUARTER 3, 2025/26 Cont'd **ITEM 4**

For the 2025/26 financial year there are 39 priority actions. The attached report describes the progress made by Council in delivering on these priority actions, as at 31 March 2026.

FINANCIAL / ECONOMIC ISSUES

Not applicable

ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES

Not applicable

SOCIAL / COMMUNITY ISSUES

Not applicable

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Council Plan achievements are reported to Council and the community through a quarterly reporting process, and through the Maroondah City Council Annual Report, at the end of each financial year.

CONCLUSION

Council has made excellent progress over the past quarter (1 January to 31 March 2026) toward the implementation of a broad range of Council Plan priority actions for the 2025/26 financial year.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Council Plan 2025 - 2029 Priority Actions Progress Report - Q3 2025-26

CONFIDENTIALITY

Not applicable

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL NOTES THE PROGRESS MADE TOWARDS THE DELIVERY OF THE 2025/26 PRIORITY ACTIONS IDENTIFIED IN THE COUNCIL PLAN 2025-2029, AS AT 31 MARCH 2026

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE REPORTING
FRAMEWORK - SERVICE PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
REPORT - QUARTER 3, 2025/26**

ITEM 5

PURPOSE

To provide Council with a report on the status of the indicators of service performance, as measured by the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF), as at 31 March 2026 (Quarter 3, 2025/26 financial year).

STRATEGIC / POLICY ISSUES

The following directions detailed in *Maroondah 2050 - Our Future Together* and the *Council Plan 2025-2029*, provide the strategic framework that underpins the purpose of this report.

Outcome Area: A well governed and empowered community

Our Community's Aspiration: Council continues to be a transparent, accountable and future-focused leader that collaborates locally and regionally, and actively champions local needs. Everyone in Maroondah is informed about matters that affect them and provided with opportunities to meaningfully engage regarding Council decision making.

Key Directions 2025 - 2029:

- 5.1 Ensure transparent and accountable governance, including balanced and sustainable decision making that is evidence informed and is in the best interests of the community.
- 5.2 Prioritise responsible, sustainable and timely management of Maroondah's financial resources, assets, infrastructure and the natural environment.
- 5.6 Deliver services to the Maroondah community that are people-focused, proactive, integrated and responsive.

BACKGROUND

The LGPRF is a mandatory reporting process developed by Local Government Victoria (LGV), which was introduced in 2014 to ensure all Victorian Councils are measuring and reporting on their performance, in a consistent way.

The LGPRF aims to ensure the transparency and accountability regarding the performance of the local government sector, to ratepayers and the public. The Framework is made up of the following sections:

- service performance
- financial performance
- governance and management checklist.

Together these components build a comprehensive picture of local government performance.

The LGPRF outcomes are reported in Council's Annual Report in the *Report of Operations and Performance Statement* sections, as required by the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* and associated elements of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE REPORTING
FRAMEWORK - SERVICE PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
REPORT - QUARTER 3, 2025/26 Cont'd**

ITEM 5

At the end of the financial year, results for LGPRF indicators are also publicly released by the Victorian Government, enabling benchmarking of the relative performance of Council.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The LGPRF service performance indicator results are monitored and reported on a quarterly basis, whilst financial performance and sustainable capacity measures are reported annually.

Many service performance indicators are subject to fluctuations across the year, which reflect seasonality, or phasing of service delivery. As a result, quarterly data is not always indicative of the end of financial year result.

FINANCIAL / ECONOMIC ISSUES

As identified within the report.

ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES

Not applicable

SOCIAL / COMMUNITY ISSUES

Not applicable

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

The end of financial year results for 2025/26 will be released in Council's Annual Report 2025/26. They will also be submitted for publication to the Victorian Government. Council will continue to monitor its performance against the LGPRF indicators and report quarterly to ensure accountability and transparency to the community.

CONCLUSION

LGPRF service performance results for the third quarter of the 2025/26 financial year (as at 31 March 2026) are presented in the attached report.

ATTACHMENTS

1. LGPRF Service Performance Report - Quarter 3, 2025/26

CONFIDENTIALITY

Not applicable

RECOMMENDATION

**THAT COUNCIL NOTES THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE REPORTING
FRAMEWORK SERVICE PERFORMANCE RESULTS FOR THE 2025/26 FINANCIAL
YEAR, AS AT 31 MARCH 2026**

PURPOSE

To present Council with a snapshot of Council's financial performance for the nine months ending 31 March 2026. Attachment 1 provides the full Maroondah City Council financial report.

STRATEGIC / POLICY ISSUES

The following directions contained in *Maroondah 2050 - Our Future Together* and the *Council Plan 2025-2029* provide the strategic framework that underpins the purpose of this report.

Outcome Area: A well governed and empowered community.

Our Community's Aspiration: Council continues to be a transparent, accountable, and future-focused leader that collaborates locally and regionally and actively champions local needs. Everyone in Maroondah is informed about matters that affect them and are provided with opportunities to meaningfully engage regarding Council decision making.

Key Directions 2025 – 2029:

- 5.1 Ensure transparent and accountable governance, including balanced and sustainable decision making that is evidence informed and is in the best interests of the community

BACKGROUND

In accordance with Section 97 of the Local Government Act 2020, Council is required each quarter to consider the financial performance of the municipality against budget for the year to date (YTD).

The quarter ending 31 March 2026 Financial Report was presented to Audit and Risk Committee on Monday, 18 May 2026. If any material changes came from the Committee, they would be raised with Council, prior to it being tabled.

The attached financial statements contain an Income Statement (Operating Statement); Balance Sheet; and a Statement of Capital Works. The Income Statement is presented in line with required accounting standards.

The Statements provide comparisons between actual results and the YTD forecast budget.

FINANCIAL REPORT: NINE MONTHS ENDING MARCH 2026
Cont'd

ITEM 6

DISCUSSION

The following is a summary of the financial position for the nine months ending 31 March 2026. A detailed report is attached to this document.

| | YTD Actual Results \$'000 | YTD Current Forecast \$'000 | YTD Forecast Variance \$'000 | Adopted Budget \$'000 | Quarter 2 Dec Forecast \$'000 | Quarter 3 Mar Forecast \$'000 | Q2 (Dec) v Q3 (Mar) Forecast Variance \$'000 |
|---|--|--|---|--------------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Operating | | | | | | | |
| Income | 170,673 | 170,526 | 147 | 191,872 | 186,868 | 186,754 | (114) |
| Expenses | 127,858 | 128,861 | 1,003 | 174,262 | 175,127 | 175,409 | (282) |
| Surplus (deficit) | 42,815 | 41,665 | 1,150 | 17,610 | 11,741 | 11,345 | (396) |
| Capital | | | | | | | |
| Grants - capital (recurrent and non- recurrent) | 7,871 | 8,750 | 879 | 7,234 | 9,773 | 9,223 | 550 |
| Contributions - Monetary (Capital) | 773 | 826 | 53 | 223 | 1,123 | 1,139 | 16 |
| Underlying result | 34,171 | 32,089 | 2,082 | 10,153 | 845 | 983 | 138 |

For the nine months ended 31 March 2026, Council has recorded an underlying surplus before capital revenues of \$42.82 million, which is \$1.15 million ahead the year-to-date forecast budget. This is largely due to timing variances outlined in the attached report.

The annual forecast underlying surplus of \$983K is inclusive of restricted items such as public open space and waste management revenue collected during the year. The favourable variance of \$138K to the quarter two forecast is due to a number of favourable movements in income, mostly offset by an unfavourable movement in depreciation and monetary contributions. Further details on these movements are provided in the attached report.

FINANCIAL / ECONOMIC ISSUES

These are as presented in this Report and accompanying Financial Statements. As per section 97 of the Local Government Act 2020, the accompanying financial statements provide a comparison of actual and budgeted results to date with any variances deemed to be material commented on accordingly.

ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES

Not applicable

SOCIAL / COMMUNITY ISSUES

Not applicable

**FINANCIAL REPORT: NINE MONTHS ENDING MARCH 2026
Cont'd**

ITEM 6

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Not applicable

CONCLUSION

The 31 March 2026 YTD results are positive and serve as a solid basis for Council to achieve its services and advocacy programs for the 2025/2026 financial year. However, it is important to note that there are economic risks, such as high inflation and general uncertainty in global markets due to conflicts, which can impact the financial performance of the Council.

These risks can affect the costs of inputs required for Council's programs and services, particularly its capital works program. Nevertheless, Council remains committed to identifying opportunities to reduce costs, increase income, and optimise the utilisation of existing resources. These efforts are crucial in ensuring the Council's long-term financial sustainability.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Quarter 3 Financial Report - Mar 2025-2026
2. Finance - Q3 Balance Sheet Analysis 2025-26

CONFIDENTIALITY

Not applicable

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL RECEIVES AND NOTES THE REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE AGAINST BUDGET FOR THE NINE MONTHS ENDING 31 MARCH 2026.

PURPOSE

For Council to consider and adopt an updated Rates Collection and Financial Hardship Policy, which establishes a transparent, equitable, and consistent framework for the collection of rates and the provision of financial hardship assistance.

STRATEGIC / POLICY ISSUES

The following directions contained in *Maroondah 2050 - Our Future Together and the Council Plan 2025-2029* provide the strategic framework that underpins the purpose of this report.

Outcome area: A well governed and empowered community.

Our Community's aspiration: Council continues to be a transparent, accountable, and future-focused leader that collaborates locally and regionally and actively champions local needs. Everyone in Maroondah is informed about matters that affect them and are provided with opportunities to meaningfully engage regarding Council decision making.

Key directions 2025 - 2029:

Ensure transparent and accountable governance, including balanced and sustainable decision making that is evidence informed and is in the best interests of the community.

BACKGROUND

Rates and charges are the primary source of revenue for Council, enabling the delivery of essential services, maintenance of community infrastructure, and completion of planned capital works. The timely collection of rates is critical for Council's financial sustainability and fairness to all ratepayers.

In response to evolving legislative requirements, updated Ministerial Guidelines, and changing community expectations, Council has reviewed its existing Rates Collection and Financial Hardship Policy to ensure it remains contemporary, transparent, and accessible for ratepayers experiencing financial hardship.

The review has also been undertaken to ensure Council's approach remains contemporary, consistent with updated Ministerial Guidelines and legislative reforms, and reflective of increasing community expectations regarding fairness, transparency, and accessibility in financial hardship assistance.

This Rates Collection and Financial Hardship Policy has been developed with reference to:

- Local Government Act 1989 (as applicable)
- Local Government Act 2020
- Local Government Legislative Amendment (Rating and Other Matters) Act 2022
- Ministerial Guidelines relating to payment of rates and charges (2025)

Council recognises that while a consistent and equitable approach to rate collection is necessary, some ratepayers may experience genuine financial hardship due to unforeseen circumstances or significant life events.

**RATES COLLECTION AND FINANCIAL HARDSHIP POLICY
Cont'd**

ITEM 7

The review was undertaken with the following objectives:

- Enhance the existing Interim Financial Hardship Policy, which was originally endorsed by Council in 2023.
- Promote the timely payment of Council rates and charges.
- Formalise transparent and consistent debt collection and recovery processes, including procedures relating to Section 181 sale of land processes for unpaid rates.
- Provide accessible hardship relief options for eligible ratepayers.
- Ensure the application and assessment process is transparent, fair, and consistent.

This policy aims to balance responsible revenue management with compassionate support, ensuring all ratepayers are treated with fairness and respect.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The revised Rates Collection and Financial Hardship Policy brings together rate and debt collection processes into a single, easy-to-understand document. This integrated approach ensures that ratepayers have well defined information about their responsibilities, available payment options, and the steps Council may take if rates become overdue.

The policy seeks to balance Council's responsibility to collect rates in a fair and consistent manner with the need to provide appropriate support to ratepayers experiencing genuine financial hardship.

Key improvements of the updated policy include:

- More detailed definitions and explanations, making it easier for ratepayers to understand important terms such as "dependent," "deferral," and "principal place of residence."
- A more structured layout, with improved schedules and references to relevant legislation, so ratepayers can easily find the information they need.
- Stronger emphasis on fairness, consistency, and privacy, including greater alignment with privacy and data protection laws.
- Transparent and formalised procedures for payment arrangements, financial hardship support, and managing overdue rates - including transparent steps before any legal action, such as the sale of land for unpaid rates, is considered.
- Improved communication with ratepayers, ensuring everyone is aware of their options and the support available.
- The policy also assists in ensuring procedural fairness and supporting consistent decision-making across the organisation.
- Ongoing enhancements to internal systems and reporting, which help Council monitor outcomes and continually improve the policy's effectiveness.

Internal processes for financial hardship programs, as well as payment and deferral plan application and monitoring systems, have been in place since mid-2023 and have proven successful. The updated policy supports the continuation and further development of these programs, ensuring that compassionate assistance remains available to those who need it.

**RATES COLLECTION AND FINANCIAL HARDSHIP POLICY
Cont'd**

ITEM 7

Council encourages ratepayers experiencing difficulty in paying rates and charges to engage with Council as early as possible to discuss available support options.

FINANCIAL / ECONOMIC ISSUES

Revenue stability: Timely collection of rates is essential for Council's ability to deliver services, maintain infrastructure, and undertake planned works. Providing expanded hardship support and flexible payment options may lead to some delays in rate revenue collection but is designed to minimise the risk of long-term non-payment or debt escalation. The policy also supports improved long-term cash flow management by encouraging earlier engagement with ratepayers experiencing financial difficulty and reducing the likelihood of unmanageable debt accumulation.

Financial sustainability: While the policy introduces more formalised hardship and deferral arrangements, it maintains Council's commitment to financial sustainability. The policy includes procedures for managing overdue rates and, where necessary, legal action, ensuring that Council can continue to meet its financial obligations to the community.

Economic impact on community: By providing transparent hardship relief, the policy supports community members facing genuine financial difficulty, helping to prevent financial distress and potential housing insecurity. This approach can have positive flow-on effects for community wellbeing and economic participation.

Overall, the policy aims to balance community support objectives with Council's obligation to maintain long-term financial sustainability.

ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES

Not applicable

SOCIAL / COMMUNITY ISSUES

Equity and inclusion: The policy is designed to ensure that all ratepayers, regardless of their background or circumstances, have equitable access to support. This includes clear definitions and accessible language, helping to remove barriers for vulnerable or disadvantaged groups, such as older residents, people with disabilities, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and those experiencing family violence or sudden life changes.

Confidentiality: The policy emphasises the sensitive handling of personal information and treats all hardship applications with respect and confidentiality. This encourages people in need to seek help without fear of stigma or judgement, fostering a more supportive community environment. The policy also adopts a respectful and informed approach to engagement with ratepayers experiencing vulnerability or financial distress.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

The policy review and its structure have been significantly shaped by the extensive consultation conducted at the state level during the development of the Ministerial Guidelines relating to payment of rates and charges. These guidelines, which involved broad engagement

**RATES COLLECTION AND FINANCIAL HARDSHIP POLICY
Cont'd**

ITEM 7

with councils, community groups, and advocacy organisations, have provided a strong foundation for ensuring the policy meets the needs and expectations of the community.

The policy has also been informed by Council's operational experience since the implementation of the Interim Financial Hardship Policy in 2023, including learnings from hardship applications, payment arrangement administration, and customer engagement practices.

Benchmarking against approaches adopted by other Victorian councils was also undertaken as part of the review process to support alignment with sector best practice.

CONCLUSION

The updated Rates Collection and Financial Hardship Policy reflects Council's commitment to balancing responsible financial management with compassionate support for community members experiencing genuine hardship. The policy ensures the timely collection of rates while providing transparent, fair, and accessible assistance options for those in need.

The policy reflects contemporary legislative and governance expectations and positions Council to continue delivering a fair, transparent, and financially responsible approach to rates collection and hardship assistance.

Establishing a consistent and documented framework to guide the administrative decision-making, support accountability and minimise discretionary inconsistency.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Rates Collection and Financial Hardship Policy

CONFIDENTIALITY

Not applicable

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL ADOPTS THE RATES COLLECTION AND FINANCIAL HARDSHIP POLICY, AS ATTACHED TO THIS REPORT.

**CAPITAL WORKS REPORT: THIRD QUARTER 2025/26
FINANCIAL YEAR**

ITEM 1

PURPOSE

To present the financial and operational status of Council's Capital Works program for the third quarter of the 2025/26 financial year.

STRATEGIC / POLICY ISSUES

The following directions contained in *Maroondah 2050 - Our Future Together* and the *Council Plan 2025-2029* provide the strategic framework that underpins the purpose of this report.

Outcome Area: A well governed and empowered community

Our Community's Aspiration: Council continues to be a transparent, accountable, and future-focused leader that collaborates locally and regionally, and actively champions local needs. Everyone in Maroondah is informed about matters that affect them and provided with opportunities to meaningfully engage regarding Council Decision making.

Key Directions 2025 - 2029:

- 5.1 Ensure transparent and accountable governance, including balanced and sustainable decision making that is evidence informed and is in the best interests of the community.

BACKGROUND

Council, as part of its Adopted Budget 2025/26, allocated \$46.03M to Capital Works projects, including significant external funding for the Ringwood Activity Centre Carpark project. In addition, Council also carried forward \$12.86M from the 2024/25 capital works budget. Based on the status of some major projects (particularly the Croydon Community Wellbeing Precinct Cultural Hub that is currently under construction), and some forecast adjustments that have occurred as a result, the total adjusted forecast budget for 2025/26 was \$49.33 million as of 31 March 2026.

Capital Works program status reports are prepared by management and reviewed monthly at the Capital Works Implementation Group (CWIG) and presented quarterly to the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC).

Provided in this report is an overview of Capital Expenditure on Council's major program areas for the period 1 July 2025 - 31 March 2026.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The following is a summary of the status of Council's major program areas as of 31 March 2026.

DIRECTOR ASSETS & LEISURE – ADAM TODOROV

CAPITAL WORKS REPORT: THIRD QUARTER 2025/26 FINANCIAL YEAR Cont'd

ITEM 1

CAPITAL PERFORMANCE – THIRD QUARTER - 31 March 2026

| Classification | YTD Actual 25-26 \$'000 | YTD Current Forecast 25-26 \$'000 | YTD Current Forecast vs Actuals \$'000 | Adjusted Q3 Forecast 25/26 (In Progress) ** \$'000 | Amount Carried Forward from 24-25 \$'000 | Adopted Budget \$'000 |
|--|-------------------------------|--|---|---|--|-----------------------------|
| Land | 55 | 27 | (27) | 29,238 | 8,898 | 22,326 |
| Buildings | 18,103 | 21,062 | 2,960 | 29,238 | 8,898 | 22,326 |
| Roads | 3,226 | 4,732 | 1,506 | 6,775 | 1,284 | 8,747 |
| Footpaths and Cycleways | 2,368 | 2,866 | 499 | 3,170 | 400 | 4,487 |
| Drainage | 1,333 | 1,664 | 331 | 2,090 | 474 | 3,130 |
| Off-Street Carparks | 519 | 606 | 86 | 775 | 15 | 440 |
| Waste Management | 13 | 254 | 240 | 925 | 51 | 50 |
| Recreational Leisure and Community Facilities | 1,194 | 1,182 | (12) | 1,790 | 355 | 1,968 |
| Parks, Open Space and Streetscapes | 1,304 | 1,813 | 508 | 2,684 | 1,129 | 2,486 |
| Fixtures, Fittings and Furniture | 60 | 72 | 12 | 97 | 29 | 124 |
| Plant, Machinery and Equipment | 1,252 | 1,192 | (60) | 1,403 | (406) | 1,942 |
| Computers and Telecommunications | 174 | 335 | 161 | 380 | 626 | 326 |
| Total capital works | 29,601 | 35,805 | 6,204 | 49,327 | 12,855 | 46,025 |

* YTD Actual expenditure includes Carried Forwards

** Forecast Budget expenditure includes 2024/25 Carried Forwards less anticipated 2025/26 Carry Forwards

Explanation of variations between forecast budget and adopted budget:

- **Buildings** – Variation between the adopted \$22.33M and adjusted forecast \$29.24M budgets is due primarily to:
 - \$8.9M in carried forward funds from the 2024/25 financial year, relating to the Ringwood Activity Centre Carpark, Eastfield Pony Pavilion Redevelopment, and the Wyreena Conservatory Redevelopment
 - The outcomes of a review of project forecasts and timelines, which resulted in a \$3.5M forecast adjustment for the CCWP Cultural Hub based on the projected contractual cash flow requirements. At the same time, \$1.5M in forecasted funding was brought forward for the CCWP Multipurpose Pavilion and Bowling Green
- **Roads** – Variation between adopted \$8.75M and adjusted forecast \$6.78M budgets is due primarily to:
 - \$1.3M in carried forward funds from the 2024/25 financial year, relating to Victoria Street Renewal, Kardinia Crescent Renewal, Evelyn Road Reconstruction and road resurfacing projects
 - \$0.35M forecast adjustment for Heywood Street Renewal and Victoria Street Renewal from drainage for associated project works

**CAPITAL WORKS REPORT: THIRD QUARTER 2025/26
FINANCIAL YEAR Cont'd**

ITEM 1

- A \$3.94M anticipated carry forward into 2026/27, 40% of which relates to fully grant-funded multiyear projects
- **Footpaths & Cycleways** – Variation between adopted \$4.49M and adjusted forecast \$3.17M budgets is due partly to:
 - \$0.40M in carried forward funds from the 2024/25 financial year, relating to the Mullum Mullum Creek Trail Improvements and the Bedford Road Bicycle Path project
 - The anticipated 2026/27 carry forward for this area, the majority of which is primarily attributable to the Bedford Road Bicycle Path project that is a multi-year funded project
- **Recreational Leisure and Community Facilities** – Variation between adopted \$1.97M and adjusted forecast \$1.79M budgets due primarily to:
 - \$0.36M in carried forward funds from the 2024/25 financial year, relating to the HE Parker Tennis Lighting Replacement and Aquinas Soccer Redevelopment.
 - \$0.27M forecast adjustment for Heathmont Tennis Light Replacement due to the successful grant funding application
- **Parks, Open Space and Streetscapes** - Variation between adopted \$2.49M and adjusted forecast \$2.68M budgets is due primarily to:
 - \$1.13M in carried forward funds from the 2024/25 financial year, relating to various open space improvement projects at Norwood Reserve, Lipscombe Park, Weiland Reserve and Croydon Park.
 - The projected carry forward into 2026/27, which is \$1.14 million, with 40% allocated to a single renewal project. It should be noted that the majority of the projects associated with this area are on track for completion and/or nearing completion
- **Computers and Telecommunications** – Variation between adopted \$0.33M and adjusted forecast \$0.38M budgets is primarily due to:
 - \$0.63M in carried forward funds from the 2024/25 financial year, relating to various IT Improvement projects.

FINANCIAL / ECONOMIC ISSUES

CARRIED FORWARDS FROM 2024/25

Council carried forward an amount of \$12.86M from the 2024/25 financial year, which primarily related to major projects that were underway at the end of the 2024/25 financial year.

EXPENDITURE FOR THIRD QUARTER OF 2025/26

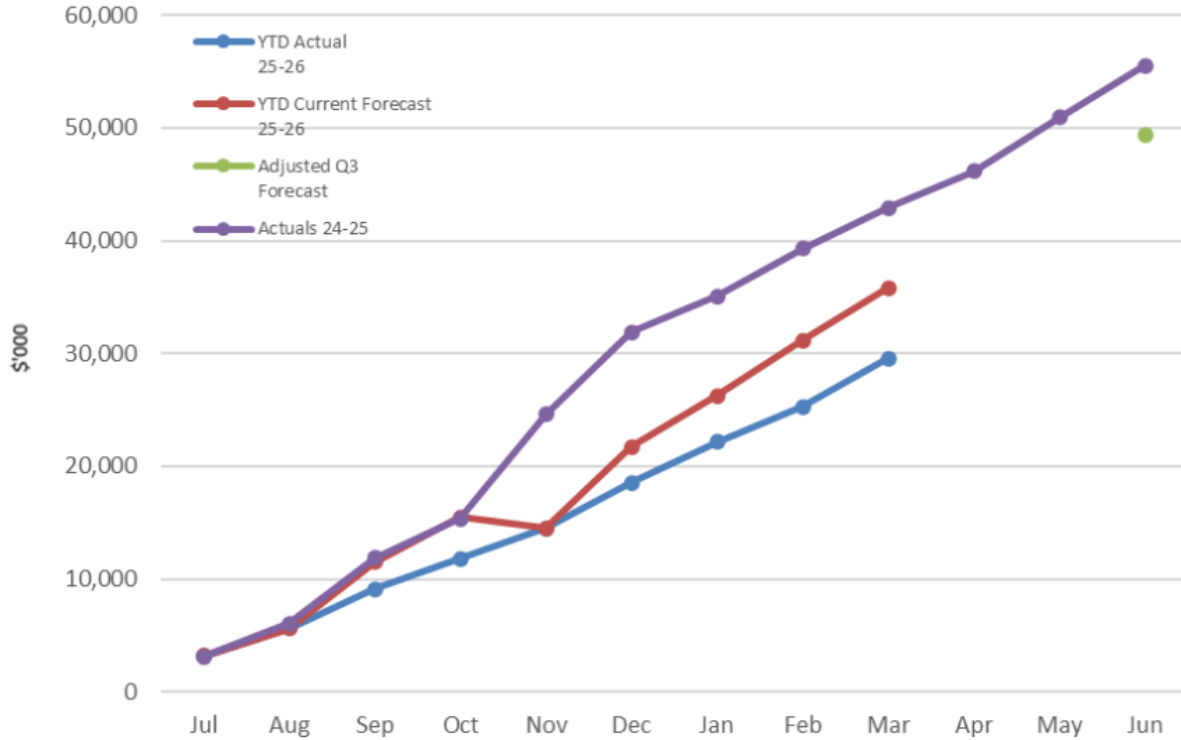
By the end of the third quarter for 2025/26, Council spent a total of \$29.60M on a wide range of capital projects that will provide significant benefit to the community. This amount represents 60% of the total adjusted forecast for 2025/26.

**CAPITAL WORKS REPORT: THIRD QUARTER 2025/26
FINANCIAL YEAR Cont'd**

ITEM 1

The graph below depicts the status of the 2025/26 capital works program at the end of the third quarter.

CAPITAL WORKS YTD – EXPENDITURE (CUMULATIVE)



ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES

Not applicable

SOCIAL / COMMUNITY ISSUES

Not applicable

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Not applicable

CONCLUSION

Council's total adjusted Capital Works forecast budget for 2025/26 is \$49.33 million. This includes \$12.86 million carried forward from 2024/25, as well as significant grant funding from State and Federal Governments. The adjusted forecast budget excludes the anticipated carry forward into 2026/27, aiming to provide a clearer indication of the end-of-year position. Key variations between the adopted and forecast program budgets for the period 1 July 2025 to 31 March 2026 are detailed within this report.

**CAPITAL WORKS REPORT: THIRD QUARTER 2025/26
FINANCIAL YEAR Cont'd**

ITEM 1

ATTACHMENTS

Not applicable

CONFIDENTIALITY

Not applicable

RECOMMENDATION

**THAT COUNCIL RECEIVES AND NOTES THE REPORT ON THE STATUS OF THE
CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAM FOR THE THIRD QUARTER FOR 2025/26**