



Council Meeting Agenda

10 February 2026 at 2pm

COPACC Meeting Rooms 1 & 2

COLAC OTWAY SHIRE COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday 10 February 2026

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COLAC OTWAY SHIRE COUNCIL MEETING

NOTICE is hereby given that the next **COUNCIL MEETING OF THE COLAC OTWAY SHIRE COUNCIL** will be held at COPACC on Tuesday 10 February 2026 at 2:00 PM.

AGENDA

1 DECLARATION OF OPENING OF MEETING

OPENING PRAYER

Almighty God, we seek your blessing and guidance in our deliberations on behalf of the people of the Colac Otway Shire. Enable this Council's decisions to be those that contribute to the true welfare and betterment of our community.

AMEN

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Colac Otway Shire acknowledges the original custodians and law makers of this land, their elders past and present.

RECORDING AND PUBLICATION OF MEETINGS

Please note: All Council meetings will be live streamed and recorded when the meeting is held either at COPACC or online. This includes the public participation sections of the meetings. When meetings are held in other locations, Council will endeavour to make an audio recording of the meeting for community access. Matters identified as confidential items in the Agenda will not be live streamed or recorded regardless of venue or mode.

By participating in open Council meetings, individuals consent to the use and disclosure of the information they share at the meeting (including any personal and/or sensitive information).

As soon as practicable following each open Council meeting, the live stream recording will be accessible on Council's website. Audio recordings are also taken to facilitate the preparation of the minutes of open Council meetings and to ensure their accuracy. Recordings will be retained by Council for a period of four years.

This meeting will be livestreamed to the public via Council's YouTube channel (search Colac Otway Shire Council at www.youtube.com).

3 MEETING ADMINISTRATION

3.1 Present

3.2 Apologies and Leaves of Absence

3.3 Confirmation of Minutes

RECOMMENDATION

That Council confirm the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 9 December 2025.

3.4 Declarations of Interest

A Councillor who has declared a conflict of interest, must leave the meeting and remain outside the room while the matter is being considered, or any vote is taken.

4 QUESTION TIME

A maximum of 30 minutes is allowed for question time. Any person wishing to participate in public question time by videoconference will need to register their intention to do so by contacting the shire prior to 5pm on Friday 6 February 2026. A maximum of two questions, per person, per meeting is permitted. You must ask a question. Question time is not a forum for public debate or statements.

1. Questions received in writing prior to the meeting. Written questions must be received by 5pm on Friday 6 February 2026. *Council is providing discretion for questions to be lodged until 5pm Sunday evening.*
2. Questions via videoconference by prior arrangement.
3. Questions from the floor.

5 PETITIONS / JOINT LETTERS

Nil reports.

6 PLANNING AUTHORITY / RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY DECISIONS

Nil reports.

Item: 7.1

Award of Contract 2605 - Reconstruction of Montrose Avenue, Pengilley Avenue, Ramsden Avenue and Costin Street, Apollo Bay

OFFICER	Adrien Rousset
GENERAL MANAGER	Doug McNeill
DIVISION	Infrastructure and Environment
ATTACHMENTS	Nil

1. PURPOSE

To award a contract for four road reconstruction projects located in Apollo Bay, including sections of Pengilley Avenue, Ramsden Avenue, Costin Street and Montrose Avenue.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council has funded a number of road reconstruction projects in its budget with an overall value of \$7 million as part its annual asset renewal program, several of which are located in Apollo Bay. Contract 2605 seeks to facilitate four Apollo Bay road reconstruction projects as a single contract.

The proposed works include the construction of road widening, subgrade improvement, pavement renewal, stormwater drainage, kerb and channel replacement, and footpath works at Pengilley Avenue between Gallipoli Parade and Costin Street, Ramsden Avenue between Pengilley Avenue and McLachlan Street, Costin Street between Pengilley Avenue and Montrose Avenue, and Montrose Avenue between McLachlan Street and Costin Street.

A request for tender was advertised on 28 November 2025 and closed on the 14 January 2026. Three tenders were received. The recommended tenderer provided a high-quality tender submission, demonstrating good value for money, understanding of the project requirements, adequate experience on similar projects and availability of suitable plant and resources.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Awards Contract 2605 to Tenderer 2 (as listed in the confidential attachment to this report).***
- 2. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to sign the contract following the award of contract.***
- 3. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to perform all roles of Principal.***
- 4. Nominates the General Manager Community and Economy to the role of Superintendent for the Contract.***
- 5. Notes the unsuccessful tenderers will be advised of the outcome of the tender process and the successful tenderer and the contract price will be listed on the Council website.***

4. KEY INFORMATION

Scope of Works

Council's annual road reconstruction program ensures that a continuous investment in its sealed road network is achieved in an affordable and practicable manner aligned with Councils Asset Plan. The 2025-26 budget for road reconstruction on sealed roads within coastal townships is an estimated \$7 million, including some projects held over from 2024-25. Several of these projects are in Apollo Bay, including a separate contract awarded in December for the reconstruction of Pascoe Street, Apollo Bay between Moore Street and Nelson Street.

The four roads proposed for reconstruction under Contract 2605 are:

- Pengilley Avenue - between Gallipoli Parade and Costin Street
- Ramsden Avenue - between Pengilley Avenue and McLachlan Street
- Costin Street - between Pengilley Avenue and Montrose Avenue; and
- Montrose Avenue - between McLachlan Street and Costin Street

The pavement and associated infrastructure on each of these roads (including kerb and channel) are currently in poor condition and have been identified for renewal.

The scope of works for the contract comprises:

- Full pavement rehabilitation including mechanical and chemical stabilisation to the existing sub-base material.
- Drainage infrastructure upgrade including kerb and channel replacement.
- Existing roadside carparking to be incorporated into works.
- Stormwater system upgrade.
- New crossovers, footpath, kerb and channel.
- Line marking, signage and landscaping

It is noted that the design incorporates stormwater upgrades that seek to reduce flooding in these and adjoining areas, including the construction of kerb and channel where this currently does not exist and construction of underground drainage. This will progressively assist Apollo Bay (along with other drainage upgrade projects being pursued) to withstand adverse impacts from high intensity rainfall events.

The approved designs also incorporate a widening of the road pavements to varied degrees so that the road pavement width meets current standards for two vehicle lanes. This will improve the trafficability and safety of these roads.

Process

A request for tender was advertised on 28 November 2025 and closed on the 14 January 2026. Three tenders were received. A Tender Evaluation process has been completed, and a copy of the Tender Evaluation Panel Report (TEP) has been provided as a confidential attachment.

A Probity Auditor was engaged via CT Management to oversee the tender process given the value of the contract. This report is attached as a Confidential Attachment and found no concerns with the process followed in the evaluation.

A Financial Scorecard assessment was undertaken on the recommended tenderer. This assessment did not identify any concerns with the capacity of the recommended tenderer to undertake the works.

Evaluation

The recommended tenderer provided a high-quality tender submission, demonstrating good value for money, understanding of the project requirements, adequate experience on similar projects and availability of suitable plant and resources. The recommended contractor has carried out similar roadworks in the past and has demonstrated the capability and availability to undertake the works within the specified timeline. The contract would be delivered within the available project budget.

The proposed start date for the project is February/March 2026, and works are expected to be completed by September 2026.

5. CONSIDERATIONS

Overarching Governance Principles (s(9)(2) LGA 2020)

This report aligns with the governance principles by reporting a public tender process that competitively tested the market to produce a suitable tenderer for the project, within the project budget.

Policies and Relevant Law (s(9)(2)(a) LGA 2020)

The tender process has been conducted in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and Council's Procurement Policy and procedures.

Environmental and Sustainability Implications (s(9)(2)(c) LGA 2020

Not Applicable.

Community Engagement (s56 LGA 2020 and Council's Community Engagement Policy)

Local businesses and residents in the area will be informed of the upcoming works and any traffic management requirements associated with the project. There will need to be enhanced public notification given the scale of works proposed (particularly in conjunction with Pascoe Street road reconstruction works occurring at the same time), and proximity in some streets to community facilities such as the P-12 school, kindergarten and other facilities.

Public Transparency (s58 LGA 2020)

This matter is transparent to the community through the decision being made in a meeting open to the public. The relevant contract details will be published on the Council website.

Alignment to Plans and Strategies

Alignment to Council Plan 2025-2029:

Theme 1 - PLACE

1.3 - Make it safe and easy to get around the Shire

Theme 2 - PEOPLE

2.2 - Build greater community connection through social, cultural, and recreational opportunities.

Theme 3 - PROSPERITY

5.1 - Facilitate growth and diversification of the visitor economy to increase visitation, length of stay and employment outcomes

Financial Management (s101 Local Government Act 2020)

The works to be carried out have been funded through a combination of Council budget from the 2024-25 road reconstruction program (carried over to 2025-26) and funding allocated in the 2025-26 budget. The works are part funded by the Roads to Recovery program.

Service Performance (s106 Local Government Act 2020)

These works have been identified in Council's Road Reconstruction Program as necessary to maintain an acceptable level of service performance. Project Management of the works will be funded from within the project budget allocation.

Risk Assessment

Practicable and reasonable risk mitigation measures have been included in the contract regarding safety in design and constructability.

The contractor shall be responsible and accountable for the provision of all the necessary plant, materials, subcontractors and other resources required to carry out the works. They will also be responsible for the site supervisors, traffic management and site safety during construction. Road closures will be subject to the endorsement of the contractor's Traffic Management Plan by Council.

The contractor will be responsible for the identification and protection of existing services and assets. Any impact on existing services will require prior approval from the relevant authorities.

Communication/Implementation

Internal communication will be managed by the Superintendent, or their representative, and external communication shall be undertaken by the contractor in accordance with the specifications and requirements that include pre-commencement notification by letter drops as required, and further communication during the construction and practical completion.

Details of the awarded contract will be published on the Councils website.

Human Rights Charter

No Impact.

Officer General or Material Interest

No officer declared an interest under the *Local Government Act 2020* in the preparation of the report.

Options

Option 1 – Award Contract 2605 as recommended

This option is recommended by officers as the contractor has been assessed through Council's procurement process as providing the best value for money.

Option 2 – Do not award the contract and re-tender or select alternative tenderer

This option is not recommended by officers as the proposal submitted by the preferred contractor is assessed as providing the best value for money, and the works need to be completed in order to improve the conditions of the roads.

Item: 7.2

Colac Otway Shire Grants Program Review and Guidelines 2026-2027

OFFICER	Katrina Kehoe
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Andrew Tenni
DIVISION	Executive
ATTACHMENTS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Guidelines Community Grants 2026 2027 [7.2.1 - 17 pages] 2. Guidelines Events Grants 2026 2027 [7.2.2 - 19 pages] 3. Guidelines Business Grants Program 2026 2027 [7.2.3 - 13 pages] 4. Guidelines Trees For Farms Grants Program 2026 2027 [7.2.4 - 11 pages] 5. Guidelines - Colac Otway Shire Grants Program 2025 2026 [7.2.5 - 27 pages]

1. PURPOSE

To seek Council endorsement of the Colac Otway Shire Grants Program 2026/2027 Guidelines.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An internal evaluation of the Colac Otway Shire Grants Program has been undertaken. This involved a review of:

- Current funding streams and their alignment to the Council Plan 2025-2029.
- Feedback received throughout the year from recipients and internal departments. Proposed changes will assist with clarification on some items.
- Consideration of the Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO) Fraud Control Over Local Government Grants recommendations.
- Desktop benchmarking against other similar sized Council's grants programs.

The evaluation of the grants program demonstrated that it has been successful in distributing funding broadly across the Shire and amongst a variety of eligible community groups, sports clubs, service clubs, not-for-profit organisations, small businesses and event organisers.

The program has evolved continually to meet changing priorities and this year the change of emphasis on the Council Plan provides direction for grants and their guidelines.

The proposed changes to the grant streams and guidelines will:

- Create alignment to the Council Plan 2025-2029 and its themes of Place, People and Prosperity.
- Continue the existing three streams – *Community*, *Events* and *Business* grants, as consolidated funding streams with simplified categories.
- Introduce a new *Trees for Farms* Grants stream.
- Continue to ensure the VAGO recommendations for fraud control in relation to Local Government grants is incorporated into the process.
- Under Events Grants, replace ‘*Community-led Major Tourism*’ event category with ‘*Signature Event*’ category, grant up to \$10,000 maximum, which may be organised by community group/club/not-for-profit organisation or a commercial entity. Signature events must attract a significant number of out of area visitors with community, economic and major branding and promotional opportunities for the host town and Colac Otway Shire.
- Remove the \$2,000 grant cap for new events and align the maximum grant amount with other Community Events at \$5,000.
- Clarify that Business Grants (Building Facade Improvements) will allow one application per property. However, if an owner submits multiple applications for different properties and the program is over-subscribed, priority will be given to one property per owner, along with other owners with a single application.
- Clarify that uniforms are not eligible for grant funding for sport, promotional or community awareness raising activities and events.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Notes the review undertaken of the Council Grants Program and the associated program guidelines.***
- 2. Endorses the Colac Otway Shire Grants Program Guidelines 2026-2027 noting the inclusion of the Trees for Farms grants stream, as per Council’s resolution of 27 April 2025.***
- 3. Notes that the Colac Otway Shire Grants Program 2026-27 will open for applications on 27 February 2026.***

4. KEY INFORMATION

Current Funding Streams

Community Grants	Up to \$10,000	
Events Grants	Up to \$ 5,000 Up to \$10,000	Community events and Commercial events Major ‘community-led’ Tourism events
Business Grants	Up to \$ 3,000	Building Facade Improvements

The current total program budget is \$316,000 with a nominal allocation for each stream.

Stream	Nominal Budget % of Total Budget (\$316,000)
Community Grants	60 %
Events Grants	35 %
Business Grants	5 %

New Trees for Farms Grants

At its meeting on 27 April 2025, Council resolved to:

- *Remove the emissions contributions table from page 6 of the Climate Change Action Plan; and*
- *Develop a small grant program to support farmers and other relevant groups in undertaking tree planting or other environmental initiatives, in partnership with community-based, not-for-profit organisations.*
- *Reallocate funds previously designated for carbon offset purchases to fund this new grant program, starting in the 2025/26 financial year.*

A proposed structure and guidelines for ‘Trees for Farms’ have been developed, and this stream is designed to deliver tangible environmental benefits on private farmland.

The **Trees for Farms** grant stream will focus on tree planting on farms. The “*other environmental initiatives, in partnership with community-based, not-for-profit organisations*” can be awarded through the Community Grants and Events Grants streams.

Council’s 2025/2026 Budget allocation of \$42,000 was not distributed, as the COS Grants Program had already closed for that financial year. When the 2026/2027 Grants Program round opens in late February 2026, the 2025/2026 allocation (\$42,000) will be available, and the 2026/2027 allocation (estimated at \$42,000) may be available, providing a total of \$84,000 for distribution – subject to approval of the Council 2026/2027 Budget.

5. CONSIDERATIONS

Overarching Governance Principles (s(9)(2) LGA 2020)

The overarching Governance principles related to this report include:

- Council decisions are to be made, and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.
- Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.
- Innovation and continuous improvement are to be pursued.
- The transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

Policies and Relevant Law (s(9)(2)(a) LGA 2020)

The following Legislation, Policy, Strategies and Plans have been considered in the development of these guidelines:

- Council Plan 2025-2029
- Grants, Contributions and Sponsorship Policy 2020
- Access, Equity and Inclusion Plan 2015-2025
- Colac Otway Economic Development Strategy 2019-2024

- Creative Colac Otway – Arts and Culture Strategy 2018-2022
- Colac Otway Shire Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2023-2033
- Colac Otway Shire Climate Change Action Plan

Environmental and Sustainability Implications (s(9)(2)(c) LGA 2020

The Council Grants Program enables and facilitates environmental and sustainability projects, which has been described previously in this report. The amended Guidelines will continue to provide opportunities for environmental related projects and initiatives through the Community and Events Grants streams.

Community Engagement (s56 LGA 2020 and Council’s Community Engagement Policy)

The Guidelines, subject to approval from Council, will be promoted when the 2026/2027 grant round opens in late February 2026. Applicants are strongly encouraged to read the Guidelines and check for eligibility prior to applying. Council officers are available to assist with any queries.

Public Transparency (s58 LGA 2020)

The grants program follows a clear path: the application process, assessment, outcome notifications, funding, delivery and acquittal is included in the Guidelines.

All applicants are notified of the outcome of their application and feedback is provided to those who are unsuccessful.

Alignment to Plans and Strategies

Alignment to Council Plan 2025-2029:

Theme 1 - PLACE

- 1.1 Enliven and beautify our townships and natural environments
- 1.2 Enhance our community and social spaces and collaborate with communities to deliver healthy and climate resilient environments

Theme 2 - PEOPLE

- 2.2 Build greater community connection through social, cultural, and recreational opportunities
- 2.4 Promote and enable healthy behaviours
- 3.4 Communicate and engage positively and clearly with the community

Theme 3 - PROSPERITY

- 4.2 Protect and leverage our traditional agricultural and manufacturing industries to create new economic opportunities, preparing for and responding to changes to the natural environment
- 4.3 Build economic opportunities from local arts, culture, sports, science and technology
- 5.1 Facilitate growth and diversification of the visitor economy to increase visitation, length of stay and employment outcomes
- 5.2 Enhance promotion of Colac Otway Shire as a destination
- 5.3 Increase tourism offerings and investment in Colac Otway Shire through events, products and attractions

Financial Management (s101 *Local Government Act 2020*)

The total Colac Otway Shire Grants Program budget will remain at \$316,000, subject to approval of the Council's 2026/2027 Budget. The three funding streams will have nominal budgets as a guide; however, grants will be recommended as long as the total recommended allocations do not exceed the total funding available. Some streams may be over or under their nominal budget.

Initially the *Trees for Farms* budget will include the 2025/2026 budget (\$42,000) and may include the 2026/2027 budget (estimated at \$42,000), subject to approval of the Council's 2026/2027 Budget.

Service Performance (s106 *Local Government Act 2020*)

The evaluation of the Grants Program shows that broad distribution of the funding allocations is being provided to eligible community groups, sports clubs, service clubs, not-for-profit organisations, small businesses and event organisers across the Shire. A review of the Grants Program will be scheduled every two years to review the benefits to the community. Feedback is documented and provided to unsuccessful applicants which may assist them to apply for future rounds.

Risk Assessment

The VAGO recommendations in the Fraud Control Over Local Government Grants has been considered and informs the guidelines and the grants process, to ensure funds are spent fairly and transparently, and fraud risks are managed. It is recognised that, from time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to the guidelines document. Where an update does not materially alter the document, a change will be made administratively. However, any change or update which materially alters the guidelines document would be by resolution of Council.

Communication/Implementation

The Grants Program and Guidelines, subject to approval from Council, will be promoted when the next round opens on 27 February 2026. The grants program will be promoted and advertised through Council's website and social media channels, local media publications, radio and database direct mailout.

Human Rights Charter

No impact.

Officer General or Material Interest

No officer declared an interest under the Local Government Act 2020 in the preparation of this report.

Options

Option 1 – Endorse the Colac Otway Shire Grant Guidelines 2026/2027 for four streams.

This option is recommended by officers as the attached Guidelines have been developed through careful analysis of previous Council Grants programs and the VAGO Fraud Control Over Local Government Grants recommendations. Endorsing the Council Grant Program Guidelines will enable the grants program to open in late February 2026.

Option 2 – Undertake further review of the Colac Otway Shire Grants Guidelines 2026/2027.
This option is not recommended by officers as careful consideration has been given to the recommended grant streams and guidelines. The inclusion of the new *Trees for Farms* Grants follows Council's resolution of 27 April 2025. Officers do not recommend delaying the opening of the grants program, as the timeframe for the round is already limited. Sufficient time is required to advertise the program, support applicants, receive submissions, undertake assessment and evaluation, and prepare recommendations for Council consideration in June 2026.

COLAC OTWAY SHIRE
GRANTS PROGRAM

Community Grants 2026/27

Guidelines

Community Grants



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1. Acknowledgement

Colac Otway Shire Council respectfully acknowledges the Gulidjan and Gadubanud peoples of the maar Nation as traditional custodians of the Colac Otway region, the land and waterways upon which the activities of the Colac Otway Shire Council are conducted. We pay our respects to their ancestors, past and present. We recognise and respect their unique cultural heritage, beliefs and uphold their continuing relationship to this land.

2. Purpose

The Colac Otway Shire Grants Program provides one-off financial assistance grants to support community groups and not-for-profit organisations to deliver projects that benefit the broader community and help in achieving outcomes consistent with the 2025-2029 Council Plan.

3. Community Grants

Funding is available to support community groups and not-for-profit organisations in delivering a broad range of community development initiatives across the Colac Otway Shire. Eligible activities may include projects, programs, services, equipment purchases, minor facility upgrades and new initiatives that contribute to the community wellbeing and development.

Funding Amount: \$500 to \$10,000 maximum

Contribution required: A dollar-for-dollar cash or in-kind matching contribution

4. What you need to know

- **One application per organisation;** ensure you apply to the correct stream.
- Funding is **competitive;** applying does not guarantee approval. Demand often exceeds available funds.
- If oversubscribed, **previous funding history** will be considered.
- **Dollar-for-dollar matching contribution** (cash and/or in-kind) is required.
- Projects promoting **gender equity** are prioritised.
- Projects using **local trades/suppliers** within Colac Otway Shire are prioritised

- Applications must be submitted via **SmartyGrants**; **late applications** are ineligible.
- **Retrospective funding requests** are ineligible. Projects cannot start or purchase equipment until the **funding agreement is signed**.
- **Canvassing or lobbying** Councillors, staff, or panel members is prohibited.
- Council reserves the right to decline applications that **do not meet eligibility criteria**.
- Funds are released only after conditions are met (e.g., landowner consent, permits).
- Projects that have already received other Council funding are not eligible for consideration.
- Applicants must notify Council if **fully funded elsewhere**; Council may withdraw the grant.

5. Eligible Organisations

To be eligible to apply, you must be one of the following:

A. Community Group

Voluntary or Community groups are defined as organisations working for public benefit with these characteristics:

- **Organised:** Has a structure with rules about how the group is organised and run. This is a governing document or constitution.
- **Self-governing:** Independent and appoints its own management committee.
- **Not-for-profit:** No individual profits. For example, committee members should not be paid for their work; Any surplus is reinvested in the group.
- **Voluntary:** Governed by voluntary management committee and rely on support of volunteers to carry out their activities.
- **Public benefit:** Group will carry out activities which benefit a specific community group.

B. Community Asset Committees

Established by Council to manage community assets in Colac Otway Shire (e.g. Recreation Reserve Committees, Public Hall Committees).

C. Not-for-profit, non-government organisations

An organisation that does not operate for the profit, personal gain or other benefit of particular people (e.g. its members, the people who run the organisation, or their friends or relatives).

Applicant must also:

- Be located **within** Colac Otway Shire.
- Be **Incorporated** (or have an auspice arrangement if not incorporated – refer to Clause 13).
- Have an **Australian Business Number (ABN)**.

6. Who Cannot Apply

- Individuals
- Business
- Event organisers
- Schools or Parents and Friends or similar groups affiliated with schools
- Churches or other religious organisations
- Elected members (Councillors)
- Council employees (staff)

Note: Support and assistance for grant applications is available through the Grants officer.

- Applicant organisations (or Auspice) that are associated with or promote activities deemed inappropriate (including but not limited to):
 - any illegal activity
 - any activity not in accordance with relevant legislation; permitting; regulations etc
 - tobacco
 - offensive or sexually explicit material
 - discrimination on the grounds of race, gender or religion
 - activities violating human rights
 - political parties
 - gambling
- Organisations with an overdue Acquittal report from a previous round. Contact the Grants officer to confirm your status.

7. What may be funded

- **Environmental projects** – natural or built.
- **Arts and Culture** initiatives.
- **Sport and Recreation** programs and projects.
- **Health and Wellbeing** projects, including those promoting Access, Equity and Inclusion.
- **Strategic Planning** for:
 - Council's Community Asset Committees
 - Other not-for-profit organisations planning for land/assets not owned or managed by Council, Government or Authority may be considered.
- **Training and Education**, including:
 - Workshops, specialist skills programs,
 - Coaching for officials, administrators or community members.
- **Community Infrastructure** - Placemaking, Streetscape, and Open Space
- **Equipment** that:
 - Improves the facility
 - Remains permanently installed
 - Provides broad benefit to the organisation.
- **Minor capital upgrades** to community and recreation facilities (up to **\$20,000 total project cost**).
- Projects that **address gender equity**.
- **Minor repairs and improvement work** for community benefit.

8. What will not be funded

Ineligible Activities and Costs:

Council Infrastructure

- Standard Council infrastructure (e.g. footpaths, bins, drainage and road construction).

Compliance and obligations

- Compliance related upgrades to Council-owned buildings
- Works required under an existing lease or management agreement

Capital Expenditure

- Projects over \$20,000 for Council buildings and assets

Core Business Expenses

- Ongoing day-to-day operational costs (administration, rent, salaries ,utility costs)
- Public Liability or other insurance
- Activities considered core business, such as regular operations, projects, programs, or day-to-day activities of the organisation.

Project Costs Not Funded

- Uniforms for sport, promotional or community awareness events and activities.
- Consumable items (e.g. sports balls)
- Alcohol
- Contingency allowance
- Project Management fees
- Activities that are the responsibility of other Agencies
- Fundraising activities, prizes, gifts, awards or sponsorship (e.g. trophies, medals, money, vouchers).
- Food and drink (unless essential to the project and clearly justified).
- Purchase of equipment for project works (e.g., ladders, scaffolding, safety barriers) unless clearly justified. Hiring is permitted if directly related to the project delivery.
- Strategic plans for land or assets under the control of another Government agency or Authority.

9. Align with the Council Plan 2025-2029

Applications must align to at least one of the themes in the Council Plan 2025-2029.

PLACE	Our Shire is a great place to live, work and belong.
PEOPLE	Our community is vibrant, healthy and supported.
PROSPERITY	Our economy is growing and diverse, supporting innovation, new businesses and investments. Our tourism industry is thriving, with expanded and interlinked experiences.

10. Application Process

Funding round	Applications open	Applications close
2026-2027 financial year	27 February 2026 at 9.00am	10 April 2026 at 5.00pm

Prepare an application

The link **TO APPLY** is available on Council's website when the funding round is open.

[Colac Otway Shire Grants Program 2026/2027](#)

Applicants must undertake the following steps to apply:

- Carefully read the program guidelines in full to confirm eligibility and what is required.
- Prepare your application early.
- Speak to a relevant Council officer to research permits and approvals which may be required.
- Compile all necessary supporting documents as detailed in the program guidelines.
- Submit an application online via Colac Otway Shire Council's website - [Colac Otway Shire Grants Program - Colac Otway Shire](#)
- Check spam/junk mail if confirmation email cannot be seen in your inbox.

Supporting documentation

The following documents must be included in your application:

- **Quote/s** are required to cover the value of the grant request and the matching dollar-for-dollar cash contribution. The quote must be itemised, issued within the past three (3) months, and show GST if applicable.
- **Public liability insurance** is required for all projects (except small portable, non-fixed equipment purchases). A Certificate of Currency (CoC) must be submitted with your application.
- **Letter(s) of support** from organisation(s) involved or partnering in the project, if applicable, to demonstrate community support.
- **'Before' photos** are required to demonstrate need; 'After' photos must accompany the Acquittal Report.
- **Permits and Approvals** may be required for your project. These processes are separate to the grant application process and require additional time and budget in your project plan. You do not need to secure permits or approvals before applying, however if your funding application is successful, obtaining them will be a condition of the grant. Council will not make any grant payments until the relevant permits and approvals are obtained. You must demonstrate in the application that you are aware of the necessary permits and approvals required for the project.

If you are unsure what permits and other approvals your project may require, please contact the grants officer on 5232 9400 or inq@colacotway.vic.gov.au to discuss your project. As an example, permits and approvals required may include, but are not limited to:

- Planning permit required for proposed works or use.
- Building permit may be required if project includes any structural works.
- **Landowner consent or In-principle support** from Council required for any works on Council owned or managed land, assets or infrastructure. In-principle support should be included in your application.
- **Public Art Proposals** must be discussed prior to submitting a funding application. In-principle support from Council is required for Public Art proposals.
Review [Public Art Policy](#) and [Assessment Guidelines Procedure](#)
- **Auspice arrangements** If your community group or not-for-profit organisation is not incorporated, you can still apply by using an Auspice. *More information on Auspicing is available later in the guidelines.*

SmartyGrants is an online platform for managing the online application process. Online applications must be submitted exclusively via SmartyGrants. Should this be challenging for your organisation, please contact the Grants officer to discuss support and assistance on a case-by-case basis.

Help Guide for Applicants:

<https://applicanthelp.smartygrants.com.au/help-guide-for-applicants/>

SmartyFile You have the option to create a [SmartyFile](#) profile for your organisation. SmartyFile allows organisations to collaborate with team members, pre-fill information into forms and manage, view, search and sort submissions across multiple funders in one spot. To learn more, visit the [SmartyFile help page](#).

Setting up a SmartyFile profile ensures your organisation retains access to your funding records even if team members change or move on.

Outcome notification

Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified of their application outcome in writing in June/July 2026. The successful applicant's name, project name and the funding amount will be made publicly available, including publication on Council's website and media releases.

11. Timelines

Applications open: 27 February 2026

Applications close: 10 April 2026

Notification of outcome: Late June 2026

Funding agreements signed: July 2026

Projects commence: July 2026 onwards

Grants Presentation Ceremony: July 2026

Project completed: By June 2027 or earlier (as per timeframes indicated in the application). Please note dates are subject to change. Applicants will be notified if any changes arise.

12. Assessment Process

This is a competitive grant process and as such, it is possible that not all eligible applicants will receive funding. Previous grant funding history may be taken into consideration if the program is over-subscribed.

Applications will be assessed using the following process:

1. Applications are received and assessed for applicant and project eligibility.
2. Applications will be reviewed by a panel of Council officers and assessed against the program assessment criteria.
3. Funding recommendations will be presented to Council for a final decision and approval.

All decisions regarding grant funding recommendations under this program remain at Council's discretion.

13. Assessment Criteria

In the application, your response to the Assessment Criteria should address the key points.

Assessment Criteria 1 – Community/Organisational Benefits and Align to Council Plan (50%)

Your response should outline:

- How the project aligns with Council Plan objectives
- Ways the project supports the local community
- The target audience who will benefit
- Short-term and long-term benefits
- The estimated number of people who will benefit.

Assessment Criteria 2 – Why is the project needed? (20%)

In your response, explain:

- What need or demand inspired this project?
- Evidence that your approach will succeed.
- Community Support: Include support letters and outline any discussions with local groups (if applicable).
- Innovation: Will the project offer a creative or unique solution to the issue?
- Gender equity: How will your project address gender equity? (*Priority is given to projects that do so*).

Tip: Be specific and provide examples or supporting documents where possible.

Assessment Criteria 3 – Project delivery (15%)

Show us you can successfully deliver this project. In your response, include:

- Project management: Who will lead and manage the project?
- Planning: What research and planning have been undertaken so far?
- Delivery: Outline the key stages and how you will implement them.
- Skills: Details if the project involves developing knowledge or skills.
- Sustainability: How will the project be funded into the future?
- Experience: Demonstrate your organisation's ability to deliver and acquit projects on time.

Assessment Criteria 4 – Who is involved? (15%)

In your response, describe:

- Local suppliers: Are your suppliers based in the Colac Otway Shire? What percentage are local? (*Priority is given to projects using local trades and suppliers*).
- Contributions: Will there be voluntary or in-kind support? Who is involved?
- Team involvement: How many people from your organisation will participate?
- Stakeholder engagement: Does the project actively involve a range of stakeholders?

Tip: Highlight local connections and community involvement to strengthen your application.

14. Budget

Quotes Required

Applications must include quotes that cover the grant amount requested, and the matching contribution.

Budget accuracy

- The budget must clearly show:
 - **all income** sources
 - and **all expenditure items** related to the project.
 - Budget must be balanced: total income = total expenditure.
 - Include permit fees if permits are required.
-

Matching Contribution Required

- A **dollar-for-dollar matching contribution** is required. This means:
 - For every \$1 of grant funding, you must contribute \$1 from your own resources (cash or in-kind).
 - Example:
 - If your grant request is \$3,000, you must show \$3,000 in matching contributions.
 - Contributions can be **cash** or **in-kind** (e.g. volunteer time, donated goods/services).
 - The combined total (grant and matching contribution) should cover the full project costs.
 - Matching contributions must be clearly documented in:
 - Your budget.
 - Your acquittal form.
 - Restriction: Contributions from Colac Otway Shire cannot be used as matching funds.
-

Cash contributions

For grant applications up to \$5,000:

- Provide a current bank statement or proof of available funds.

For grants over \$5,000:

- Provide a current bank statement or proof of available funds, and a Treasurer's report.
-

In-kind contributions

- In-kind contributions are non-cash support provided by your organisation to deliver the project (e.g. volunteer labour, donated goods/services).
 - Must directly contribute to the project delivery.
-

Eligible In-kind contributions

- Volunteer labour
 - Project management
 - Activities directly related to the delivery of the project (E.g painting, site preparation, landscaping etc)
 - Donated goods and services
-

Ineligible In-Kind contributions

- Activities completed before the project commences, such as :
 - Research, planning and application writing
 - Fundraising activities
 - Core operational maintenance (e.g. recreation reserve or public hall grounds)
 - Operational costs and staff salaries, including:
 - Volunteer work that is part of regular duties
 - Staff time/services already funded within normal job responsibilities.
 - Operational expenses and equipment use tied to core operational costs (e.g. insurance, office supplies, printers).
-

Valuing In-kind contributions

- Must be listed under **both income and expenditure** in the budget.
 - Itemise in the **In-kind contribution table** (volunteer labour, donated goods/services).
 - Use these rates:
 - Professional/trade volunteer services: **\$45/hour.**
 - General volunteer labour: **\$25/hour.**
-

In-kind contributions received

- At project completion, provide:
 - a record of actual In-kind contributions in the **Acquittal Report**, calculated using the above rates.
 - Keep written evidence of all volunteer hour logs, donation letters and receipts.
-

GST Requirements

Organisations **NOT Registered for GST**

- GST can be included in the project budget.
- Example: If a quote for painting is \$6,600 (including \$600 GST), list the item at the GST-inclusive price of \$6,600.

Organisations **Registered for GST**

- GST must be excluded from the project budget.
 - Example: If a quote is \$6,600 (including \$600 GST), list the item at \$6,000 (excluding GST).
 - Grant payments will have GST added.
 - A tax invoice (including GST) will be required for the grant payment.
-

15. Auspice arrangements

If you are a community group or not-for-profit organisation (non-government) that is not incorporated, you can still apply for Council grants by using an auspice. An auspice organisation must meet the eligibility criteria, be incorporated and agree to support your grant application. The auspice receives the grant funds on your behalf, and you deliver the project.

To apply with support from an auspice organisation, you must:

- discuss the project and request they auspice your grant application
- include a signed copy of an auspice agreement in the grant application
- confirm the auspice has reviewed the application form.

If your grant application is successful, your auspice organisation will be responsible for:

- signing the grant funding agreement on your behalf
- receiving the grant funds from Council and transferring the funds to your group
- ensuring all grant activities are completed
- submitting the acquittal report on your behalf by the required due date.

Note: setting up a **SmartyFile** profile enables you to share the grant application with the auspice. You will manage the level of access they have. Further information, go to: [SmartyFile](#)
Further information is available on Auspice arrangements [Auspicing | Not-for-profit Law](#)

16. Funding Details

- The grant recipient (or Auspice) must enter into a Funding Agreement outlining the terms and conditions, payment details and reporting requirements.
- Additional conditions may apply, such as obtain a Planning Permit, a Building Permit or formal Landowner Consent.
- Funding may be less than requested if parts of the application are ineligible or there are limited funds remaining in the funding pool.
- Projects must occur within the same financial year as the grant is received. Any unspent funds must be returned to Colac Otway Shire Council.
- Funds must be used as approved; any changes require a Variation Request form to be submitted for approval prior to implementing changes.
- Recipients without an Australian Business Number (ABN) must provide an Australian Tax Office (ATO Statement by a supplier) form to avoid withholding tax from the grant payment.
- **For grants above \$5,000, payments will be made in two instalments:**
 - **Instalment 1:** 90% paid upfront on signing the Agreement or when specific funding conditions have been fulfilled. If specific funding conditions apply to your project, these must be met prior to the release of the grant funds.
 - **Instalment 2:** 10% paid upon satisfactory completion of the acquittal report.

17. Acknowledging Council's support and promoting success

Grant recipients are required to acknowledge the support from the *Colac Otway Shire Grants Program*.

Promotional guidelines form part of funding agreements and include the requirement that all activities acknowledge Colac Otway Shire Council's support through:

- Logo presentation on any activity-related publications
- Media releases
- Promotional material
- Social media
- Written or verbal acknowledgement at presentations or 'openings' and/or

To ensure appropriate recognition of Colac Otway Shire's support, recipients must follow the Shire's Logo and Style Guide.

Where to Find Branding Resources

Visit the Colac Otway Shire website at www.colacotway.vic.gov.au and search for "Logo and Style Guide".

What the Guide Includes

The [Logo and Style Guide - Colac Otway Shire](#) webpage provides:

- Approved **logo usage options**
- Guidance on **social media acknowledgements**
- Recommended **acknowledgement statements**
- Instructions for **media releases and publications**

These resources help ensure consistent and appropriate recognition of the Shire's support across all promotional and public-facing materials.

Grant recipients are required to provide an opportunity for a Councillor to attend the project for promotional purposes if requested.

18. Acquittal

At the completion of the project, an Acquittal Report must be submitted through SmartyGrants. The report must include (where relevant):

- A summary of the project including comments on the things that went well and what you have learnt from delivering the project.
- Project outcomes, achievements and how they align with the Council Plan objectives.
- A project budget including receipts or evidence of how the grant funds were expended.
- A record of In-kind labour and/or donated goods and service (if applicable).
- Details of local suppliers and contractors used.
- Photographs of new equipment or completed works.
- Evidence of acknowledgement of Council's support e.g. newsletters, media articles, social media, copies of promotional materials, photographs or video if available etc.

Outstanding Acquittal

Applicants with an outstanding acquittal from a previous grant round are ineligible to apply for

future rounds. Contact the Grants Officer if your current project won't be completed before the application deadline.

19. Privacy

The Colac Otway Shire Council is committed to protecting your privacy. We collect and handle any personal information about you or a third party in your application, for the purpose of administering your grant application and informing the public of successful applications.

To administer your grant application effectively and efficiently, we may need to disclose your personal information with others for the purpose of assessment, consultation, and reporting. This can include Council staff or Councillors.

Any personal information about you or a third party in your correspondence will be collected, held, managed, used, disclosed, or transferred in accordance with the provisions of the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)* and other applicable laws.

The Colac Otway Shire Council's Privacy Policy can be found at www.colacotway.vic.gov.au Enter a search for Privacy Statement.

Council uses an online grant application program called SmartyGrants. [Click Here](#) to view SmartyGrants Privacy Policy <https://www.ourcommunity.com.au/privacy>

20. Contact us

Colac Otway Shire, 2-6 Rae Street Colac

T: (03) 5232 9400

E: inq@colacotway.vic.gov.au

Grants and Development Officer

For queries relating to the grants program or assistance with the online application, contact the Grants Officer between 8.30am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday.

[Colac Otway Shire Grants Program - Colac Otway Shire](#)

Recreation and Open Space Team

Contact to discuss Landowner consent requests and request in-principle support for Recreation and Open Spaces.

Community Asset Committee (CAC)

Resources for Committees [Community Asset Committees - Colac Otway Shire](#)

Manager, Economy and Creative Industries

Contact to discuss public art proposals and request in-principle support.

21. Glossary of terms

Term	Definition
Acquittal	A report provided by the grant recipient demonstrating that funds were used responsibly and in accordance with the conditions of the grant.
Applicant	The organisation applying for grant funding.
Application	A formal document submitted to a funding body to request financial assistance for a specific project or event.
Assessment Criteria	The specified requirements against which applications will be evaluated. These criteria are also used to assess the merits of proposals and to determine application rankings. These criteria may include eligibility requirements, selection criteria, and risk assessments.
Australian Business Number (ABN)	Identifies your business to the government, other businesses, and the public.
Auspice / Auspicing	A formal arrangement where an incorporated, not-for-profit organisation manages a grant on behalf of an unincorporated group, assuming legal and financial responsibility.
Community Asset Committee	A committee established by Council to manage a community asset in the Colac Otway Shire (e.g., Recreation Reserve Committee, Public Hall Committee).
Community Group	A not-for-profit, volunteer-based organisation formed by local community members who share a common interest, goal or concern. These groups work to improve community wellbeing, support social inclusion, and often deliver services, events or advocacy on behalf of their members. Characteristics include being organised, self-governing, not-for-profit, voluntary, and providing public/community benefit.
Contribution	A 'matching dollar-for-dollar contribution' means an organisation contributes an amount equal to the Council's grant.

Term	Definition
Council	Refers to Colac Otway Shire Council.
Eligibility Criteria	Mandatory requirements that must be met to qualify for a grant. Assessment criteria may apply in addition to eligibility criteria.
Events	Planned occasions or gatherings for a specific purpose, ranging from small community events to large-scale festivals. Often service social, cultural, educational, recreational or fundraising goals.
Funding Agreement	A legal document outlining the terms, conditions, and obligations of funding for both Council and the recipient.
Grant	A sum of money awarded to an organisation to deliver a specific activity, with the expectation that funds will be used only for the agreed purpose.
Grant Recipient	The organisation awarded the grant to support a specific project, activity, or event.
Guidelines	Outline the grant program, type of activities the program is aiming to fund, application process, organisation eligibility and assessment criteria. It is important to read the guidelines prior to preparing an application.
Incorporation	A voluntary process where a not-for-profit or community group becomes a legal entity, enabling it to enter contracts, such as a funding agreement and open a bank account.
In-kind Support	Non-cash contributions such as volunteer labour or donated goods/services that directly support the delivery of the project or event.
In-principle Support	A written indication (such as an email or letter) from the landowner or relevant authority confirming they support the project in concept , based on the information provided at the time of enquiry. In-Principle Support shows that the landowner agrees the project can proceed <i>in general</i> , but it is not a formal approval . Additional steps—such as permits, detailed plans, or Landowner Consent—may still be required before the project can commence.
Landowner Consent	Formal written permission provided by the owner of the land, building, infrastructure or asset where the project will take place. Landowner Consent confirms that the landowner is aware of the proposed project and agrees to it proceeding at the specified location. This consent is required when the applicant organisation does not own the land or facility.
Not-for-profit Organisation	An organisation that operates for purposes other than making a profit for its members, owners, or shareholders. It must use any surplus to further its objectives and be classified as not-for-profit under the Income Tax Assessment Act 1936.
Permits	Official approvals issued by Council or other authorities that allow certain works, activities, or events to take place. Permits ensure that projects meet relevant laws, safety standards, and planning or building requirements. Applicants are responsible

Term	Definition
	for identifying and obtaining any permits needed for their project, as grant approval does not replace or override these legal obligations.
Project	A set of organised activities that are planned to achieve a particular aim or outcome. It will have a defined start and end date.
Public Liability Insurance	Protects your organisation or community group financially if someone attending your activity or event is injured.
SmartyGrants	The online grant management platform used by Council for the submission, tracking, and administration of grant applications.

DRAFT

COLAC OTWAY SHIRE
GRANTS PROGRAM

Events Grants 2026/27

Guidelines

Events Grants



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1. Acknowledgement

Colac Otway Shire Council respectfully acknowledges the Gulidjan and Gadubanud peoples of the maar Nation as traditional custodians of the Colac Otway region, the land and waterways upon which the activities of the Colac Otway Shire Council are conducted. We pay our respects to their ancestors, past and present. We recognise and respect their unique cultural heritage, beliefs and uphold their continuing relationship to this land.

2. Purpose

The Colac Otway Shire Grants Program provides one-off financial support to deliver events that benefit the Colac Otway community and align with the 2025-2029 Council Plan. Events should strengthen the region's identity and appeal (**Place**), foster community connection and collaboration (**People**), and support local growth by building skills, creating social and economic opportunities, and delivering positive outcomes (**Prosperity**).

3. Event Grants Categories

Community Events, Commercial Events, and Signature Events

ALL applications require a dollar-for-dollar matching cash and/or in-kind contribution.

Category Funding amount	Key Features
Community Events \$500 – \$5,000 maximum	Events have a community focus. Deliver clear benefits to Colac Otway Shire residents and businesses. New or established community-led events. Organised by community groups, clubs, or not-for-profit/non-government. (note: <i>commercial entities should apply under Commercial Events</i>). Schools can access COPACC Hire Assistance for performing arts and cultural events.
Commercial Events \$500 – \$5,000 maximum	Organised by a legal business entity . Event demonstrates community and economic benefit within the Colac Otway Shire. Applicants must contact the Events Team before applying.
Signature Events Up to \$10,000 maximum	Large-scale event providing substantial community and economic benefit May be organised by an incorporated community group/not-for-profit OR a commercial event organiser. Attracts significant number of out-of-area visitors. Offers major branding and promotional opportunities for the host town and Colac Otway Shire. Applicants must contact the Events Team before applying.

Note: Refer to Section 7 – What may be funded for eligible activities and costs; and Section 12 – Assessment Criteria for priorities and scoring.

4. What you need to know

- **One application per organisation**; ensure you apply to the correct funding stream.
- Funding is **competitive**; applying does not guarantee approval. Demand often exceeds available funds.
- If the program is over-subscribed, **previous funding history** will be considered.
- **Dollar-for-dollar matching contribution** (cash and/or in-kind) is required.
- Events promoting **gender equity** are prioritised.
- Events using **local trades/suppliers** within Colac Otway Shire are prioritised.
- Applications must be submitted via **SmartyGrants**; **late applications** are ineligible.
- **Retrospective funding requests** are ineligible. Events cannot start or purchase equipment until the **funding agreement is signed**.
- **Canvassing or lobbying** of Councillors, staff or panel members is prohibited.
- Council reserves the right to decline applications that **do not meet eligibility criteria**.
- Funds are released only after conditions are fulfilled (e.g. landowner consent, permits).
- Events that have already **received other Council funding** are not eligible for consideration.
- Applicants must notify Council if **fully funded elsewhere**; Council may withdraw the grant.

5. Who Can Apply – Eligible Applicants

To be eligible to apply, you must be one of the following:

Community Events

A. **Community Group**

Community groups are defined as organisations working for public benefit with these characteristics:

- **Organised:** Has a structure with rules about how the group is organised and run. This is a governing document or constitution.
- **Self-governing:** Independent and free to appoint its own management committee.
- **Not-for-profit:** No individual within the group will profit. For example, committee members should not be paid for their work; Any surplus is reinvested in the group.
- **Voluntary:** Governed by voluntary management committee and rely on support of volunteers to carry out their activities.
- **Public/Community benefit:** Group will carry out activities which benefit a particular group of people within the community.

Note: includes Committees of Management of other, non-Council land or assets.

B. **Community Asset Committees**

Established **by Council** to manage community assets in Colac Otway Shire (e.g., Recreation Reserve Committees, Public Hall Committees).

C. **Not-for-profit, non-government organisations**

An organisation that does not operate for the profit, personal gain or other benefit of particular people (e.g. its members, the people who run the organisation, or their friends or relatives).

D. **School within Colac Otway Shire** applying for COPACC Hire Assistance.

Applicants must also:

- Deliver an event within Colac Otway Shire that benefits the local community.
 - Be Incorporated (or have an auspice arrangement if not incorporated). *Further details on auspice arrangements are provided in these guidelines.*
 - Hold an Australian Business Number (ABN).
-

Commercial Events

A Commercial Event organiser has a legal business entity.

Applicants must also:

- Deliver an event within the Colac Otway Shire that benefits the wider community and supports local businesses.
 - Hold an Australian Business Number (ABN).
 - Contact Council's Events Team** prior to submitting an application.
-

Signature Events

A Signature Event organiser may be:

- a commercial event organiser with a legal business entity, **OR**
- an Incorporated Community Group/Club/Community Asset Committee/Not for profit, non-government organisation (or their Auspice if not incorporated).

Applicants must also:

- Deliver an event within Colac Otway Shire that provides substantial community and economic benefit, attracts significant numbers of visitors from outside the region, and offers major branding and promotional opportunities for the host town and Colac Otway Shire.
 - Hold an Australian Business Number (ABN).
 - Contact Council's Events Team** prior to submitting an application.
-

6. Who cannot apply

- Churches or other religious organisations.
 - Elected members (Councillors).
 - Council employees (staff).
- Note: Support and assistance for grant applications is available through the Grants Officer.
- Applicant organisations (or Auspice) that are associated with or promote activities deemed inappropriate (including but not limited to):
 - any illegal activity
 - any activity not in accordance with relevant legislation; permitting; regulations etc
 - tobacco
 - offensive or sexually explicit material
 - discrimination on the grounds of race, gender or religion

- activities violating human rights
- political parties
- gambling
- Organisations with an overdue Acquittal report from a previous round. Contact the Grants Officer to confirm your status.

7. What may be funded

Grant funds may be used for eligible activities and event-related costs that support delivery of events within Colac Otway Shire. These include:

- Events that are accessible, inclusive and embrace diversity to connect our community.
- Event activities and materials that improve environmental sustainability, such as:
 - Initiatives to reduce or eliminate single-use plastics (bags, straws, cups, cutlery, balloons, bottled water).
 - Design and implementation of waste management plan (e.g. waste reduction, recycling, rubbish removal).
 - Measures to mitigate environmental impacts at the event site (e.g., protection of natural assets, responsible energy and water use).
- Eligible event costs:
 - Hire of entertainers and performers
 - Traffic management plans and personnel
 - Advertising and Promotional materials
 - Event infrastructure and equipment hire (e.g. sound, lighting, staging, portable toilets, fencing etc.)
 - Hire of Council's Events Trailer
 - Venue Hire (including COPACC)
 - Security expenses

8. What will not be funded

General Restrictions

- Ongoing activities or expenses considered part of an organisation's core business or normal day-to-day operations. (e.g. administration, staffing costs, insurance, permits, routine operational expenses).
- Public Liability or other Insurance.
- Events conducted completely outside of the Colac Otway Shire boundary.
- Event management costs.
- Uniforms for promotional or community awareness raising purposes, or sporting uniforms
- Events held outside of the funding (financial year) period.
- Weddings, private/family events, or events not open to the public.
- Prizes, gifts, awards or sponsorship costs (e.g. trophies, medals, money, vouchers).
- Contingency costs.
- Purchase of alcohol.
- Activities and events held in a licensed gaming venue

Fundraising Events

Events primarily for fundraising, where:

- The majority of profit generated is distributed to a third-party organisation, agency or charity.
- The event provides limited direct benefit to Colac Otway Shire residents/visitors.

Note: Applications may be considered if fundraising is a secondary purpose and the event:

- will attract substantial local/visitor attendance.
- Provides direct benefit to Colac Otway Shire residents and aligns with the Council Plan.

Other Restrictions

- A second or subsequent element of an Event or Festival will not be funded if the main Event or Festival is also receiving funding.
- Events accepting sponsorship from companies deemed unsuitable or not aligned with the Council Plan 2025-2029.
- Food and drink are generally ineligible; however, they may be considered if integral to event delivery.

9. Align with the Council Plan 2025-2029

Applications must align to at least one of the themes in the Council Plan 2025-2029.

THEME 1 – PLACE	Our Shire is a great place to live, work and belong.
THEME 2 – PEOPLE	Our community is vibrant, healthy and supported.
THEME 3 – PROSPERITY	Our economy is growing and diverse, supporting innovation, new businesses and investments. Our tourism industry is thriving, with expanded and interlinked experiences.

10. Application Process

Funding round	Applications open	Applications close
2026-2027 financial year	27 February 2026 at 9.00am	10 April 2026 at 5.00pm

Prepare an application

The link **TO APPLY** is available on Council's website when the funding round is open.

[Colac Otway Shire Grants Program 2026/2027](#)

Applicants must undertake the following steps to apply:

- Carefully read the program Guidelines in full to confirm eligibility and requirements.
- Prepare your application early.
- Speak to a relevant Council officer (Grants Officer or Events Officer) to be guided towards the correct category, consider eligibility and research permits and approvals which may be required.

- Compile all supporting documents as required in the program guidelines
- Submit an application online via Colac Otway Shire Council's website - [Colac Otway Shire Grants Program - Colac Otway Shire](#)
- Check spam/junk mail if confirmation email cannot be seen in your inbox.

Only final applications that are lodged with Colac Otway Shire Council by the closing date will be considered and assessed. Applications that are still 'in draft' and have not been submitted upon program close will not be assessed.

Supporting documentation

The following documents must be included in your application:

- Quote/s** are required to cover the value of the grant request and the matching dollar-for-dollar cash contribution. The quote must be itemised, issued within the past three (3) months and show GST if applicable.
- Public Liability Insurance** is required for all events. A Certificate of Currency (CoC) must be submitted with your application.
- Letter(s) of support (optional)** from organisation(s) involved or partnering in the event, if applicable, to demonstrate community support.
- Permits and approvals may be required** for your event. Obtaining relevant permits and approvals is separate to the grant application process and may require additional time and budget to be allocated in the event plan. You do not need to secure permits or approvals before applying, however if your funding application is successful, securing them will be a condition of the grant. Council will not make any grant payments until the relevant permits and approvals are obtained.
 - You must demonstrate in your application that you are aware of the relevant permits and approvals that may apply to your event.
 - **Contact the Events team** to discuss your event requirements **prior to applying**.
- Auspice arrangements** If your community group is not incorporated, you can still apply by arranging an Auspice. More information on Auspicing is available later in the guidelines.
- Permits and Approvals** may be required for Events. These processes are separate to the grant application process and require additional time and budget in the event plan. You do not need to secure permits or approvals before applying, however if your funding application is successful, securing them is a condition of the grant. Council will not make any grant payments until the relevant permits and approvals are obtained. You must demonstrate in the application that you are aware of the necessary permits and approvals required for your event.

If you are unsure what permits and other approvals your event may require, contact Council's Events team on 5232 9400 or inq@colacotway.vic.gov.au to discuss your event. Approvals required may include one of the following:

- [An Event in a Public Place Permit](#)
- [A Place of Public Entertainment \(POPE\) permit](#)
- Temporary Limited Liquor Licence
- A Planning Permit for the event (or specific elements related to the event) that are held on private land.

SmartyGrants is an online platform for managing the online application process. Online applications must be submitted exclusively via SmartyGrants. Should this be challenging for your organisation, please contact the Grants officer to discuss support and assistance on a case-by-case basis.

Help Guide for Applicants: <https://applicanthehelp.smartygrants.com.au/help-guide-for-applicants/>

SmartyFile You have the option to create a [SmartyFile](#) profile for your organisation. SmartyFile allows organisations to collaborate with team members, pre-fill information into forms and manage, view, search and sort submissions across multiple funders in one spot. To learn more, visit the [SmartyFile help page](#).

Setting up a SmartyFile profile ensures your organisation retains access to your funding records even if team members change or move on.

Outcome notification

All applicants, successful and unsuccessful, will be notified in writing of their application outcome in June/July 2026. The successful applicant's name, event name and the funding amount will be made publicly available, including publication on Council's website and media releases.

11. Timelines

Applications open: 27 February 2026

Applications close: 10 April 2026

Notification of outcome: Late June 2026

Funding agreements signed: July 2026

Projects commence: July 2026 onwards

Grants Presentation Ceremony: July 2026

Project completed: By June 2027 or earlier (as per timeframes indicated in the application)

Please note dates are subject to change. Applicants will be notified if any changes arise.

12. Assessment Process

This is a competitive grant process and as such, it is possible that not all eligible applicants will receive funding. Previous grant funding history may be taken into consideration if the program is over-subscribed.

Applications will be assessed using the following process:

- Applications are received and assessed for applicant and event eligibility
- Applications will be reviewed by a panel of Council officers and assessed against the program assessment criteria.
- Funding recommendations will be presented to Council for a final decision and approval.

All decisions regarding grant funding recommendations under this program remain at Council's discretion.

13. Assessment Criteria

Applicants must respond to the Assessment Criteria relevant to their event category –

13.1 Community Event, 13.2 Commercial Event, or 13.3 Signature Event.

13.1 Assessment criteria - Community Events

Assessment Criterion 1 – Community Benefits (60%)

Your response should describe the community benefits including:

- How your event makes the Shire a better **PLACE** to live, work and belong.
- **PROSPERITY** Level of involvement of local businesses (pre-event supply chain expenditure and during event - stall holders).
- What percentage of local contractors and suppliers will be used. Priority will be given to the use of local trades and suppliers.
- How the event creates opportunities for social connection.
- Inclusivity for **PEOPLE**: diversity of age groups, abilities (accessibility), and gender equity.
- Positive impact on the host community and evidence of support (letters may assist).
- Volunteer involvement, stakeholder engagement and collaboration
- Expected attendance:
 - Local residents and visitors from within Colac Otway Shire
 - Visitors from outside the Shire
- For new events: demonstrate demand and need.

Assessment Criterion 2 - Environmental Sustainability (10%)

In your response, outline:

- How waste will be managed and minimized.
- Recycling options and mitigation strategies included in your waste management plan
- Measures to restrict use or distribution of single use plastics (e.g. bags, straws, cups, cutlery, balloons, bottled water etc)
- How the site will be restored to its original pre-event condition.

Assessment Criterion 3 – Event Delivery (30%)

Demonstrate clearly your capacity to deliver the event by outlining:

- Key elements of your event and how they will be delivered.
- Who will manage the event?
- Relevant experience in event delivery and grant acquittal within required timeframes.
- Plans for sustainability, including how future events will be funded.
- Planning undertaken to ensure successful delivery.
- Demonstrate awareness of Landowner consent and permits required.

13.2 Assessment Criteria – Commercial Events

Assessment Criterion 1 - Community Economic Development Opportunities (40%)

Describe how the event will stimulate the economy including:

- The amount of visitation/tourism from people attending from outside Colac Otway Shire and the length of stay during the event.

Attachment 7.2.2 Guidelines Events Grants 2026 2027

- Marketing plan / business plan demonstrating the opportunities where Colac Otway Shire or the host township can be promoted, the nature of this promotion and the marketing reach.
- Activation of town centre and use of public spaces
- Boosting off peak visitation, overnight stays and expenditure
- The level of pre training or visitation that the event will generate in the lead up to the event
- The level of expenditure these visitors will generate (or have generated historically)
- The level of involvement of local businesses in the event both pre (supply chain expenditure in event set up) or during (stall holders).
- The ability of the event to trigger repeat visitation to Colac Otway Shire.
- Reinforce and/or strengthen the desired 'brand' of the host township and Colac Otway Shire in a positive way.

Assessment Criterion 2 – Community Benefits and Social Opportunities (20%)

Detail the community benefits provided by the event – short and long-term including:

- How the event will create social gathering opportunities
- The level to which people of diverse groups and ages are brought together
- Evidence of how the event will positively impact the host community
- Identify if the social opportunities are short (event specific) or long term (ongoing spin offs) in nature
- Level of involvement by local volunteers (No. of people and hours)
- How the event caters for needs of all abilities (accessibility etc.)
- How will the event address gender equity? Priority will be given to events that address gender equity.
- The expected number of people who will attend the event, estimating:
 - Local Colac Otway Shire resident numbers
 - Visitor numbers from outside of Colac Otway Shire (e.g. 2000 – 5000 attendees or above). Evidence of actual numbers will strengthen the application.

Assessment Criterion 3 – Event Delivery (40%)

The application must clearly demonstrate the capacity of the applicant to deliver the event.

In your response, please describe:

- Detailed Event Program
- What planning has been undertaken e.g. meeting with Events officer
- Demonstrate awareness of Landowner consent and permits required.
- Detail the stages involved in your event and how you propose to deliver it.
- Demonstrated experience of the Applicant organisation to deliver the event and acquit the grant within timeframes.
- Who will manage the event and their relevant experience?
- Will it be sustainable? Explain how you intend to fund this event into the future.

Detail how the event plans for and contributes to:

- Positive environmentally sustainable outcomes in the short (event specific) or longer term.
- An element of environmental education or awareness for attendees
- A level of excellence in event management from an environmental aspect (includes rubbish removal, waste reduction, recycling, techniques that minimise the carbon footprint of the event)
- Restricted use or distribution of single use plastics or products, including but not limited to bags, straws, cups, cutlery, balloons, bottled water.

13.3 Assessment Criteria – Signature Events

Assessment Criterion 1 - Community Economic development opportunities (40%)

Describe how the event will stimulate the economy including:

- The amount of visitation/tourism from people attending from outside Colac Otway Shire and the length of stay during the event.
- Activation of town centre and use of public spaces
- Boosting off peak visitation, overnight stays and expenditure.
- Marketing plan / business plan demonstrating the opportunities where Colac Otway Shire or the host township can be promoted, the nature of this promotion and the marketing reach.
- The level of pre training or visitation that the event will generate in the lead up to the event
- The level of expenditure these visitors will generate (or have generated historically)
- The level of involvement of local businesses in the event both pre (supply chain expenditure in event set up) or during (stall holders).
- The ability of the event to trigger repeat visitation to Colac Otway Shire.
- Reinforce and/or strengthen the desired 'brand' of the host township and Colac Otway Shire in a positive way.

Assessment Criterion 2 – Community Benefits and Social Opportunities (20%)

Detail the community benefits provided by the event – short and long-term including:

- How the event will create social gathering opportunities
- The level to which people of diverse groups and ages are brought together
- Evidence of how the event will positively impact the host community
- Identify if the social opportunities are short (event specific) or long term (ongoing spin offs) in nature
- Level of involvement by local volunteers (No. of people and hours)
- How the event caters for needs of all abilities (accessibility etc.)
- How will the event address gender equity? Priority will be given to events that address gender equity.
- The expected number of people who will attend the event, estimating:
 - Local Colac Otway Shire resident numbers
 - Visitor numbers from outside of Colac Otway Shire (e.g. 2000 – 5000 attendees or above). Evidence of actual numbers will strengthen the application.

Assessment Criterion 3 – Event Delivery (40%)

The application must clearly demonstrate the capacity of the applicant to deliver the event.

In your response, please describe:

- Detailed Event Program
- What planning has been undertaken e.g. meeting with Events officer
- Demonstrate awareness of Landowner consent and permits required.
- Detail the stages involved in your event and how you propose to deliver it.
- Demonstrated experience of the Applicant organisation to deliver the event and acquit the grant within timeframes.
- Who will manage the event and their relevant experience?
- Will it be sustainable? Explain how you intend to fund this event into the future.

Detail how the event plans for and contributes to:

- Positive environmentally sustainable outcomes in the short (event specific) or longer term.
- An element of environmental education or awareness for attendees
- A level of excellence in event management from an environmental aspect (includes rubbish removal, waste reduction, recycling, techniques that minimise the carbon footprint of the event)
- Reduce or eliminate use of single use plastics or products, including but not limited to bags, straws, cups, cutlery, balloons, bottled water.

14. Budget

Quotes

Applications must include quotes that cover the grant amount requested, and the matching contribution.

Budget Accuracy

- The budget must clearly show:
 - **all income** sources
 - **all expenditure items** related to the event.
- Budget must be balanced: total income = total expenditure.
- Include permit fees if permits are required.

Matching Contribution Required

- A **dollar-for-dollar matching contribution** is required. This means :
 - For every \$1 of grant funding, you must contribute \$1 from your own resources (cash or in-kind) .
- Example:
 - If your grant request is \$3,000, you must show \$3,000 in matching contributions.
 - Contributions can be **cash** or **in-kind** (e.g. volunteer time, donated goods/services).
- The combined total (grant & matching contribution) should cover the full event cost.
- Matching contributions must be clearly documented in:

- Your **budget**
- Your **acquittal form**.
- Restrictions: Contributions from Colac Otway Shire cannot be used as matching funds.

Cash contributions

For grant applications up to \$5,000:

- Provide a current bank statement or proof of available funds.

For grants over \$5,000:

- Provide a current bank statement or proof of available funds, and a Treasurer's report.

In-kind contributions

- In-kind contributions are non-cash support provided by your organisation to deliver the event (e.g. volunteer labour, donated goods/services).
- Must directly contribute to event delivery.

Eligible In-kind contributions

- Volunteer labour
- Event management
- Activities directly related to the delivery of the event (e.g. site preparation, maintenance, logistics, discounted venue hire)
- Donated goods and services.

Ineligible In-Kind contributions

- Activities completed before the event, such as:
 - Research, planning and application writing.
 - Fundraising activities.
- Core operational maintenance (e.g. recreation reserve or public hall grounds).
- Operational costs and staff salaries, including:
 - Volunteer work that is part of regular duties
 - Staff time/services already funded within normal job responsibilities.
 - Operational expenses and equipment use tied to core operational costs (e.g. insurance, office supplies, printers).

Valuing In-kind contributions

- Must be listed under **both income and expenditure** in the budget table.
- Itemise in the **In-kind contribution Table** (volunteer labour, donated goods/services).
- Use these rates:
 - Professional/trade volunteer services: **\$45/hour**.
 - General volunteer labour: **\$25/hour**.

In-kind contributions received

- At event completion, provide:
 - a record of actual in-kind contributions in the **Acquittal Report**, calculated using the above rates.
- Keep written evidence of volunteer hour logs, donation letters and receipts.

GST Requirements

Organisations **NOT Registered for GST**

- GST can be included in the event budget.
- Example: If a quote for painting is \$6,600 (including \$600 GST), list the item at the GST-inclusive price of \$6,600.

Organisations **Registered for GST**

- GST must be excluded from the event budget.
- Example: If a quote is \$6,600 (including \$600 GST), list the item at \$6,000 (excluding GST).
- Grant payments will have GST added.
- A tax invoice (including GST) will be required for the grant payment.

15. Auspice arrangements

If you are a community group or not-for-profit organisation (non-government) that is not incorporated, you can still apply for Council grants by using an auspice. An auspice organisation must meet the eligibility criteria, be incorporated and agree to support your grant application. The auspice receives the grant funds on your behalf, and you deliver the event.

To apply with support from an auspice organisation, you must:

- discuss the event and request they auspice your grant application
- include a signed copy of an auspice agreement in the grant application
- confirm the auspice has reviewed the application form.

If your grant application is successful, your auspice organisation will be responsible for:

- signing the grant funding agreement on your behalf
- receiving the grant funds and transferring the funds to your group
- ensuring all grant activities are completed
- submitting the acquittal report on your behalf by the required due date.

Note: setting up a **SmartyFile** profile enables you to share the grant application with the Auspice. You will manage the level of access they have. [SmartyFile](#)
Further information is available on Auspice arrangements [Auspicing | Not-for-profit Law](#)

16. Funding Details

- The grant recipient (or Auspice) must enter into a Funding Agreement outlining the terms and conditions, payment details and reporting requirements.
- Additional conditions may apply, such as obtain an Event in a Public Place permit or Place of Public Entertainment (PoPE) permit.
- Funding may be less than requested if parts of the application are ineligible or there are limited funds remaining in the funding pool.
- Events must occur within the same financial year as the grant is received. Any unspent funds must be returned to Colac Otway Shire Council.
- Funds must be used as approved; any changes require a Variation Request form to be submitted for approval prior to implementing changes.

- Recipients without an Australian Business Number (ABN) must provide an Australian Tax Office (ATO Statement by a supplier) form to avoid withholding tax from the grant payment.
- **For grants above \$5,000, payments will be made in two instalments:**
 - Instalment 1: 90% paid upfront on signing the Agreement or when specific funding conditions have been fulfilled. If specific funding conditions apply to your event, these must be fulfilled prior to the release of the grant funds.
 - Instalment 2: 10% paid upon satisfactory completion of the acquittal report.

17. Acknowledging Council's support and promoting success

Grant recipients are required to acknowledge the support from the *Colac Otway Shire Grants Program*.

Promotional guidelines form part of funding agreements and include the requirement that all activities acknowledge Colac Otway Shire Council's support through:

- Logo presentation on any activity-related publications
- Media releases
- Promotional material
- Social media
- Written or verbal acknowledgement at presentations or 'openings' and/or

To ensure appropriate recognition of Colac Otway Shire's support, recipients must follow the Shire's Logo and Style Guide.

Where to Find Branding Resources

Visit the Colac Otway Shire website at www.colacotway.vic.gov.au and search for "Logo and Style Guide".

What the Guide Includes

The [Logo and Style Guide - Colac Otway Shire](#) webpage provides:

- Approved **logo usage options**
- Guidance on **social media acknowledgements**
- Recommended **acknowledgement statements**
- Instructions for **media releases and publications**

These resources help ensure consistent and appropriate recognition of the Shire's support across all promotional and public-facing materials.

Grant recipients are required to provide an opportunity for a Colac Otway Shire Councillor to participate in the funded event. This may include presenting an award, delivering a brief speech, and facilitating a photo opportunity. Event organisers should liaise with Council staff to coordinate these arrangements prior to the event.

18. Acquittal

At the completion of the event, an Acquittal Report must be submitted through SmartyGrants. The report must include (where relevant):

- A summary of the event including comments on the things that went well and what you have learnt from delivering the event.
- Event outcomes, achievements and how they align with the Council Plan objectives.
- An event budget including receipts as evidence of how the grant funds were expended.
- A record of In-kind labour and/or donated goods and service (if applicable).
- Details of local suppliers and contractors used.
- Photographs of the event, including shots that capture the audience.
- Evidence of acknowledgement of Council's support e.g. newsletters, media articles, social media, copies of promotional materials, photographs or video if available etc.

Outstanding Acquittal

Applicants with an outstanding acquittal from a previous grant round are ineligible to apply for future rounds. Contact the Grants Officer if your current event grant won't be completed before the application deadline.

19. Privacy

The Colac Otway Shire Council is committed to protecting your privacy. We collect and handle any personal information about you or a third party in your application, for the purpose of administering your grant application and informing the public of successful applications.

To administer your grant application effectively and efficiently, we may need to disclose your personal information with others for the purpose of assessment, consultation, and reporting. This can include Council staff or Councillors.

Any personal information about you or a third party in your correspondence will be collected, held, managed, used, disclosed, or transferred in accordance with the provisions of the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)* and other applicable laws.

The Colac Otway Shire Council's Privacy Policy can be found at www.colacotway.vic.gov.au Enter a search for Privacy Statement.

Council uses an online grant application program called SmartyGrants. [Click Here](#) to view SmartyGrants Privacy Policy <https://www.ourcommunity.com.au/privacy>

20. Contact us

Colac Otway Shire, 2-6 Rae Street Colac

T: (03) 5232 9400

E: inq@colacotway.vic.gov.au

Grants and Development Officer

For grant queries or assistance with the online application, contact the Grants Officer between 8.30am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday.

T: (03) 5232 9400

E: inq@colacotway.vic.gov.au

[Colac Otway Shire Grants Program - Colac Otway Shire](#)

Place Activation and Events Team

For enquiries relating to Commercial events or Signature events, and all other enquiries for event permit requirements.

T: (03) 5232 9400

E: events@colacotway.vic.gov.au

[Event Planning Guidelines - Colac Otway Shire](#)

21. Glossary of terms

Term	Definition
Acquittal	A report provided by the grant recipient demonstrating that funds were used responsibly and in accordance with the conditions of the grant.
Applicant	The organisation applying for funding.
Application	A formal document submitted to a funding body to request financial assistance for a specific project or event.
Assessment Criteria	The specified requirements against which applications will be evaluated. These criteria are also used to assess the merits of proposals and to determine application rankings. These criteria may include eligibility requirements, selection criteria, and risk assessments.
Australian Business Number (ABN)	Identifies your business to the government, other businesses, and the public.
Auspice / Auspicing	A formal arrangement where an incorporated, not-for-profit organisation manages a grant on behalf of an unincorporated group, assuming legal and financial responsibility.
Community Asset Committee	A committee established by Council to manage a community asset in the Colac Otway Shire (e.g., Recreation Reserve Committee, Public Hall Committee).
Community Group	A not-for-profit, volunteer-based organisation formed by local community members who share a common interest, goal or concern. These groups work to improve community wellbeing, support social inclusion, and often deliver services, events or

Term	Definition
	advocacy on behalf of their members. Characteristics include being organised, self-governing, not-for-profit, voluntary, and providing public/community benefit.
Contribution	A 'matching dollar-for-dollar contribution' means an organisation contributes an amount equal to the Council's grant.
Council	Refers to Colac Otway Shire Council.
Eligibility Criteria	Mandatory requirements that must be met to qualify for a grant. Assessment criteria may apply in addition to eligibility criteria.
Events	Planned occasions or gatherings for a specific purpose, ranging from small community events to large-scale festivals, designed to engage the community, deliver cultural or social benefits, and contribute to local economic development.
Funding Agreement	A legal document outlining the terms, conditions, and obligations of funding for both Council and the recipient.
Grant	A sum of money awarded to an organisation to deliver a specific activity, with the expectation that funds will be used only for the agreed purpose.
Guidelines	Outline the grant program, type of activities the program is aiming to fund, application process, organisation eligibility and assessment criteria. It is important to read the guidelines prior to preparing an application.
Incorporation	A voluntary process where a not-for-profit or community group becomes a legal entity, enabling it to enter contracts, such as a funding agreement and open a bank account.
In-kind Support	Non-cash contributions such as volunteer labour or donated goods/services that directly support the delivery of the project or event.
Not-for-profit Organisation	An organisation that operates for purposes other than making a profit for its members, owners, or shareholders. It must use any surplus to further its objectives and be classified as not-for-profit under the Income Tax Assessment Act 1936.
Project	A set of organised activities that are planned to achieve a particular aim or outcome. It will have a defined start and end date.
Public Liability Insurance	Protects your organisation or community group financially if someone attending your activity or event is injured.
Recipient	The organisation awarded the grant to support a specific project, activity, or event.
SmartyGrants	The online grant management platform used by Council for the submission, tracking, and administration of grant applications.
SmartyFile	A SmartyFile profile enables you to collaborate with team members, pre-fill information into forms and manage, view, search and sort submissions. To learn more, visit SmartyFile

COLAC OTWAY SHIRE
GRANTS PROGRAM

Business Grants 2026/27

Guidelines

Business Grants

Building Façade Improvements



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1. Acknowledgement

Colac Otway Shire Council respectfully acknowledges the Gulidjan and Gadubanud peoples of the maar Nation as traditional custodians of the Colac Otway region, the land and waterways upon which the activities of the Colac Otway Shire Council are conducted. We pay our respects to their ancestors, past and present. We recognise and respect their unique cultural heritage, beliefs and uphold their continuing relationship to this land.

2. Purpose

The Colac Otway Shire Grants Program provides one-off financial assistance grants to support businesses to deliver façade improvement projects that revitalise the shopping strips across the Shire and help in achieving outcomes consistent with the 2025-2029 Council Plan.

3. Business Grants – Building Façade Improvements

The Building Façade Improvement Program assists businesses to improve the appearance of their building facades and increase the overall attractiveness of the shopping strips in Colac, Apollo Bay and the small towns throughout the Shire.

Funding Amount: \$500 to \$3,000 maximum

Contribution required: A dollar-for-dollar cash or in-kind matching contribution

4. What you need to know

- **One application per property** is allowed. If an owner submits multiple applications for different properties and the program is oversubscribed, priority will be given to one property per owner, along with other owners with a single application.
- Funding is **competitive**; applying does not guarantee approval. Demand often exceeds available funds.
- **Dollar-for-dollar matching cash or in-kind contribution** is required.
- Projects using **local trades/suppliers** within Colac Otway Shire are prioritised.
- Applications must be submitted via **SmartyGrants**; **late applications** are ineligible.
- **Retrospective funding requests** are ineligible. Projects cannot start until the **funding agreement is signed**.
- **Canvassing or lobbying** Councillors, staff, or panel members is prohibited.
- Council reserves the **right to decline** applications that do not meet eligibility criteria.
- Funds are released only after conditions are fulfilled (e.g. landowner consent, permits).

5. Who can apply

- Businesses located within the designated commercial areas of towns within the Colac Otway Shire.
- Property owner or lessee/business operators of premises situated in these commercial areas.
- The business premises must have a street frontage.

6. Who cannot apply

- Elected members (Councillors)
- Council employees (staff)
Note: Support and assistance for grant applications is available through the Grants officer.
- Applicant organisations (or Auspice) that are associated with or promote activities deemed inappropriate (including but not limited to):
 - any illegal activity
 - any activity not in accordance with relevant legislation; permitting; regulations etc
 - tobacco
 - offensive or sexually explicit material
 - discrimination on the grounds of race, gender or religion
 - activities violating human rights
 - political parties
 - gambling
- Applicants with an overdue Acquittal report from a previous round.

7. What may be funded

Commercial building façade improvements **must be visible from the street** and may include:

- Exterior painting of retail business building façade
- Cleaning the existing façade
- Removal or replacement of redundant signage, air conditioning units and hoardings
- Replace of signage in disrepair
- Minor repairs, maintenance or reinstatement of missing elements
- Minor repairs to existing façade tile or stone accents
- Minor repairs to structure façade elements and awnings
- New, repairs and replacement of verandahs

8. What will not be funded

Ineligible Activities and Expenses:

- Rebranding existing signage that is already in good condition.

- Projects where a permit has been refused
- Purchase of equipment to complete project works (e.g. ladders, scaffolding, safety barriers). *Note: hiring equipment is permitted if directly related to the project.*
- Internal works or works not visible from the street.
- Ongoing operational day-to-day costs such as administration, rent, salaries and utility expenses.
- Public Liability or other insurance costs.
- Contingency allowances.
- Project Management fees.
- Residential-based businesses, including Airbnb or similar accommodation.

9. Align with the Council Plan 2025-2029

Applications must align to at least one theme in the Council Plan 2025-2029.

PLACE	Our Shire is a great place to live, work and belong.
PEOPLE	Our community is vibrant, healthy and supported.
PROSPERITY	Our economy is growing and diverse, supporting innovation, new businesses and investments. Our tourism industry is thriving, with expanded and interlinked experiences.

10. Application Process

Funding round	Applications open	Applications close
2026-2027 financial year	27 February 2026 at 9.00am	10 April 2026 at 5.00pm

Prepare an application

The link **TO APPLY** is available on Council's website when the funding round is open.

[Colac Otway Shire Grants Program 2026/2027](#)

Applicants must undertake the following steps to apply:

- Carefully read the Guidelines in full to confirm eligibility and application requirements.
- Speak to a relevant Council officer to research permits and approvals which may be required.
- Prepare early for your application.
- Compile all necessary supporting documents
- Submit an application online via Colac Otway Shire Council's website - [Colac Otway Shire Grants Program - Colac Otway Shire](#)
- Check spam/junk mail if confirmation email cannot be seen in your inbox.

Only final applications that are lodged with Colac Otway Shire Council by the closing date will be considered and assessed. Applications that are still 'in draft' and have not been submitted upon program close will not be assessed.

Supporting documentation

The following documents must be included in your application:

- **Quote/s** are required to cover the value of the grant request and the matching dollar-for-dollar cash contribution. The quote must be itemised, issued within the past three (3) months, and show GST if applicable.
- **Public liability insurance** is required for all projects. A Certificate of Currency (CoC) must be submitted with your application.
- **'Before' photos** are required to demonstrate need; 'After' photos must accompany the Acquittal Report.
- **Permits and Approvals** may be required for your project. Obtaining relevant permits are separate from the grant application process and require additional time and budget in your project plan. You do not need to secure permits before applying, however if your application is successful, securing them will be a condition of funding. Council will not make any grant payments until permits are obtained.

Your application must show awareness of any permits or approvals that may apply. If unsure, contact the grants officer for advice.

Example of permits:

- Planning permit may be required for proposed works or use
- Building permit may be required if project includes any structural works
- Hoarding/Public Protection permit

SmartyGrants is an online platform for managing the online application process. Online applications must be submitted exclusively via SmartyGrants. Should this be challenging for your organisation, please contact the Grants officer to discuss support and assistance on a case-by-case basis.

Help Guide for Applicants:

<https://applicanthelp.smartygrants.com.au/help-guide-for-applicants/>

SmartyFile You have the option to create a [SmartyFile](#) profile for your organisation. SmartyFile allows organisations to collaborate with team members, pre-fill information into forms and manage, view, search and sort submissions across multiple funders in one spot. To learn more, visit the [SmartyFile help page](#). Setting up a SmartyFile profile ensures your organisation retains access to your funding records even if team members change or move on.

Outcome notification

Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified of their application outcome in writing in June/July 2026. The successful applicant's name, project name and the funding amount will be made publicly available, including publication on Council's website and media releases.

11. Timelines

Applications open: 27 February 2026

Applications close: 10 April 2026

Notification of outcome: Late June 2026

Funding agreements signed: July 2026

Projects commence: July 2026 onwards

Grants Presentation Ceremony: July 2026

Project completed: By June 2027 or earlier (as per timeframes indicated in the application)

Please note: Dates are subject to change. Applicants will be notified if any changes arise.

12. Assessment Process

This is a competitive grant process, and with a limited funding pool, it is possible that not all eligible applicants will receive funding. Previous grant funding history may be taken into consideration if the program is over-subscribed.

Applications will be assessed using the following process:

- Applications are received and assessed for applicant and project eligibility
- Applications will be reviewed by a panel of Council officers and assessed against the program assessment criteria.
- Funding recommendations will be presented to Council for a final decision and approval.

All decisions regarding grant funding recommendations under this program remain at Council's discretion.

13. Assessment Criteria

In the application, your response to the Assessment Criteria should address the key points.

Assessment Criteria 1 – Description of works (75%)

Your response should outline a detailed description of the proposed works and specify the area of the façade to be worked on:

- Are the works visible from the street? What street will the works be visible from?
 - works above the verandah E.g. painting, replacement signage, replace heritage elements etc
 - works below the verandah E.g. painting, cleaning, tile repairs etc
 - works along the verandah / awning fascia? E.g. replace rusted fascia and signage
 - works on the shop window E.g. replacement signage, replacement window frames
- Describe the level of visual impact expected as a result of the façade works

Assessment Criteria 2 – Economic return (10%)

- Will local suppliers and contractors (within the Colac Otway Shire) be engaged to undertake the works?
- What percentage of the façade will be included in the improvement works?

Assessment Criteria 3 – Capacity to deliver (15%)

Must clearly demonstrate the capacity of the applicant to deliver the project:

- Has the project been fully scoped and costed?
- Applicant has researched and demonstrated awareness of permit requirements
- The timeframe to deliver the project is within the funding period.

14. Budget

Quotes

Applications must include quotes that cover the grant amount requested, and the matching contribution.

Budget Accuracy

- The budget must clearly show:
 - **all income sources**
 - **all expenditure items** related to the project.
 - Budget must be balanced: total income = total expenditure.
 - Include permit fees if permits are required.
-

Matching Contribution Required

- A **dollar-for-dollar matching contribution** is required.
 - For every \$1 of grant funding, you must contribute \$1 from your own resources (cash or in-kind).
- Example:
- If your grant request is \$3,000, you must show \$3,000 in matching contributions.
 - Contributions can be cash or in-kind (e.g. volunteer time, donated goods/services).
- The combined total (grant and matching contribution) should cover the full cost project costs.
 - Matching contributions must be clearly documented in:
 - your **budget**
 - your **acquittal form**.
-

In-kind contributions

- In-kind contributions are non-cash support provided by your organisation to deliver the project (e.g. volunteer labour, donated goods/services).
 - Must directly contribute to project delivery.
-

Eligible In-kind contributions

- Volunteer labour
 - Activities directly related to the delivery of the project (e.g site preparation, painting)
 - Donated goods/services.
-

Ineligible In-Kind contributions

- Activities completed before the project, such as:
 - Research, planning and application writing.
 - Operational costs and staff salaries, including:
 - Volunteer work that is part of regular duties.
 - Staff time/services already funded within normal job responsibilities.
 - Operational expenses and equipment use tied to core operational costs (e.g. insurance, office supplies, printers).
-

Valuing In-kind contributions

- Must be listed under **both income and expenditure** in the budget table.
 - Itemise in the **In-kind Contribution Table** (volunteer labour, donated goods/services).
 - Use these rates:
 - Professional/trade volunteer services: **\$45/hour.**
 - General volunteer labour: **\$25/hour.**
-

In-kind contributions received

- At project completion, provide:
 - a record of actual in-kind contributions in the **Acquittal Report**, calculated using the above rates.
 - Keep written evidence of volunteer hour logs, donation letters and receipts.
-

GST Requirements

Organisations **NOT Registered for GST**

- GST can be included in the project budget.
- Example: If a quote for painting is \$6,600 (including \$600 GST), list the item at the GST-inclusive price of \$6,600.

Organisations **Registered for GST**

- GST must be excluded from the project budget.
 - Example: If a quote is \$6,600 (including \$600 GST), list the item at \$6,000 (excluding GST).
 - Grant payments will have GST added.
 - A tax invoice (including GST) will be required for the grant payment.
-

15. Funding Details

- The grant recipient must enter into a Funding Agreement outlining the terms and conditions, payment details and reporting requirements.
- Additional conditions may apply, such as obtain a Planning Permit, a Building Permit or Hoarding/Public Protection permit.
- Funding may be less than requested if parts of the application are ineligible or there are limited funds remaining in the funding pool.
- Projects must occur within the same financial year as the grant is received. Any unspent funds must be returned to Colac Otway Shire Council.
- Funds must be used as approved; any changes require a Variation Request form to be submitted for approval prior to implementing changes.

16. Acknowledging Council's support and promoting success

Grant recipients are required to acknowledge the support from the *Colac Otway Shire Grants Program*.

Promotional guidelines form part of funding agreements and include the requirement that all activities acknowledge Colac Otway Shire Council's support through:

- Logo presentation on any activity-related publications
- Media releases
- Promotional material
- Social media
- Written or verbal acknowledgement at presentations or 'openings' and/or

To ensure appropriate recognition of Colac Otway Shire's support, recipients must follow the Shire's Logo and Style Guide.

Where to find Branding Resources

Visit the **Colac Otway Shire website** at www.colacotway.vic.gov.au and search for "**Logo and Style Guide**".

What the Guide Includes

The [Logo and Style Guide - Colac Otway Shire](#) webpage provides:

- Approved **logo usage options**
- Guidance on **social media acknowledgements**
- Recommended **acknowledgement statements**
- Instructions for **media releases and publications**

These resources help ensure consistent and appropriate recognition of the Shire's support across all promotional and public-facing materials.

17. Acquittal

At the completion of the project, an Acquittal Report must be submitted through SmartyGrants. The report must include (where relevant):

- A summary of the project including comments on the things that went well and what you have learnt from delivering the project.
- Evidence of the project outcomes/achievements and how they align with the Council Plan objectives.
- A project budget including receipts or evidence of how the grant funds were expended.
- Details of local suppliers and contractors used.
- Photographs of the completed works – before and after
- Evidence of acknowledgement of Council's support e.g.. newsletters, media articles, social media, copies of promotional materials, photographs or video if available etc.

Outstanding Acquittal

Applicants with an outstanding acquittal from a previous grant round are ineligible to apply for future rounds. Contact the Grants Officer if your current project won't be completed before the application deadline.

18. Privacy

The Colac Otway Shire Council is committed to protecting your privacy. We collect and handle any personal information about you or a third party in your application, for the purpose of administering your grant application and informing the public of successful applications.

To administer your grant application effectively and efficiently, we may need to disclose your personal information with others for the purpose of assessment, consultation, and reporting. This can include Council staff or Councillors.

Any personal information about you or a third party in your correspondence will be collected, held, managed, used, disclosed, or transferred in accordance with the provisions of the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)* and other applicable laws.

The Colac Otway Shire Council's Privacy Policy can be found at www.colacotway.vic.gov.au Enter a search for Privacy Statement.

Council uses an online grant application program called SmartyGrants. [Click Here](#) to view SmartyGrants Privacy Policy <https://www.ourcommunity.com.au/privacy>

19. Contact us

Colac Otway Shire, 2-6 Rae Street Colac

T: (03) 5232 9400

E: inq@colacotway.vic.gov.au

W: [Colac Otway Shire Grants Program - Colac Otway Shire](#)

Grants and Development Officer

For queries relating to the grants program or assistance with the online application, contact the Grants Officer between 8.30am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday.

Economy and Creative Industries team

For business related enquiries.

20. Glossary of terms

Term	Definition
Acquittal	A report provided by the grant recipient demonstrating that funds were used responsibly and in accordance with the conditions of the grant.
Applicant	The organisation applying for funding.
Application	A formal document submitted to a funding body to request financial assistance for a specific project or event.
Assessment Criteria	The specified requirements against which applications will be evaluated. These criteria are also used to assess the merits of proposals and to determine application rankings. These criteria may include eligibility requirements, selection criteria, and risk assessments.
Australian Business Number (ABN)	Identifies your business to the government, other businesses, and the public.
Auspice / Auspicing	A formal arrangement where an incorporated, not-for-profit organisation manages a grant on behalf of an unincorporated group, assuming legal and financial responsibility.
Community Asset Committee	A committee established by Council to manage a community asset in the Colac Otway Shire (e.g., Recreation Reserve Committee, Public Hall Committee).
Community Group	A not-for-profit, volunteer-based organisation formed by local community members who share a common interest, goal or concern. These groups work to improve community wellbeing, support social inclusion, and often deliver services, events or advocacy on behalf of their members. Characteristics include being organised, self-governing, not-for-profit, voluntary, and providing public/community benefit.
Contribution	A 'matching dollar-for-dollar contribution' means an organisation contributes an amount equal to the Council's grant.

Term	Definition
Council	Refers to Colac Otway Shire Council.
Eligibility Criteria	Mandatory requirements that must be met to qualify for a grant. Assessment criteria may apply in addition to eligibility criteria.
Events	Planned occasions or gatherings for a specific purpose, ranging from small community events to large-scale festivals. Often service social, cultural, educational, recreational or fundraising goals.
Funding Agreement	A legal document outlining the terms, conditions, and obligations of funding for both Council and the recipient.
Grant	A sum of money awarded to an organisation to deliver a specific activity, with the expectation that funds will be used only for the agreed purpose.
Grant Recipient	The organisation awarded the grant to support a specific project, activity, or event.
Guidelines	Outline the grant program, type of activities the program is aiming to fund, application process, organisation eligibility and assessment criteria. It is important to read the guidelines prior to preparing an application.
Incorporation	A voluntary process where a not-for-profit or community group becomes a legal entity, enabling it to enter contracts, such as a funding agreement and open a bank account.
In-kind Support	Non-cash contributions such as volunteer labour or donated goods/services that directly support the delivery of the project or event.
Not-for-profit Organisation	An organisation that operates for purposes other than making a profit for its members, owners, or shareholders. It must use any surplus to further its objectives and be classified as not-for-profit under the Income Tax Assessment Act 1936.
Project	A set of organised activities that are planned to achieve a particular aim or outcome. It will have a defined start and end date.
Public Liability Insurance	Protects your organisation or community group financially if someone attending your activity or event is injured.
SmartyGrants	The online grant management platform used by Council for the submission, tracking, and administration of grant applications.

COLAC OTWAY SHIRE
GRANTS PROGRAM

Trees for Farms Grants 2026/27

Guidelines

Trees for Farms Grants



1. Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians

Colac Otway Shire Council respectfully acknowledges the Gulidjan and Gadubanud peoples as Traditional Custodians of the Colac Otway region, the land and waterways upon which the activities of the Colac Otway Shire Council are conducted. We pay our respects to their ancestors, past and present. We recognise and respect their unique cultural heritage, beliefs and uphold their continuing relationship to this land.

2. Objective

The Colac Otway Shire Trees for Farms Grants Program will provide funding to farmers to support native planting initiatives on their commercial properties within Colac Otway Shire. The program aims to assist farmers in their work to maintain healthy, efficient and sustainable production. It also seeks to provide a range of environmental benefits, such as rehabilitation of degraded land; enhanced and protected biodiversity; improved soil and air quality; and carbon sequestration.

3. Trees for Farms Grants

This program will provide a one-off financial assistance grant to farmers to ensure broad-reaching environmental benefit across the community and is in line with contributing to achieving outcomes of the 2025-2029 Council Plan.

Funding Amount: Up to \$3,000 maximum

Contribution required: A dollar-for-dollar matching cash or in-kind contribution

Features:

- Be a **Commercial Farm**
- Property is within the **Farming Zone**
- Property is **at least 5 hectares** in size.

4. What you need to know

- Grants are offered as a **one-time opportunity**; Applicants are not eligible to apply for funding across multiple properties or in future funding rounds.
- Funding is **competitive**; applying does not guarantee approval. Demand often exceeds available funds.
- **Dollar-for-dollar matching cash or in-kind contribution** is required.
- Projects using **local trades/suppliers** within Colac Otway Shire are prioritised.
- Applications must be submitted via **SmartyGrants**; **late applications** are ineligible.
- **Retrospective funding requests** are ineligible. Projects cannot start until the **funding agreement is signed**.
- **Canvassing or lobbying** Councillors, staff, or panel members is prohibited.
- Council reserves the right to decline applications that **do not meet eligibility criteria**.

5. Eligibility criteria

Applicants must meet ALL of the following criteria:

- Applicant type:** You are an individual, organisation, or business.
- Location:** The property proposed for tree planting is within the **Colac Otway Shire boundary**.
- Property type:** The property is a **commercial farm**.
- Zoning:** The property is within the **Farming Zone**.
- Size:** The property is **at least 5 hectares**.
- Native species:** You intend to plant, protect, and maintain **native Australian tree species**.
- Environmental benefits:** The project demonstrates potential to deliver additional environmental benefits, such as:
 - Rehabilitation of degraded land.
 - Enhanced and protected biodiversity.
 - Improved soil and air quality.
 - Increased connectivity of habitat corridors.
- Establishment protection:** You commit to guard and/or fence trees during their establishment period.
- Livestock fencing:** Where livestock are present, ensure the planting site remains securely fenced at all times.
- Business requirement:** You hold a valid Australian Business Number (ABN).

Who cannot apply:

- Elected members (Councillors).
- Council employees (staff).
Note: Support and assistance for grant applications is available through the Grants officer.
- Applicant organisations that are associated with or promote activities deemed inappropriate (including but not limited to):
 - any illegal activity
 - any activity not in accordance with relevant legislation; permitting; regulations etc
 - tobacco
 - offensive or sexually explicit material
 - discrimination on the grounds of race, gender or religion
 - activities violating human rights
 - political parties
 - gambling
- Applicants with an overdue Acquittal report from a previous round.
- Property owners that are not a commercial entity, or do not meet all of the eligibility criteria.
- Applicants who do not commit to protecting and/or fencing trees during their establishment period, and - where livestock are present - ensure the planting site remains securely fenced at all times.

- Applications from property owners who have received funding under the *Trees for Farms Grants* stream in previous years.
- **NOTE:** Community groups and not-for-profit organisations proposing tree planting or other environmental initiatives should apply through the *Community Grants* stream rather than the *Trees for Farms* stream. Contact the grants officer for clarification if needed.

6. What may be funded

- Purchase of **tubestock of native shrubs and tree species** as selected by applicant.
- Purchase of **guards and stakes** to protect plants during establishment.
- **Contracted works** for labour associated with **site preparation and planting**.

7. What will not be funded

Ineligible Activities and Costs:

- Cost of fencing equipment, materials and labour.
- Ongoing operational expenses and administrative costs e.g. watering regimes, plant replacement etc.
- Purchase of chemical herbicides.
- Public liability or other insurance.
- Project management costs.

8. Align with the Council Plan 2025-2029

Applications must align to the 2025-2029 Council Plan's themes of Place, People and Prosperity.

Place Our Shire is a great place to live, work and belong.

People Our community is vibrant, healthy and supported.

Prosperity Our economy is growing and diverse, supporting innovation, new business and investments.

Our tourism industry is thriving, with expanded and interlinked experiences.

9. Application Process

Funding round	Applications open	Applications close
2026-2027 financial year	27 February 2026 at 9.00am	10 April 2026 at 5.00pm

Prepare an application

The link **TO APPLY** is available on Council's website when the funding round is open.

[Colac Otway Shire Grants Program 2026/2027](#)

Applicants must take the following steps to apply:

- Carefully read the program Guidelines in full to confirm eligibility and application requirements.
- Prepare your application early.
- Speak to the Grants officer if you seek further information or assistance in applying.
- Research into whether any permits or approvals are required.
- Compile all necessary supporting documents.
- Submit an application online via Smartygrants on Colac Otway Shire Council's website [Colac Otway Shire Grants Program - Colac Otway Shire](#)
- Check spam/junk mail if confirmation email cannot be seen in your inbox.

Only final applications that are lodged with Colac Otway Shire Council by the closing date will be considered and assessed. Applications that are still 'in draft' and have not been submitted by program close will not be assessed.

Supporting documentation

The following documents must be included:

- Quote(s)** for the purchase of plants, equipment (guards and stakes) and contracted labour, to cover the value of the grant request and your matching cash contribution.
Note: In-kind labour contributions are to be calculated at \$25 p/hour for general volunteer labour.
- Location / **Site map** of the proposed planting area.
- Photographs** of the proposed planting site 'before' planting begins.
(Note: 'After' photos will be required in the Acquittal Report).

SmartyGrants is an online platform for managing the online application process. Online applications must be submitted exclusively via SmartyGrants. Should this be challenging for your organisation, please contact the Grants officer to discuss support and assistance on a case-by-case basis.

Help Guide for Applicants:

<https://applicanthelp.smartygrants.com.au/help-guide-for-applicants/>

Outcome notification

Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing of their application outcome in June/July 2026. The successful applicant's name, project and the funding amount will be made publicly available, including publication on Council's website and media releases.

10. Timelines

Applications open: 27 February 2026

Applications close: 10 April 2026

Notification of outcome: Late June/early July 2026

Funding Agreements signed: July 2026

Grants Presentation ceremony: July 2026

Projects commence: July 2026 onwards.

Project completed: June 2027 or earlier (as per timeframes indicated in the application).

Please note dates are subject to change. Applicants will be notified if any changes arise.

11. Assessment Process

This is a competitive grant process and as such, it is possible that not all eligible applicants will receive funding. With a limited funding pool, if the program is over-subscribed, applications that score below the funding cut-off threshold may not receive support.

Applications will be assessed using the following process:

- Applications are received and assessed for applicant and project eligibility
- Applications will be reviewed by a panel of Council officers and assessed against the program assessment criteria.
- Funding recommendations will be presented to Council for a final decision and approval.

All decisions regarding grant funding recommendations under this program remain at Council's discretion.

12. Assessment Criteria

In the application, your response to the Assessment Criteria should address the key points.

Assessment Criteria 1 – What impacts will the plantings have on the agricultural production being conducted at the property? (40%)

Your response may include:

- How the location of the planting will benefit land management of the property
- Establishment of a shelter belt
- Provide shade
- Rehabilitation of degraded land
- Soil condition and air quality improvement
- Any potential benefits to productivity of the enterprise

Assessment Criteria 2 – What environmental and Community benefits will the project provide? (40%)

Your response may include:

- How the location of the planting will benefit the environmental conditions of the property (e.g. erosion reduction, weed control, waterway health).
- How the project will enhance and protect biodiversity.
- Information on the project's potential to contribute to increased habitat connectivity.
- Information on the project's potential to directly impact the broader community by adjoining road reserves and other areas of public land.

Assessment Criteria 3 – How will the project be delivered? Who is involved? (20%)

Applications must clearly demonstrate the capacity of the applicant to deliver the project. Priority will be given to the use of local trades and suppliers.

- Provide a brief outline of how you will deliver the tree planting, including timelines.
- List suppliers or contractors to be used.
- Are suppliers or contractors located within the Colac Otway Shire? What percentage is based in the Shire?

12. Budget

Quotes

Applications must include quotes that cover the grant amount requested, and the matching cash contribution.

Budget Accuracy

- The budget must clearly show
 - **all income sources**
 - **all expenditure items** related to the project.
- Budget must be balanced: total income = total expenditure.

Matching Contribution Required

- A **dollar-for-dollar matching contribution** is required. This means:
 - For every \$1 of grant funding, you must contribute \$1 from your own resources (cash or in-kind).Example:
 - If your grant request is \$3,000, you must show \$3,000 in matching contributions.
 - Contributions can be cash or in-kind (e.g. volunteer time, donated goods/services).
- The combined total (grant & matching contribution) should cover the full cost project cost.
- Matching contributions must be clearly documented in:
 - your budget
 - your Acquittal form.

In-Kind contributions

In-kind contributions are non-cash support provided by you to deliver the project (e.g. voluntary labour, donated goods/services).

- Volunteer labour is calculated at **\$25 per hour for general labour**.
 - Must directly contribute to the delivery of the project.
 - Keep a log of volunteer hours to report in the Acquittal at the completion of the project.
-

GST Requirements

Organisations NOT Registered for GST

- GST can be included in the project budget.
- Example: If a quote for painting is \$6,600 (including \$600 GST), list the item at the GST-inclusive price of \$6,600.

Organisations Registered for GST

- GST must be excluded from the project budget.
- Example: If a quote is \$6,600 (including \$600 GST), list the item at \$6,000 (excluding GST).
- Grant payments will have GST added.
- A tax invoice (including GST) will be required for the grant payment.

13. Funding Details

- The grant recipient must enter into a Funding Agreement outlining the terms and conditions, payment details and reporting requirements.
- Funding may be less than requested if parts of the application are ineligible or there are limited funds remaining in the funding pool.
- Projects must occur within the same financial year as the grant is received. Any unspent funds must be returned to Colac Otway Shire Council.
- Funds must be used as approved; any changes require a Variation Request form to be submitted for approval prior to implementing changes.

14. Acquittal

At the completion of the project, an acquittal report must be submitted through SmartyGrants. The report must include (where relevant)

- A summary of the project activities undertaken, including what went well and what you have learnt from the project.
- Project outcomes and achievements.
- A project budget including receipts of how the grant funds were expended.
- A record of in-kind labour (if applicable)
- Details of local suppliers and contractors
- Photographs of 'before' and 'after' the tree planting site.

15. Privacy

The Colac Otway Shire Council is committed to protecting your privacy. We collect and handle any personal information about you or a third party in your application, for the purpose of administering the grant application and informing the public of successful applications.

To administer your grant application effectively and efficiently, we may need to disclose your personal information with others for the purpose of assessment, consultation and reporting. This can include Council staff or Councillors.

Any personal information about you or a third party in your correspondence will be collected, held, managed, used, disclosed, or transferred in accordance with the provisions of the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)* and other applicable laws.

The Colac Otway Shire Council's Privacy Policy can be found at www.colacotway.vic.gov.au Enter a search for Privacy Statement.

The Council uses an online grant application program called SmartyGrants. [Click Here](#) to view SmartyGrants Privacy Policy

16. Contact us

Colac Otway Shire, 2-6 Rae Street Colac

T: (03) 5232 9400

E: inq@colacotway.vic.gov.au

W: [Colac Otway Shire Grants Program - Colac Otway Shire](#)

Grants and Development Officer

For queries relating to the grants program or assistance with the online application, contact the Grants Officer between 8.30am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday.

Environment Team

For enquiries relating to tree planting or native Australian tree species, contact the Environment Team.

17. Glossary of terms

Term	Definition
Acquittal	A report provided by the grant recipient demonstrates that funds were used responsibly and in accordance with the conditions of the grant.
Applicant	The organisation is applying for funding.
Application	A formal document submitted to a funding body to request financial assistance for a specific project or event.
Assessment Criteria	The specified requirements against which applications will be evaluated. These criteria are also used to assess the merits of proposals and to determine application rankings. These criteria may include eligibility requirements, selection criteria, and risk assessments.
Australian Business Number (ABN)	Identifies your business to the government, other businesses, and the public.
Auspice / Auspicing	A formal arrangement where an incorporated, not-for-profit organisation manages a grant on behalf of an unincorporated group, assuming legal and financial responsibility.
Community Asset Committee	A committee established by Council to manage a community asset in the Colac Otway Shire (e.g., Recreation Reserve Committee, Public Hall Committee).
Community Group	A not-for-profit, volunteer-based organisation formed by local community members who share a common interest, goal or concern. These groups work to improve community wellbeing, support social inclusion, and often deliver services, events or advocacy on behalf of their members. Characteristics include being organised, self-governing, not-for-profit, voluntary, and providing public/community benefit.
Contribution	A 'matching dollar-for-dollar contribution' means an organisation contributes an amount equal to the Council's grant.
Council	Refers to Colac Otway Shire Council.
Eligibility Criteria	Mandatory requirements that must be met to qualify for a grant. Assessment criteria may apply in addition to eligibility criteria.
Events	Planned occasions or gatherings for a specific purpose, ranging from small community events to large-scale festivals, designed to engage the community, deliver cultural or social benefits, and contribute to local economic development.

Term	Definition
Funding Agreement	A legal document outlining the terms, conditions, and obligations of funding for both Council and the recipient.
Grant	A sum of money awarded to an organisation to deliver a specific activity, with the expectation that funds will be used only for the agreed purpose.
Guidelines	Outline the grant program, type of activities the program is aiming to fund, application process, organisation eligibility and assessment criteria. It is important to read the guidelines prior to preparing an application.
Incorporation	A voluntary process where a not-for-profit or community group becomes a legal entity, enabling it to enter into contracts, such as a funding agreement and open a bank account.
In-kind Support	Non-cash contributions such as volunteer labour or donated goods/services that directly support the delivery of the project or event.
Not-for-profit Organisation	An organisation that operates for purposes other than making a profit for its members, owners, or shareholders. It must use any surplus to further its objectives and be classified as not-for-profit under the Income Tax Assessment Act 1936.
Project	A set of organised activities that are planned to achieve a particular aim or outcome. It will have a defined start and end date.
Public Liability Insurance	Protects your organisation or community group financially if someone attending your activity or event is injured.
Recipient	The organisation awarded the grant to support a specific project, activity, or event.
SmartyGrants	The online grant management platform used by Council for the submission, tracking, and administration of grant applications.
SmartyFile	A SmartyFile profile enables you to collaborate with team members, pre-fill information into forms and manage, view, search and sort submissions. To learn more, visit SmartyFile

GRANTS PROGRAM 2025/26

Guidelines

Colac Otway Shire Grants Program



Colac Otway
SHIRE

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Acknowledgement

Colac Otway Shire Council proudly acknowledges the Gulidjan and Gadubanud peoples, past, present and emerging, as the traditional custodians of the Colac Otway region.

1. Objective

The Colac Otway Shire Grants Program provides one-off financial assistance grants to assist community organisations, event organisers and businesses in delivering projects and programs that benefit the wider community and help in achieving outcomes consistent with the 2021-2025 Council Plan.

The Grants Program supports projects and programs that improve strong and resilient economies, natural and built environments and healthy and inclusive communities.

2. Funding Streams

Colac Otway Shire Grants Program offers three funding streams:

Funding Stream	Grant Name	Grant Details	Amount
Community Grants	Community Grants	<p>Assist community groups to fund a broad range of community development projects, services, activities, equipment or new initiatives across Colac Otway Shire.</p> <p>These may address the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment • Arts & culture • Sport & recreation • Health & wellbeing, access, equity & Inclusive • Strategic Planning & Training • Community placemaking, Streetscape, Open Space infrastructure • Equipment • Facility upgrades 	\$10,000 max \$500 minimum
Events Grants	Community Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established community events • New one-off or start-up event 	\$5,000 max \$2,000 max \$500 minimum
	Tourism Events	<p>Established tourism event</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major community organised • Commercial event organiser • New event held by experienced major event organiser 	\$10,000 max \$ 5,000 max \$ 5,000 max \$500 minimum
	COPACC Hire Assistance	50% standard room hire for eligible schools within Colac Otway Shire.	\$5,000 max \$500 minimum
Business Grants	Building Façade Improvement Grant	<p>Façade improvements may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External Painting • Replace signage in poor condition • Replace hoardings • Cleaning the façade • Minor repairs, maintenance or reinstatement of missing elements • Minor repairs to existing façade tile or stone accents • Minor repairs to structural façade elements and awnings • New, repairs and replacements of verandah 	\$3,000 max \$500 minimum

3. Align with the Council Plan 2021-2025

Applications must align to at least one of the following themes in the Council Plan 2021-2025.

THEME 1 – STRONG & RESILIENT ECONOMY

- Key infrastructure investment supports our economy and liveability.

THEME 2 – VALUING THE NATURAL & BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- Mitigate impacts to people and property arising from climate change
- Protect and enhance the natural environment
- Reduce waste going to landfill
- Provide and maintain an attractive and safe built environment

THEME 3 – HEALTHY & INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

- All people have the opportunity to achieve and thrive in our shire
- People are active and socially connected through engaging quality spaces and places
- We are a safe, equitable and inclusive community

4. Important General Information	
One application can be submitted per organisation. Apply to the most relevant stream: 1. Community Grants 2. Event Grants 3. Business Grants* *Businesses may apply for one grant in a five-year period.	✓
The Grants Program is a competitive funding program. Submission of an application does not guarantee funding. Often more applications are received than the funding pool available.	✓
All applications require a dollar-for-dollar matching contribution of cash &/or in-kind.	✓
Applications that address gender equity are highly encouraged and prioritised through the assessment stage.	✓
Applicants are highly encouraged to use local trades and suppliers located in the Colac Otway Shire and will be prioritised in the assessment stage.	✓
Applications will only be received through Smartygrants - the online grant management program.	✓
Applications will not be considered for projects or events that have already received funding from Council.	✗
Applications received after the closing date/time will not be considered	✗
Requests for retrospective funding are not eligible. The project cannot commence, or equipment be purchased prior to signing the funding agreement.	✗
Canvassing or lobbying of Councillors, Council employees or members of the Assessment Panel is strictly prohibited.	✗
Colac Otway Shire reserves the right to decline any application that does not meet the eligibility criteria.	✗
Grant funds are released once funding conditions are met E.g., landowner consent conditions met &/or permits are obtained.	✗

If the applicant receives full funding for the project or event from another funding body, the Colac Otway Shire reserves the right to withdraw the grant. Applicant must contact Colac Otway Shire to discuss.	✘
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5. To Apply

Funding round	Applications open	Applications close
2025-2026 financial year	28 February 2025 at 9.00am	11 April 2025 at 5.00pm

The application link to apply is available on Council's website when the funding round is open.

Prepare early for your application.

1. Read the Guidelines and check your eligibility
2. Start early and prepare for your application by making sure you have the required information on hand including documents.
 - **A quote** is required for ALL applications to cover the value of the grant request and the matching dollar-for-dollar contribution. The quote must be prepared within the past three (3) months, must be itemised, and show GST if applicable.
 - **Landowner's consent** is required if you do not own the land or facility, and the proposed works are outside of the conditions in the lease or landowner's management agreement.
 - **Public liability insurance** is required for all projects and events (excluding equipment purchases). A Certificate of Currency (CoC) must be submitted with your application.
 - **Letter(s) of support** from organisation(s) involved or partnering in the proposed project or event, if applicable, to demonstrate community support.
 - **Permits and approvals may be required** for proposed projects or events. Obtaining relevant permits and approvals is separate to the grant application process and may require additional time and budget to be allocated in the project plan. You do not need to secure permits or approvals before applying, however if your funding application is successful, securing them will be a condition of the grant. Council will not make any grant payments until the relevant permits and approvals are obtained. You must demonstrate in your application that you are aware of the relevant permits and approvals that may apply to your project or event. If you are unsure about permits, please contact the Grants Officer to discuss your project or the Events Officer to discuss your event requirements.

Online applications are accepted through Smartygrants only. Applicants will be required to register or log in to Smartygrants to start a submission. Attachments can be uploaded in acceptable formats (refer to Applicant's Help Guide) and recommended size is 5mb, however 25mb is the limit.

Smartygrants Help Guide for Applicants: <https://applicanthelp.smartygrants.com.au/help-guide-for-applicants/>

Receipt of Application acknowledged

A Smartygrants acknowledgement email will be sent when your application has been submitted. Check that emails delivered from 'noreply@smartygrants.com.au' are not blocked or directed to your junk/spam folder.

6. Timelines

Applications open: 28 February 2025

Applications close: 11 April 2025

Notification of outcome: Late June/early July 2025

Funding agreements signed: July 2025

Projects commence: July 2025 onwards

Grants Presentation Ceremony: July 2025

Project completed: June 2026 or earlier (as per timeframes indicated in the application)

Please note dates are subject to change. Applicants will be notified of any changes if they arise.

7. Application Process

The Grants Program is a competitive process and applying does not guarantee funding. Eligible applications will be assessed by a panel of Council officers, based on the responses against the relevant assessment criteria.

If the grants program is over-subscribed, consideration of previous funding awarded will be applied.

8. Budget

All applications require a matching eligible dollar-for-dollar in-kind or cash contribution. The budget must accurately reflect the project or event's income and expenditure. Provide details of all income sources and list all expenditure costs involved in the project or event. Check if any permits are required and include the permit fee/s in the budget.

The budget must include the matching contribution required for your project or event which may include cash and/or in-kind (if relevant). Any other source of funding provided by Colac Otway Shire towards your project cannot be used as a matching contribution.

Quote/s must be included in the application to cover the value of the grant requested and the matching contribution.

The budget income and expenditure totals must balance.

Cash contributions

Cash contributions can be confirmed by providing a copy of a current Bank Statement or other evidence of bank balance for grant requests up to \$5,000. A Treasurer's report is also required for grant requests over \$5,000.

In-kind contributions

An in-kind contribution means support, other than cash, provided by your organisation towards the project. This can include voluntary labour or donated goods and services. In-kind contributions should be calculated from activities that directly contribute to the delivery of the project or event.

Eligible for In-kind contribution:

- Project management
- General maintenance or activities directly related to the project (eg painting, site preparation, landscaping)
- Donated goods & services

Ineligible for In-Kind contribution:

- Activities undertaken prior to the project are deemed ineligible for in-kind contribution including but not limited to:
 - Research, planning and application writing (undertaken prior to the commencement of the project)
 - Fundraising activities for a project. These should be completed prior to the application.
- Applicant's core operational maintenance (Eg Recreation reserve or public hall grounds maintenance)
- Official project opening
- The use of equipment purchased is not considered as in-kind. (it may be considered where an equipment purchase is part of a program or an element of a larger project).
- Operational costs and staff salaries such as:
 - Voluntary labour for time or services 'donated' should be additional & not part of the person's normal job at the applicant organisation.
 - Time or service or any employee whose role is funded, or for whom the funded activity would be within the usual scope of their job at the applicant organisation.
 - Expenditure items & use of equipment which form part of the core operational costs of the applicant organisation (eg insurance, printer)

An in-kind contribution will be:

- Recorded in the Budget table under income and under expenditure.
- Recorded in the in-kind table for voluntary labour, donated goods and services.
- Calculated at \$45 p/hour for volunteer professional/trade services.
- Calculated at \$25 p/hour for general volunteer labour.

In-kind contributions received

A record of the actual volunteer labour, donated goods and services contributed to the project or event delivery (calculated at the relevant provisional hourly rate) will be required in the Acquittal Report at the completion of the project or event. It is the applicant's responsibility to keep written records (e.g. letter of donations or receipts, volunteer hours) of the in-kind support committed or received.

9. Funding Details

- The grant recipient (or the Auspice that will manage the funds) will enter into a funding agreement with Colac Otway Shire Council which sets out the terms and conditions, payment details and reporting requirements.
- Depending on the proposal, specific funding conditions that relate to the project or event may be included in the Funding Agreement. For example: planning permit required, landowner's consent required, building permit required, Event in a Public Place permit required etc.
- Council may offer funding to a lesser amount than requested Eg. when parts of an application do not meet eligibility criteria, or there are limited funds remaining in the funding pool.
- The project must be completed within the financial year in which the grant is received. Any unspent funds must be returned to Colac Otway Shire Council.
- Funds must be spent on the activity as described in the application. Any variation to the approved activity must be submitted in a Variation Request form for approval prior to implementing changes.

- Grant recipients (or Auspice) without an Australian Business Number (ABN) must provide a completed Australian Tax Office form (Statement by a supplier) so that no withholding tax is required from the grant payment.
- **If you (or Auspice) are registered for GST**, you should not include GST in the budget expenses. Where applicable, Colac Otway Shire will pay the grant amount plus GST. A Tax Invoice must be provided to Colac Otway Shire. The budget provided in your application should be exclusive of GST. For example, if Contractors have quoted \$9,900 including GST, then you will request \$9,000 only.
- **If you (or Auspice) are not registered for GST**, ensure that the budget provided in your application covers the total cost of your expenses including GST where applicable (Eg include the impact of any GST on your purchase).
Ensure that the budget in your application covers your total costs so you are not out of pocket. Therefore, the budget provided in your application should be inclusive of GST.
For example, if contractors have quoted \$9,900 including GST, then request the full \$9,900.
- For grants above \$5,000, payments will be made in two instalments:
 - 90% paid upfront on signing the Agreement or when specific funding conditions have been met. Specific funding conditions may apply to your project or event, and these must be met prior to the release of the grant funds.
 - 10% paid upon satisfactory completion of the acquittal report.

10. Acknowledging Council's support and promoting success

Grant recipients are required to acknowledge the support from the *Colac Otway Shire Grants Program*.

Promotional guidelines form part of funding agreements and include the requirement that all activities acknowledge Colac Otway Shire Council's support through:

- Logo presentation on any activity-related publications
- Media releases
- Promotional material
- Social media
- Written or verbal acknowledgement at presentations or 'openings' and/or
- Installation of a Colac Otway Shire endorsed sign at the site of larger infrastructure activities.

Approval must be obtained to use Council's logo on any promotional material, website, social media etc. A proof of the promotional material should be sent along with the request to use the logo. Please contact Colac Otway Shire to obtain the current logo for use.

All grant recipients must provide an opportunity for a Councillor to attend the event/project for promotional purposes if requested. This may include handing out prizes after a sporting event, or a photo opportunity at the opening of a completed construction project.

11. Acquittal

At the completion of the project, an Acquittal Report must be submitted through Smartygrants. The report must include (where relevant):

- A summary of the project including comments on the things that went well and that you have learnt from the project.
- Project outcomes, achievements and how they align with Council Plan objectives.
- A project budget must be completed, including receipts or evidence of how the grant funds were expended.

- A record of In-kind labour &/or donated goods & service (if applicable).
- Details of local suppliers and contractors used.
- Copies of project promotional materials, social media posts, photographs, or video if available.
- Photographs of new equipment or completed works.
- Evidence of acknowledgement of Council's support e.g. club newsletter, media articles, social media etc.
- Business Grants Acquittal Form will be submitted at the completion of the project that demonstrates the improvements have the level of impact to the building facade as described in the application.

Outstanding Acquittal

Applicants that have an outstanding acquittal from any previous grant round will not be eligible to apply for any future grant round. Contact the Grants Officer to discuss if your current project will not be completed prior to the application closing date.

12. Privacy

The Colac Otway Shire Council is committed to protecting your privacy. We collect and handle any personal information about you or a third party in your application, for the purpose of administering your grant application and informing the public of successful applications.

For us to administer your grant application effectively and efficiently, we may need to disclose your personal information with others for the purpose of assessment, consultation, and reporting. This can include Council staff or Councillors.

Any personal information about you or a third party in your correspondence will be collected, held, managed, used, disclosed, or transferred in accordance with the provisions of the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)* and other applicable laws.

The Colac Otway Shire Council's Privacy Policy can be found at www.colacotway.vic.gov.au Enter a search for Privacy Statement.

Council uses an online grant application program called Smartygrants.

[Click Here](https://www.ourcommunity.com.au/privacy) to view Smartygrants Privacy Policy <https://www.ourcommunity.com.au/privacy>

13. Contact us

For queries relating to the grants program or assistance with the online application or further information, contact the Grants Officer between 8.30am and 5.00pm Monday to Friday.

Grants & Development Officer
Colac Otway Shire, 2-6 Rae Street Colac
T: (03) 5232 9400
E: inq@colacotway.vic.gov.au

Community Grants



The grants program supports community and recreation infrastructure improvements, community programs and activities, local community and tourism projects that contribute to community strengthening and bring a wide range of social and economic returns across the Shire.

Grants from \$500 up to \$10,000 maximum.

Grants are provided on a matching dollar for dollar cash and/or in-kind basis.

14.1 Who can apply?	
Applicant organisation located within the Colac Otway Shire boundary	✓
<p>Any of the following applicant organisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applicant organisation must meet the definition of a community group. A community group is defined as a group or organisation which works for the public benefit. Voluntary & Community Groups have the following characteristics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Organised</u>. A voluntary and community group has a structure with rules about how the group is organised and run. This is called a 'governing document' or 'constitution'. ○ <u>Self-governing and independent</u> from any other organisation. Voluntary and Community groups are independent and are free to appoint their own management committee. ○ <u>Not for Profit</u>. No one from within the group will profit from the group. For example, committee members should not be paid for their work and any profits generated should be reinvested in the group. ○ <u>Voluntary</u>. Voluntary and Community Groups are governed by a voluntary management committee and rely on the support of volunteers to carry out their activities. ○ <u>Public/community benefit</u>. The group will carry out activities which benefit a particulate group of people within the community. • Community Asset Committee established by Council (formerly called a Section 86 Committee) for the purpose of managing a community asset in the Colac Otway Shire. E.g. Recreation Reserve Committee, Public Hall committee • Not-for-profit, non-government organisation. 	✓
<p>Incorporated Organisations. If not incorporated, must arrange an eligible incorporated organisation to Auspice the grant, and include the Auspice's consent letter in the application.</p>	✓
<p>Applicants with an Australian Business Number (ABN). Or that have completed an Australian Tax Office form (Statement by a Supplier) so that no withholding tax is required from the grant payment.</p>	✓

14.2 Who cannot apply?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals • Businesses • Event organisers • Schools or Parents & Friends or similar groups affiliated with schools • Churches or other religious organisations • Non-incorporated groups who do not have an Auspice • Elected members (Councillors), Council employees (staff) <p>Note: Guidance and advice for grant applicants is available through Council's Grants Officer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant organisations (or Auspice) that are associated with or promote activities deemed inappropriate (including but not limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ any illegal activity ○ any activity not in accordance with relevant legislation; permitting; regulations etc. ○ tobacco ○ offensive or sexually explicit material ○ discrimination on the grounds of race, gender or religion ○ activities violating human rights ○ political parties ○ gambling 	✗
Applicants with an overdue Acquittal Report from a previous round. Contact Council's Grants Officer if you need to check.	✗

14.3 What may be funded?

Environmental projects – natural or built	✓
Energy Audits Type 1 for community facilities	✓
Arts & cultural projects	✓
Sport & recreation programs & projects	✓
Community programs and projects that encourage physical activity, health and wellbeing, improve equity, access and inclusion	✓
Strategic Planning activities e.g. master plans, feasibility plans, action plans or business plans for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Asset Committees of Council facilities/land/infrastructure • Other not-for-profit organisations on land /assets which are not owned or managed by Council, Government or other Authority may be considered. 	✓
Workshops, training, specialist skills programs, education or coaching courses for officials, administrators or general community members.	✓
Community infrastructure - Place making, streetscape and open space	✓
Equipment purchases that enhance the facility, are designed to remain part of a facility or which provide general benefit to the applicant organisation.	✓

Facilities upgrades - minor capital improvements of community and recreation facilities (up to \$20,000)	✓
Projects that address gender equity	✓
Minor repairs and works	✓
14.4 What may not be funded?	
Standard Council infrastructure e.g. footpaths, bins, drainage and road construction.	✗
Consumable items (e.g. sports balls, uniforms)	✗
Compliance related upgrades to Council owned buildings or requirements within the current lease or management agreement.	✗
Ongoing operational expenses and administrative costs e.g. rent, utility costs, salaries etc.	✗
Public liability or other insurance	✗
Capital expenditure projects over \$20,000 to Council buildings and assets	✗
Project management costs	✗
Projects undertaken outside of the funding period (financial year)	✗
Projects considered the responsibility of other Agencies	✗
Fundraising activities, prizes, gifts, awards or sponsorship costs, such as trophies, medals, money and vouchers	✗
Purchase of alcohol	✗
Activities and events held in a licensed gaming venue	✗
Food & Drink are not eligible expenditure. Consideration may be given if demonstrated to be integral to the delivery of a project.	✗
Requests for retrospective funding are not eligible. The project activity cannot commence, or equipment cannot be purchased prior to approval.	✗
Equipment purchased to undertake the works (e.g. ladders, gurneys, scaffolding, and safety barriers). Hiring of equipment is permitted when directly related to the project.	✗
Proposed works where landowner's consent or a permit has been refused.	✗
Strategic planning on land or assets owned by another Government entity or Authority	✗
Applications for projects that have already received funding from Council.	✗
Activities that could be considered core business i.e. those associated with the applicant organisation's normal or day-to-day operation (including regular projects, programs and activities, administration, staffing costs, insurances and permits.)	✗
Contingency costs	✗

Information you will need to provide as part of your application

You will need to provide the following documents as part of your application:

- Itemised quote(s) for the proposed works or equipment to cover the value of the grant requested and the matching contribution.
- Photographs of 'Before', if applicable. 'After' photos will be required in the Acquittal Report.

- **Permits and Approvals** Proposed projects may require permits or approvals. These processes are separate to the grant application process and require additional time and budget in the project plan. You do not need to secure permits or approvals before applying, but if your funding application is successful, securing them will be a condition of the grant. Council will not make any grant payments until the relevant permits and approvals are obtained. You must demonstrate in your application that you are aware of the required permits and approvals if required for your project. If you are unsure about permits, please contact Council's Grants Officer to discuss your project.
 - Planning Permit may be required for proposed works or use.
 - Building Permit may be required if proposed works include any structural works.
 - In principle support from Council may be required for any project on Council owned or managed land.

14.5 Assessment Criteria – Community Grants

Assessment Criteria 1 – What benefits will the project provide to your organisation and the broader community and alignment to Council Plan objectives? (Weighting 50%)

In your response, please describe:

- Alignment to Council plan objectives
- How is the project supporting the local community?
- Who is the target market to benefit from the project?
- Details of short term and long-term benefits.
- The expected number of people who will benefit from the project.

Assessment Criteria 2 – Why is this project needed? (Weighting 20%)

In your response, please describe:

- What demand exists that has created the idea for this project?
- The evidence to show why this approach will work?
- Provide support letters to demonstrate support from the community for your project and detail any discussions held with related groups in the area. (if applicable)
- Will the project be an innovative and creative response to the issue?
- Will the project address gender equity? Describe how. Priority will be given to projects that address gender equity.

Assessment Criteria 3 – How will the project be delivered? (Weighting 15%)

Applications must clearly demonstrate the capacity of the applicant to deliver the project.

In your response, please describe:

- Who will manage the project?
- What planning has been undertaken to complete this project?
- Detail the stages involved in your project and how you will deliver it.
- Details if it involves knowledge and skills development.
- Will it be sustainable? Explain how you intend to fund this project into the future.

- Demonstrated experience of the Applicant organisation to deliver and acquit the project within timeframes.

Assessment Criteria 4 – Who is involved? (Weighting 15%)

In your response, please describe:

- Are suppliers based in the Colac Otway shire? What percentage of suppliers or contractors are located in Colac Otway Shire? Priority will be given to the use of local trades and suppliers.
- Who are the partners?
- Will there be voluntary or in-kind contributions? Who is involved?
- How many people from your organisation will be involved?
- Does the project actively involve a range of stakeholders?

Events Grants



An event is any organised activity held on public or private land where an open area, facility, venue, road or temporary structure is to be used by more people than are usually found in that location.

Events can include but are not limited to:

- Cultural, Historical, Artistic (theatre, visual), Culinary, Sporting, Environmental
- Festivals, Live music events and performances
- Markets, Cinema in the park, Carnivals, Exhibitions, Community fair/shows

15.1 Community Events

Events must benefit Colac Otway Shire’s residents and businesses and have a strong community focus. Events should enhance the region’s profile, develop community cooperation and cohesion, build local skills, provide social opportunities or in other ways have a positive impact on the local community.

- Grants from \$500 up to \$5,000 to provide support for established events
- Grants from \$500 up to \$2,000 to provide support for new or one-off events
- COPACC Hire Assistance grants available for up to 50% of the cost of standard room hire for the provision of performing arts and cultural activities.
Grants from minimum \$500 to maximum \$5,000.

Grants are provided on a matching dollar-for-dollar cash and/or in-kind basis. In-kind contributions should be calculated from activities that directly contribute to the delivery of the event.

15.2 Tourism Events

Major events which attract a significant number of out of area visitors, with major branding/promotional opportunities for the host town & Colac Otway Shire.

- Grants from \$500 up to \$10,000 for major tourism events organised by local community
- Grants from \$500 up to \$5,000 maximum for major tourism events organised by commercial event organisers
- New tourism events, grants from \$500 up to maximum \$5,000. Event organiser must demonstrate previous experience in major events delivery.

Grants are provided on a matching dollar for dollar cash and/or in-kind basis. In-kind contributions should be calculated from activities that directly contribute to the delivery of the event.

15.3 Who can apply?	
<i>Event Organiser</i> definition - any individual, community group or entity who undertakes the planning, control, management and/or implementation of an event.	✓
Community groups/Clubs/Not-for-profit organisations based within Colac Otway Shire are eligible to apply for a Community Events grant, which may include COPACC venue hire.	✓
Applicant organisation must be one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Group Applicant organisation must meet the definition of a community group. A community group is defined as a group or organisation which works for the public benefit. Voluntary & Community Groups have the following characteristics: 	✓

<p><u>Organised.</u> A voluntary and community group has a structure with rules about how the group is organised and run. This is called a 'governing document' or 'constitution'.</p> <p><u>Self-governing and independent</u> from any other organisation. Voluntary and Community groups are independent and are free to appoint their own management committee.</p> <p><u>Not for Profit.</u> No one from within the group will profit from the group. For example, committee members should not be paid for their work and any profits generated should be reinvested in the group.</p> <p><u>Voluntary.</u> Voluntary and Community Groups are governed by a voluntary management committee and rely on the support of volunteers to carry out their activities.</p> <p><u>Public/community benefit.</u> The group will carry out activities which benefit a particulate group of people within the community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Asset Committee established by Council (formerly called a Section 86 Committee) for the purpose of managing a community asset in the Colac Otway Shire. E.g. Recreation Reserve Committee, Public Hall Committee • Not- for-profit, non-government organisations • Commercial Event Organiser who is a legal business entity holding an event with substantial community benefit in the Colac Otway Shire. 	✓
<p>Must be incorporated (<u>except</u> for Commercial Event Organiser legal business entity) If not incorporated, must arrange an eligible incorporated organisation to Auspice the grant, and include the Auspice's consent letter in the application.</p>	✓
<p>Applicants with an Australian Business Number (ABN). Or that have completed an Australian Tax Office form (Statement by a Supplier) so that no withholding tax is required from the grant payment.</p>	✓
<p>Primary/Secondary Schools based within Colac Otway Shire are eligible to apply for COPACC Hire Assistance only. Schools may apply for venue hire at their local Hall for annual school production performance if not feasible to attend COPACC.</p>	✓

15.4 Who cannot apply?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elected members (Councillors), Council employees (staff) • Applicant organisations (or Auspice) that are associated with or promote activities deemed inappropriate (including but not limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ any illegal activity ○ any activity not in accordance with relevant legislation; permitting; regulations etc ○ tobacco ○ offensive or sexually explicit material ○ discrimination on the grounds of race, gender or religion ○ activities violating human rights ○ political parties ○ gambling 	✗
<p>Applicants with an overdue Acquittal Report from a previous round. Contact the Grants Officer if you need to check.</p>	✗

15.5 What may be funded?	
Community Events that benefit Colac Otway Shire's residents and businesses and have a strong community focus.	✓
Tourism Events that attract significant numbers of out of area visitors, with major branding/promotional opportunities for the host town & Colac Otway Shire.	✓
Performing arts and cultural activities/events at COPACC	✓
Hire of entertainers & performers	✓
Traffic management plans and personnel for the event	✓
Promotional material for the event	✓
Event infrastructure and equipment hire costs (e.g. sound equipment, lighting, staging, portable toilets, fencing etc.). Use of local suppliers is encouraged	✓
Events that are inclusive and embrace, celebrate and promote diversity to connect our community.	✓
Commercial events subject to substantial community benefit in the Colac Otway Shire	✓
Events must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmentally sustainable initiatives to restrict use or distribution of single use plastics or products, including but not limited to bags, straws, cups, cutlery, balloons, bottled water. • Waste management plans that demonstrate a level of excellence in event management from an environmental aspect (includes rubbish removal, waste reduction, recycling) • Consideration of the environmental impact on the site selected. Events that include environmental waste initiatives to address waste reduction will be prioritised in the assessment stage.	✓
Hire of Council's Events Trailer	✓
Venue Hire	✓
15.6 What may not be funded?	
Applications received after the closing date/time will not be considered	✗
Requests for retrospective funding. The event expenditure cannot have occurred prior to signing the funding agreement.	✗
Activities that could be considered core business i.e. those associated with the applicant organisation's normal or day-to-day operation (including administration, staffing costs, insurances and permits.)	✗
Public Liability or other Insurance	✗
Events conducted completely outside of the Colac Otway Shire boundary	✗
Fundraising Events Events that are held primarily for the purpose of fundraising with the majority of profit generated distributed to a third-party organisation, agency or charity and that provide limited direct benefits to Colac Otway Shire residents/visitors, are not eligible for grant funding. Applications may be considered where fundraising is a secondary purpose and the proposed event: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will attract substantial local/visitor attendance, • provides direct benefit to Colac Otway Shire residents and • aligns with the Council Plan. 	✗

A second or subsequent element of an Event or Festival will not be funded where the main Event or Festival is to receive funding	✗
Event management costs	✗
Events held outside of the funding (financial year) period	✗
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weddings • Private / Family events • Events do not open to the general public • Prizes, gifts, awards or sponsorship costs, such as trophies, medals, money and vouchers 	✗
COPACC Hire Assistance does not include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional Cleaning fee • Box office fees • Security • Catering • Piano Tuning • Additional Labour charges • Specialised lighting 	✗
Events which are accepting sponsorship from companies that Council deem are not suitable or do not align with the Council Plan 2021-2025	✗
Contingency costs	✗
Purchase of alcohol	✗
Activities and events held in a licensed gaming venue	✗
Food & drink is not usually eligible, however, it may be considered for funding if demonstrated to be integral to the delivery of a project.	✗

Information you will need to provide as part of your application

You will need to provide Itemised quote(s) as part of your application to the value of the grant requested and the matching contribution.

15.7 Assessment Criteria - Community Events

Assessment Criteria 1 – Social opportunities (Weighting 50%)

Detail the community benefits provided by the event – short and long-term including:

In your response, please describe:

- How the event will create social gathering opportunities.
- The level to which people of diverse groups and ages are brought together.
- Evidence of how the event will positively impact the host community.
- Identify if the social opportunities are short (event specific) or long term (ongoing spin offs) in nature.
- Level of involvement by local volunteers (no. of people and hours).
- How the event caters for needs of all abilities (accessibility etc.)
- How will the event address gender equity? Priority will be given to events that address gender equity.
- The expected number of people who will attend the event, estimating:
 - Local resident numbers within Colac Otway Shire
 - Visitor numbers from outside of Colac Otway Shire

- New events should comment on why the event is needed? What demand exists?
- Does the event actively involve a range of stakeholders?
- Demonstrate support from the community & detail any discussions held with related groups in the area. (Letters of support may assist)

Assessment Criteria 2 - Environmental Sustainability (Weighting 20%)

In your response, please describe:

- How will you manage and reduce waste generated by the event?
- How your waste management plan includes recycling options and waste mitigation strategies?
- How the event will restrict use or distribution of single use plastics or products, including but not limited to bags, straws, cups, cutlery, balloons, bottled water?
- How the site will be returned to pre-event condition?

Assessment Criteria 3 – Event delivery (Weighting 15%)

Application must clearly demonstrate the capacity of the applicant to deliver the event.

In your response, please describe:

- Who will manage the event?
- Demonstrated experience of the Applicant to deliver and acquit the event within timeframes.
- What planning has been undertaken to deliver this event? Detail landowner consent and permits required.
- **Permits and Approvals** Events may require permits or approvals. These processes are separate to the grant application process and require additional time and budget in the event plan. You do not need to secure permits or approvals before applying, but if your funding application is successful, securing them is a condition of the grant. Council will not make any grant payments until the relevant permits and approvals are obtained. You must demonstrate in the application that you are aware of the necessary permits and approvals required for your event.

If you are unsure what permits and other approvals your event may require, please contact Council's Events Officer on 5232 9400 or inq@colacotway.vic.gov.au to discuss your event.

Approvals required may include any of the following:

- [An Event in a Public Place Permit](#)
- [A Place of Public Entertainment \(POPE\) permit](#)
- [Consumption of Liquor in a Public Place permit](#)
- [Temporary Limited Liquor License](#)
- A Planning Permit for the event (or specific elements related to the event) that is held on private land
- Detail the elements involved in your event and how you will deliver it.
- Will it be sustainable? Explain how you intend to fund this event into the future.

Assessment Criteria 4 – Economic return and who is involved (Weighting 15%)

In your response, please describe:

- The level of involvement of local businesses in the event both pre (supply chain expenditure in event set up) or during (stall holders). Priority will be given to the use of local trades and suppliers.
- What other key stakeholders in the community are involved in the event? Describe their level of involvement. (Letters of support may assist)

15.8 Assessment Criteria - Tourism Events**Assessment Criteria 1 - Community Economic development opportunities** (Weighting 40%)

Describe how the event will stimulate the economy including:

- Boosting off peak visitation, overnight stays and expenditure
- The amount of visitation/tourism from people attending from outside Colac Otway Shire and the length of stay during the event
- The level of pre training or visitation that the event will generate in the lead up to the event
- The level of expenditure these visitors will generate (or have generated historically)
- The opportunities where Colac Otway Shire or the host township can be promoted, the nature of this promotion and the marketing reach
- The level of involvement of local businesses in the event both pre (supply chain expenditure in event set up) or during (stall holders)
- The ability of the event to trigger repeat visitation to Colac Otway Shire
- Reinforce and/or strengthen the desired 'brand' of the host township or Colac Otway Shire in a positive way.

Assessment Criteria 2 - Social opportunities (Weighting 25%)

Detail the community benefits provided by the event – short and long-term including:

- How the event will create social gathering opportunities
- The level to which people of diverse groups and ages are brought together
- Evidence of how the event will positively impact the host community
- Identify if the social opportunities are short (event specific) or long term (ongoing spin offs) in nature
- Level of involvement by local volunteers (No. of people and hours)
- How the event caters for needs of all abilities (accessibility etc.)
- How will the event address gender equity? Priority will be given to events that address gender equity.
- The expected number of people who will attend the event, estimating:
 - Local Colac Otway Shire resident numbers
 - Visitor numbers from outside of Colac Otway Shire (e.g. 2000 – 5000 attendees or above)

Assessment Criteria 3 - Environmental sustainability (Weighting 20%)

Does the event plan for and contribute to:

- Positive environmentally sustainable outcomes in the short (event specific) or longer term
- Provide an element of environmental education or awareness for attendees

- A level of excellence in event management from an environmental aspect (includes rubbish removal, waste reduction, recycling, techniques that minimise the carbon footprint of the event)
- Restricted use or distribution of single use plastics or products, including but not limited to bags, straws, cups, cutlery, balloons, bottled water.

Assessment Criteria 4 – Event delivery? (Weighting 15%)

Must clearly demonstrate the capacity of the applicant to deliver the event.

In your response, please describe:

- Detailed Event Program
- What planning has been undertaken e.g. meeting with Events officer, detail Landowner consent & what permits will be required?
- **Permits and Approvals** Events may require permits or approvals. These processes are separate to the grant application process and require additional time and budget in the event plan. You do not need to secure permits or approvals before applying, but if your funding application is successful, securing them is a condition of the grant. Council will not make any grant payments until the relevant permits and approvals are obtained. You must demonstrate in the application that you are aware of the necessary permits and approvals required for your event.
- Detail the stages involved in your event and how you propose to deliver it.
- Demonstrated experience of the Applicant organisation to deliver and acquit the event within timeframes.
- Who will manage the event and relevant experience?
- Will it be sustainable? Explain how you intend to fund this event into the future.

All applicants should discuss their event with Council's Event Officer between Monday to Friday, 9.00am - 5.00pm on (03) 5232 9400 or inq@colacotway.vic.gov.au.

Business Grants



Council supports local businesses through Business Grants.

The **Building Façade Improvement Program** supports businesses to revitalise the shopping strips across the Shire.

Grants from \$500 up to \$3,000 maximum available. Grants require a matching dollar-for-dollar cash contribution.

16.1 Building Façade Improvement Program

The Building Façade Improvement Program assists businesses to improve the appearance of their building facades and increase the overall attractiveness of the shopping strips in Colac, Apollo Bay and the small towns throughout the Shire.

16.1.1 Who can apply?	
Businesses located in the commercial area of towns within the Colac Otway Shire	✓
Business must have street frontage	✓
Building owner or Lessee/Business owner	✓
16.1.2 Who cannot apply?	
Elected members (Councillors), Council employees (staff) Note that guidance and advice for Applicants is available through Council's Grants Officer.	✗
Applicant organisation (or Auspice) that are associated with or promote activities deemed inappropriate (including but not limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> any illegal activity any activity not in accordance with relevant legislation; permitting; regulations etc. tobacco offensive or sexually explicit material discrimination on the grounds of race, gender or religion activities violating human rights political parties gambling 	✗
Applicants with an overdue Acquittal Report from a previous round. Contact the Grants Officer if you need to check.	✗
16.1.3 What may be funded?	
Commercial building façade improvements may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exterior painting of retail business building façade Cleaning the existing façade Removal or replacement of redundant signage, air conditioning units and hoardings Replacement of signage in disrepair Minor repairs, maintenance or reinstatement of missing elements Minor repairs to existing façade tile or stone accents Minor repairs to structural façade elements and awnings 	✓

• New, repairs and replacements of verandahs	
Proposed works must be visible from the street	✓
The use of local trades and suppliers is strongly encouraged & will be prioritised in the assessment stage.	✓
16.1.4 What may not be funded?	
Re-branding of existing signage that is in good condition	✗
Proposed works where a permit has been refused	✗
Requests for retrospective funding. The project cannot commence prior to approval.	✗
Equipment purchased to undertake the works (e.g. Ladders, gurneys, scaffolding, and safety barriers). Hiring of equipment is permitted when directly related to the project.	✗
Internal works or works which are not visible from the street.	✗
Contingency costs	✗
Activities that could be considered core business i.e. those associated with the Applicant organisation's normal or day-to-day operation (including regular projects and activities, administration, staffing costs, insurances and permits).	✗
Residential based businesses, including Airbnb or similar type accommodation	✗

Information you will need to provide as part of your application

You will need to provide the following documents as part of your application:

- An itemised quote for the proposed works to cover the value of the grant request and the matching contribution.
- If proposing the painting of a building, the colour palette will need to be provided for approval by Council.
- Photographs of the building 'Before'. 'After' photos will be required in the Acquittal Report.
- **Permits and Approvals** Proposed projects may require permits or approvals. These processes are separate to the grant application process and require additional time and budget in the project plan. You do not need to secure permits or approvals before applying, but if your funding application is successful, securing them will be a condition of the grant. Council will not make any grant payments until the relevant permits and approvals are obtained. You must demonstrate in your application that you are aware of the required permits and approvals for your project. If you are unsure about permits, please contact the Grants Officer to discuss your project.
 - Planning Permit may be required for proposed building facade works e.g. signage, painting, verandahs and works on a heritage listed building or a building in an area covered by a heritage overlay.
 - Building Permit may be required if the proposed facade improvements include any structural works.
 - Public Protection (Hoarding) Permit may be required.
- An Acquittal Form will be submitted at the completion of the project that demonstrates the improvements have the level of impact to the building facade as described in the application.

16.1.5 Assessment Criteria - Building Façade Improvement

Assessment Criteria 1 – Description of works (Weighting 75%)

Provide a detailed description of the proposed works and specify the area of the façade to be worked on.

- Are the works visible from the street? What street will the works be visible from?
 - works above the verandah e.g. painting, replacement signage, replace heritage elements, cleaning.
 - works below the verandah? e.g. painting, tile repairs
 - Works along the verandah / awning fascia? e.g. replace rusted fascia & signage
 - Works on the shop window? e.g. replacement signage, replacement window frames
- Describe the level of visual impact expected as a result of the façade works?
- What percentage of the façade will be included in the improvement works?

Assessment Criteria 2 – Economic Return (Weighting 10%)

- Will local suppliers and contractors (within the Colac Otway Shire) be engaged to undertake the works?
- What percentage of the works will be procured locally?

Assessment Criteria 3 – Capacity to deliver (Weighting 15%)

Must clearly demonstrate the capacity of the applicant to deliver the project.

- Has the project been fully scoped and costed as part of the project plan?
- Applicant has researched and demonstrated awareness of permit requirements?
- Is the timeframe to complete the project within the funding period?

Item: 7.3

Apollo Bay Structure Plan Review - Community Reference Group Additional Member Selection

OFFICER	Erin Sonogo
GENERAL MANAGER	Ian Seuren
DIVISION	Community and Economy
ATTACHMENTS	Nil

1. PURPOSE

To consider the appointment of additional members to the Apollo Bay Structure Plan Review Community Reference Group (CRG).

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the Council meeting held on 9 December 2025, it was resolved to appoint nine community members to the Apollo Bay Structure Plan Review Community Reference Group (CRG). Council received nine nominations and determined to appoint all nine community members to the group. The Terms of Reference for the group states that the CRG will be comprised of 8 to 10 members.

The Apollo Bay Community Voice (ABCV) has requested that Council consider two late additional nominations for membership of the Apollo Bay Structure Plan Review Community Reference Group (CRG). Council is responsible for considering nominations and appointing nominees to the CRG.

An introductory meeting with the CRG was held prior to Christmas. Since then, one member has withdrawn from the group.

It is recommended that the two additional nominees be appointed to the CRG. No changes to the Terms of Reference are proposed.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Notes that the Apollo Bay Community Voice has requested that Council consider two late nominees from their organisation to the Apollo Bay Structure Plan Review Community Reference Group, as listed in the confidential attachment to this report.***
- 2. Agrees to appoint one representative from the Apollo Bay Community Voice to the Apollo Bay Structure Plan Review Community Reference Group.***
- 3. Writes to the Apollo Bay Community Voice requesting that they confirm which nominee will represent their organisation on the Apollo Bay Structure Plan Review Community Reference Group.***
- 4. Informs the established Community Reference Group about the decision to appoint an additional member.***

4. KEY INFORMATION

The Council Committees Policy identifies a Community Reference Group (CRG) as a 'Special Purpose Committee' which requires Council's approval for its establishment. The Apollo Bay Structure Plan Review CRG was established in accordance with this policy at the Council meeting held on 9 December 2025.

Currently the CRG comprises eight members, with one member from the original group of nine withdrawing shortly after appointment. The Terms of Reference states that the CRG will be comprised of 8 to 10 members.

The ABCV recently asked Council if two late membership nominations could be submitted. Officers agreed to that the request be considered on the following grounds:

- The inclusion of any additional member/s would be consistent with the Terms of Reference.
- Although one introductory CRG meeting has been held, the project is still in the preliminary stages and there would be no interruption to the group's activities as a result of the appointment of the additional members.
- An appointed CRG member has since withdrawn from the group.
- Appointment of any additional member/s would support broader community representation.

5. CONSIDERATIONS

Overarching Governance Principles (s(9)(2) LGA 2020)

The purpose of the CRG is to ensure that a diverse and representative range of views about the project are heard and help inform the project. The appointment of any additional members would be consistent with this purpose and in the interests of community involvement more broadly.

Policies and Relevant Law (s(9)(2)(a) LGA 2020)

The appointment of any additional members to the CRG through this process would be consistent with the Council Committees Policy.

Environmental and Sustainability Implications (s(9)(2)(c) LGA 2020)

There are no direct implications as a result of the appointment of the CRG; however, facilitating the input of local knowledge into the project should help ensure that the relevant environmental considerations are identified and considered.

Community Engagement (s56 LGA 2020 and Council's Community Engagement Policy)

The establishment of a Community Reference Group facilitates community involvement, to contribute local knowledge to a project and ensure informed decision-making. A Community Engagement Plan is to be prepared as part of the project.

Public Transparency (s58 LGA 2020)

The Community Reference Group, which has already been established, will be invited to promote public awareness of the project, to facilitate engagement and transparency.

Alignment to Plans and Strategies

Alignment to Council Plan 2025-2029:

Theme 1 – PLACE

- 1.1 Enliven and beautify our townships and natural environments
- 1.2 Enhance our community and social spaces and collaborate with communities to deliver healthy and climate resilient environments
- 1.4 Ensure our region offers a diversity of economic opportunities supported by an array of housing options

Financial Management (s101 Local Government Act 2020)

Council has allocated \$200,000 to undertake the Apollo Bay Structure Plan review.

Service Performance (s106 Local Government Act 2020)

The Community Reference Group will be managed by the Strategic Planning project team to support the review of the Apollo Bay Structure Plan.

Risk Assessment

Not applicable.

Communication/Implementation

Should Council appoint any additional Community Reference Group nominees, officers will inform them, and the current members of the CRG, of the outcome.

Human Rights Charter

No impact.

Officer General or Material Interest

No officer declared an interest under the *Local Government Act 2020* in the preparation of this report.

Options

Option 1 – Endorse the appointment of one additional member to represent the Apollo Bay Community Voice.

This option is recommended by officers, as it would provide a representative from the Apollo Bay Community Voice and ensure that the project is informed by a wider range of viewpoints and expertise.

Option 2 – Appoint two additional Community Reference Group members, as nominated by the Apollo Bay Community Voice.

This option is not recommended, as it is considered sufficient for one person to represent the Apollo Bay Community Voice.

Option 3 – Do not endorse the appointment of the nominees to the Community Reference Group.

This option is not recommended, as it is not considered that there is any reason to exclude a representative from the Apollo Bay Community Voice.

Item: 7.4 Governance Report - Monthly

OFFICER	Matilda Hardy-Smith / Belinda Rocka
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Andrew Tenni
DIVISION	Executive
ATTACHMENTS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Corrected Minutes - 25 March 2025 Council Meeting - open session [7.4.1 - 39 pages] 2. Informal Meeting of Councillors Record Planning Consultation Meeting 30 Pascoe [7.4.2 - 2 pages] 3. Informal Meeting of Councilors - Councillor briefing 2 December 2025 [7.4.3 - 2 pages] 4. Informal Meeting of Councilors - 9 Dec 2025 Council Meeting [7.4.4 - 4 pages] 5. Informal Meeting of Councilors - 16 December 2025 Councillor Briefing [7.4.5 - 2 pages] 6. Informal Meeting of Councilors - Councillor Briefing 3 Feb 2026 [7.4.6 - 3 pages] 7. For Council Resolution Instrument of Authorisation Planning and Environment Ac [7.4.7 - 1 page] 8. Unconfirmed - Audit and Risk Committee Meeting Minutes - 11 December 2025 [7.4.8 - 24 pages]

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a clear and transparent overview of governance practices in alignment with the principles of public transparency and the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the first Governance Report provided to Council and will be provided monthly ongoing.

The Governance practices being reported on in this report are:

- Correction to the Council Meeting minutes for the meeting held on 25 March 2025 in relation to noting Declarations of Interest.
- Informal Meetings of Councillors
- Appointment of Brett Harris as an Authorised Officer pursuant to section 147(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (refer Attachment 6)
- Tabling of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting Unconfirmed Minutes from 11 December 2025
- Revocation and appointment of members to the Cororooke Hall Community Asset Committee.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Notes and confirms the correction made to the 25 March 2025 Council Meeting minutes (Attachment 1) in relation to Declarations of Interest declared at that meeting.***
- 2. Appoints Brett Harris as an Authorised Officer pursuant to section 147(4) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (Attachment 6).***
 - a. Authorises the use of the common seal in accordance with Colac Otway Shire Council's Governance Local Law No 4 – 2020.***
 - b. Notes that the Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation comes into force immediately the common seal of Council is affixed to the instrument and remains in force until Council determines to vary the instrument.***
 - c. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to revoke the Instrument of Authorisation from the date Brett Harris ceases their employment with Colac Otway Shire Council.***
- 3. Notes the Informal Meetings of Councillor Records reported for the period of 21 November 2025 to 3 February 2026.***
- 4. That Council receives for information the Colac Otway Shire Audit and Risk Committee confirmed minutes dated 11 December 2025 (Attachment 7).***
- 5. Revoke membership for Kerrie Thackeray of the Cororooke Hall Community Asset Committee and acknowledges the contribution made to the Committee and Cororooke community.***
- 6. Add membership for Kylie Hughes, Justine McCarthy, Lisa Parker, Darrell Cook, Penny Reed, Rachel McCallum, Aaron Price, Leon Baggott and Janet Ross to the Cororooke Public Hall Community Asset Committee.***

4. KEY INFORMATION

Council has introduced this monthly Governance Report, to provide Council with a clear and transparent overview of governance practices in alignment with the principles of public transparency and the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

This is the first Governance Report and will be reported monthly to Council. This report includes the following Governance matters.

25 March 2025 Council Meeting Minutes

The meeting minutes have been corrected to reflect the Declarations of Interest that were declared during that meeting. (Attachment 1) They had previously only been recorded as part of the Confidential Council minutes for the same date, as the conflicts related to confidential items.

Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation – Brett Harris

Brett Harris commenced as a Local Laws Officer on 15 December 2025. To fulfill this function Brett requires authorisation under the Act.

The Act sets out procedures for preparing and amending the Victoria Planning Provisions and planning schemes. It also sets out the process for obtaining permits under schemes, settling disputes, enforcing compliance with planning schemes and permits, and other administrative procedures.

Various staff members within Council's Planning team are required to undertake assessments, give advice, or investigate various issues in relation to the Act. To undertake these assessments legally, particularly during issues of noncompliance, authorisation under the Act is required.

The officer nominated to be appointed as an Authorised Officer under the Act has been employed to fulfil specific roles and responsibilities as documented in their position description. Their experience and capabilities that enable them to fulfil their duties have been assessed through the recruitment process, and accordingly they are deemed to be suitable for appointment as an Authorised Officer.

Legal advice recommends authorised officers be appointed by Council using an instrument to address specific authorisation provisions of s 147(4) of the Act versus the broader authorisations of section 224 of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

Update to Cororooke Hall Community Asset Committee

Colac Otway Shire Council is currently supported by 19 Community Asset Committees (CACs), which have been appointed to manage a range of public halls, recreation reserves, and sporting facilities across the municipality.

In accordance with Section 65 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council is requested to approve changes to the membership of various Community Asset Committees (CAC). These changes include the revocation of existing memberships and the appointment of new members, ensuring continued community representation and effective local governance of Council-managed facilities.

This report proposes to revoke Community Asset Committee member Kerrie Thackeray (appointed by Council on 14 December 2022). This report also proposes to add new Community Asset Committee membership for Kylie Hughes, Justine McCarthy, Lisa Parker, Darrell Cook, Penny Reed, Rachel McCallum, Aaron Price, Leon Baggott and Janet Ross.

For committee memberships appointed by Council resolution prior to 27 November 2024, revocation of membership must also occur via Council resolution. For appointments made since 27 November 2024, memberships are considered to cease upon the resignation of the

member. However, the authority to appoint and revoke committee memberships may be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to enable a more efficient and timely administrative process.

Audit and Risk Committee Meeting Unconfirmed Minutes 11 December 2025

The Audit and Risk Committee Charter (adopted by Council on 25 February 2025), requires that the draft minutes of each meeting be presented to the next practicable Council meeting.

The Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) play an important role in providing oversight of Colac Otway Shire Council's governance, risk management, internal control practices, internal and external audit functions. This oversight mechanism also serves to provide confidence in the integrity of these practices.

Section 53(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* stipulates that a Council must establish an ARC. The Colac Otway Shire ARC consists of two Councillors and four independent members. The ARC meets at least four times per year.

The ARC Charter states that the draft minutes of Committee meetings will be prepared and circulated to Committee members within ten working days of each meeting. These draft minutes will then be presented as 'unconfirmed minutes' to the next practicable Council meeting to ensure that Council receives the Committee's advice in a timely manner.

If the ARC determines that changes are required to the unconfirmed minutes (i.e changes other than minor administrative changes), then the final minutes will be re-presented to Council.

The ARC will confirm any unconfirmed minutes at its next meeting.

The unconfirmed minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee held on 11 December are presented at Attachment 7.

Informal Meetings of Councillor Records

The Colac Otway Shire Governance Rules require that records of informal meetings of Councillors which meet the following criteria:

If there is a meeting of Councillors that:

- *Is scheduled or planned for the purpose of discussing the business of Council or briefing Councillors*
- *Is attended by at least one member of Council staff*
- *Is not a Council meeting, Delegated Committee meeting or Community Asset Committee meeting*

be tabled at the next convenient meeting of Council and recorded in the minutes of that Council meeting.

All relevant meetings have been recorded and documented, as attached.

The following Informal Meetings of Councillors have been held and are attached to this report. This includes a correction to the meeting record for Councillor Briefing held on 2 December 2025. The correction provides the reason for a Conflict of Interest declared.

Planning Consultation Meeting – PP125/2025-1 30 Pascoe Street, Apollo Bay	21 November 2025
Councillor Briefing	2 December 2025
Council Meeting Preparation	9 December 2025
Councillor Briefing	16 December 2025
Councillor Briefing	3 February 2026

5. CONSIDERATIONS

Overarching Governance Principles (s(9)(2) LGA 2020)

- (i) the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured

Policies and Relevant Law (s(9)(2)(a) LGA 2020)

Planning and Environment Act 1987.

Environmental and Sustainability Implications (s(9)(2)(c) LGA 2020)

Not applicable.

Community Engagement (s56 LGA 2020 and Council's Community Engagement Policy)

Not applicable.

Public Transparency (s58 LGA 2020)

- (c) Council information must be understandable and accessible to members of the municipal community;
- (d) public awareness of the availability of Council information must be facilitated.

Alignment to Plans and Strategies

Alignment to Council Plan 2025-2029:

Theme 2 - PEOPLE

3.1 - Elevate the efficiency and effectiveness of our Council

3.2 - Make well-informed, transparent decisions for the betterment of the community through best-practice governance

Financial Management (s101 Local Government Act 2020)

Not applicable.

Service Performance (s106 Local Government Act 2020)

Not applicable.

Risk Assessment

Not applicable.

Communication/Implementation

The attached Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation (*Planning and Environment Act 1987*) come into force immediately upon execution.

Human Rights Charter

No impact.

Officer General or Material Interest

No officer declared an interest under the *Local Government Act 2020* in the preparation of this report.

Options

Option 1 – Adopt the officers recommendation.

This option is recommended by officers to remove volunteers from the Cororooke Public Hall CAC and add memberships as requested and authorisation under the *Planning Act* is required for Local Laws Officers to perform their role.

Option 2 – Not adopt the officers recommendation.

This option is not recommended by officers as members of Community Asset Committees are volunteers in our community and perform valuable work to maintain Councils assets and Local Laws Officers require authorisation under the *Planning Act* to perform their role.



Council Meeting Minutes

25 March 2025 at 1pm

COPACC Meeting Rooms 1 and 2

COLAC OTWAY SHIRE COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday 25 March 2025

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COLAC OTWAY SHIRE COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES of the **COUNCIL MEETING OF THE COLAC OTWAY SHIRE COUNCIL** held at COPACC on Tuesday 25 March 2025 at 1:00 PM.

MINUTES

1 DECLARATION OF OPENING OF MEETING

OPENING PRAYER

Almighty God, we seek your blessing and guidance in our deliberations on behalf of the people of the Colac Otway Shire. Enable this Council's decisions to be those that contribute to the true welfare and betterment of our community.

AMEN

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Colac Otway Shire acknowledges the original custodians and law makers of this land, their elders past, present and emerging.

RECORDING AND PUBLICATION OF MEETINGS

Please note: All Council meetings will be live streamed and recorded when the meeting is held either at COPACC or online. This includes the public participation sections of the meetings. When meetings are held in other locations, Council will endeavour to make an audio recording of the meeting for community access. Matters identified as confidential items in the Agenda will not be live streamed or recorded regardless of venue or mode.

By participating in open Council meetings, individuals consent to the use and disclosure of the information they share at the meeting (including any personal and/or sensitive information).

As soon as practicable following each open Council meeting, the live stream recording will be accessible on Council's website. Audio recordings are also taken to facilitate the preparation of the minutes of open Council meetings and to ensure their accuracy. Recordings will be retained by Council for a period of four years.

This meeting will be livestreamed to the public via Council's YouTube channel (search Colac Otway Shire Council at www.youtube.com).

3 MEETING ADMINISTRATION

3.1 Present

Cr Jason Schram (Mayor)
 Cr Phil Howard (Deputy Mayor)
 Cr Chris Potter
 Cr Zoe Hudgell
 Cr Charlie Buchanan
 Cr Mick McCrickard
 Cr Chrissy De Deugd

Anne Howard, Chief Executive Officer
 Andrew Tenni, General Manager Corporate Services
 Doug McNeill, Acting General Manager Infrastructure and Operations
 Ian Seuren, General Manager Community and Economy
 Steven O'Dowd, Manager Governance, Customer and Communications
 Matilda Hardy-Smith, Coordinator Council Business
 Kendrea Pope, Senior Governance Advisor

3.2 Apologies and Leaves of Absence

Nil.

3.3 Confirmation of Minutes

Moved Cr Potter, Seconded Cr McCrickard

RECOMMENDATION

That Council confirm the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 25 February 2025 subject to consideration of an item of closed business at Item 2.4 of the Confidential Agenda of the Closed Session to be held later this afternoon.

CARRIED 7 : 0

3.4 Declarations of Interest

Cr Hudgell	General	Item 2.2 (confidential agenda) – Cinema Expression of Interest Process	Business uses facilities.
CEO, Anne Howard	Material	Item 2.4 (confidential agenda) – 25 February 2025 Council Meeting minutes and footage.	Item considers a matter that may relate to personal interests.

CEO, Anne Howard	Material	Item 2.5 (confidential agenda) – Chief Executive Officer Employment Matters Advisory Committee (minutes) – meeting held 18 February 2025.	Item considers matters of Anne Howards employment.
Ian Seuren	General	Item 2.1 (confidential item) Aged services – Extension of Community Home Support Program Funding to Great Ocean Road Health	Family receives services through Council.

4 QUESTION TIME

A maximum of 30 minutes is allowed for question time. To ensure that each member of the gallery has the opportunity to ask questions, it may be necessary to allow a maximum of two questions from each person in the first instance. Question time is not a forum for public debate or statements.

QUESTIONS RECEIVED IN WRITING PRIOR TO THE MEETING

James Judd

1. Due to the large number of items that cannot be recycled because of wind farm and solar farms being decommissioned, plus expired solar panels in the near future. It is estimated that a minimum of 4000 tons of non-recyclable waste will have to go to landfill per year, for the next 15 years. What Impact will this have on Councils ability to provide a waste collection for garbage that must go in the red top garbage bin?
2. Will garbage collection fees increase many times the inflation rates each year?
3. Now that it is out that Wind Farms only have a life span of about 25 years and solar farms only have a similar life span, does the Colac Otway Shire Council have definitive knowledge that renewable energy will still be available by the time the Colac 2050 Growth Plan is introduced?
4. How long before the 10-year performance warranty on the Solar Panels put in at the Bluewater Complex in Colac, held by this Council, are due to expire?

Response from General Manager Infrastructure and Environment

The potential increase in waste created by solar panels that have reached their end of life is a future challenge for the broader waste industry. It will be important to encourage recycling of these panels where practicable. Used solar panels would be dropped by the public at transfer stations and disposed of as required. It will not impact the capacity

of Council to collect kerbside waste. Future waste related fees and charges imposed by Council will be influenced by a wide range of factors, most particularly increasing costs over time to collect and dispose of waste.

Council has been in the process of implementing the 2050 Colac Growth Plan since its adoption in 2018, evidenced by rezoning of land at two sites in Elliminyt in 2024 to facilitate residential development. This planning and development is not influenced by the availability or otherwise of renewable energy. It is noted that State and Federal Government policies are to significantly increase the amount of renewable energy over the coming decade.

The Bluewater solar panels were installed in June 2018 and will be under warranty until 2028. It is anticipated that they will continue to generate >80% of their original warranted minimum power output for at least 25 years if maintained and serviced as required. All solar panel systems are listed on Council's asset register and scheduled for maintenance, renewal and replacement as required for such assets.

Graham Costin

Council Question Time allows residents and ratepayers to submit written questions to be read out and answered during Council meetings. It provides residents and ratepayers an opportunity for open engagement, transparency and accountability.

A consequence of Council's move to new meeting times is there is now a much shortened timeframe between release of the agenda and the deadline for submission of written questions.

Previously, the deadline for written questions was 5.00pm Monday preceding the Wednesday Council meeting. This allowed officers a day and a half to consider the questions and prepare written responses for the meeting. Community members had 4 days (Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday) to peruse the agenda and submit written questions. However, the new arrangements require written questions to be submitted by 5.00pm on the Friday before the Tuesday Council meeting.

If Council meeting agendas are released on time (i.e. 12pm on the Thursday before the Tuesday meeting), the new arrangements mean residents and ratepayers have only 32 hours to read the Council agenda and to submit a written question. This 32 hours includes 8 hours for sleeping, 12 or more hours for working, and variable hours for meal preparation and family activities. In effect, many community members may have no discretionary time to read the agenda and submit written questions, especially so if the release of the agenda is delayed.

I believe the new timeframe for the submission of written questions greatly reduces the opportunities for residents and ratepayers for public engagement, transparency and accountability.

1. Will Council allow written questions to be submitted up until 9.00 am on the Monday morning preceding the Council meeting (noting this timing still allows officers the same day and a half to consider the questions and prepare answers as was previously the case)?

Response from Manager Governance, Customer and Communications

This would require a change to the Council Governance Rules. We will ensure this is listed for consideration when Council reviews the rules, taking into account the impacts of the change in Council meeting day and time you have identified.

Graham Costin

It's fantastic to hear a contract has been awarded for the much-needed reconstruction of Apollo Bay's Pengilley Avenue. Council officers will no doubt be aware that the proposed works will impact on public access to Apollo Bay's Ambulance Station, Medical Centre, Childcare Centre, Neighbourhood House, Library and Gym. Also impacted, but to a lesser extent (detours available), are the RSL, Kindergarten and P-12 College.

Pengilley Ave is heavily used for on-street parking by those using these facilities as off-street parking appears to cater for less than a third of the existing demand. I expect there will also be extended periods during the reconstruction when accesses to the off-street parking areas are blocked.

1. What arrangements have been made for alternate parking, particularly for disabled and elderly persons accessing the impacted facilities?
2. Does the reconstruction contract include requirements to minimise the on- and off-street parking impacts, and/or ensure safe and inclusive access to these facilities?
3. If not, how will Council ensure safe and inclusive accesses to the impacted facilities are maintained?

The 2023 reconstruction of nearby McLachlan St dragged on for almost a year with no work undertaken for months at a time.

4. When are the reconstruction works programmed to commence?
5. What is the expected completion date? Does the reconstruction contract include penalties for delayed completion?
6. If not, how will Council ensure the works are completed within a reasonable timeframe?

Response from General Manager Infrastructure and Environment

Council is aware of the number of community stakeholders who would be impacted by the road reconstruction works in Pengilley Avenue and will ensure there is effective communication on the timing and nature of the works. A detailed work schedule is being developed to outline all phases of the construction process and this will be communicated to the affected persons in surrounding areas through a series of letter drops which indicate the proposed commencement date and provide an overview of the planned activities. This proactive communication is crucial to minimise disruption and ensure that all stakeholders are well-informed about the construction timeline and the specific impacts they might experience. A critical priority for communication during the project is with Ambulance Victoria and Great Ocean Road Health. It is noted that despite the proposed works, parking for disabled persons and the broader community will be available and the footpath will remain open to public access for business and local residences. Local traffic will be able to access residences during construction. The works are expected to commence early in May and be completed by 30 June 2025. The contract includes financial penalties if the project is not completed on-time. Further information on specific details of the project can be obtained by contacting the project manager.

James Judd

1. Are any revaluations conducted by the shire engaged valuers using actual property area to set valuations on or is this set on persistent changing of property holding when no variation takes place?
2. How many others in this shire are charged rates on land they do not own or have no access to with false areas stated on rate notices in the hope people will not object to new valuation and risk council receiving changed rate income?

Response from General Manager Corporate Services

The valuers conducting the municipal valuation are appointed by the Valuer General Victoria- not Council. The valuers use a valuation software that contains land area data that is derived from Land Victoria's property records.

Other than in some commercial or industrial property arrangements where responsibility for the payment of rates may be passed onto the business leasing commercial properties, rates are charged on the owner of the property. No one in the shire is levied rates for land they don't own or have an occupancy right for. Ratepayers have a two month period each year after the annual Valuation and Rates notice is issued in which to object to any details on their notice (including the land area). Council encourages people to exercise their right to object to the valuation or classification of their property. The process for an objection is outlined on rates notices and Council's website.

James Judd

1. Does the Colac Otway Shire Council now ever propose to go ahead and develop a solar panel farm on the old Colac tip site in Bruce St Colac?
2. Or will Colac have to rely on renewable electricity only to be provided from other areas?

Response from General Manager Infrastructure and Environment

There is no current intention of Council to develop a solar farm on the former landfill at Bruce Street, Colac. Council as an organisation has a contract with Red Energy that enables it to access 100% renewable energy to meet its electricity needs. Members of the community and businesses equally can access renewable energy from a range of providers.

Graham Costin

In Council Meeting 25 March 2025 Agenda Item 7.2 officers recommend allocating up to \$350,000 towards the Apollo Bay Recreation Reserve Redevelopment Project—the funds to be drawn for the \$850,000 reserved for Apollo Bay recreational land / public open space.

Council's Recreational Land Reserve holds moneys that subdividers paid to Council instead of transferring public open space land to Council.

The general practice is for Council to use this Reserve to purchase alternative public open space in areas surrounding the subdivision. The Subdivision Act allows Council to also use the Reserve to improve Crown land reserves "... for public recreation ..., as parklands or for

similar purposes" (Perhaps relevant section of the Subdivision Act authority should be included in the reports Considerations for the information of Councillors).

The use of the Recreational Land Reserves for the Apollo Bay Recreation Reserve Upgrade Project seems a liberal interpretation of using the funds for "... improving public recreation..., as parklands or similar. The Act does not appear to authorise the use of Reserves to upgrade campgrounds or sports facilities, as both are generally not freely available for public use.

Council owns very little public open space around Apollo Bay. In the past, it has used this as justification for its exceptionally low annual spending on recreational land, sports grounds and public open space in Apollo Bay. Using the Recreational Land Reserve for sports and campground facilities on GORCAPA land will result in less funds available to replace the public open space that subdividers were obligated to provide or contribute towards.

1. Are Councillors fully satisfied the recommended use of its Recreational Land Reserve meets the legal requirements of the Subdivision Act, and/or any relevant Ministerial Guidelines?
2. Does Council have any strategies, guidelines, planned projects for, or past examples of, similar uses of its Recreational Lands Reserve, such as upgrades of other sports grounds facilities, Meridith Park campground or similar?

Response from General Manager Community and Economy

To clarify, it is proposed to use funds from the Recreational Lands Reserve for public recreation facilities at the Apollo Bay Recreation Reserve, not for improvements to camping facilities.

The proposed use of the Recreational Lands Reserve meets the requirements of the relevant legislation.

The Subdivision Act User Guide provides the following guidance regarding the use of funds collected from developers for public open space: "Council must use land and funds received as part of any open space requirement to purchase or improve land for open space purposes."

The Apollo Bay Recreation Reserve is publicly accessible public open space and zoned Public Purposes and Recreation Zone (PPRZ). Many of the facilities that are planned to be upgraded, including the cricket training nets, sports oval and the netball/tennis courts, are accessible by the community for informal recreation as well as competitive sport. In addition, the new playspace that GORCAPA intend to install at the reserve will also be available to the general public and not just campers, however Council's funds are not proposed to be used for this project.

As these facilities provide important recreational opportunities in Apollo Bay, the use of the Recreational Lands Reserve to upgrade the before mentioned facilities is a legitimate use of the funds.

The use of the funds is supported by Council's Public Open Space Strategy. Council has used funds from the Recreational Lands Reserve in the past for improvements to sporting and recreational facilities. At this point in time, there are no other proposed use of the funds which are held in the Recreational Lands Reserve.

QUESTIONS RECEIVED VERBALLY AT THE MEETING

Elizabeth Ryan

Thank you, Mayor. Thank you, Councillors. I was here last meeting and discussed the issues out at Conns Lane. I want to prestart that with we still have a lot of issues with bike rides and races that are conducted adjacent to our property and then access to our property and other properties at Birregurra. I wanted to let you know that we still don't have any community consultation with the businesses that are organising those events, which I think is really unfair.

1. I'd also like to know if the Colac Otway Shire is planning to conduct a review of the library as it currently is, because it's nearly 20 years since that became the project to be.

Response General Manager Community and Economy

Thanks for the Question Ms Ryan. In regard to the Colac library, from memory it was opened in 2010, so it's coming up 15 years. We don't have any proposals to review the existing library. It's still in great condition and providing great services to our community.

Elizabeth Ryan

2. How do you measure that?

Response General Manager Community and Economy

We get a significant amount of information from Geelong Regional Library Corporation who runs the library service services for us. All the statistics are increasing. So, in terms of usage and borrowings, and attendance and programs, and similar, have all improved over the last couple of years.

Elizabeth Ryan

One of the reasons it was going out there was to increase the opening hours and that has never happened. We were supposed to have it open on weekends. We don't have the Friday nights like we used to and things like that. So, if you come to Colac on a Saturday morning, and especially as a dairy farmer, you get to Colac at 10:00, get the kids at sport and then the library shop was shut at 12:00. It's just easy to go to Geelong.

Council noted Elizabeth Ryans comment.

Elizabeth Ryan

Since the last Colac Otway Shire meeting, I have organised to meet with council officers Doug McNeill, to review Conns Lane, but I just want to provide a little bit of an update.

In 1995 Whoorel Station Road, where I live, the road bridge was closed and the occupants then installed their own private bridge. I want to quote something that I found really interesting, that in the challenges and the priorities for the 2005 annual report or for that year 2003 2004 annual report, for infrastructure areas, was to develop sound procedures around the road management plan as a defence to litigation associated with the local road network, which I think's really interesting.

To go on with that, you then decided, when Tracy Slatter was on board, you did a bridge asset management plan and on page 73 it actually lists the three bridges in Conns Lane which we've discussed at length, that are unsatisfactory, and it actually features the unsatisfactory drain over the creek. It also mentions the bridge on Whoorel Station Road as one of your assets, even though it was closed in 1995. I think this is that document is concerning. There is no mention of an author, so I'd like to know who the author of that document is.

3. We'd also like to know with the similarities that we have at Conns Lane and the Cape Otway Road and Whoorel Station Road, which is very similar to McKay's Road and Ryan's Road at Irrewarra, why we can't have the similar things done to our intersection.
4. Do you do a road safety audit at night?

Response General Manager Infrastructure and Operations

The document referred to is the Bridge Asset Management Plan prepared for Council in 2007. It references the three bridges in Conns Lane and a bridge in Whoreel Station Road, 0.15km from Cape Otway Road. The Plan was prepared by Council engineering staff. This plan has since been reviewed, the latest version being prepared in 2022. The 2022 Plan no longer makes reference to the Whoreel Station Road bridge. An updated Plan is currently under preparation.

Council has acknowledged the safety issues you have raised concerning the intersection of Conns Lane and Cape Otway Road and has applied for funding under the TAC Blackspot program to undertake works that would improve this intersection. This project would include rumble strips and safety warning signage for the intersection.

Council can confirm that Road Safety audits include assessment during both day and night to ensure that traffic conditions at different times of the day are taken into account in any recommendations.

Elizabeth Ryan

Friday night we had three vehicles that came through the road because I'd gone through the intersection in the middle of the night, reported that to everybody on Sunday the same thing happened Saturday morning, and I have a photo. That vehicle just came straight through Conns Lane, and we got nearly taken out in Whoorel Station Road. The Roads Minister has responded to my recent correspondence, the new road minister, and he's explained the formal complaint process which Colac Otway Shire has never provided to me even though 30 years, 25 years, 15 years, whatever number of years, I have complained about these roads.

5. How do I find out how to formally complain about the way you've been inactive about Conns Lane, and you've kept continually upgraded even though I raised it 15 years ago.

Response General Manager Infrastructure and Operations

I'm happy to talk to you offline after the meeting today and we can discuss in a bit more detail what you presented to Councillors and then hopefully I can help you.

Council has a complaints process which is referred to on the Colac Otway Shire website, however we believe you are referring to a process for lodgement of requests for service or complaints against the state of State managed roads to the Department of Transport and Planning. Information on this can be found on the DTP website. You have the option of lodging a complaint with Council if you believe that Council has not responded appropriately to you past concerns on this issue, but there is a meeting scheduled with Doug McNeill, Council's General Manager Infrastructure and Environment, and this would be a good opportunity to discuss the issues.

Ralph Alonso

Hi Councillors, I'd like to introduce myself, I'm Ralph Alonso and thank you for receiving my email over the weekend. In regard to the proposed conditions of 18 and 22 of the item on the agenda, 6.1, pertaining to 710 Blue Johanna Road, when this permit is granted, will be bound to comply with its conditions and there are mechanisms in place for the council to enforce the conditions. If we sell the property, all the current permissions and their conditions must be disclosed through a legal process by way of a section 32, which forms part of the contract of sale. As I've been advised by the planning department, Councillors have been made aware the removal of conditions 18 and 22 will make very little difference to the council's ability to enforce the land management plan.

The planning department has made commentary about the draft conditions being put in place to satisfy concerns of previous Councillors. But there's been no record of this in the notice of decision. VCAT has foreshadowed its concerns about the lack of need for conditions 18 and 22 and has questioned the lawfulness of condition 22. Previous Councillors were not aware at the time of their decision of VCAT's views on the conditions. The current Councillors are now armed with VCAT's preliminary views on the conditions. If councillors support the conditions to be included, it'll be likely leading to another VCAT hearing on the conditions appeal.

1. The question here is knowing this, are councillors prepared to proceed to support the office's recommendations giving the potential for a further delay of this application, which has now been nearly two years, which brings jobs to the Otway's but also will use rate payers' funds to argue a foreshadowed negative outcome.

Response Mayor Cr Schram

We have the item on the agenda for today, unfortunately the answer I can give you is we can't pre-empt any decision, so I can't really answer your question.

Response General Manager Community and Economy

Thanks for the question, Ralph.

Just for councillor's understanding, the officer's recommendation in relation to conditions 18 and 22 is mindful and respectful of the importance that the council at the time placed on these conditions in making a decision that was different to the officer recommendation. It's understood that council in making a decision to support the proposal, sought to ensure that the land management plan was binding on future owners, and that adequate screen landscaping could be guaranteed.

These were key factors to influencing the decision. It's a now obviously a matter for council's discretion. Having considered your correspondence Ralph and position on these two conditions, to determine whether these conditions should remain, it's our

view that the officer's report adequately covers these two conditions in dispute but also accurately represents your reasons for disputing these conditions.

Ralph Alfonso

I just basically wanted to get across to the councillors that the main part of this is I guess a foreshadowed position of VCAT and we'll be going back and forth and delaying cost. We as rate payers but also as the applicants in the whole process are sort of being tagged on both sides on this and the time frames as well. So, I'd like that to be considered when this is being discussed at 6.1 and I appreciate your time for going through it I know it's fairly detailed and lengthy but there are mechanisms in place. So that's what we wanted to assure you. without those conditions being in there.

Council noted Ralph Alfonso's comments.

Tony Weber

I'd like to congratulate the council; at the December meeting I asked a question about the spraying along the ocean road, and I asked you to advocate for regional roads, which now I think have changed their name, and that day, when I went home, they'd mowed all along the road from Lavers Hill to Marengo. So, they haven't been doing any spraying, it looks like this year, so if you advocated for that well done.

1. The first question is about the fire at Blanket Bay. Now land managers and farmers need a permit in the fire season to burn off or to have a fire in an open area. Maybe you could lobby to get campers to also have a permit in the fire period to save maybe another fire occurring like it did this year.

Response General Manager Community and Economy

My understanding is they need a permit to camp. My further understanding is that they would only be able to have campfires in designated fire pits or the like and then there is guidance from the CFA in terms of when you can and when you can't have fires.

Tony Webber

2. The second question is about the Great Ocean Road At the 196km spot on the ocean road, there's a lookout and there's a lot of buses and vehicles stopping and photographing koalas. Now they're stepping back onto the ocean road to get a good view or a good photo of a koala and the traffic there is at 100 kilometres an hour. So, I'm requesting that the council can lobby if it's regional roads to reduce that 3km section back to 80 and maybe put a sign up, because someone's going to get badly injured or killed there. Just so many near misses, people just don't seem to be able to think about the traffic. They're only thinking about a picture of a koala and it's becoming dangerous. The national parks vehicles were coming along, and this woman was just stepping out, they were blasting their horn, she just didn't seem to understand or even hear it, and then she ran across the road to get back to her vehicle. It's becoming dangerous.

General Manager of Infrastructure and Operations noted the request.

Tony Webber

3. The third question is about seismic blasting and the proposed drilling for gas near marine parks. Now there's proposed to have a moratorium on any more seismic blasting. Would the council support that? This is an actual moratorium. No more until I think the federal parliament has finished its inquiry into it.

Response General Manager Infrastructure and Operations

My understanding is that council has made strong representations on this issue previously and that position stands today. We've made a number of submissions at various points over the last couple of years on that topic.

Tony Webber

4. But this is an actual moratorium, is that what you're speaking about?

Response General Manager Infrastructure and Operations

Council's formal position is to oppose any permits being issued for seismic testing in the Otway Basin. Council therefore supports a moratorium on seismic testing at this location.

Tony Webber

5. The other one is drilling for gas right near Marine Parks. Does the council support that because it's proposed now to start. It's not very many kilometres from Marengo where they're going to start drilling for gas.

Response General Manager Infrastructure and Operations

At its meeting on 27 February 2019 Council considered its position on this issue and determined not to support a motion that would have opposed drilling in the Great Australian Bight

Simon Arundell

I bought the Colac Herald, and I got a bit excited. Council to consider rate differentiation. Then it's only 10% which is nowhere near what it should be. It should be about 50% for many reasons. My rates are \$32,000 a year and I'm not a very big farmer. There are bigger ones than me around. But that's the equivalent, I'm told, of 13 households in Colac or as one member of the Shire told me, it's the equivalent of eight houses overlooking Lake Colac.

Now I don't walk out my back door and there's a walking track, or a boat track, or whatever tracks you got in this town, I wouldn't know how many you got, I don't use them. I'm 20 mile out. It's too far out. We don't get to use it. Some people live in Cressy, they just about have to bring a sleeping bag with them to get to Colac. Same with people from Blue Johanna Road. So, distance must be taken into account.

Another thing that must be taken into account, is that your wages go up every year. I'm not saying you can buy as much each year, but they go up every year. Our prices plummeted by almost 2/3 a couple and from two years ago, and yet we still got to pay these exorbitant

rates. We're also subject to things that the cities aren't subject to, like blue gum investments, corporate farmers moving in. You're not subject to that, and I know you're subject to people coming out of Melbourne, but not like what's happened in the rural areas. If you look at the ratable properties, there's three people on my property might come into Colac. If you take the 14 there's probably 28 people, two a household might be more. So, I'm paying all that money, and I only get three tickets worth. They paid the same amount and what 28 of them get their tickets worth? So, there are many things that must be looked at if you could please, thank you I've said enough but I really think you need to study this differential rate. It's not fair by any way shape or means.

Response Mayor Cr Schram

I will answer you Mr Rundle, tonight we're going out possibly to present that to the public, open it for public submission. I encourage you and any other farmer or anyone else on the differentials to put in a submission during that public consultation period.

5 PETITIONS / JOINT LETTERS

Nil.



Item: 6.1

710 Blue Johanna Road, Johanna

OFFICER	Ian Williams
GENERAL MANAGER	Ian Seuren
DIVISION	Community and Economy

RESOLUTION

Moved Cr Potter, Seconded Cr Howard

That Council:

- 1. Sets aside the decision made by the Planning Committee on 8 February 2023.*
- 2. Substitutes a new decision, with revised conditions, in the format required by the Planning and Environment Regulations 2015 (as amended) - including amended conditions relating to the EMO and BMO to address the current version of the plans.*
- 3. Directs officers to remove condition 18 and 22 as contained within the Notice of Decision to Grant a Permit.*
- 4. Authorises officers to provide the new decision to VCAT, all parties to the VCAT review and the CFA.*
- 5. Authorises officers to advise VCAT that the reason for the new decision, which continues to reflect Council's support for the proposal, is due to the amendments made to the proposal since the original Notice of Decision to Grant a Permit was issued in February 2023, and to ensure conditions appropriately address the amendments made.*
- 6. Authorises officers to convey Council's position on conditions 18 and 22 to VCAT, all parties to the VCAT review and the CFA.*

CARRIED 7 : 0



Item: 7.1

**Project Budget Adjustments and Cash Reserves
Transfers - February 2025**

OFFICER	Brendan Walsh
GENERAL MANAGER	Doug McNeill
DIVISION	Infrastructure and Operations

RESOLUTION

Moved Cr Howard, Seconded Cr Potter

That Council:

- 1. Approves the funding in Table 2 for initiation of a new project.*
- 2. Approves the project budget adjustments in Table 3a.*
- 3. Approves the project budget adjustments in Table 3b.*

CARRIED 7 : 0



Item: 7.2

Apollo Bay Recreation Reserve Redevelopment Project - Proposed Funding Contribution

OFFICER	Ian Seuren
GENERAL MANAGER	Ian Seuren
DIVISION	Community and Economy

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Notes that the Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority (GORCAPA) has submitted an application to the Federal Government's Regional Precincts and Partnerships Program for the redevelopment of community and visitor facilities at the Apollo Bay Recreation Reserve, and has requested that Council contribute funds to the project.**
- 2. Notes that it resolved at its February 2025 meeting to lodge an application to the Victorian Government's Regional Community Sports Infrastructure Fund Round 2 for upgrade of the Apollo Bay Recreation Reserve Cricket Nets, seeking a grant of \$327,647 (excluding GST) with a Council contribution of up to \$34,297 (excluding GST) and a local contribution of \$47,615, inclusive of a Cricket Australia grant (excluding GST).**
- 3. Agrees that if the application to the Regional Community Sports Infrastructure Fund Round 2 is successful, these funds (total of \$409,550 excluding GST) can be included as a partnership contribution to the GORCAPA's application to the RPPP for the redevelopment of community facilities at the Apollo Bay Recreation Reserve, on the condition that its inclusion in the Regional Precincts and Partnerships Program project doesn't compromise Council's ability to meet its obligations under the Regional Community Sports Infrastructure Fund Round 2 grant.**
- 4. In addition to point 3, allocates the following as Council's partnership contribution to the rPPP application for the Apollo Bay Recreation Reserve upgrade project:**

- a. ***\$200,000 from the Recreational Lands Reserve in the event that Council's application to the Regional Community Sports Infrastructure Fund Round 2 is successful; or***
 - b. ***\$350,000 from the Recreational Lands Reserve and the existing funding commitment of \$34,297 in the event that Council's application to the Regional Community Sports Infrastructure Fund Round 2 is unsuccessful.***
5. ***Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to enter into an agreement with GORCAPA for Council's contribution to the Apollo Bay Recreation Reserve upgrade project if the Regional Precincts and Partnerships Program application is successful.***

RESOLUTION

Moved Cr Schram, Seconded Cr Howard

Moves the officer recommendation, with an amendment to Point 4b to read:

- b. ***“\$200,000 from the Recreational Lands Reserve and the existing funding commitment of \$34,297 in the event that Council's application to the Regional Community Sports Infrastructure Fund Round 2 is unsuccessful.”***

CARRIED 6 : 1

<i>For</i>	<i>Against</i>
<i>Cr Schram</i>	<i>Cr Potter</i>
<i>Cr Howard</i>	
<i>Cr Buchanan</i>	
<i>Cr De Deugd</i>	
<i>Cr Hudgell</i>	
<i>Cr McCrickard</i>	



Item: 7.3

Draft Road Management Plan 2025-2029

OFFICER	Kanishka Gunasekara
GENERAL MANAGER	Doug McNeill
DIVISION	Infrastructure and Operations

RESOLUTION

Moved Cr Schram, Seconded Cr Hudgell

That Council defer consideration of this item to the 29 April 2025 Council Meeting.

CARRIED 7 : 0



Item: 7.4 2025 Revenue and Rating Plan - Adoption of Draft Plan

OFFICER	Andrew Tenni
GENERAL MANAGER	Andrew Tenni
DIVISION	Corporate Services

RESOLUTION

Moved Cr Potter, Seconded Cr McCrickard

That Council:

- 1. Endorses the Draft Revenue and Rating Plan 2025 - 2029 for the purposes of Section 95 of the Local Government Act 2020.**
- 2. Gives public notice via Council's website, local newspaper and social media that Council has prepared a Draft Revenue and Rating Plan 2025- 2029.**
- 3. Determines that the public consultation period will be four weeks in duration, starting from the initial public notice.**
- 4. Determines to provide the opportunity for any person wishing to speak to their written submission to be heard, or a nominated representative to speak to their submission on behalf of the person, at a Submissions Committee meeting to be held on 13 May 2025.**
- 5. Considers for adoption the Revenue and Rating Plan 2025- 2029 at the Council Meeting on 27 May 2025 after consideration of any written and verbal submissions received by Council.**

CARRIED 7 : 0



Item: 7.5

Grant Submission - VicHealth Local Food Partnership Grant

OFFICER	Ashish Sitoula
GENERAL MANAGER	Ian Seuren
DIVISION	Community and Economy

RESOLUTION

Moved Cr McCrickard, Seconded Cr Hudgell

That Council:

- 1. Notes the funding opportunity available through VicHealth's Victorian Local Food Partnerships Grant program to support communities to access and prioritise the consumption of fresh food.*
- 2. Ratifies the grant submission to VicHealth for the Colac Otway Food Systems Community Partnership project, seeking funding of \$897,000.*
- 3. Notes that the application doesn't require a financial cash contribution from Council, however existing officer time will be provided as an in-kind contribution.*

CARRIED 7 : 0



Item: 7.6

Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism (GORRT) Membership Review

OFFICER	Heidi Taylor
GENERAL MANAGER	Ian Seuren
DIVISION	Community and Economy

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Notes the analysis of the benefits and issues of maintaining membership with Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism (GORRT), and considers the findings to make an informed decision regarding future membership.***
- 2. Continues as a member of Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism (GORRT) for a further three years, with the view to have this partnership reviewed by March 2028.***
- 3. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to confirm Council's ongoing membership and sign Memorandums or agreements as necessary to formalise this membership.***
- 4. Requests that regular reports be provided to Councillors at briefing sessions outlining GORRT activities and achievements in relation to Colac Otway Shire.***

RESOLUTION

Moved Cr Potter, Seconded Cr Howard

That Council:

Moves the officer's recommendation with the following amendments:

Point 2, Continues as a member of Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism (GORRT) for a further 12 months, with a review by March 2026, with a membership subscription of \$80,000.

Point 3, Remove the word "ongoing".

CARRIED 6 : 1

<i>For</i>	<i>Against</i>
<i>Cr Schram</i>	<i>Cr Buchanan</i>
<i>Cr Howard</i>	
<i>Cr Potter</i>	
<i>Cr De Deugd</i>	
<i>Cr Hudgell</i>	
<i>Cr McCrickard</i>	



Item: 7.7

Colac District Netball Association - Winter 2025 Season

OFFICER	Stephen Parker
GENERAL MANAGER	Ian Seuren
DIVISION	Community and Economy

RESOLUTION

Moved Cr Howard, Seconded Cr Potter

That Council:

- 1. Notes the requested use of the Bluewater Leisure Centre Stadium by the Colac and District Netball Association (CDNA) for the 2025 Winter season due to the Eastern Reserve netball court lighting not being suitable for competition.*
- 2. Agrees to partially waive the fees for the use of Bluewater Leisure Centre Stadium noting that the Eastern Reserve floodlight system's fixtures and fittings are now obsolete and cannot be replaced, rendering the system irreparable for the upcoming 2025 Winter season.*
- 3. Agrees to reduce the fees for CDNA to utilise the Bluewater Leisure Centre Stadium from a total fee of \$12,579 (including GST) to \$2,265 (including GST).*
- 4. Continues to work with the CDNA to identify funding opportunities to replace the floodlight system ahead of the 2026 Winter Season.*

CARRIED 6 : 0

Cr Buchanan left the room at 2.23pm and was not present for the vote.

The meeting was adjourned for a short break at 2.24pm.

Cr Buchanan returned to the meeting at 2.27pm



Item: 7.8 Meeting Council's Net Zero Corporate Emissions Target

OFFICER	Dora Novak
GENERAL MANAGER	Doug McNeill
DIVISION	Infrastructure and Operations

The meeting was resumed at 2.29pm.

ALTERNATIVE MOTION

Moved Cr Buchanan, Seconded Cr Hudgell

That Council:

- 1. Reaffirms its commitment to caring for the environment in our Shire in a sustainable and cost-effective manner, as outlined in our Environmental Sustainability Strategy.*
- 2. Notes the annual allocation by Council of \$60,000 toward street tree plantings within the Colac Otway Shire.*
- 3. Does not purchase offsets for Council's corporate carbon emissions relating to 2023-24.*
- 4. Does not allocate any funds towards purchasing carbon offsets in any future budget until Council resolves differently.*

AMENDMENT MOTION

Moved Cr De Deugd, Seconded Cr McCrickard

That Council:

Amends Point 4 to add the following words:

"... to redirect the funding and re-allocate it to the implementation of initiatives and projects under the Environmental Sustainability Strategy."

CARRIED 7 : 0

RESOLUTION

Moved Cr Buchanan, Seconded Cr Hudgell

That Council:

- 1. Reaffirms its commitment to caring for the environment in our Shire in a sustainable and cost-effective manner, as outlined in our Environmental Sustainability Strategy.**
- 2. Notes the annual allocation by Council of \$60,000 toward street tree plantings within the Colac Otway Shire.**
- 3. Does not purchase offsets for Council's corporate carbon emissions relating to 2023-24.**
- 4. Does not allocate any funds towards purchasing carbon offsets in any future budget until Council resolves differently and redirects the funding and re-allocates it to the implementation of initiatives and projects under the Environmental Sustainability Strategy.**

CARRIED 7 : 0



Item: 7.9

S5 Instrument of Delegation - Council to Chief Executive Officer

OFFICER	Belinda Rocka
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Anne Howard
DIVISION	Executive

RESOLUTION

Moved Cr Schram, Seconded Cr Howard

That Council:

- 1. In the exercise of the powers conferred by section 11(1) of the Local Government Act 2020 and all other powers enabling it, delegates to the member of Council staff holding, acting in or performing the position of Chief Executive Officer, the powers, duties and functions set out in the Schedule to this Instrument of Delegation, and declares that;*
- 2. This Instrument of Delegation is authorised by a Resolution of Council passed on 25 March 2025;*
- 3. The Instrument comes into force immediately the common seal of Council is affixed to this Instrument of Delegation and that the Chief Executive Officer is authorised to affix the Common seal to the Instrument;*
- 4. Is subject to any conditions and limitations set out in the Schedule, with another inclusion under point 1 that states "1.15 entering a lease or licence agreement for land or buildings that are owned or managed by Council.*
- 5. Must be exercised in accordance with any guidelines or policies which Council from time to time adopts; and*
- 6. Remains in force until Council resolves to vary or revoke it.*

CARRIED 5 : 2

<i>For</i>	<i>Against</i>
<i>Cr Schram</i>	<i>Cr Potter</i>
<i>Cr Howard</i>	<i>Cr McCrickard</i>
<i>Cr Buchanan</i>	
<i>Cr De Deugd</i>	
<i>Cr Hudgell</i>	



Item: 7.10

**Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation -
Planning and Environment Act 1987 - Robyn Au**

OFFICER	Belinda Rocka
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Anne Howard
DIVISION	Executive

RESOLUTION

Moved Cr Potter, Seconded Cr Hudgell

That Council, in the exercise of the powers conferred by section 147(4) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, resolves that:

- 1. The members of Council staff referred to in the Instrument attached be appointed and authorised as set out in the Instrument.*
- 2. The Instrument is to be sealed using the common seal in accordance with Colac Otway Shire Council's Governance Local Law No 4 – 2020.*
- 3. The Instrument comes into force immediately after the common seal of Council is affixed to the Instrument and remains in force until:
 - a. Council determines to vary or revoke the Instrument; or*
 - b. The member of Council staff ceases to be employed in a position at Council Otway Shire Council that requires this authorisation, at which point the instrument will be revoked by the Chief Executive Officer.**

CARRIED 7 : 0



Item: 7.11

Revocation of Authorised Officer under the Planning and Environment Act 1987 - Thomas Milverton

OFFICER	Belinda Rocka
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Anne Howard
DIVISION	Executive

RESOLUTION

Moved Cr Howard, Seconded Cr Hudgell

That Council revokes the Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation under the Planning and Environment Act 1987 to Thomas Milverton, dated 14 August 2024 (refer Attachment 1).

CARRIED 7 : 0



Item: 7.12
Revocation - Community Asset Committee Members

OFFICER	Belinda Rocka
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Anne Howard
DIVISION	Executive

RESOLUTION

Moved Cr McCrickard, Seconded Cr Hudgell

That Council:

- 1. Revokes membership for Barbara Paine from the Eurack Public Hall and Tennis Reserve Community Asset Committee.*
- 2. Revokes membership for Graeme Inglis from the Warrion Public Hall.*
- 3. Thanks both Barbara Paine and Graeme Inglis for their contribution to both Community Asset Committees listed above.*

CARRIED 7 : 0



Item: 8.1

Report of Informal Meetings of Councillors

OFFICER	Council Business
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Anne Howard
DIVISION	Executive
ATTACHMENTS	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Informal Meeting of Councillors - CEOEMAC Meeting - 18 February 2025 [8.1.1 - 2 pages]2. Informal Meeting of Councillors - 25 February 2025 Council Meeting [8.1.2 - 3 pages]3. Informal Meeting of Councilors - Councillor Briefing 4 March 2025 [8.1.3 - 3 pages]4. Informal Meeting of Councilors - Councillor Briefing 11 March 2025 [8.1.4 - 3 pages]5. Informal Meeting of Councillors - Councillor Briefing 18 March 2025 [8.1.5 - 3 pages]

This item did not require a formal decision of Council.

CLOSED SESSION

RESOLUTION

Moved Cr Potter, Seconded Cr De Deugd

That pursuant to the provisions of Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2020, the meeting be closed to the public and Council move into Closed Session in order to deal with:

SUBJECT	REASON	SECTION OF ACT
Minutes of the Closed Session Council Meeting held on 11 September 2024	This matter deals with confidential meeting information, being records of meetings closed to the public.	Section 66 (2)(a)
Aged services - extension of Community Home Support Program funding to Great Ocean Road Health	This matter deals with information prescribed by the regulations to be confidential information for the purposes of this definition, as per section 3(1)(a), because the matter relates to services that are delivered under commercial arrangements.	Section 3(1)(a)
Cinema Expression of Interest Process	This matter deals with Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released.	Section 3(1)(a)
Bluewater Gym Equipment Replacement	This matter deals with Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released, as per section 3(1)(a).	Section 3(1)(a)
Council Meeting Minutes and Footage from the meeting held on 25 February 2025	This matter deals with legal privileged information, being information to which legal professional privilege or client legal privilege applies AND confidential meeting information, being records of meetings closed to the public under section 66 (2) (a)	Section 3 (1)(e & h)
Minutes of the Chief Executive Officer Employment Matters	This matter deals with personal information, being information which if released	Section 3(1)(f)

Advisory Committee Meeting held on 18 February 2025	would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs	
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CARRIED 7 : 0



Item: 2.3 – Closed Session Bluewater Gym Equipment Replacement

OFFICER	Trent Bayon
GENERAL MANAGER	Ian Seuren
DIVISION	Community and Economy

RESOLUTION

Moved Cr De Deugd, Seconded Cr Howard

That Council:

- 1. Recognises that the preferred tenderer (as listed in the attachment to this report) for Contract 2509 – Provision of Gym Equipment Replacement has been assessed as providing value-for-money as per the confidential attachment (Evaluation Report).*
- 2. Awards Contract 2509 – Provision of Gym Equipment Replacement to Tenderer 4 (as per the Attachment to this report) for the tendered amount of \$320,999.04 (ex GST), for the purchase of a complete equipment fit out of the Health Club area and including quarterly maintenance over a 4-year period.*
- 3. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to sign the contract following award of Contract 2509 – Provision of Gym Equipment Replacement.*
- 4. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to perform all roles of the Principal.*
- 5. Notes that the successful tenderer and contract price will be listed on Council's website promptly after unsuccessful tenderers are advised of the outcome of the tender process.*
- 6. Determines that the purchase of this equipment will be funded as a capital project with a total budget of \$320,000 (exclusive of GST), which includes a minor contingency allowance, and will be allocated evenly across the 2025-26 and 2026-27 financial years, with the maintenance and service costs included in*

the Bluewater Leisure Centre recurrent budget at \$6,815 (exclusive of GST) per annum.

- 7. Deems that this report is no longer confidential, however the supporting information remains confidential information due to commercial content.***

CARRIED 7 : 0

The meeting was declared closed at 2.48pm

CORRECTED VERSION

TO BE CONFIRMED AND SIGNED at the meeting held on 10 February 2026

.....**MAYOR**



Informal Meeting of Councillors Record

This form must be completed by the attending Council Officer and the completed form must be provided to governance@colacotway.vic.gov.au for reporting at the next practicable Council Meeting.

Please refer to Chapter 5 (Disclosure of Conflict of Interest) and Chapter 6 (Informal Meetings of Councillors) of the Governance Rules and the guidelines over page.

Meeting Details

Meeting name: Planning Consultation Meeting regarding PP125/2025-1 at 30 Pascoe Street APOLLO BAY

Date: 21/11/2025 **Time:** 11am to 12noon

Meeting Location: Online via Microsoft Teams

Matter/s Discussed: Planning Permit Application PP125/2025-1 for a restricted recreation facility (gym) at 30 Pascoe Street APOLLO BAY

(eg. Discussions with property owners and/or residents; Planning Permit Application No. xxxx re proposed development at No. xx Pascoe Street, Apollo Bay; Council Plan steering committee with Councillors and officers.)

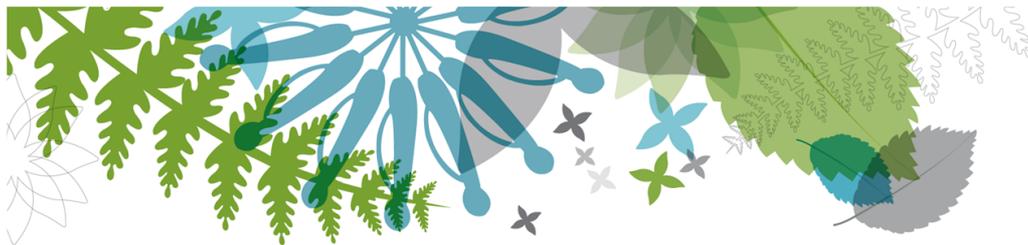
In Attendance:

Councillors:
Cr Chrissy De Deugd
Officers:
Ashley Minniti, A/Coordinator Statutory Planning Vikram Kumar, Statutory Planner

Conflict of Interest Disclosures for Councillors and Officers: (refer to over page for guidelines)

Name	Type of interest	Left meeting at	Returned to meeting at
NIL	Choose an item.	am / pm	am / pm
	Choose an item.	am / pm	am / pm
	Choose an item.	am / pm	am / pm

Completed by: Ashley Minniti, A/Coordinator Statutory Planning



Informal Meetings of Councillors Records

An Informal Meetings of Councillors record must be completed for the following meetings:

- An internal advisory committee meeting where the minutes are not reported to a Council meeting (Central Reserve Advisory Committee, Colac Regional Saleyards Advisory Committee, Friends of the Colac Botanic Gardens Advisory Committee, Colac Municipal Aerodrome Advisory Committee and Lake Colac Co-ordinating Committee)
- A meeting of Councillors which is scheduled or planned for the purpose of discussing business of Council or briefing Councillors, and is attended by at least one member of Council staff.

The records are to be tabled at the next practicable Council meeting and recorded in the minutes of that Council meeting.

Declaration of a Conflict of Interest

Section 126 of the *Local Government Act 2020* defines conflicts of interest as being either a general conflict of interest or a material conflict of interest.

General Conflict of Interest

A person has a general conflict of interest in a matter if an impartial, fair-minded person would consider that the person's private interests could result in that person acting in a manner that is contrary to their public duty.

Material Conflict of Interest

A person has a material conflict of interest in a matter if they would gain a benefit or suffer a loss depending on the outcome of the matter. The benefit may arise or the loss incurred either directly or indirectly, or in a pecuniary or non-pecuniary form. You would also have a material conflict of interest when one or more of the following would gain a benefit or suffer a loss depending on the outcome of the matter:

- A family member of the relevant person. A family member is defined as:
 - a) A spouse or domestic partner; or
 - b) A parent, grandparent, sibling, child, grandchild, step-parent, step-sibling or step-child of you or your spouse or domestic partner; or
 - c) Any other relative that regularly resides with you.
- A body corporate of which you or your spouse or domestic partner is a Director or a member of the governing body;
- Your employer(s), unless the employer is a public body;
- Your business partner(s);
- A person for whom you are a consultant, contractor or agent;
- A beneficiary under a trust or an object of discretionary trust of which you are a trustee;
- A person from whom you have received a disclosable gift. A disclosable gift is defined as one or more gifts with a total value of \$500 or more that is received from the person in the five years preceding the decision on the matter. Gifts are relevant if you were a Councillor when the gift was received or if the gift was required to be disclosed as an election campaign donation. This does not include the value of any reasonable hospitality received at an event or function that you attended in the official capacity as a Councillor.



Informal Meeting of Councillors Record

Councillor Briefing

Date: 2 December 2025

Time: 12.30pm

Meeting Location: Meeting Rooms 1 and 2, COPACC

Invitees:
Cr Jason Schram, Cr Phil Howard, Cr Chris Potter, Cr Zoe Hudgell, Cr Mick McCrickard, Cr Chrissy De Deugd, Cr Charlie Buchanan, Andrew Tenni, Doug McNeill, Ian Seuren, Steve O'Dowd, David Butterfield, Anita Craven
Attendees:
Cr Jason Schram, Cr Phil Howard, Cr Chris Potter, Cr Zoe Hudgell, Cr Mick McCrickard, Cr Chrissy De Deugd, Cr Charlie Buchanan, Andrew Tenni, Doug McNeill, Ian Seuren, Steve O'Dowd, David Butterfield, Anita Craven Heidi Taylor, Kanishka Gunasekara, Mark McLennan, Ash Minniti, Blaithin Butler
External attendees:
Nil
Apologies:
Nil
Absent:
Nil

Meeting Commenced at: 12.37pm

Declarations of Interest:

Name	Type of Disclosure	Item	Reason
Cr Hudgell	Material	Item 1.3 – COPACC EOI	The owner and director of the Victorian Arts Collective who has made a submission for the COPACC lease.
Ian Seuren	Material	Item 1.3 – COPACC EOI	Daughter is involved with a business that has submitted an EOI for COPACC.



Council Briefing Meeting – 2 December 2025 (continued)		
Time	Item	Attendees
12.37pm	Lunch with a briefing on Advocacy Strategy and Priority Projects (Item 1.2)	
12.55pm	Break <i>Cr Hudgell and Ian Seuren left the room at 12.55pm upon declaring a COI with item 1.3 of this agenda.</i>	
1.02pm	Item 1.3 – COPACC EOI	Heidi Taylor
1.45pm	Break <i>Cr Hudgell and Ian Seuren returned to the room at 1.45pm, after discussion on Item 1.3 concluded.</i>	
1.50pm	Item 1.4 – Community Awards 2026 Nominations	Heidi Taylor
2.11pm	Item 1.5 – Submissions to proposed bus parking in Murray St, Colac	Kanishka Gunasekara
2.18pm	Discussion on Planning matters proceeding to Submissions Committee today. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PP121/2024-1 - 9 Great Ocean Road GREY RIVER - Use and development of land for a dwelling in the RCZ PP125/2025-1 - 30 Pascoe Street APOLLO BAY - Use of the land for the purpose of a restricted recreation facility (gym) 	Blaithin Butler Ash Minniti
2.29pm	Item 1.6 - Proposed Eastern Reserve Indoor training facility - Lease to City United Cricket Club Incorporated and Colac Baseball Club Inc <i>Cr De Deugd left the room at 2.29pm, returned at 2.31pm</i>	Mark McLennan
2.39pm	Meeting Closed	



Informal Meeting of Councillors Record

Pre-Council Meeting Preparation

Date: 9 December 2025

Time: 10.00am

Meeting Location: Meeting Rooms 1 and 2, COPACC

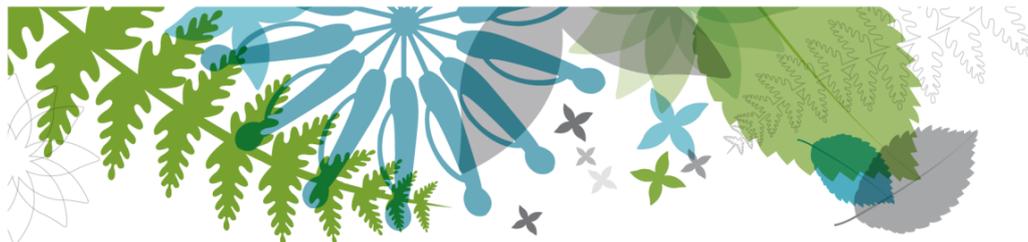
Invitees:
Cr Jason Schram, Cr Phil Howard, Cr Chris Potter, Cr Zoe Hudgell, Cr Mick McCrickard, Cr Chrissy De Deugd, Cr Charlie Buchanan, Andrew Tenni, Doug McNeill, Ian Seuren, Steve O'Dowd
Attendees:
Cr Jason Schram, Cr Phil Howard, Cr Chris Potter, Cr Zoe Hudgell, Cr Mick McCrickard, Cr Chrissy De Deugd, Cr Charlie Buchanan, Andrew Tenni, Doug McNeill, Ian Seuren, Steve O'Dowd, Blaithin Butler, Ash Minniti, Roslyn Snauw
External attendees:
Nil
Apologies:
Nil
Absent:
Cr Potter

Meeting Commenced at: 10.00am

Declarations of Interest: NIL



Pre Council meeting – 9 December 2025 (continued)		
Time	Item	Attendees
10.02am	Item 6.1 - PP186/2024-1 - 4650 Great Ocean Road WONGARRA - Use and Development of land for a Dwelling and Private Bushfire Shelter	Blaithin Butler Ash Minniti Roslyn Snaauw
10.04am	Item 6.2 - PP121/2024-1 - 9 Great Ocean Road GREY RIVER - Construction of Replacement Dwelling and Creation of an Access from a Road in TRZ2	Blaithin Butler Ash Minniti Roslyn Snaauw
10.06am	Item 6.3 - PP171/2025-1 - 145 Roadknight Creek Road FORREST - Use and Development of Dwelling	Blaithin Butler Ash Minniti Roslyn Snaauw
10.07am	Item 6.4 - PP199/2024-1 - 200 Corangamite Lake Road COROROOKE - Subdivision: excision of an existing dwelling	Blaithin Butler Ash Minniti Roslyn Snaauw
10.10am	Item 6.5 - PP175/2025-1 - 5655 Princes Highway WARNCOORT - Buildings and Works Comprising Construction of a Replacement Dwelling	Blaithin Butler Ash Minniti Roslyn Snaauw
10.10am	Item 6.6 - PP125/2025-1 - 30 Pascoe Street APOLLO BAY - Change of Use to Restricted Recreation Facility (Gym), and Alteration to the Building	Blaithin Butler Ash Minniti Roslyn Snaauw



Pre Council meeting – 9 December 2025 (continued)		
10.12am	Item 7. 1- Homes Victoria Combined Application to Minister for Planning - Pound Road Colac	Blaithin Butler Ash Minniti Roslyn Snaauw
10.24am	Item 7.6 - Apollo Bay Structure Plan Review - Community Reference Group Member Selection	Blaithin Butler Ash Minniti Roslyn Snaauw
10.29am	Item 7.2 - Project Budget Adjustments and Cash Reserve Transfers	
10.31am	Item 7.3 - Award of Contract 2516 - Road Reconstruction and Road Safety Works - Pascoe Street, Apollo Bay	
10.34am	Item 7.4 - Advocacy Priorities 2026 <i>Cr Hudgell left the meeting at 10.34am and did not return. Cr De Deugd left the room at 10.39am, returned 10.41am</i>	
10.42am	Item 7. 5 - Community Achievement Award Nominations 2026	
10.44am	Item 7.7 - Submissions to Proposed Bus Parking Changes in Murray Street, Colac	
10.50am	Item 7.8 - Proposal to enter into a Lease - Eastern Reserve Indoor training facility	



Pre Council meeting – 9 December 2025 (continued)		
10.53am	Item 7.9 - Revocation - Instrument of Authorisation - Planning and Environment Act - Simon Hunnam	
10.53am	Item 7. 10 - Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation - Planning and Environment Act 1987 - Ros Snaauw	
10.54am	Item 8.1 - Quarterly Performance Report - Q1 - July to September 2025	
10.55am	Item 8.2 - Report of Informal Meetings of Councilors	
10.55am	General Business	
11.02am	Meeting Closed	



Informal Meeting of Councillors Record

Councillor Briefing

Date: 16 December 2025

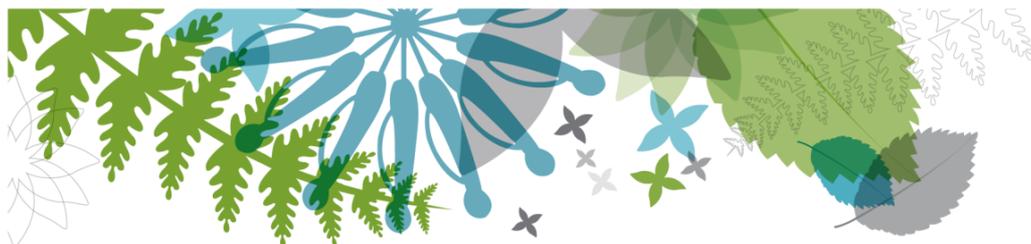
Time: 10am

Meeting Location: Meeting Rooms 1 and 2, COPACC

Invitees:
Cr Jason Schram, Cr Phil Howard, Cr Chris Potter, Cr Zoe Hudgell, Cr Mick McCrickard, Cr Chrissy De Deugd, Cr Charlie Buchanan, Andrew Tenni, Dora Novak, Ian Seuren, Steve O'Dowd, Anita Craven, David Butterfield
Attendees:
Cr Jason Schram, Cr Phil Howard, Cr Chris Potter, Cr Zoe Hudgell, Cr Mick McCrickard, Cr Chrissy De Deugd, Cr Charlie Buchanan, Andrew Tenni, Dora Novak, Ian Seuren, Steve O'Dowd, Anita Craven, David Butterfield, Nicole Frampton, Stephen Parker, Blaithin Butler, Ash Minniti, Ros Snaauw, Katrina Kehoe, Fiona Swan
External attendees:
Ben and Kate – Otium Planning
Apologies:
Doug McNeill and Cr Hudgell
Absent:
Nil

Meeting Commenced at: 10.02am

Declarations of Interest: NIL



Council Briefing Meeting – 16 December 2025 (continued)		
Time	Item	Attendees
10.03am	Item 1.1 - Colac Otway Shire Football (Soccer) Facilities Feasibility (Otium)	Nicole Frampton Stephen Parker Ben and Kate – Otium Planning (external)
11.08am	Item 1.2 - Colac Otway Shire Grants Program Review & Guidelines 2026/27 <i>Cr De Deugd left the room at 11.24am</i>	Katrina Kehoe
11.25am	Item 1.3 - Rural Policy for Houses and Subdivision <i>Cr De Deugd returned to the room at 11.27am</i>	Ash Minniti Ros Snaauw Blaithin Butler
11.45am	Item 1.4 - Planning Scheme Review	Ash Minniti Ros Snaauw Blaithin Butler
11.47am	Item 1.5 - Recent and Proposed Statewide Planning Reforms <i>Cr McCrickard left the room at 12pm, returned 12.02pm</i> <i>Cr De Deugd left the room at 12.06pm, returned 12.07pm</i>	Ash Minniti Ros Snaauw Blaithin Butler
12.16pm	Item 1.6 - Report to Council on Outstanding Council Resolutions	Matilda Hardy-Smith
12.20pm	Briefing on Emergency Preparedness during the Summer period	Fiona Swan
12.40pm	General Business	
12.43pm	Meeting Closed	



Informal Meeting of Councillors Record

Councillor Briefing

Date: 3 February 2026

Time: 10am

Meeting Location: Meeting Rooms 1 and 2, COPACC

Invitees:
Cr Jason Schram, Cr Phil Howard, Cr Chris Potter, Cr Zoe Hudgell, Cr Mick McCrickard, Cr Chrissy De Deugd, Cr Charlie Buchanan, Andrew Tenni, Doug McNeill, Ian Seuren, Emma Lowes, Anita Craven
Attendees:
Cr Jason Schram, Cr Phil Howard, Cr Chris Potter, Cr Zoe Hudgell, Cr Mick McCrickard, Cr Chrissy De Deugd, Cr Charlie Buchanan, Andrew Tenni, Doug McNeill, Ian Seuren, Emma Lowes, Anita Craven, Heidi Taylor, Rashil Pradhan, Kanishka Gunasekara, Hesala Nallaperuma, Darcy Lambert, Rebecca Wolfe, Azam Mahmood, Dave Thornburg, Rikk Price, Fiona Swan, Blaithe Butler
External attendees:
Jonathan Rochwerger (Urban Enterprises) Katelyn Richter (WGA)
Apologies:
Nil
Absent:
Cr Howard was absent from the meeting until 12.30pm.

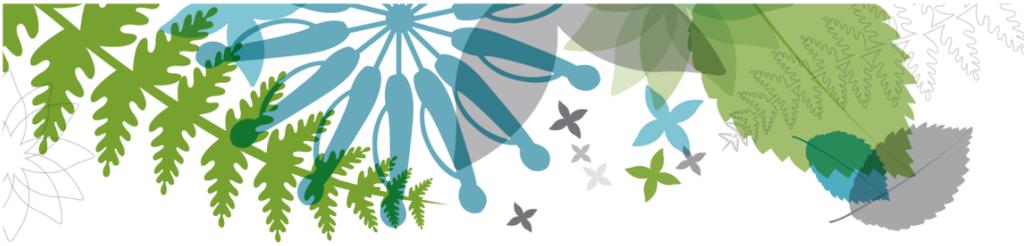
Meeting Commenced at: 10.00am

Declarations of Interest:

Name	Type of Disclosure	Item	Reason
Cr McCrickard	General	Item 1.4 – EOI Saleyard Canteen	Potential employment of young people.
Cr Hudgell	General	General Business – COPACC EOI	Conversation in relation to the COPACC EOI process
Ian Seuren	General	General Business – COPACC EOI	Conversation in relation to the COPACC EOI process



Council Briefing Meeting – 3 February 2026 (continued)		
Time	Item	Attendees
10.01am	<p><i>Cr Hudgell chaired the opening of the meeting.</i></p> <p>Item 1.1 – Economic Development Strategy 2030 – Councillor Workshop</p> <p><i>Cr Schram arrived at 10.37am</i></p>	<p>Heidi Taylor Jonathan Rochwerger <i>(External – Urban Enterprises)</i></p>
11.31am	Item 1.2 – Road Safety Strategy	<p>Katelyn Richter <i>(External - WGA)</i> Rashil Pradhan Kanishka Gunasekara Hesala Nallaperuma</p>
12.04pm	Lunch	
12.30pm	<p>Item 1.3 – Budget Workshop</p> <p><i>Cr Howard attended the meeting online at 12.30pm</i> <i>Cr Schram left the room at 12.35pm, returned 12.37pm</i></p>	<p>Darcy Lambert Azam Mahmood Rebecca Wolfe</p>
1.11pm	<p>Item 1.4 – Saleyard Canteen EOI</p> <p><i>Cr McCrickard left the meeting at 1.11pm upon declaring a COI with this item. Returning at 1.28pm when discussion had concluded.</i></p>	<p>Dave Thornburg Rikk Price</p>
1.28pm	Break	
1.30pm	<p>Item 1.6 – PP178/2025-1 85 Collins Road, Irrewarra Item 1.7 – PP207/2025-1 245 Baynes Road and 255 Wool Wool Road, Alvie Item 1.8 – Apollo Bay Harbour Redevelopment</p>	Blaithin Butler
1.43pm	Item 1.5 – Fire and Flood Incident Updates	Fiona Swan
2.15pm	Item 1.9 – Municipal Monitors Report Recommendations – Status report on implementation	Anita Craven



Council Briefing Meeting – 3 February 2026 (continued)

2.19pm	<p>General Business</p> <p><i>Cr Howard left the meeting at 2.36pm and did not return.</i></p> <p><i>Cr Hudgell and Ian Seuren left the meeting at 2.40pm upon declaring a COI with a general business item, they did not return.</i></p>	
2.55pm	Meeting Closed	



Colac Otway Shire Council

**Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation
(*Planning and Environment Act 1987*)**

In this instrument "**officer**" means -

Brett Harris

By this instrument of appointment and authorisation Colac Otway Shire Council -

1. under s 147(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* – authorises the officer to carry out the duties or functions and to exercise the powers of an authorised officer under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*; and
2. under s 313 of the *Local Government Act 2020* authorises the officer either generally or in a particular case to institute proceedings for offences against the Acts and regulations described in this instrument.

It is declared that this instrument -

- comes into force immediately upon its execution;
- remains in force until varied or revoked.

This instrument is authorised by a resolution of the Colac Otway Shire Council on 10 February 2026.

The COMMON SEAL of Colac Otway Shire)
Council was hereunto affixed in accordance)
with Local Law 4)



AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES

Thursday 11 December 2025

at 9:00 AM

COPACC

95 - 97 Gellibrand Street, Colac



COLAC OTWAY SHIRE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday 11 December 2025

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COLAC OTWAY SHIRE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES of the **AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE COLAC OTWAY SHIRE**
held at COPACC on Thursday 11 December 2025 at 9:00 AM.

MINUTES

1 DECLARATION OF OPENING OF MEETING

2 PRESENT

John Gavens
Melissa Field
John Sutherland
Richard Trigg
Cr Phil Howard
Andrew Tenni, Chief Executive Officer
David Butterfield, Acting General Manager Corporate Services
Dora Novak, Acting General Manager Infrastructure and Operations
Ian Seuren, General Manager Community and Economy
Steven O'Dowd, Manager Governance, Customer and Communications
Anita Craven, Executive Officer Governance
Belinda Rocka, Governance Officer
Matthew Hubbard, Acting Manager Financial Services
Mark Cervantes, Crowe

3 APOLOGIES

Doug McNeill, General Manager Infrastructure and Environment
Cr Jason Schram
Andrew Zavitzanos

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Nil

5 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Recommendation

That the Audit and Risk Committee confirm the minutes from the Audit and Risk Committee Meeting held on 11 September 2025.

6 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Nil



Item: 7.1

Chief Executive Officer Report

OFFICER	Andrew Tenni
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Andrew Tenni
DIVISION	Executive
ATTACHMENTS	Nil

RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit and Risk Committee:

- 1. Receives and notes the Chief Executive Officer's report***
- 2. Notes the items relating to work place health and safety incidents that raises concerns about the safety culture at Service and Operations and therefore the need to provide a stronger link between the work place health and safety functions at Service and Operations and corporately.***

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY



Item: 7.2

Internal Audit - Strategic Internal Audit Plan

OFFICER	Anita Craven
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Andrew Tenni
DIVISION	Executive
ATTACHMENTS	1. 2025-27 Colac Otway Shire Strategic Audit Plan [7.2.1 - 14 pages]

RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit and Risk Committee note the July 2025 - December 2027 Strategic Internal Audit Plan and that the Payroll audit is to be deferred to 2026-27.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY



Item: 7.3

Internal Audit - Progress Report on Internal Audits

OFFICER	Anita Craven
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Andrew Tenni
DIVISION	Executive
ATTACHMENTS	1. Colac Internal Audit Progress Report as at 4.12.25 [7.3.1 - 2 pages]

3. RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit and Risk Committee note the progression of the 3-year strategic internal audit plan.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY



Item: 7.4

Internal Audit - Immunisation Management Report

OFFICER	Anita Craven
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Andrew Tenni
DIVISION	Executive
ATTACHMENTS	1. Crowe - COS C- Immunisation Management Report - v Final [7.4.1 - 26 pages]

RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit and Risk Committee endorse the findings from the Immunisation Management Audit Final Report and receive updates via future ARC meetings on progress against the implementation of the recommended actions.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY



Item: 7.5
Internal Audit - Fraud Prevention and Management
Draft MAP

OFFICER	Anita Craven
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Andrew Tenni
DIVISION	Executive
ATTACHMENTS	1. Colac Otway Fraud Management and Prevention MAP Draft v 2.0 MC [7.5.1 - 7 pages]

RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit and Risk Committee endorse the MAP for the Internal Audit of Fraud Prevention and Management.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY



Item: 7.6

Internal Audit - Payroll Draft MAP

OFFICER	Anita Craven
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Andrew Tenni
DIVISION	Executive
ATTACHMENTS	1. Colac Otway Payroll inc DA MAP Draft v1 [7.6.1 - 7 pages]

RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit and Risk Committee note the draft MAP for Payroll (Human Resources) – including Data Analytics Internal Audit. The committee resolved not to discuss this matter as it has been deferred to 2026-27 as an Internal Audit.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY



Item: 7.7

Internal Audit - Outstanding Actions Status Report

OFFICER	Anita Craven
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Andrew Tenni
DIVISION	Executive
ATTACHMENTS	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Closed Internal Audit Actions August to November 2025 - Dec ARC [7.7.1 - 18 pages]2. High Risk Outstanding Audit Actions - December ARC [7.7.2 - 6 pages]

RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit and Risk Committee note the considerable effort that has been taken to action and close internal audit actions and note the report on outstanding internal audit actions.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY



Item: 7.8

Risk Management - Monitor and provide advice on risk management practices and risk profile - Strategic Risks

OFFICER	Natasha Skurka
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Andrew Tenni
DIVISION	Executive
ATTACHMENTS	1. Risk In Motion Report - Colac Otway Shire - Strategic Risks - 28 November 2025 [7.8.1 - 5 pages]

RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit and Risk Committee note the updated Strategic Risk Register and progress against treatment plans after review from the Executive Management Team.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY



Item: 7.9

Risk Management - Monitor management process and systems in relation to cyber security, including strategy, assets protection, testing and recovery

OFFICER	Rikk Price
GENERAL MANAGER	David Butterfield
DIVISION	Corporate Services
ATTACHMENTS	1. 3 Columns - COS - SOC Monthly Report - October 2025 [7.9.1 - 43 pages]

RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit and Risk Committee receive and note this report.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY



Item: 7.10

Risk Management - Infrastructure, Backup and Disaster Recover as a Service (IaaS, DRaaS, BaaS) Update

OFFICER	Rikk Price
GENERAL MANAGER	David Butterfield
DIVISION	Corporate Services
ATTACHMENTS	Nil

RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit and Risk Committee:

- 1. Receive and note this progress report including the considerable improvements that have been made.***
- 2. Request a further progress report to be tabled at the meeting 12 March 2026.***

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY



Item: 7.11

Risk Management - Disaster Recovery Plan - Testing

OFFICER	Rikk Price
GENERAL MANAGER	David Butterfield
DIVISION	Corporate Services
ATTACHMENTS	Nil

RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit and Risk Committee receive and note this report.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY



Item: 7.12

Performance Reporting - Quarterly Performance Report - Q1 - July to September 2025

OFFICER	Belinda Rocka
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Andrew Tenni
DIVISION	Executive
ATTACHMENTS	1. Q1 Quarterly Performance Report July to September 2025 [7.12.1 - 36 pages]

RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit and Risk Committee note the Quarterly Performance Report for the first quarter 2025-26, for the period 1 July 2025 to 30 September 2025 and the considerable improvements that have been made to the Financial, Capital and Operational Project Reporting.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY



Item: 7.13

Compliance Management - Internal Auditor Curious Eyes Publication

OFFICER	Anita Craven
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Andrew Tenni
DIVISION	Executive
ATTACHMENTS	1. Crowe Publication of Interest curious eyes July September (1) [7.13.1 - 18 pages]

RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit and Risk Committee note this report.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY



Item: 7.14

**Compliance Management - Status Report Monitors
Report Recommendations - December 2025**

OFFICER	Anita Craven
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Andrew Tenni
DIVISION	Executive
ATTACHMENTS	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Municipal Monitors Report Recommendations - status report implementation- December 2025 [7.14.1 - 3 pages]2. Monitors Report Recommendations - Recommendation 6 - Status Report December 2025 - ARC [7.14.2 - 3 pages]

RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit and Risk Committee note the status report on progress against implementation of the Monitors Report recommendations and that a number of recommendations are tracking behind schedule.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY



Item: 7.15

Compliance Management - Council's Compliance with Obligations of the General Environmental Duty (GED)

OFFICER	Fiona Swan
GENERAL MANAGER	Doug McNeill
DIVISION	Infrastructure and Environment
ATTACHMENTS	1. Colac Otway Shire Review of General Environmental Duty Obligations - November 2025 [7.15.1 - 15 pages]

RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit and Risk Committee:

- 1. Notes the attached Colac Otway Shire Review of General Environmental Duty Obligations – November 2025.*
- 2. Acknowledges that the review has been conducted using the risk assessment process recommended by EPA for local government as best practice for the sector.*
- 3. Notes that the future control measures identified will be incorporated into Council's broader risk management framework which is to be reviewed in the next six months, and that progress addressing the risks can be tracked over time utilising that framework.*

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY



Item: 7.16

Performance Evaluation - Assessment of Audit and Risk Committee Performance

OFFICER	Belinda Rocka
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Andrew Tenni
DIVISION	Executive
ATTACHMENTS	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Questions and Summary of Responses - Annual Assessment of the Audit and Risk Committee's Performance [7.16.1 - 19 pages]2. 18.16 - Audit and Risk Committee Charter - (adopted 25 February 2025) [7.16.2 - 15 pages]

RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit and Risk Committee:

- 1. Notes the results of the annual assessment of its performance against the Audit and Risk Committee Charter***
- 2. Requests that the Chief Executive Officer table a summary of the annual assessment at the next Council meeting, as required by the Local Government Act 2020.***

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY



Item: 7.17

Internal Review – Crowe Annual Contract Review

OFFICER Anita Craven

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER Andrew Tenni

DIVISION Executive

ATTACHMENTS Nil

RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit and Risk Committee:

- 1. Note that a contract review has been undertaken with Crowe Australia for the provision of Internal Audit services.*
- 2. Note that the review found that Crowe Australia is meeting the expectations of both ARC members and Council Senior Management.*
- 3. Notes the key opportunities for improvement.*

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY



Item: 7.18

Meeting Schedule - Review Audit and Risk Committee 2026 Work Plan

OFFICER	Anita Craven
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Andrew Tenni
DIVISION	Executive
ATTACHMENTS	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. 2026 ARC Work Plan [7.18.1 - 2 pages]2. March 2026 ARC Meeting Agenda Workplan [7.18.2 - 2 pages]3. Closed Resolutions and Actions ARC meetings - December 2025 ARC [7.18.3 - 4 pages]4. Outstanding Resolutions and Actions ARC meetings - December 2025 ARC [7.18.4 - 6 pages]

RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit and Risk Committee:

- 1. Notes the updated 2026 Audit and Risk Committee Work Plan at Attachment 1, incorporating the updated Audit and Risk Committee Charter and associated work plan to match.***
- 2. Notes the items listed in the 2026 Audit and Risk Committee Work Plan for 12 March 2026 Meeting at Attachment 2.***
- 3. Notes the Audit and Risk Committee complete and incomplete resolutions and actions since 21 August 2025 at Attachments 3 and 4***
- 4. Recommends the closure of additional number of actions once members have completed a review that was circulated on 10 December 2025 via email.***

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY

The meeting was declared closed at 11.35am

CONFIRMED AND SIGNED:

.....CHAIR

Item: 8.1

Municipal Monitor Report Recommendations - Status Report on Implementation

OFFICER	Anita Craven
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Andrew Tenni
DIVISION	Executive
MEETING TYPE	Councillor Briefing
ATTACHMENTS	1. Monitor Report Recommendations - Status Report December 2025 [8.1.1 - 3 pages]

1. PURPOSE

Report to Council the first bi-annual status report of progress against the Municipal Monitors Report recommendations.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council appointed Municipal Monitors Final Report, was tabled and the recommendations accepted by Council at the May 2025 Council meeting.

Council also endorsed their response to the recommendations.

The report, recommendations and Council's endorsed response was tabled with ARC in August 2025.

This status report is the first bi-annual report and was tabled at the Audit and Risk Committee meeting on 11 December 2025 as per the recommendations of the Monitors Report.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Notes the status report of progress against the Municipal Monitors Report recommendations dated December 2025, and that the report was tabled with Councils Audit and Risk Committee on 11 December 2025.***
- 2. Notes the report will be made public via Councils website and a copy will be sent to the Minister for Local Government.***

4. KEY INFORMATION

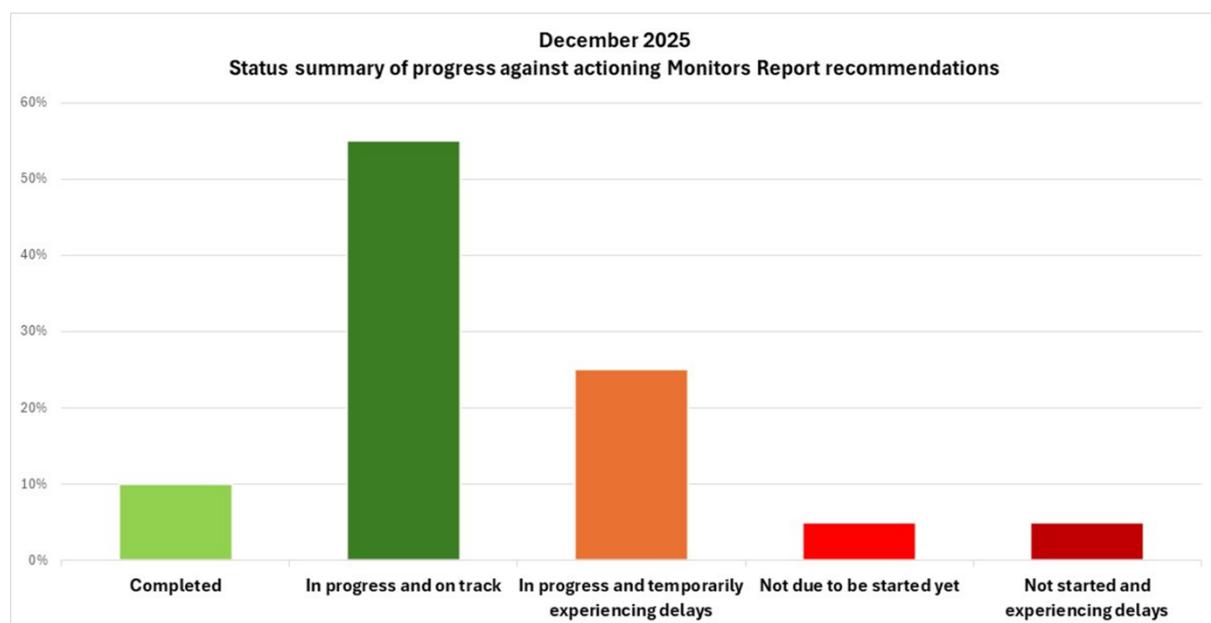
The final Municipal Monitor's report arranged its analysis and its recommendations around the following themes:

- Role clarity and strategic leadership
- Relationships, trust and respect
- Meeting procedures, decision making and adequacy of Governance Rules
- Support for the CEO including creating a safe workplace
- Financial management and community engagement, and
- Recommendations for the Minister's consideration

Council accepted the recommendations and endorsed its response at the May 2025 Council meeting. The report, recommendations and Council's endorsed response was tabled with Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) in August 2025.

This status report is the first bi-annual report and was tabled at the ARC in December 2025. A summary of progress is provided in the graph below, and **Attachment 1** to this report provides an overview of progress against each recommendation.

Table 1: Summary of progress against actioning Monitors Report recommendations



There are 20 recommendations for Council to action, and the dot points below show a summary of progress.

- 65% of actions have been completed or are in progress and on track
- 25% of actions in progress are experiencing temporary delays
- 10% of actions have not yet commenced

There are many actions linked to Councillors Continuing Professional Development which will be rolled out during the 2026 year and will enable these actions to be completed.

Other actions experiencing delays have been reviewed and officers are confident that they will be back on track for delivery or be completed by June 2026.

5. CONSIDERATIONS

Overarching Governance Principles (s(9)(2) LGA 2020)

The monitor's assessment identified areas for improvement that relate to the governance principles articulated in the Act. Progress against the recommendations is improving Council policy, practices and systems supporting good governance.

Policies and Relevant Law (s(9)(2)(a) LGA 2020)

The intention behind the response and action plan is to bring Council into alignment with a range of legislative obligations and to put in place the policies, practices and systems to support good governance on a sustainable basis.

Environmental and Sustainability Implications (s(9)(2)(c) LGA 2020)

Not applicable.

Community Engagement (s56 LGA 2020 and Council's Community Engagement Policy)

Not applicable.

Public Transparency (s58 LGA 2020)

This report will be placed onto Council's website and a copy sent to the Minister Local Government.

Alignment to Plans and Strategies

Alignment to Council Plan 2025-2029:

Theme 2 - PEOPLE

3.2 - Make well-informed, transparent decisions for the betterment of the community through best-practice governance

Financial Management (s101 Local Government Act 2020)

The cost of initiatives will be managed within existing operational budgets.

Service Performance (s106 Local Government Act 2020)

This status report includes progress against actions that focus on improving the customer experience and that are supportive of Councils ongoing efforts to improve service standards.

Risk Assessment

Reporting progress against the implementation of the actions is the key risk mitigation strategy to support Council in the delivery of the full program of reforms recommended by the monitor.

Communication/Implementation

Following the presentation of the report to Council, it will be placed onto Council's website and a copy sent to the Minister Local Government.

Human Rights Charter

No impact.

Officer General or Material Interest

No officer declared an interest under the *Local Government Act 2020* in the preparation of this report.

Attachment 8.1.1 Monitor Report Recommendations - Status Report December 2025

Status Report on progress against Monitor Report Recommendations December 2025

Recommendation	Action	Timelines	Responsibility	Status	Comment
Role Clarity and Strategic Leadership					
1. Council regularly evaluates its compliance with the Local Government(Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020. This evaluation should incorporate feedback from the executive leadership team.	Council administration will develop and propose via the Audit and Risk Committee a self assessment framework based on its broader compliance program.	Proposed June development for presentation to ARC in first quarter 2025/2026 financial year.	Executive Officer Governance	In progress and temporarily experiencing delays	A draft CPD program has been developed and tabled with Councillors for feedback. Requests for suitably qualified consultants to deliver parts of the program is currently in progress. A fully developed program will be tabled with Councillors in early 2026.
2. The practice of Councillors overseeing resolution of customer inquiries cease immediately. Instead, all customer requests for assistance (either services or information) or complaints should be directed to the organisation in line with existing policies and procedures.	In addition to this, the CEO will reissue the staff councillor interaction protocol and brief Councillors on its implementation. The website will be updated to reinforce community customer service contact points and along with the response to recommendations three and four, Council will work to reinforce the understanding in the community of the systems in place to manage requests and resolve complaints. Refresher training on the management of customer requests will be provided to Councillors as part of their continuing professional development. Management of customer inquiries will also be integrated into the Council self-assessment	Timeline for full implementation March 2026.	Manager Customer & Communications	In progress and on track	Councillors have been updated on the staff councillor interaction protocol, progress has been made on community inquiry response timelines and understanding of how to place requests and resolve disputes or complaints. Councillors are utilising the internal system (Smart Sheet) to lodge personal or customer inquiries and regular reporting on customer inquiries now embedded in management program.
3. Council reviews its customer service standards, considering resource availability, complexity and priorities. The Council should request the administration to provide regular performance reporting including emerging trends. In addition, these updated standards should be reflected in relevant policies, procedures and where appropriate management should incorporate these into staff performance plans.	Council administration will initiate a priority project to conduct the required review. The recommendations for improvement should be the subject of a briefing with Councillors to ensure there is shared agreement on standards and protocols. The briefing should address the management of the end to end process and include provision for the management of leave for the efficient and effective meeting of targets.	The project will be initiated in the first quarter financial year 2025/2026 and will be completed for Councillor briefing by March 2026	Manager Customer & Communications	In progress and on track	Draft Customer Charter developed. Timelines to be confirmed and adopted. Processes reviewed and improvements identified in the end to end process. Customer experience strategy to guide delivery of training and improvements.
4. Council commits to supporting the CEO to implement the Customer Experience Strategy, including reforms required to reinforce a culture of service excellence. This would involve Councillors ensuring that the organisation has sufficient resources to implement this strategy, including any process, system and cultural reforms required, and that they act as champions of the strategy and associated reforms	The Council administration will initiate a refreshed work program including: • Customer experience training • Journey mapping and • Setting and implementation of customer service standards	The project will be initiated in the first quarter financial year 2025/2026 and a Councillor briefing to adopt strategy and implementation will be completed by end 2025 calendar year.	Manager Customer & Communications	In progress and temporarily experiencing delays	External training provider identified and extensive program to be rolled out in 2026. Journey mapping trials underway. Customer service standards to be outlined in Customer Service Charter.
5. Council requests staff to incorporate into its review of policies and procedures an assessment to ensure roles and responsibilities of Councillors and officers reflect the Act	The Council governance team, which is leading the review of policies and procedures will build this requirement into the project brief and guidance material.	This will be implemented by December 2025	Executive Officer Governance	Completed	Governance has completed the development of Policy guidance material as part of a broader project to refresh the organisations approach to the review and development of policies. This is being rolled out across the organisation, and the guidelines have specific reference to how officers are to complete reviews and the difference between Council vs operational policy.

Attachment 8.1.1 Monitor Report Recommendations - Status Report December 2025

Status Report on progress against Monitor Report Recommendations December 2025

Recommendation	Action	Timelines	Responsibility	Status	Comment
6. Council seeks assurance from its Audit and Risk Committee that the organisation's systems and processes ensure that appropriate legal and technical standards are met, and/or risks are effectively managed where this is not possible	The Council administration will document as the basis of this assurance exercise the requirements in its key service areas including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning • Engineering • Design • Procurement As well as developing a generic checklist applicable to all other services which will be put to the Audit and Risk Committee for review.	This work will be complete by December 2025	Executive Officer Governance	In progress and temporarily experiencing delays	A checklist of processes has been developed that outlines the different ways in which service areas ensure that appropriate legal and technical standards are met. A draft of this document has been circulated to the key service areas of Planning, Engineering, Design and Procurement to establish a document view of current practices. Following tabling of this checklist at the ARC meeting in December 2025, further work is required to be carried out. This has delayed this work being completed on time.
7. Councillors guard against actual and perceived bias by transparently representing the interests of the entire municipality and ensuring they are not captured by the interests of any cohort, whether that be a particular business, geographic community, community member or interest group. An evidenced based approach to strategic planning and decision making, supported by broad community engagement will mitigate the risk of real or perceived bias	The Council administration will ensure this matter is addressed as part of Councillors ongoing continuing professional development (CPD) requirements	Councillors initial round of CPD will be complete by March 2026	Executive Officer Governance	In progress and on track	A draft CPD program has been developed and tabled with Councillors for feedback. Requests for suitably qualified consultants to deliver parts of the program is currently in progress. A fully developed program will be tabled with Councillors in early 2026.
Relationships, trust and respect					
8. Council continues to invest in the work already commenced to establish effective ways of working together (as Councillors) focusing on constructive relationships and behaviours, with the assistance of an external consultant to guide this work	The Governance Team will schedule as part of Councillors ongoing CPD, remaining sessions on effective team building. This work will be ongoing as part of Councillors CPD. In addition to these formal mechanisms councillors regularly gather to debrief and work on their team building.	Councillors initial round of CPD will be complete by March 2026	Executive Officer Governance	In progress and on track	A draft CPD program has been developed and tabled with Councillors for feedback. Requests for suitably qualified consultants to deliver parts of the program is currently in progress. A fully developed program will be tabled with Councillors in early 2026.
9. Council engages expert assistance to assist with building a culture of respect, with a focus on conflict resolution, psychological safety, and working collaboratively	The Governance Team will schedule as part of Councillors ongoing CPD, expert facilitation of ongoing sessions which will address these requirements	Councillors initial round of CPD will be complete by March 2026	Executive Officer Governance	In progress and on track	A draft CPD program has been developed and tabled with Councillors for feedback. Requests for suitably qualified consultants to deliver parts of the program is currently in progress. A fully developed program will be tabled with Councillors in early 2026.
10. Council implements the Protocol developed by the CEO in 2025 to support effective compliance with Council policies	Compliance with the protocol will be built into the proposed self assessment framework for Councillors.	Proposed June development for presentation to ARC in first quarter 2025/2026 financial year	Chief Executive Officer	In progress and temporarily experiencing delays	Draft protocol was developed by the previous CEO. A desktop review of the draft protocol is being undertaken before being tabled with Councillors and subsequent compliance
11. Council engages external expertise to undertake an assessment of Councillor's governance, leadership, and integrity performance and tailor its annual professional development content to focus on areas identified for improvement	The Council administration will engage a suitably qualified expert to undertake this assessment and feed its findings into the CPD program which will be renewed on an annual basis.	It is proposed this work be first completed in the third quarter financial year 2025/2026 the end of 2026 once the first full year of CPD has been delivered	Executive Officer Governance	In progress and on track	A draft CPD program has been developed and tabled with Councillors for feedback. Requests for suitably qualified consultants to deliver parts of the program is currently in progress. A fully developed program will be tabled with Councillors in early 2026.
Meeting procedures, decision making and adequacy of Governance Rules					
12. Council undertakes a review of the current instruments of delegation to enable more efficient operations and better reflect the strategic rather than operational role of Councillors	It is proposed this is incorporated by the administration's Governance team into the regular review of delegations and authorisations.	This first of these reviews would be complete by December 2025	Executive Officer Governance	Completed	A review of the instrument of delegations was completed in September 2025.

Attachment 8.1.1 Monitor Report Recommendations - Status Report December 2025

Status Report on progress against Monitor Report Recommendations December 2025

Recommendation	Action	Timelines	Responsibility	Status	Comment
13. When finalised, Council adopts the Model Governance Rules to reflect their commitment to best practice governance	Noted and endorsed.	as per legislated requirements	Executive Officer Governance	Not due to be started yet	This action is dependent on Local Government Victoria and the release of the Model Governance Rules.
14. Councillors adopt a practice of having regular reflections on their effectiveness, including after council meetings, and that the CEO support this practice and be able to provide feedback	It is proposed this practice be implemented jointly between the Council and the new CEO.	It is proposed the new CEO proposed a schedule against which this practice is implemented by December 2025	Chief Executive Officer	Not started and experiencing delays	This will be responded to when Councillors commence work with external consultant in 2026
Support for the CEO including creating a safe workplace					
15. Council clarifies its performance objectives for the CEO at the earliest opportunity and provides transparent annual reviews and regular feedback (at least every 6 months), in line with the agreed performance objectives.	The refresh of the CEO's performance plan and contract will be undertaken by the Employment Matters Committee overseen by the Independent Chair and will be completed for the new CEO appointment.	Proposed timeline October 2025.	EMCEO Chair	In progress and on track	A CEO performance plan has been signed of by Councillor and the CEO, post the appointment of the new CEO. A CEOEMAC meeting is scheduled for 2nd December, for an informal discussion between the committee and the CEO to discuss the first three months in the role.
16. The CEO performance review process includes the opportunity for the CEO to provide feedback about Council's performance in supporting the CEO to achieve both Councils' and the CEO's defined goals, as well as how Councillors can support the CEO in meeting the obligations of their role. This process will require support from the Independent Chair of the CEOEMAC	This will be implemented through the review process undertaken by the Employment Matters Committee and overseen by the Independent Chair.	Proposed timeline December 2025.	EMCEO Chair	In progress and on track	This has been referred to the Mayor and EMCEO Chair for actioning through the CEO Employment Matters committee.
17. Council makes overt its commitment to creating a safe and respectful environment and include in its regular professional development (at least annually), a review of its obligations and performance.	This will be built into Council's CPD program and its self-assessment framework. Council will make overt its commitment to this principle in its processes for engaging with the CEO through the Employment Matters Committee.	Proposed timeline December 2025	Executive Officer Governance	In progress and on track	A draft CPD program has been developed and tabled with Councillors for feedback. Requests for suitably qualified consultants to deliver parts of the program is currently in progress. A fully developed program will be tabled with Councillors in early 2026.
Financial management and community engagement					
18. Councillors are required to undertake financial literacy training as part of their professional development	It is proposed that Council seek to initiate and host a regional session on financial sustainability as part of Council's commitment to its CPD program and regional collaboration.	Session initiated and delivered by December 2025	Executive Officer Governance	In progress and temporarily experiencing delays	A draft CPD program has been developed and tabled with Councillors for feedback. Requests for suitably qualified consultants to deliver parts of the program is currently in progress. A fully developed program will be tabled with Councillors in early 2026.
19. Council works closely with the CEO to develop a clear strategy to achieve financial sustainability and seeks the ARC's support to track implementation and efficacy of the strateg	Council administration will work to develop a strategy which addresses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste • User fees and charges • Headline services mapping for service and asset review with a financial lens and a • 'right sizing' asset strategy 	This work will require external assistance and expertise and will commence in August 2025 and will likely be complete by early 2026.	GM Corporate Services	In progress and on track	A draft document is in progress that articulates Councils approach and the key actions to be taken to address ongoing financial sustainability and to 'right size' its asset portfolio. This will take into account the considerable work undertaken by Councillors and Council officers during the 2025 year, including the review and adoption of the 10 year Financial Plan and 10 year Asset Plan.
20. Council should work closely with the CEO to develop a clear strategy to 'right size' its asset portfolio and integrate its implementation into its strategic objectives when developing its Asset Plan and Financial Plan	This work would be integrated into the workplan above.	This work will require external assistance and expertise and will commence in August 2025 and will likely be complete by early 2026.	GM Infrastructure and Environment	In progress and on track	A draft document is in progress that articulates Councils approach and the key actions to be taken to address ongoing financial sustainability and to 'right size' its asset portfolio. This will take into account the considerable work undertaken by Councillors and Council officers during the 2025 year, including the review and adoption of the 10 year Financial Plan and 10 year Asset Plan.

Item 10.1
**Notice of Motion 361 25-26 - Cr Howard -
Amendment to Governance Rules**

COUNCILLOR Cr Phil Howard

ATTACHMENTS Nil

1. NOTICE OF MOTION

That Council:

- 1. Endorses the draft change to Governance Rules Clause 47.7 (a) & (b) to amend the clauses from “two weekdays” to “two days”, and to put this change out for public exhibition for two weeks.***
- 2. Provides the opportunity for any person wishing to speak to their written submission to be heard at the Submissions Committee prior to Council considering adoption of any proposed changes to Clause 47.7 (a) & (b).***
- 3. Notes that Clause 47.7 (a) & (b) is the only section of the Governance Rules under consideration for amendment by Council. Any other submissions regarding other Clauses of the Governance Rules will not be considered.***

2. COUNCILLOR COMMENT

In August 2025 Council resolved to put on public exhibition an updated draft of the Governance Rules. At its Council meeting in October 2025, it resolved to adopt the draft Governance Rules as attached to the agenda. In relation to Clause 47.7 (a) & (b) it was drafted to refer to “weekdays” in relation to submitting questions and registration for speaking virtually (or by phone). This restricted the deadline for the public to Friday which was not the intention. Hence the Notice of Motion to correct this oversight.

Item 10.2 Notice of Motion 362 25-26 - Cr Potter - Emergency Services Volunteer Fund

COUNCILLOR Cr Chris Potter

ATTACHMENTS Nil

1. NOTICE OF MOTION

That Council writes a letter to the Premier of Victoria to:

- 1. Acknowledge the financial commitment by the State to provide resources to combat the recent and serious fires and floods that have seriously impacted the Colac Otway Community and the State of Victoria.*
- 2. Reaffirm its opposition to the Emergency Services Volunteer Fund (ESVF).*
- 3. Recognise the sacrifices and risks our CFA and other volunteers face.*
- 4. Acknowledge that rural brigades are being disadvantaged and placed at risk with lack of delivery of equipment and station upgrades.*
- 5. Acknowledge that volunteers are at times expected to work in conditions and with equipment that may not align with typical workplace standards.*
- 6. Request a public inquiry into the allocation of the ESVF monies received, where that funding has been allocated and restoring the funding required for Victoria firefighters.*
- 7. Request a further Parliamentary Legislative Council inquiry into the resourcing, capability and preparedness of Victoria's Fire Services.*

2. COUNCILLOR COMMENT

In response to the ongoing opposition to the ESVF levy, the recent fire and flood emergencies in Colac Otway and other areas in Victoria, and in order to support our CFA and other emergency volunteer responders.

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