



Councillor Briefing Notes

Tuesday 2 December 2025 at 10.00 am

273 Main Street, Bairnsdale 3875

Attendance

Mayor

Cr Jodie Ashworth

Deputy Mayor

Cr Tom Crook

Councillors

Cr Arthur Allen

Cr Sonia Buckley

Cr Barry Davis (Online)

Cr Joanne Eastman

Cr Bernie Farquhar

Cr Ian Trevaskis

Council Officers

Fiona Weigall

Stuart McConnell

Sarah Johnston

Chris Stephenson

Chief Executive Officer

General Manager Assets and Environment

General Manager Business Excellence

General Manager Place and Community

Apologies

Cr John White

Recognition of Traditional Custodians

East Gippsland Shire Council acknowledges the Gunaikurnai, Monero and Bidawel people as the Traditional Custodians of this land that encompasses East Gippsland Shire, and their enduring relationship with country. The Traditional Custodians have cared and nurtured East Gippsland for tens of thousands of years.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Cr Sonia Buckley declared a conflict of interest in relation to item 4.2 CONFIDENTIAL Community Grants Impact, as a material conflict given her position on a committee that is a grant applicant.

Councillor Briefing Session

Assets and Environment

1.1 CONFIDENTIAL Proposed Organic Composting Facility Delivery and Operating Models

Confidentiality Notice

The information contained in the confidential attachment/s is confidential under section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* because it relates to: (a) Council Business Information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations, if prematurely released.

Pursuant to section 66(5)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, if released, the information discussed or considered in relation to this agenda item could prejudice Council's position in commercial negotiations which have not yet commenced.

Attendance

Cr Bernie Farquhar entered the Council Chambers at 10.32 am.

1.2 Capital Works and Major Projects Status as at 31 October 2025

Councillors were briefed on the status of the Capital Works and Major Projects as of 31 October 2025. This includes a review of current capital projects and outlines proposed adjustments to ensure alignment with strategic priorities and delivery timelines.

Business Excellence

2.1 Quarterly Community Satisfaction, Engagement and Customer Responsiveness Report

Councillors were presented with a quarterly Community Satisfaction, Engagement and Customer Responsiveness Report. This report highlighted the steady growth and progress in organisation's engagement and customer interactions.

Place and Community

3.1 CONFIDENTIAL Commercial Matter

Confidentiality Notice

The information contained in this report is confidential under section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* because it relates to: (g) Private Commercial Information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that—(i) relates to trade secrets.

Pursuant to section 66(5)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, if released, the information discussed or considered in relation to this agenda item could jeopardise future commercial negotiations.

3.2 Planning Amendment (Better Decisions Made Faster) Bill 2025

Councillors were briefed and discussed the *Better Decisions Made Faster Planning and Environment Act Reform Bill* currently tabled in the Victorian Parliament. Councillors were briefed on the Officers understanding of some of the implications of the Bill for Council as both a Planning Authority and Responsible Authority, noting that there have been no supporting regulations released at this point in time. Councillors were also presented with an overview of the *Housing Statement Reform Act* which received Royal Assent on 18 March 2025 and was effective as of 25 November 2025.

Reports to Future Council Meeting

4.1 Use and Development of Land for Timber Production and the Removal of Native Vegetation at 400, 400A and 580 Aitkens Road, Bengworden

Councillors were briefed on the Use and Development of Land for Timber Production and the Removal of Native Vegetation at 400, 400A and 580 Aitkens Road, Bengworden, for which Council is a Referral Authority. Councillors noted the draft Council report, which will be submitted to the **16 December 2025** Council Meeting for consideration.

Conflict of Interest

Cr Sonia Buckley, having declared a Conflict of Interest in relation to item 4.2, left the Council Chambers at 3.02 pm.

4.2 CONFIDENTIAL Council Business Matter - Community Grants

Confidentiality Notice

The information contained in this report is confidential under section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* because it relates to: (a) Council Business Information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations, if prematurely released.

Pursuant to section 66(5)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, if released, the information discussed or considered in relation to this agenda item could undermine the integrity and fairness of the assessment process and compromise Council's ability to manage funding allocations transparently.

Councillors were briefed on a report coming to the **16 December 2025** Council Meeting on the allocation of Council's Community Impact Grants stream.

Attendance

Cr Sonia Buckley returned to the Council Chambers at 3.22 pm.

4.3 CONFIDENTIAL Council Business Matter

Confidentiality Notice

The information contained in this report is confidential under section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* because it relates to: (a) Council Business Information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations, if prematurely released.

4.4 CONFIDENTIAL CON2026 1751 Spillway and bridge replacement at Livingstone Park, Omeo

Confidentiality Notice

The information contained in **Confidential Attachment 1** is confidential under section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* because it relates to: (g) Private Commercial Information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that—(ii) if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

Pursuant to section 66(5)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, if released, the information discussed or considered in relation to this agenda item would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage, by disclosing financial information to competitors.

Councillors were briefed on CON2026 1751 Spillway and bridge replacement at Livingstone Park, Omeo. Councillors noted the draft Council report, which will be submitted to the **16 December 2025** Council Meeting for consideration.

4.5 CONFIDENTIAL CON2026 1748 Old Slipway Seawall Storm Damage Repairs, Lakes Entrance

Confidentiality Notice

The information contained in **Confidential Attachments 1 and 3** in this report are confidential under section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* because they relates to: (a) Council Business Information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations, if prematurely released.

Pursuant to section 66(5)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, if released, the information discussed or considered in relation to this agenda item would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage, by disclosing financial information to competitors.

Councillors were briefed on CON2026 1748 Old Slipway Seawall Storm Damage Repairs, Lakes Entrance. Councillors noted the draft Council report, which will be submitted to the **16 December 2025** Council Meeting for consideration.

Confidentiality Notice

The information contained in this report is confidential under section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* because it relates to: (g) Private Commercial Information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that—(ii) if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

Pursuant to section 66(5)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, if released, the information discussed or considered in relation to this agenda item may result in disadvantage to the businesses involved and confidentiality is necessary to protect the legitimate commercial interests of the parties.

Meeting Close

Meeting closed at: 4.26 pm

Approved by: Fiona Weigall Chief Executive Officer