



# Councillor Briefing Notes

Tuesday 10 March 2026 at 9.30 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

Cr Joanne Eastman

Cr Bernie Farquhar

Cr Ian Trevaskis

Cr John White

### 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

## Recognition of Traditional Custodians

Council acknowledges the Traditional Owners and custodians of this land and pays deep respect to all First Nations peoples and communities with enduring cultural connections to East Gippsland, who have cared for and nurtured Country for tens of thousands of years.

We honour and celebrate the rich diversity, living cultures, and ongoing contributions of all First Nations peoples who live, work, visit, and play across East Gippsland.

We also acknowledge the many First Nations communities who, together, continue to shape and contribute to the region we know as East Gippsland. The place where we, as Local Government, deliver services and support to our community.

## Apologies

Nil

## Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Nil

## Councillor Briefing Session

### Business Excellence

#### 1.1 Workshop 4 Budget 2026/27 - Strategic Budget Settings - Rate Cap and Budget Recommendations from Audit and Risk Committee

##### Attendance

Cr Bernie Farquhar and Cr Sonia Buckley entered the Council Chamber at 9.32 am, and Cr Joanne Eastman entered the Council Chamber at 9.35 am.

Councillors workshopped the draft Budget 2026/27 – Strategic Budget Settings – Rate Cap and Budget Recommendations from the Audit and Risk Committee.

This workshop focused on the overall financial position, the application of the rate cap, and the implications of the Audit and Risk Committee's recommendations for the upcoming budget.

#### 1.2 Demonstration - Council IQ

Councillors received – a demonstration of software being developed to support community members access Council data and information, designed to improve transparency and accessibility of Council information for the community.

The demonstration outlined the purpose of the software, its development through a shared services arrangement, and its focus on presenting governance, financial and community performance information in a clear, user-friendly format.

Councillors discussed the staged approach to implementation, the importance of data accuracy and automation, and how the portal will support community understanding, trust and engagement once progressively expanded and formally launched.

#### 1.3 Surveillance Device Framework

Councillors received an update on Surveillance Device Framework, and how Council uses surveillance technologies in a safe, responsible, and transparent way. This work brings together Council's approach into one clear framework, replacing several separate policies.

The framework covers closed circuit TV cameras in public places and Council buildings, as well as other devices such as vehicle tracking, personal safety devices, and drones. It is designed to meet legal and privacy requirements and follows guidance from the Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner.

To support community understanding and transparency, Council will update public information and transparency measures, including adding information to Council's website and reviewing existing signage.

Councillors discussed how these technologies are managed, including Council's arrangements with Victoria Police and the introduction of clear rules and oversight. Officers confirmed that surveillance is used to support community safety, protect Council Officers and assets, and meet legal obligations. Clear signage, openness, and maintaining community trust are key principles of this approach.

## Reports to Future Council Meeting (For discussion)

### 2.1 Delegations - Council to Members of Staff

Councillors were briefed on the draft report, Delegations - Council to Members of Staff. Councillors noted the draft Council report, which will be submitted to the **17 March 2026** Council Meeting for consideration.

### 2.2 Domestic Animal Management Plan

Councillors were briefed on the draft report, Domestic Animal Management Plan. Councillors noted the draft Council report, which will be submitted to the **17 March 2026** Council Meeting for consideration.

### 2.3 Rural Land Use Strategy Update (2.55 pm)

Councillors were briefed on and discussed the draft report, Rural Land Use Strategy Update. Councillors discussed and noted that further work is required and that a facilitated workshop is the preferred next step. This report will not proceed to Council at this time.

### 2.4 CON2026 1789 Bairnsdale Runway Extension and Lighting Construction Works

#### Confidentiality Notice

The information contained in Confidential Attachment 1 (CON2026 1789 Contract Award Summary), 2 (CON2026 1789 Tender Evaluation Process) and 3 (CON2026 1789 Probity Report) are 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 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 tenderers to disadvantage by disclosing commercially sensitive pricing and evaluation information.

Councillors were briefed and updated on the draft report, CON2026 1789 Bairnsdale Runway Extension and Lighting Construction Works. Councillors noted the draft Council report, which will be submitted to the **17 March 2026** Council Meeting for consideration.

### 2.5 MAV State Council May Meeting - Adoption of Motion

Councillors were briefed on the draft report, MAV State Council May Meeting - Adoption of Motion. Councillors noted the proposed changes to the Motion of the draft Council report, which will be submitted to the **17 March 2026** Council Meeting for consideration.

## Meeting Close

**Meeting closed at:** 4.10 pm

**Approved by:** Fiona Weigall Chief Executive Officer