



Councillor Briefing Notes

Tuesday 28 July 2026 at 9.30 am

273 Main Street, Bairnsdale 3875

Attendance

Mayor

Cr Jodie Ashworth

Deputy Mayor

Cr Tom Crook

Councillors

Cr Arthur Allen (Online)

Cr Sonia Buckley (Online)

Cr Joanne Eastman

Cr Bernie Farquhar

Cr Ian Trevaskis

Cr John White

Council Officers

Chris Stephenson

Stuart McConnell

Sarah Johnston

Wayne Richards

Acting Chief Executive Officer

General Manager Assets and Environment

General Manager Business Excellence

Executive Manager Place and Community

Recognition of Traditional Custodians

We would like to acknowledge the First Nation people from the land on which we are gathered and pay our respects to Elders both past and present.

Apologies

Cr Barry Davis (Leave of Absence)

Fiona Weigall Chief Executive Officer

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Nil

Councillor Briefing Session

External Presentation

1.1 Workshop 2 - Financial Sustainability Strategy

Attendance

Cr Arthur Allen (online) disconnected from the meeting at 10.15 am and rejoined at 10.17 am.

Councillors workshopped the Financial Sustainability Strategy which provided a clearer understanding of Council's long term financial position and the scale of the challenge required to achieve financial sustainability.

The session explored Council's long term financial outlook and considered ways to ensure the ongoing delivery of services and infrastructure for the community.

The discussions included financial planning, the costs of providing services and maintaining assets, and principles to support long term sustainability.

Officer Briefings and Workshops

2.1 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.

In accordance with section 66(5)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, the information contained in and discussed under this agenda item is considered confidential. The report includes commercially sensitive insurance market information, premium pricing and information supplied by Council's insurance providers and broker on a confidential basis. Public disclosure could reasonably be expected to prejudice Council's future insurance procurement activities and commercial dealings with insurers.

2.2 Gippsland Lakes Shared Community Hub Project Re-Scope from Hub to Precinct

Attendance

Mayor Cr Jodie Ashworth left the meeting at 11.55 am. Deputy Mayor Cr Tom Crook assumed Chair for the remainder of this item.

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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 impact negotiations with the funding body if prematurely released.

2.3 Public Amenity Service Review Draft Findings

Attendance

Mayor Cr Jodie Ashworth rejoined the meeting in the Council Chamber at 12.50 pm, and Cr Arthur Allen joined the meeting (online) at 12.57 pm.

Councillors received an update on the Public Amenities Service Review draft findings, which considers the future delivery of Public Amenities Services across East Gippsland.

The discussions focused on opportunities to improve the public amenities service, accessibility and long-term sustainability of the network, while recognising the importance of maintaining well presented and reliable facilities throughout the municipality.

2.4 Omeo District Place Plan

Councillors were briefed on the Omeo District Place Plan prior to releasing it for public review. The Plan has been developed to provide a district level understanding of community priorities, aspirations and future opportunities across the Omeo region.

The discussions focused on housing, community wellbeing, volunteerism, community engagement and ensuring the draft Plan accurately reflects the needs and aspirations of the Omeo region and surrounding communities.

Reports to Future Council Meeting

3.1 CON2026 1786 Howitt Park Pedestrian Bridge Replacement

Confidentiality Notice

The information contained in **Confidential Attachment 1 – Contract Award Summary and Confidential Attachments 2, 3 and 4 – Tender Evaluation Reports** 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 the draft report, CON2026 1786 Howitt Park Pedestrian Bridge Replacement. Councillors noted the draft Council report, which will be submitted to the **18 August 2026** Council Meeting for consideration.

3.2 CON2026 1784, CON2026 1785, CON2026 1787 Bridge Replacements Contracts - Lees Road Mossiface, Hollands O'Briens Road Swifts Creek and Healeys Road Marlo

Confidentiality Notice

The information contained in **Confidential Attachment 1 – Contract Award Summary and Confidential Attachments 2, 3 and 4 – Tender Evaluation Reports** 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.

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Councillors were briefed on the draft report, CON2026 1784, CON2026 1785, CON2026 1787 Bridge Replacements Contracts - Lees Road Mossiface, Hollands O'Briens Road Swifts Creek and Healeys Road Marlo. Councillors noted the draft Council report, which will be submitted to the **18 August 2026** Council Meeting for consideration.

Meeting Close

Meeting closed at: 2.29 pm

Approved by: Chris Stephenson Acting Chief Executive Officer