

Council Meeting

Agenda

Tuesday, 11 February 2025

Council Chamber - Civic Centre
and via Videoconference

Information for Councillors and the community

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Yarra Ranges Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri and other Kulin Nations as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of these lands and waterways.

We pay our respects to all Elders, past, present, and emerging, who have been, and always will be, integral to the story of our region.

We proudly share custodianship to care for Country together.



COUNCIL VISION

Whether you live here or visit, you will see how much we care for country, how inclusive and connected our communities are, and how sustainable balanced growth makes this the best place in the world.

VALUE OF HISTORY

We acknowledge that history shapes our identities, engages us as citizens, creates inclusive communities, is part of our economic well-being, teaches us to think critically and creatively, inspires leaders and is the foundation of our future generations.

COUNCILLOR COMMITMENT

We'll be truthful, represent the community's needs, be positive and responsive and always strive to do better.

OUR COUNCILLORS

Billanook Ward: Tim Heenan
Chandler Ward: Gareth Ward
Chirnside Ward: Richard Higgins
Lyster Ward: Peter Mcilwain
Melba Ward: Mitch Mazzarella

O'Shannassy Ward: Jim Child
Ryrie Ward: Fiona McAllister
Streeton Ward: Jeff Marriott
Walling Ward: Len Cox

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER & DIRECTORS

Chief Executive Officer, Tammi Rose
Director Built Environment & Infrastructure, Hjalmar Philipp
Director Communities, Leanne Hurst

Director Corporate Services, Vincenzo Lombardi
Director Planning and Sustainable Futures, Kath McClusky

GOVERNANCE RULES

All Council and Delegated Committee meetings are to be conducted in accordance with Council's Governance Rules, which can be viewed at: <https://www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/Council/Corporate-documents/Policies-strategies/Governance-rules>

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN MEETINGS

Members of the community can participate in Council meetings in any of the following ways:

- making a verbal submission for up to 5 minutes on matters not listed on the agenda.
- submitting a question.
- speaking for up to 5 minutes to a specific item on the agenda. For planning applications and policy issues, the Chair will invite one person to speak on behalf of any objectors and one person to speak on behalf of the applicant. For other matters on the agenda, only one person will be invited to address Council, unless there are opposing views. At the discretion of the Chair, additional speakers may be invited for items of large interest.
- speaking for up to 5 minutes to a petition to be presented at a meeting.

For further information about how to participate in a Council meeting, please visit: <https://www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/Council/Council-meetings/Submissions-questions-petitions-to-Council>

LIVE STREAMING AND RECORDING OF MEETINGS

Council meetings will be live streamed and recorded with the video recording being published on Council's website. Council will cease live streaming at the direction of the Chair or prior to any confidential items being considered.

Opinions or statements made during the course of a meeting are those of the particular individuals. Council does not necessarily endorse or support the views, opinions, standards or information contained in the live streaming or recording of meetings. While Council will use its best endeavours to ensure the live stream and Council's website are functioning, technical issues may arise which may result in Council temporarily adjourning the meeting or, if the issue cannot be resolved, adjourning the meeting to another date and time to be determined.

A person in attendance at the meeting must not operate film, photographic, tape-recording or other equipment to reproduce sound and/or images at any meeting without first obtaining the consent of the Chair.

The Minutes produced after each Council Meeting form the official record of the decisions made by Yarra Ranges Council.

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In the case of an emergency during a meeting held at the Civic Centre, 15 Anderson Street, Lilydale, you should follow the directions given by staff and evacuate the building using the nearest available exit. You should congregate at the assembly point at Hardy Street car park.

CONTACT US

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Telephone	1300 368 333
Email	mail@yarraranges.vic.gov.au

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YARRA RANGES COUNCIL

**AGENDA FOR THE 618TH COUNCIL MEETING TO BE HELD ON TUESDAY
11 FEBRUARY 2025 COMMENCING AT 7.00PM IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC
CENTRE, ANDERSON STREET, LILYDALE / VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE**

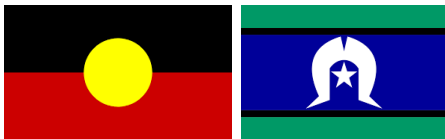
1. MEETING OPENED

2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Yarra Ranges Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri and other Kulin Nations as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of these lands and waterways.

We pay our respects to all Elders, past, present, and emerging, who have been, and always will be, integral to the story of our region.

We proudly share custodianship to care for Country together.



3. INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS PRESENT

OUR COUNCILLORS

Billanook Ward: Tim Heenan

Chandler Ward: Gareth Ward

Chirnside Ward: Richard Higgins

Lyster Ward: Peter Mcilwain

Melba Ward: Mitch Mazzarella

O'Shannassy Ward: Jim Child

Ryrie Ward: Fiona McAllister

Streeton Ward: Jeff Marriott

Walling Ward: Len Cox

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Chief Executive Officer, Tammi Rose

Director Built Environment & Infrastructure, Hjalmar Philipp

Director Communities, Leanne Hurst

Director Corporate Services, Vincenzo Lombardi

Director Planning & Sustainable Futures, Kath McClusky

4. APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

There were no apologies received prior to the commencement of this meeting.

5. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

In accordance with Chapter 7, Rule 4, of the Governance Rules developed by Council in accordance with section 60 of the Local Government Act 2020.

The Local Government Act 2020 defines two categories of conflict of interest:

- *a general conflict of interest, which is defined as "...a relevant 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", and*
- *a material conflict of interest, which is defined as "...a relevant person has a material conflict of interest in respect of a matter if an affected person would gain a benefit or suffer a loss depending on the outcome of the matter. The benefit may arise or the loss incurred (a) directly or indirectly; or (b) in a pecuniary or non-pecuniary form."*

In accordance with section 130 of the Local Government Act 2020, a conflict of interest must be disclosed in the manner required by the Governance Rules and the relevant person must exclude themselves from the decision-making process.

No Conflicts of Interest have been received prior to the Agenda being printed.

6. MAYORAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

7. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RECOMMENDATION

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held Tuesday 28 January 2025, as circulated, be confirmed.

8. QUESTIONS AND SUBMISSIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

In accordance with Chapter 3, Rules 57 and 59, of the Governance Rules developed by Council in accordance with section 60 of the Local Government Act 2020.

A person may make a submission to Council on matters that are not listed on the Agenda. A submission may be on any matter except if it:

- (a) is considered malicious, defamatory, indecent, abusive, offensive, irrelevant, trivial, or objectionable in language or substance;
- (b) is substantially the same as a submission made to a Council meeting in the preceding 12 months;
- (c) relates to confidential information as defined under the Act;
- (d) relates to the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer; or
- (e) relates to any other matter which the Council considers would prejudice the Council or any person.

9. PETITIONS

In accordance with Chapter 3, Rules 60, of the Governance Rules developed by Council in accordance with section 60 of the Local Government Act 2020.

A person may submit a petition to Council on matters that are not listed on the Agenda. Every petition or joint letter submitted to Council must:

- a) identify a 'Lead Petitioner' who Council can correspond with;
- b) be legible and in permanent writing;
- c) be clear and state on each page the matter and action sought from Council. Every page of a petition or joint letter must be a single page of paper and not be posted, stapled, pinned or otherwise affixed or attached to any piece of paper other than another page of the petition or joint letter;
- d) not be derogatory, defamatory or objectionable in language or nature;
- e) not relate to matters outside the powers of Council; and
- f) clearly state the names and addresses of at least seven (7) people who live, work, study or do business in the Municipal district.

9 PETITION TO COUNCIL

Report Author: Senior Governance Officer
 Responsible Officer: Director Corporate Services
 Ward(s) affected: Billanook, Melba

The author(s) of this report and the Responsible Officer consider that the report complies with the overarching governance principles and supporting principles set out in the Local Government Act 2020.

CONFIDENTIALITY

This item is to be considered at a Council meeting that is open to the public.

SUMMARY

The following petition be received:

General Petition

- a) Council to provide the people of Lilydale with fair and reasonable carparking signage that is agreed by the community, rescinding of all fines prior to an agreed consultation process, and publication of the results of consultation and the method of recording of infringements and enforcement.
 178 valid signatures.
- b) The introduction of a Special Charge Scheme for Sealing Stanton Grove, Lilydale, with no curb and channel.
 8 valid signatures

RECOMMENDATION

That the following General Petition be received and noted and referred to the appropriate officer.

- a) ***Council to provide the people of Lilydale with fair and reasonable carparking signage that is agreed by the community, rescinding of all fines prior to an agreed consultation process, and publication of the results of consultation and the method of recording of infringements and enforcement.***
- b) ***The introduction of a Special Charge Scheme for Sealing Stanton Grove, Lilydale, with no curb and channel.***

AUDIT & RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE BIENNIAL REPORT

Report Author: Executive Officer Governance Risk & Compliance for Stephen Schinck, Chair of the Audit and Risk Management Committee

Responsible Officer: Director Corporate Services

Ward(s) affected: All

The author(s) of this report and the Responsible Officer consider that the report complies with the overarching governance principles and supporting principles set out in the Local Government Act 2020.

CONFIDENTIALITY

This item is to be considered at a Council meeting that is open to the public.

SUMMARY

The Audit and Risk Management Committee (the Committee) has been established by Council under Section 53 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act). It is the responsibility of the Committee to provide Council with independent, objective advice and assurance on the adequacy of Council arrangements as set out in the Committee Charter (the Charter).

The Act requires that the Committee prepare a biannual report for Council that describes its activities and includes findings and recommendations.

This report is the biannual report of the Committee for the six-month period ending 31 December 2024.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council note the Yarra Ranges Audit and Risk Management Committee Biannual Report for the six-month period ending 31 December 2024.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

The Committee previously provided a biannual report for the six months to 30 June 2024, to the Council Meeting on 22 October 2024.

DISCUSSION

The Committee's Biannual Report provides Council with information of the progress of the Committee's Annual Work Plan, which outlines the activities it monitors and reviews to ensure it complies with its requirements under the Committee Charter.

Pursuant to section 54(2) of the Act, the Committee assists Council and management by providing advice and guidance on the adequacy of.

- Compliance management.
- Governance structure.
- Risk management and fraud prevention.
- Internal control framework.
- Oversight of the internal audit activity, external auditors, and other providers of assurance.
- Financial statements, performance, and public accountability reporting.

The Charter requires that the Committee has up to five members, including both Councillors (two members) and external independent representatives (three members), with the majority being independent members.

Committee Structure and Meetings

In line with the Charter, membership of the Committee during the reporting period has been as follows:

- Mr Stephen Schinck - Independent Member was reappointed as Chair at the Council meeting on 24 September 2024 for the period commencing 1 October 2024 to 31 May 2025.
- Ms Katie Baldwin - Independent Member. Appointed Independent Member at the Council meeting on 27 July 2023 for a term of three years.
- Mr David Ashmore - Independent Member. Appointed Independent Member at the Council Meeting on 25 June 2024 for a term of three years.
- Cr Fiona McAllister - Councillor Member since 24 November 2019, reappointed as a Councillor representative at the Council Meeting of 10 December 2024.
- Cr Jim Child (Mayor) - Councillor Member since 23 November 2021, reappointed as a Councillor representative at the Council meeting of 10 December 2024.

The Committee has met three times in this reporting period on 19 August 2024, 7 October 2024, and 25 November 2024.

Council Officers

The Committee has been supported by Council' Officers who have attended all meetings during the reporting period.

External Service Providers

Both the Internal Audit team (HLB Mann Judd) and the External Audit team as agent of the Victorian Auditor General's Office (VAGO) (Crowe Australia) have attended meetings as required during the reporting period, with Crowe Australia an apology for the November 2024 meeting.

The Committee enjoys strong and professional working relationships with the entire support team, which is a critical element in ensuring the Committee delivers positive and insightful support and advice to Council.

Business of the Committee

Key activities and reviews undertaken by the Committee during the reporting period include.

- Reviewing the Quarterly Financial Reports.
- Consideration of the CEO and Councillors updates.
- Reviewing the analysis, gap analyses and proposed actions against various integrity agency reports (i.e.: IBAC).
- Reviewing the activities associated with internal audits conducted by Council's Internal Auditors, HLB Mann Judd, including:
 - Victorian Protective Data Security Standards Internal Audit.
 - Licences and Leases Internal Audit.
- Monitoring the implementation of actions outstanding from Internal Audits.
- Reviewing and advising Council's risk management program, including the development of a Risk Appetite Gap Analysis for Council's Strategic Risks.
- Reviewing Council's Strategic Risk Register.
- Reviewing Council's Fraud Risk Register.
- Receiving regular updates on the Information Technology and Cyber Security maturity program, including implementation of the Cyber Security Improvement Plan.
- Considering the updates and a 'deep dive' on the risks associated with Council's waste recovery services.
- Considering the updates on the Council's budget and significant changes in accounting and reporting.
- Reviewing the Annual Financial Report and Victorian Auditor General Audit for year ending 30 June 2024.
- Reviewing the Performance Statement for the year ending 30 June 2024.
- Approving for Councillor signature, the Annual Financial Report and Performance Statement
- Reviewing the annual update on the Financial Plan.

- Conducting “In-camera” sessions with both the internal and external auditors.
- Considered the updates on the External Audit including the planned scope and approach.
- Reviewing the Health & Safety reports, including analysis of trends and data, as well as WorkSafe Incidents and Emergency Response programs.
- Reviewing other assurance activities including Chain of Responsibility and ISO 45001 gap analyses.
- Endorsement and monitoring of the Committee Annual Work Plan.
- Provided feedback and endorsement of the updated Audit & Risk Management Charter.
- Completion and review of the Committee annual performance assessment.

Further reviews and oversight included noting Councillor Expenses, Gifts Benefits & Hospitality as well as identifying areas for improvement in the meetings and agendas.

Independence

An independent Committee is a fundamental component of a strong corporate governance culture. Council’s Committee is independent of Council and is not involved in any operational decisions. Committee members do not have any executive powers, management functions or delegated financial responsibilities.

Recommendations for Improvement

Over the reporting period the Committee have noted key achievements in numerous areas under the Charter, including maturity in key areas such as risk management and cyber security, as well as a concerted effort by Council officers to implement internal audit actions in a timely manner.

The Committee also noted satisfaction with the improvements implemented to the management of the Committee, including agenda and report quality and timely distribution.

The Committee also noted intentions for continuous improvement in these areas.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

There are no financial implications identified as a result of this report. All costs associated with the Committee are included within the approved operating budget.

APPLICABLE PLANS AND POLICIES

This report contributes to the following strategic objective(s) in the Council Plan: High Performing Organisation.

The oversight mechanism provided by the Committee and as evidenced in the meeting minutes delivered to Council after each meeting, serves to provide confidence in Council's practices and supports Council's commitment to good governance, public transparency, and accountability to the community. The advice and process improvements identified and provided to Council officers through each discussion, contribute to a culture of continuous improvement.

RELEVANT LAW

It is a requirement of the Act that Council establish a Committee, appoint Independent Committee Members, adopt, and maintain a Committee Charter and provide a bi-annual report to Council. This is undertaken to provide oversight and independence in the governance structure of Council.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Environmental Implications

The Committee's oversight provides critical financial governance that enhances Council's economic sustainability by mitigating risks, improving resource allocation, and increasing public confidence. Through careful monitoring of financial statements and performance reporting, the Committee supports strategic decision-making that promotes long-term economic efficiency and responsible fiscal management.

Social Implications

The oversight mechanism provided by the Committee serves to provide confidence in Council's practices and supports Council's commitment to good governance, public transparency, and accountability to the community.

Economic Implications

The Committee assists Council by providing advice and guidance on the adequacy of initiatives including financial statements, performance, and public accountability reporting.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Not applicable to this report.

COLLABORATION, INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Whilst no collaboration with other Councils, Governments or statutory bodies was sought in respect of this item, the Committee members have reviewed and support the content provided in this report. The Independent Committee members provide insights and advice gathered from their vast experiences, as well as from sitting on Advisory and Audit and Risk Committees for other Councils and Government agencies.

Areas for improvement, including innovation in processes are considered as part of each report presented to the Committee. The Committee evaluates its performance

annually and the feedback from the 2024 survey indicated a high level of satisfaction and performance from the Committee members and key Council Officers.

RISK ASSESSMENT

Council has in place a fully functioning Committee. The establishment of the Committee, the appointment of Independent Committee members and the adoption of the Charter enables Council to meet its obligations under the Act and provides oversight and monitoring that Council has appropriate mechanisms in place to manage its risk.

The oversight mechanism provided by the Committee and as evidenced in the meeting minutes delivered to Council after each meeting, serves to provide confidence in Council's practices and supports Council's commitment to good governance, public transparency, and accountability to the community.

The biannual report to Council is an important risk management tool that provides Council with an understanding of the valuable insights and effectiveness and efficiency of the Committee's operations. This report gives Council comfort that the Committee is contributing to Council's good governance by remaining effective, efficient, and aligned with best practices in governance and risk management.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No officers and/or delegates acting on behalf of the Council through the Instrument of Delegation and involved in the preparation and/or authorisation of this report have any general or material conflict of interest as defined within the Local Government Act 2020.

CONCLUSION

The Committee's overall assessment is that Council is continuing to manage its responsibilities regarding risk, financial control, and compliance well, and that the governance culture of the Council remains robust.

The Committee is satisfied that it has fully discharged its responsibilities as set out in its Charter.

As Chair, I would like to thank the management team for their support, and to thank my colleagues - both the independent members and the Councillors - for their contribution to a strong Committee.

Stephen Schinck
Chair, Audit and Risk Management Committee

ATTACHMENTS TO THE REPORT

Nil

AUDIT & RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE CHARTER

Report Author: Executive Officer Governance Risk & Compliance
 Responsible Officer: Director Corporate Services
 Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);

The author(s) of this report and the Responsible Officer consider that the report complies with the overarching governance principles and supporting principles set out in the Local Government Act 2020.

CONFIDENTIALITY

This item is to be considered at a Council meeting that is open to the public.

SUMMARY

Yarra Ranges Council's Audit and Risk Management Committee (The Committee) serves as a key advisory body to Council, with its Charter defining the Committee's core responsibilities. The Charter is essential in outlining governance requirements, the structure of the Committee meetings, and the roles of its members.

To ensure the Committee's responsibilities remain clear, current, and aligned with evolving expectations and standards, the Charter undergoes regular review by the Committee and Council Officers and is subsequently considered by Council for formal endorsement.

The Charter has recently undergone a review with a range of non-significant, yet important, amendments being undertaken.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council approve the updated Yarra Ranges Audit and Risk Management Committee Charter.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

The current Charter was most recently reviewed and endorsed by Council in November 2022.

DISCUSSION

The Committee Charter establishes the Committee's objective, authority, membership, functions, reporting and administrative arrangements. As a

foundational document, the Charter ensures that the Committee's legislated and other responsibilities are clearly defined to support effective governance.

To maintain alignment with current governance expectations and evolving requirements, the Committee annually reviews its responsibilities, with a formal review of the Charter undertaken every four years, coinciding with the Council election term.

Proposed amendments from this review aim to further clarify the Committee's requirements and expectations, and include:

- Increasing the number of meetings to five per year.
- Defining the purpose of the Annual Work Plan.
- Presenting minutes to the whole Councillor group for noting.
- Requiring attendance by the Manager Organisational Performance & Integrity.
- Ensuring compliance with the Overarching Governance Principles.
- Specifying external audit requirements.
- A few other minor administrative updates were completed as part of the review.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

There are no financial implications identified as a result of this report. All costs associated with the implementation of the requirements of the Charter are included within approved operational budgets.

APPLICABLE PLANS AND POLICIES

This report contributes to the following strategic objective(s) in the Council Plan: High Performing Organisation.

The oversight mechanism provided by the Committee serves to provide confidence in Council's practices and supports Council's commitment to good governance, public transparency, and accountability to the community. The advice and process improvements identified and provided to Council officers through each discussion, contribute to a culture of continuous improvement.

RELEVANT LAW

Section 54(1) of the Local Government Act 2020 requires that a Council must approve a Charter.

Section 12.7 of the Charter requires formal review every four years, in line with Council elections and an interim review annually.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Economic Implications

The Committee's oversight provides critical financial governance that enhances Council's economic sustainability by mitigating risks, improving resource allocation, and increasing public confidence. Through careful monitoring of financial statements and performance reporting, the Committee supports strategic decision-making that promotes long-term economic efficiency and responsible fiscal management.

Social Implications

The oversight mechanism provided by the Committee serves to provide confidence in Council's practices and supports Council's commitment to good governance, public transparency, and accountability to the community.

Environmental Implications

The Committee assists Council by provided advice and guidance on the adequacy of initiatives including financial statements, performance, and public accountability reporting.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Not applicable to this report.

COLLABORATION, INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Whilst no collaboration with other Councils, Governments or statutory bodies was sought in respect of this item, the Committee members have reviewed and approved the Charter. The Independent Committee members provide insights and advice gathered from their vast experiences, as well as from sitting on Advisory and Audit and Risk Committees for other Councils and Government agencies.

RISK ASSESSMENT

The Audit and Risk Management Committee Charter serves as a foundational document that outlines the Committee's key responsibilities and ensures governance consistency across its meetings and membership. As a central advisory body to Council, the Committee's adherence to the Charter is crucial for fulfilling both legislated obligations and Council-imposed responsibilities, thereby supporting effective governance and accountability.

Failure to uphold the Charter could undermine the Committee's ability to meet these obligations, leading to potential governance risks, diminished oversight, and misalignment with Council's strategic objectives.

Regular reviews of the Charter are essential for maintaining the Charter's alignment with changing governance and sector expectations and broader influences, which

may include legislative updates, emerging best practices, and shifts in Council priorities. The ongoing review process mitigates the risk of outdated or unclear responsibilities, which could compromise the Committee's effectiveness.

To further mitigate risks associated with non-compliance or underperformance, the Committee undertakes an annual self-assessment to evaluate its adherence to the obligations set forth in the Charter. This performance review provides the Committee with critical insights into areas for improvement, ensuring that it continues to meet both internal and external expectations.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No officers and/or delegates acting on behalf of the Council through the Instrument of Delegation and involved in the preparation and/or authorisation of this report have any general or material conflict of interest as defined within the *Local Government Act 2020*.

ATTACHMENTS TO THE REPORT

1. ARMC Charter Updated February 2025



Yarra Ranges Council Audit and Risk Management Committee Charter

February 2025



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1. Preface

Section 53 (1) of the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act) states that “a Council must establish an Audit and Risk Committee”. Section 54 (1) of the Act states “a Council must prepare and approve an Audit and Risk Committee Charter.”

This Charter has been developed in response to the Act requirements, with reference to “*Audit Committees - A Guide to Good Practice for Local Government*” issued by Local Government Victoria in January 2011.

The Governance Rules to be adopted and kept in force by Council under section 60 of the Act do not apply to the Audit and Risk Management (ARMC) until Council resolves, or the ARMC with the approval of Council resolves, otherwise.

2. Introduction

Yarra Ranges Council is committed to good governance, public transparency, and accountability to the Yarra Ranges community. The (ARMC) plays an important role in providing an independent view of Yarra Ranges Council’s governance, risk management, financial management and internal control practices, and driving continuous improvement, and serves to provide confidence in the integrity of these practices. The ARMC performs its role by providing independent assurance to Council, in overseeing internal and external audit functions¹.

3. Background

This Charter has been developed in accordance with Section 54(7) of the Act, which states: *A Council must approve the first Audit and Risk Committee Charter and establish the first Audit and Risk Committee on or before 1 September 2020.*

4. Purpose

Pursuant to section 53(2) of the Act, the Committee is not a delegated committee and does not have any delegated powers, including executive powers, management functions, or delegated financial responsibility. Pursuant to section 54(2) of the Act, the ARMC assists Council and management by providing advice and guidance on the adequacy of initiatives for:

- compliance management
- governance structure
- risk management and fraud prevention
- internal control framework
- internal audit activity, external auditors, and other providers of assurance, and
- financial statements, performance, and public accountability reporting.

In broad terms, the ARMC reviews each of the items noted above and provides Council with independent advice and guidance regarding the adequacy and effectiveness of management’s governance and risk practices and potential improvements to those practices.

¹ Section 54(2)(d) of the Local Government Act 2020

5. Mandate

The ARMC has been established by Council under Section 53.1 of the Local Government Act 2020 (and previously Section 139 of the Local Government Act 1989).

6. Authority

The ARMC Charter sets out the authority to fulfill the responsibilities established for it by Council.

In fulfilling its role, the ARMC may request:

- Any explanatory information that it deems necessary to discharge its responsibilities unless that information is protected due to legal or confidential reasons. In discharging its responsibilities, the Audit Committee will be supported by the Director Corporate Services (or their delegate), who will facilitate provision of relevant information, records data and reports as the Audit Committee requests.
- Engagement of counsel or other advisors it deems necessary to perform its duties.
- Attendance of any official, including Councillors and Council Officers, at ARMC meetings.

The ARMC is empowered to:

- Recommend to Council the appointment and oversight of all audit and non-audit services performed by the internal audit contractor. The annual financial audit is undertaken by the Victorian Auditor-General (VAGO) or their appointed contractor.
- Resolve any disagreements between management and the internal or external auditor regarding internal audit recommendations, financial reporting, and other matters.
- Endorse all internal auditing services performed by the internal audit contractor.
- Preapprove all internal auditing services performed by the internal audit contractor.

The ARMC, through the Independent Committee Members, will assist (as required) the Director Corporate Services in the assessment of tenders for the internal audit contract. The ARMC will be provided with a recommendation report in relation to the tender process, and after formal acceptance, will be provided to Council.

The ARMC recognises that the primary responsibility for management of Council's operations is controlled by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and that the ARMC is an advisory committee to Council.

7. Composition of the Audit Committee²

The ARMC will be comprised of five members, with the majority being independent members as follows:

- two Councillors, and
- three independent members.

The Mayor may appoint an additional alternate Councillor member, who may attend and act on behalf of the nominated Councillor Representative in order to achieve a quorum of members present.

² Section 53(3) of the Local Government Act 2020: An Audit and Risk Committee must— (a) include members who are Councillors of the Council; and (b) consist of a majority of members who are not Councillors of the Council

The collective of independent members will have expertise in financial management and risk³, and experience in public sector management⁴, while the ARMC will collectively possess sufficient knowledge of audit, specific industry knowledge, IT and cyber security risks, law, governance, and control to undertake its role under this Charter. The Act precludes any person who is a member of staff of Council⁵ from being a member of the ARMC.

As the responsibilities of the ARMC evolve in response to regulatory, economic, and reporting developments, members' competencies will be periodically reevaluated to ensure the overall balance of skills on the ARMC remains appropriate to respond to Council's needs. This will occur in line with the annual performance assessment.

8. Chair of the Audit Committee

The Chair of the ARMC must be an independent member and be appointed by Council.⁶ The full ARMC may recommend appointment or reappointment of the Chair to Council subject to a satisfactory performance review of the ARMC. The Chair will be appointed for a term of up to three years.

In the absence of the Chair from a meeting, the members present will appoint another independent member as Acting Chair for that meeting.

9. Terms of Office

9.1 Councillors

Councillor ARMC Members will be appointed annually by Council in line with the allocation of other Councillor delegated responsibilities.

9.2 Independent Committee Members

The ARMC, through the Independent Members, will assist (as required) the Director Corporate Services in the recruitment process for new Independent Committee Members. Following selection through the recruitment process and completion of appropriate due diligence checks, an Independent Member will be appointed for an initial term of up to three years. At the end of this term, and after a performance review, an Independent Member may be reappointed for a further term without the need for another formal application. The maximum term of an Independent Member is three terms or nine years (whichever is the lesser).

The terms of each Independent ARMC Member will be arranged so that there is an orderly rotation of membership and avoidance (where possible) of more than two members ceasing at the same time.

³ Section 53(3)(b)(i) of the Local Government Act 2020

⁴ Section 53(3)(b)(ii) of the Local Government Act 2020

⁵ Section 53(3)(c) of the Local Government Act 2020

⁶ Section 53(4) of the Local Government Act 2020: A chairperson of an Audit and Risk Committee must not be a Councillor of the Council.

10. Quorum

A quorum of any meeting will be at least two independent members and at least one Councillor.

11. Operational Principles

11.1 Audit Committee Values

The ARMC will conduct itself in accordance with Council's Values, the Councillor Code of Conduct, the ethics of Council, and in accordance with the Act.

11.2 Conflict of Interest, Misuse of Position and Confidential Information

Section 123 (misuse of position), section 125 (confidential information) and Division 2 of Part 6 (conflict of interest) of the Act apply to a member of the ARMC who is not a Councillor, as if the member were a member of a delegated committee.⁷

All ARMC members are expected to be aware of these provisions of the Act. Failure to comply with the provisions of the Act may result in the member's appointment being terminated.

Conflict of Interest

ARMC members must disclose any conflicts of interest to the Chair. Where the conflict is related to the ARMC Chair Committee it must be disclosed to the Mayor, or in the absence of the Mayor, the Councillor Representative.

Once a conflict of interest is identified, the member of the ARMC must:

1. Disclose the conflict of interest at the commencement of the meeting at which the matter is being considered, including the:
 - a) Type of interest and class; and
 - b) The nature of the interest.
2. Notify the Chair that they are leaving the meeting for the hearing of this matter.
3. Leave the room while the matter is being considered and await the Chair's direction to return.

If details of the conflict of interest are private in nature, then the nature of the interest can be declared to the Chair in writing prior to the meeting and the disclosure will simply be the type of interest and class. Disclosure of conflicts of interest must be minuted.

Independent Committee Members will be required to sign an Initial 'Personal Interests Return Form' upon commencement of their term, and a Biannual 'Personal Interests Return Form'.

Misuse of Position

ARMC members must not intentionally misuse their position to gain or attempt to gain, directly or indirectly, an advantage for themselves or for any other person, or cause, or attempt to cause, detriment to Council or another person.

Confidential Information

⁷ Sections 53(5) of the Local Government Act 2020

ARMC members must not intentionally or recklessly disclose information that they know, or should reasonably know, is confidential information.

Independent Committee Members will be required to sign a Confidentiality Agreement upon commencement of their term.

11.3 Communications

The ARMC expects that all communication with management and staff of the organisation as well as with any external assurance providers will be direct, open, honest, and complete.

11.4 Work Plan⁸

The ARMC will endorse an Annual Work Plan to ensure that its responsibilities are scheduled and will be carried out in accordance with this Charter and legislative requirements. Additionally, the ARMC will regularly monitor the Work Plan to ensure compliance and its effectiveness.

11.5 Meeting Agenda

Agendas for ARMC Meetings will be developed in consultation with and approved by the Chair. Agendas and supporting documentation will be circulated to members a minimum of one week in advance of each meeting. Late items must be agreed by the Chair.

11.6 Information Requirements

The ARMC will establish and communicate its requirements for information, which will include the nature, extent, and timing of information. Information that is scheduled on an agenda will be provided to the ARMC a minimum of one week prior to each meeting. Information that is sought at an ARMC meeting will be provided at the next meeting unless otherwise agreed.

11.7 Preparation and Attendance

ARMC members are obligated to prepare for and participate in meetings. Participation is preferred to be in person, however online attendance will be permitted by exception, and Members are expected to:

- Apply good analytical skills, objectivity, and sound judgement.
- Express opinions, frankly, ask probing questions and pursue further follow up where appropriate.
- Treat all attendees with an appropriate level of respect and professional courtesy.

11.8 Induction and Training

ARMC members will receive a formal induction on the purpose and mandate of the committee and on the organisation's objectives. A process of continuing education will be established as required.

⁸ Section 54(3) of the Local Government Act 2020

12. Operational Procedures

12.1 Meetings

Meetings will generally be held five times per year, with one meeting allocated to consider and endorse (if appropriate) Council's annual financial and performance statements. Timing of meetings will be set to ensure that the ARMC can properly discharge its responsibilities pursuant to this Charter. Members are expected to attend every meeting of the ARMC, however, should unavoidable circumstances arise, members must notify the Chair of their absence.

Due to the potentially sensitive nature of the material being considered, meetings are closed to the public.

Upon written request from an ARMC member, the CEO or the external or internal auditors, the Chair may convene a special meeting of the ARMC within fourteen calendar days of the Chair receiving a written request.

Where a matter is required to be dealt with between meetings, it will be undertaken by circulating resolution. A report outlining the matter and a request to vote on the item will be sent by Council's management via email, with the outcome of the vote endorsed at the next scheduled ARMC meeting.

12.2 Minutes

Minutes of all meetings will be prepared and provided in draft form within two weeks following each meeting. The members will endorse the minutes within two weeks of receipt. Once agreed, the draft minutes will be provided to all Yarra Ranges Councillors.. Minutes will remain draft until they are approved at the next ARMC meeting.

The minutes will include a report on the current and outstanding actions required to be undertaken from previous ARMC meetings.

12.3 Required Attendance

The CEO, Director Corporate Services, Manager Financial Services (CFO), Manager Organisational Performance & Integrity or their nominated representatives are required to attend every meeting. Officers who have authored reports may be required to attend to speak to their reports but are not required to attend the whole meeting. At the discretion of the ARMC, other Councillors or Council Officers may be invited to attend meetings to provide advice and information when required. Attendance can be in person, or via teleconference.

Internal and external audit representatives will be required to attend every meeting unless requested not to do so by the Chair. The ARMC will meet in camera (separately from management) with both the internal and external auditors at least once a year.

12.4 Secretariat Services

Secretariat and administrative support will be provided by a member(s) of Council's management team.

12.5 Remuneration of Committee Audit Members

Councillor Committee members are not remunerated for their role.

Remuneration will be paid to each Independent Committee Member⁹. Council sets the remuneration by resolution at a formal Council Meeting. Set fees per meeting apply for each Independent Committee Member and the Chair, which will be indexed in alignment with the rate cap % each 1 July. Payment will be made each quarter following receipt of a Tax Invoice after each meeting. Remuneration will be reviewed at the appointment of a new Independent Member.

12.6 Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the ARMC to provide Council with independent, objective advice and assurance on the adequacy of management's arrangements with respect to the following aspects of the management of the organisation:

Financial and Performance Reporting

The ARMC will¹⁰:

- Obtain assurance that Council has appropriate systems and procedures in place for collecting and analysing information and data for the purposes of measuring the performance of individual programs and activities (as identified in the Council Plan).
- Review the process for the management and governance of the use of data, information, and knowledge.
- Review any changes to Council's accounting policies and procedures and the methods of applying them, with the input of management, external and internal auditors, ensuring that they are in accordance with the stated financial reporting framework.
- Assess significant estimates and judgements in financial reports by asking management about the processes used, and then asking management and external auditors for the basis of their conclusions.
- Review management's processes for ensuring and monitoring compliance with legislation and other requirements on the external reporting by Council of financial and non-financial information, performance reporting under the Act, and other relevant legislation.
- Review the appropriateness of accounting policies and disclosures to present a true and fair view.
- Assess whether a comprehensive process has been established for the purposes of legislative disclosure reporting requirements.
- Assess information from internal and external auditors that affects the quality of financial reports. For example, actual and potential material audit adjustments, financial report disclosures, non-compliance with legislation and regulations, internal control issues.
- Seek the external auditor for an independent opinion on management's:
 - technical compliance with accounting standards,
 - proper application of the accounting principles, and
 - clarity in financial disclosure practices as used or proposed in the financial report of Council.

⁹ Section 53(6) of the Local Government Act 2020: A Council may pay a fee to a member of an Audit and Risk Committee who is not a Councillor of Council.

¹⁰ Section 54(2)(b) of the Local Government Act 2020

- Review the quarterly financial report provided to Council and monitor the financial performance and sustainability of Council.
- Recommend to Council whether the financial report including the performance statement should be approved based on the Committee's assessment of them.
- Review best practice recommendations contained in VAGO's performance audits and ensure Council is compliant.

Organisational Governance

To obtain reasonable assurance with respect to governance process, the ARMC will:

- Review and provide advice on the governance process established and maintained within the organisation and the procedures in place to ensure that they are operating as intended.
- Monitor compliance of policies and procedures with the overarching governance principles, the Act, relevant regulations, and any Ministerial directions¹¹.

Risk Management

To obtain reasonable assurance with respect to risk management practices, the ARMC will:

- Review significant strategic and operational risk exposures and control issues, including risk appetite, fraud and corruption risks, business continuity, governance issues, and other matters needed or requested by senior management and Council.
- Review and provide advice on the risk management processes established and maintained by management and the procedures in place to ensure that they are operating as intended.
- Annually review the risk profile to ensure oversight of strategic, operational, and project risks.
- Obtain an annual report on management's implementation and maintenance of an appropriate enterprise-wide risk management process.
- Review the adequacy of the combined assurance being provided.

Fraud and corruption

To obtain reasonable assurance with respect to procedures for the prevention and detection of fraud and corruption, the ARMC will:

- Review the processes for the prevention, detection and deterrence of fraud and corruption.
- Ensure that appropriate action is taken against known perpetrators of fraud.
- Challenge management and internal and external auditors to ensure that appropriate anti-fraud and corruption programs and controls are in place to identify potential fraud and ensure that investigations are undertaken if fraud is detected.

¹¹ Section 54(2)(a)(i) and (ii) of the Local Government Act 2020

Control

To obtain reasonable assurance with respect to the adequacy and effectiveness of controls in responding to risks within the governance, operations, and information systems, the ARMC will:

- Consider the effectiveness of the control framework, including risk management, fraud prevention¹², and information technology security and control.
- Review and provide advice on the level of risk control of the organisation as a whole and its individual units.
- Receive reports on all matters of significance arising from work performed by other providers of financial and internal control assurance (e.g., IBAC, Office of the Victorian Ombudsman) and VAGO reports as appropriate to senior management and Council, and where required, monitor implementation of control strengthening measures.

Compliance Management

To obtain reasonable assurance with respect to the organisation's compliance with values and ethics practices, the ARMC will:

- Review and assess the policies, procedures, and practices established to monitor conformance with the code of conduct and ethical policies by all managers and staff.
- Assess the mechanisms established by management to establish and maintain high ethical standards for all managers and staff.
- Review and provide advice on the systems and practices established by management to monitor compliance with laws, regulations, policies, and standards of ethical conduct and identify and deal with any legal or ethical violations.
- Review the effectiveness of the system for monitoring compliance with laws, regulations and the Overarching Governance Principles and the results of management's investigation and follow up (including disciplinary action) of any instances of non-compliance.
- Review the observations and conclusions of internal and external auditors and the findings of any regulatory agencies.
- Review the process for communicating the code of conduct to staff and for monitoring compliance.
- Obtain regular updates from management regarding compliance matters.

These responsibilities may be revised or expanded in consultation with, or as requested by the CEO and Council.

12.7 Charter Review

This Charter will be formally reviewed by the ARMC every four years, in line with Council elections, and endorsed by the incoming Council within six months of the election. An interim review will occur every two years.

¹² Section 54(2)(c) of the Local Government Act 2020

Subject to the nature of the changes identified, approval will be as follows:

- Material changes including legislative changes – The ARMC will provide a report to Council recommending that Council approve an updated Charter. Only Council can approve significant changes to the Charter at a formal Council Meeting.
- Administrative or insignificant changes as determined by the ARMC – The CEO may authorise these changes.

13. Internal Audit Activity and Other Assurance Providers

13.1 Internal Audit Activity

To obtain reasonable assurance with respect to work of the internal audit function, the ARMC will:

Internal Audit Charter and Resources

- Review and endorse the Internal Audit Charter within six months of the ARMC Charter being endorsed by Council to ensure that it accurately reflects the ARMC purpose, authority, and responsibility.
- Monitor processes and practices to ensure that independence of the internal audit function is maintained.

Internal Audit Strategy and Plan

- Review and provide input on the internal audit activity's strategic plan, objectives, performance measures, and outcomes.
- Review and endorse proposed risk-based internal audits and make recommendations concerning internal audit projects.
- Review and (if appropriate) endorse changes to the internal audit plan as proposed by management.
- On an annual basis, review and endorse the internal audit plan and engagement work program, including reviewing internal audit resources necessary to achieve the plan, and recommend to Council for approval.
- Review the internal audit activity's performance relative to its audit plan.
- Review detailed scopes of internal audit engagements to ensure comprehensive coverage of key risk areas.

Internal Audit Engagement and Follow Up

- Review internal audit reports and other communications to management.
- Where necessary, facilitate conversations between Internal Audit and management to resolve any recommendation or finding disagreements.
- Review and track management's action plans to address the results of internal audit engagements.
- Review and advise management on the results of any special investigations.
- Make suggestions/recommendations to the CEO for them to engage Internal Audit for special reviews or other services.
- Enquire of the CEO whether any internal audit engagements or non-audit engagements have been completed but not reported to the ARMC; if so, enquire whether any matters of significance arose from such work.
- Enquire of the CEO whether any evidence of fraud has been identified during internal audit engagements and evaluate what additional actions, if any, should be taken.
- Have in camera meetings with internal auditors to discuss sensitive matters (if required).

13.2 External Auditors

To obtain reasonable assurance with respect to work of the external assurance providers, the ARMC will:

- Meet with the external auditors during the planning phase of the engagement, the presentation of the audited financial statements, and the discussion of the results of engagements and recommendations for management.
- Review the external auditors' proposed audit scope and approach, including coordination of audit effort with the internal audit activity.
- Discuss with the external auditor any audit issues encountered in the normal course of audit work, including any restriction on scope or access to information.
- Have in-camera meetings with external auditors to discuss sensitive matters (if required).
- Ensure that significant findings and recommendations made by the external auditor, and management's responses to them, are appropriate and are acted upon in a timely manner;
- Monitor management's progress on action plans.
- Consider the findings and recommendations of any relevant performance audits undertaken by VAGO and monitor implementation of the recommendations by Council.

To obtain reasonable assurance that management has acted on the results and recommendations of internal and external audit engagements, the ARMC will regularly review reports on the progress of implementing approved management actions plans and audit recommendations resulting from completed audit engagements, internal and external.

14. Other Responsibilities

The ARMC will also:

- Perform other activities related to this Charter as requested by Council.
- Institute and oversee special investigations as needed.
- On an annual basis undertake an assessment of its performance against the Charter and provide a copy of the annual assessment to the CEO for tabling at the next Council Meeting¹³.

15. Reporting on Audit Committee Performance

The ARMC will prepare a report every six months that includes:

- A summary of the work the ARMC performed to fully discharge its responsibilities.
- A summary of management's progress in addressing the results of internal and external audit engagement reports.
- An overall assessment of management's risks, controls, and compliance processes, including details of any significant emerging risks or legislative changes impacting the organisation.
- Details of meetings, including the number of meetings held during the relevant period.
- Provide additional information required by new or emerging corporate governance requirements.

A copy of the report will be provided to the CEO for tabling at the next available Council Meeting¹⁴. The ARMC may report to Council at any time regarding any other relevant matter of importance.

¹³ Section 54(4)(a) and (b) of the Local Government Act 2020

¹⁴ Section 54(5)(a) and (b) of the Local Government Act 2020

STORMWATER COMMUNITY REFERENCE PANEL – EOI PROCESS UPDATE

Report Author: Stormwater Management Engineer
 Responsible Officer: Director Built Environment & Infrastructure
 Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);

The author(s) of this report and the Responsible Officer consider that the report complies with the overarching governance principles and supporting principles set out in the Local Government Act 2020.

CONFIDENTIALITY

This item is to be considered at a Council meeting that is open to the public. A confidential attachment has been included with the report which contains personal information that is not to be disclosed whilst the meeting is open to the public.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Stormwater Community Reference Panel (SCRCP) Expression of Interest (EOI) period that was open from open from 4 December 2024 to 22 December 2024.

In total there were 14 applications received over the EOI period, with representation from all wards, with the exception of Walling Ward. One candidate withdrew their application following the conclusion of the EOI period. After consideration of all the applications received, all applicants were considered suitably qualified for panel recommendation and will be invited to participate.

While the amount of participants is marginally above the initial number sought, it is not inconsistent with other reference groups operating at Council and is considered to be able to practically function.

It is recognised that over the life the plan, additional community members may express interest in joining. Any future application would be subject to the existing evaluation process, with consideration of an appropriate and practical number of participants for a meeting to function.

It is anticipated the initial meeting (including induction) will occur in March 2025.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the successful applicants to the Stormwater Community Reference Panel listed in Attachment 1.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS/ FORUM REPORTS

At the Council meeting on 10 September 2024, Council endorsed the Yarra Ranges Stormwater Policy and the Stormwater Management Plan 2024-2034. The Council resolution and Action 26 within the Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP) included establishing a Community Reference Panel to facilitate community input on stormwater projects and studies under the SWMP.

A briefing paper was presented at a Council Forum meeting on 03 December 2024, outlining the proposed Terms of Reference for the Panel. Following this, officers commenced a two-week Expression of Interest (EOI) process for community membership of the SCRCP.

DISCUSSION

Purpose

The SCRCP will work collaboratively with Yarra Ranges Council to understand the stormwater and flood management challenges affecting the municipality. These challenges are anticipated to grow due to climate change, urban development, and increased population pressures.

The SCRCP will provide a community voice to guide the development of key projects, including municipal-wide flood modelling and stormwater management initiatives under the Stormwater Management Plan. This partnership will help shape council decisions and ensure that project-related communications reflect community concerns and priorities.

Objectives of the Stormwater Community Reference Panel

The SCRCP will help support the implementation of Stormwater Management Plan 2024-2034, by:

- Actively contributing to discussions about stormwater management and flood risk, with a focus on sustainability, biodiversity, and preparedness for natural disasters.
- Providing feedback and advice on flood mapping, stormwater infrastructure projects, and integrated water management strategies to help shape Council's response to stormwater challenges.
- Participating in the development and review of public communications and educational materials related to stormwater services, ensuring the community is well-informed and involved in the decision-making process.
- Strengthening strategic partnerships and community engagement to foster a sustainable and resilient environment in line with Yarra Ranges Council's vision for the future.

Stormwater Community Reference Panel Structure

The Panel is proposed to consist of individuals with specific interests and/or expertise in flood and stormwater management, including

- a) Thirteen (13) community members representing a balanced mix within the Shire.
- b) Interested Councillors.
- c) Council officers, including a senior Council officer, either a Director, Manager, or Executive Officer.

Consultants and representatives from external agencies such as Melbourne Water, may attend SCRCP meetings to provide specific input when required.

Stormwater Community Reference Panel EOI Process

EOIs for SCRCP were open to community members for a two-week period between 04 December 2024 to 22 December 2024.

EOI process was advertised through Council's website, social media, local media and by communications to Councils broad network of community groups and local organisations.

The EOI included a Position Description for the SCRCP, Terms of Reference and a number of application questions via a YRC OpenForms portal with weighted response scores that will signify a person's eligibility for SCRCP membership.

EOI Results

During the EOI period, 14 applications were received. One applicant withdrew their submission following the EOI period, leaving 13 applications available to select panel members.

The applicants are listed in an attachment. A wide range of applications were received from all wards except Walling ward. Figure 1 below shows the locality of each of the 13 applicants, while Figure 2 provides a summary of the number of applications received from each ward.

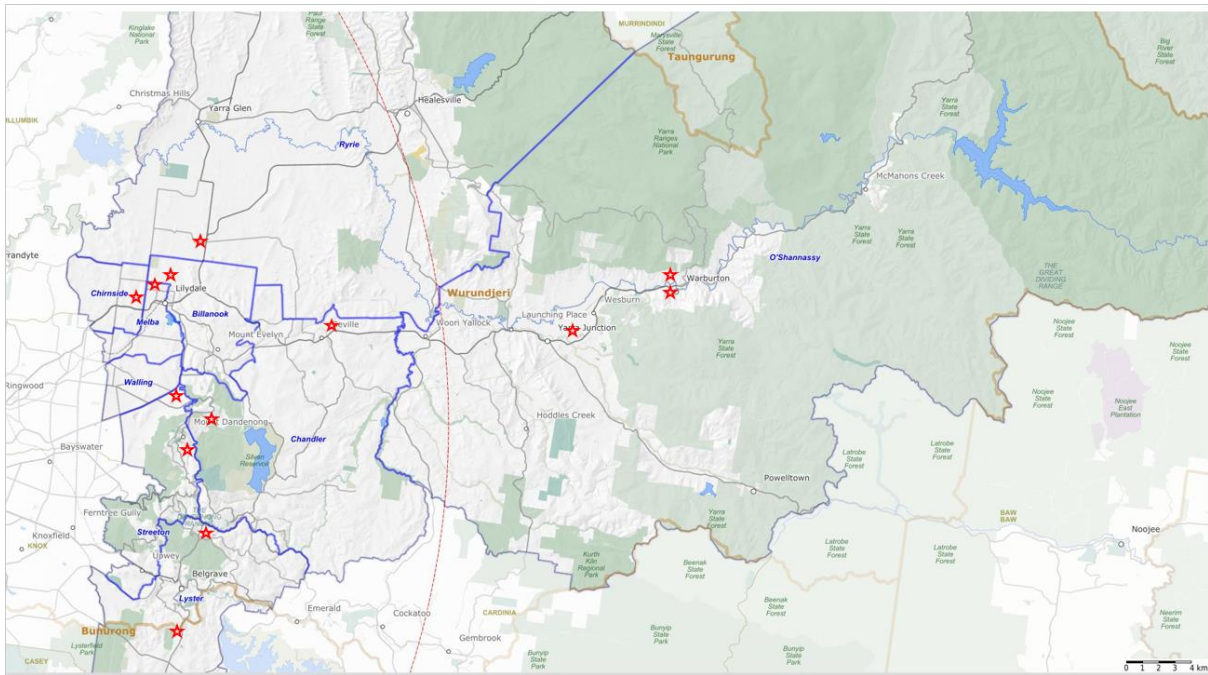


Figure 1 - Application locality within ward boundaries

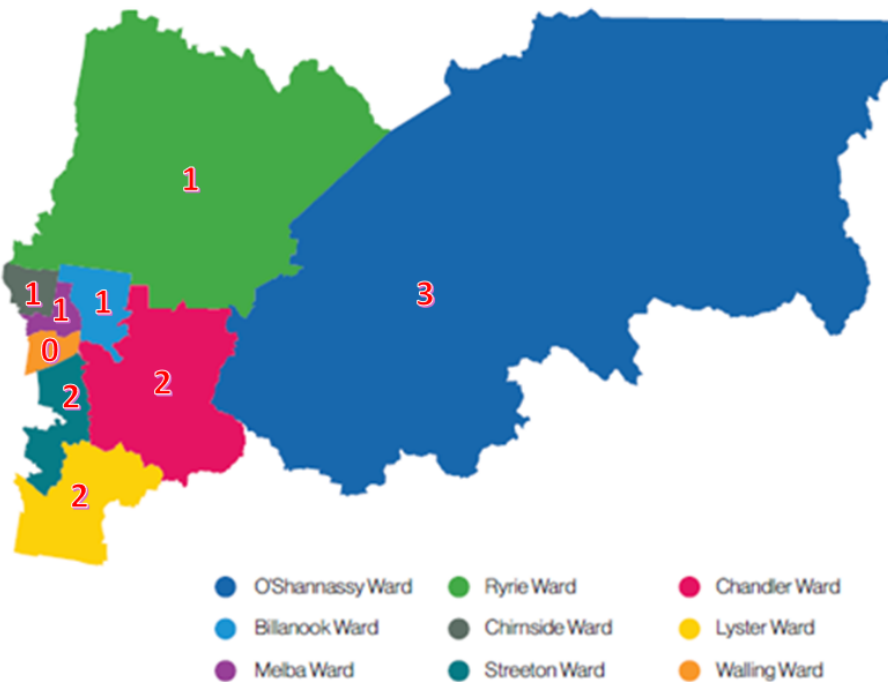


Figure 2 - Summary of the number of applications within each ward

Selection Criteria

To achieve a diverse and widespread SCRP, each applicant needed to answer questions that addressed the selection criteria of:

1. Representative community demographics.
2. Live or work in Yarra Ranges.
3. Have a personal interest in stormwater management.
4. Be personally or professionally impacted by flooding within the Yarra Ranges municipality.
5. Be able to commit to attending the regular meetings of the Panel.
6. Have a passion for working with Council to support better stormwater management.

Each of the criteria responses we assessed via the following scoring matrix:

Table 2 - Scoring Matrix for the Stormwater Community Reference Panel Selection

Criteria	Weight	Score (0-5)	Comments
1. Representative community demographics	5%		Assess representation and alignment with diverse community demographics.
2. Personal interest in stormwater management	20%		Assess interest in and knowledge of stormwater management based on qualitative responses.
3. Impact of flooding	30%		Evaluate how applicants have been personally or professionally impacted by flooding.
4. Passion for stormwater management	20%		Assess enthusiasm and willingness to support Council initiatives, as reflected in qualitative responses.
5. Previous experience in contributing to Stormwater Management in YRC	15%		Assess previous participation in contributing to stormwater management in the Yarra Ranges
6. Relevant experience	10%		Consider previous participation in reference panels, community groups, or stormwater-related efforts.
TOTAL	100%	/5	

The Score (0-5) was assessed on the following basis:

- 0 = Does not meet the criteria.
- 1 = Poor alignment with the criteria.
- 2 = Partially meets the criteria.
- 3 = Sufficient alignment with the criteria.
- 4 = Exceeds the criteria.
- 5 = Exceptional alignment with the criteria.

Recommended option and justification

After consideration of all the applications received against the scoring matrix represented in Table 2, it is recommended to include all eligible 13 applicants to ensure broad community representation. Refer to Attachment 1 (confidential) for list of applicants.

The list is confidential for the purposes of this report in line with requirements under the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014.

Diversity Assessment

The gender split for the applicants includes 5 women and 8 men, with 1 applicant being within the age ranges of 76-85, 3 applicants within 66-75, 4 applicants within 56-65, 4 applicants within 46-55, and 1 applicant being within 26-35.

In addition to the demographics of the proposed candidates, 1 candidate identified themselves as Aboriginal and/ or Torres Strait Islander, 1 candidate identified themselves as culturally and linguistically diverse, and one applicant is an unpaid carer of someone living with a disability.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

The expenditure associated with the operation of the SCRP is met through Infrastructure Services Operational budget. This includes the costs of advertising the Reference Panels recruitment and ongoing operational expenditure.

APPLICABLE PLANS AND POLICIES

- Yarra Ranges Stormwater Management Plan 2024 – 2034.
- Stormwater Policy

RELEVANT LAW

In recruiting members, Council strives to establish a reference panel that is diverse and representative of the community. This includes, but is not exclusive to, Aboriginality, gender, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, culture, nationality, refugee or asylum seeker background, migration or visa status, language, religion, ability, age, mental health, socioeconomic status, housing status, and geographic location.

The proposed representatives align with the requirements of the Gender Equality Act 2020, in ensuring diverse representation. This is represented within the Forum report, under the 'Diversity Assessment' within the Recommended option and justification section.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Economic Implications

The SCRP's contributions to stormwater management will enhance economic sustainability by promoting strategies that mitigate flood risks and prioritise cost-effective solutions. The panel will provide insights into local priorities and help refine funding mechanisms such as:

- Stormwater offsets: Facilitating developer contributions to local water-sensitive projects.
- Grant applications: Strengthening bids for state or federal funding by incorporating community-backed priorities.
- Proactive planning: Supporting initiatives that reduce costly reactive spending on flood damage by advocating for preventative infrastructure improvements.

Engaging the SCRP ensures that projects align with community expectations, fostering broader support and minimising potential conflicts that could delay implementation or increase costs.

Social Implications

The SCRP amplifies the social benefits of the SWMP by ensuring a diverse and representative voice in stormwater management. Its work will focus on:

- Improving community wellbeing: Reducing flood risks and increasing access to green spaces that foster better health outcomes.
- Addressing equity: Promoting the principles of the Gender Equality Act 2020 by considering the unique needs of all demographic groups, ensuring inclusive stormwater solutions.
- Strengthening community ownership: Facilitating transparent communication about stormwater management and promoting collaborative involvement in stormwater initiatives.

The SCRP's inclusive approach will support urban environments that are not only more liveable but also better prepared to withstand future challenges.

Environmental Implications

The SCRP plays a pivotal role in achieving the environmental goals of the SWMP, contributing to initiatives that include:

- Nature-based solutions: Advocating for stormwater harvesting, wetlands, and bioretention systems that enhance biodiversity and protect water quality.
- Integrated Water Management (IWM): Supporting strategies that balance urban development with the preservation of ecosystems, creating climate-resilient communities.

- Climate change adaptation: Ensuring that community perspectives are incorporated into infrastructure designs to improve resilience against extreme weather events.

By promoting sustainable practices and leveraging community expertise, the SCRP ensures that stormwater management aligns with long-term environmental priorities.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The SCRP aims to strengthen community engagement by:

- Facilitating dialogue: Enabling meaningful discussions on stormwater management, sustainability, and disaster preparedness.
- Incorporating feedback: Shaping flood mapping, infrastructure projects, and integrated water management strategies with community insights.
- Enhancing awareness: Reviewing public communications and educational materials to ensure they are accessible, clear, and aligned with community needs.
- Building trust: Promoting transparency in decision-making and fostering collaborative partnerships for a resilient and sustainable future.

COLLABORATION, INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Collaboration with Melbourne Water has been sought to provide expert opinion/analysis on an ad-hoc basis. Melbourne Water were engaged to review the Stormwater Community Reference Panel Terms of Reference and submit any objections or amendments of their panel responsibilities to the responsible Council Officer. No objections or requests for amendments has been received.

RISK ASSESSMENT

The application and selection process has ensured that Yarra Ranges Council recruits a balanced representation of people living in the Yarra Ranges who can provide Stormwater Management advice to Council.

The Terms of Reference (Attachment 2) brings clarity to the role and responsibilities of the Panel, its members and those who support it.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No officers and/or delegates acting on behalf of the Council through the Instrument of Delegation and involved in the preparation and/or authorisation of this report have any general or material conflict of interest as defined within the *Local Government Act 2020*.

ATTACHMENTS TO THE REPORT

1. Stormwater Community Reference Panel – Applicants (Confidential)
2. Stormwater Community Reference Panel - Terms of Reference

Confidential Item



Stormwater Community Reference Panel (SCRCP)

Version:	1.0
Approved by Council:	<Date>
Responsible Officer:	Executive Officer Strategic Projects (Stormwater Management)
Department:	Infrastructure Services
Contact Officer:	Executive Officer Strategic Projects (Stormwater Management)

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Stormwater Management Plan 2024-2034 (SWMP) aims to address the challenges of stormwater management within the Yarra Ranges municipality. The plan focuses on balancing flood protection with the preservation of natural waterways, considering the impacts of urban development and climate change.
- 1.2 The Stormwater Management Plan includes a structured approach to achieving its objectives through thirty-two specific actions.
- 1.3 Action 26 within the Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP) includes establishing a Stormwater Community Reference Panel (SCRP) to facilitate community input on stormwater projects and studies under the SWMP.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The SCRP will work collaboratively with Yarra Ranges Council to understand the stormwater and flood management challenges affecting the region. These challenges are anticipated to grow due to climate change, urban development, and increased population.
- 2.2 The SCRP will provide a platform for community voices to guide the development of key projects, including municipal-wide flood modelling and stormwater management initiatives under the Stormwater Management Plan. This partnership will help shape council decisions and ensure that project-related communications reflect community concerns and priorities. In contributing to Council's decision-making process, the SCRP will play a vital role in ensuring that the Yarra Ranges community is well-positioned to address future challenges. This will foster a sustainable and resilient community, ensuring a liveable and thriving environment for both current and future generations.
- 2.3 The SCRP will be established by Council for the purpose of:
 - a) being a voice to Council for people with an interest in Stormwater Management in Yarra Ranges;
 - b) assisting Council in the consultative process and providing feedback on Council processes and policies, and supporting Council's decision making; and
 - c) monitoring the achievement of actions under the Stormwater Management Plan.
- 2.4 The SCRP does not have authority to make decisions on behalf of Council, nor does it have delegated authority to act or to incur expenditure on behalf of Council.
- 2.5 The SCRP must at all times recognise that the primary responsibility for management of Council's operations is controlled by the Chief Executive Officer.

3. Role and Objectives

- 3.1 The SCRP will serve as a direct link between Yarra Ranges Council and the community, with participation open to residents who have knowledge, interest,

skills, or lived experience in stormwater and flood management. The panel will provide valuable community insight to guide the development and implementation of the Yarra Ranges Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP), ensuring that community concerns and values are reflected in stormwater planning decisions.

3.2 The SCRП will help support the implementation of Stormwater Management Plan 2024-2034, by:

- a) Actively contributing to discussions about stormwater management and flood risk, with a focus on sustainability, biodiversity, and preparedness for natural disasters.
- b) Providing feedback on flood mapping, stormwater infrastructure projects, and integrated water management strategies to help shape Council's response to stormwater challenges.
- c) Participating in the development and review of public communications and educational materials related to stormwater services, ensuring the community is well-informed and involved in the decision-making process.
- d) Strengthening strategic partnerships and community engagement to foster a sustainable and resilient environment in line with Yarra Ranges Council's vision for the future.

4. Structure

4.1 The Panel is proposed to consist of individuals with specific interests and/or expertise in flood and stormwater management, including:

- a) Thirteen (13) community members representing a balanced mix of gender, ages and geographical representation within the Shire
- b) Interested Councillors
- c) Council officers, including a senior Council officer, either a Director, Manager or Executive Officer.

4.2 Consultants and representatives from external agencies such as Melbourne Water may attend SCRП meetings to provide specific input when required.

5. Nomination, selection & appointment of members

5.1 Community Membership to SCRП will be sought through an Expression of Interest (EOI) process advertised through Council's website, social media, local media and by communications to Council's broad network of community groups and local organisations.

5.2 Applications will be considered against a selection criteria.

5.3 In recruiting members, Council strives to attain a Panel that is diverse and representative of the community. This includes but is not exclusive to Aboriginality, gender, sex, culture, nationality, refugee or asylum seeker background, migration or visa status, language, religion, ability, age, mental health, socioeconomic status, housing status, and geographic location.

5.4 Members should:

- a) live or work in the Yarra Ranges;
- b) have an interest in stormwater management;

- c) be personally or professionally impacted by flooding within the Yarra Ranges municipality;
- d) be able to commit to attending the regular meetings of the SCRП and
- e) have a passion for working with Council towards better stormwater management.

6 Terms of Appointment

- 6.1 Community members will be appointed for a two-year term and may reapply to be appointed to the SCRП on the expiry of their first term.
- 6.2 Councillors are appointed to the Panel by Council annually. Notwithstanding the term of appointment, Council will consider and reaffirm this on an annual basis, while reserving the right to change its appointed representative at any time.
- 6.3 A member of the SCRП has the right to resign at any time. Notice of resignation can be made at any time in writing.

7 Chairperson

- 7.1 The Chairperson will be a Council Officer.
- 7.2 The duties of the chairperson are expected to be:
 - a) Convene the meeting according to Terms of Reference and meeting agenda
 - b) Facilitate the discussion of items on the agenda in a timely manner
 - c) Ensure all panel members can participate in panel discussions

8 Responsibilities

- 8.1 SCRП members are required to:
 - a) Act with integrity, upholding ethical standards at all times.
 - b) Be impartial and responsible, working in the best interests of the local community.
 - c) Engage in open and respectful discussions, fostering a collaborative environment.
 - d) Ensure fair participation, allowing all members to share their views and contribute to discussions
 - e) Avoid bias, refraining from actions that advantage or disadvantage any individual, including themselves.
 - f) Disclose conflicts of interest, whether real or perceived.
 - g) Align with Council values:
 - i. We make it happen
 - ii. We do what matters
 - iii. We make it better
 - iv. We do it together
 - h) Contribute actively, working cooperatively with other members and stakeholders.
 - i) Follow Council's Social Media Policy, referring media inquiries to the relevant Council officers and ensuring online conduct aligns with these principles.

- j) Maintain confidentiality, refraining from sharing non-public or sensitive information without senior Council authorisation.

8.2 SCRPs members are also expected to:

- a) Prepare for meetings, reviewing materials in advance.
- b) Communicate ideas effectively, representing the community's views while considering options to advance project development.
- c) Promote community engagement, encouraging residents to register for updates on relevant Council project pages.
- d) Ensure IT readiness, having access to personal equipment for video conferencing when necessary.

8.3 The duties of Council Officers supporting the SCRPs:

- a) Are required to adhere to the Employee Code of Conduct.
- b) Ensure that the feedback and perspectives of the SCRPs are communicated and factored into decisions related to the project.
- c) Investigate issues as needed and provide technical expertise and advice to those involved in the project and to the panel.
- d) Keep SCRPs members informed about the project's progress, as well as any risks or concerns that may arise.
- e) Regularly update the online Stormwater Management Plan Project Page with progress reports, meeting agendas, minutes, etc.

8.4 Failure to comply with above responsibilities may result in the termination of membership on the SCRPs.

9 Vacancies

9.1 A position is deemed vacant if a member fails to attend three (3) consecutive meetings without being granted a leave of absence.

9.2 Where a member decides to relinquish their membership before the end of their term of appointment, they must submit their resignation in writing.

9.3 Council will seek to fill a vacancy that may occur before the end of a two-year term of appointment, with the exception of a vacancy that occurs within two months of the end of the term of appointment.

9.4 If a representative resigns or their membership lapses within the first six months of the SCRPs' term, the vacancy may be filled by selecting a suitable candidate from those considered during the original selection process to serve the remainder of the outgoing panel member's term:

- a) Officers will recommend a suitable candidate to senior management for appointment to the SCRPs for the remainder of the term.
- b) If no suitable candidates are identified, a formal expression of interest process may be initiated.
- c) If a vacancy arises within two months of the term's end, or if the SCRPs believes a replacement is unnecessary, the vacancy does not need to be filled for the remainder of the term.

10 Meetings

- 10.1 At least three (3) meetings of the SCRP will be held per year and confirmed at least one month in advance, with these to be held at an accessible venue in the Yarra Ranges or via video conference.
- 10.2 Meetings will have the option for remote virtual attendance for members who cannot attend in-person.
- 10.3 Meetings may be cancelled, or additional meetings may be convened.
- 10.4 If apologies are received from a significant number of the members of the Panel, meetings may be cancelled and rescheduled (if feasible).
- 10.5 Members are asked to check their email on the morning of the meeting to receive any notice of cancellation.
- 10.6 Meetings of the Panel are defined as “Informal Meetings of Councillors under Chapter 8, Rule 1 of Council’s Governance Rules if at least one Councillor is present. The responsible Council Officer must forward a record of an Informal Meeting of Councillors to Council’s Governance Team within 7 days of a meeting.
- 10.7 Members are responsible for providing their own IT equipment and devices, that meet the suitable requirements to access Panel meetings (eg. having access to webcam and microphones).
- 10.8 Meetings are closed to the general public.

11 Conflicts of Interest

- 11.1 A member of the Panel with a conflict of interest in an item of business to be considered at a meeting must declare this before the item is considered.
- 11.2 A member declaring a conflict of interest must leave the meeting while the identified item is being discussed and must not vote on the matter being considered.
- 11.3 A declaration of a conflict of interest that has been made at a meeting of the Panel must be recorded in the minutes of that meeting.
- 11.4 A failure to comply with the provisions regarding the disclosure of conflicts of interest may result in the member’s appointment to the Panel being terminated.
- 11.5 A Councillor appointed to the Panel must declare a conflict of interest in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 7, Rule 7, of Council’s Governance Rules.

12 Attendance at Meetings

- 12.1 A member of the SCRP has the right to resign at any time. Notice of resignation can be made at any time in writing.
- 12.2 If a SCRP member fails to attend three (3) consecutive meetings without giving 24-hour notice, membership is deemed to be void.

Notifying Absence

- 12.3 SCRP members are encouraged to notify their absence at meetings at least 24 hours prior to a scheduled meeting where possible. A proxy cannot be appointed.

13 Meeting Procedures

Agenda for Meetings

- 13.1 Council officers will be responsible for setting the Agenda for each meeting.
- 13.2 Panel members can request an item to be included on an Agenda by sending details to the delegated Council Officer at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting.
- 13.3 The delegated Council Officer will consider any such requests and determine if they be listed or dealt with (investigated) as per normal business as discussion of operational issues should be directed to an appropriate Council Officer.
- 13.4 The Agenda for each meeting will include:
 - a) commencement with an Acknowledgement of Country at the start of every meeting;
 - b) declaration of any conflict of interests declared by Councillors, Community Reference Panel members, or officers with reference to the conflicting agenda item up for discussion;
 - c) provision for any urgent items of business to be raised and, by agreement, considered by the Panel;
 - d) brief reports back on:
 - (i) the use of the Panel's advice by Council; and
 - (ii) actions and/or matters arising from items discussed at the previous meeting;
 - e) updates on current Council actions, programs and initiatives;
 - f) substantive discussion about major current issues and directions; and
 - g) an opportunity to raise other business matters from the table.
- 13.5 An Agenda will be sent to the Panel one (1) week prior to each meeting, together with any background reading material.
- 13.6 In exceptional circumstances, the Chair may allow accompanying reports that were not able to be sent out prior to the meeting to be reviewed at the meeting.

Minutes of Meetings

- 13.7 Minutes will be taken for each meeting by a delegated Council Officer and will record:
 - a) the attendance of members (either in person at the designated meeting place or using electronic technology);
 - b) agenda items tabled;
 - c) any declared conflicts of interest;
 - d) key discussion points; and
 - e) actions and agreed outcomes only

14 Confidentiality and Privacy

- 14.1 SCRP members are encouraged to freely discuss issues amongst each other and this is highly valued.
- 14.2 Members must treat information they receive as confidential, unless otherwise advised, and are expected to comply with the provisions that cover confidential information contained in sections 3 and 125 of the Local Government Act 2020.

- 14.3 Members must not use confidential information other than for the purpose of performing their function as a member of the Panel.
- 14.4 Documents presented to the Panel will often be in draft format and not suitable for wider distribution. Members have an obligation not to disclose any materials or information that is not available to the public, unless approved by the Chair or a representative of Council.
- 14.5 All Panel discussions should comply with the requirements under the Privacy Act 1988 and its principles.
- 14.6 The failure of a member to comply with paragraphs 14.2 to 14.5 will result in the termination of their appointment.

15 Media

- 15.1 The Chairperson will represent the views of the Panel and make all public statements. If members of the Panel wish to raise an issue in the media, which relates specifically to the work of the SCRP, this should be agreed beforehand at a SCRP meeting.
- 15.2 On occasion, representatives of the Panel may be invited to join the Chairperson to promote the work of the Panel or to support advocacy positions.
- 15.3 Members are entitled to make comment on matters in their capacity as a member of another organisation or as private citizens; however, it must be clear that those views are not expressed on behalf of Panel or Council.

16 Review

- 16.1 The Terms of Reference will be reviewed every four years, or at such other time that Council determines.
- 16.2 The Terms of Reference may be withdrawn at any time by Council.

11. COUNCILLOR MOTIONS

In accordance with Chapter 3 Division 4 of the Governance Rules developed by Council in accordance with section 60 of the Local Government Act 2020.

GIPPSLAND KANGAROO HARVEST ZONE - CR COX

Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);

In accordance with Governance Rule 26 developed by Council in accordance with section 60 of the Local Government Act 2020.

SUMMARY

Yarra Ranges is home to significant biodiversity, with the region's landscapes and iconic species, including the Eastern Grey Kangaroo, attracting over four million tourists per year.

Local community members and groups have raised concerns with Councillors about animal welfare and the impact of commercial harvesting on local kangaroo populations. Kangaroo control is managed entirely by the State Government, through the Authority to Control Wildlife (ATCW) process and the 2024-2028 Kangaroo Harvesting Program (KHP).

This matter was presented to a Councillor Forum in October 2023. Since this time, several peri-urban Councils, including Nillumbik, Mornington Peninsula and Mount Alexander Shire Councils, have advocated for their removal from the commercial harvesting program.

Recently State Government's 2024-2028 Kangaroo Harvest Management Plan has redrawn the harvest zones removing other peri-urban areas from commercial harvesting. Yarra Ranges Council has not been excluded, instead shifting into the Gippsland Harvest Zone, with the implications of this change unclear, especially relating to Yarra Ranges Dandenong's region which is stated as excluded from the harvesting zone.

Locally evidence received by Council suggests that there has been limited uptake of the harvesting program to date.

The protection of kangaroos and their habitat locally is guided by endorsed Council strategies, including the Environment Strategy 2015-2025 and the Nature Plan 2024-2034.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council requests that The Hon. Jacinta Allen MP, as Premier of Victoria, and The Hon. Steve Dimopoulos MP, as Minister for the Environment, immediately exclude the Shire of Yarra Ranges from the Gippsland Kangaroo Harvest Zone and include Yarra Ranges in the exclusion [to commercial killing] zone.

12. ITEMS THROUGH THE CHAIR

13. REPORTS FROM DELEGATES

14. DOCUMENTS FOR SIGNING AND SEALING

Report Author: Senior Governance Officer
 Responsible Officer: Director Corporate Services
 Ward(s) affected: All Wards;

The author(s) of this report and the Responsible Officer consider that the report complies with the overarching governance principles and supporting principles set out in the Local Government Act 2020 and in accordance with Clause 87 of the Meeting Procedures and Use of Common Seal Local Law 2015, as prescribed by Section 14(2)(c) of the Local Government Act 2020.

CONFIDENTIALITY

This item is to be considered at a Council meeting that is open to the public.

SUMMARY

It is requested that the following document be signed and sealed:

1) Letter Under Seal – Ken White

A letter under seal has been prepared in recognition of Ken White who has retired after 33 years of service with Yarra Ranges Council, working most recently as a Special Charge Scheme Officer.

2) Letter Under Seal – Karen Roberts

A letter under seal has been prepared in recognition of Karen Roberts who is retiring after 21 years of service with Yarra Ranges Council, working most recently as a Front of House Officer.

RECOMMENDATION

That the following listed document be signed and sealed:

- 1) Letter Under Seal – Ken White***
- 2) Letter Under Seal – Karen Roberts***

15. INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS

Report Author: Governance Officer
 Responsible Officer: Director Corporate Services
 Ward(s) affected: All Wards

The author(s) of this report and the Responsible Officer consider that the report complies with the overarching governance principles and supporting principles set out in the Local Government Act 2020.

CONFIDENTIALITY

This item is to be considered at a Council meeting that is open to the public

SUMMARY

Chapter 8, Rule 1, of the Governance Rules requires that records of informal meetings of Councillors must be kept and that the Chief Executive Officer must ensure that a summary of the matters discussed at the meeting tabled at the next convenient Council meeting and recorded in the Minutes of that Council meeting.

An 'informal meeting of Councillors' is defined in the Governance Rules as 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; and
- is not a Council meeting, Delegated Committee meeting or Community Asset Committee meeting.

The records for informal meetings of Councillors are attached to the report.

RECOMMENDATION

That the records of the Informal Meetings of Councillors, copies of which are attached to the report, be received and noted.

ATTACHMENTS TO THE REPORT

1. 21 January 2025 – Council Briefing
2. 21 January 2025 – Council Forum

Informal Meeting of Councillors

Public Record



Meeting Name:	Council Briefing	
Date:	21 January 2025	Start Time: 6.13pm Finish Time: 6.19pm
Venue:	Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Anderson Street, Lilydale and via videoconference	
Attendees:	<p>Councillors: Cr Higgins (Chair), Cr McAllister, Cr Cox, Cr Heenan, Cr McIlwain, Cr Ward, Cr Mazzarella and Cr Marriott</p> <p>CEO/Directors: Tammi Rose, Leanne Hurst, Kath McClusky Jonathon Makaay(Acting Director Built Environment and Infrastructure), and Kim O'Connor (Acting Director Corporate Services)</p> <p>Officers: Gina Walter, Beck Stevens, Joanne Hammond, Ameer Cooper, Stuart Wilson, Kristen Vernon, Mel Villani</p> <p>Externals: Nil</p>	
Apologies:	Cr Child	
Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nil 	
Matter/s Discussed:	This briefing covered the following items of business to be considered at the 28 January 2025 Council Meeting.	
	9.1	Petition to Council - Prioritize the sealing of Walker Road and include this Petition in as part of the next Yarra Ranges Council community roads review.
	10.1	C226 Heritage Overlay (HO) 131 Mangans Road Lilydale
	10.2	Revised 2024-2025 Budget - Borrowings
	14	Documents for Signing and Sealing
Completed By:	Gina Walter	

Informal Meeting of Councillors

Public Record



Meeting Name:	Council Forum	
Date:	21 January 2025	Start Time: 5.31pm Finish Time: 8.29pm
Venue:	Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Anderson Street, Lilydale and via videoconference	
Attendees:	<p>Councillors: Cr Higgins (Chair), Cr McAllister (From 5.32pm), Cr Cox, Cr Heenan, Cr McIlwain, Cr Ward, Cr Mazzarella and Cr Marriott</p> <p>CEO/Directors: Tammi Rose, Leanne Hurst, Kath McClusky Jonathon Makaay(Acting Director Built Environment and Infrastructure), and Kim O'Connor (Acting Director Corporate Services) (From 6.00pm)</p> <p>Officers: Gina Walter, Beck Stevens, Joanne Hammond, Ameer Cooper, Rachel Giddens, Sarah Bond, Jessica Harrison, Isha Scott Jane Sinnamon, Cindy Dunbar, Santha Press, Amanda May, Stuart Wilson, Kristen Vernon, Daniel Wressell, Mel Villani and Corinne Bowen</p> <p>Via Zoom: Bumeke Jayasinghe</p> <p>Externals: Nil</p>	
Apologies	Cr Child	
Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nil 	
	2.1	Disability Action Plan 2024-2028 - Draft
	2.2	Funding For New Mooroolbark Community House
	5.1	Sustainable Environment Advisory Committee - Updated Terms of Reference and Membership Appointments
	5.2	Stormwater Community Reference Panel – EOI Process Update
	9	For Noting
	9.1	Draft Audit and Risk Management Committee Meeting Minutes - 25 November 2024
	9.2	Indicative Forum & Council Meeting Schedule
Completed By:	Gina Walter	

16. URGENT BUSINESS

In accordance with Chapter 3 Rule 24 of the Governance Rules developed by Council in accordance with section 60 of the Local Government Act 2020.

17. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

In accordance with Chapter 3 Rule 24 of the Governance Rules developed by Council in accordance with section 60 of the Local Government Act 2020.

There were no Confidential Items listed for this meeting.

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Council is scheduled to be held on Tuesday 25 February 2025 commencing at 7.00pm, at Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Anderson Street, Lilydale and via videoconference.



In providing for the good governance of its community, Councillors are reminded of their obligation to abide by the provisions as set within the Local Government Act 2020 and the Code of Conduct for Councillors.

When attending a Council Meeting, Councillors should adhere to the procedures set out in the Governance Rules developed by Council in accordance with section 60 of the Local Government Act 2020.

The following is a guide for all Councillors to ensure they act honestly, in good faith and in the best interests of Yarra Ranges as a whole.

1. Councillors will respect the personal views of other Councillors and the decisions of Council.
2. Councillors may publicly express their own opinions on Council matters but not so as to undermine the standing of Council in the community.
3. The Mayor is the official spokesperson for Council.
4. Councillors will incur expenditure in a responsible manner and in accordance with the Councillor Expenditure and Policy.
5. Councillors will avoid conflicts of interest and will always openly disclose any direct and indirect interests where they exist.
6. Councillors will act with integrity and respect when interacting with Council staff and members of the public.
7. Councillors will demonstrate fairness in all dealings and conduct and be open with and accountable to the community at all times.
8. Councillors will conduct themselves in a manner that does not cause detriment to Council or the Yarra Ranges community.