

Council Meeting

Minutes

Tuesday, 28 October 2025
Council Chamber - Civic Centre

Information for Councillors and the community

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY



Yarra Ranges Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri and other Kulin Nation peoples 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 OAM

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

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- 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.

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<https://www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/Council/Council-meetings/Submissions-questions-petitions-to-Council>

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CONTACT US

Post	PO Box 105, Anderson Street
Telephone	1300 368 333
Facsimile	(03) 9735 4249
Email	mail@yarraranges.vic.gov.au

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YARRA RANGES COUNCIL

MINUTES FOR THE 633RD COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, 28 OCTOBER 2025 COMMENCING AT 7.00 PM COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC CENTRE

1 COUNCIL MEETING OPENED

Councillor Jim Child (Mayor) declared the meeting open.

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Mayor then read the Acknowledgement of Country and welcomed all present.

3 INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS PRESENT

Councillors

Councillor Jim Child (Mayor)

Councillor Richard Higgins (Deputy Mayor)

Councillor Jeff Marriott

Councillor Peter McIlwain

Councillor Gareth Ward

Councillor Mitch Mazzearella

Councillor Fiona McAllister

Councillor Tim Heenan

Councillor Len Cox OAM

Officers

Tammi Rose, Chief Executive Officer

Hjalmar Philipp, Director Built Environment & Infrastructure

Kath McClusky, Director Planning & Sustainable Futures

Leanne Hurst, Director Communities

Vincenzo Lombardi, Director Corporate Services

4 APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

There were no apologies received for this meeting.

5 DISCLOSURE OF 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.

Cr Marriott declared a material interest in respect of Item 10.3. A written notice was supplied to the Chief Executive Officer under Governance Rules Chapter 7 Sub-Rule 3.1b.

6 MAYORAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

End of Mayoral Term

The Mayor announced that this meeting would be the last public meeting chairing as Mayor. The Mayor thanked Councillors, Officers and members of the public for their collaboration and engagement over the period.

7 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Moved: Cr Mazzearella

Seconded: Cr Mcilwain

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held Tuesday 14 October 2025, as circulated, be confirmed.

The motion was Carried unanimously.

In Favour: Cr Child, Cr Cox, Cr Heenan, Cr Higgins, Cr Marriott, Cr Mazzearella, Cr McAllister, Cr Mcilwain and Cr Ward

Against: Nil

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.

There were no Questions or Submissions from the Public listed on the agenda for this meeting.

9 PETITIONS

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

There were no Petitions received for this meeting.

10.1 McDermott Avenue Reserve Master Plan**SUMMARY**

Since the relocation of organised netball to Pinks Reserve, Kilsyth in 2015, the McDermott Avenue Reserve at 52 McDermott Avenue, Mooroolbark has remained a vacated and under-utilised open space.

On 27 January 2015 Council passed a resolution that the land be rezoned for housing and sold. This was not acted on at the time.

In late 2020, Council officers began initial research and preliminary community engagement to explore future uses for the site. The project was paused due to other priorities and resumed in late 2024 including site investigations and initial community engagement.

A review of the 2015 resolution has established that, based on population projections and contemporary open space service levels, there is a shortfall in open space provision in this area of Mooroolbark and that a Neighbourhood level reserve of minimum one hectare (1 hectare) is still needed at the site to service local open space needs.

This report provides a draft Master Plan for the future use of the site that responds to both the previous Council resolution as well as the recent findings on open space needs. Officers recommend proceeding to community consultation with the attached Draft McDermott Ave Reserve Masterplan (Attachment 1) that includes developing most of the site for public open space (Neighbourhood level) and that a separate housing investigation still be carried out for the southwest corner. This is recommended to include advocacy to Victorian Government for an exemption to Windfall Gains Tax and seek more viable delivery options for housing and improved open space outcomes.

In accordance with Governance Rule 58, Mark Sheedy spoke in support of the recommendation included in the officer report.

In accordance with Governance Rule 29.1, Cr Mazzearella, Cr Ward, Cr Cox, Cr Heenan, Cr Marriott and Cr Higgins spoke to the Motion.

Moved: Cr Mazzarella

Seconded: Cr Ward

That Council

1. *Abandon the previous resolution of Council, 27 January 2015, relating to 52 McDermott Avenue.*
2. *Retain the land at 52 McDermott Avenue, Mooroolbark.*
3. *Support progressing community consultation for the Draft McDermott Avenue Reserve Masterplan (Attachments 1 and 2), including provision of Public Open Space (Neighbourhood level) with partial site investigation for localised housing options which may result in a reduced parcel of subdivision and disposal*
4. *Receive a further report considering submissions to the Masterplan.*

The motion was Carried unanimously.

In Favour: Cr Child, Cr Cox. Cr Heenan, Cr Higgins, Cr Marriott, Cr Mazzarella, Cr McAllister, Cr Mcilwain and Cr Ward

Against: Nil

10.2 Audit and Risk Management Committee Biannual Report

SUMMARY

The Local Government Act 2020 (the Act) requires that Council's Audit and Risk Management Committee (Committee) prepare a biannual report that describes its activities and achievements over the last 6 months.

This report is the biannual report of the Committee for the six-month period ending 30 June 2025.

In accordance with Governance Rule 58, David Ashmore spoke in support of the recommendation included in the officer report.

In accordance with Governance Rule 29.1, Cr McAllister and Cr Higgins spoke to the Motion.

Moved: Cr McAllister

Seconded: Cr Higgins

That Council note the Yarra Ranges Audit and Risk Management Committee Biannual Report for the six-month period ending 30 June 2025.

The motion was Carried unanimously.

In Favour: Cr Child, Cr Cox, Cr Heenan, Cr Higgins, Cr Marriott, Cr Mazzearella, Cr McAllister, Cr McIlwain and Cr Ward

Against: Nil

10.3 Councillor Expenditure Policy - Reimbursement of Expenses for Cr Marriott

SUMMARY

The *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) governs the reimbursement of expenses for Councillors and members of a delegated committee. This requires Council to reimburse reasonable, bona fide out-of-pocket expenses incurred while performing their respective roles.

The Councillor Expenditure Policy (the Policy) requires all claims for the reimbursement of expenses to be made within three months of the date an expense has been incurred.

Claims submitted that fall outside this three-month period must be considered by Council.

In accordance with the Policy, approval is sought to reimburse out-of-pocket expenses relating to travel, to the value of \$1,101.85 incurred by Cr Marriott during the period 1 April 2025 through to 30 May 2025.

Cr Marriott left the meeting at 7:34pm, prior to consideration of the item, having declared a conflict of interest in this item.

In accordance with Governance Rule 29.1, Cr Higgins and Cr Cox spoke to the Motion.

Moved: Cr Higgins

Seconded: Cr Cox

That Council approve the reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses of \$1,101.85 incurred by Cr Marriott during the period 1 April 2025 through to 30 May 2025.

The motion was Carried unanimously.

In Favour: Cr Child, Cr Cox. Cr Heenan, Cr Higgins, Cr Mazzearella, Cr McAllister, Cr McIlwain and Cr Ward

Against: Nil

Cr Marriott returned to the meeting at 7:36pm.

10.4 Historical Parking Infringements Pursuant to Section 87(4) of the Road Safety Act 1986

SUMMARY

Pursuant to the *Road Safety Act 1986* ('the Act'), Council can resolve to alter the penalty unit amount for eleven parking offences. Following a review, and subsequent detection of overcharging motorists for these eleven parking offences, Merri-Bek Council announced it would be commencing a refund scheme for motorists to apply for partial refunds, being the difference between the amount charged by Merri-Bek and the base infringement amount, set by the Act without a resolution of Council, pursuant to section 87(4) of the Act.

Council Officers then conducted a thorough and fulsome investigation into Yarra Ranges' historical infringement practices. It became apparent that while there was a resolution of Council in 2001, there has been no subsequent resolution made, despite Council raising the penalty amount pursuant to section 84(4) of the Act and indexing that penalty amount yearly. This report presents recommended steps to rectify the matter.

In accordance with Governance Rule 29.1, Cr Child, Cr McAllister, Cr Heenan and Cr McIlwain spoke to the Motion.

Moved: Cr Child

Seconded: Cr McAllister

That Council resolves to

1. *Establish a refund scheme for those parking infringements specified as Items 1 to 11 in Column 1 of Schedule 6 of the Road Safety (General) Regulations 2019, in line with Attachment 1.*
2. *Authorise the Director, Communities to establish the refund scheme.*
3. *In accordance with Section 87(4) of the Road Safety Act 1986, resolves to fix at 0.5 penalty units the penalty for those parking infringements specified as Items 1 to 11 in Column 1 of Schedule 6 of the Road Safety (General) Regulations 2019 effective immediately until otherwise resolved.*

The motion was Carried unanimously.

In Favour: Cr Child, Cr Cox, Cr Heenan, Cr Higgins, Cr Marriott, Cr Mazzarella, Cr McAllister, Cr McIlwain and Cr Ward

Against: Nil

10.5 Key Life Stages for Endorsement

SUMMARY

This report presents the Key Life Stages Plan 2025-2029. The Key Life Stages Plan 2025-2029 is a supporting strategy to the Council Plan and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2025-2029. The Health and Wellbeing Strategy illustrates Council's focus for the whole community's wellbeing. This strategy is supported by a number of other strategic documents (Disability Action Plan, Reconciliation Action Plan, Economic Development Strategy, Housing Strategy, Environment Strategy, Creative Communities Strategy, and the Key Life Stages Plan) that define Council's role in assisting sections of the community or our culture that require targeted support.

The Key Life Stages Plan 2025-2029 (The Plan) recognises and addresses the unique opportunities and challenges that appear during some of the more vulnerable ages experienced over a person's lifetime. The Plan outlines how Council will target activities to best support our community's health and wellbeing through a whole-of-life approach. The Plan also acknowledges that support occurs within sectors where funded services and programs are designed for specific age ranges.

This plan replaces five standalone strategies (Early Years Strategic Action Plan 2019-2021, Middle Years Strategic Action Plan 2017-2021, Healthy and Active Ageing Plan 2019-2023, Youth Plan 2021-2023 & the Child and Youth Strategic Plan 2014-2024) with an integrated approach also better considers the co-dependency of life stages and the need to consider that in service provision.

As a third-tier strategic plan, the Key Life Stages Plan is more operational focussing on: communicating service intent; clarifying specific advocacy topics; and supporting integrated planning in the support service network across the municipality.

In accordance with Governance Rule 29.1, Cr Marriott, Cr Mcilwain, Cr Higgins, Cr McAllister and Cr Mazzarella spoke to the Motion.

Moved: Cr Marriott

Seconded: Cr Mazzarella

That Council endorse the Key Life Stages Plan 2025-2029.

The motion was Carried unanimously.

In Favour: Cr Child, Cr Cox, Cr Heenan, Cr Higgins, Cr Marriott, Cr Mazzarella, Cr McAllister, Cr Mcilwain and Cr Ward

Against: Nil

10.6 Draft Council Order in accordance with Section 25(2) and 26(2) of the Domestic Animals Act 1994

SUMMARY

The Domestic Animals Act 1994 (“the Act”) provides Council the power to make orders to control both dogs and cats in public places. Council Orders made under Section 10A(1), Section 25(2), and Section 26(2) the Domestic Animals Act 1994 are in doubt that they may not be legally enforceable due to publishing errors.

There are no significant changes proposed for a new Council Orders. The Council Orders are proposed to be remade to:

- a) Accurately reflect prior Council decisions for the compulsory desexing of cats;
- b) Accurately reflect prior Council decisions for usage of public land for on and off leash dog exercise;
- c) Accurately reflect prior Council decisions where domestic animals are prohibited throughout Yarra Ranges;
- d) Support compliance and enforcement of Council’s legislated responsibility under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*; and
- e) Correctly publish a Council Orders as a valid instrument for legal enforcement.

The draft Council Orders and complete maps are presented in this report.

In accordance with Governance Rule 29.1, Cr Mazzarella and Cr Ward spoke to the Motion.

Moved: Cr Mazzarella

Seconded: Cr Ward

That Council

1. *Endorse the draft Council Order regarding Section 10A(1) of the Domestic Animals Act 1994.*
2. *Endorse the draft Council Order regarding Section 25(2) and 26(2) of the Domestic Animals Act 1994, and Area Maps.*
3. *Note that the Orders will be published in the Government Gazette and a local newspaper, as required by the Domestic Animals Act 1994*
4. *Establishes a refund scheme for those infringements previously specified under sections 25(2) and 26(2) of the Domestic Animals Act 1994*
5. *Accept applications for refunds for a period of 12 months, effective from 28 October 2025.*
6. *Authorises the Director Communities to establish the refund scheme.*

The motion was Carried unanimously.

In Favour: Cr Child, Cr Cox. Cr Heenan, Cr Higgins, Cr Marriott, Cr Mazzarella, Cr McAllister, Cr McIlwain and Cr Ward

Against: Nil

10.7 2026 Annual Grant Program

SUMMARY

Council's Annual Grants Program (the Program) supports not-for-profit community groups, including heritage and arts groups and artists, to deliver community-led initiatives that foster connected, vibrant and resilient communities and strengthen culture and the arts.

The Program criteria align with Council's strategic objectives, ensuring funded projects contribute meaningfully to broader community goals, enabling projects that promote social cohesion, enhance liveability, strengthen a sense of place through art and cultural projects, and build community resilience to be supported.

The program is delivered across three funding streams:

- Community Development
- Arts and Heritage
- Festivals and Events

All funding streams encourage an asset-based community development (ABCD) approach, leveraging the skills, strengths, knowledge, and creativity of local communities. The 2026 Annual Grant Round will support project delivery in 2026.

Two independent assessment panels (Community Development and Creative Communities) assessed the applications. The panels' funding recommendations are outlined in this report. The total recommended funding allocation of \$574,535.15 falls within the endorsed 2025-26 Council budget for Community Grants. The panels' recommendations include a slight reallocation of funds across the three streams. This is part of the collaborative panel process.

In accordance with Governance Rule 29.1, Cr Mcilwain and Cr Cox spoke to the Motion.

Moved: Cr Mcilwain

Seconded: Cr Cox

That Council notes

- 1) *The recommendations of the independent community assessment panels to award 2026 Annual Grants funding as follows*
 - a) *Arts & Heritage: 15 projects.*
 - b) *Community Development: 40 projects.*
 - c) *Festivals and Events: 20 projects.*
- 2) *Acknowledge the contribution of panel members and their commitment of time and expertise in evaluating applications and shaping their funding recommendations.*

The motion was Carried unanimously.

In Favour: Cr Child, Cr Cox. Cr Heenan, Cr Higgins, Cr Marriott, Cr Mazzarella, Cr McAllister, Cr Mcilwain and Cr Ward

Against: Nil

10.8 New Funding to Strengthen Our Communities

SUMMARY

Council's 2025-26 budget includes \$150,000 for new community grant-making. A best value approach has informed the use of this new funding. The new funding model responds to community needs, relieves pressure on two existing funding programs, and pilots an innovative funding model designed to strengthen local communities. The report also presents a revised and distinct funding model to support healthy active ageing.

Council has a generous suite of grant programs including monthly, annual, and multi-year grant programs that support community-led initiatives in community development, arts, culture, and heritage and festivals/events. It also provides Neighbourhood House funding that supports 12 community-managed grass roots services that promote connection, learning, and inclusion. The current Healthy Active Ageing funding provides support to nine senior citizens groups and six Universities of the Third Age groups (U3As).

This report presents an exciting new program of funding and a revised Healthy Active Ageing grant program, the latter utilising funds already earmarked for that purpose, post the recent aged care reforms.

The new programs will:

- increase investment in Monthly Grants to meet rising demand.
- provide additional funding for Neighbourhood Houses in response to growing financial pressures.
- pilot an innovative community pitch program to strengthen community-led action and foster local innovation.
- provide a program of funding promoting healthy active ageing, while also creating additional capacity for strategic grant making.

In accordance with Governance Rule 29.1, Cr Heenan and Cr Marriott spoke to the Motion.

Moved: Cr Heenan
Seconded: Cr Marriott

That Council notes

- 1) *The allocation of funding to strengthen communities through the \$150,000 of new grant money in the 2025-26 budget for the following programs:*
 - a) *Additional Neighbourhood House funding (\$4,000 per House) totalling \$48,000 in year one.*
 - b) *An increase to the Monthly Grants budget of \$20,000 per year to help meet increasing demand.*
 - c) *An allocation of \$82,000 to pilot a community focused funding initiative consisting of:*
 - i. *\$70,000 for a Community Pitch project.*
 - ii. *\$12,000 for officer support to deliver the pitch project.*
- 2) *The allocation of revised Healthy Active Ageing grant program for Senior Citizens Groups, U3As and strategic grants that includes:*
 - a) *Senior Citizens Clubs funding pool of \$45,000.*
 - b) *U3A \$32,000 (an increase to the existing program of \$10,000).*
- 3) *Healthy Active Ageing strategic project funding of \$25,000 per year.*

The motion was Carried unanimously.

In Favour: Cr Child, Cr Cox. Cr Heenan, Cr Higgins, Cr Marriott, Cr Mazzearella, Cr McAllister, Cr McIlwain and Cr Ward

Against: Nil

10.9 Road Management Plan Review

SUMMARY

This report presents the results of the community engagement for the draft Road Management Plan 2025 pursuant to Section 54(5) of the Road Management Act 2004.

Eight submissions were received during the consultation period, reflecting the following key themes:

- Footpaths and Pedestrian Infrastructure
- Unsealed Roads: Maintenance, Potholes, and Dust Suppression
- Road Sealing and Affordability
- Contractor Performance and Repair Quality
- Car Park and Crossover Maintenance
- Department of Transport Planning infrastructure (formerly VicRoads)

(DTP are roads outside council responsibilities)

Only 2 submissions related specifically to the Road Management Plan (RMP) service standards. These are defect repair timeframes on unsealed roads (i.e. potholes) and frequency of night-time inspections. The proposed service standards in the draft RMP are considered to be appropriate to manage risk related to these two areas.

Therefore, no changes have been made to the Road Management Plan 2025 following the review. The final draft Road Management Plan is presented in this report.

In accordance with Governance Rule 29.1, Cr Ward, Cr Heenan, Cr Marriott, Cr McAllister and Cr Mazzarella spoke to the Motion.

Moved: Cr Ward

Seconded: Cr Mazzarella

That Council

1. *Note that the review of the Road Management Plan (RMP) has been completed in accordance with the Road Management (General) Regulations 2016.*
2. *Note the public submissions, feedback and Officer responses.*
3. *Endorse the Road Management Plan 2025, pursuant to the Road Management Act 2004, Section 54(6) and Road Management (General) Regulations 2016 (Regulation 11).*

The motion was Carried unanimously.

In Favour: Cr Child, Cr Cox, Cr Heenan, Cr Higgins, Cr Marriott, Cr Mazzarella, Cr McAllister, Cr McIlwain and Cr Ward

Against: Nil

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.

There were no Councillor motions listed on the agenda for this meeting.

12 ITEMS THROUGH THE CHAIR

12.1 Pathways for Carers Mt Evelyn

Cr Heenan attended and spoke at the 10 year celebration of the Pathways for Carers in Mount Evelyn on Monday 20 October at the Mt Evelyn Community House. Cr Heenan noted the 82 members of the group who come together once a month to give carers time out for themselves, connect with others and engage with organisations or resources.

12.2 Mt Evelyn Street Party

Cr Heenan congratulated all involved in the organisation of the Mt Evelyn Street Party held on 26 October 2025. Cr Heenan noted many events had to be rescheduled or relocated due to bad weather that did not dampen the enthusiasm of the community.

12.3 Lilydale Cricket Club Equipment Stolen

Cr Mazzarella noted the Lilydale Cricket Club have once again been left frustrated after \$3000 worth of equipment was stolen. This follows the grandstand set ablaze in February and a bowling machine being stolen on a previous occasion.

13 REPORTS FROM DELEGATES

Cr Marriott

- Attended the Indigenous Advisory Committee meeting held on 21 October 2025 at the Yarra Ranges Council Civic Centre. The meeting was also attended by Cr McAllister

14 DOCUMENTS FOR SIGNING AND SEALING

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.

There were no Documents for Signing and Sealing received for this meeting.

15 INFORMAL MEETING OF COUNCILLORS

Moved: Cr Child

Seconded: Cr Higgins

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

The motion was Carried unanimously.

In Favour: Cr Child, Cr Cox. Cr Heenan, Cr Higgins, Cr Marriott, Cr Mazzearella, Cr McAllister, Cr McIlwain and Cr Ward

Against: Nil

16 URGENT BUSINESS

There were no Urgent Business listed on the agenda for this meeting.

17 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

In accordance with section 66(2)(a) of the Local Government Act 2020.

There were no Confidential Items listed on the agenda for this meeting.

18 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

There being no further business the meeting was declared closed at: 8.35 pm.

Confirmed this day, Tuesday, 11 November 2025.

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Councillor Jim Child (Mayor)