

AGENDA

MEETING OF THE
HORSHAM RURAL CITY COUNCIL

To be held on
28 January 2026
At 5.30pm

In the
Council Chamber, Civic Centre
18 Roberts Avenue, HORSHAM



**COUNCILLORS are respectfully requested to attend the Council Meeting
of the Horsham Rural City Council to be held on 28 January 2026
in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Horsham at 5.30pm**

Order of Business

PRESENT

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

1. PRAYER

Almighty God, we pledge ourselves to work in harmony for, the social, cultural and economic well-being of our Rural City. Help us to be wise in our deliberations and fair in our actions, so that prosperity and happiness shall be the lot of our people. AMEN

2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY STATEMENT

Horsham Rural City Council acknowledges the five Traditional Owner groups of this land; the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk people. We recognise the important and ongoing place that all Indigenous people hold in our community.

We pay our respects to the Elders, both past and present, and commit to working together in the spirit of mutual understanding and respect for the benefit of the broader community and future generations.

3. OPENING AND WELCOME

Chairman, Cr Brian Klowss formally welcomed those in attendance to the meeting. The Mayor advised that the meeting will be recorded to maintain a video archive, which will be available on the Horsham Rural City Council website as soon as practicable.

4. APOLOGIES

5. LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUESTS

6. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Recommendation

That the minutes emanating from the Council Meeting of the Horsham Rural City Council held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Horsham at 5.30pm on 15 December 2025 be adopted.

7. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Declarations of Interest

A Councillor who has declared a conflict of interest, must leave the meeting and remain outside the room while the matter is being considered, or any vote is taken.

Members of Staff

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, officers or people engaged under contract to the Council providing a report or advice to Council must disclose any conflicts of interests in the matter, including the type of interest.

8. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

REPORTS FOR COUNCIL DECISION 6

9. OFFICERS REPORTS 6

9.1 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE BIENNIAL REPORT TO COUNCIL – 1 JULY TO 31 DECEMBER 20256

9.2 COMMUNITY GRANTS POLICY REVIEW9

9.3 RISK APPETITE STATEMENT 13

9.4 S5 INSTRUMENT OF DELEGATION UPDATE - INCREASE TO FINANCIAL DELEGATION AND APPROVAL OF NAMING PROPOSALS (ROADS, FEATURES AND LOCALITIES) 17

9.5 S6A DELEGATIONS MINI UPDATE - *PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT ACT 1987*.....23

9.6 KERBSIDE GLASS COLLECTION FREQUENCY REVIEW28

9.7 RAIL FREIGHT ALLIANCE ADVOCACY – SUNSHINE CROSSOVER REMOVAL 34

9.8 WESTERN HIGHWAY – ALTERNATIVE TRUCK ROUTE PROJECT 38

10. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS 44

11. URGENT BUSINESS..... 45

12. PETITIONS AND JOINT LETTERS 46

13. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS..... 47

13.1 INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS – RECORD OF MEETINGS.....47

13.2 COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES47

14. NOTICE OF MOTION..... 48

15. CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS 48

15.1 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE: ANNUAL APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR
Defined as confidential information in accordance with Local Government Act 2020 - Section 3(1)(f) - Personal Information

15.2 GARBAGE TRUCK REPLACEMENT.....
Defined as confidential information in accordance with Local Government Act 2020 - Section 3(1)(g) - Private Commercial Information

16. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS..... 48

16.1 INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS – RECORD OF MEETINGS.....
Defined as confidential information in accordance with Local Government Act 2020 - Section 3(1)(h) - Confidential Meeting Information

CLOSE



GAIL GATT
Chief Executive Officer

REPORTS FOR COUNCIL DECISION

9. OFFICERS REPORTS

9.1 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE BIENNIAL REPORT TO COUNCIL – 1 JULY TO 31 DECEMBER 2025

Director:	Kim Hargreaves
Directorate:	Corporate Services
File Number:	F18/A13/000001

Officer Conflict of Interest

Officer disclosure in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 130:

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

Defined as confidential information in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 3(1):

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Audit and Risk Committee's Biannual Report to Council July – December 2025 (**Appendix 9.1A**)

Purpose

To present the Audit and Risk Committee's Biannual Report for the period July to December 2025 to Council.

Summary

The report outlines key activity during the reporting period.

- Audit and Risk Committee meetings – 100% attendance by Committee members (independent members and Councillor Representatives).
- Two Committee meetings held during the reporting period – 18 September 2025 and 4 December 2025
- Adoption and commencement of internal audit program
- Progress against outstanding audit actions

Recommendation

That Council receive and note the Biannual Report of the Audit and Risk Committee for the period July to December 2025.

REPORT

Background

This report is prepared in accordance with the Horsham Rural City Council's Audit and Risk Committee Charter 2025 (section 4.2.2) and fulfils the obligations under the *Local Government Act 2020* (s 54(5)).

The specific requirements of that section are that:

(5) An Audit and Risk Committee must—

- a) prepare a biannual audit and risk report that describes the activities of the Audit and Risk Committee and includes its findings and recommendations; and
- b) provide a copy of the biannual audit and risk report to the Chief Executive Officer for tabling at the next Council meeting.

The biannual report covers the period July to December 2024 and includes the Committee meetings held on 18 September and 4 December 2025. The minutes of the September meeting were tabled at the October 2025 Council Meeting and the minutes of the December meeting have been tabled as a separate report to this Council Meeting.

Discussion

This report provides a summary of the work the Committee performed to discharge its responsibilities. It also includes a summary of Council's progress in addressing the results of internal and external audit reports. Key activity from the meetings held on 18 September 2025 and 4 December 2025 is also provided and supports the information provided in the minutes of those meetings.

Activity against these key topics is outlined in more detail in the attached report.

- External audit – including closing report from 2024-2025 audit to inform the Annual Report
- Internal audit – including adoption of Internal Audit Program
- Financial reporting – including quarterly and annual financial reporting
- Governance – including processes to support the operation of the Committee
- Risk management – including updates to key risk documents
- CEO report – including updates on key matters relating to Council's operations

Options to Consider

The report is required by legislation (section 54(5) of the *Local Government Act 2020*) so must be presented to Council to receive and note.

Sustainability Implications

Not applicable

Community Engagement

Council's Audit and Risk Committee is comprised of Councillors and independent members. Consultation is undertaken with Internal Auditors and external (Victorian Auditor-General's Office – VAGO) Auditors.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Council applies the principles of continuous improvement in the operation of the Audit and Risk Committee with a strong process of regular review and evaluation of the Committee's operations. From this regular review and evaluation, processes and practices are changed as required to deliver improved

and effective outcomes. The biannual report represents one such mechanism of evaluation of operations.

Collaboration

Not applicable

Financial Implications

Costs associated with Council's Audit and Risk Committee are within the 2025-26 operational budget allocation.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Nil

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

2025-2029 Council Plan

Leadership - A trusted and capable Council that leads with integrity and responsibility

12. Make transparent and evidence-based decisions

13. Demonstrate sound financial and asset management

Risk Implications

An Audit and Risk Committee is required under the *Local Government Act 2020* so having a properly functioning or constituted committee ensures Council meets its legislative obligations and is well placed to mitigate risk noting the Committee's responsibilities. These include monitoring compliance with Council policies and procedures, Council's financials and performance, risk management and fraud prevention systems and controls, and overseeing internal and external audit functions.

Conclusion

The Audit and Risk Committee is a legislated requirement under the *Local Government Act 2020*. Other obligations are placed on the Committee by the Audit and Risk Committee Charter. This report meets our obligations under the Act and the Charter and is provided for the information of Council.

9.2 COMMUNITY GRANTS POLICY REVIEW

Director:	Kim Hargreaves
Directorate:	Corporate Services
File Number:	F20/A01/000003

Officer Conflict of Interest

Officer disclosure in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 130:

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

Defined as confidential information in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 3(1):

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Updated Community Grants Policy (**Appendix 9.2A**)

Purpose

To provide Council with an amended Community Grants Policy for adoption and confirm the 2026–27 budget allocation for the Community Grants Program.

Summary

- A review of the Community Grants Policy is undertaken annually, with the latest review focused on aligning with best practice, the governance principles of the *Local Government Act 2020*, and recommendations from the VAGO report on Fraud Control Over Local Government Grants (2022).
- This year’s review addressed the need to include priorities from the new 2025–2029 Council Plan, changes to grant streams based on feedback, and clarification of responsibilities for maintaining, upgrading, or renewing Council-owned or managed buildings.
- The review resulted in a significant rewrite of the Community Grants Policy, introducing clearer principles for equitable and transparent funding, updated eligibility criteria, streamlined application and assessment processes, and revised timelines.
- The proposed budget to support the delivery of the Community Grants program in line with this updated policy is also presented for approval with a total of \$235,000 requested (\$231,684 in 2025-2026).

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Adopt the updated Community Grants Policy.
2. Allocate \$235,000 for the Community Grants Program as part of the 2026–27 budget to fund the following streams:
 - a. Community Grants
 - b. Community Event Grants
 - c. Youth Grants
 - d. Urgent Need Grants.

REPORT

Background

The Community Grants Policy establishes the framework for the delivering Council's annual Community Grants Program. It defines funding priorities, application processes, eligibility and assessment criteria, timelines, and reporting obligations. To support community groups in preparing applications, detailed guidelines and application forms are developed in alignment with this policy.

Discussion

The Community Grants Policy is reviewed and updated annually as part of the budget development process. This year's comprehensive review focused on aligning the policy with best practice, the overarching governance principles to support the intention of the *Local Government Act 2020*, and the recommendations from the Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO) report on Fraud Control Over Local Government Grants. This review also ensured alignment with Council's key strategic documents, including the Council Plan 2025–2029 adopted in October 2025. Consequently, there has been a significant rewrite of the Community Grants Policy, reinforcing Council's commitment to continuous improvement, transparency, and robust governance.

A summary of the proposed changes to the policy are outlined below:

- Inclusion of the objectives of the new Council Plan (section 1)*
- specifically, Liveability, Sustainability and Accessibility
- Inclusion of new Principles for the Community Grants Program (section 4)*
A set of clear principles guiding the allocation of funding through an equitable and transparent process.
- Funding priorities (section 4.1)*
Inclusion of a statement that the Community Grants program is allocated as part of Council's annual budget process and that the amount allocated to each funding stream each year is determined by Council.
- Eligibility (section 4.2)*
Eligibility section simplified for clarity, including details of the types of projects that are not eligible for Community Grant funding.

A key change to this section is that projects that involve building works to upgrade or renew Council owned or managed buildings, including fixture and external landscaping works will no longer be eligible for funding through the community grants program. Projects of this nature are the responsibility of Council and should be considered for inclusion in Council's operational budget in accordance with the relevant maintenance schedule.
- Application Process (section 4.4)*
Inclusion of reference to Council's use of the SmartyGrants on-line platform.
- Assessment Process*
Changes to the grant streams' assessment panels and the authority to award grants are designed to strengthen governance and reduce the risk of fraud and corruption. Officers responsible for assessing applications will be appointed by the Chief Executive Officer, or Directors in relation to the Youth Grant stream, and all applications will be evaluated against a predetermined set of criteria. The Chief Executive Officer and Directors will award grant applications in line with their respective financial delegations. These changes reflect best practice and reflect implementation of a key recommendation

from the 2022 VAGO Fraud Control Over Local Government Grants Report, which advises that Councillors should not assess or make recommendations on grant applications. A list of grant allocations will be provided to Council for information only with funds allocated within the allocated budget and in accordance with the established evaluation criteria.

7. Conflict of interest

Inclusion of specific details outlining how conflicts of interest are managed and recorded throughout the assessment process.

8. Timelines for Community Events Grants (section 4.8)

Over the past two funding years, all event funding has been allocated in the first nominal funding round (May) each year, with no funds remaining to offer a second funding round in November. It is therefore recommended that there is just funding round for community events grants offered in March each year to provide early notification for events (particularly those scheduled early in the upcoming financial year). This change addresses community feedback that early notification is vital for those events held early in the financial year, so that the applicants event budget can be confirmed.

9. Grant variations (section 4.10)

Inclusion of a section specifically dealing with requests for changes to project scope or delivery timelines. These will be approved by the Chief Executive Officer for all funding streams.

10. Grant Reporting (section 4.11)

To note that all Grant Reporting is now completed using the on-line SmartyGrants platform.

Options to Consider

1. Council adopt the updated policy to support the administration of the grants program for the 2026-2027 year, including the adoption of the proposed budget.

(Recommended) noting the changes are designed to align with current best practice in local government grant administration and implement key recommendations from the VAGO Fraud Control Over Local Government Grants Report and seek to improve transparency, accountability, and integrity throughout the process, reinforcing Council's commitment to robust governance).

2. Council chose not to adopt the updated policy
3. Council confirm the budget allocation for the program **(Recommended)**
4. Council determine an alternate figure for the budget allocation

Sustainability Implications

Nil

Community Engagement

Community education sessions will again be provided to coincide with the annual opening round of the Community Development Grants Stream. There will also be communication across all available media platforms around the Community Development Grants programs.

The guidelines and application forms will also be updated to reflect these proposed changes to the Policy upon adoption and will form part of the community education undertaken.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The proposed changes demonstrate a clear commitment to continuous improvement and align with recognised best practice in local government grant administration. By clarifying roles, strengthening

assessment processes, and formalising authority to award grants, the program enhances transparency, accountability, and integrity.

Collaboration

The changes have been developed through collaboration within the organisation and feedback from community groups. This approach ensures the revised process reflects a whole-of Council perspective and aligns with best practice principles for governance and grant administration.

Financial Implications

The financial allocation proposed for adoption as part of the recommendation will be included in the 2026-2027 budget and is recommended as part of the budget development process. There are no financial implications relating to the recommended changes to the Community Grants Policy beyond the budget allocation.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Not applicable

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

- 2025-2029 Council Plan (including the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan)
- Disability Access and Inclusion Plan
- Reconciliation Action Plan
- Youth Strategy
- Age-Friendly Plan

Risk Implications

The ongoing review of the policy and associated processes by which community grant funds are allocated ensures Council can address any issues identified in a timely manner. This improves both the administration and delivery of the community grants program thereby further reducing any risks associated with the funding allocated.

The changes proposed to the policy also improve governance by reducing conflicts of interest and mitigating the risk of fraud or corruption; they also ensure consistent, criteria-based decision-making, to ensure Council deliver an objective, equitable and defensible process that builds community trust.

Conclusion

The annual review of the Community Grants Policy has been completed with changes made to improve alignment with recognised best practice in local government grant administration, embed the overarching and supporting governance principles of the *Local Government Act 2020*, and incorporate VAGO recommendations. Combined with integration of Council's strategic priorities, these changes deliver a more transparent and accountable framework, reinforcing Council's commitment to continuous improvement and robust governance. The revised Policy incorporating those changes is now presented to Council for adoption along with the recommended budget allocation for the 2026-2027 budget.

9.3 RISK APPETITE STATEMENT

Director:	Kim Hargreaves
Directorate:	Director Corporate Services
File Number:	F06/A01/000001

Officer Conflict of Interest

Officer disclosure in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 130:

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

Defined as confidential information in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 3(1):

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Risk Appetite Statement – updated (**Appendix 9.3A**)

Purpose

To seek adoption of the updated Risk Appetite Statement, which has been aligned with the 2025–2029 Council Plan themes and commitments, and strengthens Council’s governance and enterprise risk management framework.

Summary

- Council recently adopted the Council Plan 2025-2029, setting strategic priorities under four themes: Liveability, Sustainability, Accessibility, and Leadership.
- Noting the adoption of the new Council Plan, a comprehensive review of HRCC’s Risk Appetite Statement was undertaken to align the document with the 2025–29 Council Plan themes.
- The proposed Risk Appetite Statement was benchmarked against several Victorian councils and developed in accordance with ISO 31000 principles, ensuring consistency with sector standards and adherence to best practice.
- The document provides a clear framework for decision-making, setting defined risk appetite levels across strategic themes and commitments to guide governance and operational activities.
- The proposed Risk Appetite Statement was presented to Council’s Audit and Risk Committee in December 2025 with the Committee endorsing the statement and recommending the Statement to Council for consideration.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Adopt the updated Risk Appetite Statement.

REPORT

Background

The *Local Government Act 2020* (s54) requires the Audit and Risk Committee to monitor and provide advice on risk management systems and controls. The ongoing review and improvement of risk management documentation provides a means by which the Committee can monitor and provide such advice.

One of the key documents within the broader suite of risk management documentation and practices is the Risk Appetite Statement. A Risk Appetite Statement is a document that sets out the level of risk the Council is willing to accept in pursuit of its objectives and provides clear boundaries for decision-making and ensures risks are managed consistently and transparently. Having a defined risk appetite therefore supports good governance and compliance, aligns decisions with community expectations, and reduces surprised by setting agreed limits.

The development of the current Statement was part of a broader enhancement of Council's risk management practices. It was developed as a standalone document in the previous review of the Risk Management Framework and Policy by the Audit and Risk Committee in December 2023. The review of the Framework and Policy at that time confirmed the presented documentation addressed audit recommendations that had been identified previously. During this review process, the RAS evolved into a standalone document, having previously been incorporated within the Risk Management Framework.

Final drafts of the Risk Management Policy and Framework were presented to the Audit and Risk Committee in March 2024, along with the standalone Risk Appetite Statement, with the Committee endorsing both documents and recommending their approval by Council. Subsequently, Council formally approved the documents at the April 2024 meeting.

Noting the development of the Council Plan 2025-2029, it was determined to defer the review of the Statement until such time as the plan was formally adopted. With the Plan formally adopted by Council at their October 2025 meeting, the RAS underwent significant review.

Discussion

The updated Risk Appetite Statement has been developed against the four key themes of the Council Plan: Liveability, Sustainability, Accessibility, and Leadership. By assessing risk appetite against these themes, Council ensures that its approach to risk management supports the achievement of strategic objectives while maintaining compliance and accountability.

To ensure the Statement is consistent with sector standards, the review process incorporated best practice principles and guidance from ISO 31000, an internationally recognised framework that provides principles, structures, and processes for systematically managing risk. It's applicable to any organisation—including local councils—to integrate risk awareness into everyday governance and decision-making. Benchmarking against several Victorian councils was also undertaken, with the comparative analysis demonstrating HRCC's proposed appetite levels were largely consistent with those adopted by other councils, thereby providing confidence in the approach taken.

Risk appetite levels

This Statement articulates the type and amount of risk HRCC is willing to accept in pursuing the outcomes set out in the Council Plan 2025–2029. It provides a clear guide for decision-making, resource allocation, and governance by setting boundaries for risk-taking across HRCC’s operations and strategic initiatives.

These levels are applied across the four strategic themes and are defined as follows:

- **Low Appetite:** Council prefers certainty and compliance so has a strong preference for avoiding risk and will only accept minimal exposure.
This level applies where statutory compliance, safety, and community well-being are paramount.
- **Moderate Appetite:** Council is willing to accept some risk where the potential benefits justify the exposure.
This level is appropriate for areas that involve innovation or service improvement but still require careful management.
- **High Appetite:** Council is prepared to accept significant risk/uncertainty in pursuit of strategic opportunities that deliver substantial benefits to the community.
This level is reserved for initiatives that align strongly with long-term goals and where risks can be effectively mitigated.

These appetite levels provide a structured approach to decision-making, ensuring that risks are considered in the context of strategic priorities and community expectations.

Review

In accordance with Council’s Risk Management Framework, the Risk Appetite Statement will be subject to regular review to maintain its relevance and effectiveness. The statement will be reviewed and presented to the Audit and Risk Committee annually, providing oversight and assurance that it continues to reflect organisational priorities and external conditions. The review will consider audit outcomes, incident learning, and other feedback to refine tolerances and controls.

The Risk Management Framework will be formally adopted by Council once every four years, in line with the Council Plan cycle, to ensure ongoing alignment with strategic objectives. That will be provided to a future meeting for consideration by the Audit and Risk Committee before progressing to Council for consideration and adoption.

Options to Consider

1. Adopt the updated Risk Appetite Statement – recommended
2. Undertake further work to revise the updated Risk Appetite Statement – *not recommended* given the updated document is overdue as it was deferred pending adoption of the Council Plan 2025-2029

Sustainability Implications

The Risk Appetite Statement supports sustainable decision-making by embedding risk considerations that balance long-term community, environmental, and financial outcome

Community Engagement

The Risk Appetite Statement was developed against the recently adopted 2025-2029 Council Plan which saw over 400 people participate in the development of the documents through survey responses (n=283), workshop participation (n=102), stakeholder meetings (n=21) or individual submissions (n=2). By aligning the Risk Appetite Statement to the Council Plan we can enhance transparency, build trust, and demonstrate the risk Council is prepared to take reflects the needs and priorities of our residents.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The review of the current Risk Appetite Statement to inform the development of the updated document presented for consideration reflects continuous improvement noting the nature of the review undertaken.

Collaboration

The review of the proposed Risk Appetite Statement involved extensive collaboration to ensure best practice. The statement was benchmarked against those of other councils, aligned with best practice principles, and workshopped with Council's leadership team. The revised Risk Appetite Statement was then presented to Council's Audit and Risk Committee which recommended that the statement proceed to Council for consideration.

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications associated with the adoption of the Statement, however, Council risks inconsistent decision-making that may lead to uncontrolled financial exposure, inefficient resource allocation, and missed opportunities for strategic investment without an effective Risk Appetite Statement.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

ISO 31000: Risk Management — Guidelines

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

2025-2029 Council Plan – all aspects

Risk Implications

An effective Risk Appetite Statement provides clear direction for decision-making, ensuring that risk-taking is aligned with Council's strategic objectives while safeguarding compliance, community trust, and organisational resilience. It also defines the thresholds at which Council is prepared to tolerate risk within each strategic theme.

Conclusion

The updated Risk Appetite Statement has been developed through a structured, evidence-based review process. It has been designed to align with and reflect the strategic themes of the 2025-2029 Council Plan, providing a foundation for informed decision-making and accountability in delivering Council's strategic intent under the themes of Liveability, Sustainability, Accessibility, and Leadership. This approach establishes a clear framework for managing uncertainty while enabling innovation and progress in service delivery, ensuring that community expectations, statutory obligations, and best practice standards are consistently met.

9.4 S5 INSTRUMENT OF DELEGATION UPDATE - INCREASE TO FINANCIAL DELEGATION AND APPROVAL OF NAMING PROPOSALS (ROADS, FEATURES AND LOCALITIES)

Director:	Kim Hargreaves
Directorate:	Corporate Services
File Number:	F27/A15/000001

Officer Conflict of Interest

Officer disclosure in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 130:

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

Defined as confidential information in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 3(1):

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Extract of the minutes of the 24 March 2025 meeting for the S5 Instrument of Delegation update (Appendix 9.4A)

Purpose

To seek Council approval to revise the *S5 Instrument of Delegation* to amend the CEO's financial delegation and delegate authority to undertake responsibilities as a naming authority in accordance with the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998* and the *Naming Rules for Places in Victoria*.

Summary

- The *S5 Instrument of Delegation, Council to Chief Executive Officer* enables Council to delegate powers to its CEO under section 11(1)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.
- This also includes the power to approve naming, renaming and boundary change proposals for roads, features and localities to the CEO in accordance with the *Naming Rules for Places in Victoria (2022)*
- Delegating this power would streamline routine naming processes, improve timeliness and efficiency while still retaining Council oversight noting the conditions placed on the delegation:
 - proposals must comply with the Naming Rules,
 - contentious or non-compliant proposals must be referred to Council, and
 - the CEO must provide quarterly reporting.
- A proposed increase to the CEO's financial delegation is also proposed.
- An amendment to the S5 Instrument of Delegation is required to implement the delegation.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Delegates to the CEO, under section 11(1)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, the authority to approve naming, renaming and boundary change proposals for roads, features and localities within the municipality, and to submit such proposals to the Registrar of Geographic Names in accordance with Section 5 of the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998 and the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria (2022)*.
2. Requires all such delegated decisions:
 - a. Be recorded in a Naming Register demonstrating compliance with the Naming Rules

-
- b. Be reported to Council on a quarterly basis
 - 3. Retain authority to determine proposals considered culturally or historically significant; controversial; or likely to attract substantial public interest
 - 4. Resolves to increase the financial delegation of the CEO from \$250,000 (plus GST) to \$400,000 (plus GST).
 - 5. Authorise an amendment to the S5 Instrument of Delegation – Council to Chief Executive Officer, to give effect to this delegation and the associated conditions, and the increase in financial delegation proposed.
 - 6. Notes that the delegation will be recorded on Council’s public Register of Delegations and reviewed in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

REPORT

Background

An instrument of delegation is a written document that specifies what powers and functions are delegations and to what positions within Council. Delegations empower employees with the authority to make binding decisions on behalf of Council. The S5 Instrument of Delegation is the document that explains what decisions the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) can make on behalf of Council.

Council reviewed and adopted the S5 Instrument of Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer on 24 March 2025 with an administrative change to replace the term 'fire services property levy' with 'emergency services and volunteers funding levy' adopted on 22 September 2025. This report proposes a change to the instrument to increase the CEO's financial delegation following a similar submission as part of the adoption of the instrument in March 2025. The rationale for that proposal is provided in the discussion section. The additional consideration is to delegate responsibility to the CEO in relation to naming, renaming and boundary change proposals for roads, features and localities within the municipality noting Victorian councils are primary naming authorities for most local roads, features and localities.

Geographic Names Victoria administers the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998* and oversees compliance with that act. The Naming Rules are the statutory guidelines provided for under Section 5 of the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998* and are therefore mandatory for all naming authorities including Horsham Rural City Council.

The [Naming Rules](#) set out processes and criteria for naming, renaming, or altering boundaries of roads, features, and localities. They ensure compliance with principles such as:

- Public safety and emergency response
- Cultural heritage and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander names
- Avoidance of duplication and confusion
- Community consultation and transparency

As with other councils, Horsham Rural City Council is a naming authority and is therefore responsible for submitting naming proposals that comply with the Naming Rules to the Registrar who will determine whether to register or amend names in [VICNAMES](#) - a statewide register that enables users to search for all official place names in Victoria. It holds more than 200,000 road and 45,000 place names including:

- geographic features, such as mountains and rivers
- bounded localities, such as suburbs, towns, cities
- regions and physical infrastructure, such as roads, reserves and schools

At HRCC, individuals who wish to add a new name to the street naming list must apply, with substantiating information to support the request, to Council for approval. From there the application is reviewed against the *Naming Rules* and Council's *Road, Feature and Locality Naming Policy*. This policy provides a system that ensures roads, features and localities within the municipality are appropriately named and recorded in a consistent manner and in accordance with the Naming Rules. Once assessed a report is then prepared for consideration by Council which can delay routine decisions and increase administrative burden.

Discussion

Increase to financial delegation

A proposal to increase the financial delegation of the CEO from \$250,000 (plus GST) to \$500,000 (plus GST) was made to Council in March 2025. The rationale for the increase was outlined in the report

presented to that meeting (the minutes of that meeting, including the report provided, are available online at <https://www.hrcc.vic.gov.au/Our-Council/Inside-Council/Council-Minutes-and-Agendas> and provided as the Appendix to this report). At the time Council decided to retain the current financial delegation.

Councillors did indicate at the meeting they would consider a future proposal to increase the financial delegation so it is raised again noting the request for delegation regarding place naming. Circumstances have also changed since the original recommendation to increase the financial delegation with a substantive CEO, Gail Gatt, being appointed in May 2025. The proposal remains informed by the review of financial delegations undertaken at that time and outlined in the report referred to above.

In this instance the proposal is to increase the financial delegation of the CEO from \$250,000 (plus GST) to \$400,000 (plus GST i.e. \$440,000). While more conservative than the original proposal, the benefit of providing the CEO with a higher financial approval limit remains – including ensuring routine Council activity can be processed more quickly and enables Councillors to focus on major strategic decisions rather than operational approvals.

It is recommended that Council adopt the recommendation to increase the financial delegation for the reasons outlined this and the previous report.

Delegation in relation to place naming

The *Local Government Act 2020* permits Council to delegate “any power, duty or function” to the CEO under that or any other Act (except for those specifically listed in s11(2)) by instrument of delegation. Place-naming approvals fall within the delegable powers, so it is proposed to delegate these powers to streamline routine naming matters.

Specifically, it is proposed that Council delegate authority to the CEO to:

- Receive, assess, and approve naming proposals for roads, features, and localities within the municipality;
- Ensure compliance with:
 - Section 5 of the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998*; and
 - The Victorian Naming Rules (statutory guidelines).

Scope of the Delegation

The delegation would cover:

- Naming/renaming of roads (public/private), features (parks, reserves, bridges, waterways), and localities (including boundary changes) where Council is the responsible naming authority; proposals prepared and approved in accordance with the Naming Rules and submitted to the Registrar for determination in VICNAMES.

Conditions of Delegation

Council’s oversight will be retained through the following conditions:

1. All decisions must be documented in the Naming Register, demonstrating compliance with the Naming Rules.
2. A quarterly report summarising delegated decisions must be presented to Council
3. Proposals deemed:
 - Culturally or historically significant,
 - Controversial, or

- Likely to attract substantial public interest will be referred to Council for determination.

The above examples may include:

- Proposals with significant contention after consultation (e.g. unique)
- Proposals that depart from Naming Rules principles (e.g. duplication risks, commemorative naming not meeting criteria)
- Strategic or high-profile proposals (e.g. municipal-wide locality changes).

Why delegate now?

- **Efficiency:** Naming proposals arise frequently (e.g., subdivisions, park assets, wayfinding) and benefit from prompt decisions so this approach would support the faster processing of routine naming proposals.
- **Compliance:** The CEO can ensure proposals adhere to statutory requirements under the Act and Naming Rules principles, consultation steps, and documentation before submission to the Registrar.
- **Transparency:** The quarterly reporting requirement will clearly articulate how the delegation has been exercised in accordance with the legislative provisions.
- **Community Engagement:** Significant proposals remain subject to Council oversight as per the conditions placed on the delegation.

Next Steps

If the recommendation is approved, the next steps to be undertaken are:

1. Update the S5 Instrument of Delegation – Council to CEO to amend the financial delegation and include naming approvals and conditions.
2. Publish the updated instrument on the register on Council's website.
3. Implement a quarterly reporting template for naming decisions made under delegation.

Options to Consider

1. Council adopt the recommendation and increase the financial delegation of the CEO from \$250,000 plus GST (\$275,000) to \$400,000 plus GST (\$440,000) – recommended
2. Approve delegation (recommended) with conditions and reporting as proposed - recommended.
3. Retain financial delegation at current level - not recommended for reasons outlined in the report.
4. Retain place-naming decisions at Council meeting level - not recommended for reasons outlined in the report.

Sustainability Implications

Nil

Community Engagement

Section 11(8) of the Act requires that Councils must keep a register of delegations made to members of a delegated committee or the CEO. This register must be made available for public inspection and is accessible via Council's website for that purpose. The updated instrument will be added to the register as per the Council resolution.

Also, the Naming Rules set out standardised consultation requirements (public notices, feedback periods, stakeholder engagement including Traditional Owners and emergency services). Under delegation, the CEO must ensure these requirements are met for each proposal, with outcomes documented for the Registrar.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The proposed increase to financial delegation and delegation regarding place naming represents continuous improvement by improving efficiency and timeliness of the process for routine requests while maintaining Council's oversight for more complex matters.

Collaboration

Advice was sought from

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with the increase in financial delegation to the CEO as expenditure must be in accordance with relevant budget and other considerations. The administration costs of road naming responsibilities as per the legislation is within existing financial resources noting the proposed revision may reduce some of the cost associated with routine matters noting there are efficiencies to be gained through the recommended revised process.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

- *Naming Rules for Places in Victoria – Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities 2022* are mandatory for naming authorities and outline the requirements for proposals, including community consultation, Traditional Owner engagement, documentation, and submission to the Registrar.

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

- S5 Council-to-CEO Instrument of Delegation - commonly used to operationalise such decision-making, with public registers available for transparency.
- HRCC Public register of delegations as per requirements of s11(8) of the *Local Government Act 2020*
- 2025-2029 Council Plan
- Horsham Rural City Council *Road, Feature and Locality Naming Policy*

Risk Implications

Ensuring that instruments of delegation remain current is essential to empower staff appropriately and maintain legislative compliance for Horsham Rural City Council. The proposed update is intended to manage risk and improve operational efficiency noting there are risks to Council if adopted processes fail to meet the requirements of respective legislation. In relation to naming places, HRCC's processes meet these requirements however the proposed recommendation will seek to improve efficiency in processing timeframes for routine applications thereby reducing risks to Council.

Conclusion

Under section 11(1)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council can delegate "any power, duty or function" to the CEO under that or any other Act (except for those specifically listed in s11(2)) by instrument of delegation. Place-naming approvals fall within the delegable powers, so it is proposed to delegate these powers to streamline routine naming matters. It is therefore recommended that this authority be delegated to improve efficiency and timeliness for routine naming matters while maintaining Council oversight for significant or sensitive proposals as per the conditions placed on the delegation.

The increase to financial delegation will also improve efficiency by ensuring routine Council activity can be processed more quickly while enabling Councillors to focus on major strategic decisions rather than operational approvals. It is therefore also recommended for endorsement by Council.

9.5 S6A DELEGATIONS MINI UPDATE - *PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT ACT 1987*

Director:	Kim Hargreaves
Directorate:	Corporate Services
File Number:	F19/A02/000001

Officer Conflict of Interest

Officer disclosure in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 130:

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

Defined as confidential information in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 3(1):

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

S6A Instrument of Delegation to members of Council staff (Planning and Environment Act 1987) (**Appendix 9.5A**)

S6 Instrument of Delegation to members of Council staff (Adopted by Council 22 Sept 2025) (**Appendix 9.5B**)

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to outline recent legislative changes to the *Planning & Environment Act 1987* arising from the *Consumer and Planning Legislation Amendment (Housing Statement Reform) Act 2025*, and to present the corresponding updates required for Council's S6A Instrument of Delegation to Members of Council Staff.

Summary

- Legislative amendments to the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* commenced on 25 November 2025, triggering updates to Council's S6A Instrument of Delegation
- This S6A Instrument is complementary to the S6 Instrument of Delegation adopted by Council on 22 September 2025.
- The amendments include 5 repealed, 3 amended and 13 new provisions, all affecting existing delegations and requiring updated officer assignments
- Key changes include a new mechanism for preparing planning scheme amendments and expanded Ministerial powers under Division 1AA of Part 3
- Additional Council obligations now apply, including record keeping for levy exemption certificates and requirements relating to submissions and material detriment guidelines.

Recommendation

That Council, in the exercise of the powers conferred by the legislation referred to in the attached instrument of delegation, resolves that –

1. There be delegated to the members of Council staff holding, acting in, or performing the duties of the offices or positions referred to in the attached *S6A Instrument of Delegation to Members of Council Staff (Planning and Environment Act 1987)* the powers, duties and functions set out in that instrument, subject to the conditions and limitations specified in that instrument.
2. That the S6A Instrument comes into force immediately upon this resolution being made and is to be signed by the Chief Executive Officer.

-
3. That the *S6A Instrument of Delegation to Members of Council Staff (Planning and Environment Act 1987)*, is adopted as a complementary instrument to the existing *S6 Instrument of Delegation to Members of Council Staff* as adopted by Council on 22 September 2025, and operates solely to update and replace those specific provisions marked as 'amended' or 'repealed' listed within S6A (Appendix 9.1A).
 4. On the coming into force of the *S6A Instrument of Delegation to Members of Council Staff (Planning and Environment Act 1987)*, only those provisions marked as 'amended' or 'repealed' within S6A are revoked from the S6 Instrument of Delegation (Appendix 9.1B) previously adopted by Council on 22 September 2025. All other delegations conferred under the existing S6 Instrument continue unchanged.
 5. The duties and functions set out in the S6A Instrument must be performed, and the powers set out in the instrument must be executed, in accordance with any guidelines or policies of Council that it may from time to time adopt.

REPORT

Background

The recent amendments to the *Planning & Environment Act 1987*—introduced through the *Consumer and Planning Legislation Amendment (Housing Statement Reform) Act 2025* commenced on 25 November 2025. This amendment has necessitated updates to Council’s delegation framework. Through Council’s subscription to Maddocks Delegations and Authorisations Service (a legal compliance tool widely used by Victorian local councils to manage their legal instruments of delegation), Council has been provided a new S6A Instrument of Delegation to Members of Council Staff (*Planning & Environment Act 1987*), specifically reflecting and incorporating these legislative reforms. This update is complementary to the S6 Instrument of Delegation adopted by Council on 22 September 2025.

These updates ensure Horsham Rural City Council maintains compliance with current legislative obligations, appropriately empowers staff, and aligns with best-practice governance through the Maddocks Lawyers delegation service.

Discussion

This S6A Instrument is a stand-alone, one-off update, as these changes will be incorporated into the next Delegation Services update to the S6 Instrument of Delegation to Members of Council Staff following the Maddocks First Biannual 2026 legislative amendments.

Amendments made as part of the updated S6A Instrument (**Appendix 9.1A**):

- **5 provisions have been repealed**, impacting the Director Communities & Place, Planning & Development Lead, and the Team Leader Statutory Planning.
 - Some provisions of the Act which previously set out delegable powers and functions of Council, namely in ss8A and 8B, have been repealed. Those powers have largely been replaced by the new powers in Division 1AA of Part 3.
- **13 new provisions have been introduced**, all of which require allocation to appropriate delegates.
 - The amendments to the Act include a revised mechanism regarding preparing amendments to the planning scheme, which will generally require authorisation from the Minister as set out in the new Division 1AA of Part 3 (ss16A – 16N).
 - Other changes relevant to Councils relate to the abandoning of amendments, and the ability of the Minister to continue with the amendment despite the abandonment.

- **Other Key amendments**

While this mini update includes the changes required for Council’s instruments, there are several other amendments to the Act which Council should note. These include:

- levy exemption certificates (s96UB), which Council is required to keep a record of (s96Z);
- duty not to refer frivolous, vexatious, or wholly irrelevant submissions to the panel (s23(6)); and
- the Minister being able to issue guidelines on material detriment (s52A), which Council will be required to consider (ss52(1D), 57B(2A), 96C(1A)).

Assigning the new provisions to the Director Communities and Place, and the Planning & Development Lead ensures decision-making authority sits with appropriately senior and professionally accountable officers who have the requisite expertise and organisational oversight. This approach supports consistency, risk-based decision-making and alignment with Council policy objectives, while providing clear governance, accountability and escalation pathways for the exercise of newly introduced or amended statutory powers.

Options to Consider

1. Adopt the new S6A Instrument of Delegation (*Planning & Environment Act 1987*);
Recommended: *Adopting the standalone S6A Instrument ensures Council's delegation framework is fully aligned with the legislative reforms that commenced on 25 November 2025. This approach provides officers with clear, lawful authority to exercise the updated and newly created powers under the Planning & Environment Act 1987, reducing operational risk and ensuring compliance. It also supports continuity of service delivery by avoiding ambiguity regarding which officers may act under the amended provisions.*
2. Wait to adopt until these updates are incorporated into the next S6 update, while informing affected officers of the repealed and amended provisions in the interim.
Not recommended: *Delaying adoption introduces unnecessary compliance and operational risks, as officers would be required to rely on outdated instruments while managing amended or repealed provisions. Interim communication does not provide lawful authority to exercise the updated powers, creating potential uncertainty, inconsistent decision-making, and increased likelihood of administrative error. Deferring adoption may also impact statutory timeframes and workflow efficiency within the planning function.*

Sustainability Implications

Nil

Community Engagement

The delegations have been updated in alignment with the Maddocks Delegations and Authorisations Service and reviewed through consultation with the relevant Council officers.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Council's subscription to the Maddocks Delegations and Authorisations Service reflects our commitment to continuous improvement, offering an efficient means of ensuring our delegations are consistently updated to reflect legislative and regulatory developments.

Collaboration

Targeted consultation with the relevant internal departments, informed by the Maddocks Delegations and Authorisations Service, ensures appropriate officers are designated to exercise the powers conferred.

Financial Implications

The financial impact of the review of delegations is limited to staff time, the cost of Maddocks Lawyers delegation service which includes access to all materials relating to delegations and authorisations and biannual updates and Council's subscription to the RelianSys Delegations+ system. These costs are budgeted within the respective adopted budgets. No additional resourcing is required to give effect to these functions.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Nil

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

2025-2029 Council Plan - Leadership

12 - Make transparent and evidence-based decisions

Risk Implications

The timely updating of instruments of delegation is essential to support staff to undertake their role and to maintain Horsham Rural City Council's compliance with legislative frameworks.

Conclusion

The legislative amendments introduced in November 2025 necessitate prompt updates to Council's S6A Instrument of Delegation. Adoption of the revised instrument as an interim standalone document will provide certainty for officers exercising statutory powers and reinforce Council's commitment to robust governance practices. The document is provided for Council to exercise the powers conferred by the legislation to relevant members of staff holding, acting in, or performing the duties of the offices or positions referred to in the instrument.

9.6 KERBSIDE GLASS COLLECTION FREQUENCY REVIEW

Director:	John Martin
Directorate:	Infrastructure
File Number:	F29/A11/000003

Officer Conflict of Interest

Officer disclosure in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 130:

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

Defined as confidential information in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* – Section 3(1):

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Survey Comments by Theme (**Appendix 9.6A**)

Purpose

To provide Council with Community Survey results from the Kerbside Glass Collection Frequency survey and propose a reduced frequency of collection of the bins.

Summary

- Council introduced a 4-weekly glass collection service in April 2023. The current glass kerbside collection frequency is once every four weeks.
- The current kerbside glass service was introduced along with a Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) service to encourage the diversion of waste from landfill.
- The kerbside glass collection service is only utilised by approximately 18% of serviced households on average each collection cycle.
- A community survey was conducted online from 3 November 2025 to 1 December 2025.
- An outcome of the survey was that 67% of respondents were in favour of a change in frequency to every 8 weeks.
- Additional feedback was received regarding weekly garbage collection, reduction in rates and the weight of bins as well as general suggestions for improvements
- It is proposed that the glass collection frequency be reduced to once every eight weeks, with the option of an additional 120 L glass bin for heavy users, at no extra charge.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Continue the kerbside glass collection at a frequency of once every eight weeks
2. Provide the option of an additional 120 L glass bin to households, upon request, at no additional charge
3. Amend Council's Kerbside Waste Collection Policy and Solid Waste Code to accommodate this change in frequency and additional service option

REPORT

Background

Prior to 2023, Council's kerbside waste collection service included only the collection of general garbage and commingled recycling. Plans for changes to this service began around 2017 with increasing demand for a kerbside green waste service, however due to the availability of an affordable green waste processor, plans stalled.

In 2020, the State Government introduced the Recycling Victoria 2020 Policy, which flagged the introduction of a 4-bin kerbside collection service that fostered previous discussions about the introduction of a green waste collection service.

At the time, according to the 2019-20 Sustainability Victoria Local Government Waste Services Report, Horsham was one of only 3 councils in Victoria that still had a 240 L garbage bin with a weekly collection service. All other councils in the state had introduced smaller bins or a fortnightly collection service, in some cases both. Horsham was also ranked 7th lowest in the state for diversion of recyclables from landfill, at a very low 20.7%.

With an emphasis on improving the diversion of recyclable wastes from landfill and increasing community demand for a green waste bin, Council began preparations for changes to the bin service. The result of the planning was the introduction of a 4-bin service in April 2023.

Over time, glass in the commingled recycling stream was becoming less valuable and causing more issues to material recycling processors who were requesting glass free commingled wastes, charging additional surcharges if material was received with glass contamination.

Since the introduction of the 4-bin system, Horsham has seen the diversion rate of recyclable materials increase to 45%, a notable achievement.

The glass collection service has not been consistently used by residential households at a high level, with an initial presentation rate of 24% in 2023-24 and dropping to 18% in 2024-25. The introduction of the Container Deposit Scheme (CDS) in November 2023 has seen the volume of glass collected through kerbside collection reduce by 22%.

With the low bin presentation rate and volume of glass received it has been determined that Council could save an estimated \$32,529 per year in operating costs by reducing the frequency of kerbside glass collection to 8-weekly collection without impacting on most individual residential households.

At its meeting in October 2025, Council resolved to conduct a community survey seeking feedback on changes to kerbside glass collection frequency to determine the community's views on this potential change in service.

Discussion

An online survey was released for comments from 3 November to 1 December 2025.

The survey was available on Council's website and was advertised on Facebook, Council's public notices, e-Newsletter and the waste app.

A total of 289 responses were received with 266 of the respondents identifying that they receive a kerbside glass collection service.

Respondents were located in the Horsham urban and rural areas, Haven, Natimuk, Jung and Pimpinio.

The overall result of this survey was that 67% (194) were fully in favour of an 8-weekly collection service, 17% (50) were partly in favour and 16% (45) were not in favour of an 8-weekly collection service.

The survey also asked questions about the individual glass waste habits of the respondents and interestingly 56% of respondents identified that they put their glass bin out every 2 months or more (i.e. less frequently).

Also, 39% of respondents identified that their glass bin was only half full when they did put it out.

The survey also provided an opportunity for respondents to provide comments on their answers. Appendix 9.6A provides a listing of all comments, sorted by key themes. The majority of comments were positive regarding the change in frequency of the glass collection service and use of the CDS service.

Feedback was received regarding the general waste collection frequency, with requests for this to be changed back to weekly collection. The collection frequency for general garbage waste was changed to fortnightly following the introduction of the 4-bin system. Fifteen respondents commented on the need for bringing back a weekly general garbage waste collection service.

As explained in the background to this report, in 2020, Horsham Rural City Council was only one of 3 Victorian councils still collecting 240 L waste bins weekly, with the remaining 76 Councils having a fortnightly collection service (or smaller bins, or both). The key reasons for seeking a return to 240 L, weekly collections are either the volume of waste or complaints about odours. Hence, there is ample evidence from across the state to demonstrate that the new service has been effective.

A key aim of the Government's circular economy policy is to avoid permanent disposal of waste material into landfill where those wastes can instead be recycled and reused for other purposes. Victoria and HRCC have adopted a policy of providing separate waste streams to encourage the community to separate recyclable wastes. It would therefore be seen as counterproductive to waste diversion to reintroduce a weekly waste collection service when trying to encourage diversion of wastes.

For those households that genuinely generate more garbage waste, Council's Solid Waste Code allows for an additional bin service upon application (for an additional fee) to meet the needs of this small number of households.

Feedback was also received regarding the waste charge applied to individual ratepayers as a result of this change in frequency.

While it has been identified that the change in glass collection frequency will save approximately \$32,529 in the operational cost of collecting the glass bins, it is not proposed that this will result in a change in the waste charge for individual ratepayers.

Council's waste charge includes a number of individual components relating to the overall waste service which includes collection, landfill disposal, transport and processing of recyclable wastes for all four waste

streams. Based on the estimated operational savings and number of services (8,031) this would equate to a saving of approximately \$4.05 per individual ratepayer receiving an urban glass bin service.

Instead, this operational efficiency is intended to offset costs associated with staff resourcing and plant replacement, including a replacement garbage truck being considered by Council separately at this meeting. Currently, Council's waste collection team are over-represented in terms of staff with excess un-taken leave, due to the challenges in filling rosters with a limited complement of staff. On occasions, some of the supervisors and staff from other teams have needed to support the waste collection operations.

Other concerns were raised by a number of respondents around the weight of full glass bins and the impact that this has on the safety of older and disabled members of our community.

Council's Solid Waste Code allows for two waste bin sizes, 120L and 240L. The standard for all glass bins is the smaller 120L, to limit the weights of these bins.

In instances where certain individuals may struggle with the weight of bins, downsizing of their bin may be a viable solution. The code allows for the downsizing of general waste and FOGO bins from 240L to 120L upon request and free of charge. However, the standard waste charge will still apply despite having a smaller bin as the collection is maintained fortnightly.

The survey also included questions about glass drop off points, as a secondary method for the disposal of glass waste. Council received a mixture of comments relating to glass drop off points and overall improvements to the glass waste service. These comments will be noted and used for future improvements when reviewing waste services across the municipality.

Options to Consider

After reviewing the feedback from the community survey, the following options should be considered:

1. Amend the glass collection frequency to once every 8 weeks with the option for an additional 120 L glass bin to households, upon request, and provided free of charge.
2. Continue to maintain a glass waste collection frequency at once every 4 weeks with only one 120 L glass bin per household.

Sustainability Implications

Halving the frequency of glass collection would reduce the amount of diesel fuel used by waste collection trucks, noting that each litre of diesel used releases approximately 2.7 kg of carbon dioxide. As a result, this would reduce approximately 8 tonnes of CO₂ emissions per year and reduce the fuel costs.

Additionally, reducing the frequency of glass collection creates an opportunity for the waste collection team to further analyse all garbage collection routes and identify other areas of efficiency, and potentially the need for relying on other operations staff to assist in the delivery of these services.

Should Council proceed with the change, an extensive media campaign will be undertaken to advise the community of the change. This will be supported by the issue of a new waste collection calendar, and an update to Council's Waste Service app.

Community Engagement

An online community survey was conducted with 289 responses being received over a 4-week period.

This survey was promoted through Council's public notices, social media and e-newsletter as well as through Council's Waste App.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Changes to the frequency of glass collection, based on collection data, will allow Council to continue to deliver this service to the community but in a more efficient manner with savings in the cost, time and CO₂ emissions.

The option for heavy use households to request an additional bin will ensure that the service is balanced for the needs of all households.

Collaboration

Not applicable

Financial Implications

The direct cost for Council to provide this collection service which includes staff time, plant costs and fuel is approximately \$65,059 per year. The proposed change will approximately halve that cost.

Resourcing the waste collection function requires consideration of periods of staff leave, illness or other operational demands and at times requires the use of staff from other Operations areas to ensure that waste collection routes are completed. This proposed change in collection frequency will assist in reducing the need to supplement resources to the Waste Team to meet operational requirements. This will also be reliant on the outcomes of some of the other review areas proposed in the overall waste review.

Council currently has an adequate supply of purple lid glass bins that can be used for additional bins when requested by residents.

If adopted, Council's formal fees and charges will be revised in relation to the charge for an extra glass bin.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Household waste and recycling services are regulated by Recycling Victoria, through regulations under the [Circular Economy \(Waste Reduction and Recycling\) Act 2021](#) (the CE Act).

The CE Act requires Councils and Alpine Resorts Victoria to provide the 4-stream waste services to households, while the [Victorian Government's Recycling Victoria Policy](#) is a 10-year policy and action plan to improve waste and recycling in Victoria.

As part of this policy, all Victorian households must transition to a four-waste stream system to support the circular economy by 2027, which consists of general rubbish, mixed recycling, food and garden organics and glass recycling.

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

Council's Kerbside Waste Collection Policy outlines what Council aims to achieve with the kerbside collection of waste. Council's Solid Waste Code defines how Council will provide kerbside collection services for waste and recycling, to meet the principles of Council's Kerbside Waste Collection Policy.

A change in collection frequency will require the update of Councils Solid Waste Code to reflect the change in service provision and to provide for the option of additional glass bins when requested.

Risk Implications

Any change to a service has the potential to create a risk to the reputation of Council. However, the majority of respondents were in favour of the change in collection frequency and many comments were received that glass collection was not required since the introduction of the CDS. It is not anticipated that this will create a reputational risk.

The decision to maintain a fortnightly garbage collection frequency, however, may be met with negative sentiments from the community. Especially with the feedback regarding public health risks from odour and vermin from a fortnightly garbage service. However, as stated earlier in this report, fortnightly garbage collection is standard across many Councils in Victoria and residents can arrange for additional bins if necessary.

Conclusion

Summary of the feedback provided in the Community Survey conducted in November 2025 has indicated that the community support a change in frequency of glass collection from 4-weekly to 8-weekly.

Additional feedback from the community regarding general waste collection, changes in the waste charge, bin sizes and accessibility has been addressed in this report.

Feedback received from this survey will be used for future improvements to the waste service as the overall waste review progresses.

9.7 RAIL FREIGHT ALLIANCE ADVOCACY – SUNSHINE CROSSOVER REMOVAL

Director:	John Martin
Directorate:	Infrastructure
File Number:	F10/A04/000001

Officer Conflict of Interest

Officer disclosure in accordance with Local Government Act 2020 – Section 130:

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

Defined as confidential information in accordance with Local Government Act 2020 – Section 3(1):

Yes No

Reason: (g) the appendix to this report includes private commercial information that has been made available to Rail Freight Alliance members.

Appendix

RFA Members Briefing (**Confidential**) (**Appendix 9.7A**)

Letter template for politicians (**Appendix 9.7B**)

Purpose

To provide Councillors with background information about an advocacy priority to ensure the ongoing efficiency of rail freight in Victoria.

Summary

- The Victorian Government is conducting major works on the metropolitan rail network, with further works to follow, including the Melbourne Airport Rail project.
- It is now understood that works around the Sunshine Super Hub are proposed to include removal of some rail crossovers that provide an interconnection between some of the freight lines servicing northern Victoria and the Port of Melbourne.
- Removal of these rail crossovers would lead to increased congestion and/or delays in travel time for rail freight to the Port of Melbourne. These would lead to increased costs for freight movement, or encourage greater utilisation of road for freight.
- The Rail Freight Alliance (RFA) is proposing that this be a matter for collective advocacy from member Councils, and is developing a campaign to plan this advocacy.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Send letters to relevant Ministers and politicians highlighting the need to ensure that the impacts of the Sunshine Rail Crossover works on freight access are suitably mitigated by alternative measures, if the works proceed.
2. Issue related media releases to highlight this concern.

REPORT

Background

Council is a member of the Rail Freight Alliance (RFA) which has a mission that includes (amongst other things):

- Advocating for increased use of rail for freight movement in Victoria
- Highlighting constraints in the rail freight network, to promote improvements

The RFA recently conducted a members-only forum (21 November 2025) to present potentially sensitive information about the removal of some key rail crossovers in the rail network, that provide connection between the northern Victorian rail network and the Port of Melbourne.

The attached Members Brief (Appendix 9.7A) provides detailed background about the Sunshine Regional Link Crossovers (SRLC), the planned works, and the likely impacts on different parts of the Victorian rail freight network.

The forum included presentations from some industry specialists, who provided significant insight into how the freight network operates with these crossovers and the problems in trying to operate the network without them. Some of the information provided by these specialists was confidential.

It appears, in this writer's view, that the Government has not made a specific plan on how rail freight would effectively operate without these crossovers, or has not had sufficient informed advice on the impacts of their removal.

There is a need for the RFA and member Councils to highlight the shortcomings of the proposed removals, although it appears that contracts may have already been awarded for the works packages that include their removal.

Discussion

Information presented at the RFA forum highlighted that while the direct impact of the proposed crossover removal would be on the northern Victorian freight lines, the effects would flow on to the interstate Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) line that links Adelaide to Melbourne, via the Wimmera Intermodal Freight Terminal (WIFT), as the changes would push more services onto that line.

Hence this is a matter that affects our region in common with many other parts of Victoria.

On this basis the RFA is proposing that there be a coordinated advocacy approach to highlight this problem to the Victorian and Australian Governments – as both are funding the planned works.

The RFA's Executive Officer, Reid Mather, has advised of the following intentions for the proposed advocacy campaign.

My recommended approach is:-

- *A letter requesting the retention of the SRLC to the Premier, Minister for Freight and Ports & the Minister for Public Transport signed by all RFA Member Mayors.*
- *A letter requesting the retention of the SRLC to the Federal Infrastructure Minister signed by all RFA Member Mayors.*

- *Individual letters to Victorian and Federal members within individual RFA Members footprint.*
- *Meeting request with relevant Ministers for RFA executive.*

RFA Members will be resourced with:-

- *Draft Notice of Motion to Council*
- *Letters to signed by all Mayors*
- *Draft Letters to be sent to MPs within your municipality.*
- *Briefing Paper.*

Some of this information is still to be provided.

Options to Consider

The RFA Executive Officer advises that there are additional works that could be undertaken to mitigate the removal of the crossovers, however, there has been no announcement from government to do so.

Sustainability Implications

The RFA Forum highlighted that rail freight is much more fuel / carbon efficient than road freight, hence provides sustainability benefits.

Community Engagement

Subject to the proposal from RFA, it is proposed that media releases would be issued in support of Council's letters to Ministers.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Nil

Collaboration

The Rail Freight Alliance is a collaboration of Victorian Municipal Councils.

Financial Implications

The RFA has not sought financial contributions to support the advocacy campaign. It is primarily a letter writing campaign, and hence there will be negligible costs.

The impact of the removal of the rail crossovers could have significant regional economic implications, including additional road maintenance and trauma costs through increased freight on road.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

The Victorian Government is proposing that it will commence preparation of a Victorian Rail Freight Plan in early 2026. The absence of such a plan contributes to the problem with planning for rail freight in the metropolitan area.

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

The Accessibility theme of the 2025-29 Council Plan includes the following commitment:

9. Improve transport networks within our community and beyond

This advocacy is necessary to ensure that the rail freight network servicing our region is not degraded.

Risk Implications

Negligible. There is a risk that this advocacy may be too late, however, that should not stop it from proceeding.

Conclusion

Information is presented for Councillors to inform advocacy to support the retention of the Sunshine rail crossovers, to enable efficient freight movement from northern and western Victoria.

9.8 WESTERN HIGHWAY – ALTERNATIVE TRUCK ROUTE PROJECT

Director:	John Martin
Directorate:	Infrastructure
File Number:	F15/A01/000001

Officer Conflict of Interest

Officer disclosure in accordance with Local Government Act 2020 – Section 130:

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Status

Defined as confidential information in accordance with Local Government Act 2020 – Section 3(1):

Yes No

Reason: Nil

Appendix

Nil

Purpose

1. To note the final report on the Horsham Alternative Truck Route project is being finalised and will shortly be released.
2. To outline the planned communication of the outcomes of the project and distribution of the project report.
3. To reiterate the next steps in Council's planning for a Horsham Bypass.

Summary

- The Horsham Urban Transport Plan identified an Alternative Truck Route of the Western Highway around Horsham as a priority project.
- Subsequently, Council and the Department of Transport and Planning jointly funded a project on the feasibility of an Alternative Truck Route.
- Specialists consultants were engaged to undertake the investigations and analysis to identify a preferred route, using a range of evaluation criteria assessed on many route options around the Horsham urban area.
- The report on the consultant's study, conducted in accordance with the objectives established by the combined Council / DTP project control group, identified a preferred option.
- In early 2025, the then recently elected Councillors received a presentation on the technical aspects of the study from the Department of Transport and Planning.
- The project did not include a community engagement process, so the study has not obtained any level of community input or feedback. The report on the consultant's study will shortly be released to the public.
- Council's further consideration during 2025 of how Council might progress the alternative truck route study highlighted the imperative of actively engaging with the community at all stages.
- This has led to the adoption at Council's December 2025 meeting of a project plan for identifying a preferred Bypass route of Horsham, through the establishment of a Community Reference Group and extensive community engagement.
- It is proposed that Council now note that the report on the Alternative Truck Route Study will soon be finalised, and make it available as one of the inputs to the Bypass Planning Project when available.

-
- It is also proposed that landholders along the alignment of the preferred route from the study be notified of the outcomes of the study, highlighting that Council has not yet formed a view on those outcomes, and that these will be considered through the Bypass Planning Project.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Note that the consultant's report on the Horsham Alternative Truck Route Feasibility Study will soon be finalised and released.
2. Confirm that Council has not yet established a position on the findings of study, and is commencing the Horsham Bypass Planning Project to effectively engage the community in forming a position on a preferred Bypass alignment.
3. When available, make the Alternative Truck Route report available to the public, in particular to landholders along the study's preferred route alignment and other relevant stakeholders and to facilitate the Horsham Bypass Planning Project.
4. Commence the process to seek representation on a Community Reference Group to support the Horsham Bypass Planning Project in accordance with the resolution at the December 2025 meeting.

REPORT

Background

The 2015 Planning Panel into a Horsham Bypass did not lead to the adoption of a route for a Bypass. One of the issues raised within the community following the Panel process was that the cost of a Bypass might be unaffordable. This issue nurtured a concept that a cheaper alternative, that may be seen as being more affordable, would be to identify a truck route that used existing roads, and which may not necessarily be at highway speed limits.

A recommendation to advance consideration of an Alternative Truck Route was included as Action 6.1.1 of the Horsham Urban Transport Plan (adopted in 2020), as follows:

Advocate to and collaborate with relevant State Government agencies and other stakeholders, including Barengi Gadjin Land Council, to determine the most appropriate route for removal from Horsham's CBD of through truck traffic from the Western, Wimmera and Henty Highways, including consideration of a possible south west link through Horsham's industrial area.

The scope for the Transport Plan included the following transport objectives that had been identified by Council at that time, to inform consideration of an alternative truck route:

- A more active and vibrant CBD and river precinct;
- Trucks which don't originate or terminate in the CBD to be removed from the CBD and river precinct;
- More active transport;
- More river crossings;
- Linking highways to economic activities;
- Preference for the use of existing road reserves for future development of the local and arterial roads.

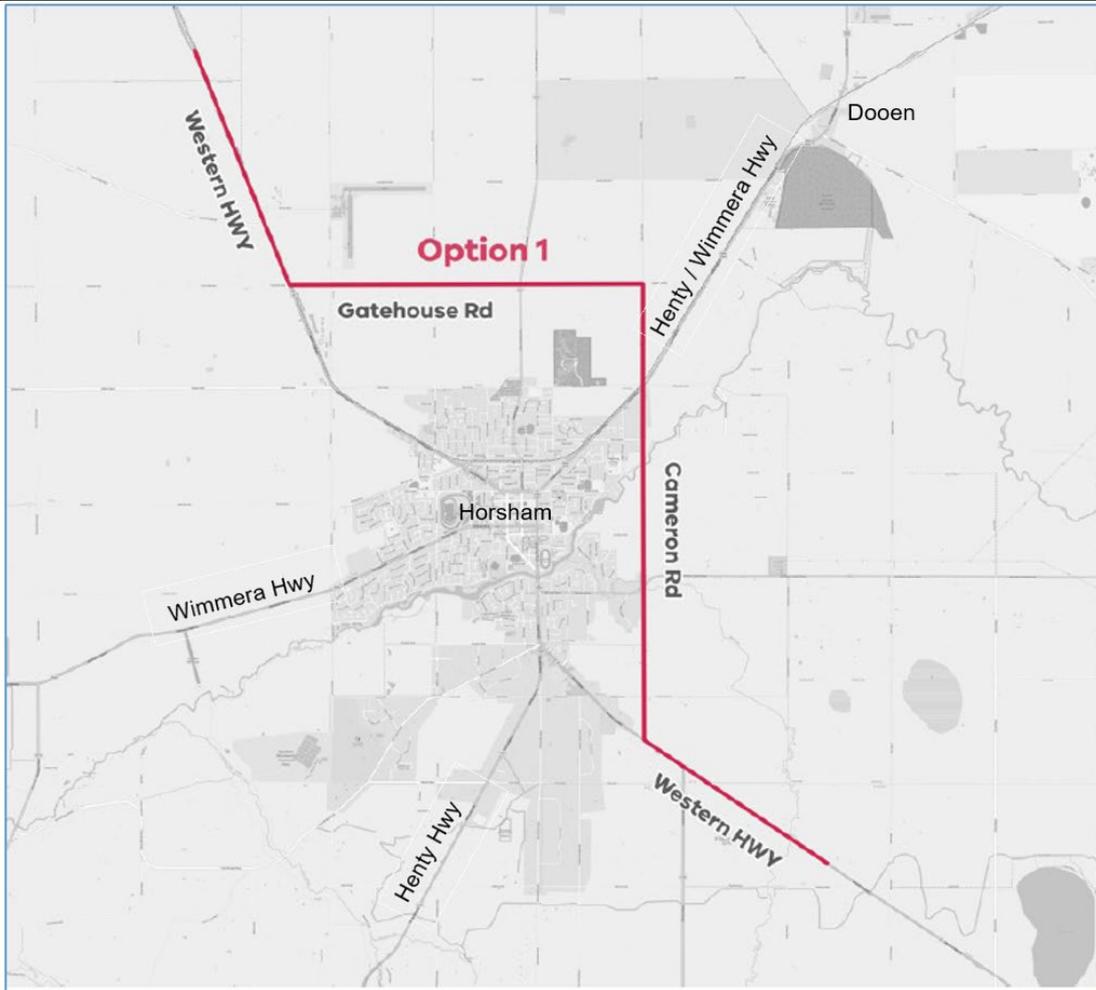
Two main areas of investigation proceeded, being:

- A cultural heritage study, to identify route alignments that would have little or no impact on sites of cultural significance.
- An engineering investigation, evaluating the costs and impacts of a range of routes, which was also informed by the cultural study.

The engineering investigation examined five routes to the north/east of Horsham and seven routes to the south/west. These were all evaluated at a high level initially, against the following criteria:

- Constraints
- Road length / structures (as an indication of cost)
- Land use integration
- Travel time benefits.

Two short-listed options were then evaluated to a higher level of detail, including consideration of more specific cost estimates, land acquisition impacts and constructability. The preferred option identified in the report was Option 1 as shown in the diagram below, which follows generally the alignments of Gatehouse Rd and Cameron Rd around the north and east of the Horsham urban area.



A presentation on technical aspects of the study was provided to Council in March 2025, from the Department of Transport and Planning.

The alternative truck route project did not include a community engagement process, so the study has not obtained any level of community input or feedback.

Discussion

After receiving the presentation on the study in March 2025, the new Council group identified that understanding the community's perspectives through a sound engagement process is imperative to make a decision on an issue as significant as a Horsham Bypass.

It is most probable that many landholders and residents along the route identified in the Alternative Truck Route study would be significantly impacted by the development of this as a truck route. But at this stage, no community input has been sought on the study.

It is not proposed that Council would establish a position on the Alternative Truck Route, or any of the previous work relating to a Horsham Bypass until the community has been effectively engaged in this process.

At its December 2025 meeting, Council resolved to establish a Community Reference Group (CRG), comprising a range of community and stakeholder representatives to provide advice to Council on this subject. The project plan included as part of the report to Council on that subject outlines the process that Council will now follow to commence the Horsham Bypass Planning Project.

The initial step in this will be seeking nominations for the Community Reference Group which is proposed to commence immediately. Nominations will be sought by expressions of interest, with Council to appoint the representatives at its March 2026 meeting. The initial meeting of the CRG is planned for April 2026.

Options to Consider

A key proposed outcome of this report is the public release of the Alternative Truck Route study report, when it becomes available, to ensure the broadest suite of information is available to the community and the Community Reference Group to advise Council in the subsequent work on the Bypass Planning Project.

Community confidence in Council's Bypass Planning Project is reliant on a transparent approach to information sharing, including release of the Alternative Truck Route report.

Sustainability Implications

Nil

Community Engagement

This report identifies that community engagement will be an essential ingredient to advance the technical work undertaken in the Alternative Truck Route study to inform Council's planning on a Bypass route alignment. The proposed community engagement plan is captured in the Project Plan for the Horsham Bypass Planning Project, as considered at the December 2025 Council meeting.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

N/A

Collaboration

Conduct of the Horsham Alternative Truck Route Feasibility Study was overseen by a project control group comprising representatives of Council and the Department of Transport and Planning.

Financial Implications

Council committed \$100,000 to the conduct of the Alternative Truck Route Feasibility Study, with the Department of Transport and Planning gaining \$150,000 of Federal Government funding to complement Council's contribution.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

The National Freight and Supply Chain Strategy 2025 identifies the Western Highway as one of the major freight corridors in Australia. It is inappropriate for this high and increasing level of freight movement to continue to pass through the Horsham urban area, given the impacts on amenity and road safety.

Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

Investigation of an alternative truck route was an action from the Horsham Urban Transport Plan 2020.

The Council Plan 2025-29 includes as one of its major initiatives the following:

9.1 Confirm a preferred route for the Horsham bypass

Risk Implications

The December 2025 report to Council on the Bypass Planning Project identified a key risk as the potential for this issue to be divisive within the community. Council has adopted a project plan with an extensive engagement process to address this risk.

Conclusion

The Horsham Alternative Truck Route Study report provides relevant background information that will help inform the community and Council on further consideration of a Bypass route for Horsham. The report is proposed to be made available to the public to facilitate future planning.

10. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Cr Brian Klowss, Mayor

Committee Representation	
Date	Description
	Nil
Other Council Activities	
18/12/25	Depot and Civic All-staff Functions
7/01/26	Natimuk Economic & Social Plan PAC
14/01/26	Mayors, CEO X MAV Fire Response & Recovery Priorities
14/01/26	Community Catchup for Fire Affected Residents - Quantong
15/01/26	Community Catchup for Fire Affected Residents - Natimuk
19/01/26	CEO RDV & HRCC – Natimuk Recovery Centre

Cr Cam McDonald

Committee Representation	
Date	Description
	Nil
Other Council Activities	
1/12/25	Council Briefing
8/12/25	Council Briefing
15/12/25	Council Meeting

Cr Dean O'Loughlin

Committee Representation	
Date	Description
	Nil
Other Council Activities	
15/12/25	Council Meeting
16/12/25	All-Staff Meeting and Christmas morning tea with Councillors
18/12/25	Depot Christmas Breakfast
14/01/26	Community Catch Ups for Fire Affected Residents - Quantong
16/01/26	Community Catch Ups for Fire Affected Residents - Natimuk
19/01/26	Council Briefing
21/01/26	Tones & I come to Horsham – Community gathering

11. URGENT BUSINESS

12. PETITIONS AND JOINT LETTERS

13. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

13.1 INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS – RECORD OF MEETINGS

- Council Briefing Meeting held on Monday 19 January 2026.

Refer to **Appendix 13.1A**

13.2 COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Nil

Refer to **Appendix 13.2A**

Recommendation

That Council receive and note agenda items:

- 13.1 Informal Meetings of Councillors – Record of Meetings
- 13.2 Council Committee Minutes.

14. NOTICE OF MOTION