

### **Draft Transcript**

Surf Coast Shire Ordinary Council Meeting  
Surf Coast Shire Civic Office  
Council Chambers  
1 Merrijig Drive, Torquay, Victorian

Tuesday, 9 December 2025 at 6pm

### **About This Document**

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CR STAPLETON: Good evening and welcome to our December Council meeting. I'm Mayor Libby Stapleton and it's a pleasure to welcome everyone joining us tonight. This meeting is also being live streamed, so a big welcome to those tuning in online, and of course welcome to my fellow Councillors both here in the chamber and those who are joining us online tonight. Live captioning will accompany the live stream of this meeting and we hope that this assists those who may have hearing difficulties.

I'd like to acknowledge that we are meeting on Wadawurrung country and that the Surf Coast municipality also includes the traditional country of the Gadubanud and Gulidjan peoples of the Eastern Maar Nation. I pay my respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. Surf Coast Shire Council is committed to walking with traditional owners on a reconciliation journey that recognises and celebrates culture and the unique land, sea and waterway country of the Surf Coast. I would also like to acknowledge Aboriginal people attending or viewing this meeting tonight.

Before we get started on our agenda items for tonight's meeting, I'd like to take the opportunity to share our excitement at the imminent opening of the new Banyul-Warri Fields Hockey Pitch here in Torquay. I'm looking forward to joining member for Western Victoria Gayle Tierney and the Torquay Hockey Club and Hockey Victoria officials for the opening event, which will take place tomorrow morning.

The pitch is funded through an investment of more than \$4.2 million from the Victorian Government's Regional Sports Infrastructure Program delivering us with a state-of-the-art, eco-friendly synthetic surface that comes with all the trimmings needed for sport, including 500 lux sports lighting, an electronic scoreboard, spectator seating with shelter, and a new car park. A section of the pitch surface features a really impressive stitched-in artwork that was designed by Wadawurrung artist BJ O'Toole and I know that the facility - I've been over there and had a look and it's absolutely spectacular, so I encourage everyone in the community to get down and have a look and I know that it will be a highly valued facility for our community for many years to come.

When we get to the presentations part of our agenda this evening, I will be calling on Councillor Crockett to give us an overview of last weekend's Afterglow running event that was held here in the Shire.

Now to our agenda for tonight. Council meetings operate according to our adopted Governance Rules, which include the following procedures. During the

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meeting, the mover of a motion or amendment may speak for a maximum of 5 minutes to open the debate and then a further 2 minutes to make a closing statement. Any other Councillor, including the seconder, may speak to a motion for no more than 3 minutes.

I ask that members of the gallery avoid using mobile phones during the meeting as this can be distracting for Councillors as well as other members of the gallery. I also note that any unauthorised recording of the meeting is prohibited under our Governance Rules. However, you can access a copy of the official recording on our website after the meeting.

I will now recite the Pledge as a sign of our commitment: As Councillors, we carry out our responsibilities with diligence and integrity and make fair decisions of lasting value for the wellbeing of our community and environment.

On to apologies, I note that Councillor Bodsworth and Councillor Schonfelder are on a leave of absence at the moment. Do we have any apologies for tonight's meeting? No. I just note that online we have Councillor Walker, Councillor Phelps and Councillor Pattison joining us. Thanks, Councillors.

So there's no apologies, which means we will move on to confirmation of minutes. Can I please have a mover and a seconder to confirm the minutes of the Council meeting held on 25 November 2025? Moved by Councillor Barker and seconded by Councillor Pattison. Thank you. All those in favour? The motion is carried unanimously. Thank you, Councillors.

Do we have any leave of absence requests tonight? No. Thank you, Councillors.

Declarations of conflicts of interest - so if a Councillor or an officer has a conflict of interest, they must declare it now and do so again just prior to the item being discussed and the Councillor or officer will be requested to leave chambers and those online will be placed by the host in a virtual waiting room whilst the matter is being considered. Once the matter is resolved, the Councillor and/or officer will be returned to the meeting. Are there any declarations of conflicts of interest in relation to tonight's meeting agenda? No conflicts of interest. Thank you, Councillors.

I will now call on Councillor Phoebe Crockett to give us an overview of the Afterglow running event. Thanks, Phoebe - thanks, Councillor Crockett.

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CR CROCKETT: Thank you, Mayor. I, yes, had the absolute pleasure of speaking at the starting line of the full glow run, which was 21ks starting at Point Addis, on the weekend and it was amazing to see so many people there in colourful outfits, most dressed as unicorns, and it, yeah, was a really fun event and was raising money for the Sexual Assault & Family Violence Centre nearby. So a lot of people got their fingernails painted rainbow at the starting line and it was children doing the painting as well and for everyone who got their nails painted \$5 went to the Family Violence Centre. So it was a great event raising money for a good cause.

CR STAPLETON: Great. Thanks, Councillor Crockett. We will now move on to Public Question Time, which is a time for community members to ask questions or make a submission at a Council meeting. Tonight we have two community members who have submitted four questions in total for tonight and I understand they're not with us, so I will be reading the questions out on behalf of those community members and both of them will be questions that I will be referring to the CEO for a response.

So the first one is from Charles Raj in Winchelsea and Charles's first question is how has the budget been decided for the Winchelsea pool opening hours and I'll refer that to our CEO?

MS ROBYN SEYMOUR: Thank you, Mayor. Thanks, Charles, for your questions tonight. So the proposed opening hours consider both community feedback and also the patterns of usage from the last season and we try as part of that to balance our operating costs with community use and our need to fund other community facilities and services. So what that means is that the operating hours of the pool for the 25/26 season are largely determined by the available staff budget, which is approximately \$120,000.

The budgeted income from admission fees is \$61,000, meaning Council subsidises the operating cost of the pool to keep it affordable for the community. So what this actually equates to is a subsidy per visit across the visitations of about \$20 per visit is what we anticipate.

But we have - we did get quite a lot of questions about this at our last Council meeting, so Charles, if you want to see a bit more information on that, you could have a look at the responses to last month's questions at the November Council meeting.

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CR STAPLETON: Thank you, Ms Seymour. The second question from Charles is why is the pool never promoted by the Council or Winchelsea Councillors apart from one media release and I'll refer that to you for a response as well.

MS ROBYN SEYMOUR: Charles, thanks for the opportunity to talk to this because actually we've done quite a lot more promotion than that and so if you're not aware of it, then maybe this might be helpful for you.

So you're right, we did do a media release at the end of November promoting the opening season. We've also been posting the opening dates on a brand new Winchelsea pool Facebook page, so we're doing that on a daily basis depending on whether the pool is open or not.

We've also done a direct email to all the Winchelsea Health Club members, there's about 300 Health Club members, about the opening date and the new Facebook page and we've done a promotional post on the Winchelsea Health Club page which has 900 members about the opening date and also promoting the new Facebook page. So we encourage you and anyone else to follow this new Winchelsea Pool Facebook page for any of the operational pool updates.

Charles, if you've got any other suggestions for how we can promote the pool, then please contact the team because we'd be keen to understand what that looks like because we feel like this new Facebook page is a really good opportunity to ensure that community know what is happening on a day by day basis around whether or not the pool is open because it's warm enough or whether we've decided because it's under 23 degrees is the forecast we'll be keeping it shut.

So please join that Winchelsea Pool Facebook page if you're interested in visiting our pool. It's a great pool, we're really proud of it, so we want people to get down and use it. Thanks very much.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Ms Seymour. We now have two questions from Jeremy Ham regarding the Torquay Multi Arts Centre. Jeremy is also not here in person, so I'm going to read his questions and starting with the first one - bear with me because there's three parts to the question, but I'll read it out in full for you. So "Primary to the \$1.4 million Torquay Multi Arts Centre", otherwise known as the MAC, "redevelopment project brief was achieving sound isolation between the gallery and theatre. Upon completion, users have noted the following: 1. The noise of the HVAC system bleeds into the theatre

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so that heating/cooling cannot be used during performances. This is because the outdoor air handling units were located on a roof adjacent to the theatre. 2. Sound from the Gallery bleeds between spaces via a gap in the sound isolation wall. This is because the sound isolation wall was only built to the ceiling and wall line, enabling sound to travel through gaps in wall-roof cavities. This issue was identified to Council officers by me prior to tender. 3. The heating system does not heat the people in the Gallery after a full day of operation. This is because the ducts are 8 metres high, with vents pointing outward, requiring the whole 1600 cubic metre Gallery volume to heat up before reaching the occupants. Can Council please explain how these basic design issues were not identified by the Council Sponsor and Project managers? What will be done to rectify these issues and what will the cost be for rectification and who will pay?" I will refer that first question to our CEO. Thank you.

MS ROBYN SEYMOUR: Thanks, Mayor. I'm actually going to ask the General Manager of Placemaking and Environment to respond to that question and also the next one because it's pretty technical questions and so I think he's better placed to respond.

MR CHRIS PIKE: Thanks, Mayor. So thanks for raising your concerns, Jeremy. I'll just start off by noting it's really important to acknowledge that the Multi Arts Centre isn't a purpose-built facility. We're not that fortunate. It's an old basketball stadium that's been converted into an arts facility and we're really grateful that we received funding from the Federal Government and the Council also contributed some funding so that we could bring the building up to code because without that investment, we wouldn't be able to continue using the facility as a community arts space and it would need to return to a sports stadium.

So how did we arrive at the design? Well, we relied, as we often do in these processes, on the services of experts. So in this case, independent architects who are experienced in cultural and community facilities were engaged and they helped us with all aspects of the design, including the matters that you're raising around acoustics and heating and cooling.

It's also worth noting that because we had a limited budget and there were a number of ambitions that the users had for the facility, we had a project control group, which included user group representatives, and they would work through the relative priorities of different improvements and it's quite clear that not every issue could be resolved either within the available budget or due

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to the structural limitations of the existing building. There were moments where it was difficult to get agreement between different users about priorities, so there were instances where the project sponsor would make those final decisions with that guidance from the architects.

But we are really pleased with the project delivering a really greatly improved facility for the community, I think that's important to focus on, and the centre is fully operational.

Officers are still working with the MAC Inc. to address any remaining noise concerns. It's never going to be perfect. There is some small remaining project budget which is looking at the noise emanating from the HVAC units on the outside of the building. But beyond that, there aren't any other plans to alter the building.

We do know that projects like this where we're repurposing a facility will always have some limitations, but we're always open to working with user groups if they can attract all those funds to further improve the facility and we'd be happy to have those discussions.

CR STAPLETON: Thank you, Mr Pike. Jeremy's second question - with his second question, Jeremy has raised concerns that he has had around governance and management of the MAC lease and user agreement and the process of participation by the Surf Coast arts space group. This is also something that he's raised with senior officers. So his question specifically is how was MAC Inc. vetted prior to being offered a lease for their capacity to manage the Shire's largest multi arts facility and what action will be taken if they are incapable of delivering on the 25/3/25 Council resolution? I will also refer that through the CEO to our General Manager, Mr Pike.

MR CHRIS PIKE: Thanks, Mayor, and through you, so before the MAC formally existed, there was a collective of local creatives. They actually proposed - they're the ones who proposed using the old stadium as an arts facility. So with that impetus from that group of people, we worked with that group and Council formally established the MAC by resolution in August 2019. So that's now evolved - MAC Inc. is now governed through its lease and through an associated management plan and Council has also supported its ongoing governance development through drawing in the help of Regional Arts Victoria.



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To talk specifically about vetting membership, Council doesn't vet members of the MAC Inc. community. That's a matter for that particular group. Council's most recent resolution on this matter was in March 2025, so earlier this year, and that again confirmed MAC Inc. as the model of running the facility and as the tenant of the facility.

So we, as Council is the landlord, effectively, of the building, have received a number of claims and concerns and investigated those regarding MAC Inc's compliance with that resolution from March this year and have found that the MAC Inc. is meeting its obligations, with one outstanding matter being the continued negotiation of a user agreement with the Surf Coast arts space.

So we're quite clear that responsibility for negotiating an equitable user agreement does rest with the MAC Inc. and to work with the Surf Coast arts space group and it would be our expectations, and this is continuing to be communicated clearly, that if that agreement can't be reached through normal processes, then those groups would seek to resolve their differences by making use of independent third party mediators and sharing the costs of doing so.

CR STAPLETON: Thank you, Mr Pike. That brings us to a close of public questions, so we will move on. There are no petitions for tonight's meeting and there are no notices of motion for tonight's meeting.

Just before we move on to the agenda items or the reports, I just want to note that we have an item of urgent business to consider at tonight's meeting. This item is currently listed as item 6 under urgent business. However, as we have a confidential item to consider prior to urgent business, I want to give Councillors an opportunity to consider whether the urgent business be moved forward on the agenda, perhaps to be considered after item 4.9, given they are somewhat related.

So would any Councillor like to move a procedural motion that the item listed as urgent business as item 6 in the agenda be moved forward to be considered after item 4.9? Councillor Pattison, thank you, and seconded by Councillor Barker. All those in favour for that motion? Sorry, Councillor Grist, I can't see whether you're voting or not. I think that's one, two, three, four, five, six - he's frozen, okay. So we might just go with six Councillors voting on that and that's passed unanimously.



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Now on to item 4.1, which is the response to the petition for extra kangaroo and wildlife signage in multiple locations within the Surf Coast Shire and the purpose of this report is to respond to a petition that was received by Council requesting that Council erect extra kangaroo wildlife signage at multiple locations within the Surf Coast and the petition consisted of 44 signatures. We do have a recommendation before us. Does anyone wish to move a motion in relation to that item? Councillor Pattison - as per the recommendation? Yes. And seconded by Councillor Barker. And Councillor Pattison, would you like to speak to that item?

CR PATTISON: Yes, that would be great. So it's great that we are reporting back on that petition and there's a number of community members that are really concerned about what's happening with the kangaroos on our roads and injuring wildlife and the like as well as collisions with cars, which endangers both people and animals. So I definitely support what is proposed in the motion and the traffic assessment on Duffields Road, Bones Road, Jarosite Road and Addiscott Road to determine if we need further wildlife signage on all those roads and obviously ensuring that all the signage complies with the Australian standards.

Unfortunately, current research indicates that over 40% of drivers don't actually pay attention to conventional wildlife signs and so it is a little bit - it's good and it's bad that we're putting more signage out. We want to do what we can and that is what the petition was around, but I think we also - this petition has escalated within the Council and community and Councillors the need to really look at how we are managing that.

So I think that it's a good opening and we're doing some work or we're doing the work that's requested around looking at more wildlife signage, but I think it's also opening that door to questions and in the papers that the officers have put forward we've also talked about the use of the VMS boards, the messaging boards, which are actually more effective because it's a moving sign and people pay more attention to things when they change.

So it's great that actually as part of Council's operational budget there's a VMS board that can be used when we identify hotspots that are wildlife crossings and the like and they're really effective and so that's also a good thing that will be done and that won't cost Council more money because moving those VMS boards is part of our current budget and so that's another way that Council can be helping to address the root cause of what this petition is really about, which

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is ensuring that we are looking after or trying to minimise the impact of wildlife being hit, kangaroos in particular, on our roads.

So thank you to the petitioner and I hope - although this doesn't solve the problem, I hope the response to the petition will elevate the matter and also facilitate the additional signage. So I encourage Councillors to support the motion.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Pattison, and Councillor Barker?

CR BARKER: Very quickly. Ultimately, personal responsibility takes care of this. If you're driving in an area where there are known kangaroos, you slow down, unless you've got a vehicle that can sustain it, but ideally what happens with this is that we get a tidy up of the signs and even those informal signs might end up getting cleared up so that we're compliant within our responsibilities.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Barker. Would any other Councillors like to speak to this item? Councillor Crockett.

CR CROCKETT: Thank you, Mayor. I would also like to thank the petitioners for highlighting this issue. It's so important and we are so lucky to live alongside kangaroos and wildlife, so I too would like to see less collisions with wildlife in our region. And, yes, just echoing that in this instance Council will be responding to the signage request within this petition and undertaking a traffic review to follow the best practice to have signs in the right places.

I support the recommendation, but I acknowledge that it is just one part of the solution and as Councillor Pattison said, the research is not too strong in proving the effectiveness of these particular signs, but I'm really grateful that this petition has highlighted this issue to keep the conversation going on this topic. So I'm also really keen to have further discussions with Council and with community as well on what other strategies could be available. You know, we know that Council is limited in resources and capacity for this, despite acknowledging a gap in wildlife protection measures. So these might be some of the difficult conversations we might have to have in the upcoming budget, but it's a discussion I would like to keep on the table.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Crockett. And would any other Councillors like to speak to this item? Councillor Walker.

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CR WALKER: Thank you, Mayor, and fellow Councillors. You've hit it on the head really well with the issue not just around more signage that's protecting our wildlife, but looking at how do we actually look after our wildlife when incidences do happen and simply slowing down and reducing your own speed and being wary might save an extra 30 seconds or a minute travelling at higher speed. It's also looking at our own behaviour when we drive around our beautiful coastline and hinterland, all the beautiful wildlife.

So I'm looking forward to continuing this conversation to see how we can actually work towards more wildlife care and those sorts of things too. So I welcome this recommendation. Thanks.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Walker. Would any other Councillors like to speak to this item? Councillor Phelps?

CR PHELPS: Thank you, Mayor. Yes, I'd like to just acknowledge the compassion and care of the petition participants. It is inevitable to see a dead kangaroo on the road.

I'd like to note that items 14 and 15 of the report quote research, or point to research, that signs simply don't work as those would wish they would. Signs are routinely ignored and worse, more signs is actually less effective. We all know that Surf Coast Shire has many kangaroos, as Councillor Crockett has mentioned, and nobody wants to see them being killed. Even from a strictly selfish point of view, a kangaroo can inflict significant damage on a vehicle, leading to insurance claims and higher insurance premiums.

So I'd like to also urge all road users, particularly at sunrise and dusk, to take care on the country and coastal roads and to drive to the conditions, including looking out for wildlife on the road and in support of Councillor Barker's comments, I'd like to emphasise that more signage is not, in my view, the solution to this. Alternative and better solutions are needed which would need new funding to enable them. So in the meantime, I do support the recommendation for traffic assessments and I look forward to seeing the resulting statistics. Thank you.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Phelps. Are any other Councillors wanting to speak to this item? No. Any closing comments, Councillor Pattison? Okay, we'll now put the motion to a vote. All those in favour? And against? Sorry, Councillor Grist, was that in favour? Yes, thank you. So that motion is carried unanimously.

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We'll move on to item 4.2 on the agenda, which is Our Places and Spaces - Social Infrastructure Plan. The purpose of this report is to seek adoption of Our Places and Spaces Social Infrastructure Plan 2026-2036 to guide provision of social infrastructure for the Surf Coast Shire Council. We do have a recommendation before us. Does anyone wish to move a motion? Councillor Crockett - as per the recommendation? Yes. And do we have a seconder for that? Councillor Walker, thank you. Sorry, that was as per the recommendation, yes. So Councillor Crockett, would you like to speak to the item?

CR CROCKETT: Yes, thank you, Mayor. Thank you. Yes, social infrastructure is really important and the purpose of this plan is to ensure we can sustainably plan and deliver these places and spaces when and where they are needed most.

So we know that locals value recreation spaces, outdoor sport and play space and arts and cultural venues, including libraries, but prioritising them is not easy and we need to ensure that the network is sustainable and this means working within our resources to deliver.

So there's been a great amount of engagement on this where Council asked the community to let us know which places and spaces they need to access and how important they are, so this helped to understand everyone's unique priorities and then was used to establish a policy position and methodology to guide how we prioritise these. So I think it's a great document because it's an adaptive planning document that will be tracked and refreshed each year, reflecting the ever-changing community. So I support it.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Crockett. And Councillor Walker? Sorry, Councillor Walker, you're just on mute. We've got you.

CR WALKER: Thanks, Mayor. That's better?

CR STAPLETON: Yes, thanks, Councillor.

CR WALKER: Yes, this Council Our Places and Spaces - Social Infrastructure Plan sets us for the next 10 years. It's a framework for innovation improvement for projects to ensure social infrastructure owned and managed by Council is accessible, inclusive, flexible, fit for purpose and meeting the needs of our communities, while giving Surf Coast communities clarity on

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Council's role, how decisions are made and what is planned in the place that we live in. It provides overarching strategic direction in line with the Council plan, Council policy, social infrastructure assets, service delivery, community programs, activities and events throughout the Shire.

The State of Play document and Have Your Say with community stakeholder engagement gave a range of feedback from the community in relation to the provision of social infrastructure on the Surf Coast. This plan engagement gives good transparency to Council and our community. Feedback included a desire for more balanced investment across townships and facilities that reflects the needs of our growing and diverse communities that we all call home.

The Places and Spaces Social Infrastructure Plan shows what is planned in the place you live in across the wards, but also the individual towns over the next 10 years. I welcome this plan and I look forward to reviewing it every year. Thanks.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Walker. Would any other Councillors like to speak to this item? Councillor Barker?

CR BARKER: Thanks, Mayor. First some key points. It's not legally required. We're not compelled to do this. It does admit that we can't afford to keep building new things. To suggest a strong focus on renewing existing assets is pretty good, but the funding relies heavily on grants, not so good.

As you'll notice, my Christmas cheer was used up in the last agenda item, we're back to normal programming now because it's got a long list of future projects that risk locking in expansion that we can't fulfil. Overall, the plan starts well, admits we're wearing out our assets faster than we can renew them, and that honesty is super, super welcome and I hope there's more reports like that in the future. But we need a focus on fixing what we have rather than chasing new builds, which this sets us up for.

My concern is that we then attach long-term future projects and rely on the outside grants to justify them. I go back to the point made by Councillor Crockett, when we talk about working within our resources, we need to be aware that we have a finite amount of resources and we can't spread them too thin. If we do, we do everything poorly.

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It's these little incremental changes that create scope creep that ends up Council stepping outside its core responsibilities and I don't want to support that. For the good parts in being truthful and assessing the reality of the situation that we're in, good, but overall it will not get my support. Thank you.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Barker. And would any other Councillors like to speak to this item? Councillor Pattison?

CR PATTISON: Thank you. So it's already been spoken about it's a social infrastructure plan for the next 10 years ultimately, with a five-year horizon and then the future for the next 10 years, and for those that aren't aware, Council's social infrastructure is vast. There's 8,000 open spaces, 253 kilometres of footpaths and cycle ways. That's a bit of a snapshot, but then it comes down to community spaces, pavilions, bike paths and playgrounds. So the overall assets of Council, the social infrastructure assets, are valued at around \$243 million. So that's a lot of assets and we really need a complex plan like this to understand, may need to renew, to make sure it's equitable across the whole Shire.

So the social infrastructure plan focuses on accessibility, the assets being inclusive, flexible, fit for purpose and meeting the needs of our community and it's actually - if you look at the plan, it's broken down into each of our townships and you can see the next five years what's planned, in the next 10-year horizon. So they're not budgeted, but this is looking at need across the Shire and then on an annual basis there will be budget allocations to do that work. And yes, as has been identified, there will be grant requirements to deliver some of these, so we're not saying all of this is funded, but we're saying this is what we think is needed for our community based on evaluating the existing infrastructure and the status of that existing infrastructure.

So this is all built on a lot of work over a number of years. There was the State of Play operational document that came out in 2024 and that really just listed out what's going on in our Shire and then there's been a lot of engagement from that and then now we've come up with this, Our Places Our Spaces, which is the plan going forward.

So this is something we've been looking forward to for quite some time and community understand about they want something renewed, how does it sit within the other priorities of need. That's what this plan is all about. So I'm really excited that it's finally coming to us and we can have a clear

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understanding of what's happening across each township over the next 5 to 10 years. So I encourage my fellow Councillors to support it. Thank you.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Pattison. And Councillor Phelps.

CR PHELPS: Thank you, Mayor. The most important aspect I think of this social infrastructure plan is its prioritisation framework. There are many projects, many, many projects, that ratepayers and residents would like to see completed around the Surf Coast Shire, far more than our budget can possibly accommodate. Accordingly, it's important to have, and I quote, "a plan to guide investment and decision making in social infrastructure provision for the Surf Coast Shire".

This is what is presented today and while it includes a longer list of current and future projects, as I say, what matters most is given in items 13.1 and 13.2 of the report, 13.1, "A robust, evidence-based and industry best practice approach to assessing the adequacy of current and proposed provision", and 13.2, which is "The development of the assessment matrix to enable the equitable prioritisation of projects for investment based on criteria across two themes of 'Community Need' and 'Project Deliverability'".

I highly recommend ratepayers and residents take a good look at this social infrastructure plan, which breaks down projects by town and area. These are the things that make our place what it is, one of the most liveable local government areas in the country.

We can't afford it all and this is a 10-year plan. It will constantly evolve, as mentioned. But it also lays out an equitable approach to making where we live even better than it is today and importantly, and as also mentioned, we need to do that within our financial constraints. I support adopting this social infrastructure plan. Thank you.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Phelps. And would any other Councillors like to speak to this item? Councillor Crockett, did you have any closing comments?

CR CROCKETT: No, thank you, Mayor.

CR STAPLETON: Thank you. I'll now put the item to a vote. All those in favour? And all those against? And this item is carried 6-1. Thanks, Councillors.



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The next item, 4.3, is Council Representation on Various Regional/Peak Organisations and the purpose of this report is for Council to appoint representatives to the various regional and peak organisations we have in our community for 2026. Do I have a mover of that motion? Councillor Crockett - as per the recommendation?

CR CROCKETT: Yes.

CR STAPLETON: Thank you. And a seconder? Councillor Walker, thank you. And Councillor Crockett, would you like to speak to that item?

CR CROCKETT: Thank you, Mayor. Yes, I wanted to say that, you know, having Council representation on different committees and different organisations just ensures that Council is well placed to have input on a wide range of different matters. So I'm really excited to put up my hand as the Council rep for the All Abilities Advisory Committee, which advises Council on how to improve access and inclusion for people with a disability, making sure everyone, no matter their abilities, can take part in the community, get what they need in terms of services and be included. So I'm looking forward to being a part of that.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Crockett. And Councillor Walker, would you like to speak to this item?

CR WALKER: Yes, thank you, Mayor. Yes, representation on these various committees and regional peak organisations ensures that Council is well placed to have input on a broad range of key matters which are significant to our community. By reviewing these appointments annually, Council is able to ensure that its involvement in the committees and organisations is relevant to Council's strategic goals, Council plan, objectives and, more importantly, community priorities.

I've been on the All Abilities Advisory Committee for the last year, which has been fantastic to be involved in with a dynamic passionate group and I'm happy to hand this representation over to Councillor Crockett. She'll do a great job and it's fantastic to be involved with any of these types of groups.

I look forward to joining the MAV Emergency Management Forum as representation too, so the emergency management advocacy and priorities and everything involved with emergency management. I welcome this and

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look forward to hearing from fellow Councillors and everyone else who is on these important committees to make the best out of our area that we live in the best it can be. Thanks.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Walker. Would any other Councillors like to speak to this item? Councillor Barker?

CR BARKER: Quickly, memberships to most of these are optional, we don't need to be there. They're only useful if they've got a direct impact on what our core duties are and the risk is that we join groups that lobby for spending more money that don't have a say in the piece.

We've got organisations like Municipal Association of Victoria and they're largely a body that call for more spending in the municipal industry, which comes from taxpayers, so it's just robbing Peter to pay Paul, and that sort of activity is something that I don't support. If it was joining committees that contributed to our core responsibilities, yes, but overall this doesn't, so I won't be supporting it.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Barker. And Councillor Pattison?

CR PATTISON: Thank you. It's really important that, as elected representatives, we can represent the needs of our Shire on relevant bodies. So I am the Chair of the Geelong Regional Library Corporation and that's an important role because we provide - the library provides services for Torquay and the broader library region that all of us go to and Council puts a lot of money into that.

So that's really important, as well as I think actually the MAV, just as an example, provides training for Councillors so that we can be the best Councillors that we can be. They advocate for government. I was just reading one of their newsletters and they were reporting around the emergency services levy and they've been doing a lot of work advocating to the State Government around that being pushed back or not or trying to stop that fund. So I think there's also insurance schemes and the like which they can bulk buy different insurance for local government.

So all of the industries and bodies that we as Councillors are on provide really good benefits for our Council and our community and that actually saves us a lot of money through some of those bulk buy arrangements, like VAGO came through that as well as a lot of the other bodies.

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So I do encourage my fellow Councillors and all of us put a lot of time and energy into these peak bodies that we are representatives on. So I congratulate those of us that have put our hand up.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Pattison. Would any other Councillors like to speak to this item? Councillor Phelps?

CR PHELPS: Yes, just a quick one, just to mention that over the past year I've been on the Positive Ageing Advisory Committee. I've found that personally very useful in terms of the insights and the feedback that I've been getting about the older generations where Council is concerned. I think their input has been valuable and I'm very pleased to be continuing for another year. Thank you.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Phelps. Any other Councillors? And Councillor Crockett, did you have any closing comments?

CR CROCKETT: No, thank you.

CR STAPLETON: No, thank you. I'll now put the item to a vote. All those in favour? And against? Was that against?

CR BARKER: Against.

CR STAPLETON: Okay, so that item is carried 6-1. Thank you, Councillors.

Item 4.3 is the Service Review Policy for adoption. So the purpose of this report is to present the results of the community consultation on the draft SCS-050 Service Review Policy and the final version of the policy to Council for adoption. We do have a recommendation before us. Does anyone wish to move a motion? Is that as per the recommendation?

CR BARKER: Yes, Mayor.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Barker. And a seconder? Councillor Pattison, thank you. Would you like to speak to that item, Councillor Barker?

CR BARKER: Just briefly. Again, this isn't mandatory, but it's potentially powerful. It allows us to question whether Council should or should not be doing something, but it does come with a risk of simply becoming a box ticking

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exercise. If we use it properly, it will be super, super useful. Firstly, to be able to assess whether Council should or should not be involved in the space is a very important question and then you can get into the detail after that.

It will help us tighten our footprint and as I've stressed many, many, many, many times before, if we can tighten the amount of services that we offer, we will do them far better than what we do at the moment and this will be a key component to that happening. If it becomes paperwork that just justifies keeping everything, then it will be a waste and it will have no value. So I'm getting my little bit of Christmas cheer back and supporting it, even though it does come with a little bit of a risk, but I hope that risk is unwarranted from my perspective.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Barker. And Councillor Pattison, would you like to speak to this item?

CR PATTISON: Thank you, yes. I agree, Council should periodically review the services it delivers to ensure that those services continue to meet the needs and priorities of our community now and into the future. The service reviews look into the cost, quality, efficiency and effectiveness of the services that are provided to the community and really it's part of being a high-performing Council that you look at the services you deliver and you work out whether we're doing them well, whether we could change, those sorts of things.

So some of the key things that need to be considered as part of this policy are determining if the service is adapting to change, you know, is it efficient and does it optimise the use of Council resources, is it still relevant, is it fit for purpose, is it responsive to the customer and community need, is it delivering the right outcomes and is it having the right impact?

So these are important things to consider in any services that we deliver. It doesn't necessarily mean that we're not going to deliver that service. I know that some want us to really reduce the amount of services and if it's found through this that really it's not relevant, well, sure, that's all part of a robust service review, but a lot of the time it will be looking at efficiencies, how it could be done better, you know, all of those sorts of other things and it's part of being a high-performing Council. So I'm glad that this policy has come up for review.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Pattison. And would any other Councillors like to speak to this item? Councillor Phelps?

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CR PHELPS: Thank you, Mayor. A defined policy and process for reviewing what Council does and to what extent is definitely a good idea. There are several categories that each service is reviewed against to help prioritise what to look at next, such as strategic alignment, community impact and cost.

It's my opinion that having a structured approach will enable Council to most efficiently carry out ongoing reviews of Council services to avoid wasting precious funds on services that are no longer required or that can be provided differently or even where community demand has changed. So I strongly support adopting this service review policy. Thank you.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Phelps. And any other Councillors? No. And did you have closing comments, Councillor Barker?

CR BARKER: No, thanks.

CR ROBYN SEYMOUR: I think Joel put his hand up, Mayor.

CR STAPLETON: Oh, sorry, Councillor Grist, did you have your hand up? Thank you. I think the different shaped screen, so when you put your hand up, just pop it in front of your face so I can see you. But yes, please go ahead, Councillor Grist, thank you.

CR GRIST: Thanks, Mayor. I also support this agenda item. Regular independent service reviews align closely with fiscal responsibility and potentially minimising government footprint. They are an opportunity to identify services that should be ceased, outsourced or shifted to user pays or even community provisions. I second Councillor Barker's call to ensure reviews are not just performative and the reviews must have teeth, mandatory action reviews, cost benefit thresholds and clear accountability for implementation of those decisions that we make. Thanks.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Grist. No closing comments. Okay. We'll now put the item to a vote. All those in favour? That motion is carried unanimously. Thank you, Councillors.

Item 4.5 is on Community Asset Committees Annual Update for 2024-2025. The purpose of this report is to present the 24-25 Community Asset Committee Annual Report, to appoint new committee members, accept some committee resignations and consider a new management model for the Anglesea Bike

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Park CAC, which is the Community Asset Committee. Just before we consider this item, I will note that the final point in the recommendation just has a minor typo where it refers to "Friend of Anglesea Bike park". I'd like to assure the community that the Anglesea Bike Park has more than one friend, there are many friends of the Anglesea Bike Park. So that will be updated in the minutes to read "Friends of Anglesea Bike Park", just to reassure everyone.

We do have a recommendation there, obviously. Does anyone wish to move a motion? Councillor Walker, is that as per the recommendation? Yes. Thanks, Councillor Walker. And a seconder? Councillor Barker. Would you like to speak to the item, Councillor Walker?

CR WALKER: Yes, Mayor, thank you. Our Community Asset Committees, or known as CACs, are made of dedicated volunteers who directly manage daily operations, activities and nominated halls and recreation reserves on behalf of the Surf Coast Shire Council.

These committees create greater local connection and bring local knowledge that results in more effective use of the facilities. It's not an easy job for them all and especially being volunteers, so I especially want to acknowledge the valuable contributions that all the Community Asset Committee members have made to the community and thank each volunteer for their dedicated support. Especially I thank those resigning, I acknowledge their contribution, and I also welcome the new committee members to the fantastic CACs and welcome this recommendation. It gives a good insight to what CACs do and the challenges they face, but at the same time, again, I just want to acknowledge the valuable contributions they make to our community. Thanks.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Walker, and Councillor Barker?

CR BARKER: Yes, I'd just reiterate a lot of the points that Councillor Walker has made. Thank you to the outgoing and incoming members. It is noted that volunteers managing CACs contribute significantly I think in the order of the equivalent value of hundreds of thousands of dollars to what Council does, so that reduces our cost to the ratepayer, so that is excellent, and I hope that this model can stretch further and we have more community take up responsibility, reducing Council cost so we can reduce the rates.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Barker. And would any other Councillors like to speak? Councillor Pattison, thank you.

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CR PATTISON: Thank you. As those who've already spoken, obviously thank you to all the volunteers on our asset committees for their dedication and work and also welcome to the new members. Thanks for stepping up.

I thought I'd just mention about the Anglesea Bike Park community asset committee that's resolved to formally dissolve as a CAC as of 30 June this year and they'll operate instead under a Friends of Anglesea Bike Park model. So this MA model is a more suitable model for the bike park with support from the Surf Coast Mountain Bike Club and this will enable volunteers to focus on the bike park and less on the governance and running for the CAC.

So importantly, though, any funds that are held will be transferred into a dedicated line in Council's budget to be spent on the Anglesea Bike Park with input from the friends of group to inform how it's spent and bike park is just one example of the many great community assets that we have across the Shire and once again, thanks to those who have been looking after these assets for many years already and ongoing. Thank you.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Pattison. And would any other Councillors like to speak to this item? No. And Councillor Walker, did you have any closing comments? No. Thanks, Councillor Walker. We'll now put the motion to a vote. All those in favour? And the motion is carried unanimously. Thank you, Councillors.

Item 4.6 is the Audit and Risk Committee Charter and the purpose of this report is for Council to consider adopting the reviewed Audit and Risk Committee Charter. We do have a recommendation before us. Does anyone wish to move a motion? Councillor Pattison - as per the recommendation? Yes. And do I have a seconder for that motion? Councillor Phelps, thank you. Councillor Pattison, would you like to speak to it?

CR PATTISON: Sure. So currently the charter needs to be reviewed annually and then come to Council for adoption, so part of this review it's changed that that can be done every four years as the annual review was unnecessary.

So there's still a lot that's happened in this review as well as that point. There's some changes around the board chair appointment timeframes and recruitment panels, how many Councillors are on those panels and the like, as well as bringing the independent member remuneration in line with the Victorian Government board appointment and remuneration guidelines.



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So that's all listed in the charter in the agenda and I encourage Councillors to support that, but also I think it's important to identify the importance of Audit and Risk Committees that play a vital role in providing feedback to Council on key areas, including financial management, risk, compliance, internal controls and internal and external audit processes.

In my last 12 months, I've been on the Audit and Risk Committee with Councillor Grist and I think the Audit and Risk Committee really strengthened the trust that both Councillors and the community have in our organisation because it says that understanding of the evaluation and review that's carried out by those independent members and this charter demonstrates this and it ensures that it continues to be that way. So I encourage you to support the charter. Thank you.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Pattison. And Councillor Phelps, would you like to speak to this item?

CR PHELPS: Yes, thank you, Mayor. So just basically supporting what Councillor Pattison has just said, the Audit and Risk Committee are I think incredibly important to Councils in general. The committee we have are very expert in what they do. They poke and prod into all sorts of areas. I think it is really fantastic to have such an expert and independent group of people who really know what they're looking for and provide some excellent advice to Council. So yes, I support the recommendation. Thank you.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Phelps. And would any other Councillors like to speak? Councillor Barker?

CR BARKER: Thanks, Mayor. Overall, I appreciate what the Audit and Risk Committee do. I've sat in as an observer after being on the Audit and Risk Committee myself a few years ago.

What did concern me is that while the technical aspects are okay, the culture of the Audit and Risk Committee has become a bit of a cheer leader of the organisation and I recall that formerly the Audit and Risk Committee would be an independent body that would perform critical assessments and that has reduced somewhat, like we're ticking the box in terms of what we need to do, but it could be better. I don't think the Audit and Risk Committee should be a cheer leader for the organisation.

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The only other concern that I have is that the amendments for the evaluation of the qualifications of the external independent members has now reduced from the CEO and two Councillors to the CEO and one Councillor and I am not set in which way I'm going to vote on this. I think that having the CEO and one Councillor is insufficient, but if someone can sway my vote, then it will get up. If they can't, then I'll vote against it.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Barker. And would any other Councillors like to speak to this item? No. And Councillor Pattison, would you like to make any closing comments?

CR PATTISON: Thanks. I'll do my best to sway Councillor Barker.

Councillor Grist and I had the pleasure of interviewing for an independent panel member and we both worked hard to be able to come to those interviews and the like and I think ultimately, you know, both Councillors will always be invited and want to be part of it, but we don't want to be holding up interviews because we can only get one Councillor. We all have busy lives, and the like, so I think if we have one Councillor that represents the interests of the Councillor group, that is an adequate representation and can enable those interviews and the like to progress. So I think it's always good to have more, but - well, it's not always good to have more, but it's fine to have two Councillors, but really one is adequate and that's why I think this change is good in the policy. Thank you.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Pattison. We'll now put the motion to a vote. All those in favour? And against? And the motion is carried 6-1. Thank you, Councillors.

Okay, item 4.7 is the Anglesea Landfill Rehabilitation - Stage 4 Project. The purpose of the report is to seek Council's approval of additional budget to support planned works for the rehabilitation of the Anglesea Landfill during the 25/26 budget year. We do have a recommendation before us. Would anyone like to move a motion? Councillor Crockett - as per the recommendation?

CR CROCKETT: Yes.

CR STAPLETON: Thank you. And do we have a seconder for that? Councillor Pattison, thank you. And Councillor Crockett, would you like to speak to this item?

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CR CROCKETT: Yes, thank you. I am supportive of the additional budget to facilitate efficient delivery of the works for the Anglesea Landfill rehabilitation. Waste management is important and I know that there's actually many parts of the world that don't have waste management or a landfill arrangement, but this is Council's mandated responsibility under legislation.

So I'm confident in the recommendation to manage and schedule the works which will extend the landfill capacity for as long as possible, which is the best financial outcome, but the impending closure of the landfill is a reminder that when you put something in the bin, it doesn't go away and realistically manufacturers should be responsible for the end of life of their products and packaging, but Council is working to eliminate unnecessary packaging through the likes of the single use items and packaging policy that came to our last Council meeting or diverting our organic material from landfill through our FOGO bins. But through all this it's still no easy feat to be dealing with all this waste, but it needs to be done and we all deserve a future where waste doesn't harm the environment or our health or the economy.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Crockett. And Councillor Pattison, would you like to speak to this item?

CR PATTISON: Yes, I think Councillor Crockett has covered most of it, but really it's about bringing forward just over \$1 million from the waste reserve to the Anglesea rehabilitation Facebook project to enable that delivery this current financial year.

Ultimately, we want the Anglesea landfill to last as long as it can so it can be as cost effective for Council and enable Council time to work out where the waste will go down the track and this is one important piece of that rehabilitation that's needed and continue to have our landfill operating well. So it's an important operational thing that needs to happen, but it is a lot of money, so it's important it's coming to Council. So I encourage my fellow Councillors to support it. Thank you.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Pattison. Would any other Councillors like to speak to this item? Councillor Barker.

CR BARKER: A few key points. It's legally required under the EPA rules and I'd rather we focus on advocacy there in freeing them up a bit because the EPA rules are going to have significant impacts on Councils across the state with regards to landfill rehabilitation.

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The redesign is needed because an early design missed available airspace and for those following at home, airspace is not the sky above, but the cubic space that the landfill can take on. The revised plan does lower the long-term cost, so that's a pretty good thing, and funded from the waste reserve where it technically should come from.

I am conflicted because any time that an error is made and it costs money, in government often that cost is not borne by the individual that created the problem. So what we're doing here or whether it's the Karaaf stormwater project or a whole bunch of other issues, we're coming in to fix a former error and what I would hope that the organisation learns is that we need to make sure we get it right the first time, learn why the error happened in the first place and then we can ensure that we don't have future waste years down the track.

So I'm going to get my Christmas cheer back and give a little bit of support. We'll see how it goes on the next item.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Barker. Would any other Councillors like to speak to this item? Councillor Walker and then we'll go to Councillor Phelps. So Councillor Walker?

CR WALKER: Thank you, Mayor, and thank you to fellow Councillors. You've summarised a lot of the things I was going to say.

Further on to Councillor Crockett's comments around our landfill due to reach capacity around 2030, if we do the right thing and we really tighten up our waste, you know, as businesses, as community, what we choose to buy, what we choose to use, how we recycle and everything, we can extend that further and in turn, we'll be saving more costs in the future. So let's try to get that projection in 2040, that would be a great outcome, wouldn't it? You never know. But no, thank you, I support this and yes, let's do the best to get the most out of this site in the earlier years, the better. Thanks.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Walker. And Councillor Phelps?

CR PHELPS: Thank you, Mayor. Yes, this million dollars that we're talking about brings forward roughly half a million dollars from stage 5 and there's a redesign of stage 4. I guess this sort of builds on what Councillor Barker was saying in terms of the EPA and their requirements. We are kind of playing a

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game, but there's a moving goal post, so I think it's really hard to try to map out what's going to happen with the landfill up until it's closed and then finally sealed.

I think we're doing the best, or the Council staff are doing the best, but it is a moving goalpost and hence we've got this redesign happening and bringing forward half a million dollars extra expenditure early, which will save us money down the track. It will be interesting to see how this plays out over the next few years. As Councillor Walker just said, the longer they last, the better and everything we can do to make that last longer, the cheaper it is for our ratepayers. Thank you.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Phelps. Any other Councillors? No. Councillor Crockett, do you have any closing comments?

CR CROCKETT: No, thank you.

CR STAPLETON: Okay. We'll now put the motion to a vote. All those in favour? And the motion is carried unanimously. Thank you, Councillors.

We are now up to item 4.8, which is the Project Budget Adjustments and Cash Reserve Transfers table for December 2025. The purpose of this report is to present adjustments, including existing projects that require adjustment, project closures, new projects to be officiated, CEO-approved transfers under delegation or corrections to prior reports presented to Council.

We have a recommendation before us. Does anyone wish to move a motion? As per the recommendation, Councillor Barker? Thank you. And a seconder? Councillor Phelps, thank you. And Councillor Barker, would you like to speak to this item?

CR BARKER: Very quickly, thanks. This is the best cash reserve and budget adjustment transfer table I've ever seen. I don't know if it's just Christmas. This is not a recommendation to officers to bring more spending items to the December 2026 meeting, but it's not bad. I'll support it.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Barker. And Councillor Phelps?

CR PHELPS: Supporting Councillor Barker, it's a fairly brief one this month. So we have 225,000 which is from the adopted strategy reserve for Torquay

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town centre design and now a stadium of 63,500 going back in to waste reserve, so all good, thank you.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Phelps. And would any other Councillors like to speak? Councillor Pattison?

CR PATTISON: Thank you. I would just like to talk about the Torquay Town Centre and Baines Crescent Precinct Facilitation Program. So there's a new allocation, or project allocation, of 225,000 for that and this is a really exciting project because some might say that Baines Crescent is one of the amazing pieces of Torquay, it's one of my favourite places to hang out, and this is about really bringing out the potential of Baines Crescent and the broader area around that.

It's bringing together a number of projects. Unfortunately, the Council wasn't successful in getting a grant to do this work, but it is really important work. So it's important to look at what we can do in that area, looking at potential rezoning, detailed design and looking at what we have in place in the plan for Baines Crescent, including discussion with landholders and those sorts of things. So it's about Council taking the lead and getting a really great plan for that area so that it can be better than it currently is. So I am glad to see it on this item tonight. Thank you.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Pattison. Would any other Councillors like to speak to this item? No. Councillor Barker, do you have any closing comments?

CR BARKER: No, thanks.

CR STAPLETON: We'll put the motion to a vote. All those in favour? And the motion is carried unanimously. Thank you, Councillors.

Item 4.9 is the Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation - Planning and Environment Act and the purpose of this report is to seek Council's appointment of authorised officers under the Planning & Environment Act through the updated Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation. This instrument requires updating due to recent staff changes.

We do have a recommendation before us. Does anyone wish to move a motion? Councillor Phelps - as per the recommendation? Yes. And seconded by Councillor Pattison. Councillor Phelps, would you like to speak to this item?

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CR PHELPS: Just to mention, as you have mentioned, Mayor, that this just reflects staff changes for authorised officers. Thank you.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Phelps. And Councillor Pattison, did you have anything you wanted to say? Would any other Councillors like to speak to this item? No. We will put the - I'm assuming, Councillor Phelps, you don't have any closing comments. We'll put the motion to a vote. All those in favour? The motion is carried unanimously.

So now before we move to item 4.10, you'll recall that earlier in the meeting I spoke about there being urgent business and we had a procedural motion to move item 6 in the urgent business to be heard or to be considered after item 4.9.

So just to clarify because I know a couple of Councillors joined late, so just to make sure everyone is across this, this item relates to the adoption of s6A Instrument of Delegation and before we are able to consider this item, I will first need to invite a motion that Council admits the item as urgent business. So although we are able to debate as to whether or not that motion is admitted to urgent business, that debate should be limited to whether or not the item should be considered tonight, not whether or not the item should be supported. That will come after the agreement to consider it as urgent business. Hopefully that all makes sense.

So firstly, do we have a mover of a motion to accept item 6.1 as an item of urgent business? Councillor Pattison, thank you. And do we have a seconder for that? Councillor Crockett, thank you. Councillor Pattison, did you want to speak to that item?

CR PATTISON: Only to say that, Mayor, could you use a different microphone? It's all crackly and you're kind of going funny, so if you could swap, please, that would be great. Otherwise it's more of a procedural motion, so I'm happy just to move the motion.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Pattison. And is that microphone better? Great. And Councillor Crockett, did you want to speak to the item?

CR CROCKETT: No, thank you.



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CR STAPLETON: No. Did any Councillors want to speak to the motion to accept this item as urgent business? No. We'll put the motion to a vote. All those in favour? And that motion is carried unanimously.

So we will now consider item 6.1, which the purpose of this report is to present the s6A Instrument of Delegation to Council for adoption. This newly created instrument is presented due to recent changes to the Planning and Environment Act 1987 and is presented as urgent business as officers may need to exercise the relevant powers, duties and/or functions prior to the next scheduled Council meeting, which is not until late February 2026. We do have a recommendation before us. Does anyone wish to move a motion? Councillor Pattison - as per the recommendation? Thank you. And a seconder?

CR PATTISON: Is it possible to get it displayed because it's not in the agenda. Is it possible just to get it up on the screen? I don't know if that's too complicated. It might be good to display.

CR STAPLETON: Governance is getting that up on the screen for us, Councillor Pattison, so we'll just wait a moment while that happens.

CR PATTISON: Thank you.

CR STAPLETON: Can everybody read that? Yes. We'll just give you a moment to read through it. Okay. Councillor Pattison, just to confirm you were happy to move that item as per the recommendation? Yes. And do we have a seconder? We might need to take the recommendation down now, Governance. Thank you. Do we have a seconder for that item? Councillor Phelps, thank you. Councillor Pattison, would you like to speak to that item?

CR PATTISON: Thank you. As per the last item that we've just passed, this is - it's more of a procedural administrative type motion which delegates powers to officers and it's a requirement from State Government and given that it's come through and there's not a lot of time, you know, to present it as it would normally be through the papers, it's important to come through as urgent business and there's quite some time until our next Council meeting, so I encourage my Councillors to support this motion, thank you.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Pattison. Councillor Phelps, would you like to speak to this item?

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CR PHELPS: Just to say Councillor Pattison has covered it. I think it's something that is paperwork, so to speak, that we need to tick off. Nothing further to add, thank you.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Phelps. And Councillor Barker?

CR BARKER: Yes, I appreciate that this is somewhat similar to the previous item, but it's quite different. "The delegation shift powers of decision making away from Councillors" - now, that's a pretty important statement there. s6A instrument hands staff several powers under the amended sections of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 and that's deciding whether to seek authorisation from the Minister to start Planning Scheme amendment notifying the Minister of decisions or preparing amendments with or without ministerial authorisation. These are significant strategic powers and they've been rushed through.

Now, the autonomy may also shift upwards towards the Minister. The new legislation itself pushes more power to the Minister. Now, Councillors have not had an opportunity to review this legislation in full. It's only just recently been passed through Parliament. It will have increased authorisation steps, some stricter timeframes, expanded circumstances where a Council must act, so that's a state telling us what we must do, where previously we would have had more autonomy.

The report only came through today. We've not had a chance to be briefed fully, we've not had a chance to workshop real-world scenarios. Generally, there's some internal discussion and then we'll consider adopting.

I can see the need to move this as urgent business to facilitate some processes that we've got underway, but like I've had bugger all time to get into this, but already I'm seeing some very, very, very significant warning signs that while it may create some benefit, it also creates far more potential risks. Like the delegation conditions state that the powers must not be exercised where a decision would contradict a policy or strategy adopted by Council, but these are major powers that Council is delegating to officers and unless we've got people on Council who can allay my fears, I cannot support it.

I see the benefits that it creates, but any time the Government rushes anything, there are unintended consequences that are attached to that and this is one of those items that we cannot foresee exactly what's going to

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happen, but I can guarantee you if we rush this through now, there will be harms to the community as a result and for that I will not support it.

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Barker. Would any other Councillors like to speak to this item? No? Could I just ask a question of officers, please, just in relation to this item? If Councillors were not to approve this motion tonight, what would be the impact of holding it over to February or would a special council meeting be required to make a decision sooner than that?

MR CHRIS PIKE: So through you, Mayor, so we have a couple of Planning Scheme amendments on hand at the moment. Council resolved to progress one at its last meeting. I haven't had the opportunity to talk through the implications. The opportunity to have access to the most up-to-date delegations that are in accordance with the current legislation is helpful when you've got any Planning Scheme amendments on hand. If there was a delay until February, it would just create a delay in the progression of those amendments, so it's not a show stopper, it's just a time delay.

CR STAPLETON: Okay. Thanks, Mr Pike. Councillor Pattison, did you want to make any closing comments?

CR PATTISON: Just to say, as others have said, this has come down quite quickly. When I've had a look at the reforms, the recent planning reforms, through this division 1A part 3, it does seem more of streamlining some processes and some of the key changes that I looked into that have been highlighted some things around clearer process requires Council and others to seek ministerial approval before preparing - I mean, it's all quite complex planning things that I think at the end of the day our officers are the ones that are best to do those - to undertake the activities and that's why we have these allocations to officers to do those.

I encourage my fellow Councillors to support this so that we can - we're not holding things up. A lot of the complaints of local government is that sometimes we get in the way and hold things up and I think we should allow these things to continue on because the next Council meeting isn't until February. Obviously, if it doesn't get through and it's needed, we can always have another Council meeting, we can come back if we need to, but it may be simpler that we pass it tonight. Thank you.

## Draft Transcript

CR STAPLETON: Thanks, Councillor Pattison. We'll now put the motion to a vote. All those in favour? And against? Thanks, Councillors. So the motion is carried 5-2.

We're moving around on the agenda a little. We are now up to item 4.10, which is the Conflict of Interest Records. The purpose of this report is to present conflict of interest records received since the previous Council meeting. An administrative error has been identified in one of these records and officers have prepared an updated recommendation to enable this to be rectified, so if we could please get that shared on the screen. Thanks, officers.

Has everyone had a chance to have a look at that? Yes. So do we have a mover of the recommendation before us, as per the updated motion - well, Councillor Pattison, is that as per the updated motion that was on the screen? Yes. And a seconder? Councillor Walker, thank you. And Councillor Pattison, do you wish to speak to that item? No. Councillor Walker?

CR WALKER: No, thanks.

CR STAPLETON: Do any Councillors want to speak to that item? No. We'll put the motion to a vote. All those in favour? Thanks, Councillors. That item is carried unanimously.

Next up we have one confidential item to consider tonight, so we will now need to close the meeting to the public and end our live stream. A big thank you to everyone who's joined us both in person and online tonight and I'll take this opportunity to wish you all a very merry Christmas and have a safe and happy festive season.

Is the live stream off? Oh, can I have Councillors to move and second a motion to move into confidential, please? Councillor Phelps and Councillor Pattison, thank you. And all those in favour? I might just do that vote again. All those in favour of moving into confidential? One, two, three, four. And against? Thank you, so that motion is carried 4-3. Thanks, Councillors. We'll now turn off the live stream.

(The remainder of the Council meeting was held in confidential session)