

Freedom of Information Part II Statement

Documents and Information Available to the Public

1 January 2026

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Introduction

Part II of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Vic) (**FOI Act**) requires government agencies to publish statements annually to assist the public in accessing information it holds.

The Part II Statement supports:

- the Public Transparency Principles (section 58 of the *Local Government Act 2020*)
- the Surf Coast Shire Council's Public Transparency Policy SCS 051
- section 12 of the FOI Act.

Surf Coast Shire Council (**Council**) is committed to maintaining an environment and culture of transparency and accountability, and supporting public access to the information Council holds.

Council has compiled these statements to provide members of the public with information about:

1. Organisation and Functions of Council
Freedom of Information Act 1982, Section 7(1) (a) (i) (vii)
2. Categories of Documents
Freedom of Information Act 1982, Section 7(1) (a) (ii)
3. Freedom of Information Arrangements
Freedom of Information Act 1982, Section 7(1) (a) (iii) (v)(vi)
4. Publicity Material
Freedom of Information Act 1982, Section 7(1) (a) (iv)
5. Rules, Policies and Procedures
Freedom of Information Act 1982, Section 8

If you cannot locate the information you are seeking after reviewing these statements and searching Council's website, we encourage you to contact Council on 03 5261 0600 or by email to info@surfcoast.vic.gov.au.

Statement 1 - Organisation and Functions

Section 7(1)(a)(i), (vii) of the *FOI Act*

About Surf Coast Shire Council

Council was created by the Order of the Governor in Council on Thursday 15th December 1994, and involved the amalgamation of the former Shires of Winchelsea and Barrabool and part of the former City of South Barwon.

The Surf Coast Shire is located in south western Victoria, 1 hour from Melbourne, 20 minutes south of Geelong and the official start of the iconic Great Ocean Road. The municipality is bounded by the City of Greater Geelong, Golden Plains Shire and Colac-Otway Shire.

The Shire has an area of 1,553 square kilometers and a permanent population of approximately 41,300. It is home to 11 distinct townships: Aireys Inlet, Anglesea, Bellbrae, Deans Marsh, Fairhaven, Freshwater Creek, Jan Juc, Lorne, Moriac, Torquay and Winchelsea.

The Surf Coast is a major lifestyle and visitor destination that is among the fastest growing regional municipalities in Victoria and has undergone significant change over the past 15 years.

More information in relation to economy, population and tourism is available on Council's website:

<https://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/About-us/About-the-Shire>.

Our Council

Council is represented by nine Councillors divided into four wards.

- Otway Ward: three Councillors
- Torquay Ward: three Councillors
- Winchelsea Ward: three Councillors.

Information about Councillors is available on Council's website: <https://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/About-us/Council/Councillors>.

Every four years a local council election takes place to elect Councillors to represent each of the four wards. The next local council elections will be held in 2028.

Executive Management Team

Chief Executive Officer

The principal officer is Ms Robyn Seymour, Chief Executive Officer.

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for establishing and maintaining an appropriate organisational structure for the Council and ensuring the effective and efficient management of the day to day operations of the Shire.

The Chief Executive Officer is also responsible for managing interactions between Council staff and Councillors including by ensuring that appropriate policies, practices and protocols are in place defining appropriate arrangements for interaction between Council staff and Councillors.

The Councillor and Staff Interaction Protocol is available at <https://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/About-us/Council/Policies-plans-strategies-and-reports/Council-Policies>.

Executive Management Team

There are three divisions, each the responsibility of a General Manager. Together they make up the Executive Management Team.

- Strategy and Effectiveness
- Place Making and Environment
- Community Life

Council's Organisational Structure is available on Council's website: [Organisational Structure](#).

Services Provided by Council

The Council has responsibility for managing a broad range of functions, activities and services.

Strategy and Effectiveness Division

- Finance – Revenue, Management Accounting and Financial Accounting
- Integrity and Governance – Risk and Compliance, Legal and Property Services, Procurement and Governance
- People and Culture – Human Resources, Learning and Development, Workplace Health and Safety and Workplace Transformation
- Technology and Information – Digital Transformation Program, Information Technology and Records
- Business Strategy and Performance - Organisation Strategy; Business Improvement; Continuous Improvement; Service Review Framework; Performance Reporting
- Program Delivery – Project Management- Capital and Operational projects

Place Making and Environment Division

- Asset Management and Engineering – Fleet Management, Asset Management, Traffic and Design and Development Engineering
- Environment and Sustainability – Environment, Environmental Sustainability and Waste Management
- Planning and Compliance – Planning Compliance, Statutory Planning and Para Planning and Subdivision
- Integrated Planning – Strategic Planning, Recreational Planning, Social Infrastructure and open Space Planning, Transport Planning and Strategic Initiatives/Housing
- Economic Development, Arts and Tourism – Events, Business Support, Tourism and Arts

Community Life Division

- Operations – Facilities Management; Open Space Operations and Civil Operations
- Community Support – Community Health and Development; Communications & Community Engagement; Customer Experience
- Community Safety – Emergency Management, Ranger Services, Environmental Health, Building Services
- Community Strengthening – Aged, Youth and Access; Early Years; Sports and Facilities Operations, Community Projects and Partnerships

Legislation and Laws Administered by Council

- Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006
- Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012
- Audit Act 1994
- Building Act 1993
- Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005
- Children Youth and Families Act 2005
- Children's Services Act 1996
- Climate Change Act 2017
- Conservation, Forests and Land Act 1987
- Country Fire Authority Act 1958
- Cultural and Recreational Lands Act 1963
- Dangerous Goods Act 1985
- Development Victoria Act 2003
- Disability Act 2006
- Domestic Animals Act 1994
- Domestic Building Contracts Act 1995
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Training Reform Act 2006
- Electoral Act 2002
- Electricity Safety Act 1998
- Emergency Management Act 2013
- Environment Protection Act 2017
- Family Violence Protection Act 2008
- Fences Act 1968
- Filming Approval Act 2014
- Fines Reform Act 2014
- Fire Rescue Victoria Act 1958
- Fire Services Property Levy Act 2012
- Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988
- Food Act 1984
- Freedom of Information Act 1982
- Gambling Regulation Act 2003
- Gender Equality Act 2020
- Graffiti Prevention Act 2007
- Great Ocean Road and Environs Protection Act 2020
- Health Records Act 2001
- Heavy Vehicle National Law 2012
- Heavy Vehicle National Law Application Act 2013
- Heritage Act 2017
- Gambling Regulation Act 2003
- Gender Equality Act 2020
- Graffiti Prevention Act 2007
- Great Ocean Road and Environs Protection Act 2020
- Health Records Act 2001
- Heavy Vehicle National Law 2012
- Heavy Vehicle National Law Application Act 2013
- Independent Broad-Based Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2011
- Local Government Act 1989
- Local Government Act 2020
- Magistrates' Court Act 1989
- Major Transport Projects Facilitation Act 2009
- Marine and Coastal Act 2018
- Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Act 1990
- National Parks Act 1975
- Pipelines Act 2005
- Planning and Environment Act 1987
- Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014
- Professional Engineers Registration Act 2019
- Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012
- Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008
- Public Records Act 1973
- Residential Tenancies Act 1997
- Road Management Act 2004
- Road Safety Act 1986
- Rooming House Operators Act 2016
- Second Hand Dealers and Pawnbrokers Act 1989
- Service Victoria Act 2018
- Sex Work Act 1994
- Sheriff Act 2009
- Sport and Recreation Act 1972
- Subdivision Act 1988
- Summary Offences Act 1966
- Taxation Administration Act 1997
- Tobacco Act 1987
- Transfer of Land Act 1958
- Transport Integration Act 2010
- Valuation of Land Act 1960
- Victorian Data Sharing Act 2017
- Victorian Environmental Assessment

- Council Act 2001
- Victorian Inspectorate Act 2011
- Victorian Local Government Grants Commission Act 1976
- Victoria State Emergency Service Act 2005
- Victorian Data Sharing Act 2017
- Victorian Inspectorate Act 2011
- Victorian Planning Authority Act 2017
- Water Act 1989
- Yarra River Protection (Wilip-Gin Birrarung Murrumbidgee) Act 2017
- Building Regulations 2018
- Country Fire Authority Regulations 2014
- Dangerous Goods (Explosives) Regulations 2021
- Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Regulations 2017
- Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020
- Infringements Regulations 2016
- Land Acquisition and Compensation Regulations 2021
- Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2020
- Local Government (General) Regulations 2015
- Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020
- Local Government (Land Information) Regulations 2021
- Local Government (Long Service Leave) Regulations 2021
- Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020
- Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017
- Planning and Environment Regulations 2015
- Planning and Environment (Fees) Regulations 2016
- Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019
- Public Health and Wellbeing (Prescribed Accommodation) Regulations 2020
- Residential Tenancies (Caravan Parks and Movable Dwellings Registration and Standards) Regulations 2020
- Road Management (General) Reg 2016

- Road Management (Works and Infrastructure) Regulations 2015
- Road Safety Road Rules 2017
- Road Safety (General) Regulations 2019
- Road Safety (Traffic Management) Regulations 2019
- Subdivision (Fees) Regulations 2016
- Subdivision (Procedures) Regulations 2021
- Subdivision (Registrar's Requirements) Regulations 2011

Copies of Victorian legislation are available on the Victorian Legislation website:

<https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/>.

Local Laws

Council's local laws are available on Council's website: <https://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/About-us/Council/Laws-and-regulations>.

Role of Council

The role of Council under section 8 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (**Local Government Act**), is to provide good governance in its municipal district for the benefit and wellbeing of the municipal community in accordance with the overarching governance principles.

The following are the overarching governance principles (section 9 of *the Local Government Act*):

- a. Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law;
- b. priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations;
- c. the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted;
- d. the municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making;
- e. innovation and continuous improvement is to be pursued;
- f. collaboration with other Councils and Governments and statutory bodies is to be sought;
- g. the ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured;
- h. regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision making; and
- i. the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

In giving effect to the overarching governance principles, Council must take into account the following supporting principles:

- The community engagement principles in sections 55 and 56 of *the Local Government Act*
- The public transparency principles in sections 57 and 58 of *the Local Government Act*
- The strategic planning principles in section 89 of *the Local Government Act*
- The financial management principles in sections 101 and 102 of *the Local Government Act*. The service performance principles in section 106 of *the Local Government Act*.

The following relevant documents are available on Council's website:

- [Community Engagement Policy](#)
- [Public Transparency Policy](#)
- [Plans and Strategies](#)
- [Strategic Asset Management Policy](#)
- [Complaints Policy](#)

Decision Making Powers

Council decisions are made in several ways, with the central decision-making process taking place at Council meetings. With Council approval, certain decisions can also be made under delegation by Council officers or by special committees.

In the context of local government, delegation is the giving of decision making power by Council or the Chief Executive Officer to members of staff. The Local Government Act allows both Council and the Chief Executive Officer to delegate to members of staff, by instrument of delegation, certain powers, duties and functions.

All decisions and actions taken under delegation are required to be:

- In the best interests of Council and the community
- Without conflict of interest or personal interest
- Made without coercion or influence
- Recorded in the records management system with supporting documents and an audit trail
- Consistent with the policies, procedures and resolutions of Council
- Within budgetary limits and constraints.

Council Meetings

Council meetings are currently held on the fourth Tuesday of each month.

Council meetings generally begin at 6pm in the Council Chambers at 1 Merrijig Drive, Torquay, unless advertised otherwise.

The agenda for the meeting will be available online by the close of business on the Friday before the meeting. The minutes and recording will be online as soon as possible after the meeting, usually the following week.

Council meetings are streamed live via video and audio.

Agendas and minutes of meetings are available on Council's website.

Council meetings are conducted in accordance with Council's [Governance Rules](#) which Council has developed and adopted as required by section 60 the Local Government Act.

All information in relation to Council meetings is available on Council's website:

<https://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/About-us/Council/Council-Meetings>.

Community Consultation

Consultation is an important means of gathering community feedback. The information assists Council to understand the community's view on a range of subjects. These may include opportunities for feedback on specific local issues through to planning for the future needs of the municipality.

Council consults with the community through planning consultation forums, interviews, resident surveys, invitations for submissions, committees, public meetings, information nights, direct mail to residents, the provision of drafts and exhibits for public comment, onsite meetings, online surveys and at meetings where residents are given the opportunity to comment on any issue.

Additionally Council enables residents to contribute their ideas and opinions on some projects and issues being considered by Council via the online community consultation and engagement page of Council's website:

<https://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/About-us/Your-Say>.

Committees and Organisations

Each year Council appoints representatives/delegates to the following committees/ organisations which provide a two-way information stream and assist in the formulation of policy and the administration of the Council.

Legislated Committees

- Audit and Risk Committee

Advisory Committees

- All Abilities Advisory Committee
- Barwon South West Waste and Resource Recovery Group
- Bells Beach Committee
- Chief Executive Officer Employment Matters Committee
- Positive Ageing Advisory Committee

Corporations with Local Government Representation

- Geelong Regional Library Corporation
- Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism Inc. Board
- G21 Geelong Region Alliance Ltd - Board of Directors

Other Organisations/Committees

- Australian Local Government Association (ALGA)
- Peri Urban Group of Rural Councils
- Municipal Association of Victoria
- MAV Emergency Management Forum
- Mayoral Taskforce Supporting People Seeking Asylum

Community Asset Committees

- Anderson Roadknight Reserve
- Connewarre Reserve
- Deans Marsh Community Hall and Memorial Reserve
- Eastern Reserve
- Globe Theatre
- Modewarre Reserve
- Stribling Reserve

To make enquiries about any of these committees please contact Council via email at info@surfcoast.vic.gov.au. Your query will be directed to the most appropriate officer.

Contacting Council

Main office

1 Merrijig Drive, Torquay
Hours: 8.30am - 5pm (Monday to Friday)

Phone: (03) 5261 0600 or 1300 610 600
Fax: (03) 5261 0525
Postal Address: PO Box 350, Torquay, 3228

Email: info@surfcoast.vic.gov.au
Website: www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au

Visitor Information Centres

Torquay (at the Australian National Surfing Museum)

Surf City Plaza
Beach Road (off Surfcoast Highway), Torquay
Hours: 9am – 5pm everyday (except Christmas Day)
Phone: 1300 614 219
Email: torquayvic@surfcoast.vic.gov.au

Lorne Visitor Centre & Great Ocean Road Heritage Centre

15 Mountjoy Parade, Lorne
Hours: 9am – 5pm everyday (except Christmas Day)
Phone: 1300 891 152
Email: lornevic@surfcoast.vic.gov.au

Anglesea

Anglesea River Bank
Great Ocean Road, Anglesea
Hours: 10am – 1pm everyday (except Christmas Day)
Phone: 1300 614 219
Email: AVisitorInformation@surfcoast.vic.gov.au

Winchelsea

28 Hesse Street (located within the Town Hall)
Winchelsea
Hours: 10am – 2pm, Friday – Sunday (except Christmas Day)
Phone: 1300 891 152
Email: lornevic@surfcoast.vic.gov.au

Statement 2 – Categories of Documents

Section 7(1)(a)(ii) of the FOI Act

Council creates a large number of documents and records in the course of its activities. Council uses an electronic document and records management system to classify, store, access and manage a broad range of electronic and hard copy documents.

The *Public Records Act 1973* requires Victorian public agencies and public officers to 'make and keep full and accurate records' of their decisions and activities. Additionally, all agencies are obligated to 'establish and maintain a records management programs in conformity with standards and codes of best practice as established by the Public Records Office of Victoria (**PROV**). These standards apply equally to paper and electronic record keeping environments.

Council maintains a number of systems to manage and maintain a wide variety of business activities. Many of these systems contain facilities to store and generate documents.

Council uses Content Manager as the Electronic Document Records Management System (**EDRMS**) for the management of records.

Incoming hardcopy documents are scanned onto the EDRMS and held and maintained in accordance with the PROV requirements. Other documents born digitally are maintained in a digital form. All emails sent to info@surfcoast.vic.gov.au are also captured into the EDRMS by Records staff.

Council holds a quantity of hardcopy files. These include:

- Files created prior to the introduction of an EDRMS in 2010
- Files created prior to council's establishment in 1994, including records from Shire of Winchelsea, Shire of Barrabool and City of South Barwon. These hard copy files are stored in off-site storage and are scanned and registered into the EDRMS when access is required
- Planning Permit Application Files
- Planning Enforcement Files
- Contracts and Legal Agreements
- Any other document as required by the *Local Government Act*.

The Classification Scheme used within the EDRMS is based on the Local Government Classification Scheme. It is a three tier system that is linked with PROV retention and disposal requirements and are outlined below:

1. Function - Prescribed descriptors which outline the functions undertaken by Council;
2. Activity - Reflects the activities performed within the Function; and
3. Subject Files - The topics related to the function-activity pairing. Documents are kept in these files.

Surf Coast Shire Council Document Classification Scheme

Level 1 - Function	Description
Building Control	Documents relating to the function of regulating building activities through the administration and enforcement of building permits and regulations and the provision of advice on building related matters either by Council or private building surveyors.
Community Relations	Documents relating to the function of establishing rapport with the community and raising and advancing Council's public image and its relationships with outside bodies, including the media and the public. Includes marketing, media relations, celebrations, ceremonies, speeches as well as official representation at functions and community activities. Also includes community consultation, the management of corporate image and memorials.
Community Services	Documents relating to the function of planning, providing and operating services, programs and resources which provide assistance and support to residents and the local community particularly the aged, disabled, infants, children, adolescents and their families. Also includes council managing and operating community housing and programs.
Contracts and Tendering	Documents relating to the function of managing the process of tendering and contracting for services. Includes the preparation, evaluation and selection of tenders, contracts, quotations and expressions of interest and the continued management of terms and conditions of contracts. Contracts are inclusive of Service contracts, project related contracts and consulting contracts.
Corporate Management	Documents relating to the function of applying broad systematic management planning, monitoring, reporting and review of organisational structures, strategic direction and performance of Council. Includes the development of corporate mission and objectives, the implementation of business framework and continuous improvement programs and the development, monitoring and review of corporate and business plans.
Council Governance	Documents relating to the function of managing Council elections, the establishment of Council boundaries, terms and conditions for Councillors and the management and recording of Council meetings.
Customer Services	Documents relating to the function of planning, monitoring and evaluating the methods and level of services provided to customers by the council, including customer consultation and feedback. Also includes managing the processes in how service is provided and complaints handling procedures.
Economic Development and Tourism	Documents relating to the function of planning for the provision and operation of services, programs and initiatives to deliver positive sustainable economic outcomes and encourage attraction and retention of local and regional agriculture, business, industry, tourism and trade. Includes Council cooperating with government agencies, business, industry groups and the community in the promotion of natural and tourist attractions and regional business and development investment opportunities.
Emergency Management	Documents relating to the function of preventing loss and minimising threats to life, property and the natural environment, from fire, flood and other emergency situations. Includes Council working in cooperation with government agencies, organisations and the community on hazard reduction and mitigation activities and coordinating resources and services during emergency situations and the recovery process.
Environmental Management	Documents relating to the function of managing, conserving, protecting and rehabilitating air, soil, water and native flora and

Level 1 - Function	Description
	fauna. Includes the development, planning and implementation of environmental policy, plans and programs in co-operation with government agencies, organisations and the community.
External Organisations	Documents relating to the function of council interacting with government at all levels, members of parliament, political parties as well as community groups, professional bodies, associations and other organisations for the purpose of exchanging, updating or renewing general contact, administrative, organisational or membership information. Includes the receipt of annual reports, publications, brochures, newsletters and media releases from external organisations. Also includes Council participating in formal inquiries through submissions and providing evidence.
Financial Management	Documents relating to the function of managing Council's financial resources. Includes establishing, operating and maintaining accounting systems, controls and procedures, financial planning, budgeting, estimates of expenditure and receipts, forecasting, and managing revenue from charging and investments. See - RATES AND VALUATIONS for activities relating to managing, regulating, setting and collecting Council income through the valuation of rateable land and other property related charges including special charge schemes. See - GRANTS AND SUBSIDIES for the management of payments to Council from State and Federal Governments for special purposes and from Council to other agencies."
Fleet, Plant and Equipment	Documents relating to the function of acquiring, managing, maintaining and disposing of vehicles, plant, equipment and stores for use by Council. See INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY for records relating to the acquisition, management and disposal of information technologies and telecommunications.
Grants and Subsidies	Documents relating to the function of managing the application, evaluation, awarding and reporting associated with financial assistance for specific programs, projects or services, to Council from government and non-government sources and from Council to other organisations and the community.
Human Resources Management	Documents relating to the function of managing the conditions of employment and administration of Council employees, contractors and consultants and volunteers. Includes employment policies and matters relating to safety and accident prevention procedures and arrangements within Council. Also includes the management of industrial relations, training and development, and arrangements for employee travel.
Information Management	Documents relating to the function of managing Council's information resources through their capture, storage, distribution, retrieval, archiving and disposal. Includes the management of current, in-active and archival records. Also includes requests for and handling of information and the reporting of such matters in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Information Privacy legislation.
Information Technology	Documents relating to the function of managing communications and information technology infrastructure and systems to support the business operations of Council. Includes the evaluation, acquisition, development, implementation and disposal of hardware, software, email, web based technology and communications devices such as telephones and PABX. Also includes data security management.
Land use Planning and Development	Documents relating to the function of establishing, interpreting and implementing strategies, policies and controls to deliver

Level 1 - Function	Description
	sustainable land use outcomes. Includes the administration and enforcement of the Planning Scheme and associated legislation, assessment of land use, development and subdivision applications, planning scheme amendments and the provision of advice on land use related matters.
Legal Services and Legislation	Documents relating to the function of managing legal services as provided to Council. Includes the interpretation and provision of advice regarding legal matters, the drawing up of legal documentation (e.g. Leases, Contracts, Agreements and Memorandums of Understanding), handling legal action and disputes and the management of Council's intellectual property. Also includes Council input into submissions to Government for the development of Acts and Regulations. Council feedback into these submissions may or may not include the provision of legal advice.
Local Laws and Enforcement	Documents relating to the function of upholding State legislation and the development and enforcement of policies, regulations and local laws appropriate to the safety and wellbeing of residents, visitors and the general public. Includes, but is not restricted to domestic animal management, livestock control, traffic management, litter, graffiti, consumption of alcohol in public places and the use of footpaths and road reserves for commercial activities.
Occupational Health and Safety (OHS)	Documents relating to the function of implementing and coordinating occupational health and safety measures to ensure a safe work environment and practices for Council employees. Includes ensuring the safe handling and use of hazardous materials by Council employees.
Parks Reserves and Open Spaces	Documents relating to the function of acquiring, designing, developing, maintaining and disposing of spaces such as; parks, reserves and open space either owned, leased, managed by council. This function also includes the installation and maintenance of infrastructure such as lighting, furniture, playground equipment, public art and memorials, security and access arrangements in these spaces.
Property Management	Documents relating to the function of acquiring, constructing, fitting-out, maintaining, securing and disposing of facilities and premises such as; buildings, Council halls and centres for multi-purpose uses owned, leased, used or otherwise managed by Council.
Public Health Services	Documents relating to the function of managing, monitoring and regulating activities to protect and improve public health. Includes the promotion, management and enforcement of health codes, standards and regulations relating to food, infectious diseases, immunisation, cemeteries, pest control, domestic waste water treatment and substances which impact on public health and safety.
Rates and Valuations	Documents relating to the function of managing, regulating, setting and collecting Council income through the valuation of rateable land and other property related charges including special charge schemes. Also includes the management of property database.
Recreation and Cultural Services	Documents relating to the function of Council arranging, managing and encouraging programs, events and services which promote the arts, sport, cultural and recreational activities. Includes the operation of sporting and cultural facilities such as swimming pools, leisure centres, museums, galleries and libraries and managing the booking and hire of Council's sporting grounds, halls and recreational facilities.
Risk Management	Documents relating to the function of identifying, managing and reducing the risks associated with Council properties,

Level 1 - Function	Description
	equipment and operations. Includes managing the risks to members of the general public, Council personnel, consultants, contractors, volunteers, councillors and liability to the public. Risk Management is inclusive of both strategic and operational risks associated, but not limited to: fraud, litigation and insurance.
Transport and Infrastructure Management	Documents relating to the function of acquiring, planning, designing, constructing and maintaining roads, streets, bridges, drainage and associated infrastructure owned or managed by Council. Includes the planning, monitoring and management of transportation needs and the efficient movement and safety of traffic.
Utilities	Documents relating to the function of Council working with energy, water, telecommunications and television and radio transmission and service providers to assist with the planning, design, installation and maintenance of associated infrastructure. Includes supply and service provision.
Waste Management	Documents relating to the function of providing and operating services, resources and programs related to the management of waste. Includes household and commercial waste collection services, the operation of waste disposal sites and programs and initiatives promoting waste reduction and recycling.

Level 2 - Activity	Description
Access	Activities to provide fair, efficient and impartial access to council services and council facilities. Includes programs to increase and include public access, including access for disabled persons to Council buildings and properties.
Accident and Injury	Accident and Injury Reporting is recorded in PAN Software.
Accreditation	The process of gaining official recognition against a standard, statutory requirements, code, best practice principles, and/or guidelines from a body external to Council. See AUDIT for records relating to audits undertaken to retain accreditation.
Acquisition	The activities associated with purchase, donation, bequest or transfer to Council of property, equipment, vehicles and plant, stores and the collections of libraries, museums, galleries and council records.
Acts & Regulations	The activities associated with the interpretation and implementation of acts, laws, legislation, national and international standards to which Council is subject. Includes Council submissions to proposed changes or the introduction of new acts, laws, legislation, and standards that may impact on Council services and activities.
Advertising	The preparation and publication of information about Council services, activities, plans and achievements in order to promote Council's public image and to inform the community. Includes advertisements and public notices as well as regular communiques such as the Mayor's column.
Advise	The activities associated with seeking and receiving legal or professional advice by Council.
Agreements	The processes associated with the establishment, maintenance, review and negotiation of agreements. Includes agreements between Council and service providers and government agencies which provide services.
Audit	The activities associated with the official checking of Council's records, procedures and operations to ensure compliance with agreed or legislated standards. Includes audits carried out internally or by an independent assessor.

Level 2 - Activity	Description
Awards and Ceremonies	The activities associated with the planning, coordination and management of ceremonies which recognise awards, honours or citizenship.
Banking	The activities involved in the opening and maintaining bank accounts, reconciling accounts and the maintenance of signatories.
Boundaries	The process of monitoring and reviewing boundaries of and within the municipality. Includes wards, districts, localities, suburbs and the boundaries between municipalities.
Budgeting	The process of planning the use of expected income and expenditure over a specified period.
Building Applications	The activities associated with the receipt, assessment and determination of applications for approval or consent under the Building Act and Regulations by Council or private building surveyor.
Claims Management	The activities associated with the management of insurance claims made by or against Council and its personnel. Includes claims made for personal injury, professional indemnity, public liability and property damage or loss.
Client Management	The activity of managing client records including requests and applications for service, assessment of eligibility and change s in services provided to clients.
Community Engagement	Records relating to a planned process with the specific purpose of working with identified groups of people in the community.
Contracts	The activities associated with the establishment, maintenance, review and negotiation of contracts.
Corporate Image	The activities of identifying and designing, and procuring logos, signs, letterhead, corporate uniforms (including caps) and other symbols such as stationery (rulers, pens etc) that incorporate the identity and image of Council.
Council Meetings	The activity associated with the formal decision-making processes of Council, recording the official minutes of meetings, and summarising decisions of the meetings of elected Councillors with action in response by Council staff. Includes attendance records of meetings of elected Councillors. Also includes the processes of tracking actions and when action is due.
Councillor Conditions	The activities associated with managing the general conditions of Councillors.
Creditors	The activity of managing payments to whom Council owes money. Also known as Accounts Payable - We pay them.
Data Management	The activities associated with the building, prototyping, testing of databases. Includes changes to schemas, view and configuration management.
Debtors	The activity of managing Council's debtors. Includes reviewing and the recovery of debts. Also known as Accounts Receivable - They pay Council.
Delegations	The activities associated with giving authority for decisions, activities and expenditure.
Design and Construction	The activities associated with the design and construction of Council property, equipment, infrastructure and facilities. Also includes Council input into the design and construction of the infrastructure that supports essential services such as electricity, gas, telecommunications, water and alternative energy sources.
Discipline	The activities associated with the coordinating and managing disciplinary matters that occur when an employee or Councillor has under-performed or been involved in an incident of misconduct.

Level 2 - Activity	Description
Disposal	The activities associated with the sale, surrender, disposal, destruction or transfer by Council of property, equipment, vehicles and plant, stores, impounded animals and vehicles and the collections of libraries, museums, galleries and council records.
Donations and Sponsorship	The activities associated with the provision and receipt of donations or sponsorship for programs, services or events. Includes financial and in-kind support or the provision of other resources to Council or by Council to other organisations, groups or charities.
Education and Awareness	The activities associated with developing and implementing public awareness and education. Includes Council promoting and participating in other agency's campaigns.
Elections	The activities associated with preparing for, conducting and reviewing the election of councillors to represent residents and ratepayers of the municipality. Also includes the process of electing the mayor.
Employee Files	Individual files for each employee in the organisation.
Employee Performance	The activities associated with developing, managing and measuring the performance of Council employees. Includes the process of setting individual goals and objectives and the appraisal of performance.
Employment and Training Schemes	The activities associated with the implementation and management of employment and training schemes including apprenticeships, traineeships and work experience.
Enquiries	The activities associated with the handling of requests for information about Council and its services. Includes general enquiries, requests for advice and the application for and provision of information on land, buildings and rates payable.
Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)	The activity of managing programs to provide workplaces that are free from all forms of unlawful discrimination and harassment, and which assist members of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) groups to overcome past or present disadvantage.
Establishment	The activities associated with changing and establishing the Council administrative structure and allocation of functional responsibility to business units. Also includes managing positions, duties and reporting relationships between staff.
Evaluation	The process of determining suitability of potential or existing programs, items of equipment, systems or services in relation to meeting the needs of the given situation.
Event Management	Activities relating to the planning, coordination and management of community, cultural, sporting, environmental, major and iconic events in which Council is involved. Includes event management plans and traffic management plans.
Fees and Charges	The activities relating to the establishment, setting and review of fees and charges for services rendered by Council.
Freedom of Information	The activity of managing access to information held by Council in accordance with Freedom of Information legislation.
Geographical Information Systems (GIS)	The activity of managing land and environmental information that incorporates map base, property information, environmental data, street and reserve naming and house numbering, as well as comprehensive population analysis and forecasting systems, used to support strategic planning.

Level 2 - Activity	Description
Government Enquiries	The activities associated with liaising with state and Federal governments, including Royal Commissions and Ombudsman in relation to formal inquiries and investigations. Includes Council participation in the form of submissions and providing evidence. May not be on matters that are directly related to Council business or operations.
Grant Application	The activities associated with Council applying for funding or grants from government and non-government sources. Includes preparation of applications, notification of successful and unsuccessful applications, execution of agreements and subsequent reporting on successful applications. Also includes agreements, claims, reporting and acquittals for re-occurring funding.
Grant Facilitation	The activities associated with Council assisting local community groups, sporting clubs and organisations or individuals in the evaluation and application for financial assistance from government and non-government grant and funding programs.
Grant Provision	The activities associated with the receipt, assessment and awarding of grants from Council to other organisations and the community. Includes reports received by Council from successful applicants on the utilisation of funds.
Greetings	The activities associated with preparing, sending and receiving messages of appreciation, congratulations or condolence by Council.
Grievances	The activities associated with the handling and resolution of grievances. Includes handling complaints over perceived discrimination, or those over the work environment, organisation and distribution of work, peers, supervisors, or subordinates. Also includes complaints regarding the provision of access to opportunities such as training, equipment, promotion or higher duties.
Health Monitoring	Records associated with checking, observing and recording of health monitoring, may include monitoring of Ergonomics, hearing conservation, medical examinations, personal protective equipment and rehabilitation.
Health Promotion	Promotion of healthy lifestyles to Council employees.
Implementation and Installation	The activities associated with the installation and operation of information technology programs, systems and hardware.
Industrial Relations	The activity of managing an agreed set of employment conditions and level(s) of payment applicable to all employees in a particular occupation, set either by mutual consent or through arbitration. Includes negotiations conducted to obtain determinations, agreements or awards, industrial actions and industrial disputes settled within Council or by an external arbiter.
Infringements	Activities involved in the issuing and management of fines or penalties for breaches of laws, regulations, notices or permit conditions.
Infringements and Prosecutions	The function of implementing and coordinating occupational health and safety measures to ensure a safe work environment and practices for Council employees. Includes ensuring the safe handling and use of hazardous materials by Council employees.
Insurance	The activities associated with Council taking out insurance premiums to cover accident, injury, death, damage or loss. Includes administration of insurance policies and their renewal. Also includes Council requesting and receiving proof of appropriate insurance cover from contractors as a condition of engagement.
Intellectual Property	The activities involved in managing Council's intellectual property, both published and unpublished. Includes copyright,

Level 2 - Activity	Description
	patents and trademarks.
Interest Groups	The function of council interacting with government at all levels, members of parliament, political parties as well as community groups, professional bodies, associations and other organisations' purely for the purpose of exchanging, updating or renewing general contact, administrative, organisational or membership information. Includes the receipt of annual reports, publications, brochures, newsletters and media releases from external organisations.
Internal Ombudsman	The activity of appointing an official to investigate public complaints about Council decisions or activities, and to provide and independent review of complaints.
International Relations	The activities associated with managing relations with other parties in other countries, including Sister City.
Investigations	The activity of investigating and advising of breaches of laws, regulations, notices or permit conditions prior to the issue of an infringement or penalty.
Investments	The activity of managing capital that has been invested by Council.
Leasing	The activity of leasing plant, equipment, vehicles, properties or facilities by Council from another individual or organisation.
Leasing-Out	The activity of Council leasing out or licensing the use of land, facilities or premises to other individuals or organisations.
Liaison	The activities associated with maintaining regular general contact between Council and other organisations, other councils, state and federal government, professional associations and community groups for the expressed purpose of discussing membership, building networks and relationships, professional development, the sharing informal advice and/or the building of a body of knowledge in a particular issue relating to this functional area.
Licensing, Permits and Registrations	The activities associated with the application, assessment and determination of permits, licences and registrations. Includes successful and unsuccessful applications, cancellations, transfers, renewals, suspensions and revocations.
Litigation	The activities involved in managing lawsuits or legal proceedings between Council and other parties.
Loans	The activity of borrowing money to enable Council to perform its functions and exercise its power.
Local Government	The function of council interacting with government at all levels, members of parliament, political parties as well as community groups, professional bodies, associations and other organisations' for the purpose of exchanging, updating or renewing general contact, administrative, organisational or membership information. Includes the receipt of annual reports, publications, brochures, newsletters and media releases from external organisations. Also includes Council participating in formal inquiries through submissions and providing evidence.
Local Laws	The activities associated with the formulation, adoption, implementation and review of local laws.
Mail Management	The activities associated with the receipt and dispatch of mail. Includes mail received and sent through postal and courier services.
Maintenance	The activities associated with the upkeep, repair, servicing and preservation of property, equipment, infrastructure, facilities and the collections of libraries, galleries and council records.
Manual Handling	Conditions of safe work for manual handling and weight lifting rules.
Media Liaison	The activities associated with establishing a relationship between the media and Council. Includes cultivating media contacts, coordinating access to the media, authorising and issuing press releases and briefings, and organising media

Level 2 - Activity	Description
	interviews.
Meetings	The activities associated with the management of gatherings initiated by Council or where Council is formally represented to discuss and resolve issues and matters relating to the operation and business of Council. Includes both internal and external meetings and is also inclusive of Committees where Council has a delegated representative. Includes establishment, appointment and selection of participants, terms of reference, notices of meetings, agendas, minutes and reporting of actions and decisions.
Membership	Activities associated with the administration and management of memberships to Council affiliated groups associations. Includes regular circulars to members.
Monitoring	The activities associated with checking, observing and recording the operation and performance of Council equipment, infrastructure and systems and activities and events within the community which have the potential to impact on health and safety.
Naming	The activities associated with naming of any place, building or object under the jurisdiction of Council. Includes the naming of townships, suburbs, localities, parks, reserves, topographical features, roads, streets and buildings.
Organisations	The activities associated with implementing and measuring performance of Council. Includes the development and implementation of continuous improvement activities such as benchmarking and indicators and measures for performance.
Organisational Performance	The function of council interacting with government at all levels, members of parliament, political parties as well as community groups, professional bodies, associations and other organisations' for the purpose of exchanging, updating or renewing general contact, administrative, organisational or membership information. Includes the receipt of annual reports, publications, brochures, newsletters and media releases from external organisations. Also includes Council participating in formal inquiries through submissions and providing evidence.
Payments	The activity of managing the payment of Council rates and property charges. Includes the issuing of notices, assessment of applications for concession, deferral or waiver, administering the frequency and methods of payment and the management and recovery of outstanding rates.
Payroll	The activities associated with managing the payroll process. Includes timesheets, adjustments, deductions, group certificates, superannuation and variations of salaries.
Planning	The activities associated with the development of plans and strategies which outline specific objectives and goals and how they are to be achieved.
Planning Scheme Amendments	The activities associated with the receipt, assessment and determination of applications for amendment to the Surf Coast Planning Scheme either through the instigation of Council or at the instigation of a member of the public. Also includes notifications, submissions and outcomes of state government amendments to the planning scheme (known as VC amendments)
Policy	The activities associated with the formulation, adoption, implementation and review of Council policies, guidelines, standards, codes of practice etc.
Presentations	Activity of giving presentations for training, community relations or sales purposes. Includes speeches and multi-media

Level 2 - Activity	Description
	presentations.
Privacy	The activities associated with managing the collection, handling, use and disclosure of information in accordance with Information Privacy legislation.
Procedures	The process of developing, implementing and reviewing standard methods of operation to activities undertaken by Council according to formulated policy. Includes procedures, work instructions, guidelines etc.
Programs	The activity of delivering services and programs by Council or by agencies in association with Council. Includes instances where Council is not the responsible agency but may coordinate or be a participant in the service or program. Does not include the management of client records.
Promotion	Activities associated with the promotion of the local area, business and tourism industries.
Property History	The activities associated with managing the identification and ownership of land within the municipality. Includes the allocation of street numbers and property addresses and the updating of the legal owners of properties and their information.
Prosecutions	The activities involved in managing legal proceedings between Council and other parties relating to breaches of laws, regulations, notices or permit conditions.
Public Reaction	The activities associated with handling public reaction and complaints about Council and its services. Includes expressions of complaint, congratulations or appreciation received from the public and redirecting those not related to Council.
Public Relations	The activities associated with having works, irrespective of format, issued for distribution or sale, internally or to the public. Includes drafting, production, printing, marketing and supply of publications by Council.
Quotations	The activities associated with the receipt, evaluation and selection of quotations for goods and services for Council.
Rate Classifications	The activities associated with the setting, management and implementation of classifications used to identify the use of land and to determine the calculation of municipal rates. Includes assessment of requests for the application or removal of particular rate classifications to be applied to land.
Recovery	The activities associated with Council seeking recovery of overdue municipal rates and property charges. Includes debt collection services and sale of land.
Recruitment	The activities associated with process of recruiting personnel to Council. Includes justifications, advertising of positions, handling of applications, interviews, selection, culling and appointment.
Registers	The activity of managing summary records including inventories, lists, indexes and registers.
Reporting	The activities associated with providing formal responses to requests or situations as a requisite of Council policy or statutory requirement. Includes discussion papers, financial reports, proposals, reports and returns.
Representation	The activities associated with the representation of Council by Councillors or employees at events or impromptu meetings. Does not include meetings where Council has formally representation or membership.
Research	The activities associated with the receipt, collection and interpretation of information or data to discover facts, provide evidence or support a position. Includes Council providing input into as well as undertaking surveys, questionnaires, statistics etc.

Level 2 - Activity	Description
Risk Assessment	The activity of managing the analysis of identified and potential risks, the rate of severity of risks, and also the measures to prevent their impacts.
Road Classifications	The activities associated with identifying roads within Surf Coast Shire in accordance with Council's road hierarchy classifications. Classifications identify roads according to their location, use, traffic flows, links and thus the authority (i.e. Council, VicRoads) or who is responsible for their management, maintenance, upgrade and control. Road classifications can range from Highway, Main and Link Road which are generally the responsibility of VicRoads to Collector, Access and Private Road for which Council or associated landholders are responsible. Classifications also include discontinuance and closures, permanent, temporary or partial. Activities also include changes in a road's classification instigated by Council or other authority.
Security	The activities associated with measures taken to protect people, premises, equipment or information from accidental or intentional damage from unauthorised access.
Separations	The activity of managing the departure of employees or Councillors from Council due to resignation, retirement, retrenchment, redeployment or termination.
Service Honours	The activities associated with the planning, coordination and management of ceremonies which recognise awards, honours, citizenship or are part of solemn or important public or state occasions.
Social Activities	The activities associated with the planning, coordination and management of social activities for Council employees including those arranged by staff social clubs.
Subdivisions	The activities associated with the receipt, assessment and determination of applications for the subdivision and consolidation of land, including the creation, variation and removal of easements.
Submissions	The preparation and submission of a formal statement (e.g. Report, statistics etc.) supporting a case or opinion held by Council which is submitted to another Council or organisation, or within Council.
Supply	Activities associated with the supply of electricity, gas, water and telecommunications by providers to Council and the community.
System Integration Templates	This classification was formerly known as KAPISH TRIM ENHANCEMENT TEMPLATES. Updated on 12/2/2021 to incorporate the use of Authority Templates for system integration as well as the Kapish TRIM enhancement Templates. This includes Templates for Folder Wizard and Word Add-In.
Taxation	The activity of managing compulsory monetary contribution demanded by a government for its support and levied on incomes, property, goods purchased etc.
Tendering	The activities involved in receiving and assessing tenders for the supply, sale or purchase of goods and services. Includes development of tender specifications, managing the tender process and the evaluation of tender submissions received. See- CONTRACTS AND TENDERING - CONTRACTS for the formalisation and execution of contract with successful bidder.
Training and Development	The activities associated with internal/external training and development opportunities available to Council employees and Councillors including conferences, courses, seminars and staff induction. Includes attendance, supporting materials and

Level 2 - Activity	Description
	evaluation.
Travel	The activity of managing travel arrangements for Council employees or councillors.
Trusts	The activities associated with managing trusts. Includes trusts dedicated to the creation and maintenance of parks and reserves, or funds and assets held by trustees on behalf of investors.
Usage	The activities associated with administering the use of plant, equipment, vehicles, properties and facilities. Includes arrangements for booking, hire, rental and requests for use and instructions on use. Also includes infringements or penalties incurred by Council personnel using Council vehicles.
User Support	The activity of providing advice and technical support to end users to resolve problems, difficulties and undertake improvements in information technology.
Valuations	The activities associated with the valuing of property, equipment, vehicles and plant, stores and other assets owned by Council. Includes the valuation of rateable land within the municipality for the purpose of determining rates and charges to be levied.
Visits and Receptions	The activities involved in the planning, coordination and management of arrangements and functions associated with visits by dignitaries and officials for special occasions such as announcements, openings, etc.
Welfare	The activity of managing the provision of support and counselling services to employees.
Workers Compensation	The activity of managing the provision of workers compensations to employees.

Statement 3 – Freedom of Information Arrangements

Section 7(1)(a)(iii), (v), (vi) of the *FOI Act*

Public Access to Information

A range of documents are available for public inspection at Council's main office, or for download from Council's website.

Type	Description
Council Records	Agendas, minutes, live stream and video recordings of Council Meetings
	Reporting from Committees to Council e.g. Delegated Committees and Community Asset Committees
	Terms of Reference or Charters for Council committees
Local Laws	Community Amenity Local Law
	Common Seal and Miscellaneous Penalties Local Law
	Governance Rules
Policies, Strategies, Reports	Council Plan, Annual Report, Strategies, Council Policies, Budget
Organisation	Organisation Chart
Councillors	Councillor Payment Summaries
	Councillor Profiles
Council Elections	Election Campaign Donation Returns
	Candidate Information (during elections)
Donations and Grants	Grant Programs
Planning	Development Plans, Reference and Incorporated Docs
	Development Contributions
	Current Planning Applications
Property	How Rates are Calculated
	Current Planning Applications
	Development Contributions
Businesses	Council's Terms and Conditions
	Awarded Tenders
Council operations	Events Information
	Waste management and recycling information
	Information Relating to Families, Positive Ageing, Childcare and Pets
	Tourism and Local Area – Variety of Information
	Parks and Reserves - Listing
Registers	Register of Building Occupancy Permits
	Register of Authorised Officers
	Register of Delegations
	Register of Personal Interests
	Register of Leases
	Register of Overseas or Interstate Travel
	Register of Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality
Process/Other Information	Application Processes for Approvals, Permits, Grants, Access to Council Services
	Community Engagement Processes
	Complaints Handling Processes

Type	Description
	Practice Notes
	Online Payments and Applications
	Employment with Council
	Lodging a Request/Complaint
	Economic and Population Profiles
	Information Relating to Access (maps and guides)

If you are interested in viewing a document but have been unable to locate it on Council's website you can contact Council using one of the following methods:

- Phoning Customer Service on 03 5261 0600.
- Emailing info@surfcoast.vic.gov.au.
- Via Council's website using the 'Lodge a Request', 'Make a Complaint' or Freedom of Information application online forms at <https://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/About-us/Contact-Us>.

The FOI Act gives you a right to request access to documents that Council holds. If you cannot find the document you require, call us before you make a Freedom of Information application as we may be able to make it available.

Please note that Council's website is not available to view in other languages however a translation service is available at customer service through TIS (Translating and Interpreting Service).

Information Not Available

Some Council information may not be made publicly available. This will only occur if the information is confidential information by virtue of the *Local Government Act* or any other Act; or if its release would be contrary to the public interest.

"Confidential information" is defined in section 3 of the *Local Government Act*. It includes the following types of information.

Type	Description
Council business information	Information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released.
Security information	Information that is likely to endanger the security of Council property or the safety of any person if released.
Land use planning information	Information that is likely to encourage speculation in land values if prematurely released.
Law enforcement information	Information which would be reasonably likely to prejudice the investigation into an alleged breach of the law or the fair trial or hearing of any person if released.
Legal privileged information	Information to which legal professional privilege or client legal privilege applies.
Personal information	Information which would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs if released.
Private commercial information	Information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that relates to trade secrets or that would unreasonably expose the business,

Type	Description
	commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage if released.
Confidential meeting information	Records of a Council and delegated committee meetings that are closed to the public to consider confidential information
Internal arbitration information	Confidential information relating internal arbitration about an alleged breach of the councillor code of conduct.
Councillor Conduct Panel confidential information	Confidential information relating to a Councillor Conduct Panel matter
Confidential information under the 1989 Act	Information that was confidential information for the purposes of section 77 of the <i>Local Government Act 1989</i>

Freedom of Information Arrangements

What Is Freedom of Information?

The FOI Act gives you the right to request information held by:

- Ministers
- State government departments
- Local councils
- Most semi-government agencies and statutory authorities
- Public hospitals and community health centres
- Universities, tafe colleges and schools.

The FOI Act gives you:

- a. the right to access documents about your personal affairs and the activities of government agencies; and
- b. the right to request that incorrect or misleading information held by an agency about you be amended or removed.

What information is available?

You have a right to apply for access to documents that are held by an agency which is covered by the FOI Act.

It is not only documents in paper form that are accessible. The word 'documents' covers a broad range of media including maps, films, microfiche, photographs, computer printouts, emails, computer discs, tape recordings and videotapes.

You may ask for a copy of the document, or you may request access to the document, for example, to see a film or to get a transcript of a tape recording.

What information is not available?

Not all information is automatically available.

The FOI Act allows an agency to refuse access to certain documents or information. These documents or information are often called 'exempt' documents.

In some cases you may be refused access to an entire document. Alternatively, you may be given access to a

document with exempt information deleted.

Some documents that you may not be able to access include:

- a. cabinet documents
- b. some internal working documents
- c. law enforcement documents
- d. documents covered by legal professional privilege, such as legal advice
- e. documents containing personal information about other people
- f. documents containing information provided to an agency in confidence
- g. documents containing information provided to an agency by a business
- h. documents which are covered by secrecy provisions in other legislation.

This should not deter you from asking for access as each document is assessed on its merits before a decision is made.

[Do I Need to Use Freedom of Information to Access Documents?](#)

Many documents are available outside the requirements of the FOI Act. In these instances the request will not be processed under FOI.

Documents you may obtain without an FOI application include information which is available publicly, such as on a public register, and information which is available for purchase.

Please note that if you require documents for a court hearing or litigation, speak to your legal adviser about other methods available to gain access in those circumstances.

[Before making a request](#)

Before you make a formal request for access to documents, there are a number of things to consider.

Is the information you seek in a document?

The FOI Act gives you the right to request access to documents. Generally, you cannot request information that does not exist in an existing document or answers to questions under the FOI Act. Remember, a request must be for information contained in documents.

Identify the agency that has the document you seek

Contact the agency to confirm if it has the document before making your request. The agency may be able to tell you how to obtain the document without a formal request, or if another agency has the document.

Is the document you seek publicly available?

For example, it may be published on an agency's website or available for purchase from the agency.

Why do you want access to the document or information?

Consider informing the agency of your reason for seeking access to the document or information, or if you plan to use the document or information for a specific purpose. This may assist the agency to consider whether it can informally release the document or information to you without the need for a formal request.

[How Do I Make a Request?](#)

Any individual can make a request, or with written authorisation, enable another person to make a request on their behalf (for example a solicitor).

For an application to be valid it must:

- Be in writing
- Clearly describe the documents being requested
- Include an application fee or evidence of qualification to have the fee waived or reduced (health care card, pension card, financial hardship).

A copy of the application form can be found on council's website at <https://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/About-us/Council/Policies-plans-strategies-and-reports/Freedom-of-Information>.

Applications can also be emailed to info@surfcoast.vic.gov.au.

Costs Associated with Making a Request under the Freedom of Information Act 1982

All valid FOI requests must be written and accompanied by an application fee of \$33.60 (from 1 July 2025).

The only exception for an application fee to be waived is when hardship or concession status is applied (evidence needs to be included). Fees and charges are imposed by the FOI Act and *Freedom of Information Regulations 2019*, not Council.

All access charges and fees pertaining to FOI Requests are published on the Council website. Access charges relate to the costs incurred in granting access to the documents you have requested.

All fees and charges are exempt from GST.

Where the fee for access is assessed as likely to exceed \$50.00, the applicant will be asked to pay a deposit before the search for documents is begun.

Customer service will contact you to arrange payment of the application fee.

Note: Fees are updated annually on 1 July.

Right of Appeal

If an applicant is dissatisfied with the Freedom of Information Officer's decision to refuse access to a document; defer access to a document; not waive or reduce an application fee (whether or not the fee has already been paid by the applicant) or not amend a document (in accordance with section 39), the applicant may appeal the decision to the Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner (OVIC) for review.

Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner
PO Box 24274
Melbourne VIC 3001

Telephone: 1300 006 842 (1300 00 OVIC)

Email: enquiries@ovic.vic.gov.au

Web: www.ovic.vic.gov.au

Statement 4 – Publicity Material

Section 7(1)(a)(iv) of the FOI Act

Publications Available by Subscription or Free Mailing Lists

Online Communication

Council uses a range of communication channels to keep residents informed on the latest news. Some of the ways in which we do this are through our website, social media channels and newsletters. Council also uses local media to inform the community about local projects.

Council Websites

Council's website is updated regularly with important and useful information: www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au.

Social Media

Members of the public are also able to connect with Council via the following social media channels:

- [Facebook](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)
- [YouTube](#)

Newsletters

Council publishes a range of reports, handbooks and newsletters for residents, businesses and visitors. These are available for download, or on request. Some are also available at Council libraries.

Publications

Council produces a number of policies, strategies and plans to help guide decisions and to achieve outcomes and goals. These documents can be downloaded from Council's website: <https://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/About-us/Council/Policies-plans-strategies-and-reports>.

Statement 5 – Publications & documents available for inspection – Freedom of Information Act

Section 8 of the FOI Act

In addition to documents made available for public inspection, *the FOI Act* requires Council to make available certain documents for inspection and purchase.

This statement applies to documents that are provided by Council for the use or guidance of Council or its officers in:

- making decisions or recommendations;
- providing advice to persons outside Council with respect to rights, privileges, benefits, obligations penalties; and
- enforcing Acts or schemes administered by Council where a member of the public might be directly affected by that enforcement.

Copies of all documents are made available for inspection and for purchase by members of the public. A large number of the documents are available on Council's website and copies can be arranged by contacting Council using one of the following methods:

- Phoning Customer Service on 03 5261 0600.
- Emailing info@surfcoast.vic.gov.au.
- Via Council's website using the 'Lodge a Request' at <https://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/About-us/Contact-Us>.

The list below is an example of some of the documents provided by Council for the use or guidance of Council and its officers. This is not an exhaustive list.

Council Reports and Plans

- Council Plan, including Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan
- Annual Budget
- Annual Report
- Surf Coast Planning Scheme

These documents are available on Council's website: <https://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/About-us/Council/Policies-plans-strategies-and-reports>.

Laws and Regulations

- Community Amenity Local Law
- Common Seal and Miscellaneous Penalties Local Law

Council's local laws are available on Council's website: <https://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/About-us/Council/Laws-and-regulations>.