



GANNAWARRA
Shire Council

Council Meeting

MINUTES

Wednesday, 18 June 2025

6:00 PM

Senior Citizens Centre

Kerang

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**MINUTES OF GANNAWARRA SHIRE COUNCIL
COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT THE SENIOR CITIZENS CENTRE, KERANG
ON WEDNESDAY, 18 JUNE 2025 AT 6:00 PM**

PRESENT: Cr Garner Smith (Mayor)
Cr Ross Stanton (Deputy Mayor)
Cr Daniel Bolitho
Cr Lisa Farrant
Cr Keith Link
Cr Pat Quinn

IN ATTENDANCE: Chief Executive Officer
Manager People and Culture
Governance Officer

Gallery: Nil

Media: Nil

1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Acknowledgement of Country video was played.

2 OPENING DECLARATION

Cr Keith Link read the Opening Declaration

3 APOLOGIES

Cr Charlie Gillingham

4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Daniel Bolitho

Seconded: Cr Lisa Farrant

That the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 21 May 2025 be confirmed.

CARRIED

5 DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Geoff Rollinson, Chief Executive Officer declared a Material Conflict of Interest in Item 12.1 – CEO Contract – Exercise of Option to Extend

6 BRIEFING SESSIONS

6.1 RECORD OF COUNCILLOR BRIEFING - 21 MAY 2025 TO 18 JUNE 2025

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents to Council written records of Councillor Briefings in accordance with Clause 31 of the Gannawarra Shire Council Governance Rules.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Ross Stanton

Seconded: Cr Keith Link

That Council note the records of Councillor Briefings from 21 May 2025 to 18 June 2025.

CARRIED

7 BUSINESS REPORTS FOR DECISION

7.1 ADOPTION OF THE 2025/2026 BUDGET AND FEES AND CHARGES SCHEDULE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council has prepared the 2025/2026 Annual Budget (the Budget), in accordance with Section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act). The Budget seeks to balance the demand for services and infrastructure with the community's capacity to pay.

The proposed increase in rate revenue for the 2025/2026 financial year is 3.00% in line with the order by the Minister for Local Government under the Fair Go Rates System.

A key financial performance indicator for the budget is that there is an underlying result of \$478 K deficit. This means Council is showing a sizeable deficit in the operating budget and asset renewal is dependent on grant funding to maintain the current asset condition status.

There are no new borrowings and Council is debt free, the indebtedness ratio is 8.6%, the asset renewal ratio is 94.9%.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Ross Stanton

Seconded: Cr Daniel Bolitho

That Council

1. Adopt the 2025/2026 Budget, having advertised the proposed budget, having received and reviewed feedback;
2. Adopt the 2025/2026 Fees and Charges Schedule, having advertised the draft fees and charges schedule, having received and reviewed feedback; and
3. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to change Council's 2025/2026 Fees and Charges Schedule where statutory fees and charges are altered by the State Government.

CARRIED

7.2 ADOPTION OF REVENUE AND RATING PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Local Government Act requires each Council to prepare a Revenue and Rating Plan to cover a minimum period of four years following each Council election. The Revenue and Rating Plan establishes the revenue raising framework within which the Council proposes to work.

The Revenue and Rating Plan will set out decisions that Council has made in relation to rating options available to it under the Local Government Act to ensure the fair and equitable distribution of rates across property owners. It will also set out principles that are used in decision making for other revenue sources such as fees and charges.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Daniel Bolitho

Seconded: Cr Ross Stanton

That Council adopt the Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-2029.

CARRIED

7.3 COUNCIL POLICY NO. 105 - MEMORIALS ON ROADSIDES AND PUBLIC OPEN SPACES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council officers have undertaken a review of Council Policy 105 - Memorials on Roadsides and Public Open Spaces, which provides framework for the approval, installation, maintenance, and removal of memorials on Council-managed land. It ensures memorials reflect significant local contributions or events, are safely and appropriately placed and align with public safety and land use objectives.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Pat Quinn

Seconded: Cr Daniel Bolitho

That Council adopts Policy No. 105 - Memorials on Roadsides and Public Open Spaces.

CARRIED

7.4 COUNCIL POLICY NO. 151 – ROAD DISCONTINUANCE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

New Council Policy No. 151 – Road Discontinuance is proposed to establish a framework for the discontinuance of roads within the Gannawarra Shire municipality, ensuring that such actions are undertaken in a consistent, transparent, and legally compliant manner.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Ross Stanton

Seconded: Cr Daniel Bolitho

That Council adopts the following Council Policy No. 151 – Road Discontinuance.

CARRIED

7.5 EMERGENCY SERVICES AND VOLUNTEERS FUNDING LEVY REPORT IN RESPONSE TO URGENT ITEM OF BUSINESS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Effective from 1 July 2025, the Victorian Government will replace the Fire Services Property Levy (FSPL) with the Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund (ESVF) following the passage of the Fire Services Property Amendment (Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund) Bill 2025 by the Victorian Parliament on 16 May 2025.

This new levy aims to provide broader funding for emergency services and comprises a fixed charge plus a variable component based on the property's CIV.

Local Councils are responsible for collecting the levy through property rates notices on behalf of the state government.

This overview report has been prepared in response to the urgent business item passed at the May 2025 Council meeting.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Keith Link

Seconded: Cr Daniel Bolitho

That Council:

1. Receive and note the Emergency Services and Volunteers Funding (ESVF) Levy urgent business response paper.

CARRIED

7.6 PETITION - ADDRESSING FLOOD MITIGATION AND RECOVERY IN KERANG WEST: COUNCIL RESPONSE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report responds to a petition received in April 2025 regarding the clearing and maintenance of the Loddon River floodway and Sheepwash Creek. While Council continues to focus on levee rehabilitation and other flood resilience measures within its remit, it is important to clarify that waterway management responsibilities, including vegetation removal or modification, are governed by State legislation and lie with authorised land and waterway managers.

Council officers have met with petition representatives and engaged with the North Central Catchment Management Authority (NCCMA) to better understand community concerns. While Council acknowledges the local impacts of vegetation and flood risk, its role is limited to advocating for sustainable, long-term flood mitigation outcomes within the bounds of applicable legislation.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Pat Quinn

Seconded: Cr Ross Stanton

That Council

1. Note the petition seeking action on clearing vegetation in the Loddon River floodway, Sheepwash Creek and remedial works for the Kerang township levee;
2. Reaffirm that responsibility for works within designated waterways lies with the relevant land managers and regulatory authorities, and that Council does not have a role in the direct management or maintenance of these waterways.
3. Continue progressing detailed design work for remedial upgrades to the Kerang Levee to make the project investment-ready for future flood mitigation funding; and
4. Support informed community advocacy that aligns with current policy settings and legislative responsibilities.

CARRIED

8 URGENT BUSINESS

Nil

9 NOTICES OF MOTION

Nil

8 QUESTION TIME

Nil

CONFIRMED

9 DELEGATES REPORTS

11.1 DELEGATES REPORTS

The Councillors provided updates on their portfolios and meetings they had attended.

COUNCILLOR COMMITTEES 2024/2025	
COMMITTEE	COUNCILLOR
Murray River Group of Councils (MRGC)	Cr Garner Smith, Mayor
Loddon Campaspe Group of Councils (LCGC)	Cr Garner Smith, Mayor
Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance (CVGA)	Cr Daniel Bolitho
Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee (MFMPC)	Cr Lisa Farrant
Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC)	Cr Lisa Farrant
Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)	Cr Ross Stanton
Audit and Risk Committee (ARC)(x 2)	Cr Garner Smith Cr Ross Stanton
Transport Committee including Rail Freight Alliance	Cr Pat Quinn
Rural Councils Victoria (RCV)	Cr Charlie Gillingham
Timber Towns Victoria (TTV)	Cr Pat Quinn
Community Halls Community Asset Committee	Cr Keith Link

12 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

Chief Executive Officer, Geoff Rollinson left the meeting at 6:54pm.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Ross Stanton

Seconded: Cr Lisa Farrant

That Council considers the confidential report(s) listed below in a meeting closed to the public in accordance with Section 66(2)(a) of the Local Government Act 2020:

12.1 CEO Contract - Exercise of Option to Extend

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 3(1)(f) and (h) of the Local Government Act, and the Council is satisfied that discussion of this matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it deals with personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs and confidential meeting information, being the records of meetings closed to the public under section 66(2)(a).

CARRIED

The Meeting closed at 6.56pm.

The Minutes of this Meeting were confirmed at the Meeting of the Gannawarra Shire Council held on 16 July 2025.

Cr Garner Smith

CHAIR