

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday 18 February 2026
6:00 pm

Glasshouse, Kerang



GANNAWARRA
Shire Council

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CONFIRMED

**MINUTES OF GANNAWARRA SHIRE COUNCIL
COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT THE GLASSHOUSE, KERANG
ON WEDNESDAY 18 FEBRUARY 2026 AT 6:00 PM**

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Director Infrastructure and Development
Manager People and Culture
Governance Officer

GALLERY: Nil

MEDIA: 1

CONFIRMED

1 WELCOME TO COUNTRY

The Acknowledgment of Country video was played.

2 OPENING DECLARATION

Cr Daniel Bolitho read the Opening Declaration.

3 APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Apologies received from:

- Mayor Garner Smith;
- Cr Charlie Gillingham; and
- Chief Executive Officer, Geoff Rollinson.

4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Daniel Bolitho
Seconded: Cr Lisa Farrant

That the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 17 December 2025 be confirmed.

CARRIED

5 DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Cr Pat Quinn declared a Material Conflict of Interest in Item 7.3 – Referrals for Land Surrender in Macorna.

6 BRIEFING SESSIONS

6.1 RECORD OF COUNCILLOR BRIEFING – 3 DECEMBER 2025 TO 3 FEBRUARY 2026

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 Lisa Farrant

Seconded: Cr Pat Quinn

That Council note the Records of Councillor Briefings from 3 December 2025 to 3 February 2026.

CARRIED

CONFIRMED

7 BUSINESS REPORTS FOR DECISION

7.1 POLICY REVIEW - WELCOME TO COUNTRY VIDEO CLIP AND PROTOCOL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A revised Gannawarra Welcome to Country Video Clip has been created by Council in partnership with the Kerang Elders and Leaders Group, Northern District Community Health and Mallee District Aboriginal Services.

Filming of the revised video clip took place at Lake Meran in September 2025, and the revised video has since been approved by all partners.

As a Welcome to Country is an official Aboriginal custom, a Welcome to Country Video Clip Protocol sits alongside the clip to authorise its wider use where an Elder is not available to conduct a Welcome to Country, or where it is impractical to have an Elder from that Country attend to conduct a Welcome, such as at the monthly Council Meeting.

The Welcome to Country Video Clip Protocol has been reviewed by partners.

The reviewed Protocol will be adopted by Northern District Community Health and Mallee District Aboriginal Services to ensure that the use of the Gannawarra Welcome to Country Video Clip recognises and pays respect to the Welcome to Country custom of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as well as acknowledging their ongoing connection to Country.

The Welcome to Country Video Clip and Protocol form part of Council's commitment outlined in the Gannawarra Reconciliation Action Plan 2024-2026.

An official launch of the revised Gannawarra Welcome to Country Video Clip will be held at the Glasshouse, Sir John Gorton Library, Kerang on Thursday, 20 March 2026 commencing at 4:00pm. This event will provide the local Aboriginal community with the opportunity to come together with the wider community to view the clip and to celebrate and recognise the children, young people and Elders that feature in the video.

Following the adoption of the Welcome to Country Video Clip Protocol and the official launch on 20 March, the revised video would then be released for use as intended.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Pat Quinn

Seconded: Cr Daniel Bolitho

That Council endorse the revised Welcome to Country Video Clip Protocol.

CARRIED

7.2 GLASS RECYCLING AND KERBSIDE REFORM

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report discusses the proposal to introduce a kerbside glass collection service for Gannawarra Shire in line with upcoming state recycling reforms. The Shire covers 3,735–3,736 km² and has a dispersed population, meaning that adding a separate glass collection service would require trucks to travel long distances for relatively small volumes.

Recent waste audits (2025) indicate that 6% of garbage bins and 24% of mixed recycling bins currently contain glass. The mixed recycling from the Shire is processed at the Echuca Material Recovery Facility (MRF), which also receives recycling from New South Wales, where glass-only collection is not mandated.

Financial modelling shows that a separate kerbside glass service would increase costs for Council and ratepayers, while operational and regulatory uncertainties add further risk. Enhancing glass drop-off facilities, expanding participation in the Container Deposit Scheme (CDS), and implementing community education are more practical, cost-effective, and sustainable approaches to managing glass recycling in Gannawarra Shire.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Daniel Bolitho

Seconded: Cr Lisa Farrant

That Council:

1. Does not commit at this time to the implementation of a mandatory, standalone kerbside glass recycling service by 1 July 2027, as the Service Standards required under the Victorian Government's *Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) Act 2021* have not yet been set or released.
2. Investigates and supports alternative and complementary approaches to glass diversion across the Shire, including but not limited to expanded drop-off facilities, recovery partnerships, and other non-kerbside options, where they provide effective, accessible, and cost-efficient outcomes.
3. Joins the Glass Advocacy Group, an alliance of over 30 councils advocating for practical and cost-effective alternatives to the mandatory glass-only kerbside bin rollout.
4. Advocate for the inclusion of additional glass types (e.g. wine and spirit bottles) in the Container Deposit Scheme (CDS).
5. Writes to the Minister for Environment, Minister for Local Government, Member for Murray Plains, the members for Northern Victoria Region of the Legislative Council and DEECA outlining Council's position.
6. Notes the significant number of local governments challenging the State Government's mandated kerbside glass delivery date and its Glass Regulatory Impact Statement.
7. Notes the risks to Council of prematurely implementing a new, additional kerbside waste and recycling service in the absence of certainty around service delivery requirements that are to be confirmed in the as yet unreleased service standards.

CARRIED

Cr Pat Quinn left the Meeting at 6:17pm.

7.3 REFERRALS FOR LAND SURRENDER IN MACORNA

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In November Council adopted the Surrender of Land Policy (the Policy). This was a first step in the process to work towards purchase and consolidation of land parcels in the Macorna subdivision located on the north side of the Macorna Pyramid Road and east of the Kerang Macorna Road. A map is provided in the detail of the report.

This report has been provided as a next stage of this process and includes recommendations to assist in gathering preliminary information and costings for the project as a whole.

This information gathered will then be brought back to Council and will guide further decisions around the next phases of the project.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Daniel Bolitho

Seconded: Cr Keith Link

That Council

- 1. Obtain a formal valuation of the properties within the Macorna estate;**
- 2. Write to landholders outlining the option to surrender parcels in the Macorna estate.**

CARRIED

Cr Pat Quinn returned to the Meeting at 6:22pm.

7.4 RESPONSE TO ACTIONS – KOONDROOK LOCAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Koondrook & District Local Development Strategy (LDS) has been completed following extensive community engagement, technical analysis and collaboration between DEECA, Urban Enterprise, Council officers and the LDS Steering Committee. The Strategy establishes a five-year framework to support economic diversification, tourism activation, agribusiness innovation, improved liveability and long-term township planning for Koondrook and District.

This report provides additional information as requested by Council at the Ordinary Meeting of Council in December 2025.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council note the information in the report as it relates to the implementation of the Koondrook and District Local Development Strategy.

MOTION

Moved: Cr Lisa Farrant

Seconded: Cr Pat Quinn

- 1. That Council note the information in the report as it relates to the implementation of the Koondrook and District Local Development Strategy.**
- 2. That Council endorse the Koondrook Local Development Strategy as a locally developed plan for the long term benefit of the Koondrook Community.**

CARRIED

7.5 QUARTERLY BUDGET REPORT - QUARTER ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2025

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council was last presented with its quarterly budget report in November 2025; this was for the September 2025 quarter.

This report has seen a refresh of the format with greater detail and reaffirm alignment with the statements and content with the Financial Statements and to reinforce to the Councillors and public about the financial health of Council.

As of 31 December 2025, Council is showing an underlying surplus YTD of \$8.85 million, which is \$1.87 million more than budgeted for the same period. Income has a variance of \$0.39 million, and there is a \$1.47 million variance for expenditure YTD.

Council is forecasting a \$4.33 million underlying deficit for 30 June 2026, which is an increase in the deficit of \$3.85 million on the 2025/26 adopted budget.

The adopted capital budget for 2025/26 is \$19.320 million. There has been an increase in the forecasted capital works budget by \$1.481 million to recognise multiyear projects carried over from 2024/25. Anticipated budgeted spend by 30 June 2026 is \$20.801 million. 38% of the forecasted capital works budget had been either spent or committed by 31 December 2025. This was 30% as of 30 September 2025.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Daniel Bolitho

Seconded: Cr Lisa Farrant

That Council receive and note the report outlining the 2025/2026 Quarterly Budget Report as of 31 December 2025, including the budget amendments for the financial year to date.

CARRIED

7.6 G12-2025 DRFA FLOOD BETTERMENT WORKS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines the proposed G12-2025 DRFA Flood Betterment Works, which aim to enhance the resilience of Council infrastructure impacted by recent flood events. The projects are funded under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) and will deliver targeted improvements to reduce future flood risk and improve community safety and road network resilience.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Lisa Farrant

Seconded: Cr Pat Quinn

That Council Award contract G12-2025 DRFA Flood Betterment Works to Eco Infrastructure & Engineering Pty Ltd for the lump sum amount of \$697,729.69 (excluding GST), not subject to rise and fall.

CARRIED

7.7 COMMUNITY ASSET COMMITTEE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) provides for councils to establish Community Asset Committees for the purpose of managing community assets within the municipality and requires the CEO to submit an annual report to Council in relation to the activities and performance of Community Asset Committees.

This report relates to the activities and performance of the Community Asset Committees for 2024/25.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Lisa Farrant

Seconded: Cr Keith Link

That Council receives and notes the report on activities and performance of the Community Asset Committees.

CARRIED

CONFIRMED

7.8 GANNAWARRA URBAN GROWTH STRATEGY ADDENDUM

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council adopted the Gannawarra Urban Growth Strategy 2023 (GUGS) at its Ordinary Meeting of Council on 16 August 2023. The purpose of the adopted GUGS is to support the future rezoning of residential and industrial land in Cohuna, Kerang, the Kerang Lakes and Koondrook by undertaking an evidence-based assessment of urban land supply and demand, to prepare population forecasts, and reconcile them within a set of implementable strategic planning directions that are consistent with State, regional and local policies.

Since the adoption of the Gannawarra Urban Growth Strategy, several significant policy and regulatory changes have been introduced by the Victorian Government which directly impact residential, commercial and industrial development through Victoria. These changes include:

- Plan for Victoria
- Victoria's Housing Statement
- A suite of regulatory reforms that apply to residential development

In addition, the Gannawarra Council Plan 2025 - 2029 has been released.

These changes have necessitated a review of the Gannawarra Urban Growth Strategy to ensure that it remains relevant, is evidence-based, and will support sound and orderly planning for the municipality.

Following a competitive tender process SGS Economics and Planning was appointed to undertake an independent peer review of the GUGS, and, with oversight of Council officers, prepare an Addendum which would address the policy changes and provide the clear direction required.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Daniel Bolitho

Seconded: Cr Lisa Farrant

That Council adopts the Addendum to the Gannawarra Urban Growth Strategy 2023

CARRIED

7.9 DRAFT GANNAWARRA RESOURCE RECOVERY AND WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Council has engaged a consultant to undertake a review of Council's current waste management practices, alongside state and federal government policies, to prepare a 10-year Resource Recovery and Waste Management Strategy.

The Draft Strategy is now presented to Councillors for consideration and feedback, following which endorsement will be sought to release the Draft Strategy for community consultation.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Pat Quinn

Seconded: Cr Daniel Bolitho

That Council:

- 1. Endorse the draft Gannawarra Resource Recovery and Waste Management Strategy to undertake public exhibition for a period of 28 days from 19 February 2026 to 19 March 2026.**
- 2. Endorse the waste survey for release.**

CARRIED

7.10 DELEGATION UPDATE - S5 INSTRUMENT OF DELEGATION TO CEO & S6 INSTRUMENT OF DELEGATION TO MEMBERS OF STAFF

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Gannawarra Shire Council has functions and duties which it must perform and powers which it may exercise, pursuant to the *Local Government Act 1989* (the 1989 Act), the *Local Government Act 2020* (the 2020 Act) as well as a range of other Acts and regulations. Legislation referred to in the attached instrument of delegation provides for Council to delegate certain powers, duties or functions to members of staff rather than having all functions and duties dealt with by Council resolution.

Delegations are regularly reviewed to reflect changes in legislation, regulations and Council's organisational structure.

This report addresses delegations to members of Council staff.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Daniel Bolitho

Seconded: Cr Lisa Farrant

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

- 1. To delegate to the members of Council staff holding, acting in or performing the duties of the offices or positions referred to in the attached *Instrument of Delegation to Members of Staff*, the powers, duties and functions set out in that instrument, subject to the conditions and limitations specified in that Instrument.**
- 2. That the instrument comes into force immediately when signed by the Chief Executive Officer.**
- 3. On the coming into force of the instrument all previous delegations to members of Council staff (other than the Chief Executive Officer) are revoked.**
- 4. That the duties and functions set out in the instrument must be performed, and the powers set out in the instruments must be executed, in accordance with any guidelines or policies of Council that it may from time to time adopt.**

CARRIED

7.11 COUNCIL POLICY REVIEW (NO. 74 & NO. 83)**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Council officers undertake regular reviews of Council policies to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and that they are reflective of current practices. This report addresses the following policies and Council documents which have recently been reviewed:

- Policy No. 083 – Email, Internet and Intranet
- Policy No. 074 – Information Privacy and Health Records

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Pat Quinn

Seconded: Cr Daniel Bolitho

That Council endorse the following reviewed policies:

1. Policy No. 074 – Information Privacy and Health Records; and
2. Policy No. 083 – Email, Internet and Intranet Management.

CARRIED

7.12 COUNCIL POLICY REVIEW (NO. 129 & NO. 137)**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Council officers undertake regular reviews of Council policies to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and that they are reflective of current practices. This report addresses the following policies which have recently been reviewed:

- Policy No. 129 – Diversity
- Policy No. 137 – Abuse and Neglect

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Daniel Bolitho

Seconded: Cr Pat Quinn

That Council:

1. Endorse the revised Policy No. 129 Diversity.
2. Rescind Policy No. 137 Abuse and Neglect.

CARRIED

8 URGENT BUSINESS

8.1 KOONDROOK CARAVAN PARK

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council received a letter from the lessees of the Koondrook Caravan Park (KCP) on 24 December 2025, that they are relinquishing the lease of the KCP on 2 April 2026.

The KCP adjoins the Koondrook Retreat (KR) where the glamping tents are situated on crown land. The two tourism facilities are operated by separate entities on separate lease arrangements.

The KCP in Keene Street is on prime land on the banks of the Murray River and could be utilised for several different purposes in either Council or private ownership.

The recommendation is to remain in Council ownership, to continue to run it as a caravan park and to combine the operating arrangements for the KCP and KR.

MOTION

Moved: Cr Lisa Farrant

Seconded: Cr Pat Quinn

That Council admit Urgent Business into the Agenda as distributed.

CARRIED

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Pat Quinn

Seconded: Cr Lisa Farrant

That Council

- 1. Continue to operate the land in Keene Street Koondrook as a Caravan Park;**
- 2. Review operating arrangements and assets at the Koondrook Caravan Park and report back to Council;**
- 3. Prepare legal documentation for the lease of the Koondrook Caravan Park, including the Koondrook Retreat facility; and**
- 4. Arrange interim arrangements for the operation of the Koondrook Caravan Park from 2 April 2026 until the new lease arrangements for the Koondrook Caravan Park begin operation.**

CARRIED

9 NOTICES OF MOTION

Nil

10 QUESTION TIME

Nil

11 DELEGATES REPORTS

11.1 DELEGATES REPORTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council has memberships with peak Local Government associations, local and regional forums, along with statutory committees. Some memberships require that a Councillor be appointed to act as a delegate to formally represent Council, typically in a voting capacity.

This Agenda item provides an opportunity for Council appointed delegates to present a verbal update on any pertinent matters arising from Council's membership with the following associations.

COUNCILLOR COMMITTEES 2025/2026	
COMMITTEE	COUNCILLOR
Murray River Group of Councillors (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 (MFMP)	Cr Lisa Farrant
Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC)	Cr Keith Link
Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)	Cr Ross Stanton
Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) (x2)	Cr Garner Smith Cr Ross Stanton
Transport Connections	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
Community Resilience Committee	Cr Keith Link

12 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

Nil

The Meeting Closed at 7:22pm.

The Minutes of this Meeting were confirmed at the Meeting of the Gannawarra Shire Council held on 18 March 2026.

Deputy Mayor Ross Stanton

CHAIR

CONFIRMED