



# Councillor Briefing Notes

Tuesday 7 April 2026 at 9.30 am

273 Main Street, Bairnsdale 3875

## Attendance

### Mayor

Cr Jodie Ashworth

### Deputy Mayor

Cr Tom Crook

### Councillors

Cr Arthur Allen

Cr Sonia Buckley

Cr Barry Davis (Online)

Cr Joanne Eastman

Cr Bernie Farquhar (Online)

Cr Ian Trevaskis

Cr John White

### Council Officers

Fiona Weigall

Stuart McConnell

Sarah Johnston

Chris Stephenson

Chief Executive Officer

General Manager Assets and Environment

General Manager Business Excellence

General Manager Place and Community

## Recognition of Traditional Custodians

Council acknowledges the Traditional Owners and custodians of this land and pays deep respect to all First Nations peoples and communities with enduring cultural connections to East Gippsland, who have cared for and nurtured Country for tens of thousands of years.

We honour and celebrate the rich diversity, living cultures, and ongoing contributions of all First Nations peoples who live, work, visit, and play across East Gippsland.

We also acknowledge the many First Nations communities who, together, continue to shape and contribute to the region we know as East Gippsland. The place where we, as Local Government, deliver services and support to our community.

## Apologies

Nil

## Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Nil

## Councillor Briefing Session

### External Presentation

#### 1.1 Budget Workshop No 7 - Valuer General's Office presentation and Rating differentials

Councillors workshopped and discussed information provided by Valuer-General Victoria as part of developing the 2026/27 budget, including how property values are assessed and how rates are set across different property types.

The discussion covered how Council balances the need to fund services and infrastructure with community affordability, including consideration of different rate options and approaches used to manage changes from year to year. Councillors also reflected on the importance of understanding the financial pressures facing households and businesses, supporting people experiencing hardship, and clearly explaining how valuations, rates and Council decisions fit together. The session also focused on how Councillors may wish to apply differential rating to the three rate categories of General Rates; Commercial and Industrial Rates; and Farm Rate. It was noted that Council will continue to carefully consider these matters as the budget is developed and will keep the community informed.

### Assets and Environment

#### 2.1 Capital Works and Major Projects Status as at 28 February 2026

Councillors were briefed on and discussed the status of the Capital Works and Major Projects program as at 28 February 2026, including how projects are progressing and how challenges are being managed. It was noted that some projects are taking longer due to external factors, and that Officers are adjusting timeframes, maintaining key assets and improving reporting to support transparency and informed decision making.

#### 2.2 Specific Project Status

Councillors were briefed on and discussed the construction-readiness of a specific project. Based on this discussion Officers will now prepare a report for the May meeting of Council, so that the matter can be formally resolved.

## Place and Community

### 3.1 Regional Marketing Strategy

Councillors were briefed on the status of a draft Regional Marketing Strategy, which is being developed to provide a more coordinated way to promote East Gippsland as a place to visit, live, work and invest.

The discussions focused on a four-pillar approach to regional marketing with the strategy being informed by market research. Councillors also discussed how regional marketing can support local businesses, tourism and the broader economy, while also recognising the importance of managing this work carefully, affordably and within a partnership framework.

Councillors also noted that those stakeholders involved in discussions which have informed the draft strategy will now have the opportunity to review the draft.

### 3.2 Council Asset Condition

Councillors were briefed on an independent assessment of the condition of a Council asset.

#### Attendance

Cr Barry Davis left the online meeting at 3.50 pm and did not return.

## Reports to Future Council Meeting

### 4.1 Civic Recognition and Functions Policy

Councillors were briefed on the draft report, Civic Recognition and Functions Policy. Councillors noted the draft Council report, which will be submitted to a future Council Meeting for consideration.

### 4.2 Addition of Roads to Council's Register of Public Roads

Councillors were briefed on the draft report, Addition of Roads to Council's Register of Public Roads. Councillors noted the draft Council report, which will be submitted to the **21 April 2026** Council Meeting for consideration.

### 4.3 CON2026 1795 - Supply and Delivery of Granular Pavement Materials

#### Confidentiality Notice

The information contained in **Confidential Attachment 1 – Contract Award Summary and Attachment 2 – Tender Evaluation Report (CON 2026 1795 Supply and Delivery of Granular Pavement and Quarry Rock Materials)** is confidential under section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* because it relates to: (g) Private Commercial Information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that—(ii) if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

Pursuant to section 66(5)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, if released, the information discussed or considered in relation to this agenda item includes detailed tender evaluation and pricing information, the disclosure of which would unreasonably expose the businesses to disadvantage.

Councillors were briefed on the draft report, CON2026 1795 - Supply and Delivery of Granular Pavement Materials. Councillors noted the draft Council report, which will be submitted to the **21 April 2026** Council Meeting for consideration.

### 4.4 CON2026 1794 - Supply of Plant and Equipment for Emergency Response and Recovery Works

#### Confidentiality Notice

The information contained in the Confidential Attachment 1 – **Contract Award Summary and Attachments 2, 3 and 4 – Tender Evaluation Report (CON2026 1794 Supply of Plant and Equipment for Emergency Response and Recovery Works)** and Appendix is confidential under section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* because it relates to: (g) Private Commercial Information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that—(ii) if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

Pursuant to section 66(5)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, if released, the information discussed or considered in relation to this agenda item includes financial and commercial information, the disclosure of which would unreasonably expose the businesses to disadvantage, including by revealing information to competitors.

Councillors were briefed and discussed the draft report, CON2026 1794 - Supply of Plant and Equipment for Emergency Response and Recovery Works. Councillors noted that it will be submitted to the **21 April 2026** Council Meeting for consideration.

## Meeting Close

**Meeting closed at:** 4.37 pm

**Approved by:** Fiona Weigall Chief Executive Officer