



WELLINGTON
SHIRE COUNCIL

The Heart of Gippsland

RESOLUTIONS IN BRIEF ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday 4 March 2025, commencing at 5:00 PM

To be read in conjunction with the Council Meeting Agenda 4 March 2025.

Cr Scott Rossetti (Mayor)

Cr Cindy Madeley (Deputy Mayor)

Cr Catherine Bannerman

Cr Liz Foat

Cr Edward Lowe

Cr Carmel Ripper

Cr Garry Stephens

Cr John Tatterson

Cr Geoff Wells

David Morcom, Chief Executive Officer

Arthur Skipitaris, General Manager Corporate Services

Andrew Pomeroy, General Manager Development

Chris Hastie, General Manager Built and Natural Environment

Kim Salleh, Manager Communications & Media

Catie Thomson, Governance Officer

**ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL
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1. APOLOGIES

NIL

2. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT/S OF INTEREST

NIL

3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING/S

3.1. ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING

ACTION OFFICER: MANAGER ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE AND GOVERNANCE

PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM THE GALLERY
NIL

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopt the minutes and resolutions of the Ordinary Council Meeting of 18 February 2025.

COUNCILLOR BANNERMAN / COUNCILLOR FOAT

That Council adopt the minutes and resolutions of the Ordinary Council Meeting of 18 February 2025.

CARRIED

4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

ACTION OFFICER: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

ITEM	FROM MEETING	COMMENTS	ACTION BY
NIL			

5. ACCEPTANCE OF LATE AND URGENT ITEMS

NIL

6. NOTICE/S OF MOTION

NIL

7. RECEIVING OF PETITION OR JOINT LETTERS

7.1. OUTSTANDING PETITIONS

ACTION OFFICER: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

ITEM	FROM MEETING	COMMENTS	ACTION BY
NIL			

7.2. RECEIPT OF PETITION: GET LIGHTS INSTALLED AT STEAD STREET RESERVE SALE

ACTION OFFICER: GENERAL MANAGER CORPORATE SERVICES

PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM THE GALLERY
NIL

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive the attached petition regarding installing lights at Stead Street Reserve Sale and refer it to the General Manager Built & Natural Environment for consideration and response.

COUNCILLOR TATTERSON / COUNCILLOR MADELEY

That Council receive the attached petition regarding installing lights at Stead Street Reserve Sale and refer it to the General Manager Built & Natural Environment for consideration and response.

CARRIED

8. INVITED ADDRESSES, PRESENTATIONS OR ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

COUNCILLOR STEPHENS acknowledged the visit of the Governor of Victoria, Professor the Honourable Margaret Gardner AC, to the Shire. Councillor Stephens and the Mayor met with the Governor of Victoria in the Yarram area. The Governor of Victoria was impressed with the reception and dance presentation she received at Wulgunggo Ngalu and the Star of the South (Southerly Ten) team in Yarram who provided an overview of the project. They also visited the mural by Heesco which the Governor's predecessor commissioned and which was donated back to the community.

COUNCILLOR STEPHENS acknowledged Esso/ExxonMobil's great information session which occurred at the Yarram Country Club on Tuesday 25 February in relation to the decommissioning project for the Bass Strait. Of the nineteen platforms, twelve will be decommissioned, whilst the remaining gas platforms will remain for some years. Councillor Stephens encouraged all interested parties to review the available YouTube film clips on the extraordinary process which will be undertaken from 2027 to remove the platforms using The Pioneering Spirit vessel 'Polaris Explorer' measuring approximately 385m in length.

COUNCILLOR FOAT acknowledged the Governor of Victoria’s tour of Gippsland’s agricultural sector in the Wellington Shire. The trip consisted of 2 parts – a visit to the Hussey Farm who produce Australia’s finest gourmet baby spinach leaf and salad mixes and the Hillside Dairy which operates a robotic dairy. The Governor was impressed by the tours and what is ‘on the doorstep’ in Gippsland. Councillor Foat thanked Hussey Farm and their employees as well as Alister, his family and employees at Hillside Dairy.

COUNCILLOR BANNERMAN also acknowledged an aspect of the Governor of Victoria’s visit with the tour of the ASH Timber Mills in Heyfield. The native hardwood industry has been shut down, but ASH Timber Mills has impressively found a way to pivot away from the native hardwood industry and launch into new avenues, including the ‘mass timber’ which is compounded hardwood timber being created into structures that can be used for infrastructure construction, as opposed to concrete and steel.

COUNCILLOR TATTERSON attended the launch of the new project to support wellbeing in regional communities which was also attended by Councillor Lowe and Councillor Ripper. It is a new research project funded by the Gardiner Foundation with research led by the University of Canberra with support from the University of Southern Queensland. The studies will occur across the Stratford area and then be applied across the broader Wellington Shire and other areas, for which the learnings will be applied across the whole State of Victoria. Councillor Tatterson congratulated the Stratford Community Group for achieving the funding and thanked the Gardiner Foundation for making it happen.

COUNCILLOR ROSSETTI acknowledged the significance of the Governor of Victoria’s visit, highlighting that the Governor sees and experiences, in great detail, the many activities and initiatives undertaken by local community and industry in the regions. The Governor also made a major visit to the RAAF Base and the Gippsland Agricultural Centre in Bairnsdale where there was a round table to discuss the region’s challenges. One of the common challenges identified during many of the visits was education. Given the Governor’s background as a former Vice Chancellor at Monash University and RMIT, she showed particularly interested in this area and offered some suggestions for moving forward. Councillor Rossetti believes the Governor of Victoria will return with a deep understanding of what is occurring in the region and can bring this level of awareness to those in power in Melbourne, particularly the importance of how regional industries, such as those in Gippsland, contribute to the standard of living experienced by those living in the cities.

9. QUESTION/S ON NOTICE

9.1. OUTSTANDING QUESTION/S ON NOTICE

ACTION OFFICER: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

ITEM	FROM MEETING	COMMENTS	ACTION BY
NIL			

10. DELEGATES REPORT

COUNCILLOR TATTERSON provided an update on the Southern East Australian Transport Strategy (SEATS) meeting held in Queanbeyan on 20 and 21 February, that he attended with Councillor Arthur Allen from East Gippsland Council, Councillor Adele Pugsley from Latrobe City Council, Mayor John Schelling from South Gippsland Shire Council and Councillor Ben Lucas from Baw Baw Shire Council. It was a very informative and productive couple of days.

A presentation was conducted by the Managing Director of Freight Victoria and the Manager of Policy and Strategy which focussed on freight and travel time. SEATS identified their priority projects and Freight Victoria acknowledged SEATS in advocating for progress on the Traralgon bypass and issues with Longwarry and further east, as well as acknowledging the bridge strengthening works that have been undertaken on the Sale alternate truck route to allow transport vehicles to take the shorter route, rather than rattle through Sale.

Councillor Tatterson was the Acting Chairperson for the last meeting and Councillor Patricia White from Shoalhaven Council has been elected Chairperson for the upcoming 2 years. Councillor Tatterson will forward the minutes from the meeting to Chris Hastie, General Manager Built and Natural Environment.

COUNCILLOR FOAT and COUNCILLOR MADELEY provided an update on the Gippsland Art Gallery Advisory Group Committee which was held last night where they reviewed the upcoming Autumn exhibition launch and discussed future exhibition strategies. The Autumn exhibition will launch on Friday evening and is open to the public on Saturday and features a diverse range of works including the 'Gifted 3' which is a collection of gifted artworks donated to the gallery. The art of Annemieke Mein, Borun and Tuk collection, Portraits from the Collection and 'Bad Kids' project, a collaborative project with Regional Arts Victoria. The most notable exhibition this time around is Peter Wegner's 'The Centenarian Series', a series of 100 portraits of individuals over one hundred years of age.

Part of last night's committee meeting was to discuss 'blockbuster' exhibitions. Coming up in winter will be the Turner Exhibition. These blockbuster exhibitions attract substantial attention and large audiences and play a key role in promoting and increasing the visibility of the Gippsland Gallery with much economic benefit to Sale and surrounds during the time of these exhibitions, as observed by many business owners and operators in Gippsland.

COUNCILLOR BANNERMAN provided an update on the discussions and considerations of the Timber Towns Victoria committee which met on 20 February 2025. It kicked off with a presentation from the Healthy Forests Foundation, an "up and coming" advocacy group with a vision to shape how forests are looked after.

Discussions then focussed on illegal logging with the idea to submit to the Federal Government a requirement that all timber be tested for point of origin to avoid receipt of imported timber that is purporting to be Australian grown and would likely not meet Australian standards or conditions for timber growing, employment and forestry standards. The committee also discussed the impact of feral animals on the forestry industry and, in particular, the growing deer populations. The committee discussed the need to move to formally recognise deer as feral animals.

Lastly, the committee is requesting that all Timber Town Victoria members and their associated councils remember to register, when possible, any concerns about roads in the Timber Industry Roads Evaluation Study (TIRES) Report that goes to the State and Federal Government to build the case for funding of roads and bridges from State and Federal funding.

COUNCILLOR BANNERMAN provided an update on the Audit and Risk Committee which was held on 24 February 2025. It was a lengthy meeting in which many matters were covered. Some of the highlights included the election of the Chairperson, Chris Badger; receipt of a Human Resources management report; receipt of a report from Council's new Coordinator of Work, Health and Safety which covered his initial observations of Council's

Work, Health and Safety position; adoption of a thirteenth strategic risk onto the risk profile matrix (a statutory and regulatory requirements risk); and receipt of financial reports. The committee received a very positive update on Council's level of protection against threats in the ICT and Cybersecurity space. The Committee also discussed the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework, a state government mandated requirement which is very heavy on Council resources to self-report against ever increasing parameters.

11. GENERAL MANAGER CORPORATE SERVICES

11.1. ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS REPORT

ACTION OFFICER: MANAGER ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE AND GOVERNANCE

PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM THE GALLERY
NIL

RECOMMENDATION

That Council note and receive the attached Assembly of Councillor records for the period 10 February 2025 to 23 February 2025.

COUNCILLOR MADELEY / COUNCILLOR WELLS

That Council note and receive the attached Assembly of Councillor records for the period 10 February 2025 to 23 February 2025.

CARRIED

11.2. COUNCILLOR EXPENSE AND ADMINISTRATION POLICY

ACTION OFFICER: MANAGER ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE AND GOVERNANCE

PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM THE GALLERY
NIL

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopt the attached Councillor Expense and Administration Policy.

COUNCILLOR TATTERSON / COUNCILLOR MADELEY

That Council adopt the attached Councillor Expense and Administration Policy.

CARRIED

11.3. UPDATED APPOINTMENT TO COMMITTEES & DELEGATES 2025

ACTION OFFICER: GENERAL MANAGER CORPORATE SERVICES

PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM THE GALLERY

NIL

RECOMMENDATION

That Councillors be formally appointed to Council Committees in accordance with the attached updated Register of Council Committees and Advisory Groups 2024-2025.

COUNCILLOR LOWE / COUNCILLOR BANNERMAN

That Councillors be formally appointed to Council Committees in accordance with the attached updated Register of Council Committees and Advisory Groups 2024-2025.

CARRIED

12. GENERAL MANAGER BUILT AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

12.1. DRAFT ROAD MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW FOR COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

ACTION OFFICER: MANAGER BUILT ENVIRONMENT

PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM THE GALLERY

NIL

RECOMMENDATION

That Council;

- 1. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer or delegate to issue a notice to amend the Road Management Plan, as attached, pursuant with section 10 of the Road Management (General) Regulations 2016; and*
- 2. Release the Draft Road Management Plan 2025, as attached, for public comment for a minimum period of 28 days.*

COUNCILLOR TATTERSON / COUNCILLOR BANNERMAN

That Council;

- 1. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer or delegate to issue a notice to amend the Road Management Plan, as attached, pursuant with section 10 of the Road Management (General) Regulations 2016; and**
- 2. Release the Draft Road Management Plan 2025, as attached, for public comment for a minimum period of 28 days.**

CARRIED

13. FURTHER GALLERY AND ONLINE COMMENTS

Gallery comments are an opportunity for members of the public to raise any particular matter they wish. This allows those in the gallery to speak directly to Councillors but is not a forum designed for open discussion or debate. We will listen respectfully to what you have to say and make the commitment that if your query requires a written response, we will advise you that a response will be forthcoming, and a copy of that response will be circulated to all Councillors.

This is not a forum for members of the public to lodge complaints against individuals, including Councillors and staff, particularly as that individual gets no public right of reply to any matter raised. We take complaints seriously, and in line with the guidance from the Victorian Ombudsman and the local Government Inspectorate, we request that any specific complaint against an individual be put in writing. This way, your concern can be properly dealt with while ensuring fairness to all parties concerned.

If you wish to speak, we remind you that this part of the meeting is being recorded and broadcast on our website. Council's official Minutes will record that you have spoken to Council and the subject you spoke to Council about but will not record specific comments. We ask you to state your name in full, where you are from, and you have three minutes.

ONLINE COMMENTS

The following online Council Meeting question was received via the Wellington Shire Council website:

ALAN HEYWOOD, SALE – A question was raised in writing regarding status of Council follow-up on the damage to the Wurruk levee bank, following Mr Heywood's attendance at the last 2 Council meetings.

The Chief Executive Officer read out Mr Heywood's written question, in full. The CEO has spoken with the General Manager Development, Andrew Pomeroy, who indicated Council has tried to contact Mr Heywood. Andrew will contact Mr Heywood again tomorrow to provide a response.

FURTHER GALLERY COMMENTS

MR IAN PREE, TRARALGON – Addressed Council in relation to his concerns around Covid vaccines which Mr Pree believes to be experimental gene therapy; government responses to Constitutions and the concept of Civic freedom; Gippsland identity and Sale heritage, following his first presentation at the 18 February 2025 Ordinary Council Meeting.

14. IN CLOSED SESSION

COUNCILLOR TATTERSON / COUNCILLOR STEPHENS

That the meeting be closed to the public to consider confidential information pursuant to section 66(2) of the Local Government Act 2020 and defined in section 3(1) as involving personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs.

CARRIED

The live streaming of this Council meeting came to a close at 5.46pm

IN CLOSED SESSION

COUNCILLOR STEPHENS / COUNCILLOR FOAT

Details redacted.

CARRIED

COUNCILLOR TATTERSON / COUNCILLOR STEPHENS

That Council move into open session and ratify the decision made in closed session.

CARRIED

Meeting declared closed at 5.47pm.