

SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL

Council Meeting Agenda

29 June 2022

**Council Meeting No.472
Council Chambers, Leongatha
Commencing at 2.00 pm**



agenda



*South Gippsland
Shire Council*

Come for the beauty, Stay for the lifestyle



OUR PURPOSE

To serve in the best interests of the whole Shire, delivering quality services and advocating for community needs.

Privacy

Council is required to keep minutes of each Council meeting. The minutes contain details of proceedings which may include personal information about community members disclosed as part of presentations, submissions and questions. The minutes of Council meetings are a public record and can be inspected by members of the public.

Council undertakes audio recordings of Council Meetings as a contribution to good governance and accuracy of minutes. An audio recording of this meeting is being made for the purpose of verifying the accuracy of minutes of the meeting. In some circumstances the recording may be disclosed, such as where Council is compelled to do so by court order, warrant, and subpoena or by any other law such as the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*. It should be noted that other people present at the meeting may be recording the meeting and Council has limited power to regulate this. Council has developed a policy to regulate recordings, "*Sound Recording of Council Meetings*".

A copy of this Policy is located on Council's website www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au.

SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL

Notice is hereby given that Council Meeting No. 472 of the South Gippsland Shire Council will be held on Wednesday 29 June 2022 in the Council Chambers, Leongatha commencing at 2.00pm

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Kerryn Ellis
Chief Executive Officer

1. PRELIMINARY MATTERS

1.1. LIVE-STREAMING COUNCIL MEETING DISCLAIMER

This Council Meeting is being streamed live, recorded and published in accordance with Council's Live Streaming in Council Meetings Policy.

The Chair and/or the CEO have the discretion and authority at any time to direct the termination or interruption of live streaming. Such direction will only be given in exceptional circumstances where deemed relevant. Circumstances may include instances where the content of debate is considered misleading, defamatory or potentially inappropriate to be published.

Today's Meeting is being streamed live as well as recorded and published on Council's website.

Thank you

1.2. WELCOME TO THE COUNCIL MEETING

COVID Safe Plan

Council Meetings are conducted in line with Council's *COVID Safe Plan*.

Public Questions

In accordance with *Governance Rules (C82)*, clause 56.4(d) the placement of public questions has now closed. Questions must be received prior to the commencement of the Council Meeting and placed in the receptacle at Governance Officers table. Questions received after the commencement of the Meeting will be considered at the next Council Meeting.

1.3. OPENING PRAYER

We pray to God to guide us so that the thoughts we have and the decisions made this day, are in the best interests of the people of the South Gippsland Shire.

Amen

1.4. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS

We acknowledge the Bunurong and Gunaikurnai people as the Traditional Custodians of South Gippsland and pay respect to their Elders, past, present, and future, for they hold the memories, traditions, culture, and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of Australia.

1.5. APOLOGIES

1.6. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RECOMMENDATION

That the Minutes of the South Gippsland Shire Council Meeting No. 471, held on 15 June 2022 in the Council Chambers, Leongatha be confirmed.

1.7. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST FOR COUNCILLORS

The *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act), Division 2 sets out the requirements relating to Conflict of Interest. Disclosure of a conflict of interest in respect of a matter to be considered at a Council Meeting is required under section 130(1)(a) and specifically applies to a relevant person being a Councillor, member of a delegated committee who is not a Councillor and a member of Council staff.

Council's Governance Rules (C82) (the Rules), clause 3.0 Disclosure of a Conflict of Interest at a Council Meeting sets out the prescribed manner required to disclose a conflict of interest at South Gippsland Shire Council.

The Rules require a Councillor and/ or staff member who has a conflict of interest in a matter being considered at a Council Meeting to announce before the matter is considered and disclose this in a written notice to the Chief Executive Officer. The details included in the disclosure, explain the nature conflict of interest, whether it is classified as general or material (s.127 and s.128), the name of the relevant person(s) and their relationship to them.

Failure to comply with disclosures of conflict of interest (s.130) may be subject to penalty points and/ or other disciplinary measures depending on the nature of the conflict.

The *Local Government Act 2020* can be accessed from the Victorian Legislation and Parliamentary documents website at www.legislation.vic.gov.au.

Council's Governance Rules (C82) can be accessed from [Council's Policies](#) webpage.

1.8. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST FOR STAFF

The *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act), Division 2 sets out the requirements relating to Conflict of Interest. Disclosure of a conflict of interest in respect of a matter to be considered at a Council Meeting is required under section 130(1)(a) and specifically applies to a relevant person being a Councillor, member of a delegated committee who is not a Councillor and a member of Council staff.

Council's *Governance Rules (C82) (the Rules)*, Chapter 5, clause 7, 8 and 9 sets the prescribed manner required for staff to disclose a conflict of interest when:

- *Preparing Reports for Meetings*
- *Exercise of Delegated Power*
- *Exercise of a Statutory Function*

Council staff must immediately upon becoming aware of a conflict of interest provide a written notice to the Chief Executive Officer disclosing the conflict of interest, explain the nature of the conflict and how it will be managed. Upon becoming aware and declaring a conflict of interest, a staff member may not exercise a power or perform a function in the matter. All prepared reports will record that staff member(s) have considered a conflict of interest and include if any, the details of a disclosure.

Failure to comply with disclosures of conflict of interest (s.130) may be subject to penalty points and/ or other disciplinary measures depending on the nature of the conflict.

The *Local Government Act 2020* can be accessed from the Victorian Legislation and Parliamentary documents website at www.legislation.vic.gov.au.

Council's *Governance Rules (C82)* can be accessed from [Council's Policies](#) webpage.

2. INTEGRATED STRATEGIC PLANS FOR ADOPTION

2.1. COMMUNITY VISION 2040

Performance & Innovation

Council Plan

Objective 1 – United Shire - Strategy 1.1 Develop a shared vision for the future direction of the Shire in partnership with the community.

Through engagement with the people of South Gippsland, the Community Vision captures the community's aspirations to guide future decision making up to the year 2040.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present the final *South Gippsland Community Vision 2040 (Community Vision)* (**Attachment [2.1.1]**) for Council's consideration and determination. The *Community Vision* has been prepared in accordance with s.88 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act).

It was developed based on extensive community feedback and in partnership with a Community Panel with the assistance of consultant who coordinated deliberative engagement activities to ascertain community priorities and values.

The *Community Vision* has been developed with deliberative engagement activities as part of the suite of Council's Integrated Plans. A formal community consultation process was held from 21 April to 15 May 2022 to obtain feedback on the proposed draft.

This report recommends that Council formally adopt the *Community Vision* contained in **Attachment [2.1.1]**, and in accordance with s.88 of the Act.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Adopts the Community Vision 2040 (Attachment [2.1.1]) in accordance with s.88 of the Local Government Act 2020;**
- 2. Formally thanks the Community Panel for their work; and**
- 3. Publishes the Community Vision 2040 on Council's website.**

REPORT

A *Community Vision* is an important document that describes the community's aspirations for the future of the municipality and helps to guide decision making. Development of a Vision asks the community to help shape the Shire by imagining life in 2040, and mapping out the aspirations and priorities that will help to get there.

The *Draft Community Vision*, along with the suite of draft Integrated Plans, was endorsed at the 20 April 2022 Council Meeting for community consultation. The final consultation phase was held between 21 April to 15 May 2022. The suite of Integrated Plan endorsed included:

1. Community Vision 2040 (Community Vision);
2. Council Plan 2022-2026 (Council Plan);
3. Long-Term Financial Plan 2022-2032 (Financial Plan);
4. Rating and Revenue Plan 2022-2026 (Rating & Revenue Plan);
5. Budget 2022/23 – 2025/26 (Budget);
6. Asset Plan 2022-2032 (Asset Plan);
7. Arts, Culture and Creative Industries Strategy 2022-2026 (Arts Strategy);
and
8. Domestic Waste Water Management Plan 2022-2026 (Waste Water Plan).

A Panel of community members reviewed the community feedback received during the final consultation phase at their last meeting held on 28 May 2022.

The Community Panel included 29 members of the community who represent the Shire's overall demographics. Members were recruited and randomly selected by the consultant, independent of Council, following a mailout to 16,000 homes and promoted online. There were 162 people that applied to be involved in the Panel process.

Community Panel deliberations over three meetings finalised the Community Vision. The Community Panel agreed to reorder the five overarching Priorities based on community support as follows:

- Healthy, Connected and Engaged Community
- Sustainability and Climate Change
- Shaping our Future

- Enhanced Natural Environment and Cultural Heritage
- A Destination to Live, Visit and Enjoy

The *Community Vision* is an integral plan within the suite of the Integrated Plans. The suite of Integrated Plans include:

1. Community Vision 2040;
2. Council Plan 2022-2026;
3. Long-Term Financial Plan 2022-2032;
4. Rating and Revenue Plan 2022-2026;
5. Budget 2022/23 – 2025/26; and
6. Asset Plan 2022-2032.

CONSULTATION / COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Act requires councils to take an integrated approach to strategic planning and reporting, including deliberative community engagement practices.

In the development of its 2022 suite of Integrated Plans, Council undertook its largest and most extensive community engagement campaign: *Shaping South Gippsland*.

This has been the largest community engagement program ever held by Council. Every item of feedback, conversation held, survey response, petition request and submissions received have all been considered and treated as equally important as all others. A summary of the various engagement activities is contained in the *Integrated Planning Engagement Report* in **Attachment [2.1.2]**. Council extends its appreciation to everyone who has taken the time to participate in these engagement activities.

Shaping South Gippsland three key phases included:

Phase 1

The initial phase from December 2021 to February 2022 involved a collaboration with external consultants to determine the aspirations of the community. This included an online survey with 234 completions, an online workshop, nine place-based community pop-ups and two school visits, and the establishment of the Community Panel to develop the Community Vision 2040. Nine hundred and twenty-eight people from diverse backgrounds participated in these activities, contributing a total of 2,939 comments.

These comments were collated into common themes and interest areas and have informed the development of Council's suite of draft Integrated Plans.

A series of Councillor workshops were held during this phase to discuss the approach to preparing the plans and the development of each Integrated Plan.

Phase 2

The Regional Profile Project was the second phase. This Project engaged with over 2,000 households from February to April 2022 and provides Council with a snapshot of the likes, dislikes, interests and challenges of the South Gippsland Community. This data complements and has been considered in line with the community feedback to inform, support and develop the suite of Integrated Plans. Its rich content will be used to further inform a range of other strategies and plans to be developed in the 2022/23 financial year.

Phase 3

The final phase saw the suite of Draft Integrated Plans endorsed at the 20 April 2022 Council Meeting for community consultation and were promoted for community feedback from 21 April to 15 May 2022. The community was encouraged to indicate their support for, or against the objectives, priorities and initiatives proposed.

During this time, Councillors and staff facilitated thirteen community engagement events with a total reach of approximately 385 people. This included an online Facebook Q&A, a stakeholder breakfast and eleven place-based community pop-up events. These events were designed to socialise the Draft Integrated Plans and collect the community's input and feedback on these drafts. The activities included a survey through Council's online engagement platform: YourSay, which was available online or as a paper version and which was promoted widely to Council's networks and the community. A total of 86 surveys were completed. Council also invited written submissions during this period and 45 submissions, including one petition, were received for the suite of Integrated Plans.

All of the written submissions, the petition, completed surveys and details from engagement events were reviewed and considered. The feedback can be summarised under the following themes:

- The connection/alignment between the Community Vision and Council Plan was difficult to understand;
- Support was strong for all the proposed Objectives, Priorities and Major Initiatives, including those requiring additional funds;

- The important emphasis placed on roads, footpaths and infrastructure needs to be a priority;
- Greater investment and focus on the Arts are sought;
- Support was strong for advocating and supporting the needs of youth, families, disabled and ageing community members for affordable housing, education, gender equity, health and mental health service accessibility and prevention of family violence;
- The place of volunteers and support for community groups needs to be strengthened and continued;
- Support was strong for preserving the environment, caring for wildlife, providing electric car charging stations and addressing changing climate impacts through localised prioritised actions;
- Support for the farming sectors, tourism sectors, small and larger towns and industries so that the focus is towards building a strong local economy.

A detailed Engagement Summary is contained in **Attachment [2.1.2]** that provides context to the extensive program undertaken to inform the suite of Integrated Plans.

RESOURCES / FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The *Community Vision* is an overarching strategic document which will help inform a number of plans over the next 20 years. Achievement of the *Community Vision* will be a long-term objective and will align to the capacity of future budgets.

RISKS

Council is required to develop the *Community Vision* in accordance with s.88 of the Act, including development using deliberative engagement practices. Careful planning has ensured the development of the *Community Vision* has met the requirements of the Act and reflects the South Gippsland Community.

STAFF DISCLOSURE

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have considered and determined that they do not have a conflict of interest in the matter.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachments are available on Council's website at the following [LINK](#).

1. South Gippsland Community Vision - June 2022 [2.1.1 - 23 pages]
2. Integrated Planning Engagement Report - June 2022 [2.1.2 - 38 pages]

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Council's Good Governance Framework

Pillar 1. Direction & Leadership

Council Policy / Strategy / Plans

Documents are available on Council's website at the following [LINK](#).

Annual Budget

Legislative Provisions

Local Government Act 2020

2.2. COUNCIL PLAN 2022 - 2026

Performance & Innovation

Council Plan

Objective 4 - Customer Focused Organisation - Strategy 4.4 Build on leadership, governance, financial sustainability, shared values and cultural capabilities within the organisation

The development of the Council Plan 2022/23-2025/26 sets the strategic direction for the term of Council and aligns with the broad themes in the South Gippsland Community Vision 2040.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present the final *Proposed Council Plan 2022-2026* (Council Plan) (**Attachment [2.2.1]**) for Council's consideration and determination. The *Council Plan* sets out the Strategic Objectives, Priorities (strategies) and Indicators Council will focus the allocation of resources and direction of Council towards. The Council Plan also contains the Major Initiatives for the 2022/23 financial year which will be funded by the *Budget 2022/23-2025/26*.

The Council Plan is a key strategic document that aligns with the broad themes and intent of the *South Gippsland Community Vision 2040* (Community Vision) and has been prepared in accordance with s.90 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act).

This report recommends that Council formally adopt the Council Plan contained in **Attachment [2.2.1]**, and in accordance with s.90 of the Act.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Adopts the Council Plan 2022-2026 (Attachment [2.2.1]) in accordance with s.90 of the Local Government Act 2020; and**
- 2. Publishes the Council Plan 2022-2026 on Council's website.**

REPORT

The role of Council is to provide leadership for the good governance of the Shire. This is achieved, in part, by establishing strategic directions articulated in a four-year Council Plan. The Council Plan, set out in **Attachment [2.2.1]**, is a key strategic document within Council's *Good Governance Framework* and within the suite of integrated plans (Integrated Plans). These Integrated Plans work together to provide the long-term aspirational desires of the community

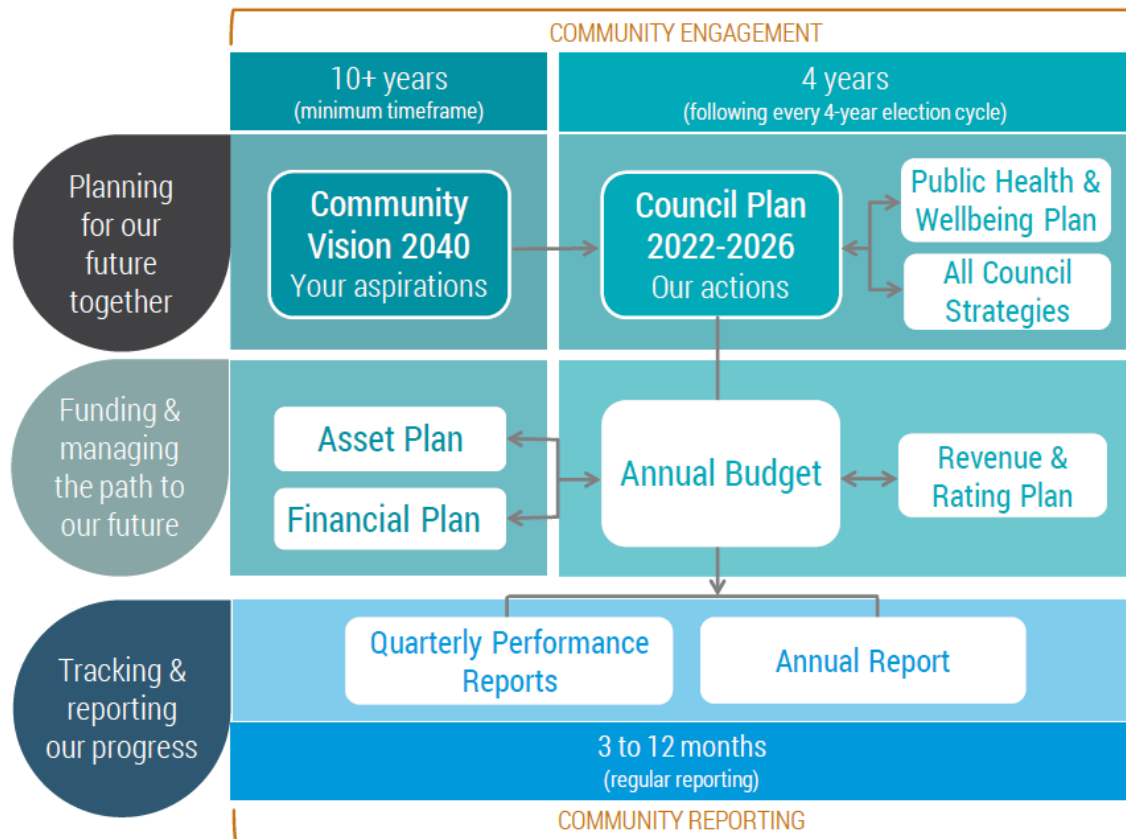
with the practical and considered allocation of resources to prioritise short to medium term requirements. Together these Integrated Plans guide the organisation's direction for the term of the current Council.

The *Draft Council Plan 2022-2026*, along with the suite of draft Integrated Plans, was endorsed at the 20 April 2022 Council Meeting for community consultation. The final consultation phase was held between 21 April to 15 May 2022. The suite of Integrated Plan endorsed included:

1. Community Vision 2040 (Community Vision);
2. Council Plan 2022-2026 (Council Plan);
3. Long-Term Financial Plan 2022-2032 (Financial Plan);
4. Rating and Revenue Plan 2022-2026 (Rating & Revenue Plan);
5. Budget 2022/23 – 2025/26 (Budget);
6. Asset Plan 2022-2032 (Asset Plan);
7. Arts, Culture and Creative Industries Strategy 2022-2026 (Arts Strategy);
and
8. Domestic Waste Water Management Plan 2022-2026 (Waste Water Plan)

The Council Plan has been developed concurrently with the Community Vision through shared deliberative engagement activities. These two plans spearhead the suite of Integrated Plans.

The link between the two plans is best described as the Community Vision being the longer-term 'aspirational' plan for the Shire, while the Council Plan seeks to address the short to medium term priorities of the Shire's community, keeping these longer-term aspirations within clear line of sight. The Community Vision is a holistic view of the Community's desired future, while the Council Plan is 'action oriented'; setting in place directions to address the current priority concerns of the community. The following Integrated Planning Framework shows these linkages diagrammatically:



The final stage of development of this final Council Plan has incorporated consideration of the vast responses and submissions received from a community consultation process on the *Draft Council Plan 2022-2026* held between 21 April to 15 May 2022.

Councillors have considered all the feedback, survey responses, submissions and a petition received, along with all the rich conversations they shared with community members across the Shire. Collectively the responses provided have informed this final Council Plan.

The *Council Plan* also aligns with the *Community Vision 2040*, being considered by Council in this Council Meeting. The *Council Plan*, along with all the community engagement responses received between December 2021 and May 2022, have also informed the final suite of Integrated Plans being considered for adoption at this meeting that include:

1. Community Vision 2040;
2. Council Plan 2022-2026;
3. Long-Term Financial Plan 2022-2032;
4. Rating and Revenue Plan 2022-2026;

5. Budget 2022/23 – 2025/26; and
6. Asset Plan 2022-2032.

In the future, further plans will be presented to Council to form part of this suite of Integrated Plans.

The Council Plan contains six Strategic Objectives that broadly align with the overarching themes of the *Community Vision*, however they are worded to focus the organisation on specific requirements to be addressed in the term of this Council. The six equally important Strategic Objectives of the Council Plan are:

- Connecting our People and Places
- Economy and Industry
- Healthy and Engaged Communities
- Leading with Integrity
- Protecting and Enhancing our Environment
- Sustainable Growth

The *Council Plan* highlights the Priorities (strategies) to achieve these six Objectives and the Indicators to assist in measuring success. It also indicates where Council's services and adopted plans and strategies align with each Strategic Objective.

Major Initiatives set out the significant annual actions to achieve these Objectives and Priorities. The *2022/23 Annual Major Initiatives* (Major Initiatives) are contained and resourced through the *Budget 2022/23 – 2025/26*. They are also incorporated under their relevant Objective in the Council Plan. In each progressive year Council will develop new annual Major Initiatives to be achieved and these will be updated/replaced in the Council Plan and Budget. These will be influenced in part by changing circumstances, emerging influences and the areas considered a priority to progress the achievement of the Objectives and Priorities.

The *Council Plan* in **Attachment [2.2.1]** incorporates all the final amendments and is presented ready for Council's consideration and deliberation. In summary the main changes from the endorsed Draft Council Plan include:

- Revised the 'Purpose' and 'Thank you' components
- Objectives re-ordered alphabetically to indicate equal importance;

- Mayor's message updated;
- Simplified Integrated Planning Framework diagram to assist understanding and connectedness to the Community Vision and other plans;
- Revised and refined the Council Vision;
- Outlined under Major Initiatives that new initiatives will be included annually;
- Included an additional Major Initiative for implementation of the Arts, Culture and Creative Industries Strategy under the Objective for Economy and Industry, and allocated \$50,000 to commence implementation of the strategy;
- Updated wording for the Great Southern Rail Trail Management Plan under the Objective for Economy and Industry;
- Included a new 'Objective Statement' for volunteers and the important role they play, under the Objective for Healthy and Engaged Communities;
- Included a new Priority for supporting and celebrating volunteers, under the Objective for Healthy and Engaged Communities;
- Included a new Priority for supporting community sport and recreational groups, under the Objective for Healthy and Engaged Communities;
- Included various additional plans and strategies in the various lists and other general administrative refinements throughout the document.

CONSULTATION / COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Act requires councils to take an integrated approach to strategic planning and reporting, including deliberative community engagement practices.

In the development of its 2022 suite of Integrated Plans, Council undertook its largest and most extensive community engagement campaign: *Shaping South Gippsland*.

This has been the largest community engagement program ever held by Council. Every item of feedback, conversation held, survey response, petition request and submissions received have all been considered and treated as equally important as all others. A summary of the various engagement activities is contained in the *Integrated Planning Engagement Report* in

Attachment [2.2.2]. Council extends its appreciation to everyone who has taken the time to participate in these engagement activities.

Shaping South Gippsland three key phases.

Phase 1

The initial phase from December 2021 to February 2022 involved a collaboration with external consultants to determine the aspirations of the community. This included an online survey with 234 completions, an online workshop, nine place-based community pop-ups and two school visits, and the establishment of the Community Panel to develop the *Community Vision 2040*. Nine hundred and twenty-eight people from diverse backgrounds participated in these activities, contributing a total of 2,939 comments.

These comments were collated into common themes and interest areas and have informed the development of Council's suite of draft Integrated Plans.

A series of Councillor workshops were held during this phase to discuss the approach to preparing the plans and the development of each Integrated Plan.

Phase 2

The Regional Profile Project was the second phase. This project engaged with over 2,000 households from February to April 2022, and provides Council with a snapshot of the likes, dislikes, interests and challenges of the South Gippsland Community. This data complements and has been considered in line with the community feedback to inform, support and develop the suite of Integrated Plans. Its rich content will be used to further inform a range of other strategies and plans to be developed in the 2022/23 financial year.

Phase 3

The final phase saw the suite of Draft Integrated Plans endorsed at the 20 April 2022 Council Meeting for community consultation and were promoted for community feedback from 21 April to 15 May 2022. The community was encouraged to indicate their support for, or against the objectives, priorities and initiatives proposed.

During this time, Councillors and staff facilitated thirteen community engagement events with a total reach of approximately 385 people. This included an online Facebook Q&A, a stakeholder breakfast and eleven place-based community pop-up events. These events were designed to socialise the Draft Integrated Plans and collect the community's input and feedback on these drafts. The activities included a survey through Council's online engagement platform: YourSay, which was available online or as a paper version and which was promoted widely to Council's networks and the

community. A total of 86 surveys were completed. Council also invited written submissions during this period and 45 submissions, including one petition, were received for the suite of Integrated Plans.

The draft *Arts, Culture and Creative Industry Strategy* received a substantive number of submissions. These submissions will be considered in the preparation of the final version that will be brought back to Council for consideration and determination early in the 2022/23 financial year. In the interim, the level of interest raised for this Strategy has been recognised with the inclusion in the Council Plan of an additional Major Initiative for 2022/23 to commence its implementation.

All of the written submissions, the petition, completed surveys and details from engagement events were reviewed and considered. The feedback can be summarised under the following themes:

- The connection/alignment between the Community Vision and Council Plan was difficult to understand;
- Support was strong for all the proposed Objectives, Priorities and Major Initiatives, including those requiring additional funds;
- The important emphasis placed on roads, footpaths and infrastructure needs to be a priority;
- Greater investment and focus on the Arts are sought;
- Support was strong for advocating and supporting the needs of youth, families, disabled and ageing community members for affordable housing, education, gender equity, health and mental health service accessibility and prevention of family violence;
- The place of volunteers and support for community groups needs to be strengthened and continued;
- Support was strong for preserving the environment, caring for wildlife, providing electric car charging stations and addressing changing climate impacts through localised prioritised actions;
- Support for the farming sectors, tourism sectors, small and larger towns and industries so that the focus is towards building a strong local economy.

A detailed engagement summary is contained in the *Integrated Planning Engagement Report in Attachment [2.2.2]* that provides context to the extensive program undertaken to inform the suite of Integrated Plans.

In response to this feedback the Council Plan has been updated to strengthen some priorities and major initiatives by including additional items. In general, it is considered that the various themes arising from the community have good coverage within the Council Plan. Not all of the desired community requirements can be addressed in one financial year, so over the three-year term of Council new major initiatives will be developed and funded annually.

RESOURCES / FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The *Council Plan* is a key strategic document that describes the Council's direction and planning of resources for the term of Council. Seeking community feedback on the *Council Plan*, including the Major Initiatives, has informed the sustainable allocation of resources and alignment to community needs through the Long-Term Financial Plan and Annual Budget.

RISKS

Council is required to adopt a Council Plan for its four-year term in accordance with s.90 of the Act. The Council Plan must contain strategic objectives, strategies to achieve these objectives and strategic indicators to monitor the achievement of these objectives over the term of Council. Without these sections, Council risks breaching the legislative requirements outlined in the Act.

STAFF DISCLOSURE

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have considered and determined that they do not have a conflict of interest in the matter.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachments are available on Council's website at the following [LINK](#).

1. Council Plan 2022 - 2026 - Final - June 2022 [2.2.1 - 36 pages]
2. Integrated Planning Engagement Report - June 2022 [2.2.2 - 38 pages]

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Council's Good Governance Framework

Pillar 1. Direction & Leadership

Council Policy / Strategy / Plans

Documents are available on Council's website at the following [LINK](#).

Annual Budget

Legislative Provisions

Local Government Act 2020

2.3. LONG TERM FINANCIAL PLAN (10 YEAR PLAN), REVENUE AND RATING PLAN 2022 - 2026, 2022/23 - 2025/26 BUDGET AND ASSET PLAN

Performance & Innovation

Council Plan

Objective 4 - Customer Focused Organisation - Strategy 4.4 Build on leadership, governance, financial sustainability, shared values and cultural capabilities within the organisation

The development of the Long-Term Financial Plan and Draft Budget provide the resources to progress the achievement of the Strategic Objectives and Strategies outlined in the 2022 - 2026 Council Plan. The Revenue and Rating Plan determines the most appropriate and affordable revenue and rating approach for Council. The Asset Plan sets the strategic direction of the management of Council's vast asset portfolio and aligns with South Gippsland Community Vision 2040.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present the final *Financial Plan (Attachment [2.3.1])*, *Revenue and Rating Plan 2022-2026 (Attachment [2.3.2])*, the *Budget 2022/23 – 2025/26 (Attachment [2.3.3])* and the *Asset Plan 2022-2032 (Attachment [2.3.4]) (Plans)* for endorsement by Council.

These Plans are fundamental documents for Council as they outline Council's future financial and other resource planning to support the delivery of the *Council Plan 2022 – 2026 (Council Plan)*. The *Budget 2022/23 – 2025/26* notes Council's directions for the year ahead (and the following three years), and outlines how Council intends to serve the community with the services and facilities that Council provides. The scope of the *Financial Plan* is a period of at least the next ten financial years.

The purpose of the *Revenue and Rating Plan* is to establish a revenue-raising framework over a four-year period within which Council proposes to work. It determines the most appropriate and affordable revenue and rating approach for Council, which in conjunction with other income sources will adequately finance the objectives in the Council Plan and Council's operations.

The *Asset Plan* informs the community, in conjunction with Council's other strategic documents, about how Council manages its vast asset portfolio, both presently and into the future.

These Draft Plans have been prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020 (the Act)* and reference:

- Financial Plan (s.91).

- Revenue and Rating Plan (s.93);
- Adoption of the Annual Budget (s.94 of the Act);
- Preparation (s.94 and 96 of the Act); and
- Asset Plan (s.92).

These Plans have been developed in conjunction with the *Community Vision 2040* deliberative engagement activities as part of the suite of Council's Integrated Plans. A formal community consultation process was held from 21 April to 15 May 2022 to obtain feedback on the *Draft Plans*.

A number of adjustments have been made to the final Plans which are detailed in the body of the report. These adjustments have not compromised the intention or integrity of the Budget, Financial Plan or Revenue and Rating Plan.

This report recommends that Council formally adopt the Plans in accordance with s.91, s.92, s.93, s.94 and s.96 of the Act.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Adopts the Financial Plan (Attachment [2.3.1]), Revenue and Rating Plan 2022 - 2026 (Attachment [2.3.2]), Budget 2022/23 – 2025/26 (Attachment [2.3.3]) and Asset Plan (Attachment [2.3.3]) (Plans) in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020;**
- 2. Declaration of Rates and Charges: Declares the following rates and charges:**
 - a. An amount of \$47,634,397 (or such other amount as is lawfully raised as a consequence of this Resolution) be declared as the amount which Council intends to raise by general rates and the annual service charge (described later in this Resolution), which amount is calculated as follows:**
 - i. General Rates (excluding supplementary rates) - \$43,314,800;**
 - ii. Annual Service Charges - \$4,123,105; and**
 - iii. Revenue in lieu of rates - \$196,492.**
- 3. General Rates:**
 - a. A general rate be declared in respect of the 2022/23 financial year;**

- b. It be further declared that the general rate be raised by the application of differential rates;**
- c. A differential rate as per Council's Revenue and Rating Plan 2022 – 2026 be respectively declared for rateable land having the respective characteristics specified below, which characteristics will form the criteria for each differential so declared:**
 - i. Industrial;**
 - ii. Commercial;**
 - iii. Vacant Land;**
 - iv. Farm Land;**
 - v. Cultural and Recreational; and**
 - vi. Rural Vacant Land.**
- d. It be recorded that Council considers that each differential rate will contribute to the equitable and efficient carrying out of Council functions, and that:**
 - i. the respective objectives of each differential rate be those specified in Council's Revenue and Rating Plan 2022 - 2026;**
 - ii. the respective types or classes of land which are subject to each differential rate be those Revenue and Rating Plan 2022 - 2026;**
 - iii. the respective uses and levels of each differential rate in relation to those respective types or classes of land be those described in Council's Revenue and Rating Plan 2022 - 2026; and**
 - iv. the relevant:**
 - uses of;**
 - geographical locations of; and**
 - planning scheme zonings of; and**
 - types of buildings on.**
 - v. the respective types or classes of land be those identified in Council's Revenue and Rating Plan 2022 – 2026;**

- e. **No municipal charge to be declared for the 2022/23 financial year;**
- f. **Annual Service charge:**
 - i. **An annual service charge, for the collection and disposal of refuse, be declared in respect of the 2022/23 financial year and**
 - ii. **The annual service charge be in the sum of, and be based on the criteria set out below:**

Category	Rate
Waste Services Charge A	\$251.65
Waste Services Charge B	\$251.65
Waste Services Charge C	\$354.30
Waste Services Charge D	\$260.00
Waste Services Charge E	\$298.15
Waste Services Charge G	\$190.20
Waste Services Charge H	\$302.20
Waste Services Charge J	\$174.40
Waste Services Charge K	\$310.90
Garb Green Waste Bin	\$102.00

- g. **Fees and Charges:**
 - i. **Adopts the fees and charges that are included in the budget which may be subject to change as fees and charges are based on information available at the time of publishing and may vary during the financial year as a result of changes in Council policy or legislation.**
- h. **Incentives:**
 - i. **No incentives are declared for the payment of general rates (and annual service charge described earlier in this resolution).**
- i. **Interest on rates and charges: it be recorded that Council requires any person to pay interest on any amount of rates and charges to which:**
 - i. **that person is liable to pay; and**
 - ii. **have not been paid by the date specified for their payment.**
 - iii. **The Chief Executive Officer be authorised to levy and recover the general rates and annual service charge in accordance with the Local Government Act 1989.**

- j. **Notes the Annual Budget 2022/23 includes loan borrowings carried forward from 2021/22 from the State Government loan scheme for the Korumburra Community Hub and Streetscape Works as detailed in Attachment [2.3.3] and authorises the Chief Executive Officer to execute any further loan documentation required.**
4. **Notes the following items have been included in the Budget 2022/23 – 2025/26:**
 - a. **\$50,000 set aside towards implementation of the Draft 2022-2026 Arts, Culture and Creative Industries Strategy, once the final strategy is determined by Council.**
5. **Publishes all Plans referenced in this Council Report on Council's website.**

REPORT

Financial Plan and Budget

The final *Financial Plan* document in **Attachment [2.3.1]** is the Financial Plan for the next ten years and has been prepared in accordance with s.91 of the Act.

The final *Budget 2022/23 – 2025/26* document in **Attachment [2.3.3]** is the Budget for the next year and proceeding three years and has been prepared in accordance with s.96 of the Act. The *2022/23 Annual Major Initiatives*, to progress the Council Plan, have also been incorporated in this document. The draft Budget that was part of the formal consultation process included \$1.500 million in new initiatives for 2022/23. These include:

- An additional \$0.500 million for the gravel roads re-sheet program;
- \$0.300 million for a new urban activity cleaning service;
- \$0.270 million to continue the Community Leadership Program;
- \$0.100 million for a feasibility study for pedestrian and bike paths in Venus Bay and Sandy Point; and
- \$0.055 million contribution to the Destination Gippsland event acquisition fund.

After reviewing community feedback, changes were made to the Healthy and Engaged Community theme priorities and \$0.050 million was allocated to implement some actions from the Arts, Culture and Creative Industries Strategy under the Economy and Industry theme.

It should be noted that there has been one change to the Budget's operating result since it was advertised in May 2022, with an additional \$3.273 million in Victoria Grants Commission allocations brought forward to the 2021/22 financial year.

Both of these documents follow the Better Practice Guidelines and Model Budget issued by Local Government Victoria (LGV) in accordance with the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.

Revenue and Rating Plan

As set out in s.93 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) Council is required to prepare and adopt a *Revenue and Rating Plan 2022-2026* (**Attachment [2.3.2]**) by 30 June following a general election. The *Revenue and Rating Plan* establishes the revenue raising framework within which the Council proposes to operate. Annual reviews will be completed to ensure that Council's approach to revenue raising remains appropriate and affordable.

The purpose of this Plan is, therefore, to consider what rating options are available to Council under the Act and how Council's choices in applying these options contribute towards meeting the requirement for an equitable rating strategy.

The introduction of rate capping under the Victorian Government's *Fair Go Rates System* (FGRS) has brought a renewed focus to Council's long-term financial sustainability. The FGRS continues to restrict Council's ability to raise revenue above the rate cap unless application is made to the Essential Services Commission for a variation. Maintaining service delivery levels and investing in community assets remain key priorities for Council.

The *Revenue and Rating Plan* explains how Council calculates the revenue needed to fund its activities, and how the funding burden will be apportioned between ratepayers and other users of Council facilities and services.

It is important to note that this Plan does not set revenue targets for Council, it outlines the strategic framework and decisions that inform how Council will go about calculating and collecting its revenue.

Asset Plan

The final *Asset Plan* (**Attachment [2.3.4]**) sets out the quantum and state of Council's assets. It outlines the key challenges and choices that are associated with effective asset management. This Plan is a key strategic document that aligns with the requirements of Council's Integrated Plans and has been prepared in accordance with s.92 of the Act.

The final Integrated Plans that are being presented for adoption in this Council Meeting include:

1. Community Vision 2040;
2. Council Plan 2022-2026;
3. Long-Term Financial Plan 2022-2032;
4. Rating and Revenue Plan 2022-2026;
5. Budget 2022/23 – 2025/26; and
6. Asset Plan 2022-2032.

In the future, further plans will be presented to Council to form part of this suite of Integrated Plans. These Plans and the suite of Integrated Plans have been prepared and are presented to Council for final adoption.

CONSULTATION / COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Act requires councils to take an integrated approach to strategic planning and reporting, including deliberative community engagement practices.

In the development of its 2022 suite of Integrated Plans, Council undertook its largest and most extensive community engagement campaign: *Shaping South Gippsland*.

This has been the largest community engagement program ever held by Council. Every item of feedback, conversation held, survey response, petition request and submissions received have all been considered and treated as equally important as all others. A summary of the various engagement activities is contained in the *Integrated Planning Engagement Report* in **Attachment [2.3.5]**. Council extends its appreciation to everyone who has taken the time to participate in these engagement activities.

Shaping South Gippsland three key phases.

Phase 1

The initial phase from December 2021 to February 2022 involved a collaboration with external consultants to determine the aspirations of the community. This included an online survey with 234 completions, an online workshop, nine place-based community pop-ups and two school visits, and the establishment of the Community Panel to develop the *Community Vision 2040*. Nine hundred and twenty-eight people from diverse backgrounds participated in these activities, contributing a total of 2,939 comments.

These comments were collated into common themes and interest areas and have informed the development of Council's suite of draft Integrated Plans.

A series of Councillor workshops were held during this phase to discuss the approach to preparing the plans and the development of each Integrated Plan.

Phase 2

The Regional Profile Project was the second phase. This project engaged with over 2,000 households from February to April 2022, and provides Council with a snapshot of the likes, dislikes, interests and challenges of the South Gippsland Community. This data complements and has been considered in line with the community feedback to inform, support and develop the suite of Integrated Plans. Its rich content will be used to further inform a range of other strategies and plans to be developed in the 2022/23 financial year.

Phase 3

The final phase saw the suite of Draft Integrated Plans endorsed at the 20 April 2022 Council Meeting for community consultation and were promoted for community feedback from 21 April to 15 May 2022. The community was encouraged to indicate their support for, or against the objectives, priorities and initiatives proposed.

During this time, Councillors and staff facilitated thirteen community engagement events with a total reach of approximately 385 people. This included an online Facebook Q&A, a stakeholder breakfast and eleven place-based community pop-up events. These events were designed to socialise the Draft Integrated Plans and collect the community's input and feedback on these drafts. The activities included a survey through Council's online engagement platform: YourSay, which was available online or as a paper version and which was promoted widely to Council's networks and the community. A total of 86 surveys were completed. Council also invited written submissions during this period and 45 submissions, including one petition, were received for the suite of Integrated Plans.

The draft *Arts, Culture and Creative Industry Strategy* received a substantive number of submissions. These submissions will be considered in the preparation of the final version that will be brought back to Council for consideration and determination early in the 2022/23 financial year. In the interim, the level of interest raised for this Strategy has been recognised with the inclusion in the Council Plan of an additional Major Initiative for 2022/23 to commence its implementation.

All of the written submissions, the petition, completed surveys and details from engagement events were reviewed and considered. The feedback can be summarised under the following themes:

- The connection/alignment between the Community Vision and Council Plan was difficult to understand;
- Support was strong for all the proposed Objectives, Priorities and Major Initiatives, including those requiring additional funds;
- The important emphasis placed on roads, footpaths and infrastructure needs to be a priority;
- Greater investment and focus on the Arts are sought;
- Support was strong for advocating and supporting the needs of youth, families, disabled and ageing community members for affordable housing, education, gender equity, health and mental health service accessibility and prevention of family violence;
- The place of volunteers and support for community groups needs to be strengthened and continued;
- Support was strong for preserving the environment, caring for wildlife, providing electric car charging stations and addressing changing climate impacts through localised prioritised actions;
- Support for the farming sectors, tourism sectors, small and larger towns and industries so that the focus is towards building a strong local economy.

A detailed engagement summary is contained in the *Integrated Planning Engagement Report* in **Attachment [2.3.5]** that provides context to the extensive program undertaken to inform the suite of Integrated Plans.

In response to this feedback the Council Plan has been updated to strengthen some priorities and major initiatives by including additional items. In general, it is considered that the various themes arising from the community have good coverage within the Council Plan. Not all of the desired community requirements can be addressed in one financial year, so over the three-year term of Council new major initiatives will be developed and funded annually.

RESOURCES / FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The Budget, Long-Term Financial Plan and Asset Plan are key strategic documents that outline the direction and resources required to achieve the Council's direction in the Council Plan and the range of services provided.

Seeking community feedback on the suite of Integrated Plans has informed the sustainable allocation of resources and alignment to community needs through the Long-Term Financial Plan and Annual Budget.

RISKS

The risk of not adopting these Plans by the statutory deadline of 30 June is that Council will suffer reputational damage and be constrained in its ability to raise the necessary funds to carry out its functions and meet its objectives.

STAFF DISCLOSURE

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have considered and determined that they do not have a conflict of interest in the matter.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachments are available on Council's website at the following [LINK](#).

1. Financial Plan 2022-23 - 2031-32 - June 2022 [2.3.1 - 41 pages]
2. Revenue and Rating Plan 2022 - 2026 - June 2022 [2.3.2 - 40 pages]
3. Annual Budget 2022-23 - 2025-26 - June 2022 [2.3.3 - 97 pages]
4. Asset Plan 2022-23 - 2031-32 - June 2022 [2.3.4 - 16 pages]
5. Integrated Planning Engagement Report - June 2022 [2.3.5 - 38 pages]

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Council's Good Governance Framework

Pillar 1. Direction & Leadership

Council Policy / Strategy / Plans

Documents are available on Council's website at the following [LINK](#).

Long-Term Financial Strategies

Proposed Budget

Proposed Financial Plan

Council Plan

Legislative Provisions

Local Government Act 2020

2.4. ADVOCACY STRATEGY AND 2022 PRIORITY PROJECTS

Performance and Innovation

Council Plan

Objective 1 – United Shire

Objective 2 - Economic Prosperity

The recommendations in this report address the Council Plan Objective ‘United Shire’ by presenting a Draft Advocacy Strategy and Priority List developed from extensive community feedback, representing the collective voice of the community.

The Advocacy Strategy and Priority Projects also provides structure for Council to advocate to higher levels of government to decrease the financial burden of Council and aligns with the objective ‘Economic Prosperity’. For example, through calling on State and Federal governments to increase and implement funding programs.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider and determine the attached draft Advocacy Strategy 2022 and Advocacy Priority Project List.

The draft Advocacy Strategy 2022 (refer **Attachment [2.4.1]**) sets out the framework and guidelines for how Council will advocate moving forwards. It includes detail on the roles and responsibilities of the Mayor, CEO, Councillors and Staff and established a three-tier system for determining how projects will be prioritised and what advocacy action will be taken.

The Advocacy Priority Project List formally establishes the top advocacy projects for Council, creating the authorising environment for a pro-active and planned advocacy approach. This list was developed through a deliberative process involving various Councillor workshops. The projects in this list consider all the recent community feedback, the strategic direction of the draft Integrated Plans as well as State and Federal policy and relevance.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Adopts the draft Advocacy Strategy 2022 (Attachment [2.4.1]); and**
- 2. Endorses the following Advocacy Priority Project list:**
 - a. Roads: increase State and Federal Government funding towards road infrastructure including:**

- i. **Increase Federal Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program and amend the program to sharpen the focus on rural roads;**
 - ii. **State Government to expand Rural Roads Support Package and re-instate Fixing Country Roads Program; and**
 - iii. **State Government funding towards South Gippsland’s priority roads projects: Leongatha Heavy Vehicle Alternative Route Stage 2, and South Gippsland Highway Korumburra Realignment (Korumburra bends)**
- b. **Connectivity:**
 - i. **Increase Government funded and delivered public and community transport;**
 - ii. **NBN upgrades for our community; and**
 - iii. **Minimise mobile phone black spots;**
- c. **Early Years Infrastructure**
- d. **Health and Recreation - State Government funding to upgrade the Grand Stand at the Leongatha Recreation Reserve.**
- e. **Emergency Preparedness - funding to boost the community’s preparedness and resilience for extreme weather events including technology and infrastructure improvements; and**
- f. **Coastal Protection - funding towards a Salt Marsh Strategy and State Government to undertake Erosion Mitigation works and sea wall assessment study.**

REPORT

During the recent *Shaping South Gippsland Community Engagement*, and the development of the *Council Plan 2022-2026*, Advocacy has emerged as a priority for Council and the community.

Advocacy featured as a desire from the community, both directly in feedback such as “businesses working together and supported by local council or community discussions to advocate” and indirectly through community sentiment to improve State and Federal controlled services and infrastructure such as Health Care, Education, Environment, Public Transport and Roads.

Advocacy is also highlighted in the *Council Plan 2022-2026*. The development of a draft Advocacy Strategy 2022 features in the Leading with Integrity Theme as a Priority and Major Initiative and is woven throughout all themes of the *Council Plan 2022-2026*, where Council makes a commitment to partner and advocate for improved community outcomes.

The attached draft Advocacy Strategy 2022 (**Attachment [2.4.1]**) has been developed with input from Councillors and in consideration of existing Advocacy Strategies in place at other Local Government organisations.

Advocacy Priority Project List

In developing the top Advocacy Priority Projects List, Councillors considered a range of potential priority projects which align with State and Federal policy, in tandem with the advocacy aspirations of the community identified through the *Shaping South Gippsland Community Engagement* process, and advocacy goals identified in the *Council Plan 2022-2026*.

Councillors also considered evidence and research to understand where the greatest need is and what projects would have the highest impact. Geographical spread and diversity of projects, as well as their achievability and financial implications (such as a Budget or long-term financial plan implications) was also part of the deliberation process.

This process resulted in the proposed advocacy priority project list:

Roads: increase State and Federal Government funding towards road infrastructure including:

- Increase Federal Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program;
- State Government to expand Rural Roads Support Package and re-instate Fixing Country Roads Program; and
- State Government funding towards Leongatha Heavy Vehicle Alternative Route Stage 2 and South Gippsland Highway Korumburra Realignment (Korumburra bends).

Connectivity

- Increase Government funded and delivered public and community transport;
- NBN upgrades for our community; and
- Minimise mobile phone black spots.

Early Years Infrastructure

Health and Recreation

- State Government funding to upgrade the Grand Stand at the Leongatha Recreation Reserve.

Emergency Preparedness

- Funding to boost the community's preparedness and resilience for extreme weather events including technology and infrastructure improvements; and

Coastal Protection

- Funding towards a Salt Marsh Strategy and State Government to undertake Erosion Mitigation works and sea wall assessment study.

CONSULTATION / COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In the development of its 2022 suite of Integrated Plans, Council undertook its largest and most extensive community engagement campaign: *Shaping South Gippsland*.

Shaping South Gippsland can be easily divided into three key parts or phases.

The initial phase from December 2021 to February 2022 involved a collaboration with external consultants to determine the aspirations of the community. This included an online survey with 234 completions, an online workshop, nine place based community pop-ups and two school visits, and the establishment of the Community Panel to develop the Community Vision 2040. Nine hundred and twenty-eight people from diverse backgrounds participated in these activities, contributing a total of 2,939 comments.

These comments were collated into common themes and interest areas and have informed the development of Council's Draft Integrated Plans, as well as the draft Advocacy Strategy 2022 and Advocacy Priority Project List.

The Regional Profile project was the second phase. This project engaged with over 2,000 households from February to April 2022 and provides Council with an in-time snapshot of the likes, dislikes, interests, and challenges of the South Gippsland Community. This data compliments and has been considered in line with the community feedback to inform, support and develop the suite of Integrated Plans.

Finally, the suite of draft Integrated Plans endorsed at Council's April Meeting were promoted for community feedback from 21 April to 15 May through

Council's online engagement platform: YourSay. During this time, Councillors and staff facilitated thirteen community engagement events with a total reach of approximately 385 people. This included an online Facebook Q&A, a stakeholder breakfast and eleven place based community pop-up events. These events were designed to socialise the Draft Integrated Plans and collect the community's input and feedback on these drafts. There was also survey, which was available online or as a paper version and which was promoted widely to Councils networks and the community. A total of 86 surveys were completed. Council also invited written submissions during this period and 45 submissions were received.

A detailed engagement summary is contained in the *Integrated Planning Engagement Report* in **Attachment [2.4.2]** that provides context to the extensive program undertaken to inform the suite of Integrated Plans.

During this *Shaping South Gippsland Community Engagement* process, and the development of the *Council Plan 2022-2026*, Advocacy emerged as a priority for Council and the community.

Advocacy featured as a desire from the community, both directly in feedback such as "businesses working together and supported by local council or community discussions to advocate" and indirectly through community sentiment to improve State and Federally controlled services and infrastructure such as Health Care, Education, Public Transport and Roads.

RESOURCES / FINANCIAL VIABILITY

Implementation of the draft Advocacy Strategy 2022 can be accommodated within existing resources.

RISKS

Nil

STAFF DISCLOSURE

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have considered and determined that they do not have a conflict of interest in the matter.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachments are available on Council's website at the following [LINK](#).

1. Advocacy Strategy - June 2022 [2.4.1 - 14 pages]
2. Integrated Planning Engagement Report - June 2022 [2.4.2 - 38 pages]

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Council's Good Governance Framework

Pillar 1. Direction & Leadership

Council Policy / Strategy / Plans

Documents are available on Council's website at the following [LINK](#).

Council Plan 2020-2024

Legislative Provisions

Local Government Act 2020

3. OBJECTIVE 2 - ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

3.1. GREAT SOUTHERN RAIL TRAIL (GSRT) VISITATION AND MARKETING PLAN

Sustainable Infrastructure

Council Plan

Objective 2 - Economic Prosperity - Strategy 2.1 Build a sustainable and growing economy that attracts and supports businesses, strengthen industry sectors, creates employment and establishes the Shire as the 'food hub'

Objective 2 - Economic Prosperity - Strategy 2.3 Deliver services that support the growth of the local and regional economy

The development of the Great Southern Rail Trail Visitation and Marketing Plan relates to Council Plan Major Initiative 2.2 - Develop a Visitation and Marketing Plan for the extended Great Southern Rail Trail (GSRT), and commence implementation to foster community and visitor attraction to the Trail.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present Council with the final Great Southern Rail Trail Visitor Experience and Marketing Plan 2022 (Plan) for consideration and determination (refer **Attachment [3.1.1]**).

The Plan has been developed with the assistance of brand and marketing specialists, Cupla Studio who have undertaken significant community and stakeholder engagement in its development.

During its development, the Plan was referred to as the Great Southern Rail Trail Visitation and Marketing Plan. The naming was amended to the Great Southern Rail Trail Visitor Experience and Marketing Plan to a better align to the outcomes identified in the Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopts the Great Southern Rail Trail Visitor Experience and Marketing Plan 2022-2031 (Attachment [3.1.1]).

REPORT

Background

The Great Southern Rail Trail (GSRT) follows the former path of the Great Southern Railway. It is currently 72km in length from Leongatha to Port Welshpool.

The Trail is currently being extended and once complete, it will be approximately 135km in length and traverse from Nyora to Yarram, with

opportunities to extend it beyond these points subject to support and funding from neighbouring Councils.

As part of previous extension works; in 2016 a rebranding of the GSRT was developed which included the creation of new signage, brand style guide and marketing collateral.

There has been marketing of the Trail since the rebrand; however, with the continuous increase in length and popularity, Council acknowledged a specific visitation and marketing plan is required to further capitalise on the product and position the Trail as an iconic tourism asset.

The development of the Great Southern Rail Trail (GSRT) Visitor Experience and Marketing Plan is a Council Plan initiative that is to be completed by 30 June 2022.

The Plan is also an identified action of the Visitor Economy Strategy 2021 –31, adopted by Council on 21 July 2021.

Draft Plan Development

Cupla Studio is the marketing consultant who has been engaged to develop the Plan. The project commenced in December 2021.

Key phases and stages in the development of the Great Southern Rail Trail Visitation and Marketing Plan has included:

Stakeholder workshops & Survey

- Stakeholder Workshops—six two-hour workshops with local businesses, stakeholders and interested community members
- Community Survey—the purpose of the survey was to test the findings and recommendations that may inform the draft Plan.

Audit & Insights

- Review all existing research, plans, strategies and communications material related to the GSRT and visitor economy in the region.
- Review similar competitor product in Victoria, Australia and internationally.
- Development of stimulus for insights workshop, including all learnings from consultation.

Insights and Recommendations Workshop

- Three-hour workshop session with the internal working group to present all learnings and recommendations. An interactive session around audience profiles, theme identification and action planning for the development of the draft Plan.

Audience Profiles

- Development of behaviour-based audience profiles to focus visitation planning and marketing activity.

Key Actions and Recommendations in the Plan

The following findings and learnings from the key stages has helped informed the key actions and recommendations in the Plan.

Inspiration and engagement

Visitors, users and stakeholders want more awareness of the rail trail, inspiration of its unique offers and be engaged in more meaningful experiences.

Practicality and planning

There are significant logistical and mental barriers for people wanting to visit and use our rail trail. People need consistent, clear, and easy to use planning resources and information that will help build positive anticipation, meet their expectations, and manage their experiences on the rail trail.

Signage

It is difficult for people to discover the rail trail locally, navigate to it from towns, and understand their position on it. People also seek signs along their journey to guide their understanding and appreciation of the rail trail, creating a more meaningful experience overall.

Infrastructure and Support

Lack of proper rail trail infrastructure (perceived and actual) frustrates users on their journey and operators who support customers using the rail trail. Township infrastructure and support is also a challenge for visitors due to poor available information, lack of actual offer, and disconnection between operators and the rail trail team.

Public Exhibition of Draft Plan

The GSRT Visitation and Marketing Plan Public Exhibition commenced on Thursday 19 May for a 2-week period concluding on Thursday 2 June 2022.

Community and stakeholders were invited to provide feedback to the Plan via a questionnaire and/or a written submission, information was provided on Council's Your Say platform.

There was also an opportunity to discuss the Plan at a public drop-in session held on Wednesday 1 June in Foster and Korumburra.

Council received 74 responses via the "your say" questionnaire and five written submissions.

Eighty per cent of questionnaire respondents agreed that the audience profiles identified in the Plan reflect the users of the GSRT.

However, it was also identified that environmental and conservation groups, school groups, service clubs and adjoining land owners should be considered in the Plan.

Key themes that were identified in the submissions include:

- Ensuring the branding and marketing of the rail trail supports consistent marketing for South Gippsland. The GSRT brand framework will consider and align to the South Gippsland brand identity and where appropriate the Gippsland All Kinds of Wonder brand and brand pillars.
- Digital promotion, website development and support of digital platforms was reflected in the submission. Council acknowledges that these are of high importance, and will be considered through the implementation of activities identified in the major projects of the Plan. There is also opportunity for the Plan to align to the railway precincts actions identified in the Draft Arts, Culture and Creative Industries Strategy.
- Amongst the infrastructure and signage feedback there were comments relating to advocating to appropriate Government agencies to address concerns raised with the rail trail crossing point on the South Gippsland Highway in Leongatha. An immediate measure is to improve signage and information at the cross over point.
- There was support to extend the trail beyond municipal boundaries. The funded Welshpool to Yarram extension and the revitalisation of the railway precincts in Korumburra and Leongatha will commence in the near future. The link from Nyora to Anderson and beyond Nyora connecting to Cardinia and Casey municipalities form part of the Gippsland Odyssey Trail. This is a key project of the Gippsland Tracks and Trails Feasibility Study, Gippsland Destination Management Plan and a priority project for Council and One Gippsland.

- There was a very small amount of feedback about the return of public rail. Council is advocating for improved connectivity including public transport.
- The submissions highlight the significance of businesses as an audience profile. The Plan emphasises the importance of engaging and supporting business owners, the role they play in the visitor experience and promotion of the trail. Feedback obtained also included providing links and information to business within the towns and across the Shire. This will be addressed through websites including visitsouthgippsland.com.au and individual town websites.
- Responses acknowledge that sections of the trail offer different opportunities and experiences, some more engaging than others. Opportunities including conservation tourism, art, culture and events were highlighted. Also, further development of the trail can continue to enhance and promote the original purpose of the corridor, a railway line.
- Submissions received and discussions at the drop-in session highlights the willingness for community groups such as service clubs to participate in the maintenance and promotion of the trail. Engaging with the community and businesses is an action of the Plan.
- Some feedback received was better aligned to the existing Visitor Economy Strategy, such as advocating for increased and improved accommodation.
- It was noted in the submissions that the Plan did not reference implementation, funding or management of the GSRT. Council recognises the importance of an internal working group to manage the functions of the trail, and that there is a dedicated maintenance budget that is reviewed annually.
- Submissions also raised that there would need to be dedicated funding to implement the actions from the Marketing Plan. Currently, there is no dedicated funding in the draft 2022/23 budget, therefore, the annual funding for marketing will be subject to annual budget considerations.

GSRT Management Plan

The GSRT Visitor Experience and Marketing Plan will help guide the GSRT Management Plan (in development) which outlines management principles and responsibilities, trail usage, trail etiquette and service levels including infrastructure.

There was a substantial amount of feedback in relation to the management of the trail, including:

- Trail surface
- Type of usage on the trail
- Trail etiquette
- Signage
- Seating
- Bike racks
- Memorial/sponsored seating
- Water fountains
- Horse carrells
- Toilets
- Picnic areas
- Appropriate car park facilities
- Access points
- Vegetation maintenance
- Weed control

This information has been collated and will be considered in the development of the draft GSRT Management Plan.

Changes to the Draft Plan

Council received a lot of valuable feedback that has been taken into consideration and will assist when implementing the Plan.

The following changes were included in the final version of the Plan.

- An additional objective that references that the Plan was developed to provide a consistent approach and product experience for the municipalities that the GSRT traverses.
- The GSRT brand framework should consider and align to the new South Gippsland brand identity and where appropriate the Gippsland All Kinds

of Wonder brand and brand pillars. Also partner with Destination Gippsland in the delivery of brand and campaign partner where appropriate.

- Addition of environmental and conservation groups, school groups, service clubs and adjoining land owners in the Community and Cultural Groups audience profile.
- Minor rewording in sections including objectives, audience profiles, government and partner audience profile, major and long-term projects.

CONSULTATION / COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community Engagement

There were six workshops (four online and two in person) facilitated in February 2022 with a total of 53 attendees. The workshops were designed by Cupla to understand the expectations and ambitions of identified stakeholders with regards to the future marketing of the Trail, product innovation and the Trail's connection to the wider region and visitor experience.

A survey was also developed and made available for community participation in March. The purpose of the survey was to test the findings and recommendations that may inform the draft Plan. A total of 277 people completed the survey during a two-week period.

A period of public exhibition from Thursday 19 May to Thursday 2 June 2022 allowed further feedback from the broader South Gippsland community prior to Council considering the final Great Southern Rail Trail Visitation and Marketing Plan.

RESOURCES / FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The development of the Great Southern Rail Trail Visitor Experience and Marketing Plan has been allocated within the 2021/22 Budget.

Some actions from the Plan can be completed within existing budget allocations, including the complementary South Gippsland brand identity development.

Future campaigns and actions to implement the Plan will be subject to future budget considerations.

RISKS

If the Plan is not supported by Council by June 2022, there is a risk that the project may require an extension and/or not meet the objectives of the Council Plan.

STAFF DISCLOSURE

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have considered and determined that they do not have a conflict of interest in the matter.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachments are available on Council's website at the following [LINK](#).

1. Great Southern Rail Trail (GSRT) Visitation and Marketing Plan - June 2022
[3.1.1 - 32 pages]

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Council's Good Governance Framework

Pillar 1. Direction & Leadership

Council Policy / Strategy / Plans

Documents are available on Council's website at the following [LINK](#).

Annual Budget

Arts, Culture and Creative Industry Strategy

Council Plan 2020-2024

Economic Development and Tourism Strategy

Paths and Trails Strategy

Legislative Provisions

Regional Development Victoria Act 2002

Regional Development Victoria Regulations 2019

Regional, State and National Plan and Policies

Gippsland Destination Management Plan - Towards 2030 - A Blueprint for Growth
(Destination Gippsland)

Gippsland Track & Trails Feasibility Study

4. OBJECTIVE 3 - INTEGRATED SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

4.1. PROPOSED RENAMING - DISCONTINUED SECTION OF SOUTH GIPPSLAND HIGHWAY, KOONWARRA

Sustainable Infrastructure

Council Plan

Objective 3 - Integrated Services and Infrastructure

The report aligns with the Council Plan by enhancing liveability.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider the results of the community engagement phase for the proposed new road name for the discontinued section of the South Gippsland Highway in Koonwarra to allow access for local residents.

As part of the South Gippsland Highway, Koonwarra road realignment works, a section of the existing highway will be discontinued due to the new alignment, and access will be closed off to through traffic east of Caithness Road. The section of former highway will be retained to allow access for local residents. To allow for the transfer of the road status from an “arterial road” (highway) to municipal road (local road), a new name must be given to this former section of highway. This renaming must be carried out in order for the newly constructed section of highway to be formerly open to traffic, and published in the Victorian Government Gazette.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

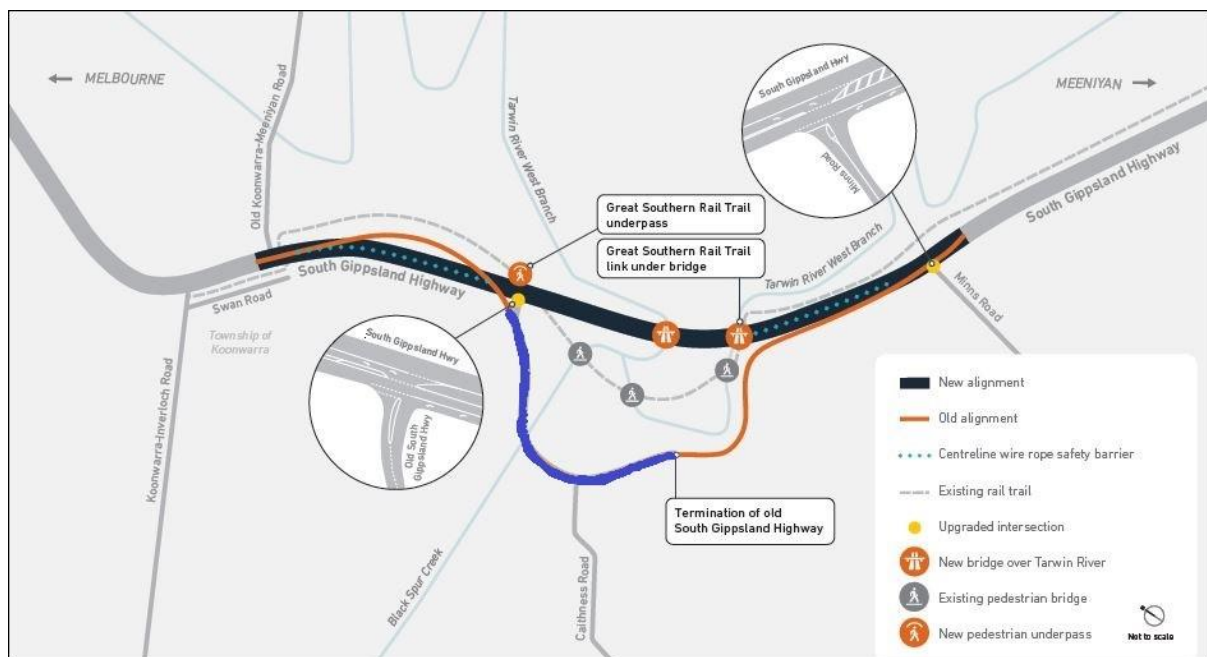
- 1. Notes the outcome of Round One community consultation (public notice and survey) which concluded with the following names receiving the majority support and VicNames naming rules compliancy for the former section of highway to be renamed:**
 - a. Barguss (4 submissions)**
 - b. Fossil (1 submission)**
 - c. Kinnish (3 submissions)**
 - d. Milsom (3 submissions)**
 - e. Prosser (13 submissions)**

2. **Notes the outcome of Round Two community consultation (voting poll) with two of the three directly affected properties supporting the following names from item 1 above for the proposed section of road to be renamed:**
 - a. **Prosser (1 vote)**
 - b. **Fossil (1 vote)**
3. **Considers the outcome of Round One (majority support for “Prosser”) and Round Two community consultation (equal support for “Prosser” and “Fossil”) and reverts back to the results of Round One based on the majority votes for the new road name for the former section of highway;**
4. **Determines the former section of the South Gippsland Highway in Koonwarra be renamed to PROSSER ROAD;**
5. **Adjusts and renumbers all affected properties abutting the former section of South Gippsland Highway in Koonwarra accordingly;**
6. **Writes to all submitters advising them of Council's decision and notifies the objectors that they have an opportunity to appeal South Gippsland Shire Council's decision with Geographic Names Victoria;**
7. **Retains a list of the proposed road names that were not selected for this road naming process for future road naming considerations;**
8. **Forwards the proposed new road name to Geographic Names Victoria for final consideration and approval; and**
9. **Subject to Geographic Names Victoria's approval of the proposed new name, places a notice in local newspapers and advise abutting land owners, local organisations, and local stakeholders of the new road name.**

REPORT

Major Road Projects Victoria are carrying out upgrade works on the South Gippsland Highway in Koonwarra. As part of this project, a section of the existing highway will be made redundant due to the new alignment, and access will be closed off to through traffic east of Caithness Road. The section of old highway will be retained to allow access for local residents. To allow for the transfer of the road from an arterial road to a municipal road, a new name must be given to the road.

Figure 1 – Former Section of Highway Proposed to be Renamed



Public safety is paramount and renaming this section of old highway and registering the new name with Geographic Names Victoria, will ensure emergency services can locate all properties on these roads by providing a unique road name and appropriate property numbering.

CONSULTATION / COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Consultative actions are carried out for the naming and renaming of all roads, primarily in consideration of the significance and potential effects of a proposal. The views of potentially affected property owners and occupiers must be sought and considered in line with Geographic Names Victoria naming rules. For this process, the following community consultation actions were completed:

1. Consult Historical Society – to seek potential names proposed by the Leongatha and District Historical Society which are of historical significance to the area.
2. Public Notice and Surveys (Round One) – to provide the opportunity for the community to provide feedback and gauge the level of support or opposition on a road naming/renaming proposal.
3. Voting Polls (Round Two)– to gain an indication of community support or opposition to a naming/renaming proposal for the immediate community if affected by an address change.

Please note: There has been some confusion around the spelling of “MILSOM” with the following errors noted during the consultation phase; second public

notice in May and June (“Milson”), web survey (“Millsom”), correspondence to VicNames for compliance check prior to Round 2 consultation (“Millsom”) and, final voting poll (“Milson”). However, although spelling was incorrect, the pronunciation including historical context is still the same.

Further information on each community consultation action / outcome is provided below.

1. Leongatha & District Historical Society

Leongatha & District Historical Society proposed the surnames of two men who owned property adjoining the section of old highway to be renamed.

- BARGUSS – Robert Barguss died of illness as a Prisoner of War (POW) on the Burma Railway on 12 January 1944. Robert was from Koonwarra and his name is etched on the memorial gates in his honour in the Koonwarra township.
- MILSOM – Harry Milsom was in 2/22nd Battalion at Rabaul and was executed by the Japanese as a POW on 8 March 1942. Although Harry lived and farmed at Tarwin, he also owned property abutting the old section of highway. His name is etched on the memorial gates in his honour in the Koonwarra township.

10. Round One Consultation

a. Public Notice & Surveys (12 April to 2 May 2022)

A public notice was placed in the local newspapers, Council’s Facebook page, and on Council’s website on 12 April 2022 calling for members of the public to provide feedback on the names proposed by the Leongatha & District Historical Society for the section of old highway to be renamed (“Barguss” and “Milsom”). Council also sought permission to use the proposed names by calling for consent from the family members or requested family contact details from the community.

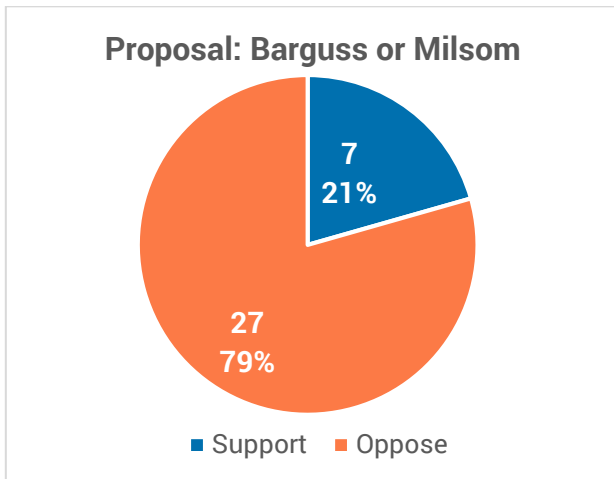
Surveys were available from the web and also sent to the immediate community (landowners / occupiers) that would be affected by an address change arising from this road name change to gain an indication of support or opposition in line with the *Naming Rules for Naming Places in Victoria 2016*. **Please note: “Milsom” incorrectly on the web survey (“Millsom”).**

A copy of the public notice is included in **Attachment [4.1.1]**.

b. Results from Round One Consultation

On conclusion of Round One community consultation and in response to the initial proposal to name the former section of highway as “Barguss or Milsom”, 34 submissions were received with a total of 27 submissions opposing to the proposal – refer to **Figure 1** below:

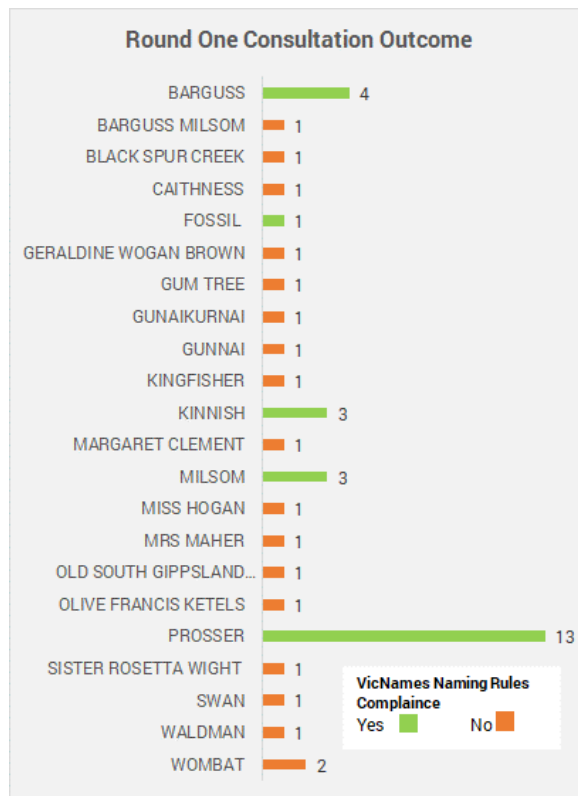
Figure 1 – Support / Opposition for “Barguss” or “Milsom”



Of the 27 submissions received opposing to the proposal to name this former section of highway “Barguss or Milsom”, a total of 20 further name suggestions were received including the consent from a family member to use the name “Barguss”.

These names have been checked for compliance under the Geographic Names Victoria naming rules and those names that comply, were shortlisted for Round Two community consultation. Refer to **Figure 2** below for a summary of the other suggested road names from the community.

Figure 2 – Road Name Suggestions / VicNames Compliance



As can be seen from **Figure 2** above, five of the proposed names complied with the VicNames naming rules with the following road names included in a voting poll (Round Two) to properties abutting the section of road to be renamed.

“MILSOM” - “BARGUSS” - “PROSSER” - “FOSSIL” - “KINNISH”

A further two public notices were placed in the local newspapers on 31 May and 15 June 2022 to update the community on the outcome of the community consultation phase carried out over April and May, and to notify the community of an upcoming report to Council to endorse the preferred new road name. A notice was also available on Council’s website under *Naming Roads and Places / Current Projects*.

A copy of the public notices are included in **Attachment [4.1.2]**. *Please note: “Milsom” incorrectly spelt in the public notices – “Milson”.*

Full details on all road name suggestions submitted by the community, including details around the selection of names based on the VicNames naming rules compliance check process is included in **Attachment [4.1.3]**.

A copy of all submissions received (personal details redacted) is included in **Attachment [4.1.4]**.

11. Round Two Consultation – Voting Poll

Voting polls can be used to gain an indication of community support or opposition to a naming/renaming proposal. They should be used with the immediate community if affected by an address change, noting that the majority of votes returned will be the preferred name subject to Council's approval and Geographic Names Victoria approval. In this instance, there were three properties directly affected by this naming proposal as they will be affected by an address change, therefore naming preference was ultimately left in their hands.

As the first-round consultation has generated five proposed names, Council sent out a voting poll to the three abutting landowners of this section of highway to be renamed to gain an indication of community support. The road name receiving the majority of the votes, would then be recommended to Council for consideration as the proposed new road name for the former section of highway at Koonwarra.

The closing date for voting polls to be returned was 21 June 2022.

a. Results from Round Two Consultation

Two of the three properties abutting the section of old highway to be renamed, returned their voting poll with one vote each for "Fossil" and "Prosser".

12. Conclusion

Considering the outcome of the two consultation rounds, it is considered appropriate to revert back to the results of Round One consultation considering the majority of the submissions indicated their preference for the new road name to be "Prosser" (with 13 votes being 31% of the total submissions received), compared to "Fossil" (1 vote / 2%) and "Kinnish" (3 votes / 7%).

Therefore, it is considered appropriate that "Prosser" is proposed as the new road name for the former section of highway based on the findings of the community consultation actions.

VICNAMES COMPLIANCE CHECK

South Gippsland Shire Council received 'In Principle' support for the proposed name of "Barguss" and "Milsom" from Geographic Names Victoria prior to Round One consultation. *Please note: "Milsom" spelt incorrectly in correspondence to VicNames – "Millsom".*

After Round Two, the twenty further suggested names were checked for compliance in accordance with the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria – Roads, Features, and Places 2016 with a VICNAMES 15km duplicate¹ or similar sounding/spelling name² search from Geographic Names Victoria carried out.

The final proposed road name is subject to a compliant proposal being submitted to the Office of Geographic Names Victoria (OGN) for final approval.

Appeals can be made to The Registrar of Geographic Names from members of the community who have already objected directly to the naming authority's proposal. An appeal to the Registrar can only be made if the objector can demonstrate that either:

- The naming authority did not consider the objections during its deliberations.
- The proposal does not reasonably conform to the principles and statutory requirements of these naming rules.

Full details on all road name suggestions submitted by the community, including details around the selection of names based on the VicNames naming rules compliance check process is included in **Attachment [4.1.3]**.

All names that are non-compliant for this section of road will be placed on Council's future road name list for a suitable road.

RESOURCES / FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The only future cost to Council will be for the erection of one new sign at approximately \$150, this is accommodated in Council's signage budget.

RISKS

Council's risk is minimal as the methodology for the road naming has followed the *Naming Rules for Places in Victoria - Statutory Requirements for Naming Roads, Features and Localities 2016*.

Renaming this former section of highway with a unique road name and applying standardised addressing will ensure each property is uniquely

¹ **Duplicates** are considered to be two (or more) names within close proximity, or names that are identical or have similar spelling or pronunciation. Not all results from a VICNAMES duplication search are duplicates. If naming authorities have a proposed name not duplicated within the same locality, but marginally within the radius deemed to be a duplicate, you may contact Office of Geographic Names Victoria (OGN) for further advice.

² For **similar sounding names**, common sense is required. Sound out the name to ensure suitable difference.

identified in the Victorian Government's spatial databases. This will remove any confusion from the general public, emergency services, and service providers.

STAFF DISCLOSURE

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have considered and determined that they do not have a conflict of interest in the matter.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachments are available on Council's website at the following [LINK](#).

1. Public Notice - 12 April 2022 [4.1.1 - 1 page]
2. Public Notices - 31 May & 15 June 2022 [4.1.2 - 1 page]
3. Proposed Road Names - History - VicNames Compliance [4.1.3 - 3 pages]
4. Submissions (Round One) [4.1.4 - 51 pages]
5. Voting Polls (Round Two) [4.1.5 - 4 pages]

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Council's Good Governance Framework

Pillar 3. Decision Making

Legislative Provisions

Features and Localities – 2016

Geographic Place Names Act 1998

Local Government Act 1989

Local Government Act 2020

Naming Rules for Places in Victoria - Statutory Requirements for Naming Roads

Road Management Act 2004

5. NOTICES OF MOTION AND/OR RESCISSION

Nil

6. COUNCILLOR REPORTS

6.1. REQUESTS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Cr Williams proposes to request a leave of absence for Council Meeting 20 July 2022.

6.2. COUNCILLOR UPDATES

6.3. COMMITTEE UPDATES

7. URGENT OR OTHER BUSINESS

There are two basic parts to this section of the Agenda:

1. Urgent Business

Normally no motion should be debated by Councillors unless the matter is already included as an item on the Agenda. However, in some circumstances it is possible to raise urgent motions.

Council's Governance Rules 2020 (clause 22 - Urgent Business) adopted on 26 August 2020, allows for where a situation has not been provided for under the Governance Rules, the Council may determine the matter by resolution. Established practice has provided for urgent motions to be raised at Council provided the matter cannot be dealt with at the next Council Meeting or by Officers under delegation.

It is necessary for the Councillor wishing to raise a matter of urgent business to raise a motion similar to the following:

'That consideration of (the issue) be dealt with as a matter of urgent business and Councillor....be allowed a 'short period' to indicate the reason(s) why the matter should be considered as a matter of urgent business.' If the Chairperson accepts the motion as meeting the urgent business criteria, normal meeting procedures in Council's Governance Rules 2020 (clause 22) will apply.

If the motion to accept the item as a matter of urgent business is passed by Council, the motion relating to the specific issue can then be put and debated in the normal way.

2. Other Business

This provides an opportunity for Councillors to raise items of general interest to the Council and the community. It may relate to an up and coming event or the outcomes of a recent meeting with a Minister etc.

8. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

8.1. PETITIONS AND JOINT LETTERS

Petitions and Joint Letters are written requests that have been signed by a number of community members. According to the *Governance Rules (C82)*, *clause 57*, members of the community may submit a valid petition or joint letter to a Councillor or to Council addressed to the Chief Executive Officer.

At the Meeting a petition or joint letter is presented, Council will consider a motion to receive it, the matter itself will not be considered unless determined as urgent business.

The Councillor presenting the petition or joint letter is responsible for ensuring that they are familiar with the contents and purpose of the petition or joint letter and that it does not contain language disrespectful to Council.

The requirements of the lead petitioner are detailed in the *Governance Rules (C82)*, *clause 57*.

Source: [Governance Rules \(C82\)](#) – adopted August 2020.

8.2. ANSWERS TO PREVIOUS QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Answers to previous questions taken on notice at a former Council Meeting, are included in the Minutes of this Meeting.

Background material submitted with a question will not be recorded in the Council Meeting Minutes.

A submitter will receive a letter outlining the response to a question after the Minutes have been produced.

Source: [Governance Rules \(C82\)](#) – adopted August 2020.

Nil

8.3. SUBMITTED PUBLIC QUESTIONS

All community member questions for Council Meetings are to be written and submitted to the Council Business Team by 9.00am on the Monday morning preceding the Council Meeting to allow time for a response to be prepared, where possible, for the Council Meeting. All reasonable attempts will be made to answer pre-submitted questions at the Meeting. When further time is required to prepare an answer, questions may be taken on notice and responses will be provided at the next Council Meeting.

On the day of the Meeting, questions on the prescribed form must be received prior to the commencement of the Council Meeting by 2.00pm and placed in the receptacle at the Governance Officers table. These questions will be taken on notice, included in the Minutes and responses provided at the next Council Meeting.

Public Question Time in Council Meetings is to be used for matters that are relevant to the business or functions of Council and are clear and legible. Questions may not be allowed where the question(s) is deemed to be:

- Related to a matter beyond or outside the powers of Council;
- Trivial or frivolous;
- Defamatory, indecent, abusive or objectionable;
- Derogatory or designed to embarrass a Councillor, a member of Council staff or a member of the community;
- Related to subject matter previously received and responded to;
- Related to a matter already considered and resolved upon by Council;
- Breach Council's confidentiality obligations; and/or
- Illegible, vague or not make sense.

A person may submit a maximum of three (3) questions for any one Council Meeting, this includes a combined total of three (3) questions for related parties or groups. The total word count of all questions submitted is to be 100 words or fewer.

Background material submitted with a question will not be read out or recorded in the Council Meeting Minutes.

The CEO retains the discretion, in consultation with the Mayor, to not refer questions to Council meetings if there is a more effective or appropriate way to respond to the matters raised. Answers to questions from a member of the community who is present in the gallery will be read out at the Council Meeting by the CEO or Mayor.

Source: [Governance Rules \(C82\)](#) – adopted August 2020.

9. CLOSED SESSION

The *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act), section 66 provides that if a council or delegated committee determines that a meeting is to be closed to the public to consider confidential information, the Council or delegated committee must record in the minutes of the meeting that are available for public inspection –

- a) the ground or grounds for determining to close the meeting to the public by reference to the grounds specified in the definition of ***confidential information*** in section 3(1); and
- b) an explanation of why the specified ground or grounds applied.

The Act defines ***confidential information*** in s.3(1)(a)-(l), and includes information that may prejudice or impact; commercial negotiations, the security of Council, land use planning, law enforcement, legal privilege, personal information, private commercial information, confidential meeting information, internal arbitration, Councillor conduct panel information and information specified under s.77 of the previous *Local Government Act 1989*.

Once confidential information has been considered and decided in a closed session of a Council Meeting, a further resolution to resume open Council is required.

Nil

10. MEETING CLOSED

NEXT MEETING

The next Council Meeting open to the public will be held on Wednesday, 20 July 2022 commencing at 2pm in the Council Chambers, Leongatha.