

Benalla Rural City Council

# Council Meeting

## Agenda

- Date: Wednesday 15 October 2025
- Time: Following the 6pm Finance and Planning Committee meeting
- Venue: Civic Centre (Council Meeting Room)  
13 Mair Street, Benalla

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# Agenda

<b>Chair</b>	Councillor Bernie Hearn (Mayor)	
<b>Councillors</b>	Councillor Justin King (Deputy Mayor)	
	Councillor David Blore	
	Councillor Peter Davis	
	Councillor Puna Hewa Gunaratne	
	Councillor Jillian Merkel	
	Councillor Nathan Tolliday	
<b>In attendance</b>	Peter Keane	Chief Executive Officer
	Robert Barber	General Manager Corporate
	Joel Ingham	Acting Manager Assets and Infrastructure
	Courtney Naughton	Manager Economic Development and Sustainability
	Stephen Dowe	Senior Projects and Technical Services Engineer
	Jess Pendergast	Governance Coordinator

## Opening and Acknowledgement of Country

The Chair will open the meeting and recite the following Acknowledgement of Country.

*We, the Benalla Rural City Council, acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we are meeting. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and to Elders from other communities who may be here today.*

## Apologies

### **Recommendation:**

**That the apology/ies be accepted.**

## Statement of Commitment

The Councillors will recite the following Statement of Commitment:

*I declare,*

*that as a Councillor of Benalla Rural City*

*I will undertake on every occasion*

*to carry out my duties in the best interests of the community*

*and that my conduct shall maintain the standards of our Model Councillor Code of Conduct*

*so that I may faithfully represent*

*and uphold the trust placed in the Council*

*by the people of Benalla and District.*

## Governance Matters

This Council Meeting is conducted in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Benalla Rural City Council Governance Rules 2020*.

## Question Time and Public Submissions

Any person wishing to participate in Question Time or Public Submissions in accordance with Rule 7.2 and 7.3 of the *Governance Rules 2020* should contact the Council by emailing [council@benalla.vic.gov.au](mailto:council@benalla.vic.gov.au) or telephoning the Governance Coordinator Jess Pendergast on (03) 5760 2600.

## Recording of Council Meetings

In accordance with Rule 6.4 of the *Governance Rules 2020* the Council Meeting will be livestreamed via the Council's website and an audio recording will be made of the proceedings and made available for public access, with the exception of matters identified as confidential items in the agenda.

Members of the public can watch the live broadcast of the meeting at [www.benalla.vic.gov.au](http://www.benalla.vic.gov.au)

## Behaviour at Meetings

Members of the public present at a meeting must remain silent during the proceedings other than when specifically invited to address the Committee.

The Chair may remove a person from a meeting for interjecting or gesticulating offensively after being asked to desist, and the chair may cause the removal of any object or material that is deemed by the Chair to be objectionable or disrespectful.

The Chair may call a break in a meeting for either a short time, or to resume another day if the behaviour at the Council table or in the gallery is significantly disrupting the Meeting.

## Disclosures of Conflict of Interest

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, a Councillor must declare any Conflict of Interest pursuant to Section 130 of the Act in any items on this Agenda.

At the time indicated in the agenda, a Councillor with a conflict of interest in an item on that agenda must indicate they have a conflict of interest by clearly stating:

- the item for which they have a conflict of interest;
- whether their conflict of interest is general or material; and
- the circumstances that give rise to the conflict of interest.

Immediately prior to the consideration of the item in which they have a conflict of interest, a Councillor must indicate to the Meeting the existence of the conflict of interest and leave the Meeting.

## Confirmation of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes have been circulated to Councillors and posted on the Council website [www.benalla.vic.gov.au](http://www.benalla.vic.gov.au) pending confirmation at this meeting.

### **Recommendation:**

**That the Minutes of the Council Meetings held on Wednesday 10 September 2025 and Wednesday 1 October 2025 be confirmed as a true and accurate records of the meetings.**

## 1. Public Question Time

The Council's *Governance Rules 2020* provide the opportunity for members of the public to lodge written questions of broad interest to the Council and the community.

Questions of the Council will not be allowed during any period when the Council has resolved to close the meeting in respect of a matter under section 66 (1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act).

A question may be on any matter except if it:

- is considered malicious, defamatory, indecent, abusive, offensive, irrelevant, trivial, or objectionable in language or substance;
- relates to confidential information as defined under the Act;
- relates to the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer; or
- relates to any other matter which the Council considers would prejudice the Council or any person.

No more than two questions will be accepted from any person at any one meeting. All questions and answers must be as brief as possible, and no discussion may be allowed other than by Councillors for the purposes of clarification.

Like questions may be grouped together and a single answer provided. The Chair may nominate a Councillor, the Chief Executive Officer or another member of Council staff to respond to a question.

### **Recommendation:**

**That the question(s) and answer(s) be noted.**

## 2. Petitions

No petitions were submitted to the meeting.

### Record of Committees

#### 3.1 Recommendations from Finance and Planning Committee

The recommendations of the Finance and Planning Committee meeting held on Wednesday 1 October 2025 are attached as **Appendix 1**.

#### **Recommendation:**

**That the recommendations of the Finance and Planning Committee meeting held on Wednesday 1 October 2025 be adopted.**

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## Recommendations of the Finance and Planning Committee - 1 October 2025

### Business

#### 1. Draft *Benalla Rural City Council Plan 2025-2029* – Hearing of Submissions

The report presented submissions received on the draft *Benalla Rural City Council Plan 2025-2029*.

Submissions will be considered at the Finance and Planning Committee on 15 October 2025.

The draft *Benalla Rural City Council Plan 2025-2029* will be considered for adoption at the Council meeting on 29 October 2025.

**Cr King / Cr Tolliday:**

**That submissions on the draft *Benalla Rural City Council Plan 2025-2029* be received.**

**Carried**

#### 2. Draft *Benalla Rural City Council Road Management Plan 2025-2029* – Hearing of Submissions

The report presented submissions received on the draft *Benalla Rural City Council Road Management Plan 2025-2029*.

It is noted that the following persons addressed the meeting in relation to their submissions:

- Anne Cahill Lambert
- Colin Squires
- Grant Donaldson

Submissions will be considered at the Finance and Planning Committee on 15 October 2025.

The *Benalla Rural City Council Road Management Plan 2025–2029* will be considered for adoption at the Council meeting on 29 October 2025.

**Cr Blore / Cr Merkel:**

**That submissions on the draft *Benalla Rural City Council Road Management Plan 2025–2029* be received.**

**Carried**

### **3. Daft Benalla Rural City Council Asset Plan 2025–2029 and Draft Asset Management Policy – Hearing of Submissions**

The report presented submissions received on the draft *Benalla Rural City Council Asset Plan 2025–2029* and draft *Asset Management Policy*.

Submissions on the draft *Benalla Rural City Council Asset Plan 2025–2029* will be considered at the Finance and Planning Committee on 15 October 2025.

The *Benalla Rural City Council Asset Plan 2025–2029* will be considered for adoption at the Council meeting on 29 October 2025.

As no submissions were received and no further amendments are proposed, it is recommended that the Council adopt the Asset Management Policy.

**Cr King / Cr Blore:**

- 1. That submissions on the draft *Benalla Rural City Council Asset Plan 2025-2029* be received.**
- 2. That the *Asset Management Policy* be adopted.**
- 3. That the *Asset Management Policy* be reviewed in October 2029.**

**Carried**

### **4. Draft Benalla Rural City Council Financial Plan 2025/26 to 2034/35**

The report presented the *Benalla Rural City Council Financial Plan 2025/26 to 2034/35*.

As no submissions were received and no further amendments are proposed, it is recommended that the Council adopt the *Benalla Rural City Council Financial Plan 2025/26 to 2034/35*.

It is proposed that the Financial Plan be updated annually as part of the Council Budget development program.

**Cr Blore / Cr Tolliday:**

**That the *Benalla Rural City Council Financial Plan 2025/26 to 2034/35* be adopted.**

**Carried**

## **5. 2025/26 Quick Response Grants Program**

The report presented funding applications for 2025/26 Quick Response Grants.

**Cr Tolliday / Cr Merkel:**

**That a \$700 grant from the *2025/2026 Quick Response Grant program* be awarded to the Benalla Men's Shed.**

**Carried**

## **6. Building and Planning Approvals – August 2025**

The report detailed planning permit applications and building approvals for August 2025.

**Cr King / Cr Gunaratne:**

**That the report be noted.**

**Carried**

## **7. Urgent Business**

No urgent business was submitted to the meeting.



### 3.2 Assemblies of Councillors, Advisory and External Committees

Under Council's *Governance Rules 2020* the Chief Executive Officer is required to provide a written record of the Assemblies of Councillors at a scheduled Council Meeting.

The record of Assemblies of Councillors, Advisory and External Committees are attached as **Appendix 1**.

Copies of the Minutes from the following meetings have been provided to councillors under separate cover.

#### September 2025

<b>2 September</b>	Benalla Art Gallery Redevelopment Committee
<b>3 September</b>	Assembly of Councillors – Business Review
<b>9 September</b>	Benalla Festival Advisory Committee
<b>16 September</b>	Benalla Art Gallery Redevelopment Project Control Group
<b>24 September</b>	Assembly of Councillors – Business Review

#### Recommendation:

**That the report be noted.**

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## Record of Assemblies of Councillors, Advisory and External Committees

September 2025

**Benalla Art Gallery Advisory Committee**

5.30pm Tuesday 2 September 2025, Civic Centre (Council Meeting Room) 13 Mair Street, Benalla.

**Chair** Barbara Alexander OA

<b>Committee</b>	Cr Jillian Merkel	Councillor Representative
	Cr Puna Hewa Gunaratne	Councillor Representative
	Tim Abdallah	General Member
	Andrew Ashton	Friends of Benalla Art Gallery delegate
	Winsome McCaughey AO	General Member
	Elizabeth Costello	Tourism North East delegate
	Anna Parle	General Member
	Fiona Stephens	General Member
<b>In attendance</b>	Alice Tallis	General Member
	Adrian Gasperoni	Manager Assets and Infrastructure
	Courtney Naughton	Manager Economic Development and Sustainability
	Eric Nash	Director Benalla Art Gallery

**Apologies:** Elizabeth Costello and Fiona Stephen**Conflicts of Interest disclosed:** Nil**Items discussed:**

1. *Benalla Art Gallery Redevelopment Project* – Stage 1 Update
2. Director's Report – September 2025
3. Exhibition Schedule – 2025 and 2026
4. Benalla Art Gallery Foundation Report – September 2025
5. Acquisition Proposal – Bill Henson
6. Acquisition Proposal – Mary Tonkin
7. Acquisition Proposal – Guy Stuart
8. General Business

**Assembly of Councillors – Business Review**

6pm Wednesday 3 September 2025, Civic Centre (Council Meeting Room) 13 Mair Street, Benalla.

**Chair** Councillor Bernie Hearn (Mayor)

**Councillors** Councillor David Blore  
Councillor Peter Davis  
Councillor Puna Hewa Gunaratne  
Councillor Jillian Merkel  
Councillor Nathan Tolliday

**Online Attendance** Councillor Justin King (Deputy Mayor)

**In attendance** Robert Barber Acting Chief Executive Officer  
Courtney Naughton Manager Economic Development and Sustainability  
Kate Nolan Tourism and Events Officer

**Apologies:** Cr Peter Davis

**Conflicts of Interest disclosed:** Nil

**Items discussed:**

1. Presentation: VicGrid Victorian Transmission Plan
2. 2025 Benalla Festival
3. Draft *Councillor Confidentiality Policy*
4. Councillor Policies

**Benalla Festival Advisory Committee**

4.15pm Tuesday 9 September 2025, Civic Centre (Council Meeting Room) 13 Mair Street, Benalla.

**Chair** Cr Justin King (Deputy Mayor) Councillor Representative

**Committee** Cr Jillian Merkel Councillor Representative  
Cr Nathan Tolliday Councillor Representative  
Caroll Bolitho Community Representative  
Stephanine Brack Community Representative  
Vince Branigan Community Representative  
Adam Toms Community Representative

**In attendance** Courtney Naughton Manager Economic Development and Sustainability  
Kate Nolan Tourism and Events Officer  
Sara Bowie Administration Officer

**Apologies:** Vince Branigan and Stephanie Brack

**Conflicts of Interest disclosed:** Nil

**Items discussed:**

1. Benalla By The Lake Event Update
2. Update On Progress
3. Launch Event



**Benalla Art Gallery Redevelopment Project Control Group**

2pm Tuesday 16 September 2025, Civic Centre (Council Meeting Room) 13 Mair Street, Benalla.

<b>Chair</b>	Adrian Gasperoni	Manager Assets and Infrastructure
<b>Committee</b>	Cr Justin King (Deputy Mayor)	Councillor Representative
	Cr David Blore	Councillor Representative
	Barber Alexander OA	Chair Benalla Art Gallery Advisory Committee
	Jason Brown	Browns Project Solutions
	Laura Benson	Browns Project Solutions
	Eric Nash	Benalla Art Gallery Director
	Travis Vincent	Regional Development Victoria
<b>Invitees</b>	Peter Keane	Chief Executive Officer
	Courtney Naughton	Manager Economic Development and Sustainability
	Brian Beggs	Administration Officer

**Apologies:** Peter Keane and Jason Brown

**Conflicts of Interest disclosed:** Nil

**Items discussed:**

1. Benalla Art Gallery Redevelopment Project Update
2. Benalla Art Gallery Advisory Committee Update
3. Funding Provider Update
4. Action Sheet Review
5. General Business

**Assembly of Councillors – Business Review**

6pm Wednesday 24 September 2025, Civic Centre (Council Meeting Room) 13 Mair Street, Benalla.

<b>Chair</b>	Councillor Jillian Merkel	
<b>Councillors</b>	Councillor Bernie Hearn (Mayor)	
	Councillor Justin King (Deputy Mayor)	
	Councillor David Blore	
	Councillor Peter Davis	
	Councillor Puna Hewa Gunaratne	
	Councillor Nathan Tolliday	
<b>In attendance</b>	Peter Keane	Chief Executive Officer
	Robert Barber	General Manager Corporate
	Jane Archbold	Manager Community
	Nathan Gasperoni	Environmental Sustainability Coordinator

**Apologies:** Cr Bernie Hearn

**Conflicts of Interest disclosed:** Nil

**Items discussed:**

1. Presentation: Goulburn Murray Climate Alliance
2. Update On Outcomes From The Petition Requesting Council Establish A LGBTQIA+ Subcommittee Of The Social Inclusion Action Group
3. VicGrid Victoria Transmission Plan Presentation



## Officer Reports

### 4.1 2025/26 Major Event Funding Program

Ref: 17668899222-1047

Kate Nolan – Tourism and Events Officer

Courtney Naughton – Manager Economic Development and Sustainability

#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents funding applications for the 2025/26 Major Event Funding Program.

#### BACKGROUND

The Council's Major Event Funding Program enables local community groups, clubs, organisations and external event groups to seek up to \$2,000 in funding to assist in the staging of events that will provide measurable economic benefit and enhance the image and liveability of Benalla Rural City.

#### DISCUSSION

##### Major Event Funding

Applications for consideration under the 2025/26 Major Event Funding program are detailed in the table below.

Applicant	Details	Amount Requested	Proposed Assistance
Benalla Lions Club	<p><b>Community Carols By Candlelight</b> <b>21 December 2025</b></p> <p>Benalla Lions Community Carols by Candlelight has run for 50+ years. All members of Benalla and surrounding communities are welcome to attend this free event.</p> <p>Carols by Candlelight is a major Christmas social event for Benalla and the surrounding district communities, bringing together a large contingent of the Benalla Community. Ages from young children to elderly take part and attend this event. Many families purchase take-away food from local outlets and then have a picnic while watching the Carols.</p> <p>This year Benalla Rose City Band, Benalla Theatre Company and P-12 Benalla College Band will provide the entertainment. We believe by having the local school band involved this year, it will bring more people to the event. Estimated number of attendees is 2,500.</p> <p>The event will be held in the Botanic Gardens in and around the Rotunda with the public on the lawn area in front of the Rotunda. Santa will be in attendance and will arrive in an SES vehicle.</p> <p>This funding will be used to promote the event via posters, Bridge board signs and in the Ensign. It will also be used to supply a light meal for the singers and band groups.</p>	\$2,000	\$2,000

Applicant	Details	Amount Requested	Proposed Assistance
<b>Benalla Migrants Association</b>	<p><b>Diwali @ Mural</b> <b>3 November 2025</b></p> <p>This is the community Diwali celebration for Northeast Victoria, presented as a major highlight of the Benalla Festival. Diwali is a vibrant, family-friendly event that brings together cultural groups to share and experience Diwali in its many forms, as it is celebrated across South Asia. It provides an inclusive platform to celebrate diversity, foster community connection, and strengthen cultural understanding across the region.</p> <p>The program will feature a variety of cultural performances, DJ music, traditional dance, and visual art projections, creating a lively and immersive atmosphere. Unique attractions such as a 360 video booth, children's face painting, henna stalls, and a spectacular fireworks display will also be offered free of charge for all attendees, ensuring the event remains accessible and welcoming. BMA volunteers will distribute free sweets and snacks, while food trucks will be available for attendees to purchase meals and drinks. The event has proven to be a major drawcard, attracting over 2,500 attendees in 2024, whilst hoping to have a similar attendance in 2025.</p> <p>The Diwali celebration delivers strong social and economic benefits to Benalla. As one of the region's largest multicultural events, it attracts thousands of visitors from nearby towns, such as Shepparton, Albury-Wodonga, and Melbourne. Promoted nationally through tourism platforms and media campaigns, the event enhances Benalla's profile as a vibrant and welcoming cultural destination.</p> <p>Economically, the festival drives local spending on food, accommodation, and retail. Food trucks, vendors, and local businesses benefit directly from increased foot traffic, while the influx of visitors supports Benalla's hospitality and tourism sectors and showcases attractions like Lake Benalla and the Benalla Art Gallery.</p> <p>The Diwali celebration offers a wide range of opportunities for community participation, led by the Benalla Migrants Association. In the lead-up to the event, five community workshops will be held to create Diwali-themed art for use in visual projections and event decorations. These workshops are open to all and encourage creativity, collaboration, and cultural learning.</p> <p>Benalla's youth are also actively engaged, with dance practice sessions already underway in preparation for performances at the event. Many local community members, including children and adults, are participating as performers in cultural and musical acts, reflecting the diversity and talent within the region.</p> <p>On the day of the festival, a 15-minute community Bollywood dance workshop will be offered to everyone.</p> <p>The intended use of the funding will be to cover the cost of hiring toilets, chairs and tables for the event.</p>	\$2,000	\$2,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$4,000</b>	<b>\$4,000</b>

## Community

- *A healthy, Safe and resilient community.*
- *A connected, involved and inclusive community.*

## Leadership

- *Engaged and informed community.*

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In accordance with the Council's *Community Engagement Policy*, it is proposed that community engagement be undertaken at the 'Inform' level under the International Association for Public Participation's IAP2 public participation spectrum.

Level of Public Participation	Promise to the community	Techniques to be used
Inform	We will provide information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Promotion of program via media, website and social media.</li><li>▪ Program presented in public reports to the Council.</li><li>▪ Outcomes advised directly to applicants.</li><li>▪ Outcomes detailed in Annual Report.</li><li>▪ Media release.</li></ul>

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The *2025/26 Budget* allocated \$12,000 to the Major Event Funding program. These applications are the second and third for this financial year. The inclusion of this event will bring the total budget spend to \$6,000.

## OFFICER DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any general or material conflicts of interest in this matter.

### Recommendation:

**That \$2,000 grants from the 2025/26 Major Event Funding program be allocated to the Benalla Lions Club and Benalla Migrants Association.**

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## 4.2 Benalla Street Art Advisory Committee – Consideration of Chair

Ref: 870788216-18973

Courtney Naughton – Manager Economic Development and Sustainability

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### PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents the nomination for the position of Chair for the *Benalla Street Art Advisory Committee* for the 2025/26 year.

### BACKGROUND

The *Benalla Street Art Festival Advisory Committee* (the Committee) was established by the Council at its meeting on 24 May 2023. The committee was formed to deliver the Benalla Street Art Festival event in Benalla Rural City.

Street Art Festivals have been delivered in 2024 and 2025, with planning underway for a 2026 festival.

The Council at its meeting on 18 December 2024 appointed two Councillor representatives to the Committee:

- Cr Jillian Merkel
- Cr Nathan Tolliday.

The *Benalla Street Art Festival Advisory Committee Terms of Reference* (Terms of Reference) were adopted by Council at its meeting on 27 August 2025.

### DISCUSSION

In accordance with the *Benalla Street Art Festival Advisory Committee Terms of Reference* at the Committees October meeting each year the Committee nominates a chairperson for the Councils consideration.

The *Benalla Street Art Advisory Committee* held a meeting on Monday 6 October 2025 and the committee nominated Ian Gonzaga as the chair for the 2025/26 year.

Ian Gonzaga was appointed to the committee as a community representative by the Council at its meeting on 28 June 2023.

### **COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025 IMPLICATIONS**

#### Leadership

- *Good governance.*
- *High performance culture.*
- *Engaged and informed community.*
- *Effective and responsive advocacy.*

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In accordance with the Council's *Community Engagement Policy*, due to administrative nature, community engagement be undertaken at the 'Inform' level under the International Association for Public Participation's IAP2 public participation spectrum as detailed in the table below:

Level of Public Participation	Promise to the community	Techniques to be used
Inform	We will provide information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Report published on the Council's website.</li></ul>

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no material financial implications for the appointment of a Chair to the *Benalla Street Art Advisory Committee*.

## LEGISLATIVE AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

It is considered that the report is consistent with the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* and *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

## OFFICER DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any general or material conflicts of interest in this matter.

### Recommendation:

**That Ian Gonzaga be appointed as the Chair of the *Benalla Street Art Festival Advisory Committee* for the 2025/26 Council Year.**



**4.3 Chief Executive Officer Credit Card Report For The Quarter Ended 30 September 2025**

Ref: 669520245-167  
Tracey Beaton – Executive Coordinator

**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

The report details expenditure associated with the corporate credit card issued to the Chief Executive Officer for the quarter ended 30 September 2025.

**BACKGROUND**

As part of an audit of the Council’s 2017/18 financial statements, the Victorian Auditor General’s Office recommended that the Chief Executive Officer’s credit card transactions be reviewed and authorised by a Council member.

In response to the recommendation, transactions on the CEOs credit card are reported quarterly to the Council.

**CEO Credit Card Transactions for the Quarter ended 30 September 2025**

Date	Details	Amount
11/07/2025	7-Eleven - Fuel	\$118.29
Total (ex. GST)		<b>\$118.29</b>

**Recommendation:**  
**That the report be noted.**

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## 4.4 Councillors' Expenses For The Quarter Ended 30 September 2025

Ref: 36167913-9667

Tracey Beaton – Executive Coordinator

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report details expenditure associated with Councillors' mobile phone usage, attendance at professional development courses, conferences and seminars, and reimbursement of expenses incurred.

### Councillors' Information and Communication Expenses

Councillors' information and communication expenses for mobile phones are detailed in the table below:

Councillor	2025/26 Q1
Cr Davis	\$0
Cr Gunaratne	\$36.61
Cr Hearn	\$0
Cr King	\$0
Cr Blore	\$36.61
Cr Merkel	\$36.61
Cr Tolliday	\$36.61
<b>Total (ex. GST):</b>	<b>\$146.44</b>

### Councillors' attendance at training courses, conferences and seminars

The Council at its meeting on 12 October 2022 adopted the *Professional Development for Councillors Policy*. The policy states that a quarterly report be submitted to the Council detailing year to date expenditure on Councillors' attendance at professional development courses, conferences and seminars.

Date	Councillor	Description	Conferences & Seminars (ex. GST)
29/07/2025	Cr David Blore	Attendance and Travel - Victorian Greenhouse Alliance Conference on 22 August 2025	\$470.99
04/08/2025	Mayor Cr Bernie Hearn	Attendance at MAV Service Awards including Mr Danny Claridge	\$400.00
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$870.99</b>

Cr David Blore paid for the Victorian Greenhouse Alliance Conference and associated travel expenses upfront and subsequently received a reimbursement in accordance with the *Councillor Resources and Reimbursement Policy*.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The 2025/26 *Budget* allocated for Councillors' attendance at professional development courses, conferences and seminars is \$15,104.

Summary	Professional Development, Conferences and Seminars (ex. GST)
Quarter ended 30 September 2025	\$870.99

**Recommendation:**  
**That the report be noted.**

## 4.5 Mayor and Councillors' Attendance At Conferences and Events

Ref: 36167913-9665

Tracey Beaton – Executive Coordinator

The Mayor and Councillors attended meetings and events as detailed below during the period 1 September 2025 to 5 October 2025.

<b>Mayor Councillor Bernie Hearn</b>	
3 September	Councillor Only Time
	Assembly of Councillors – Business Review
5 September	Interview with 3NE
10 September	Council Meeting
11 September	RUOK? Benalla Rural City Council Staff Breakfast
13 September	Koren Film Festival Official Opening
16 September	Meeting with Benalla Golf Club
	Citizenship Ceremony
17 September	MAV - The Mayors Institute – State Election Roundtable
18 September	Benalla Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee Meeting
	Benalla Rotary Club “Say No to Domestic and Family Violence
17 September	Helen Haines MP - LGA Roundtable Meeting
19 September	Benalla Art Gallery Foundation Function
20 September	Baileys of Glenrowan Market Day

<b>Deputy Mayor Councillor Justin King</b>	
3 September	Assembly of Councillors – Business Review
4 September	Benalla Showgrounds and Recreation Reserve Meeting
9 September	Benalla Festival Advisory Committee Meeting
10 September	Council Meeting
11 September	RUOK? Benalla Rural City Council Staff Breakfast
16 September	Benalla Art Gallery Redevelopment Project Control Group Meeting
	Citizenship Ceremony
19 September	Benalla Art Gallery Foundation Function
25 September	Benalla Art Gallery 50th Anniversary and Closing Celebration
26 September	Benalla Racing Club - Benalla Gold Cup
1 October	Additional Council Meeting
	Finance and Planning Committee Meeting
4 October	Official Opening of the new Salvation Army Facility

<b>Councillor David Blore</b>	
3 September	Councillor Only Time
	Assembly of Councillors – Business Review
10 September	Council Meeting
16 September	Benalla Family Research Group Meeting
	Benalla Art Gallery Redevelopment Project Control Group Meeting
	Citizenship Ceremony
18 September	Benalla Rotary Club “Say No to Domestic and Family Violence
19 September	Benalla Art Gallery Foundation Function
24 September	Assembly of Councillors - Business Review
25 September	Benalla Art Gallery 50th Anniversary and Closing Celebration
1 October	Benalla Historical Society Committee Meeting
	Additional Council Meeting
	Finance and Planning Committee Meeting

<b>Councillor Peter Davis</b>	
10 September	Council Meeting
17 September	Benalla Gardens Oval Committee of Management Meeting
19 September	Benalla Art Gallery Foundation Function
24 September	Assembly of Councillors - Business Review
1 October	Additional Council Meeting
	Finance and Planning Committee Meeting

<b>Councillor Puna Hewa Gunaratne</b>	
2 September	Benalla Art Gallery Advisory Committee Meeting
3 September	Assembly of Councillors – Business Review
10 September	Council Meeting
13 September	Koren Film Festival Official Opening
15 September	Benalla Gymnastics Club Sausage Sizzle
16 September	Citizenship Ceremony
18 September	Benalla Rotary Club “Say No to Domestic and Family Violence
19 September	Benalla Art Gallery Foundation Function
	Warrenbayne Community Event
24 September	Assembly of Councillors - Business Review
26 September	Benalla Racing Club - Benalla Gold Cup
1 October	Additional Council Meeting
	Finance and Planning Committee Meeting

<b>Councillor Jillian Merkel</b>	
2 September	Benalla Art Gallery Advisory Committee Meeting
3 September	Councillor Only Time
	Assembly of Councillors – Business Review
9 September	Benalla Festival Advisory Committee Meeting
10 September	Council Meeting
16 September	Citizenship Ceremony
18 September	Benalla Rotary Club “Say No to Domestic and Family Violence
19 September	Benalla Art Gallery Foundation Function
24 September	Assembly of Councillors - Business Review
25 September	Benalla Art Gallery 50th Anniversary and Closing Celebration
26 September	Benalla Racing Club - Benalla Gold Cup
1 October	Additional Council Meeting
	Finance and Planning Committee Meeting
4 October	Official Opening of the new Salvation Army Facility

<b>Councillor Nathan Tolliday</b>	
3 September	Councillor Only Time
	Assembly of Councillors – Business Review
4 September	Live4Life Benalla Partnership Meeting
8 September	NE Tracks LLEN Committee of Management Meeting
9 September	Benalla Festival Advisory Committee Meeting
10 September	Council Meeting
16 September	Citizenship Ceremony
18 September	Benalla Rotary Club “Say No to Domestic and Family Violence
24 September	Assembly of Councillors - Business Review
25 September	Benalla Art Gallery 50th Anniversary and Closing Celebration
1 October	Additional Council Meeting
	Finance and Planning Committee Meeting

**Recommendation:**

**That the report be noted.**

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## 4.6 Council Actions Pending

Council Actions Pending are detailed in **Appendix 1**.

### **Recommendation:**

**That the report be noted.**

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## Council Actions Pending

Action No.	Meeting Name	Item	Action	Officer	Status/notes
1.	F&P Committee 1-October-25	5	<b>2025/26 Quick Response Grants Program</b> That a \$700 grant from the <i>2025/2026 Quick Response Grant program</i> be awarded to the Benalla Men's Shed.	MC	Completed
2.	F&P Committee 1-October-25	4	<b>Draft Benalla Rural City Council Financial Plan 2025/26 to 2034/35</b> That the <i>Benalla Rural City Council Financial Plan 2025/26 to 2034/35</i> be adopted.	MF	Completed
3.	F&P Committee 1-October-25	3	<b>Daft Benalla Rural City Council Asset Plan 2025–2029 and Draft Asset Management Policy – Hearing of Submissions</b> 1. That submissions on the draft <i>Benalla Rural City Council Asset Plan 2025-2029</i> be received. 2. That the <i>Asset Management Policy</i> be adopted. 3. That the <i>Asset Management Policy</i> be reviewed in October 2029.	MAI	1. Completed 2. Completed 3. Completed
4.	F&P Committee 1-October-25	2	<b>Draft Benalla Rural City Council Road Management Plan 2025-2029 – Hearing of Submissions</b> That submissions on the draft <i>Benalla Rural City Council Road Management Plan 2025–2029</i> be received.	MAI	Completed
5.	F&P Committee 1-October-25	1	<b>Draft Benalla Rural City Council Plan 2025-2029 – Hearing of Submissions</b> That submissions on the draft <i>Benalla Rural City Council Plan 2025-2029</i> be received.	MC	Completed
6.	Council Meeting 6-Sept-2025	4.6	<b>Councillor Policies For Review</b> That the following Council Policies be adopted and reviewed in September 2029: ▪ <i>CP 08 Professional Development for Councillors Policy</i> ▪ <i>CP 15 Councillor Resources and Reimbursement Policy</i> ▪ <i>CP 37 Councillor Staff Interaction Policy.</i>	CEO	Completed
7.	Council Meeting 6-Sept-2025	4.5	<b>Draft CP 14 Councillor Confidentiality Policy</b> 1. That <i>CP 14 Councillor Confidentiality Policy</i> be adopted. 2. That <i>CP 14 Councillor Confidentiality Policy</i> be reviewed in September 2029.	CEO	1. Completed 2. Completed
8.	Council Meeting 6-Sept-2025	4.1	<b>Audit and Risk Committee Chair Report</b> That the <i>Audit and Risk Committee Chair Report</i> be accepted.	GMC	Completed

Action No.	Meeting Name	Item	Action	Officer	Status/notes
9.	Council Meeting 6-Sept-2025	4.4	<b>2025/26 Quick Response Grants Program</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>That a \$750 grant from the <i>2025/2026 Quick Response Grant program</i> be awarded to the Cake Decorators Association Victoria – Benalla Branch.</li> <li>That a \$650 grant from the <i>2025/2026 Quick Response Grant program</i> be awarded to the North Eastern Archers Inc.</li> </ol>	MC	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed</li> <li>Completed</li> </ol>
10.	F&P Committee 27-Aug-25	3	<b>Planning Permit Application for Buildings and Works to the Existing Office Building at 18 Bridge Street East, Benalla</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>That the report be noted.</li> <li>That a report on Planning Permit Application for Buildings and Works to the Existing Office Building at 18 Bridge Street East, Benalla be presented to the Finance and Planning Committee meeting on Wednesday 10 December 2025.</li> </ol>	MD	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed</li> <li>In progress</li> </ol>
11.	Council Meeting 6-Aug-25	6.1	<b>Notice of Motion: Winton Wetlands</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>That the Mayor, with advice from the Chief Executive Officer, writes to the Minister for Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), the Hon. Steve Dimopoulos MP, seeking: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To discuss the future management, operational direction, and long-term vision for the Winton Wetlands.</li> <li>Clarification of the decision-making process that led to the handover of the Winton Wetlands to DEECA.</li> </ul> </li> <li>That the Mayor and/or Chief Executive Officer engage and with representatives from DEECA regarding the future of the Winton Wetlands.</li> <li>That the Mayor and/or Chief Executive Officer represent Benalla Rural City Council at all meetings or stakeholder forums concerning the future of Winton Wetlands and report back to the Council on progress and outcomes.</li> </ol>	CEO	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed</li> <li>On going</li> <li>Noted</li> </ol>
12.	F&P Committee 23-July-25	1	<b>Petition: Request for Council to establish an LGBTIQA+ Subcommittee of the Social Inclusion Action Group</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>That the report and petition be noted.</li> <li>That the council undertake a further discussion around SIAG membership following the report.</li> </ol>	MC	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed</li> <li>Completed</li> </ol>
13.	Council Meeting 13-Dec-23	4.4	<b>Benalla Sports and Equestrian Reserve Committee</b> That the debate on this matter be deferred until the Council Meeting on 14 February 2024 to allow the <i>Benalla Sports and Equestrian Reserve</i> user groups to endorse their representative on the <i>Benalla Sports and Equestrian Reserve Committee</i> and the <i>Instrument of Sub-Delegation from the Chief Executive Officer to Community Asset Committees</i> be updated.	CEO	Report to be presented to Assembly of Councillors briefing on 29 October 2025.

## 5. Reports by Councillors

**Recommendation:**  
**That the report(s) be noted.**

## 6. Notices of Motion

## 7. Notices of Rescission Motion

## 8. Urgent Business

Business can only be admitted as urgent business by resolution of the council, and only then if it:

- relates to or arises out of a matter which has arisen since distribution of the agenda; and
- cannot be deferred until the next Council Meeting without having a negative impact on the Council, the municipality or the local community; and
- cannot be addressed through the Customer Request Management System.

A Councillor proposing that a matter be admitted as urgent business must lodge it in writing with the Chief Executive Officer by 4pm on the day of the meeting.

The Chief Executive Officer will advise the Mayor of any matter that the Chief Executive Officer determines appropriate for the Council to consider admitting as urgent business.

## Confidential Business

It is proposed that the following items be considered in confidential business pursuant to the *Local Government Act 2020* as they contain personal information or private commercial information that would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about a person, their personal affairs or expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking if released:

- 9.1 Tender Report For CM25.074 Provision of Powerline Clearance, Property Service Wire Clearance and Auditing 2025-2028
- 9.2 Tender Report For CM26.014 Gravel Road Re-Sheeting Works on Various Council Roads 2025-2026
- 9.3 Confidential Reports by Councillors
- 9.4 Confidential Council Actions Pending

### **Recommendation:**

**That the meeting be closed to the public for the consideration of the confidential business item noted above pursuant to Sections 3(1) and Section 66(2)(a) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.**

## **10. Reopening of the meeting to the public**

### **Recommendation:**

**That the meeting be reopened to the public.**

## **Closure of the meeting**