

Benalla Rural City Council

# Finance and Planning Committee

## Agenda

Date: Wednesday 5 November 2025

Time: 6pm

Venue: Civic Centre (Council Meeting Room)  
13 Mair Street, Benalla

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# Agenda

<b>Chair</b>	Councillor Peter Davis
<b>Councillors</b>	Councillor Bernie Hearn (Mayor)
	Councillor Justin King (Deputy Mayor)
	Councillor David Blore
	Councillor Puna Hewa Gunaratne
	Councillor Jillian Merkel

<b>In attendance</b>	Peter Keane	Chief Executive Officer
	Robert Barber	General Manager Corporate
	Jane Archbold	Manager Community
	Adrian Gasperoni	Manager Assets and Infrastructure
	Janine McMaster	Manager People and Performance
	Courtney Naughton	Manager Economic Development and Sustainability
	Greg Robertson	Manager Facilities and Information Technology
	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 apology/ies be accepted.**

## Governance Matters

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

## Public Submissions

Any person wishing to participate in Public Submissions in accordance with 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 Committee Meeting will be livestreamed via the Council's website. 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 Finance and Planning Committee meetings held on Wednesday 1 October 2025 and Wednesday 15 October 2025 be confirmed as true and accurate records of the meetings.**

## Business

### 1. Draft Benalla Rural City Council Domestic Animal Management Plan 2025-2029 – Consideration of Submissions

Ref: 6755727-106  
Nilesh Singh – Manager Development

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#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents considerations of submissions received on the draft *Benalla Rural City Council Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029*.

#### BACKGROUND

The current *Benalla Rural City Council Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025* was developed as an operational document by Authorised Officers of the compliance team, over-viewed by the Manager Development, utilising current data and statistics available through Council and publicly accessible research and reporting. It was adopted by Council at its meeting on 23 February 2022

Under Section 68A of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* (the Act), Council is required to prepare and implement a Domestic Animal Management Plan (The Plan) every four years on 4 December. The Plan deals with strategies and services that Council must provide with regards to dogs and cats, which are the only domestic animals identified and dealt with by The Act.

The purpose of The Plan is to evaluate and monitor if Council animal management strategies and services are meeting community needs and adequately addressing the requirements of the Act and the *Domestic Animal Regulations 2015* (The Regulations).

A domestic animal management plan prepared by a Council must:

- a) set out a method for evaluating whether the animal control services provided by the Council in its municipal district are adequate to give effect to the requirements of this Act and the regulations; and
- b) outline programs for the training of authorised officers to ensure that they can properly administer and enforce the requirements of this Act in the Council's municipal district; and
- c) outline programs, services and strategies which the Council intends to pursue in its municipal district—
  - i. to promote and encourage the responsible ownership of dogs and cats; and
  - ii. to ensure that people comply with this Act, the regulations and any related legislation; and
  - iii. to minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals; and
  - iv. to address any over-population and high euthanasia rates for dogs and cats; and
  - v. to encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats; and
  - vi. to minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance; and
  - vii. to effectively identify all dangerous dogs, menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs in that district and to ensure that those dogs are kept in compliance with the Act and the regulations; and

- d) provide for the review of existing orders made under this Act and local laws that relate to the Council's municipal district with a view to determining whether further orders or local laws dealing with the management of dogs and cats in the municipal district are desirable; and
- e) provide for the review of any other matters related to the management of dogs and cats in the Council's municipal district that it thinks necessary; and
- f) provide for the periodic evaluation of any program, service, strategy or review outlined under the plan.

Every Council must

- a) review its domestic animal management plan annually and, if appropriate, amend the plan; and
- b) provide the Secretary with a copy of the plan and any amendments to the plan; and
- c) publish an evaluation of its implementation of the plan in its annual report.

The Council at the Finance and Planning Committee on 27 August 2025, acting under its delegated authority of the Council, resolved:

*That the Finance and Planning Committee, acting under its delegated authority of the Council, resolve that the draft Benalla Rural City Council Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029 be endorsed and placed on public exhibition for a period of at least 28 days.*

Public notice of the draft *Benalla Rural City Council Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029* (the Plan) was given on the Council's website and the *Benalla Ensign* on 3 September 2025.

Feedback was also sought via the Council's website and social media.

Public listening posts were conducted by Compliance staff in Bridge Street East, Benalla in the central business district on 24 and 30 September 2025.

The submission period closed 5pm Wednesday 1 October 2025.

## **DISCUSSION**

At the close of the submission period six submissions had been received from:

- Cally Grogan
- Anonymous
- Emily Watt
- Dianne Simpson
- Carol McNulty
- Monique Tolliday

Submissions are attached as **Appendix 1**.

A summary of submissions and officer comments is provided in the below table.

Issue	Theme identified in public submission	Officer Comments	Recommendation
1	<b>Excessive domestic cats within the area</b>	Excessive unowned and unregistered cats. Traps are provided at request of residents. Letterbox drops, education for wondering cats to owners that have cats at large. Infringements are issued. Cat trapping program is available subject to resourcing or on a case-by-case basis.	Agree. More community education on responsible pet ownership required and availability of cat traps. No changes to plan required.
2	<b>Animal Pound</b>	Current contract with RSPCA expires October 2026. Currently in discussion with other providers like Albury Animal Pound. Shared service arrangement with other councils.	Agree. No changes required to the plan.
3	<b>Incentives for cat desexing, microchipping for low-income families and discounted registration</b>	Whilst there is no requirement for mandatory desexing, there are objectives included in the <i>Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029</i> dealing with seeking grants and funding for subsidised pet desexing programs and community education around the advantages of desexing pets.	Supported by staff. No changes required to the plan.
4	<b>Online portal to register, renewal animal registration</b>	On-line portal is a part of the CODI implementation program and is planning to be available in the 2026/27 financial year	Agree. No changes required to the plan.
5	<b>More Enforcement for Cats</b>	Traps are provided at request of residents. Letterbox drops, education for wondering cats to owners that have cats at large. Infringements are issued. Cat trapping program is available subject to resourcing or on a case-by-case basis.	Agree. More community education on responsible pet ownership required and availability of cat traps. No changes to the plan.
6	<b>Protection of Birds and Native Wildlife</b>	Cat curfew in place 24 hours a day. Council passed an order under Section 25 of the <i>Domestic Animal Act 1994</i> to declare cats must be confined to the property at which they are kept at all times on 23 February 2022.	Agree. Existing cat curfew in place. Cats to be always confined to the property. No changes required to the plan.

Issue	Theme identified in public submission	Officer Comments	Recommendation
7	<b>More Enforcement for dogs</b>	<p>Nuisance barking is regulated by the Act and the draft <i>Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029</i> already includes a section dealing with this and other issues of nuisance animals.</p> <p>The <i>Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029</i> contains details of training required for Authorised Officers of Council, including the investigation of offences and evidence gathering.</p> <p>The onus is on the investigating body (Council) to prove an offence beyond reasonable doubt in order to progress any enforcement or prosecution action, so we are rarely able to take action without reliable witnesses, officer observations or admissible evidence as per the requirements of the <i>Evidence Act 2008</i> and other relevant Acts and Procedures.</p> <p>Enforcement penalties are set by the Department of Justice and are adjusted every year, they cannot be changed by Council</p>	<p>Agree.</p> <p>No changes required to <i>Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2026</i> as it already contains requirement for Authorised Officer training in investigation, procedures and legislative changes.</p>
8	<b>Dog Park - Social and timid dogs' area</b>	<p>The proposed new dog park at Saleyards Road will be divided into two parts (one for social dogs and other for timid dogs that do not require socialisation)</p>	<p>Agree.</p> <p>No changes required to the plan.</p>
9	<b>Education for dog owners (on/off leash areas)</b>	<p>One submission indicated a need for training and education for dog owners.</p> <p>Council Order under Section 26 <i>Domestic Animals Act 1994</i> (the Act), for effective control of dogs in public places is in place.</p> <p>Patrols are undertaken subject to availability of resources and complaints received.</p>	<p>Agree.</p> <p>No changes required to the plan.</p> <p>More community education of the definitions and owner responsibilities in public areas.</p>
10	<b>Excessive dog permit</b>	<p>Current local law does not provide for an evaluation criteria.</p> <p>A review of the local law may consider an evaluation criteria subject to the process of creating a local law.</p> <p>Council officers are subject to powers of entry under the <i>Domestic Animal Act 1994</i>.</p>	<p>Agree.</p> <p>No changes to plan required.</p> <p>Changes required to Benalla Rural City Council Community Local Law 2017.</p> <p>Review of the Benalla Rural City Council Community Local Law 2017 to commence within the next financial year.</p>



In accordance with the Council's *Governance Rules 2020*, submitters were invited to address the Finance and Planning Committee on 15 October 2025 to support of their submissions. No submitters spoke in support of their submissions.

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

#### **Community**

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

#### **Liveability**

- *Vibrant public spaces and places.*

#### **Environment**

- *Healthy and protected natural environment.*

#### **Leadership**

- *Engaged and informed community.*
- *Effective and responsive advocacy.*

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

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

<b>Level of Public Participation</b>	<b>Promise to the community</b>	<b>Techniques to be used</b>
Consult	We will provide information and consider feedback prior to making a decision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Draft Plan presented in a public report to the Council.</li> <li>▪ Draft Plan to be published on Councils website.</li> <li>▪ Feedback and submissions invited via the Council's website and social media.</li> <li>▪ Public Notice of community consultation in the Benalla Ensign and on Council website.</li> <li>▪ 'Pop-up' information sessions at the Benalla Farmers Market and CBD area by Council Authorised Officers.</li> </ul>

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are currently no financial impacts associated with the development of the draft Plan. However, some of the identified future initiatives may have cost implications to be considered as part of the annual budget development process.

### **LEGISLATIVE AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

Under Section 68A of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, Council is required to prepare and implement a Domestic Animal Management Plan every four years.

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.

## CONCLUSION

Section 68A of the Act requires Council, in consultation with the Secretary, to prepare a Domestic Animal Management Plan on 4 December 2025 and at the end of each period of 4 years after that.

The Plan requires a community consultation period to assess the viewpoint of the Benalla Rural City populace and ascertain any changes.

The draft *Benalla Rural City Council Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029* will be considered for adoption at the Council Meeting on Wednesday 19 November 2025.

### **Recommendation:**

**That the report be noted.**

**Draft Benalla Rural City Council Domestic  
Animal Management Plan 2026-2029 -  
Submission Results**

Response No:  
1

Contribution ID: 3738

Member ID:

Date Submitted: Oct 01, 2025, 11:42 AM

Q1

**Please provide your feedback on the Draft Benalla Rural City Council Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029**

Long Text

I think there are far too many domestic cats out and about in Benalla and in my neighbourhood, with some using my garden as kitty litter. I worry about the impact they have on native bird species.

It would be great to see some kind of set up like Albury Animal Care which works under the auspice of Albury Council to have impounded animals available to adopt here instead of at Burwood RSPCA.

I do think initiatives like the ones proposed to offer subsidised cat desexing and subsidised microchip and desexing to low income families is also a great idea and should absolutely be implemented! I'm saying this, providing discounted registration fees is a great incentive to pay them, but I do fear that those who aren't registering their dogs, probably also don't care much about desexing? I don't really know?

Q2

**Please upload any supporting documents.**

File Upload

Q3

**Your name**

Short Text

Cally Grogan

Response No:  
2

Contribution ID: 3716

Member ID:

Date Submitted: Sep 07, 2025, 10:59 PM

Q1

Long Text

**Please provide your feedback on the Draft Benalla Rural City Council Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029**

The process of registering your animal and renewing is too difficult. Most other councils allow pet registration and renewal completely online. With everything going online, it's time to catch up.  
Best way to increase animal registration, it too make it as easy and accessible as possible.

Q2

File Upload

**Please upload any supporting documents.**

Q3

Short Text

**Your name**

Response No:  
3

Contribution ID: 3714

Member ID:

Date Submitted: Sep 07, 2025, 10:18 AM

Q1

**Please provide your feedback on the Draft Benalla Rural City Council Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029**

Long Text

How does Council plan to reinforce the Kitty Curfew for those cats who roam at night?  
Are ratepayers going to be responsible for paying for Rangers to roam the neighborhoods at night?

Q2

**Please upload any supporting documents.**

File Upload

Q3

**Your name**

Short Text

Emily Watt

Response No:  
4

Contribution ID: 3713

Member ID:

Date Submitted: Sep 06, 2025, 11:06 AM

Q1

**Please provide your feedback on the Draft Benalla Rural City Council Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029**

Long Text

There needs to be better enforcement of the cat curfew law. I have neighbourhood cats coming into my yard on a regular basis, the owners refuse to contain them. I have trapped some of these cats in the past and passed them on to the bylaws officers, each time the cats have been back on my property within a few days. My garden is designed to attract birds, so finding them dead because of these wandering cats is very distressing. The loss of some families of blue wrens in particular is very noticeable.

Q2

**Please upload any supporting documents.**

File Upload

Q3

**Your name**

Short Text

Dianne Simpson

Response No:  
5

Contribution ID: 3712

Member ID:

Date Submitted: Sep 06, 2025, 10:54 AM

Q1

Long Text

**Please provide your feedback on the Draft Benalla Rural City Council Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029**

All cats should be confined to own premises. All call outs for nuisance cats should be addressed with in reasonable time line not two weeks. There should be a cats curfew at night.  
Council should monitor walking tracks to enforce on leach areas. To many entitled residents think the walking tracks are their own personal space with no awareness of others. Dog parks should be divided for those who wish to exercise their dogs with no interaction from others. People need to be educated on local laws as they currently are not.

Q2

File Upload

**Please upload any supporting documents.**

Q3

Short Text

**Your name**

Carol McNulty



**Q1**

Long Text

**Please provide your feedback on the Draft Benalla Rural City Council Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029**

Please see in detail my concerns within emails I have sent to Council. They are too big to load within this form.

- Emails to Mayor Councillor Bernie Hearn: 20/04/22 & 04/09/25.

There were other correspondence emails and phone calls to the BRCC Compliance Department as well.

Things to consider/feedback:

- The proposed document doesn't specify how they stop people having more than 2 dogs on property.
- It doesn't have supports in place to verify and ensure that multiple extra dogs aren't staying on property on full time basis (on holidays/visiting doesn't cut it when the dogs live full time on premises & go for weekend drives once in a blue moon).
- If that's the case then everyone can have an infinite amount of dogs on a property with loophole of 'visiting'. Would you like 7 dogs or more in a town house living next door to you? Mere meters from your living space? Barking, growling and impacting your family? Because that's exactly what happened to us! It was awful!
- The only reason dog numbers reduced in our situation was because their pitbulls smashed through a glass pane window to attack their other dogs. They were both removed from premises and x1 red nose pitbull was put down. Imagine if that was my toddler in our yard that it attacked. We weren't helped or supported. Council did not care.
- Letters aren't sent out to neighbouring houses to help decide if people can have register extra dogs (in our case Council said said they would but never did, no consultation and let them keep extra dogs).
- Noise complaints (persistent and constant barking) aren't taken seriously. Even with proof (keep a diary etc) nothing will be done.
- Aggressive dog complaints aren't taken seriously.
- There are no consequences.
- People are left unsupported by the to just deal with the said issues.
- Lack of tracking/records/keeping up to date of dog numbers & dog breed of individual dogs on registration papers on premises. Huge issue.

**Q2**

File Upload

**Please upload any supporting documents.**

**Q3**

Short Text

**Your name**

Monique Tolliday



## 2. Building and Planning Approvals – September 2025

Ref: 2005329054-542

Sarah Ford – Building Coordinator

Joel Ingham – Planning Coordinator

Nilesh Snigh – Manager Development

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report details planning permit applications and building approvals for September 2025.

### Planning Permit Applications Determined under Officer Delegation

Permit No.		Description	Property Address	Decision
1	P111-25	Alterations and additions to the existing dwelling	1 Bennison Court, Benalla	Approved
2	P029-25	Construction of a shed	4 Mayfair Drive, Benalla	Approved
3	P054-25	Three lot subdivision	Whites Road, Baddaginnie	Approved
4	P113-25	Two subdivisions and creation of access to a road in a Transport Zone 2	18 Racecourse Road, Benalla	Approved - Notice of Decision
5	P103-25	Construction of horse stables	51 North Road, Benalla	Approved
6	P056-25	Construction of two Shops, alteration of access to a Transport Zone 2, variation of an Easement of Way, reduction of Parking Requirements and to construct and display Business Identification Signage	37 Sydney Road, Benalla	Approved
7	P121-25	Construction of a swimming pool	37 Hall Drive, Benalla	Approved
8	P106.25	Construction of a shed	5A Nunn Street, Benalla	Approved
9	P069-25	Subdivision of the land into ten lots and the removal of native vegetation	45 Olivers Road, Benalla	Approved - Notice of Decision
10	P088-25	To use and develop land for a dwelling	824 Benalla- Warrenbayne, Road Warrenbayne	Approved
11	P120-25	Construction of a dwelling	13 Thoroughbred Lane, Benalla	Approved
12	P107-25	Construction of a dwelling	683 Goomalibee Road, Goomalibee	Approved
13	P098-25	Construction of a dwelling and garage	1 Piccadilly Court, Benalla	Approved
14	P027-25	To use the land for the purpose of materials recycling (tyre shredding)	42 Lowens Lane, Benalla	Approved
15	P100-25	The re-subdivision of land from six lots into two lots	125 and 193 Flynn Road, Devenish	Approved

### Planning Permit Amendments Determined Under Officer Delegation

Permit No.		Description	Property Address	Decision
1	P0082-24-1	Construction of six dwellings	3-5 Senator Drive, Benalla	Approved

### Planning Permits Issued Under VicSmart

Permit No.		Description	Property Address	Decision
1	VS019-25	Construction of an industrial building	4 McPherson Road, Benalla	Approved
2	VS020-25	Construction of a shed	28 Barrs Lane, Benalla	Approved
3	VS012-25	Construction of a warehouse	32 Enterprise Drive, Benalla	Approved

### Planning Permit Applications Determined by the Council

There were no planning permit applications determined by the Council during the month of September 2025.

### Planning Permit Amendments Determined by the Council

There were no planning permit amendments determined by the Council during the month of September 2025.

### Planning Permit Applications Withdrawn or Lapsed

There were no planning permit applications withdrawn or lapsed during the month of September 2025.

### Notices of Decision

Permit No.		Description	Property Address
1	P113-25	Two subdivisions and creation of access to a road in a Transport Zone 2.	18 Racecourse Road, Benalla
2	P069-25	Subdivision of the land into ten lots and the removal of native vegetation.	45 Olivers Road, Benalla

*A Notice of Decision (NOD) is issued when Council has decided to grant a planning permit when objection(s) are received regarding the application.*

*An objector may appeal to Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) against the decision to grant the permit within 21 days of a Notice of Decision being issued. After 28 days if no appeal has been lodged Council will issue the Planning Permit.*

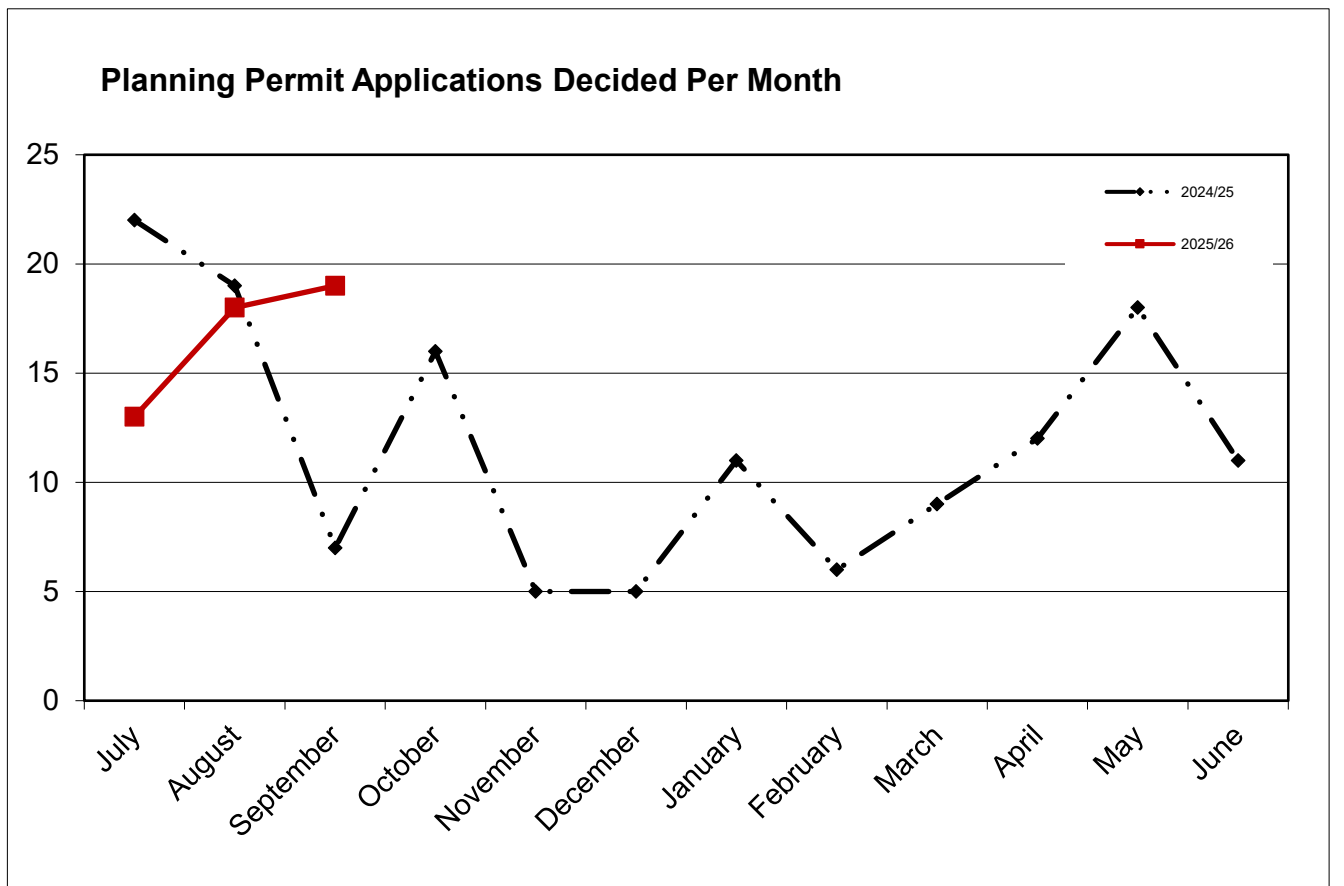
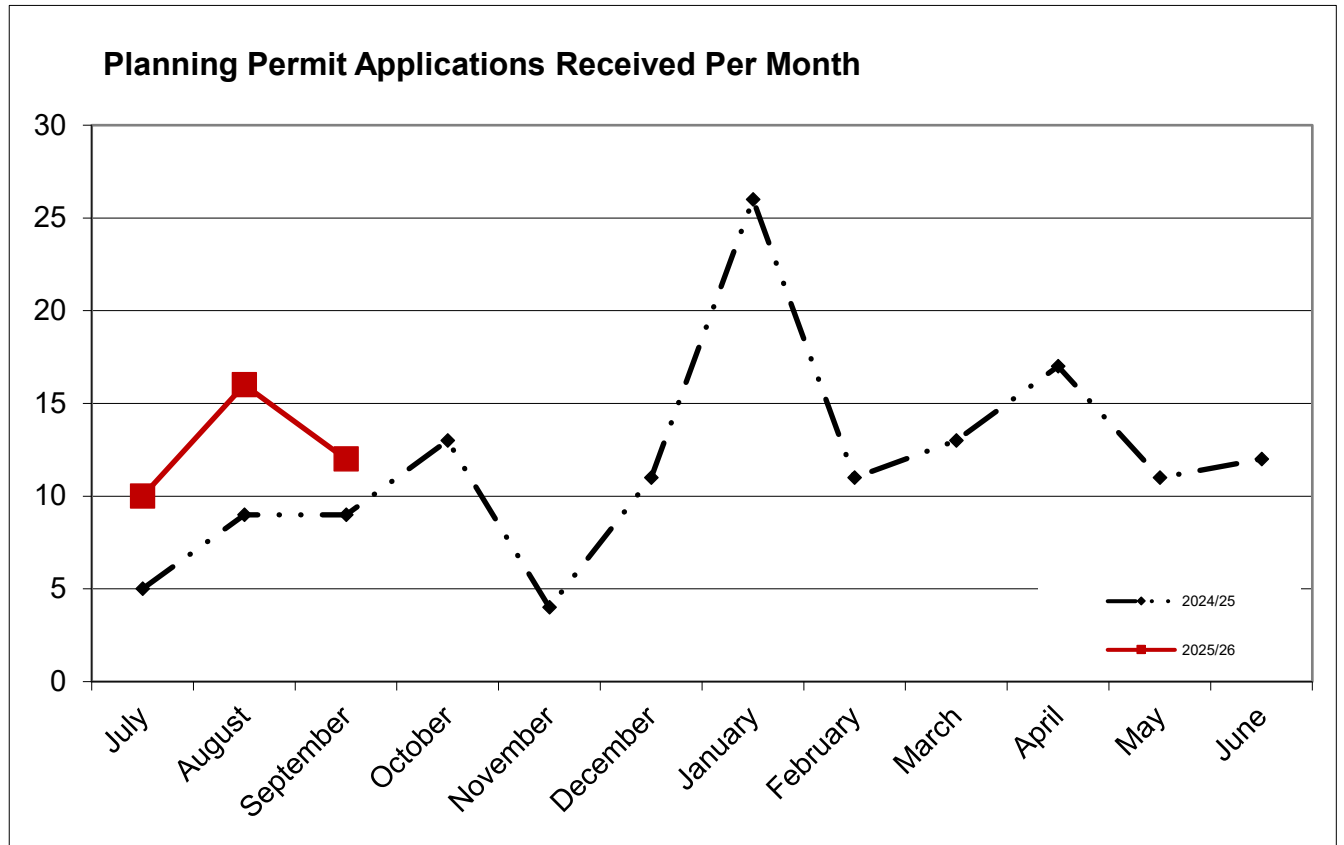
### Planning Permit Applications Determined by VCAT

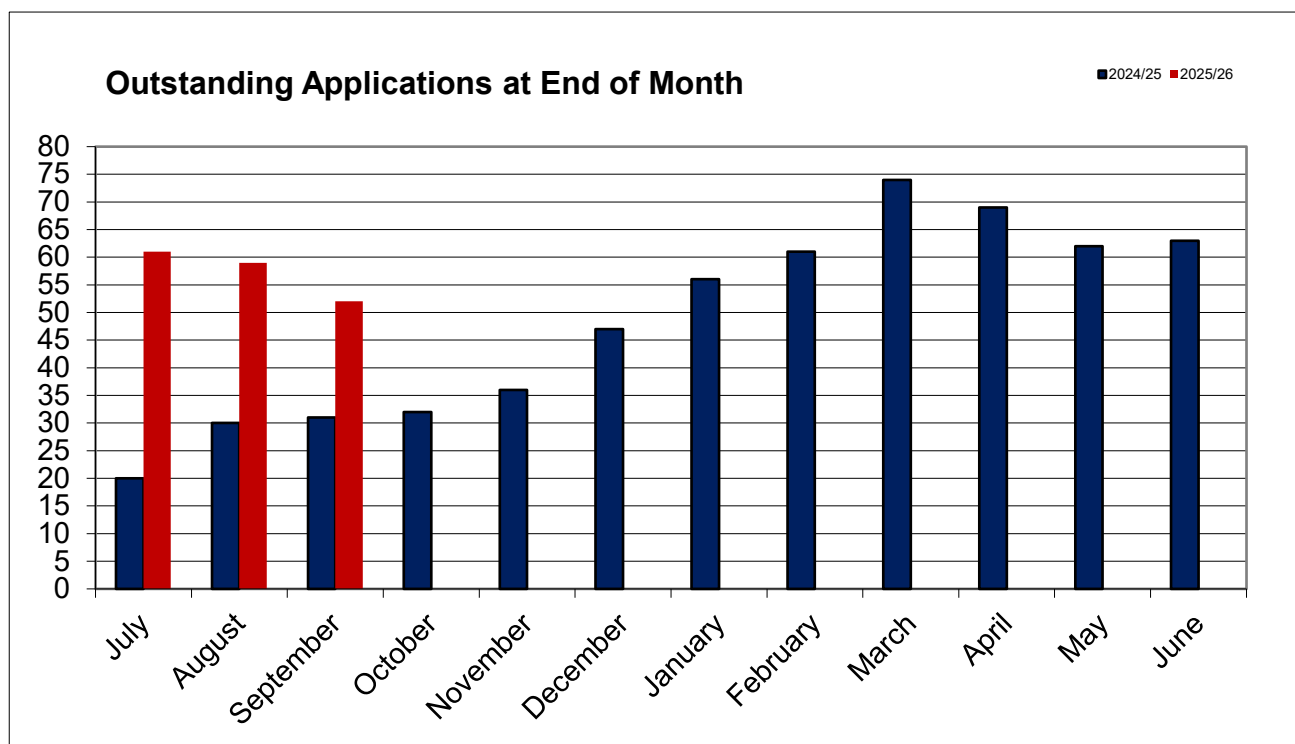
There were no planning permit applications determined by VCAT during the month of September 2025.

### Matters Before VCAT

P012-25	26 Bridge Street East, Benalla
Status	Planning Permit No. P012-25 was refused by Council on 10 September 2025 to construct and display an electronic promotion sign at 26 Bridge Street East, Benalla. The applicant has appealed this decision to the Tribunal. On the 24 September 2025 the Tribunal ordered that a compulsory conference (mediation) would be conducted on 12 December 2025 with the main hearing date to be heard on 6 March 2026.

## Planning Permit Applications





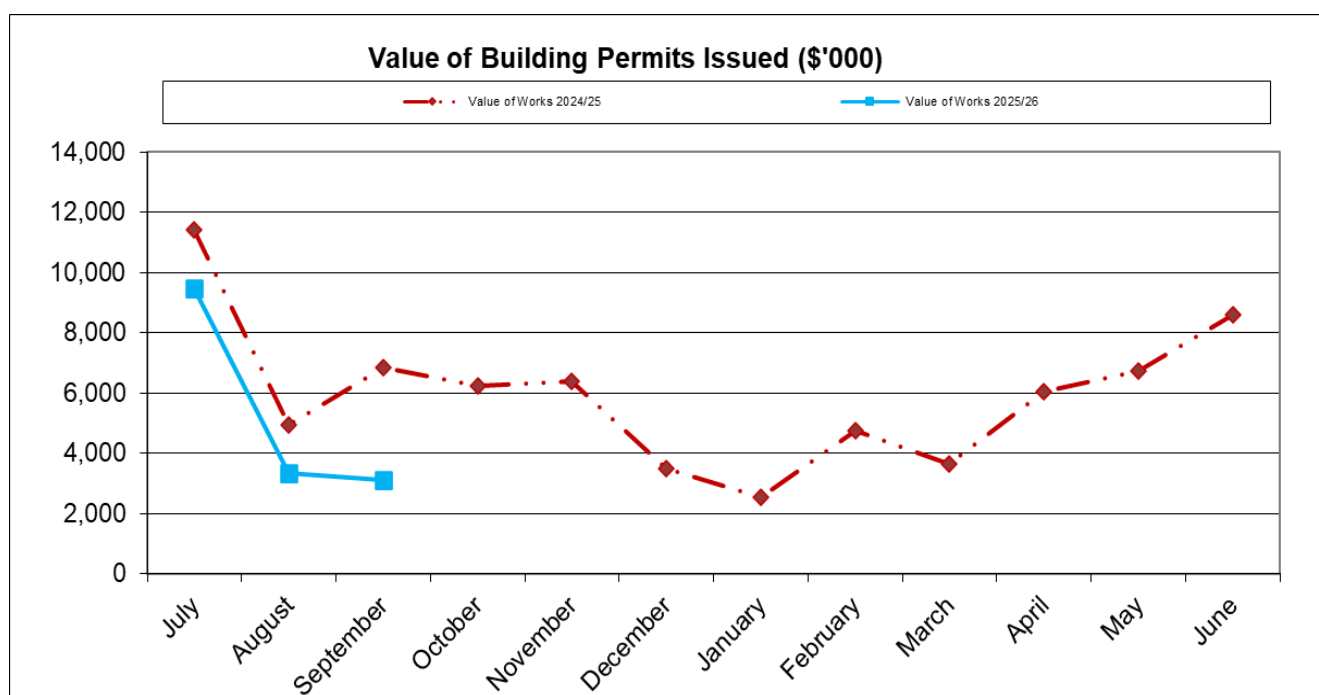
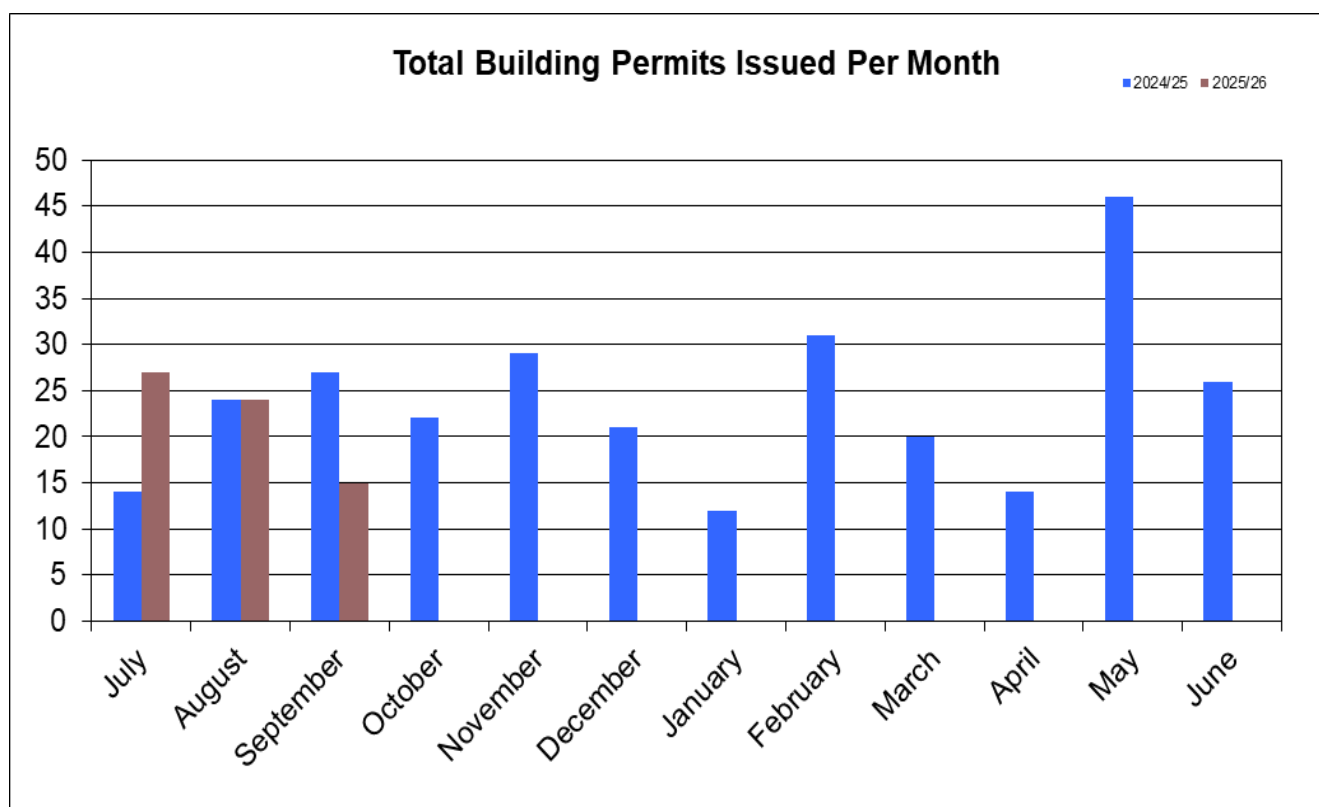
Council staff are actively working on clearing the backlog of outstanding planning applications. Because of application complexity, this is taking longer than expected. External resources are being utilised where possible and available.

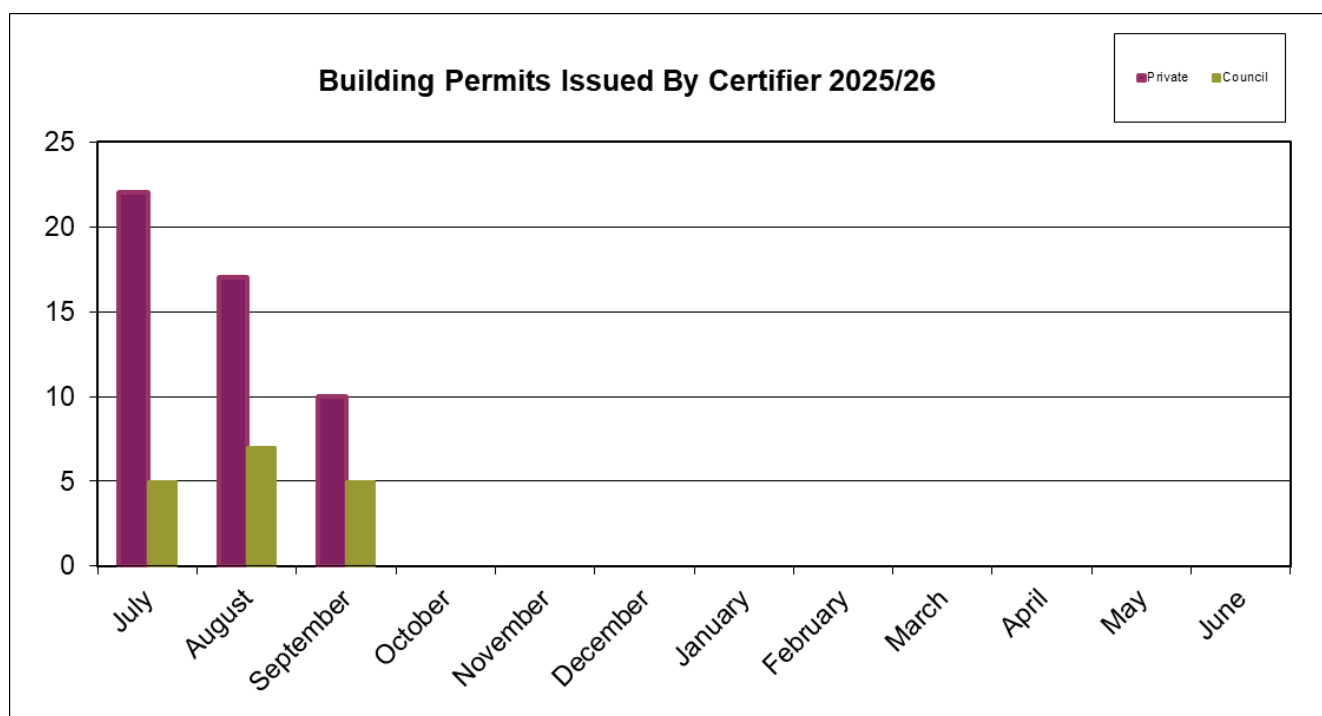
### Building Approvals Issued by Council and Private Practitioners

Permit No.		Description	Property Address	Value
1	8518652876466	Construction of a dwelling	69 Lakeside Drive Chesney Vale	\$250,000
2	4425779863339	Construction of a shed	12 Lucy Court Benalla	\$13,773
3	6475092946021	Construction of a carport	23 River Gum Avenue Benalla	\$13,367
4	1579347590099	Construction of a shed	104 Benalla Street Benalla	\$26,322
5	3718670609436	Construction of a commercial shed	1868 Kilfeera Road Molyullah	\$62,046
6	2269607580257	Construction of a shed	130 Waller Street Benalla	\$5,500
7	7230954446504	Construction of a dwelling and garage	1 Piccadilly Court Benalla	\$786,836
8	4195180493302	Construction of a dwelling and garage	18 Kookaburra Street Benalla	\$389,500
9	8095622751795	Construction of a dwelling and garage	35 Roynic Benalla	\$400,600
10	1504414391616	Construction of a dwelling and garage	25 Livingston Boulevard Benalla	\$398,500
11	4887507502945	Construction of a dwelling, garage and shed	9 Croft Court Benalla	\$350,000
12	6261501975506	Construction of a carport	16 Henry Street Benalla	\$22,030
13	9297156587279	Restump existing dwelling	23 Smythe Street Benalla	\$15,500

Permit No.		Description	Property Address	Value
14	7126935487065	Restump existing dwelling	28 Barkly Street Benalla	\$14,300
15	7590018333869	Construction of a dwelling	18 Honeyeater Street Benalla	\$362,418
Total				<b>\$3,110,692</b>

### Building Permits Issued by Certifier by Month





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

#### **Community**

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

#### **Livability**

- Vibrant public spaces and places.
- Connected and accessible roads, footpaths, transport and parking.

#### **Economy**

- Population growth.

#### **Environment**

- Healthy and protected natural environment.

#### **Leadership**

- Good governance.

### **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 the report be noted.**



### 3. Development Department Activity Report For The Quarter Ended 30 September 2025

Ref: 2005329054-541  
Nilesh Singh – Manager Development

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#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents the activities of the Development department for the quarter ended 30 September 2025.

#### Strategic Planning

- The Heritage Study is progressing with a meeting of the Heritage Working Group held on 20 October 2025. The meeting outlined the work undertaken on the Heritage Study to date including the completion of the draft heritage study with properties to be included into the study. It was advised at the meeting that any comments from the working group should be received within one month of the meeting. Once comments have been received the draft study will be advertised to affected properties and to the wider community.
- The *Benalla Planning Scheme Review amendment (C45)* is currently on exhibition (closing on 24 November 2025). The amendment will need to be presented to a Finance and Planning Committee meeting to hear any submissions that are received.
- The Benalla Growth Strategy is progressing with three more studies currently going through the procurement process being an updated drainage strategy, a retail/commercial study and a service strategy. Work is also progressing on the Traffic Study with a meeting scheduled with the contractor to make amendments to the draft memo/report.

#### Statutory Planning

- 43 applications received during the quarter.
- 47 applications decided during the quarter.
- 76.6 per cent of applications were decided within statutory timeframes.

#### Building Surveying

- 174 building inspections.
- 112 building certificates.
- 18 building permits issued.
- 56 private building permits issued.

#### Public Health

- A food complaint was referred to Council by artificial intelligence (AI) software. The possibility of mould in a food product was identified by AI in a product photograph. Reference samples were taken from the food premises, and it was confirmed by laboratory analysis and microscopic examination that the AI analysis was incorrect.
- An enquiry was received on how Council would classify a 3D printed food product. The food product is printed according to the order in front of customers by robotic equipment. Basic cleaning and ingredient details are needed similar to those of fairy floss except the possibility of choking hazards is now being reviewed by the proprietor.
- There were 31 Routine Food Safety assessments of class 1 and class 2 food premises conducted in this quarter.

## Compliance

- The compliance team impounded 45 domestic animals.
- Responded to 152 domestic animal related requests.
- 26 dogs and cats were returned to their homes.

## Emergency Management

- Municipal Emergency Management Plan review has gone to the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee and is with the Regional Emergency Management Planning Committee for 'Assurance Process' approval.
- Final draft of Neighbourhood Safer Places – Bushfire Place of last Resort, has been endorsed by the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee. The Document does not require Regional Emergency Management Planning Committee assurance. It will be provided to the Council as an operational document.
- Partnering with Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority to undertake the Baddaginnie Flood study (State Government funded) and project managed by the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority.
- Participating in the Emergency Management Victoria 'Response and Recovery' subcommittee to develop Regional Training opportunities.
- Country Fire Authority have circulated the Benalla Municipal Fire Management Plan to the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee for comments. The sub-committee will be meeting to finalise the plan and will be present to the next Municipal Emergency Planning Committee for approval prior to being sent to Regional Emergency Management Planning Committee for approval as it is a subplan of the Municipal Emergency Management Plan.

## Manager Development

### Septic Tanks

- 26 Permit to Install issued.
- 15 Certificate to Use' issued.
- 108 septic inspections conducted.

### Wastewater Referrals for Planning Permit

- 18 applications were referred for planning comments to Manager Development for wastewater comments for planning proposals.

### Fee Dispensation

The Council supports community groups and not-for-profit organisations through fee dispensation or reduction and responding to other circumstances as warranted.

For the quarter ended 30 September 2025, one application to the value of \$67.50 in fee dispensations were approved:

Fundraising	0
Burning Off	0
General	1
Food and/or accommodation premises	0
Planning Matters	0
Building Matters	0

### Applications Received:

Applicant	Permit Type	Value
Benalla Euroa Violet Town Legacy Group	General Permit	\$67.50
Total		\$67.50

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Operating Budget result for the period ending 30 September 2025

	Notes	2025/26 YTD Actuals	2025/26 YTD Budgets	2025/26 YTD Variance	2025/26 Full Year Budget	2025/26 Full Year Forecast
Development Operations		\$60,052	\$61,051	\$999	\$314,933	\$314,933
Planning	1	\$7,179	\$52,222	\$45,043	\$251,678	\$506,650
Building	2	\$91,956	\$79,628	-\$12,328	\$306,154	\$306,154
Compliance	3	\$234,392	\$201,197	-\$33,195	\$727,457	\$732,925
Environmental Health	4	\$25,035	\$42,899	\$17,864	\$126,819	\$126,819
Emergency Management	5	(\$33,994)	\$6,106	\$40,100	\$22,108	\$28,761
Total		\$384,620	\$443,103	\$58,483	\$1,749,150	\$2,016,243

### Notes:

1. Favourable variance primarily due to Planning Services income more than budgeted (\$30,597) and Public Open Space Contributions more than budget (\$17,895).
2. Unfavourable variance primarily due to Contract Payments more than budgeted (\$66,012) offset by Salaries and Oncosts expense less than budgeted (\$47,346).
3. Unfavourable variance primarily due to timing of State Government funding (School Crossing Supervision and Tobacco Licensing Compliance). Funding budgeted for but not yet received.
4. Favourable variance primarily due to timing of Immunisation Operations contractor payment (\$16,000). Expense budgeted for but not yet made.
5. Favourable variance primarily due to earlier than budgeted receipt of State Government funding.

### Recommendation:

**That the report be noted.**

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#### 4. People and Performance Activity Report For The Quarter Ended 30 September 2025

Ref: 1138149297-13080

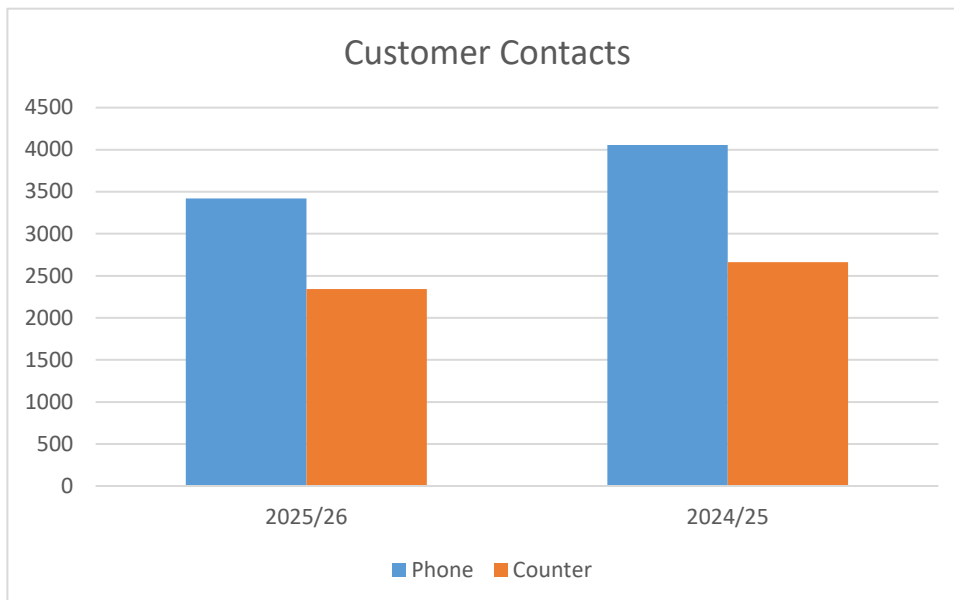
Janine McMaster – Manager People and Performance

##### PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents the activities of the People and Performance Department for the quarter ending 30 September 2025.

##### Customer Relations

- The Customer Relations Team continue to actively coordinate the requests for missed bins and partially emptied bins. Missed bin requests have decreased by 14 per cent and partially emptied bin requests have decreased by 38 per cent compared to the previous quarter.
- There has been a 17 per cent decrease in overall customer contacts for the quarter compared to the same quarter in 2024/25.



- The Customer Relations Coordinator has been actively engaged in the configuration and integration of the Customer Request Management (CRM), receipting, and E-Service (Customer Portal) modules within the new Authority Altitude platform.

This work has been undertaken alongside the coordination and delivery of targeted training for the Customer Relations team and other key stakeholders, as well as ongoing liaison with internal and external partners to ensure consistent program delivery.

##### Human Resources

- Ongoing maintenance and administration of the Human Resources functions, including the following areas: recruitment, interview, induction, organisational wide training and monitoring the training budget.
- Continuing with the Implementation of our new HR System (ELMO). We are currently at the stage of implementing the onboarding module for all new staff who join the organisation.
- Rolling out Performance and Development reviews for all staff. Included in this is providing staff with all newly formatted position descriptions.

- The three workplace incidents were, a staff member lacerating their finger while cleaning a pole saw, a staff member hit head on lawn mower roll over protection bar, and a staff member fell on uneven timber on the board walk and this injury resulted in a work cover claim where the staff member lost a total of two and a half days, however, has since made a complete recovery and returned to full duties.
- Snake Awareness training and Fire Warden training was provided to many staff across the Organisation.

Service	June 2025	September 2025
Recruitment	5	4
Turnover	1	3
Training Applications	164	102
Workplace incidents	1	3
WorkCover claims	1	1

## Payroll

- Maintained Payforce database in response to changes in employee details and terms of employment.
- Responded to internal payroll enquiries.
- Continue to work on the implementation and configuration of the Payroll system within the new Authority Altitude system.

## Risk Management

- Investigations and following up of incidents within the organisation.
- Improving and streamlining the process for those conducting the investigations. Ongoing training with staff.
- Ongoing updating of risk documents to be relevant with new corporate branding and Sharepoint references.
- OH&S inductions with new staff members, including Human Resources Coordinator introducing all new outdoor staff to the Corporate OHS induction as well as their own site and job specific induction process.
- Continue working on our Business Continuity Plan and implementing the changes made by Leadership Team specific to their own departments.
- Ongoing review of OH&S policies and procedures for approval and staff review.
- Fitness for work policy endorsed by the Leadership Team and approved through the staff review process.
- Continued to train for back up payroll where required.

OH&S continues to be monitored through the following regular:

- scheduled OH&S workplace site inspections
- scheduled servicing of stationary first aid kits and defibrillators.
- designated Workplace Group meetings.
- incident and hazard reporting and monitoring.

- incident and hazard action lists.
- reporting to the Leadership Team and OH&S Committee.
- Risk management meetings.

### Information Management

- There has been increased input into the Civica Authority Project, due to researching the mapping requirements for Authority/Sharepoint folder structure.
- Volume of support requests continues to steadily reduce as staff become more comfortable with SharePoint, but mainly due to access requirements being addressed.

### Volunteer Development

Volunteer activity for the quarter:

Activity	Current 2025	
	Registered	Active
Arts & Tourism <i>(includes Cinema)</i>	54	36
Events and Festivals <i>(Includes Benalla Street Art 2025)</i>	44	35
Youth Programs <i>(Live4Life only)</i>	45	45
L2P <i>(Mentors only)</i>	39	35
Library	8	5
Gardens maintenance and Litter Reduction	15	15
Specialist Committees and Steering Groups <i>(includes Age Friendly and ARG)</i>	38	30
RedB4 Bookshop Benalla Library	42	42

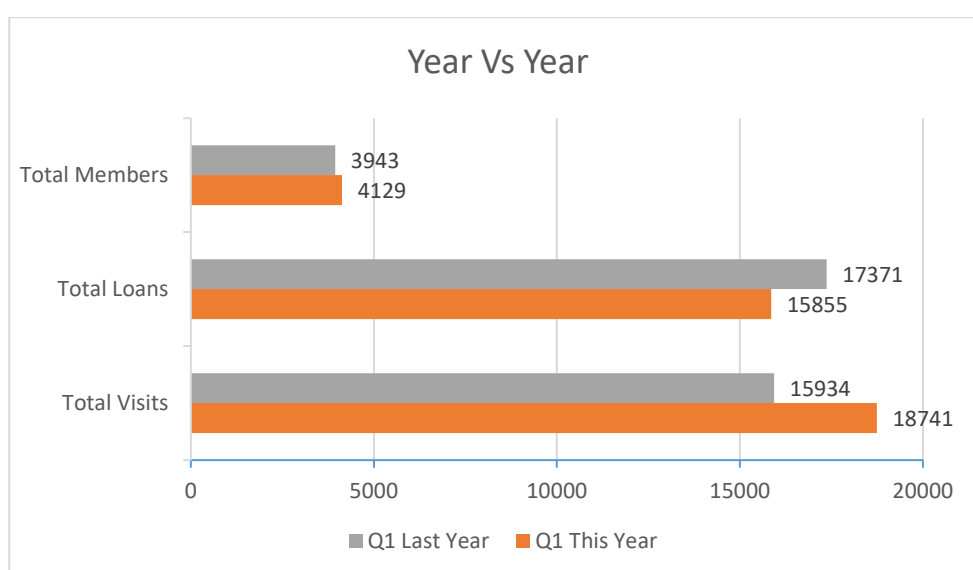
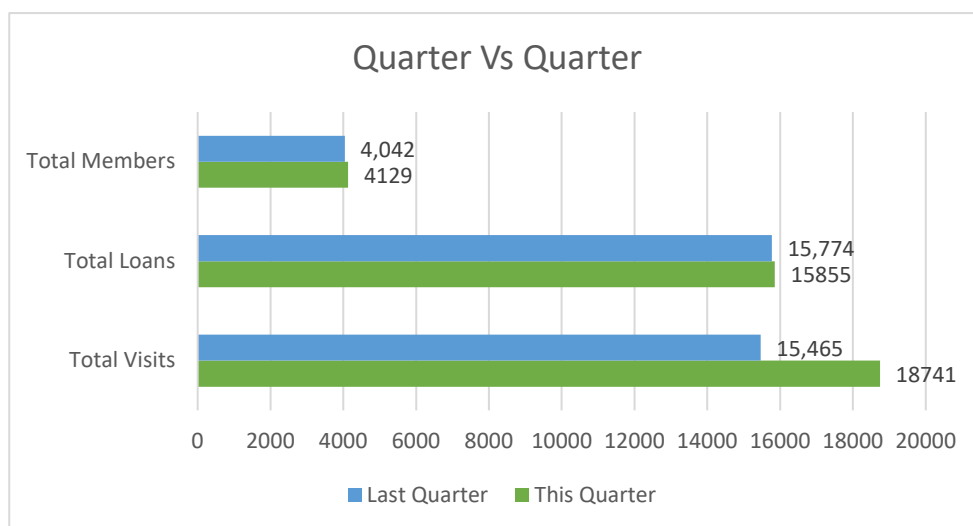
*Note: Some Volunteers are in several groups.*

- Ensuring all volunteer details are updated and current in preparation for the 2025 Benalla Festival.
- Updating documentation and volunteer position descriptions to new Benalla Rural City Council (BRCC) style format as required.
- Investigating Christmas gift options for all BRCC Volunteers.
- Five new volunteers have been processed this quarter.

### Sir Edward 'Weary' Dunlop Learning Centre (Benalla Library)

During this quarter the Benalla Library welcomed 18,741 patrons through our doors and loaned a total of 15,855 items.

2025	July	August	September	Q1 Total
<b>Total Members</b>	4,092	4,101	4,129	
<b>New Members</b>	81	51	68	200
<b>Total Loans</b>	5,541	5,101	5,213	15,855
<b>Total Visits</b>	6,345	5,681	6,715	18,741



## July 2025

- School holidays rolled in with many activities to keep children engaged in the library, including knitting with the Benalla Social Knitters, multiple film screenings, and special open Play Station sessions.
- Our Library Officer represented the library at the Benalla Rural City NAIDOC celebrations, following a year of preparing for this event.
- Robyn Howarth captivated a large audience with her audiobiographical novel detailing her experiences during and after the Faraday kidnapping in 1972.
- Parents Early Education Partnership (PEEP) also attended for special Story Time collaborations, to help encourage their new cohorts to attend early years programs with their little ones.

## August 2025

- August was a great month for the Library's Walking Talking-Book Club, as we experienced fantastic weather and some beautiful wildlife encounters while we listened to our audiobooks.
- Science Week went off with a big bang, thanks to one of our Library Officer's hard work and organisation. The Science Week take-home activity packs were hugely popular, as were the live events. The author talk with Krystal DeNapoli and Cherly Copper, and the



information session with Benalla Astronomy Club welcomed many new participants to the library.

- Following Science Week, we launched into Book Week with one of our Library Officers running eight Story Time sessions over the week, and he certainly needed to rest his singing voice after such a huge effort!
- Benalla Library was also happy to welcome a Breast Cancer Awareness and Support Presentation, to help increase awareness of local services and develop networks as patients go through their treatments.

## September 2025

- In acknowledgment of Dementia Awareness Month and Alzheimer's Awareness Week, Benalla Library welcomed Dr Kylie Ladd for a discussion about Dementia and what the average person needs to know. Not only is Kylie a successful author, but she also has over 30 years' experience in Dementia research and medicine. Dr Kylie Ladd approached this often scary and sad topic with encouraging facts, information about developing treatment options, and openness.



- To further enhance our connection with Dementia Awareness Month, we welcomed Age Well Hubs "Brain Hub", a collaboration with Dementia Australia.

September was a big month for non-fiction author talks, with three authors coming to chat to us about their books. Kristy Harris, Peter Mitchell, and Jade Miles engaged audiences and shared their insights into their specific fields. Kristy Harris spoke to us about her research into women in world wars and how nurses supported servicemen overseas and at home, Peter Mitchell discussed the real life wartime letters between his parents which inspired his novel, and Jade Miles spoke to us about permaculture, preserving, homesteading, and other ways to be more sustainable in our day to day lives.



- One of our Library Officers held her first solo school holidays event, running a craft session where children made butterflies attached to pegs. We also had a very successful school holidays film, The Minecraft Movie, with the session being booked out.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Operating Budget result for the period ending 30 September 2025

	Notes	2025/26 YTD Actuals	2025/26 YTD Budgets	2025/26 YTD Variance	2025/26 Full Year Budget	2025/26 Full Year Forecast
People & Performance		\$203,790	\$199,506	-\$4,284	\$798,073	\$798,073
Customer Relations		\$117,759	\$126,792	\$9,033	\$534,262	\$534,262
Records Management		\$82,621	\$86,226	\$3,605	\$335,443	\$335,443
Volunteer Development		\$9,235	\$13,285	\$4,050	\$51,702	\$51,702
Risk Management	1	\$614,152	\$642,921	\$28,768	\$868,109	\$868,109
Library	2	\$37,174	(\$17,132)	-\$54,306	\$521,575	\$521,575
Total		<b>\$1,064,732</b>	<b>\$1,051,598</b>	<b>-\$13,134</b>	<b>\$3,109,163</b>	<b>\$3,109,163</b>

### Notes:

1. Favourable variance primarily due to Insurance expense \$23,384 less than budgeted.
2. Unfavourable variance primarily due to phasing of \$80,674 annual payment to High Country Library (HCL). Full-year HCL budget \$84,000.

### Recommendation:

**That the report be noted.**

## 5. Economic Development and Sustainability Activity Report For The Quarter Ended 30 September 2025

Ref: 1545273666-206

Courtney Naughton – Manager Economic Development

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents the activity of the Economic Development and Sustainability Department for the quarter ending 30 September 2025.

### Economic Development

#### Future of Benalla and District Project – Community Development Fund

- Melissa Reid commenced in the temporary full-time position of Project Manager – Community Development Fund, from Monday 21 July 2025 until Friday 22 January 2027.
- The Forestry Transition Fund Expression of Interest (EOI's) closed on Friday 29 August with a total of five local businesses making submissions (one new business and four existing). Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) have provided feedback to all, and final applications are due by 31 October 2025.
- *The Forestry Transition Fund* supports job creation, new business development and expansion in towns or communities affected by the end of native timber harvesting in Victoria.
- Benalla Migrant Camp feasibility study EOI was approved and funding application was submitted as part of the *Community Development Fund - Round 3 - Stream 2*.
- Benalla Art Gallery undercroft feasibility study EOI was approved and funding application was submitted as part of the *Community Development Fund - Round 3 - Stream 2*.
- Australian Centre for Rural Entrepreneurship (ACRE) have been appointed by DEECA to deliver the Community Leadership Program, an expanded component of the Community Development Fund, geared to offer a training program to develop local leaders that are equipped for navigating change, leading their communities, and shaping the future for their region in these former native timber towns. The first workshop, *Connect and explore*, will be Thursday 4 December 2025.

### BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

#### Business Visits

Month	Number of Business
July	20
August	10
September	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>

#### Business Upskilling

Forty Two upskilling courses was offered to local businesses during the quarter and promoted via Council's website and on social media. Courses included; 7 Cyber Security red flags, Creating Ads for Facebook and Instagram, Starting your Small Business, Financial Pathways, First 10 Customers, Retail leasing: maintenance.

## **Business Networking**

- The monthly Coffee Connections organised by Council continued this quarter with a variety of topics and guest speakers. The Benalla Art Gallery Foundation also organised a Business After Hours event celebrating 50 years milestone and highlighting the benefits of Regional Galleries to the economy plans and the plans for its redevelopment.
- The Business Network has continued to meet monthly with the Business Development Coordinator on a range of collaborative projects.
- After a nine-year partnership with Wangaratta and Mansfield Councils, the online jobs hub portal for our region was closed at the end of August 2025.
- The Business Development Coordinator started preparations for a Multicultural Business Precincts Program application of \$250,000 per precinct. This includes a range of options for the CBD and Visitor Services precincts such as wayfinding for street art; replacement of old bench seats and multicultural themed murals on benches and above key shop fronts; vacant shop activations; tree lighting and lanterns in laneways plus sculptural concepts; mobile stages and shade options. The grant is due in October 2025.
- The Business Development Coordinator and Benalla Business Network Executive members attended the Main Street Australia Summit in North Melbourne on Thursday 18 September 2025. It was an excellent day of learning and networking with sessions on ways to strengthen business associations and CBD placemaking activations which enhance the visitor and community experience.

## **Christmas Festival Planning**

Business Development Coordinator and Benalla Business Network are working hard to create a festive atmosphere in the Central Business District (CBD) to encourage locals to shop in Benalla this Christmas. Planned activities will centre around a CBD promotion on Friday 12 December and Saturday 13 December 2025, including:

1. Main Street Market - footpath trading, business specials and kids' games and activities
2. Shop Local First competition to go in the weekly draw for a share of \$1000 Benalla Dollars throughout December
3. Window Decoration competition
4. Busking and live entertainment
5. Corflutes painted by local schools for CBD rubbish bins

## **Street Art Festival 2026**

- Development of a 2026 Sponsorship prospectus and a "Save the date" brochure.
- Distributed the Save the Date to more than 150 local businesses, highlighting Expressions of Interests for fringe events closing 1 December 2025.

## **VISITOR ECONOMY**

### **Flame Fest**

Flame Fest Benalla made a successful return in 2025 following the cancellation of the previous year's event. It was held at the Benalla Racing Club on Saturday 16 August 2025.

The festival attracted more than 1,200 visitors. The evening program featured a spectacular mix of fire performances, live music, stunt shows, roving entertainers, children's activities, and a diverse range of food trucks, creating an energetic and family-friendly atmosphere.

The event offered an engaging experience for both locals and visitors, showcasing Benalla’s capacity to deliver high-quality cultural events that drive regional visitation and community pride.

### Citizenship Ceremony

Benalla Visitor Information Centre hosted a Citizenship Ceremony on Tuesday 16 September 2025. Welcoming 14 new citizens. The conferees represented seven countries—India, China, the United Kingdom, Samoa, Zimbabwe, Sri Lanka, and the Philippines.

The event offered a meaningful and celebratory experience for the new citizens, their families, and the wider community, highlighting Benalla’s ongoing commitment to inclusivity, diversity, and civic pride.

### BENALLA CINEMA

- The Korean Film Festival in Australia (KOFFIA) returned to Benalla Cinema from 13–14 September 2025, marking its second consecutive year in the town and the only screening in Victoria.

Over the two-day festival, four carefully curated films—Hear Me: Our Summer, Forbidden Fairytale, About Family, and The Noisy Mansion—were screened, offering audiences a rich insight into Korean culture and storytelling. The event attracted 114 patrons, providing a unique cultural experience for both the local community and visitors.
- To coincide with the release of Downton Abbey, Benalla Cinema hosted a special themed event designed to offer patrons a memorable cinema experience. The event included a movie ticket, a snack, and a glass of bubbles on arrival. The cinema foyer was elegantly styled to resemble a high tea, creating a unique and immersive atmosphere for 57 patrons.
- Benalla Visitor Information Centre brought Tiny Tails to the centre for the September school holidays on Tuesday 30 September 2025 where 40 children participated.

Two shows were available with up to six species including, pythons, lizards, turtles, and invertebrates being presented to those that attended.

### Cinema Comparison 2024/25

Month	Benalla Cinema	Patrons 2025	Benalla Cinema	Patrons 2024
July	144 sessions	1533	108 sessions	1480
August	106 sessions	447	134 sessions	958
September	119 sessions	1570	114 sessions	1457

*\*Some session weeks have overlapped into the next month. Numbers are dependent on movies.*

### Benalla Visitor Information Centre

Visitor numbers for the quarter:

Month	Visitor numbers
July	823
August	665
September	1,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,488</b>



## **TOURISM**

- Benalla Rural City Destination Management Plan (DMP) 2025–2029 was officially launched on Thursday 17 July 2025 at the Benalla Visitor Information Centre. The launch was attended by approximately 30 industry and community members, marking an important milestone in guiding the region's tourism and visitor strategies over the next five years.
- The Visitor Economy Coordinator attended the VTIC Victorian Tourism Summit on 22-24 July 2025. The event was held in Shepparton. The theme was 'Victoria's Visitor Economy: Empowering Communities, Growing Economies'. The program featured half-day famils, valuable networking opportunities, and an impressive lineup of speakers covering topics ranging from artificial intelligence to effective merchandising.

## **Benalla Art Gallery**

- For the quarter Benalla Art Gallery welcomed 15,096 exhibition visitors and staged 67 public and education programs for 1,205 participants.
- Benalla Art Gallery launched two new major exhibitions in this quarter:
  - Allan Mitelman: The marks we make
  - Looking back: celebrating 50 years through the Benalla Art Gallery Collection
- Benalla Art Gallery Advisory Committee met on 2 September 2025 confirming the acquisition of five new works by Bill Henson, Mary Tonkin, and Guy Stuart.
- Benalla Art Gallery received notification through the Governors of The Ian Potter Foundation had awarded funding of \$140,000 to be paid over 24 months to support the role of Philanthropy Manager through the Benalla Art Gallery Foundation.
- It was confirmed that a funding submission to the Tucker Foundation, made in partnership with the Benalla Art Gallery Foundation, was successful. This will fund an internal digital signage display, to replace the current honour board in the airlock, enabling details to be updated in real time at no expense, and for the space to also dynamically promote current exhibitions and forthcoming programs.
- The Community Development Fund Panel supported Benalla Art Gallery's Expression of Interest to undertake a Feasibility and Concept Plan for the year-round activation of the Gallery Undercroft as an immersive, ticketed street art experience. Benalla Art Gallery will now develop the full application to seek funding through the Community Development Fund to undertake this feasibility.
- Benalla Rural City Council secured a lease for 75 Bridge Street East, Benalla which enables program continuity of the Gallery throughout the closure period for redevelopment Stage 1. Gallery staff commenced relocation actions during this quarter.
- Benalla Art Gallery closed to the public for redevelopment on Sunday 28 September, with an open community 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration staged on the evening of Thursday 25 September 2025. 140 Gallery supporters, local and visiting, attended the event.

## **Sustainable Environment**

- The *2024/25 Roadside Weed and Pest Program* treatments and mapping have been completed and funding for the 2025/26 program has been received.
- The Powering Resilience in the Regions Project (Library Battery Storage) which is being led by the Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance with support from the Goulburn Murray Climate Alliance, have been working towards the tender process for the operation and maintenance of the batteries and solar systems. The RFT will be open from the first week of August 2025.

- The Environment Sustainability Coordinator (ESC) has been working with Tesla to assess potential sites for electric vehicle chargers in Benalla.
- The ESC has been attending meetings for the *Goulburn Valley Food System Framework Reference Group*. The Framework has been put together by the Goulburn Valley Public Health Unit in collaboration with a reference group consisting of people from a number of organisations in the region. Consultation for the framework will be undertaken with key stakeholders.
- Council's Sustainability team are planning its third annual clothes swap. This event will be run during the 2025 Benalla Festival in November 2025.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Operating Budget result for the period ending 30 September 2025

	Notes	2025/26 YTD Actuals	2025/26 YTD Budgets	2025/26 YTD Variance	2025/26 Full Year Budget	2025/26 Full Year Forecast
Economic Development and Sustainability	1	(\$78,131)	\$95,786	\$173,917	\$382,198	\$303,946
Art Gallery	2	\$71,444	\$188,781	\$117,337	\$632,262	\$658,785
Benalla Cinema	3	\$37,057	\$56,600	\$19,543	\$253,175	\$242,175
Communication and Engagement		\$91,076	\$97,710	\$6,634	\$379,761	\$379,761
Events	4	\$107,972	\$78,075	-\$29,897	\$307,428	\$305,928
Tourism		\$130,531	\$140,104	\$9,573	\$353,66	\$364,406
Environmental Sustainability	5	(\$59,104)	\$41,010	\$100,114	\$159,360	\$117,995
Business Development	6	\$38,203	\$45,531	\$7,328	\$176,833	\$176,833
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$339,048</b>	<b>\$743,597</b>	<b>\$404,549</b>	<b>\$2,644,687</b>	<b>\$2,549,830</b>

### Notes:

1. Favourable variance due to receipt of \$173,636 of unbudgeted grant income – Forestry Transition fund.
2. Favourable variance primarily due to \$70,000 unbudgeted Ian Potter Foundation grant income (Benalla Art Gallery Foundation) and more than budgeted grant income (\$47,250).
3. Favourable variance primarily due to Kiosk income being \$16,932 more than budgeted.
4. Unfavourable variance primarily due to Benalla Festival expenses paid sooner than budgeted.
5. Favourable variance due to receipt of unbudgeted grant income.
6. Favourable variance due to modest less than budgeted expenditure across several programs.

### Recommendation:

**That the report be noted.**

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## 6. 2025/2026 Quick Response Grants

Ref: 15361321093-1023

Tom Arnold – Community Development and recreation Coordinator  
Jane Archbold – Manager Community

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

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

### BACKGROUND

The Quick Response grant program enables local community groups, clubs and organisations to seek funding to increase their capacity to work in partnership with the Council and others to address local needs and enhance the local community.

The program distributes grants up to \$750 allowing local clubs, groups and organisations the opportunity to seek funds when the need arises.

### DISCUSSION

Applications for consideration under the 2025/26 Quick Response Grant program are detailed in the table below.

Applicant	Details	Amount Requested	Proposed Assistance
Rotary Club of Benalla Inc.	<p>The Rotary Club of Benalla has applied for \$750 to send 25 local children aged 10–12 years to Portsea Camp. Selected by local schools as those who would most benefit, children are given the chance to build confidence, make new friends, and develop life skills in a supportive environment.</p> <p>This Rotary initiative has run for over 70 years and continues to make a lasting difference for local families. The Portsea Camp is fully inclusive and accessible, ensuring every child can participate and benefit from this valuable experience.</p>	\$750	\$750
Probus Club of Benalla Rose City Inc.	<p>The Probus Club of Benalla seeks \$750 to assist with the hire of <i>The Glasshouse</i> venue, tables, chairs, tablecloths and part of the catering costs for its Annual Christmas Function.</p> <p>This event brings together all club members and invited guests to celebrate the year and recognise those who have supported the club. The Glasshouse is fully accessible, ensuring all attendees can participate comfortably.</p>	\$750	\$750

Applicant	Details	Amount Requested	Proposed Assistance
Small Town Sing	Small Town Sing brings people of all ages together to learn and sing a song in just two hours, promoting connection and wellbeing through group singing. Led by experienced music educators Adam Toms and Cath Burton, the event builds on three successful past sessions. Event proceeds will support Live4Life. The requested \$750 of grant funding will assist with catering and photography costs. Held at the accessible Visitor's Centre, <i>Small Town Sing</i> is a fun, inclusive and family-friendly event open to all.	\$750	\$750
Moir Benalla Club	The Moira Benalla Club is seeking \$750 of funding to purchase a new Defibrillator (AED) to replace its current unit, which is over 10 years old and no longer operable. Given the club's large number of elderly members and visiting bowlers from across the northeast region, access to a functioning defibrillator is essential. The new defibrillator will feature the latest technology and be installed in an accessible location, with clear signage and member instruction to ensure it can be used quickly and effectively in an emergency.	\$750	\$750
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$3,000</b>	<b>\$3,000</b>

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

#### **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> </ul>

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The *2025/26 Budget* allocates \$15,000 to the Quick Response Grant program. To date \$5,600 in Quick Response Grant funds have been awarded, leaving \$9,400 in the funding pool.

Recipients of support throughout the financial year are detailed in the Annual Report.

## 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 \$750 grants from the *2025/2026 Quick Response Grant program* be awarded to the Rotary Club of Benalla, the Probus Club of Benalla, the Small Town Sing and the Moira Benalla Club.**

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## 7. Community Department Activity Report For The Quarter Ended 30 September 2025

Ref: 1138149297-13099

Jane Archbold – Manager Community

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### PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents the activities of the Community Department for the quarter ended 30 September 2025.

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND RECREATION

This quarter has once again been marked by significant progress across a range of strategic planning, community consultation, and infrastructure development initiatives. The team has worked closely with internal and external stakeholders to advance key projects, strengthen community partnerships, and support grant opportunities for local groups.

#### Strategic Planning and Consultation

- The development of the *Benalla Rural City Council Plan 2025-2029* was undertaken with extensive consultation informing the draft direction.  
Community Panel evaluation survey completed by 10 of the original 15 participants. Positive feedback received and recommendation for Council to use community panels for future projects.
- Staff are working closely with the consultants to refine the draft *Benalla Rural City Council Open Space Strategy 2026-2040* with a complete draft expected in November 2025.
- Fair Access surveys were sent out to local sports and recreation clubs to continue to progress Councils work in this area.
- Staff delivered communications and consultation campaign in support of Churchill Recreation Reserve being selected as new preferred site for the *Benalla Indoor Recreation Centre Redevelopment project*.

#### Project Delivery and Planning

- Construction of the Flying Fox in Fawckner Drive, Benalla was completed and is proving to be popular with families and community members.

#### Community Grants and Engagement

- The team continues to provide one-on-one support to local groups interested in grant funding and other funding opportunities.
- Officers attended the Churchill Reserve Committee of Management meeting to provide updates and support ongoing engagement.
- Six Quick Response Grants awarded during the period.
- Three successful Profile ID training sessions were held in early September 2025 for the Council Staff and community members. Feedback from participants was very positive, with community members in particular highlighting the benefits of this training.

#### Free From Violence (FFV)

- A free community session, Responding to Disclosures of Family Violence training was held on Wednesday 30 July 2025 at the Lakeside Community Centre with 19 community members in attendance.

- 16 Days of Activism event 'An Evening with Jelena Dokic' sold out, 325 tickets in total sold. This event is for the first day of 16 Days of Activism Tuesday 25 November 2025 and is being organised alongside the Centre Against Violence (CAV).
- Key Council staff and Councillors attended Vic Pol's 'Neighbourhood Policing Forum' online briefing on 24 July 2025.

## COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- During the reporting period, the communications team has been actively preparing for two major community events: the Benalla Festival and the 2025 Victorian Seniors Festival. This work has included the production of both print and online programs, coordination of marketing efforts, and collaboration with internal stakeholders to ensure broad community engagement.
- Communications and engagement support has been a key focus for the *Benalla Indoor Recreation Centre (BIRC) Redevelopment project* and the *Benalla Art Gallery (BAG) Redevelopment project*.
- The communications team supported the announcement of the preferred location for the BIRC project, working alongside the Community Development and Recreation team to design and deliver stakeholder consultation materials.
- The *Benalla Art Gallery Redevelopment* project saw the team assist the Art Gallery Director and project control group with communications around the temporary relocation of the gallery to 75 Bridge Street, Benalla.
- During the reporting period, the team provided extensive support for the public exhibition of key Council documents, including the Draft Council Plan 2025–2029, Asset Plan 2025–2029, Asset Management Policy, Financial Plan 2025/26 to 2034/35, and Road Management Plan 2025–2029.
- Pop-up listening posts at the Benalla Markets and in Bridge Street were held during the period. These events enabled Councillors to connect directly with residents and encouraged feedback via Council's Have Your Say platform on key Council documents.
- Continuous improvements for the corporate website has continued over the period. A focus on enhancing user experience and simplifying the customer journey. Improvements include refining the search functionality removing quick menus from content pages, reviewing online forms and simplifying page layouts. These changes aim to make the website more intuitive and accessible, and further collaboration with web developers is planned to implement site-wide structural improvements.
- In September, the team attended the *Taungurung Local Government Forum* held in Toolleen, co-hosted by Campaspe Shire Council. The forum included a Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony, followed by discussions on the development of the Walking Together Statement and Principles. The event reinforced the importance of long-term relationships and cultural awareness in local government practice.
- This quarter delivered strong and diverse media coverage across cultural events, infrastructure projects, arts and tourism, community initiatives, and health programs.
- Nine hundred and ninety seven media items were delivered for the quarter with a potential reach of approximately 986,000 people.
- During the reporting period, the Communications team's Facebook content achieved strong engagement, with a total of 327,876 views and a net audience growth of 130 followers.

## Youth Development

- Youth Development team and L2P program staff attended the NE Tracks LLEN Hands on Trades Day at Winton.
- New Youth Officer Scarlet Lowe commenced on Monday 21 July 2025.
- Amplify (formerly FReeZA) committee meetings were held throughout this period with the committee supporting the roll out of the Battle of the Bands in October and an upcoming Benalla Festival event.
- Benalla Council and Al's Skate Co. hosted the North East Skatepark series on 20 September 2025. Bringing together people of all ages to scoot, skate, BMX and roller skate their way to a medal and prize. 59 registered riders participated with many community members coming along and supporting the event and young people riding on the day.
- Twenty three expressions of interest were received for a two-day First Aid training course over the September school holidays, with 18 young people attending. The training was delivered through *The Centre*, with Amplify funding substantially covering the cost of the training, whereby young people paid only \$20 towards the \$220 cost per participant.
- The Engage! Program supported 11 young people to complete Responsible Serving of Alcohol (RSA) training also facilitated by *The Centre*, paying \$20 for a program costing \$150 per participant.
- Teen Mental Health First Aid (Teen MHFA) training began for Year 10's at Benalla P-12 College and FCJ College. The training was well received by students and schools with over 100 young people newly trained during Term three.
- Successful R U OK Day BBQ's were organised by Live4Life youth crews at both FCJ College and Benalla P-12 College. The main goal of the R U OK Day is to encourage people to regularly check in with others — friends, family, colleagues, or anyone who might be struggling — by simply asking: "Are you OK?".
- The L2P program had seven young people obtaining their licence over the reporting period. The program has 18 mentors provided over 1080 hours of driving experience to learners and 64 professional driving lessons provided to mentees. There are currently 29 learners on the wait list, with a focus on high priority learners.
- In August 2025 an inaugural L2P Newsletter was released, this will be a quarterly publication keeping mentors and stakeholders up to date.
- Staff are in the process of collating new driving stages checklists for mentors and handbooks for new learners and mentors.
- A successful morning tea was held in September for driving mentors with a guest speaker overseeing driving tests.



## Social Inclusion Action Group (SIAG)

- The Social Connections Grants program closed on 18 August 2025. 15 applications were received, with the SIAG committee approving ten.



- Expressions of Interest to join the Social Inclusion Action Group Committee closed on 18 August 2025. Ten applications were received, with equal balance of representation from community members and organisations. The applicant pool reflected a wide range of diversity, lived experience, and perspectives. After careful deliberation by the committee eight of the ten applicants were selected to join the committee. An induction program is currently being developed and will commence next quarter.
- SIAG is funding a one day a week Aboriginal Liaison Officer on a trial basis. The role is responsible for strengthening relationships between Council and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and will focus on supporting the SIAG to make decisions about and delivering flexible funding for initiatives that will support the Aboriginal community. The position will commence in early October 2025.
- Stages of Empathy Training was held on 16 September 2025 at Room at the Table. This was an interactive theatre program that supports community groups to be more welcoming and accessible for people with disabilities and LGBTQIA+ identities. Participants gave very positive feedback about the session.
- The SIAG Resource Library went live on 15 September 2025. Community members have actively engaged through the Have Your Say page where they can share feedback about what else they would like the library.
- This year's NAIDOC Week celebration hosted by Benalla Health and funded by SIAG and held on Tuesday 8 July 2025. The day commenced with a flag raising ceremony at the Civic Centre attended by 30 people and was followed by a family day event at the Lakeside Community Centre attracting over 450 attendees, with more than 100 children and young people getting involved in art, games and music activities.



### **Maternal and Child Health (MCH)**

- 30 Birth Notices were received over the quarter, 11 being first time Mothers. Five children transferred into the service from other areas and three Children transferred out (moving to other areas within Victoria)
- 385 children are currently enrolled in our service, 22 being Aboriginal children, with 196 children attending the service at least once.
- This term saw 19 mums and bubs enroll in our First Time Parents Group running over third term. Feedback from new parents continues to be positive with participants gaining valuable information and connections.
- The Enhanced MCH service has 35 active families they are currently working with (25 last quarter), as 11 new families are being supported and one family no longer requires support.
- In response to a recent MCH Feedback Survey the MCH waiting room has undergone a revamp with new toys and posters brightening up the area and receiving very positive feedback from the community.
- With the addition of new staff, the MCH Team have a shortage of consulting rooms and are considering other options to supplement the delivery of this vital service to our community.



## **Integrated Family Services (IFS)**

- Integrated Family Services (Family Services and Family Liaison) supported 37 families through case management throughout the quarter, inclusive of 93 children/young people aged 0-17 years old.
- Referrals to the service through The Orange Door are primarily coming from Child Protection, Police (L17 family violence response), client self-referrals, and Maternal and Child Health.
- Family Services achieved funded service hours to 98.4 per cent.
- Supported Playgroup is currently meeting funded targets for two groups per week during school terms. A variation to funding was received as underspend from 2024/25 funding was recouped. Underspend occurred due to an unstaffed period during recruitment in term one.

## **Age Friendly Benalla**

- A Community Breast Cancer Awareness Session took place at the Benalla Library on Tuesday 19 August 2025. A total of 12 people attended the session, featuring guest speakers Hayley (Breast Cancer Nurse), Lencia (Breast Cancer Survivor and Maternal Health Nurse), and Jenny and Gwen (from the Benalla Cancer Support Group).
- During September two Dementia Australia Brain Hub Information Sessions were offered to staff and community members, with over 40 people attending. The guest speakers for these events included Denise, Dementia Support Specialists from Dementia Australia, Jason, Team Leader from Family Care, Laurel, the Community Development Officer for Dementia Friendly Cities, and Gary, the Education Coordinator from Seniors Rights.
- A more detailed workshop for Council and Benalla Health staff was also provided with 26 staff participating. Most attendees expressed interest in conducting annual Dementia Australia workshops.
- Age Friendly Benalla supported the Warrenbayne Pizza Night on Friday 19 September 2025. The event was a great success, with over 40 community members in attendance. Cr. Gunaratne attended and was asked to draw the raffle prize winners.
- A total of 42 events have been organised for the Benalla Seniors Festival, including two privately organised events at Coinda. These events align with the key theme of the Victorian Seniors Festival: Connect, Create, and Celebrate. The program focuses on several priority groups, including First Nations Elders, seniors with disabilities, seniors from multicultural and multi-faith backgrounds, and vulnerable older men. There has been a focus on rural communities with events scheduled in Devenish, Swanpool, Lima East, and Goorambat.
- Five hundred copies of the Benalla Seniors Festival program, along with hundreds of four-weekly timetables, were distributed to local businesses, aged care facilities, health services, and community groups throughout the Benalla local government area in mid-September 2025. The programs were also made available at four key locations: the Customer Service Centre, Benalla Health, the Visitor Information Centre, and the library.

## **Highlights**

- The L2P program welcomed a new Toyota Hybrid Yaris in early July 2025 replacing the Toyota Corolla which had given 10 years' service to the program accruing over 270,000kms for leaner drivers. A special launch event was held on 31 July 2025 to launch the Toyota Yarris and a Toyota Corolla.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Operating Budget result for the period ending 30 September 2025

	Notes	2025/26 YTD Actuals	2025/26 YTD Budgets	2025/26 YTD Variance	2025/26 Full Year Budget	2025/26 Full Year Forecast
Communications and Engagement		\$91,076	\$97,710	\$6,634	\$379,761	\$379,761
Community Operations	1	\$150,728	\$187,272	\$36,544	\$885,086	\$1,116,633
Community Development	2	\$32,380	(\$1,070)	-\$33,450	(\$6,618)	\$146,857
Youth Programs		(\$93,552)	(\$45,914)	\$47,638	\$50,543	\$79,673
ADS Assessment		\$0	\$126	\$126	\$508	\$508
FCS Maternal Child Health	3	\$17,675	\$58,756	\$41,081	\$218,203	\$437,009
FCS Family & Children's Services	4	(\$7,726)	\$56,086	\$63,812	\$220,421	\$243,863
ADS Aged & Disability Services		\$3,883	\$1,176	-\$2,707	\$4,707	\$26,048
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>\$194,998</b>	<b>\$354,142</b>	<b>\$159,144</b>	<b>\$1,752,611</b>	<b>\$2,430,352</b>

### Notes:

1. Favourable variance primarily due Repairs and Maintenance and Salaries and Oncosts expenses less than budgeted.
2. Unfavourable variance due to timing of grant funding payments (budgeted but not yet received) and payment of contractor for the development of the Open Space Strategy (budget allocated 2024/25 but expended in 2025/26).
3. Favourable variance primarily due to Salaries and Oncosts less than budgeted for the quarter.
4. Favourable variance primarily due to grants being more than budgeted and Salaries and Oncosts expense less than budgeted.

### Recommendation:

**That the report be noted.**

## **8. Facilities and Information Technology Department Activity Report For The Quarter Ended 30 September 2025**

Ref: 1138149297-13081

Greg Robertson – Manager Facilities and Information Technology

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### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

The report presents the activities of the Facilities and Information Technology Department for the quarter ended 30 September 2025.

### **Facilities Management**

- Replaced deteriorated wooden external stairs to the Benalla Town Hall.
- Digital Display signs were installed in Bridge Street, Mair Street, Benalla and an interactive display installed at the entrance to the Visitor Information Centre.
- The Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) recently conducted a three-day audit of Benalla Airport Operations and the Benalla Airport Manual. The formal audit findings were received during the quarter and CASA issued formal Safety Findings which included:
  - Renew line marking on runway and taxi ways.
  - Establish a Drug and Alcohol Management Plan.
  - Update the Integrated Aeronautical Information Package to reflect current on ground infrastructure and assign taxiways alphanumeric designations.
  - Undertake and record Airport Works Safety Officer training for the Slashing Contractor.
  - Increase runway lighting inspections to twice per week, after sunset or before dawn, as outlined in the audited Benalla Airport Manual. The Safety Findings have each been addressed and formal notification prepared for CASA review.
- The Airport Manual has since been amended, in line with operational need, to allow a reduction in inspection frequency to fortnightly runway lighting checks. CASA will review these operational changes at the next audit.
- As required under our CASA Aerodrome Certification, an external service provider undertook an Airport Manual validation check, and an Obstacle Limitation (OL) survey (OLS) at the ends of all runways and glider strips. All checks and OL surveys passed inspection. Trimming of several trees was undertaken on advice of the OL surveyor to keep canopy under the OL surfaces.
- Two large windows were smashed at the Customer Service Centre. Police investigations are ongoing. A Benalla based glazier has been engaged to replace the windows.
- A new stove and rangehood were installed at the Senior Citizens Community Centre.

### **Information and Communications Technology (ICT)**

- Completed independent review of network hardware stack and server software licencing. The review will inform programmed upgrades and replacements.
- Rollout of software patches and security upgrades to production network servers.
- Negotiations with Telstra to activate high speed fibre optic internet connection to Community Care and to increase speed of main internet connection at the Customer Service Centre. Now awaiting Telstra's activation of the improved services.

- Migration of Helpdesk system to new software platform to better manage technical support tickets.
- Firewall Security devices thwarted all known external cyber-attacks directed at Councils network.
- Repairs completed to core network switching to replace faulty power supply and cooling fan.
- ICT staff undertook various out-of-hours programming, configuration and database downloads to support the CODI Project and migration to new software. Tasks were conducted out-of-hours to ensure ICT systems could remain on-line for business hours use.

### **Collaborative Digital Innovation (CODI) Project**

- Key stakeholder user training sessions commenced for Authority Altitude with our Corporate Champions Groups.
- Share point Project CODI site implemented - training resources and all relevant documentation – Single source of truth.
- User Acceptance Training modules in full swing and majority have been completed.
- Civica and Altitude rollout key dates and actions communicated to all staff.
- Authority Altitude project plan key milestones achieved with Go Live date confirmed for Monday 3 November 2025.

### **Benalla Aquatic Centre YMCA**

- The YMCA launched a Health and Wellness Membership Campaign in the lead up to the warmer weather. After the campaign general memberships totalled 400, an increase on 378 memberships for the same time last year. Swimming lesson enrolments increased to 689, up from 635 recorded at the end of September 2024.
- Water Quality testing achieved 100 per cent for all testing undertaken in all pools (several times per day) in September. Testing records free chlorine levels against the required standard for commercial pools. The exceptional result is in-part attributed to chemical equipment and chemical bund upgrades recently completed at the centre.
- Pool water temperature remains very stable in all indoor pools with temperatures within the required setpoint 99 per cent of the time. Pool temperatures are recorded three times per day for each pool. Since the installation of the new boilers pool temperatures have exhibited impressive stability, something not achievable before the boilers upgrade. Prior to the upgrade, temperatures could vary by several degrees during the day, any variations now are only part of a degree.
- An additional baby change table was installed in the male changerooms to ensure to match the number available in the female changerooms.

### **Highlight**

- At the Aquatic Centre solid shower partitions were installed in the male changerooms to enhance personal privacy. At the time of construction open showers were common practice in male changerooms (note: showers have been enclosed in the female changerooms since near the time of centre construction), and the modest upgrade brings the centre up to modern customer expectations improving privacy. The upgrade may alleviate some pressures on the Family Changerooms due to enhanced privacy now available in all changerooms at the centre. The upgrade is welcomed by school groups as it contributes further to child safety.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Operating Budget result for the period ending 30 September 2025

	Notes	2025/26 YTD Actuals	2025/26 YTD Budgets	2025/26 YTD Variance	2025/26 Full Year Budget	2025/26 Full Year Forecast
Facilities		\$343,649	\$369,179	\$25,530	\$2,560,205	\$2,543,611
Information Technology	1	\$768,313	\$977,255	\$208,941	\$2,777,259	\$2,777,259
Benalla Airport		\$5,664	\$7,576	\$1,912	\$133,707	\$133,707
Saleyards	2	\$2,557	\$8,256	\$5,699	\$32,967	\$32,967
Aquatic Centre	3	\$166,001	\$230,979	\$64,978	\$923,918	\$923,918
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$1,286,185</b>	<b>\$1,593,244</b>	<b>\$307,060</b>	<b>\$6,428,056</b>	<b>\$6,411,461</b>

### Notes:

1. Favourable variance primarily due to phasing of Computer Support/Software expenses.
2. Favourable variance due to less than budgeted expenditure across several expense categories.
3. Favourable variance primarily due to phasing of contract payments to YMCA.

### Recommendation:

**That the report be noted.**

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## 9. Benalla Art Gallery Redevelopment Project Control Group – Terms of Reference

Ref: 870788216-19017

Adrian Gasperoni – Manager Assets and Infrastructure

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents the reviewed *Benalla Art Gallery Redevelopment Project Control Group Terms of Reference*.

### BACKGROUND

At a Council Meeting on 26 June 2024 the Council resolved to establish the Benalla Art Gallery Project Control Group and adopt the Benalla Art Gallery Project Control Group Terms of Reference.

The Benalla Art Gallery Redevelopment Project Control Group, as defined by the *Benalla Art Gallery Redevelopment Project Control Group Terms of Reference*, is comprised of:

- Four Council officers.
- Two Councillor representatives.
- Chair of Benalla Art Gallery Advisory Committee
- Representative from Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions.

The Terms of Reference adopted on the 26 June 2024 have since been reviewed by the Benalla Art Gallery Redevelopment Project Control Group. A revised Terms of Reference has therefore been drafted in response to the review.

### DISCUSSION

The *Benalla Art Gallery Redevelopment Project Terms of Reference* has been reviewed and updated by the *Benalla Art Gallery Redevelopment Project Control Group*.

The *Benalla Art Gallery Project Control Group Terms of Reference* are attached as **Appendix 1**.

### 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*, and the administrative nature of the Terms of Reference, that 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>▪ Terms of Reference presented in a public report.</li><li>▪ Terms of Reference published on Councils website.</li></ul>

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications with the development or implementation of the Committee's Term of Reference.

## **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.

## **CONCLUSION**

It is proposed that the *Benalla Art Gallery Project Control Group Terms of Reference* be adopted.

### **Recommendation:**

**That the *Benalla Art Gallery Redevelopment Project Control Group Terms of Reference* be adopted.**



## Terms of Reference

# Benalla Art Gallery Redevelopment Project Control Group

November 2025

### Document Control

Draft terms of reference created:	March 2025
Terms of Reference adopted by Council:	xxx
Version Number:	V2

## 1. Title

The working group will be known as the Benalla Art Gallery Redevelopment Project Control Group.

## 2. Purpose

The purpose of the Benalla Art Gallery Project Control Group is to:

- Manage, review and ensure the *Benalla Art Gallery Redevelopment Project* success through review and guidance of cost, time, quality and risks.
- Represent and provide guidance on Councils standards and requirements.
- Provide direction based on the organisations values and plans.
- Gain and provide community recommendations.

## 3. Duties and Functions

The Benalla Art Gallery Project Control Group has the following duties and functions:

- ensure the budget, scope and design are agreed.
- monitor project budget.
- promote awareness of asset management systems across the organization, Council and the community.
- investigate opportunities for further funding.
- monitor and identify potential risks and consider risk strategies.
- adhere to Councils code of conduct and values.
- Provide advice on consultation with the community and key interest groups.

## 4. Membership

4.1 Membership of the Benalla Art Gallery Redevelopment Project Control Group shall be comprised of eight members.

- Four Council officers.
- Two Councillor representatives.
- Chair of Benalla Art Gallery Advisory Committee.
- Representative from Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions.

4.2 The Council will appoint Councillors representatives. The Chief Executive Officer will appoint Council Officers to the Project Control Group.

- 4.3 The Council officers, Chair of the Benalla Art Gallery Advisory Committee and the representative from Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions are appointed to the Project Control Group for the term of the project.
- 4.4 After the initial appointment Councillor Representatives are elected to the Project Control Group annually at the annual Council Meeting.
- 4.5 Meetings of the Project Control Group will be chaired by the Project Manager.
- 4.6 The Project Control Group may seek the involvement of additional members with relevant interests and expertise.
- 4.7 A member of the Project Control Group may resign from their position at any time.
- 4.8 Members are expected to attend all meetings of the Project Control Group. If a member fails to attend two consecutive meetings of the Project Control Group without obtaining a leave of absence that member shall be deemed to have resigned from the Project Control Group.

## 5. Delegations

The Project Control Group has no delegated power to act on behalf of the Council or commit the Council to any expenditure.

## 6. Meetings

Meetings will be held monthly with extra meetings scheduled as required.

## 7. Quorum

The quorum for a meeting will be no less than a majority of the members appointed to the Committee.

## 8. Reporting

- 8.1 The business of the Project Control Group shall be recorded in proper minutes.
- 8.2 Agendas and notes of each meeting will be distributed to all members.
- 8.3 The Project Control Group will provide reports on its activities as required.
- 8.4 The Council will be responsible for providing administration support to the Project Control Group.

## 9. Support

Administration support will be provided by the Assets and Infrastructure department to:

- provide appropriate notice of meetings.
- circulate meeting documentation.
- take the minutes for each meeting.
- track the decisions of the Project Control Group.
- keep appropriate records of the meeting documentation, including the confirmed minutes.

## 10. Advice to Project Control Group

- 10.1 The Project Control Group may invite and obtain independent expert advice as required.
- 10.2 Any formal advice requested by the Project Control Group will be made available to all Committee members and, where relevant and appropriate, will be provided to the Council through meeting minutes.

## 11. Review of Terms of Reference

- 11.1 The Project Control Groups terms of reference may be reviewed at any time by the Council to accommodate changes in legislation, regulations, policy gaps, new technology or systems, as well as remain consistent with industry best practice.
- 11.2 The Council shall consult with the Project Control Group prior to amending the group's terms of reference.

## 10. Urgent Business

### Confidential Business

It is proposed that the following item be considered in confidential business pursuant to the *Local Government Act 2020* as it contains personal information and 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:

#### 11.1 Tender Report For CM25.074 Provision of Powerline Clearance, Property Service Wire Clearance and Auditing 2025-2028

##### **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*.**

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

### **Recommendation:**

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

## **Closure of Meeting**