

Benalla Rural City Council

Finance and Planning Committee

Minutes

Date: Wednesday 5 November 2025

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

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Minutes

Chair	Councillor Peter Davis	
Councillors	Councillor Bernie Hearn (Mayor)	
	Councillor Justin King (Deputy Mayor)	
	Councillor David Blore	
	Councillor Puna Hewa Gunaratne	
	Councillor Jillian Merkel	
In attendance	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 opened the meeting at 6pm and recited 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

No apologies were submitted to the meeting.

Governance Matters

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

Recording of Council Meetings

In accordance with Rule 6.4 of the *Governance Rules 2020* the Committee Meeting was livestreamed via the Council's website. An audio recording was made of the proceedings.

Members of the public can watch the recorded broadcast of the meeting at www.benalla.vic.gov.au

Disclosures of Conflict of Interest

See item 6.

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 pending confirmation at this meeting.

Cr King / Cr Hearn:

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.

Carried

Business

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

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

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.

Cr Blore / Cr Gunaratne:
That the report be noted.

Carried

2. Building and Planning Approvals – September 2025

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

Cr Hearn / Cr King:
That the report be noted.

Carried

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

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

Cr Blore / Cr Merkel:
That the report be noted.

Carried

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

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

Cr Hearn / Cr Blore:
That the report be noted.

Carried

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

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

Cr King / Cr Gunaratne:
That the report be noted.

Carried

6. 2025/2026 Quick Response Grants

It is noted that Cr Peter Davis declared a general conflict of interest in item 6. A family member is an office bearer for the Moira Benalla Club and Cr David is a member of the Rotary Club of Benalla. Cr Davis left the meeting at 6.27pm.

Cr Jillian Merkel and Cr David Blore declared a general conflict of interest in item 6 as they are general members of the Moria Benalla Club. Cr Merkel and Cr Blore claimed an exemption as the conflict of interest is held in common with residents and ratepayers.

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

Cr King / Cr Blore:
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.

Carried

Cr Davis returned to the meeting at 6.31pm.

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

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

Cr Blore / Cr Gunaratne:
That the report be noted.

Carried

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

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

Cr Hearn / Cr Merkel:
That the report be noted.

Carried

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

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

Cr King / Cr Gunaratne:
That the *Benalla Art Gallery Redevelopment Project Control Group Terms of Reference* be adopted.

Carried

10. Urgent Business

No urgent business was submitted to the meeting.

Confidential Business

It was 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 and expose the business, commercial and financial undertaking if released:

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

Cr King / Cr Hearn:

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*.

The meeting was closed to the public at 6.47pm.

Reopening of the meeting to the public

Cr Blore / Cr Gunaratne:

That the meeting be reopened to the public.

Carried

The meeting was reopened at 6.58pm.

Closure of Meeting

The Council Meeting closed at 6.58pm.

The minutes were confirmed on the fifth day of November 2025.

Signed: _____
Cr Peter Davis – Chair