



MINUTES

Unscheduled Council Meeting Wednesday, 15 April 2026

Date: Wednesday, 15 April 2026

Time: 6.00pm

**Location: Council Chambers, 15 Stead Street, Ballan &
Online**

Order Of Business

1 Opening of Meeting and Prayer..... 3

2 Acknowledgement of Country 3

3 Present 3

4 Apologies 3

5 Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest 3

6 Presentations/Deputations 3

7 Customer and Corporate Services Reports 4

 7.1 Investigation of a Municipal Charge.....4

 7.2 Bin Purchase Required for the Rollout of Mandatory Green Waste Service
beginning in 2027/289

 7.3 Subsidised Waste Services12

8 Meeting Closure 16

1 OPENING OF MEETING AND PRAYER

The Mayor opened the meeting at 6.00pm.

Cr Bingham read the Prayer.

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Mayor read the Acknowledgement of Country.

3 PRESENT

Cr Steven Venditti-Taylor, Mayor

Cr Jarrod Bingham, Deputy Mayor

Cr Moira Berry

Cr Sheila Freeman

Cr John Keogh

Cr Ally Munari

Cr Tom Sullivan

Cr Paul Tatchell

Cr Rod Ward

Officers:

Mr Derek Madden	Chief Executive Officer
Mr David Jackson	General Manager Customer & Corporate Services
Mr Henry Bezuidenhout	Executive Manager Community Planning & Development
Ms Leigh McCallum	General Manager Community Strengthening
Mr Phil Jeffrey	General Manager Community Assets & Infrastructure
Mr Joseph Spiteri	Manager Governance & Civic Support
Mr James Hogan	Chief Financial Officer

4 APOLOGIES

Nil

5 DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Nil

6 PRESENTATIONS/DEPUTATIONS

Nil

7 CUSTOMER AND CORPORATE SERVICES REPORTS

Cr Ward dropped out of the meeting at 6.06pm due to technical difficulties.

Cr Ward returned to the meeting at 6.14pm.

7.1 INVESTIGATION OF A MUNICIPAL CHARGE

Author: James Hogan, Chief Financial Officer

Authoriser: David Jackson, General Manager Customer and Corporate Services

Attachments: 1. Municipal Charge HYS questions 2026 (under separate cover)

PURPOSE

This report presents the results of community consultation undertaken in relation to the investigation of a potential municipal charge. The consultation was conducted to inform the community about the proposal, provide transparency around how a municipal charge would operate and seek feedback on it prior to being tabled with Council for consideration.

Community engagement was undertaken through Council's Have Your Say platform and supported by a range of information tools, including explanatory material, frequently asked questions and an online rate comparison calculator. Feedback received has been reviewed and analysed to identify key themes and issues raised by the community.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Council undertook community consultation between 27 January and 17 February 2026 to seek feedback on the potential introduction of a municipal charge of up to 20% as part of the review of Council's Revenue and Rating Strategy.
- The consultation generated strong community engagement, with over 3,900 page views, more than 1,800 unique visitors and 206 formal submissions received. Feedback was received from across the Shire, with the highest participation from Bacchus Marsh, Darley, Maddingley and Ballan.
- The results indicate a majority of respondents do not support the introduction of a municipal charge at this time. Key issues raised included concerns regarding equity, affordability, cost-of-living pressures and the perceived redistribution of the rates burden toward lower-value residential properties.
- In light of the consultation outcomes it is recommended that Council does not proceed with the introduction of a municipal charge as part of the 2026/27 Budget process, noting the matter may be reconsidered as part of future reviews of Council's Revenue and Rating Strategy.

RESOLUTION**That Council:**

1. **Notes the results of the community consultation undertaken between 27 January and 17 February 2026 regarding the potential introduction of a municipal charge.**
2. **Acknowledges the feedback received from the community, including key themes relating to equity, affordability and cost-of-living pressures.**
3. **Resolves to not introduce a municipal charge as part of the 2026/27 Budget process.**
4. **Notes that the option of a municipal charge may be reconsidered as part of future reviews of Council's Revenue and Rating Strategy.**

In Favour: Crs Jarrod Bingham, John Keogh, Moira Berry, Rod Ward, Sheila Freeman and Steven Venditti-Taylor

Against: Crs Tom Sullivan, Ally Munari and Paul Tatchell

CARRIED 6/3

BACKGROUND

A municipal charge is a fixed component of rates that redistributes existing rate revenue between a flat charge and the variable rate calculated on property valuation. Importantly, the introduction of a municipal charge does not increase Council's total rate revenue; rather, it changes how the overall rates burden is shared across ratepayers.

Council resolved to investigate the potential introduction of a municipal charge of up to 20% as part of a broader review of Council's Revenue and Rating Strategy.

The community consultation period ran from 27 January to 17 February 2026.

Feedback was received from a broad geographic spread across the Shire, with the highest volume of responses originating from Bacchus Marsh, Darley, Maddingley and Ballan. The consultation generated a high level of community interest and a substantial volume of qualitative feedback.

Analysis of submissions and survey responses identified several consistent and strongly expressed themes.

1. General Opposition to the Municipal Charge

The consultation demonstrated a majority of respondents did not support the introduction of a municipal charge. In the direct survey question asking whether respondents supported implementation, the majority selected "No", with a small minority indicating support.

Written feedback generally expressed concern about fairness, affordability and timing given current cost-of-living pressures.

2. Equity and Ability-to-Pay Concerns

The primary theme raised was that a municipal charge was perceived as regressive. Many respondents argued that a fixed charge disproportionately impacts:

- Lower-value residential properties;
- Pensioners and retirees on fixed incomes;
- Single-income households and first-home buyers.

Feedback focused on the modelling demonstrating rate increases for lower-valued properties, while higher-valued properties experienced reductions, leading to a perception that the proposal shifted the burden from wealthier households to those with less financial capacity.

The principle of rates being linked to property value as a proxy for ability to pay was defended by many respondents, who considered the current valuation-based system to be fairer.

3. Cost-of-Living Pressures and Financial Hardship

A significant proportion of submissions referenced current economic conditions, including:

- Rising interest rates;
- Increased energy, insurance and food costs;
- Additional State Government levies appearing on rates notices.

Respondents often stated that even modest annual increases were meaningful and, for some households, potentially unaffordable. Many expressed concern that increased rates could lead to financial stress, reduced local spending or housing insecurity, particularly for pensioners, retirees and low-income households.

4. Perceived Imbalance Between Residential and Non-Residential Ratepayers

Many submissions expressed concern that the municipal charge appeared to benefit businesses, commercial landholders, extractive industries and some farming properties, while residential ratepayers bore the majority of increases.

Some respondents questioned why households should pay more while entities with greater capacity to absorb costs – or claim rates as a business expense – would receive reductions. This issue was frequently framed as a question of fairness and social equity rather than opposition to business or farming sectors per se.

5. Service Levels and Value for Money

Another recurring issue was dissatisfaction with current service levels. Respondents frequently cited:

- Road condition and maintenance;
- Drainage and footpaths;
- Removal of tip vouchers and green-waste initiatives;
- Lack of hard-rubbish collection.

Many respondents stated that increased or redistributed rates were difficult to justify without corresponding improvements in service delivery. There was a sentiment that Council should focus on efficiency, cost control and service improvements before altering the rating structure.

6. Supportive Minority Viewpoints

A smaller number of submissions expressed support for a municipal charge, primarily from rural or farming perspectives. Supportive respondents generally argued that:

- Council services are provided broadly regardless of property value;
- Fixed administrative costs should be shared equally;
- Current valuation-based rates unfairly burden large landholdings with limited service access.

While these views were clearly articulated, they represented a minority position within the overall consultation outcomes.

PROPOSAL

The community consultation on the proposed municipal charge generated strong engagement and a high volume of feedback. The results indicate clear and widespread opposition to the introduction of a municipal charge.

In light of the consultation outcomes it is recommended that Council does not proceed with the introduction of a municipal charge as part of the 2026/27 Budget process, noting the matter may be reconsidered as part of future reviews of Council's Revenue and Rating Strategy.

COUNCIL PLAN

The Council Plan 2025-2029 provides as follows:

Strategic Objective 4: A Council that engages and adapts

Priority 4.2: Align services and resources to sustainably meet the needs of our community

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Implementing or not implementing a municipal charge has no financial impact, as it is revenue neutral.

RISK & OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY ISSUES

There are no identified risks associated with this process.

COMMUNICATIONS & CONSULTATION STRATEGY

The community consultation period ran from 27 January to 17 February 2026.

Engagement was advertised on the following platforms:

- Facebook (28 January & 5 February);
- Antenno (28 January & 16 February);
- Council's Webpage Banner;
- Moorabool News (30 January, 6 February & 13 February);
- Face-to-face interactions with community members who attended Council offices;
- Verbal enquiries from participants seeking further clarification and information.

Engagement outcomes included:

- Over 3,900 page views on the engagement site;
- 1,800+ unique visitors accessing information;
- 234 actively engaged participants;
- 206 submissions formally lodged through the platform.

Feedback was received from a broad geographic spread across the Shire, with the highest volume of responses originating from Bacchus Marsh, Darley, Maddingley and Ballan. The consultation generated a high level of community interest and a substantial volume of qualitative feedback.

VICTORIAN CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES ACT 2006

In developing this report to Council, the officer considered whether the subject matter raised any human rights issues. In particular, whether the scope of any human right established by the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities is in any way limited, restricted or interfered with by the recommendations contained in the report. It is considered that the subject matter does not raise any human rights issues.

OFFICER'S DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

Under section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

General Manager – David Jackson

In providing this advice to Council as the General Manager, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – James Hogan

In providing this advice to Council as the Author, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

CONCLUSION

The community consultation on the proposed municipal charge generated strong engagement and a high volume of feedback. The collected results indicate opposition to the introduction of a municipal charge.

Key issues raised included concerns about equity, affordability, cost-of-living pressures and perceived redistribution away from higher value properties. While a minority of respondents supported the proposal on equity-of-use grounds, the majority of respondents view was that a municipal charge would unfairly disadvantage lower-value residential properties and vulnerable households.

Based on the consultation outcome, it is recommended that Council does not proceed with the introduction of a municipal charge as part of the 2026/27 Budget process, noting the matter may be reconsidered as part of future reviews of Council's Revenue and Rating Strategy.

7.2 BIN PURCHASE REQUIRED FOR THE ROLLOUT OF MANDATORY GREEN WASTE SERVICE BEGINNING IN 2027/28**Author:** James Hogan, Chief Financial Officer**Authoriser:** David Jackson, General Manager Customer and Corporate Services**Attachments:** Nil**PURPOSE**

To seek Council approval for the procurement and funding approach for bins required to support the rollout of the mandatory green waste service commencing in 2027/28.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The introduction of a mandatory green waste service from 2027/28 will require the purchase of new bins and kitchen caddies for all applicable households.
- The total estimated upfront cost of bin procurement is \$428,000.
- It is proposed that Council adopt an amortisation funding model (Option B), whereby the upfront cost is funded from the Landfill Rehabilitation Reserve and subsequently recovered over three years through service charges.

RESOLUTION**Moved:** Cr Rod Ward**Seconded:** Cr Sheila Freeman**That Council:**

1. Approves the procurement and funding approach for the green waste bin rollout.
2. Endorse Option B – Amortisation of bin costs over three years.
3. Approve the use of the Landfill Rehabilitation Reserve to fund the initial \$428,000 purchase, to be replenished through green waste service charges over the first three years of operation.

The Mayor Cr Venditti-Taylor exercised a casting vote in favour of the recommendation.**CARRIED**

BACKGROUND

The Victorian Government has mandated the introduction of a universal green waste service across all councils, to be implemented by 2027/28. This reform is aimed at reducing organic waste sent to landfill and supporting the transition to a circular economy.

To deliver this service, Council will be required to provide residents with appropriate infrastructure, including a 240-litre green waste bin and a kitchen caddy to support food organics collection.

PROPOSAL

It is proposed that Council proceed with the purchase of:

- 240-litre green waste bins at a unit cost of \$55;
- Kitchen caddies at a unit cost of \$10;

The total estimated cost of procurement is \$428,000.

Two funding options have been considered:

- Option A: Pay in full in 2026/27
Council funds the full cost upfront through the 2026/27 budget.
- Option B: Amortise over three years (preferred)
Council funds the upfront cost and recovers the expenditure over the first three years of service delivery through increased waste service charges.

Option B is the preferred approach as it:

- Aligns cost recovery with service delivery;
- Reduces immediate budget pressure in 2026/27;
- Provides a more equitable distribution of costs to service users over time.

It is proposed that the upfront cost be funded from the Landfill Rehabilitation Reserve, with the Reserve replenished through collected service charges.

COUNCIL PLAN

The Council Plan 2025-2029 provides as follows:

Strategic Objective 4: A Council that engages and adapts

Priority 4.3: Focus resources to deliver on our service promise in a sustainable way

The proposal is consistent with the Council Plan 2025-2029.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The total upfront cost of the bin rollout is estimated at \$428,000.

Under the preferred Option B:

- Initial funding will be sourced from the Landfill Rehabilitation Reserve;
- The Reserve will be replenished over a three-year period through waste service charges applied to residents;
- This approach minimises the immediate impact on the 2026/27 operating result while ensuring full cost recovery.

RISK & OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY ISSUES

There are no identified risks associated with this process.

COMMUNICATIONS & CONSULTATION STRATEGY

The Draft Budget will include the preferred option, which will be subject to a consultation process.

VICTORIAN CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES ACT 2006

In developing this report to Council, the officer considered whether the subject matter raised any human rights issues. In particular, whether the scope of any human right established by the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities is in any way limited, restricted or interfered with by the recommendations contained in the report. It is considered that the subject matter does not raise any human rights issues.

OFFICER'S DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

Under section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

General Manager – David Jackson

In providing this advice to Council as the General Manager, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – James Hogan

In providing this advice to Council as the Author, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

CONCLUSION

The rollout of the mandatory green waste service requires upfront investment in bin infrastructure. The proposed amortisation approach enables Council to deliver the service in a financially sustainable manner while aligning cost recovery with service delivery and minimising short-term budget impacts.

7.3 SUBSIDISED WASTE SERVICES

Author: James Hogan, Chief Financial Officer

Authoriser: David Jackson, General Manager Customer and Corporate Services

Attachments:

1. Extract NoM 328 - Ordinary Meeting of Council 7 May 2025 (under separate cover)
2. Extract Response NoM 328 - Ordinary Meeting of Council, 3 December (under separate cover)
3. Extract Recision NoM 328 - Ordinary Meeting of Council, 17 December (under separate cover)

PURPOSE

To provide next steps to the Notice of Recission carried at the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 17 December 2025, regarding the introduction of subsidised waste services in the 2026/27 financial year.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- At the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 17 December 2025, Council carried a Notice of Recission to implement a range of subsidised waste services as part of the 2026/27 financial year.
- The resolution followed investigation into hard waste services under Notice of Motion No. 328.
- The adopted services include subsidised drop-off services and a targeted kerbside collection service.
- This report resolves to include the subsidised waste services costings in the 2026/27 Draft Budget to allow appropriate community feedback for consideration by Council on these services.

RESOLUTION

That Council resolves to include the subsidised waste services listed in this report in the 2026/27 Draft Budget and explicitly define these costs as part of the community consultation on the Draft Budget to allow appropriate community feedback for consideration by Council.

In Favour: Crs Jarrod Bingham, John Keogh, Rod Ward, Sheila Freeman and Steven Venditti-Taylor

Against: Crs Tom Sullivan, Moira Berry, Ally Munari and Paul Tatchell

CARRIED 5/4

BACKGROUND

At the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 17 December 2025, Council carried a Notice of Recission – Response to NoM No. 328 – Subsidised Waste Services.

Council resolved to give consideration to the introduction of the following subsidised waste services in the 2026/27 budget process by providing full costings during community consultation in the Draft Budget:

- (a) Subsidised hard waste drop off service at Council’s transfer stations via a 2x1m3 allocation annually; no charge at the gate.
- (b) Subsidised greenwaste drop off service at Council’s transfer stations via no charge at the gate for one month annually.
- (c) Subsidised mattress drop off service at the transfer stations via half price at the gate for one month annually.
- (d) Subsidised hard waste kerbside pick-up service for the unabled or elderly residents via a 2x3m allocation capped at 500 properties annually.

PROPOSAL

In accordance with Council’s resolution, the following subsidised waste services will be included in the Draft Budget with full costings:

- 1. Hard Waste Drop-Off (Transfer Stations)
 - a. Up to 2 x 1m³ allocations per household annually
 - b. No charge at the gate
- 2. Green Waste Drop-Off (Transfer Stations)
 - a. No charge at the gate for one month annually
- 3. Mattress Drop-Off (Transfer Stations)
 - a. 50% subsidy (half price) for one month annually
- 4. Targeted Hard Waste Kerbside Collection
 - a. Available to elderly or unable residents
 - b. 2m³ allocation per household
 - c. Capped at 500 properties annually

COUNCIL PLAN

The Council Plan 2025-2029 provides as follows:

Strategic Objective 4: A Council that engages and adapts

Priority 4.1: Listen, understand and advocate for community needs

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The introduction of subsidised waste services will have a direct impact on Council’s operating budget. The draft budget will incorporate the ongoing costs of these services in the waste service charge.

The estimated annual cost of each service will be:

Service	Estimated Cost	Cost per Service
2 x 1m ³ Hardwaste Drop Off	\$190,000.00	\$9.99
Greenwaste Drop Off Month	\$38,000.00	\$2.00
Half Price Mattress Month	\$28,500.00	\$1.76
Kerbside Pick-Up for Unabled & Elderly	\$142,500.00	\$8.82

These costs will be updated annually as part of the budget process based on community utilisation of the service.

RISK & OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY ISSUES

In the absence of a subsidised waste service, residents themselves become a key source of risk. Individuals may attempt to dispose of waste in unsafe or unauthorised ways, creating hazards both for themselves and the wider community. This can include illegal dumping, accumulation of combustible materials or unsafe handling of bulky or hazardous items. The table below outlines some of the main risks associated with resident behaviour, their potential severity and possible control measures:

Risk Identifier	Detail of Risk	Risk Rating	Control/s
Illegal Dumping	Residents may dispose of waste in unauthorised locations, causing environmental hazards, community complaints, and potential legal liability.	High	Increase monitoring and enforcement; provide education on legal disposal options; encourage private contractor engagement.
Fire Hazard/Property Risk	Accumulation of green waste or combustible materials on private properties may increase fire risk, particularly during the fire season.	High	Implement targeted education campaigns on safe storage and disposal; offer seasonal drop-off options or rebates for high-risk properties.
Roadside Hazard	Residents may place bulky items on kerbsides or road reserves, creating obstacles for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers.	Medium	Provide education on safe disposal points; consider at-call collection options; encourage use of approved private contractors.
Community Frustration	There has been increasing demand for subsidised services within the municipality. Failing to respond may lead to heightened dissatisfaction and frustration with Council.	Medium	Provide a subsidised waste service to meet community expectations.

COMMUNICATIONS & CONSULTATION STRATEGY

The subsidised services will be included in the Draft Budget which will be subject to community consultation.

VICTORIAN CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES ACT 2006

In developing this report to Council, the officer considered whether the subject matter raised any human rights issues. In particular, whether the scope of any human right established by the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities is in any way limited, restricted or

interfered with by the recommendations contained in the report. It is considered that the subject matter does not raise any human rights issues.

OFFICER'S DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

Under section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

General Manager – David Jackson

In providing this advice to Council as the General Manager, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – James Hogan

In providing this advice to Council as the Author, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

CONCLUSION

Council has resolved to give consideration to the introduction of subsidised waste services as part of the 2026/27 budget process by providing full costings for these services during community consultation.

The inclusion of these services in the Draft Budget will allow community feedback on both service delivery and associated costs, ensuring any final budget decisions align with both community expectations and Council's long-term financial sustainability.

8 MEETING CLOSURE

The Meeting closed at 6.58pm.

.....

CHAIRPERSON