

OFFICIAL



Mansfield Shire Council Meeting

Tuesday 15 September 2026 5:00 pm
Mansfield Shire Council Chamber

Notice and Agenda of meeting livestreamed via the
[Mansfield Shire Council website](#)
Commencing at 5pm

Our aspiration for our Shire and its community

We live, work and play in an inclusive, dynamic and prosperous place where
community spirit is strong and people are empowered to engage in issues that
affect their lives.

Councillors

Cr Steve Rabie (Mayor)
Cr James Tehan (Deputy Mayor)
Cr Mandy Treasure
Cr Bonnie Clark
Cr Tim Berenyi

Officers

Kirsten Alexander, Chief Executive Officer
Melissa Crane, General Manager Investment & Planning
Janique Snyder, Executive Manager Community Health & Wellbeing
Justin Hotton, Executive Manager Capital Works & Operations
Maya Balvonova, Executive Manager Development & Customer Service

Order of Business

1. Opening of the meeting

The Mayor, who chairs the meeting, will formally open the meeting and welcome all present.

2. Present

Where a meeting is held virtually, Councillors will confirm that they can see and hear each other.

3. Apologies

Where a Councillor is not present, their absence is noted in the Minutes of the meeting.

4. Statement of commitment

The Council affirms its commitment to ensuring its behaviour meets the standards set by the Model Councillor Code of Conduct.

5. Acknowledgement of Country

The Council affirms its recognition of the Taungurung people being traditional custodians of this area, and pays respect to their Elders past and present.

6. Disclosure of conflicts of interest

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, a Councillor must declare any Conflicts of Interest pursuant to sections 126 and 127 Act in any items on this Agenda.

Council officers or contractors who have provided advice in relation to any items listed on this Agenda must declare a Conflict of Interest regarding the specific item.

7. Confirmation of minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting are placed before Council to confirm the accuracy and completeness of the record.

8. Representations

Council receives or presents acknowledgements to the general public. Deputations may also be heard by members of the general public who have made submission on any matter or requested to address the Council. Council may also receive petitions from residents and ratepayers on various issues. Any petitions received since the previous Council meeting are tabled at the meeting and the matter referred to the appropriate Council officer for consideration.

9. Notices of Motion

A Motion is a request (Notice of Motion) that may be made by a Councillor for an issue not listed on the Agenda to be discussed at a Council meeting and for a decision to be made.

10. Mayor's report

The Mayor provides a report on their activities.

11. Reports from council appointed representatives

Councillors appointed by Council to external committees will provide an update where relevant.

12. Public question time

Councillors will respond to questions from the community that have been received in writing, by midday on the Monday prior to the Council meeting. A form is provided on Council's website.

13. Officer reports

13.1 Council considers a report from the Chief Executive Officer on the current operations, activities and projects undertaken with each department over the past month

13.2-13.5 Officer reports are presented to the Council, where required.

14. Council resolutions report

Council reviews the outstanding actions arising from resolutions from previous Council meetings.

15. Advisory and Special Committee reports

Council considers reports from Advisory Committees that Councillors represent Council on.

16. Authorisation of sealing of documents

Any documents that are required to be endorsed by the Chief Executive Officer under delegated authority and sealed by the Council are presented to the Council.

17. Close of meeting

The Mayor will formally close the meeting and thank all present for attending.

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Agenda

1. Opening of the meeting

2. Present

The Chair will call on any Councillor/s attending the meeting virtually and ask them to confirm verbally that they can see all Councillors and hear the proceedings.

Councillor/s attending virtually will respond to their name with: "I can hear the proceedings and see all Councillors and Council officers".

The Chair will ask the Councillor/s to confirm by raising their hand that they could all hear each statement of the Councillors.

Councillors will raise their hand to acknowledge they can hear each other.

3. Apologies

The Chair will call on the CEO for any apologies.

4. Statement of commitment

The Chair will read the statement and call on each Councillor to confirm their commitment:

"As Councillors of Mansfield Shire we are committed to ensuring our behaviour meets the standards set by the Model Councillor Code of Conduct. We will, at all times, faithfully represent and uphold the trust placed in us by the community."

5. Acknowledgement of Country

The Deputy Mayor will recite Council's Acknowledgement of Country:

"Our meeting is being held on the traditional lands of the Taungurung people. We wish to acknowledge them as the traditional custodians and pay our respects to their Elders past and present. We extend that respect to all members of our community."

6. Disclosure of conflicts of interest

The Chair will call on each Councillor in turn and ask them to declare whether they have any conflicts of interest in relation to any agenda items:

- Councillor Tehan
- Councillor Treasure
- Councillor Clark
- Councillor Berenyi

7. Confirmation of minutes

Recommendation

THAT the Minutes of the Mansfield Shire Council meeting held on 18 August 2026 and 1 September 2026 be confirmed as an accurate record.

8. Representations

9. Notices of motion

Nil

10. Mayor's report

Mayor Steve Rabie will present the monthly Mayor's report to the Council as follows:

It was great to see the first hints of spring arrive in Mansfield in time for Bloom at Doon on Saturday. I was disappointed to miss out on judging the famous scarecrow competition this year, but by all reports it was another terrific event. My congratulations and thanks go to the organisers and volunteers who once again made it happen.

The warmer weather has also seen one of our newest pieces of infrastructure put straight to good use – the Greenvale Lane Footbridge. Completed at the end of July with grant funding through the Safer Local Roads and Streets Program, the bridge is already being well used by walkers and cyclists and has also been designed to safely accommodate horse riders. It's a practical improvement that provides a safer connection for pedestrians, cyclists and horses and makes it easier for everyone to get around Mansfield township.

There's no doubt we've had a very wet winter. While that rain has been a real blessing for our agricultural industry and will hopefully set our farmers up for a good spring, the wet conditions have also put pressure on the progress of several earthmoving projects across the shire. These include the new dog park, the pump track and the new roundabout at the intersection of Whitfield/Tolmie Road and Dead Horse Lane. With spring now here and hopefully some sunnier and drier days ahead, I'm looking forward to seeing these projects get underway very soon.

The Armchair Travel sessions at Mansfield Library have continued to take locals to destinations around the world through the stories and experiences of people from our own community. It's another reminder that our library is much more than a place to borrow books – it's a genuine community hub and a place that brings people together.

Another highlight has been the return of the Three Faces Portrait Prize, which Council is proud to support in partnership with Arts Mansfield. This year's sitter is Ella Crathern, Mansfield's 2025 Young Citizen of the Year. Three local artists are now working on their interpretations of Ella, with the completed works to be unveiled on 15 October. Council sponsors the \$2,000 acquisitive prize, with the winning portrait becoming part of our permanent Three Faces collection. I'm really looking forward to the final unveiling and seeing how each of the artists has captured Ella and her story.

Book Week was another highlight, with so many of our local primary school children getting involved. I had the privilege of reading Share, Said the Rooster to children from Mansfield Kindergarten, outside in the beautiful sunshine of the last days of winter. Seeing the children so engaged and excited by a good story is always one of the enjoyable parts of being Mayor.

Two new EV charging spaces have also been installed in Early Street, providing another service for residents and visitors travelling through Mansfield. Importantly, the charging infrastructure has come at no cost to Council. The car spaces are leased to the charging operator, providing Council with revenue while the operator provides the infrastructure and charging service. It's a good example of how Council can support new services in our shire without placing the cost on our ratepayers.

There was good news for our local tennis community this month, with the roof replacement at the Mansfield Tennis Association Clubrooms now complete. This work will help ensure the clubrooms remain a safe, comfortable and welcoming facility for players and visitors for many years to come. Thank you to everyone involved in getting the project across the line.

As we head into spring, there is plenty happening across Mansfield Shire. Planning for the High-Country Festival is well underway, and I'm looking forward to seeing our community come together once again to celebrate everything our region has to offer.

Whether you're a local or one of the many visitors we welcome each year, get out and enjoy the warmer weather and everything that makes Mansfield Shire the best little shire in Victoria.

*Cr Steve Rabie
Mayor*

Recommendation

THAT COUNCIL receive the Mayor's report for the period 18 August 2026 to 9 September 2026.

11. Reports from council appointed representatives

Councillors appointed by Council to internal and external committees will provide a verbal update where relevant.

Committee	Responsible Councillor(s)
Australia Day Awards Committee	- Mayor Cr Steve Rabie - Cr James Tehan - Cr Mandy Treasure
Goulburn Murray Climate Alliance (GMCA)	Cr Tim Berenyi
Hume Regional Local Government Network (HRLGN)	Mayor Cr Steve Rabie
Mansfield Shire Council Audit and Risk Committee	- Mayor Cr Steve Rabie - Cr Mandy Treasure
Mansfield Shire CEO Employment Matters Committee	- Mayor Cr Steve Rabie - Cr James Tehan - Cr Bonnie Clark
Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)	- Mayor Cr Steve Rabie - Substitute - Deputy Mayor Cr James Tehan
North East Local Government Waste and Recovery Forum	Cr Tim Berenyi
Rural Councils Victoria (RCV)	Cr James Tehan
Station Precinct Museum Community Asset Committee	Mayor Cr Steve Rabie
Taungurung-Local Government Forum	Mayor Cr Steve Rabie

Recommendation

THAT COUNCIL note the verbal reports provided by Councillors in relation to their representation on internal and external Committees.

12. Public question time

Council welcomes questions from the community. A question must be submitted by midday on the Monday prior to the Council meeting. The [‘ask a question’ form](#) is available from Council's website.

The Mayor will read out the question and answer at the meeting.

13. Officer reports

13.1. Chief Executive Officer's report

File Number: E103

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer, Kirsten Alexander

Introduction

The Chief Executive Officer's report allows a short briefing to be provided to the Council on the current operations, tasks and projects undertaken within each department over the past month.

The Chief Executive Officer report will provide information relation to:

- ▶ Customer Service
- ▶ Capital Works
- ▶ Statutory and Strategic Planning
- ▶ Waste Services (Landfill)
- ▶ Field Services
- ▶ Youth Services and Events
- ▶ Library
- ▶ Communications
- ▶ Digital Transformation Project

Recommendation
THAT COUNCIL receive and note the Chief Executive Officer's report for the period 1 August 2026 to 31 August 2026.
Support Attachments
1. CEO Monthly Report – August 2026 [13.1.1.1 – 37 pages]

13.2. Development and Customer Service

13.2.1. Facility Hire Fee Waiver Criteria & Requests

File Number	E10965	Responsible Officer	Executive Manager Development and Customer Services, Maya Balvonova
Purpose			

To seek Council approval of a Facility Hire Fee Waiver Framework and consideration of four facility hire fee waiver requests assessed against the proposed criteria. The proposed framework for assessing waivers of facility hire fees is based on the principles and assessment methodology previously adopted by Council for Local Law Permit Fee Waivers.

Executive Summary

Council receives requests from community organisations, charities, sporting clubs, service providers and not-for-profit organisations seeking waivers of Council facility hire fees.

While Council has adopted eligibility criteria for the assessment of Local Law Permit Fee Waivers, there is currently no formal framework to guide the assessment of requests seeking a waiver of Council facility hire fees. To ensure consistency, transparency and fairness in decision-making, officers have assessed recent facility hire fee waiver requests using the same principles and criteria adopted by Council on 19 September 2023 for Local Law Permit Fee Waivers.

This report seeks Council approval of a Facility Hire Fee Waiver Framework based on the existing Local Law Permit Fee Waiver Criteria and presents four facility hire fee waiver requests for consideration.

The facility hire fee waiver requests relate to:

- ▶ Heart and Hound Art Therapy;
- ▶ Empowered Healing – Centre Against Violence;
- ▶ Parent Support Group for Children with Additional Needs; and
- ▶ Parent-Child Mother Goose Program.

The proposed framework considers:

- ▶ Community benefit;
- ▶ Organisational status;
- ▶ Availability of alternative funding sources;
- ▶ Whether participant fees are charged;
- ▶ Broader community outcomes; and
- ▶ Alignment with Council objectives and community wellbeing outcomes.

Key Issues

Proposed Facility Hire Fee Waiver Criteria

To support a consistent and transparent approach to future facility hire fee waiver requests, it is proposed that Council adopt the following criteria.

Community Groups and Sporting Groups

Facility hire fee waivers may be considered for Community Groups and Sporting Groups that are local to Mansfield Shire.

Waivers will generally not be provided where:

- ▶ The activity has an alternative funding source;
- ▶ Entry or participation fees are charged;
- ▶ The primary purpose of the activity is commercial gain;
- ▶ The group receives income from electronic gaming machines; or
- ▶ The activity requires significant Council resources beyond the facility hire request.

Charities and Non-Profit Organisations

Facility hire fee waivers may be considered where:

- ▶ The activity provides a demonstrated public or community benefit;
- ▶ The activity is not funded through a grant program or alternative funding stream;
- ▶ Participation is free or low-cost and accessible to the community; and
- ▶ The organisation operates on a not-for-profit basis.

Commercial Organisations

Requests from commercial organisations may be considered where:

- ▶ The activity provides a specialised community service that is not otherwise readily available within Mansfield Shire;
- ▶ The activity delivers significant social, health or wellbeing outcomes for residents;
- ▶ The fee waiver directly contributes to improved accessibility for participants; and
- ▶ Council determines that the broader community benefit outweighs the commercial nature of the service.

The following criteria are proposed to be applied for facility hire fee waiver requests:

- ▶ The waiver will only apply to ad hoc facility hire applications.
 - ▶ Waivers will be issued to Community Groups and Sporting Groups that are considered local to Mansfield Shire.
 - ▶ Waivers will not be issued to these groups if any of the following parameters apply:
 - ▶ The permit is for something that has an alternative funding stream
 - ▶ Entry fees will be charged to people attending
 - ▶ Alcohol is to be served in the facility.
 - ▶ The group receives income from electronic gaming machines.
 - ▶ The event may have an impact on traffic, car parking, public spaces, transport activity, and (or) pedestrian issues may arise because of the event activity.
- (Noting that Council's events management team will consider on a case-by-case

basis the payment of applicable permit fees as an in-kind Council contribution to the event).

- ▶ Waivers will be considered for Charities and Non-profit organisations if any of the following parameters apply:
 - ▶ The permit pertains to an activity that offers a public benefit.
 - ▶ The program is not funded through a grant or other funding stream

Facility Hire Fee Waiver Requests

Heart and Hound Art Therapy

Heart and Hound Art Therapy is a locally based provider delivering therapeutic art programs for children experiencing social, emotional and family-related challenges. The organisation does not receive ongoing grant funding and charges \$225 per child for the eight-week program, with some participants supported through Integrated Family Services (IFS) Client Flexible Funding.

The program provides an accessible alternative to individual therapy, supporting children affected by family violence, trauma and parental mental health challenges through creative, therapeutic activities. The organisation advises that a comparable service is not currently available within Mansfield Shire.

Heart and Hound Art Therapy has requested a waiver of meeting room hire fees at the Mansfield Family and Children's Centre. Based on the current hire rate of \$44.00 per hour (incl. GST) and approximately 10 one-hour sessions during Term 3, the value of the requested fee waiver is estimated at \$440.00 (incl. GST).

Officer Assessment

The program provides a specialised therapeutic service that is not otherwise available within the municipality and delivers positive wellbeing outcomes for participating children and families.

However, the organisation operates as a commercial entity and charges participants a fee to attend. While some participants receive financial support through referral agencies, the program is not provided free of charge to all users.

Officers consider the request does not sufficiently align with the proposed Facility Hire Fee Waiver Criteria, due to its delivery through a commercial entity and approval of a fee waiver is therefore not recommended.

Empowered Healing – Centre Against Violence

Empowered Healing is an eight-week therapeutic program delivered by Centre Against Violence, a not-for-profit organisation.

The service is provided free of charge and supports individuals impacted by family violence and trauma. The program is not otherwise available within Mansfield Shire and reduces the need for vulnerable residents to travel outside the municipality to access support services.

The requested waiver relates to meeting room hire fees at the Mansfield Family and Children's Centre with an estimated value of \$352.00 (incl. GST).

Officer Assessment

The program:

- ▶ Is delivered by a not-for-profit organisation;
- ▶ Provides clear community benefit;
- ▶ Is offered free of charge;
- ▶ Addresses an identified service gap; and
- ▶ Improves access to support services for vulnerable residents.

Officers consider the request strongly aligns with the proposed Facility Hire Fee Waiver Criteria and recommend approval of the request.

Parent Support Group for Children with Additional Needs

The Parent Support Group for Children with Additional Needs is a local peer-led support group established to assist families and carers of young children with additional needs.

The group receives no external funding and does not charge participants. The program will provide opportunities for information sharing, peer connection and support for families navigating complex health, education and support systems.

The estimated annual value of the requested fee waiver is \$528.00 (incl. GST).

Officer Assessment

The request aligns strongly with the proposed criteria as the group:

- ▶ Operates solely for community benefit;
- ▶ Is not-for-profit;
- ▶ Does not charge participants;
- ▶ Addresses an identified community need; and
- ▶ Supports social inclusion and community connectedness.

Officers recommend approval of the request.

Parent-Child Mother Goose Program

The Parent-Child Mother Goose Program is a volunteer-led early years initiative delivered free of charge to families within Mansfield Shire.

The program supports early literacy, child development, parent-child attachment and community connection. Participation has increased significantly since relocating to the Mansfield Library, with additional benefits including increased use of library facilities and services.

The group currently pays a room hire fee of approximately \$9 per session and operates for around 40 weeks per year.

Officer Assessment

The program:

- ▶ Is volunteer led;
- ▶ Operates on a not-for-profit basis;
- ▶ Is delivered free of charge;
- ▶ Supports child development and family wellbeing;
- ▶ Promotes community connection; and

- Increases utilisation of Council facilities.

Officers consider the request strongly aligns with the proposed Facility Hire Fee Waiver Criteria and recommend approval of the request.

Recommendation
THAT COUNCIL: 1. Approves the proposed Facility Hire Fee Waiver Criteria outlined in this report. 2. Approves the use of the Facility Hire Fee Waiver Criteria for the assessment of future facility hire fee waiver requests by Council officers. 3. Notes that the Criteria will be implemented immediately upon approval by Council. 4. Approves a facility hire fee waiver for Empowered Healing – Centre Against Violence. 5. Approves a facility hire fee waiver for the Parent Support Group for Children with Additional Needs. 6. Approves a facility hire fee waiver for the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program. 7. Does not approve a facility hire fee waiver for Heart and Hound Art Therapy, having considered the commercial nature of the organisation and the participant fees charged for the program.
Support Attachments
Nil

Considerations and Implications of Recommendation

Sustainability Implications

The proposed Facility Hire Fee Waiver Criteria support the sustainable delivery of community programs and services by providing a transparent and consistent framework for assessing requests. The framework seeks to balance responsible management of Council resources with the provision of support to organisations and programs that deliver demonstrated community benefit.

Community Engagement

The facility hire fee waiver requests considered within this report have been submitted by community organisations and service providers seeking access to Council facilities to deliver programs that support community wellbeing, social inclusion, early childhood development, family support and access to specialised services.

The proposed Facility Hire Fee Waiver Criteria have been developed using the same principles and assessment framework previously adopted by Council for Local Law Permit Fee Waivers, providing a consistent and transparent approach to the assessment of requests across Council services. Community notification of the Facility Hire Fee Waiver Criteria will be undertaken through the Mansfield Matters column in the Courier and the criteria will be listed on Council's public website.

Collaboration

Not Applicable

Financial Impact

Approval of the proposed Facility Hire Fee Waiver Criteria will provide a consistent framework for assessing future requests and improve transparency in Council decision-making.

The estimated value of the facility hire fee waiver requests recommended for approval in this report is:

- ▶ Empowered Healing – Centre Against Violence: \$352.00 (incl. GST);
- ▶ Parent Support Group for Children with Additional Needs: \$528.00 (incl. GST); and
- ▶ Parent-Child Mother Goose Program: approximately \$360.00 per annum.

The total estimated annual value of the fee waivers is approximately \$1,240.00 (incl. GST). This amount represents foregone facility hire revenue and is considered manageable within existing operational budgets.

Legal and Risk Implications

Not Applicable

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Not Applicable

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Not Applicable

Alignment to Council Plan

Theme 3: A Trusted, Effective and Efficient Council

Strategic Objective 7: Financial sustainability and value for money

Strategy 7.1: Increase Council's financial resilience by utilising opportunities to derive own-source income and optimising costs of delivering services.

The requested fee waivers do not directly align with Strategy 7.1, as they forgo Council revenue from facility hire fees. However, the relatively low financial impact of the waivers may be balanced against the community benefits delivered through the programs.

Strategic Objective 8: A consultative Council that represents and empowers its community

Strategy 8.1: Increase community trust in Council to make informed decisions with "no surprises".

Consideration of fee waiver requests through a transparent and consistent assessment process aligns with Strategy 8.1 by ensuring Council's decision-making is open, accountable and based on established criteria.

Governance - Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

The author of this report and officers providing advice in relation to this report do not have a conflict of interest to declare in this matter, in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020.

13.3. Capital Works and Operations

13.3.1. Fire Recovery Budget and Delivery Program

File Number	E15040	Responsible Officer	Emergency Management Officer, Tamara Watson
Purpose			

To provide Council with an update on bushfire recovery activities funded through the Victorian and Australian Government recovery programs following the January 2026 Bushfires.

Executive Summary

Council secured a total of \$1.525 million in recovery funding comprising:

- \$750,000 through the Council Support Fund (CSF); and
- \$775,000 through the Community Recovery Officer (CRO) and Recovery Hubs Program.

The funding has enabled Council to establish a dedicated bushfire recovery team, deliver community recovery services, support impacted residents and businesses and implement initiatives aimed at strengthening long-term community resilience and preparedness.

The recovery funding has supported the establishment of Community Recovery Hubs and outreach services within impacted communities providing residents, businesses and primary producers with access to information, referrals, wellbeing support and recovery assistance.

In addition, Council received \$125,000 to support the disposal of fire-affected waste from impacted properties they were not eligible for the clean up program.

The recovery funding secured by Council has significantly enhanced Council's capacity to continue to support communities affected by the January 2026 Bushfires over two financial years until 30 June 2028. Recovery activities continue to deliver positive outcomes for residents, businesses and community groups while strengthening resilience, preparedness and community wellbeing across Mansfield Shire.

Key Issues

Financial Overview

Funding Program	Allocation	Committed	Remaining
Council Support Fund	\$750,000	\$736,934	\$13,066
CRO and Hub Funding	\$775,000	\$727,497	\$47,503
Fire Waste levy funding	\$125,000	\$125,000	\$0.00
Total	\$1,650,000	\$1,589,431	\$60,569

All funding allocations are scheduled to be fully expended by 30 June 2028 in accordance with program requirements.

Community Recovery Officer (CRO) and Recovery Hubs Funding

This funding directly supports community recovery services and coordinates the delivery of fire recovery.

Community Recovery Officer (CROs) and Hubs Program Funding - \$775,000.00		
Approved Activities		
Name	Description	Funding Allocation
Operational Costs associated with CRO and Hub Positions	IT set up and training for all new staff as part of onboarding process.	\$40,867.00
Costs associated with providing recovery services	Youth and Family mental health and wellbeing services. Agricultural mental health and wellbeing services and travel expenses.	\$30,000.00
Facility costs	Hire of the Merton Hall and Bonnie Doon Community Centre to provide outreach services and hosting of events, workshops and training, Community Recovery Committee meetings.	\$7,000.00
Community Recovery Capability Building initiatives	Providing communities with targeted workshops, events and information sessions partnering with agencies and organisations to support the recovery and wellbeing of communities' post fire. Including catering and travel costs.	\$29,137.00
Recovery Hub Operational Costs	Travel costs associated with providing community outreach recovery programs, admin costs, electricity costs.	\$20,000.00
		Total: \$127,004.00

Approved Staff – Across the funding period	
Role Title	Funding Allocation
Community Recovery Officer	\$60,692.00
Community Recovery Support Officer x 2	\$52,290.00
Community Recovery Officer (Business)	\$101,200.00
Recovery Manager	\$255,211.00
Community Resilience Officer	\$24,900.00
Community Recovery Officer (Agriculture)	\$85,000.00
Community Recovery Officer (Environmental)	\$21,200.00
Total: \$600,493	

Remaining Funds: \$47,503.00

Council Support Fund (CSF) provides funding to support broader community, economic, organisational and resilience recovery outcomes resulting from the bushfire event.

Council Support Fund - \$750,000.00		
Approved Activities		
Name	Description	Funding Allocation
Merton Recreation Reserve & Bonnie Doon Community Centre - Design	Works include designs for last place of resort and facilities upgrade, including electrical upgrades, as well as plumbing/drainage upgrades. Electrical upgrades will enable reliable power supply for emergency response equipment, mobile command units, lighting towers and other operational equipment used during bushfire and disaster response activities.	\$10,570.00
Mansfield Showgrounds - Design	Works include designs for expanded and upgraded amenities, power resilience upgrades and water supply.	\$40,000.00
Mansfield Sporting Complex - Design	Works include design for Emergency Relief Centre upgrades, including a HVAC system, electrical upgrades (if required), amenities upgrade (if required), and enclosed airlock entry to improve temperature control and air quality management during emergency events.	\$30,000.00
Mansfield Racecourse - Design	Works include designs for facilities upgrade, inclusive of animal shelters, water points as well as electrical and amenities upgrades (if required).	\$20,000.00
Mansfield Shire Waste	Waste transportation costs, waste levy and landfill operator gate fees for bushfire waste following conclusion of the Victorian Government waiver.	\$20,000.00
Events Support	Events support for Mansfield Shire to support regional recovery and economic reinvigoration following the AGRN 1242 January 2026 Bushfires. The project includes place making approach to boost takings, training, workshops and education. The campaign will include targeted marketing support to assist events impacted by the bushfire period and to enable growth and expanded promotion of key regional events including Mansfield Races, Mansfield High Country	\$30,000.00

Council Support Fund - \$750,000.00		
Approved Activities		
Name	Description	Funding Allocation
	Festival, Town Booster event and other community and visitor events. The initiative will position Mansfield as open, welcoming and ready for visitation while driving increased event attendance and overnight stays.	
Winter Festival	Plan, coordinate and deliver a Winter Festival as a three-week activation in partnership with Mt Buller, and incorporating the Lantern Festival. The activation will include installation of lighting displays and lantern features across key locations, promotion of the event and coordination of supporting activities to attract visitors to the region during the winter period following the January 2026 bushfires (AGRN 1242).	\$63,750.00
		Total: \$214,320.00

Approved Staff across the funding period	
Role Title	Funding Allocation
Bushfire Youth and Events Officer	\$139,600.00
Admin Support Bushfire Recovery	\$69,720.00
Bushfire Communications Support Officer	\$91,000.00
Recovery Claims Officer	\$52,290.00
Project Officer - Design	\$105,200.00
Bushfire Events Officer	\$51,154.03
Bushfire Communications Support Officer	\$13,650.00
Total: \$522,614.03	

Remaining Funds: \$13,065.97

Key outcomes achieved to date include:

- 115 community members accessing recovery support services through the Recovery Hub program.
- 75 residents participating in psychosocial recovery sessions facilitated by specialist recovery practitioners Rob Gordon and Anne Leadbeater.
- Establishment of dedicated recovery services in Merton and Bonnie Doon.
- Delivery of community engagement activities, information sessions and wellbeing initiatives.
- Ongoing business and agricultural recovery support through targeted partnerships and referral pathways.

- The regular presence of recovery staff within impacted communities has strengthened relationships with residents, improved access to support services, and provided opportunities for community members to reconnect and support one another during recovery.
- Council continues to work closely with government agencies, service providers and community organisations to support recovery outcomes, including:
 - Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH)
 - Collaborating with agencies to deliver mental health support through Mental Health and Wellbeing Local and Australian Red Cross
 - Supporting events hosted by Social Inclusion Action Group
 - Environmental initiatives supported by Up2Us Landcare and Upper Goulburn Landcare
 - Providing business support through AgBiz Assist, Business Connect and Delatite Chamber of Commerce

These partnerships have enhanced access to mental health, financial counselling, business support, agricultural recovery services and community wellbeing initiatives.

Business and Agricultural Recovery

Council has undertaken business impact assessments and worked closely with support agencies to connect local businesses and primary producers with available assistance programs. These include;

- 11 farming businesses are receiving support through AgBiz Assist.
- 25 local businesses are accessing financial counselling, business planning and recovery assistance services.
- This work is helping strengthen business continuity, economic recovery and long-term resilience across the municipality.
- Supported community events such as The Unbreakable Farmer, Yarck Beef Group, Paddock Walk and Fodder budget workshop

Post-Fire Clean-Up Program

Under the Victorian Government's Post-Fire Clean-Up Program:

- 13 Mansfield properties registered for assessment.
- 5 properties met program eligibility requirements.
- 4 property owners accepted the clean-up service.
- Clean-up works are currently underway on 3 properties.
- Council is also providing support through the disposal of eligible fire-affected waste at the Resource Recovery Centre.

Future Priorities

Key recovery priorities for the remainder of the funding period include:

- Continuing Community Recovery Hub services and outreach programs.
- Delivering mental health and wellbeing initiatives.
- Supporting business and agricultural recovery activities.
- Facilitating community connection and resilience-building events.
- Delivering preparedness and pre-fire season education programs.
- Progressing priority resilience infrastructure planning projects.

- Supporting communities to mark the anniversary of the January 2026 bushfires.

Recovery remains an ongoing process for impacted individuals, families, businesses and primary producers. Continued access to mental health, wellbeing, social connection and practical recovery support remains a priority across affected communities.

Local businesses and farming enterprises continue to face recovery challenges. Council is working with partner agencies to connect businesses and primary producers with financial counselling, business planning and recovery support programs.

Recovery funding provides opportunities to deliver preparedness, resilience-building and capability development activities that will strengthen community capacity to respond to future emergencies.

Funding is supporting planning and design work for community facilities that play a critical role during emergency events, while also strengthening Council's organisational preparedness and recovery capability.

Recovery outcomes continue to rely on strong partnerships between Council, government agencies, community organisations and service providers to ensure coordinated and locally responsive support for impacted communities.

Recommendation
THAT COUNCIL: 1. Receives this update on the implementation of the January 2026 Bushfire Recovery Program and the community, business, agricultural and resilience initiatives being delivered; 2. Notes that a total of \$1.650 million in external recovery funding was secured through the Council Support Fund and the Community Recovery Officer and Recovery Hubs Program, of which \$1.589 million has been allocated or committed in accordance with the approved funding agreements, with \$60,569 remaining available for further eligible recovery activities; 3. Notes that funded activities are required to be completed by 30 June 2028 in accordance with the applicable funding agreements.
Support Attachments
Nil

Considerations and Implications of Recommendation

Sustainability Implications

Not Applicable

Community Engagement

Council has undertaken ongoing engagement with fire-affected communities throughout the recovery program. Community Recovery Hubs, outreach activities, community meetings, workshops and direct engagement with residents, businesses and primary producers have assisted Council and partner agencies to identify emerging recovery needs and inform the delivery of recovery activities.

Collaboration

Delivery of the recovery program involves significant collaboration with Government agencies, community organisations, health and wellbeing providers, agricultural and business support organisations and local community groups.

Financial Impact

Council has secured \$1.650 million in external funding to deliver the bushfire recovery program, comprising \$750,000 through the Council Support Fund, \$775,000 through the Community Recovery Officer and Recovery Hubs Program and \$125,000 for fire-affected waste disposal.

Program expenditure is required to be undertaken in accordance with the relevant funding agreements and completed by 30 June 2028. No additional Council funding is sought through this report.

Any future construction works arising from the resilience infrastructure design projects would be subject to separate funding and Council approval.

Legal and Risk Implications

Council is required to deliver funded activities in accordance with the conditions and eligibility requirements of the respective funding agreements. Expenditure outside approved activities may be ineligible and could result in Council being required to meet those costs or repay funding.

There is also a delivery risk associated with ensuring all funded activities are completed within the required funding period to 30 June 2028. Officers will continue to monitor expenditure, program milestones and funding compliance throughout delivery.

The design of resilience infrastructure does not commit Council to subsequent construction expenditure. Any future capital works will be subject to available funding, Council budget processes and relevant approvals.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Not Applicable

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Not Applicable

Alignment to Council Plan

Theme 3: An Effective and Efficient Council

Strategic Objective 3.2 Ensure responsible and innovative resource management

Governance - Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

The author of this report and officers providing advice in relation to this report do not have a conflict of interest to declare in this matter, in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020.

13.4. Community Health and Wellbeing

13.4.1. RESPOND - Memorandum of Understanding

File Number	E16140	Responsible Officer	Community Health and Volunteer Officer, Dakoda Robrahn
Purpose			

To seek Council's endorsement of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Mansfield Shire Council (MSC) and Mansfield District Hospital (MDH) to support the ongoing operation of the Mansfield RESPOND Network and Quarterly Working Group.

Executive Summary

The RESPOND (Reflexive Evidence and Systems Interventions to Prevent Obesity and Non-Communicable Disease) initiative was a nationally funded, community-based health promotion and research project that operated in Mansfield from 2018-2024. The project supported healthy eating, active living and improved wellbeing through a whole-of-community approach.

Following completion of the research project Mansfield Shire Council, Mansfield District Hospital and community stakeholders have continued to support positive health and wellbeing outcomes across the municipality.

The MoU provides a formal governance framework for the continuation of the Mansfield RESPOND network including the operation of quarterly working group meetings, shared decision-making arrangements and ongoing collaboration between partner organisations.

The MoU is non-binding, does not create any financial obligation for either party and will be reviewed annually. Council's participation will continue to be supported through existing staff resources.

Key Issues

Local partners wish to continue the collaborative approach established through the RESPOND project following the conclusion of the original research project.

The proposed MoU formalises the ongoing partnership between Mansfield Shire Council and Mansfield District Hospital and provides clear governance arrangements for the Mansfield RESPOND Network.

The network brings together Council, health services, community organisations and residents to support healthy eating, active living and broader community wellbeing initiatives.

The MoU does not create any financial commitment for Council.

The partnership supports Council's strategic objectives relating to health, wellbeing, community participation and collaboration.

Recommendation
THAT COUNCIL: 1. Endorse the Memorandum of Understanding between the Mansfield Shire Council and Mansfield District Hospital for the continuation of the Mansfield RESPOND Network and Quarterly Working Group. 2. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to execute the Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of Mansfield Shire Council. 3. Note that the Memorandum of Understanding is non-binding, does not commit Council to any financial contribution and will be reviewed annually.
Support Attachments
1. Memorandum of Understanding RESPOND Network (2026) [13.4.1.1 - 6 pages]

Considerations and Implications of Recommendation

Sustainability Implications

Social: The RESPOND Network supports positive social outcomes by bringing together Council, health services, community organisations, volunteers and community members to work towards shared health and wellbeing goals. The partnership promotes community participation, strengthens local connections and supports initiatives that encourage healthy eating, active lifestyles and social inclusions.

Community Engagement

Not Applicable

Collaboration

This has been a collaboration with Mansfield District Hospital.

Financial Impact

All work to develop the MoU has been undertaken internally by Council Officers within existing staff resources.

Legal and Risk Implications

Not Applicable

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Not Applicable

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Not Applicable

Alignment to Council Plan

Theme 1: A Healthy and Connected Community

Strategic Objective 1.1 Strengthen community connection, inclusion and participation

Strategic Objective 1.2 Enable active lifestyles through inclusive, accessible and utilised public spaces

Strategic Objective 1.3 Promote health and wellbeing across all life stages

Governance - Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

The author of this report and officers providing advice in relation to this report do not have a conflict of interest to declare in this matter, in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020.

13.5. Executive Services

13.5.1. Independent Audit Member Recommendation

File Number	E11404	Responsible Officer	Coordinator Governance & Risk, Chelsea Daly
Purpose			

To seek Council endorsement for the nomination of Ms Moh-Lee Ng to a third three-year term as an independent Audit and Risk Committee member.

Executive Summary

The Mansfield Shire Council Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) comprises two Councillors, currently Mayor Cr Steve Rabie and Cr Mandy Treasure, and three independent committee members.

The term of appointment for each independent member is, where possible, arranged to provide an orderly rotation of membership. Each independent member is appointed for a three-year term.

Moh-Lee Ng has been an independent member of the Mansfield Shire Council ARC since November 2020 and was reappointed for a second three-year term in November 2023 which is expiring in November 2026. Moh-Lee Ng is seeking re-appointment for a third three-year term.

Key Issues

Under section 4.3.3 of the Audit and Risk Committee Charter, Council may use its discretion to directly appoint an independent member for a second and/or third term without going through a public recruitment process.

It is proposed that Council directly appoints Moh-Lee Ng for a third three-year term. All other members of the Committee are supportive of the proposal. Moh-Lee Ng is an active participant of the ARC and brings a set of skills that are considered highly desirable to the Committee. Council will benefit from the continuity of Moh-Lee Ng being appointed for a third term.

This will be Moh-Lee's final re-appointment as a Mansfield Shire Council ARC member as section 4.3.2 of the Charter states that independent members shall be eligible for appointment for up to a maximum of three full terms each, with each term being three years.

AFS, Mansfield Council's internal auditors, recently undertook a review of the effectiveness of the ARC – there were no issues raised during this process regarding the performance or skills mix of the Committee.

Recommendation

THAT COUNCIL appoints Ms Moh-Lee Ng to the Mansfield Shire Council Audit and Risk Committee for a third three-year term commencing 13 November 2029.

Support Attachments

Nil

Considerations and Implications of Recommendation

Sustainability Implications

Not Applicable

Community Engagement

Not Applicable

Collaboration

Not Applicable

Financial Impact

Independent members of the Audit and Risk Committee are remunerated for each meeting they attend in line with Council's Audit and Risk Committee Charter. This is accounted for in the annual budget allocation.

Legal and Risk Implications

Maintaining a good mix of skills and experience in the ARC members is an important risk mitigation measure, ensuring the Committee has the capability to provide independent assurance and assistance to Council on its risk, control and compliance framework.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

It is a requirement of the *Local Government Act 2020* that councils' Audit and Committee consist of a majority of members who are not Councillors and must not include any person who is a member of Council staff. Mansfield Shire Council's Audit and Risk Committee comprises two Councillors and three independent members.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Not Applicable

Alignment to Council Plan

Theme 3: An Effective and Efficient Council

Strategic Objective 3.3 Maintain strong governance, transparency and accountability

Governance - Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

The author of this report and officers providing advice in relation to this report do not have a conflict of interest to declare in this matter, in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020.

13.5.2. Governance and Management Checklist 2025-26

File Number	E14329	Responsible Officer	Coordinator Governance & Risk, Chelsea Daly
Purpose			

To present the Governance and Management Checklist for the year ended 30 June 2026 for certification by the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer.

Executive Summary

Council is required under the *Local Government Act 2020* and *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* to prepare the Governance and Management Checklist which is to be certified by the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer.

The checklist is published within Council's Annual Report and through the Know Your Council website which is managed by Local Government Victoria (LGV).

The checklist was reviewed by the Audit and Risk Committee on 24 August 2026.

Key Issues

The checklist is a component of the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) which requires Council to report on compliance with 27 governance and management practices for the 2025-26 financial year.

Council is compliant with all 27 items listed in the checklist. This reflects Council's ongoing commitment to strong governance standards and effective organisational management.

Recommendation

THAT COUNCIL authorise Mayor Cr Steve Rabie and Chief Executive Officer, Kirsten Alexander, to certify the 2025-26 Governance and Management Checklist.

Support Attachments

1. Governance and Management Checklist for the year ended 30 June 2026 [13.5.2.1 - 4 pages]

Considerations and Implications of Recommendation

Sustainability Implications

Not Applicable

Community Engagement

The Governance and Management Checklist forms part of Council's Annual Report which will be available to the community on Council's website.

Collaboration

Not Applicable

Financial Impact

Not Applicable

Legal and Risk Implications

Compliance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* ensures there is no risk to Council in relation to this reporting requirement.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

The checklist is part of the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework under the *Local Government Act 2020* and *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*. The framework is a mandatory system of performance reporting for all Victorian councils. It ensures councils are measuring and reporting on their performance in a consistent way to promote transparency and accountability in the local government sector.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The Governance and Management Checklist serves not only as a compliance tool but also as a mechanism for measuring and driving continuous improvement in governance and management of the organisation.

Alignment to Council Plan

Theme 3: An Effective and Efficient Council

Strategic Objective 3.3 Maintain strong governance, transparency and accountability

Governance - Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

The author of this report and officers providing advice in relation to this report do not have a conflict of interest to declare in this matter, in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*.

13.5.3. S6 Instrument of Delegation - Members of Staff

File Number	E2478	Responsible Officer	Coordinator Governance & Risk, Chelsea Daly
Purpose			

To seek Council endorsement of S6 Instrument of Delegation - Council to Members of Staff.

Executive Summary

Delegations to undertake a specific duty or power in accordance with a specific section of an Act of Parliament are essential to enable Council staff to carry out professional duties, particularly in areas which involve enforcement such as Planning, Local Laws, Environmental Health, Animal Management, Parking Control and Road Management.

Council subscribes to a delegations and authorisations service produced by the legal firm Maddocks. The firm reviews all legislation that impacts local government in Victoria and distributes an updated schedule of delegations that reflects any legislative changes bi-annually. This template is used by many Victorian councils and reflects common practice within the industry. Drawing on these updates, the Instruments of Delegation are updated periodically as legislation is amended, or new legislation is introduced which impacts the operations of Council.

This report seeks Council endorsement of the revised Schedule 6 Instrument of Delegation - Council to Members of Staff which delegates Council powers, duties and functions within various Acts and Regulations which contain a specific power of delegation. This delegates certain powers directly from Council to Council staff due to the relevant legislation containing specific powers of delegation.

Key Issues

The S6 Instrument has been updated drawing on the bi-annual update from Maddocks due to legislative changes.

Recommendation

THAT COUNCIL:

1. Revoke the existing Schedule 6 - Instrument of Delegation from Council to Members of Council Staff previously endorsed by Council on 17 March 2026.
2. Endorse Schedule 6 - Instrument of Delegation from Council to Members of Council Staff dated 15 September 2026.
3. Approve the Mayor to sign the endorsed Schedule 6 as listed in point 2 and Deputy Mayor to witness the signing.

Support Attachments

1. DRAFT S6. Instrument of Delegation – Council to Members of Staff (September 2026) [13.5.3.1 - 79 pages]

Considerations and Implications of Recommendation

Sustainability Implications

Not Applicable

Community Engagement

Not Applicable

Collaboration

Not Applicable

Financial Impact

Council's subscription to Maddocks delegations and authorisations service is invoiced bi-annually for \$2,200 (excl. GST), this is accounted for in the operational budget. All work to update Mansfield Shire Council's delegations and authorisations is undertaken internally by Council Officers within existing staff resources.

Legal and Risk Implications

Regular reviews of delegations and authorisations ensure compliance with the relevant Acts and Regulations.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Delegations are kept in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Not Applicable

Alignment to Council Plan

Theme 3: An Effective and Efficient Council

Strategic Objective 3.3 Maintain strong governance, transparency and accountability

Governance - Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

The author of this report and officers providing advice in relation to this report do not have a conflict of interest to declare in this matter, in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020.

14. Council Meeting Resolution Actions Status Register

This report presents to Council the Mansfield Shire Council Meeting Resolution Actions Status Register

Recommendation	
THAT COUNCIL receive and note the Mansfield Shire Council Meeting Resolution Actions Status Register as at 8 September 2026.	
Support Attachments	
1.	Mansfield Shire Council Action Register as at 8 September 2026 [14.1.1 - 10 pages]
2.	CONFIDENTIAL Mansfield Shire Council Action Register as at 8 September 2026 [14.1.2 - 3 pages]

15. Advisory and Special Committee reports

15.1. Audit & Risk Committee Meeting Agenda & Minutes

The Agenda & Minutes of the Mansfield Shire Audit and Risk Committee, held 24 August 2026, are attached for the Councils information.

Recommendation	
THAT COUNCIL receive the Agenda & Minutes of the Mansfield Shire Audit and Risk Committee meeting held 24 August 2026.	
Support Attachments	
1.	Audit and Risk Committee Meeting Minutes - 24 August 2026 [15.1.1 - 8 pages]
2.	CONFIDENTIAL Audit and Risk Committee Meeting Agenda - 24 August 2026 [15.1.2 - 60 pages]

15.2. Audit & Risk Committee - Chair's Report to Council

File Number	E10900	Responsible Officer	Coordinator Governance & Risk, Chelsea Daly
Purpose			

To present Council with a biannual report from the Mansfield Shire Audit and Risk Committee for the six months ending 30 June 2026.

Executive Summary

The Audit & Risk Committee Charter and the Local Government Act 2020 require the Audit & Risk Committee to present a biannual report on its activities, findings and recommendations to Council. The Audit and Risk Committee considered the attached report at its meeting on 24 August 2026 and has recommended the report to be presented to Council.

The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee offers the attached report as fulfilling the requirements under section 9.4 (d) of the charter to facilitate a biannual audit and risk report that describes the activities of the Committee and includes its findings and recommendations.

Key Issues

The role of the Audit and Risk Committee is to provide independent assurance and assistance to the Council (and management) on Council's risk, control and compliance framework and its external accountability responsibilities as defined in the governing legislation and in adherence to the various requirements of the Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO).

The report presents an overview of the activities of the Mansfield Shire Audit and Risk Committee for the six months ending 30 June 2026, structured as follows:

- Overview
- Introduction
- Role of the Audit and Risk Committee
- Membership of the Audit and Risk Committee
- Meeting Attendance
- Annual Highlights
- Summary of the Work of the Committee
- Overall Assessment

Recommendation

THAT COUNCIL receives and notes the Mansfield Shire Audit and Risk Committee report describing the activities, findings and recommendations for the six months ending 30 June 2026.

Support Attachments

1. Audit and Risk Committee – Report to Council (June 2026) [15.2.1 - 7 pages]

Considerations and Implications of Recommendation

Sustainability Implications

Not Applicable

Community Engagement

Not Applicable

Collaboration

Not Applicable

Financial Impact

Not Applicable

Legal and Risk Implications

The prepared report addresses the Committee's requirements under the Local Government Act 2020.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

It is a requirement under the Local Government Act 2020 that the Audit and Risk Committee present a biannual report on its activities, findings, and recommendations to Council.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Not Applicable

Alignment to Council Plan

Theme 3: An Effective and Efficient Council

Strategic Objective 3.3 Maintain strong governance, transparency and accountability

Governance - Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

The author of this report and officers providing advice in relation to this report do not have a conflict of interest to declare in this matter, in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020.

16. Authorisation of sealing of documents

Nil

17. Close of meeting