



Shire of
Plantagenet

Mount Barker • Kendenup • Narrikup
Porongurup • Rocky Gully

ORDINARY AGENDA

**An Ordinary Meeting of Council will be held at the
Shire of Plantagenet Council Chambers, Mount Barker
at 5:00pm on Tuesday 28 April 2026**

Julian Murphy
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



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1 DECLARATION OF OPENING / ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISITORS

The Presiding Member will declare the meeting open.

Welcome to this Ordinary Meeting of Council, of Tuesday the 28 April 2026, commencing at 5:00pm. This meeting is being audio-recorded, in accordance with Regulation 14I of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996.

I also point you to the Disclaimer and Emergency Procedures on the lead in pages of this document for this building.

The Shire of Plantagenet acknowledges the traditional custodians of our area and their continuing connection to the land and community. We pay our respects to all members of the Menang Noongar community and their culture; and to Elders past and present.

2 RECORD OF ATTENDANCE / APOLOGIES / LEAVE OF ABSENCE (PREVIOUSLY APPROVED)

Members Present:

In Attendance:

Apologies:

Members of the Public Present:

Previously Approved Leave of Absence:

Cr J Liebeck

3 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

3.1 RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS PUBLIC QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE

Nil

3.2 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME - SECTION 5.24 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1995

4 PETITIONS / DEPUTATIONS / PRESENTATIONS

5 DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Part 5 Division 6 Local Government Act 1995

6 APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Section 5.25 Local Government Act 1995

Nil

7 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

7.1 ORDINARY MINUTES OF COUNCIL HELD 24 MARCH 2026

Minutes, as circulated, of the Ordinary Meeting of the Shire of Plantagenet, held on 24 March 2026.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Shire of Plantagenet, held on 24 March 2026, be confirmed as a true and accurate record.

8 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY PRESIDING MEMBER WITHOUT DISCUSSION

9 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND OFFICERS

9.1 DEVELOPMENT & REGULATORY SERVICES REPORTS

9.1.1 PROPOSED ADOPTION OF LOCAL PLANNING POLICY FOR DAMS & WATER FEATURES FOLLOWING PUBLIC ADVERTISING

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Synergy Ref: | N67834 |
| Attachment: | <u>A – Proposed Final Local Planning Policy No. 8 – Dams & Water Features</u> <u>B – Public Submissions to Draft Local Planning Policy No. 8</u> <u>C – Advice from the Department of Water & Environmental Regulation</u> <u>D – State Planning Policy 2.9 and extract from WAPC Planning for Water Guidelines</u> <u>E – Information Brochure – ‘Dams & Water Features’</u> |
| Responsible Officer: | André Pinto, Executive Manager Development & Regulatory Services |
| Author: | André Pinto, Executive Manager Development & Regulatory Services |
| Proprietor/Applicant: | n/a |
| Proposed Meeting Date: | 28 April 2026 |

PURPOSE

This report recommends Council adopt a modified version of proposed *Local Planning Policy No. 8 – Dams & Water Features* following the completion of public advertising and further discussion with Council. The changes are outlined in this report with the final version of the policy included as **Attachment A**.

BACKGROUND

On 22 July 2025 a report was presented to the Council detailing the proposed introduction of a new *Local Planning Policy No. 8 – Dams & Water Features*. In summary, this report outlined:

- The construction of dams and water features is considered as development under the *Planning and Development Act 2005* and development (planning) approval is therefore required unless an exemption is provided for within the local planning scheme or a local planning policy.
- As the Shire does not currently have any adopted exemptions, approval is required for dams of any size in any zone.

- A local planning policy is proposed as a way to introduce exemptions for dams and water features that are within specified 'acceptable development standards' and are considered relatively low risk.
- Proposed dams that are outside of these specified standards require approval and the proposed policy provides criteria for assessment. This acts as a safeguard for proposals that potentially have higher risk.
- The proposed policy is weighted towards supporting dams for productive rural land uses and weighted away from aesthetic or ornamental water features.
- The proposed policy does not address the availability of water within a catchment area as this is a matter assessed and regulated by the Department of Water & Environmental Regulation (DWER).
- The proposed policy will remove the need for Shire approval for the majority of dams, including most dams constructed without prior approval.

Council endorsed Draft Local Planning Policy No. 8 for the purpose of public consultation.

EXTERNAL CONSULTATION

Public advertising of proposed LPP 8 took place between 28 July and 25 August 2025, providing for a comment period exceeding the minimum requirement of 21 days.

Public notification occurred via the following means:

- Notice and publication of the draft policies on the Shire's website
- Notice in the Shire's social media
- Notice in Plantagenet News

Six submissions were received during the public comment period and one late submission was received after the public comment period. All submissions received are detailed in **Attachment B** including officer responses to the matters raised.

The most common issues raised in submissions were:

- The need for farming properties to have larger dams
- The shortage of qualified engineers to service dam construction projects
- Concerns about increased regulation

Responses to these issues are discussed in the Officer Comment section of this report.

The Department of Water & Environmental Regulation also provided advice relating to the proposed policy, as detailed at **Attachment C**. This advice provides guidance relating to how the Department regulates water use as well as direction for the levels at which to set requirements for engineering

certification, geotechnical investigations and hydrology reports. Proposed LPP 8 has been updated to be consistent with this guidance.

STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT

Local planning policies are prepared, advertised and adopted in accordance with Part 2 of Schedule 2 of the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015*.

Existing and proposed local planning policies operate as subsidiary to *Local Planning Scheme No. 5* in providing guidance for discretionary decision making and the assessment of development requiring approval under the Scheme.

In the event the Council adopts LPP 8 as recommended in this report this will be given effect through publication on the Shire's website and a copy of each policy being made available at the Shire's administration offices (as per Schedule 2, Part 2, Clause 4(4) of the Regulations).

On 16 December 2025 the WA Planning Commission adopted a finalised version of *State Planning Policy 2.9 – Water (SPP 2.9)* and accompanying *Planning for Water Guidelines* (the Guidelines). SPP 2.9 provides for local planning schemes and policies to set development standards and exemptions from approval that are appropriate to the local context. The Guidelines also generally outline the matters that are to be considered as part of planning assessment for dams.

SPP 2.9 and an extract from the Guidelines (section directly relating to dams) are included as **Attachment D** to this report.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This report recommends final adoption of *Local Planning Policy No. 8 – Dams & Water Features*.

If adopted by Council, public notice will be given of the adoption of the policy to meet the requirements of the Regulations and to more generally inform our community. The policy will then form part of the local planning framework for the purposes of determining planning approval requirements and assessing planning applications.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

By increasing the range of development that is exempt from planning approval, the Shire will no longer receive certain types of applications and the associated fees. However, this is considered to have positive economic benefits within the community as low-risk forms of development are enabled with fewer approval requirements.

Shire staff will in many cases still be required to provide advice to development proponents as well as complete a planning compliance check before a building permit is processed. Process improvement will focus on improving communication materials to enable customer self-service and streamlining compliance checks to minimise resource requirements.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications for this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Improving the effectiveness and legibility of the policies discussed in the report will potentially reduce instances of planning applications being appealed to the State Administrative Tribunal.

It is noted that many landowners within the Shire have historically constructed dams without planning approval. By introducing exemptions from the need for approval for the most common sizes of dams LPP 8 will remove any retrospective requirement for planning approval.

ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no asset management implications as no assets are being created or acquired.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

The Shire of Plantagenet Corporate Business Plan 2025 – 2029 provides:

At *Key Pillar 3 – Develop Our Economy* the following:

Strategy 3.5 – Lead and encourage development via a structured planning vision

Corporate Action 3.5.2 – Local Planning Scheme No.5 (2021) review (constant ongoing minor reviews)

At *Key Pillar 4 – Performance & Leadership* the following:

Strategy 4.3 – Commitment to continuous improvement in service delivery

Corporate Action 4.3.1 – Implement review processes in service delivery on a regular basis and as needed

Accordingly, the recommended outcome for this report aligns with the Corporate Business Plan.

RISK MITIGATION IMPLICATIONSLow Risk

This item has been evaluated against the Shire of Plantagenet Risk Assessment and Acceptance Criteria. The perceived level of risk is considered to be “Low” risk and can be managed by routine procedures and with currently available resources.

STRATEGIC RISK IMPLICATIONS

There are no strategic risk implications for this report.

REGIONAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no regional implications for this report.

OFFICER COMMENT

Public consultation provided valuable feedback which has enabled officers to review the draft policy in detail. As a result, several changes are proposed to address the matters that were raised as concerns within the submissions received.

- *The need for farming properties to have larger dams*

In response to this feedback, officers recommend amending the draft policy to include an additional 'acceptable development' category which provides for dams of up to 4ha on Rural zoned lots greater than 60 hectares.

This will allow for farming properties to have larger dams without the need for planning approval, noting that proposals for dams even larger than this can be approved by the Shire if consistent with the objectives of the policy.

- *The shortage of qualified engineers to service dam construction projects*

In response to this feedback, officers contacted two locally based engineering firms to seek informal advice on how they would approach certifying the construction of dams. It was noted that there are generally few engineers that specialise in this area and it was suggested that the Shire's approach is based on the level of apparent risk, with the need for specialist input considered relative to dam size and downstream conditions.

In addition, the advice received from the Department of Water & Environmental Regulation has suggested setting engineering requirements at a higher level.

As a result, officers recommend several changes to the proposed policy:

- An additional assessment criteria relating to safety and risk
- An additional section (part 6.3) with amended engineering requirements:
 - Engineering requested as standard for dams over 50,000m³ or with a dam wall over 10.0m in height
 - The ability for the Shire to request engineering certification where there is a significant risk to public infrastructure or private assets downstream
 - Clear assignment of responsibility and liability to the landowner

This approach is suggested as a reasonable compromise between the desire of landowners to minimise development costs and the responsibility of the Shire to ensure that the development of large dams does not result in a significant risk to life or property, and is based on advice received from the Department of Water & Environmental Regulation.

- *Concerns about increased regulation*

This is an unfounded concern – the proposed policy removes an existing requirement for planning approval for the majority of dams that are developed within the Shire.

Other minor recommended changes to the policy are:

- Providing clarification in Part 6 of the policy that the proposed exemptions from approval apply in certain Rural Residential zones only (the policy cannot override a specific requirement for approval in the Scheme for the other Rural Residential zones)
- Providing clarification in Part 6.1 of the policy that exemptions for small dams apply to all Rural and Rural Smallholdings zoned lots (not just lots under 10ha).
- Adding guidance as to when a hydrology report may be required, providing detail of the impact on localised water resources. This requirement will apply to large dams only where there is the potential to impact on other water users or the environment. This addresses requirements of State Planning Policy 2.9 and reflects the advice provided by the Department of Water & Environmental Regulation.

Furthermore, at the February 2026 Ordinary Council Meeting, Council opted to not adopt the policy at the time, and requested further changes were discussed. At the March 2026 Council Forum, discussions between Councillors and Officers occurred, mainly around the allowances provided under *Table 6.1- Acceptable Development Standards*, particularly around allowances for Rural Lots. Council felt these needed to be increased further, officers highlighted concerns around opening the policy up too much for its initial version. In turn, Council and Officers came to agree on a 'matrix table' approach for the Rural lots, essentially the larger the lot size, the greater the cumulative dam surface area could be based on a ratio. A ratio was then also discussed for the dam wall heights, as the wall height increases, so does the required setback from the lot boundary. These changes have now been made to the policy accordingly.

The recommended changes to the policy alter details relating to approval requirements and do not affect the overall intent of the policy. For this reason officers do not consider there to be a need to re-advertise any of these proposed changes.

All of these proposed changes are included in the recommended final version of the policy included as **Attachment A**.

To help communicate approval requirements to landowners, officers have prepared an information brochure based on the recommended final policy. This brochure is included as **Attachment E** to this report.

Proposed *Local Planning Policy No. 8 – Dams & Water Features* will remove the requirement for approval for the majority of dams, establish clear standards to help guide landowners, and provide assessment criteria to help the Shire assess planning applications. Overall, this will improve the clarity of development standards and reduce unnecessary 'red tape' for low-risk development.

VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Simple Majority

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopts *Local Planning Policy No. 8 – Dams & Water Features*, inclusive of proposed modifications, as presented.

9.2 INFRASTRUCTURE AND ASSETS REPORTS

Nil

9.3 CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES REPORTS

9.3.1 MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT – MARCH 2026

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| File Ref: | N67911 |
| Attachment: | <u>Monthly Financial Report – March 2026</u> |
| Responsible Officer: | Anthony Middleton Executive Manager Corporate & Community |
| Author: | Kylie Caley Manager of Finance |
| Proposed Meeting Date: | 28 April 2026 |

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with the monthly financial reports for the month ending 31 March 2026.

BACKGROUND

The *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996*, regulation 34 states that a local government must prepare each month a statement of financial activity reporting on the revenue and expenditure, as set out in the annual budget.

Variances between budgeted and actual expenditure including the required material variances (10% with a minimum value of \$20,000) are included in the variance report.

EXTERNAL CONSULTATION

Nil

STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT

s.6.4 *Local Government Act 1995*, Part 6 - Financial Management
r. 34 *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996*
r. 35 *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996*

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Policy implications do not apply for this report and it is the opinion of the author that policy development is not required.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This item reports on the current financial position of the Shire. The recommendation does not in itself have a financial implication.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications for this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications for this report.

ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no asset management implications as no assets are being created or acquired.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

The Shire of Plantagenet Corporate Business Plan 2025 - 2029 provides:

At Key Pillar 4 Performance & Leadership the following:

Strategy 4.2:

‘A Shire that is open and transparent with its community.’

Corporate Action 4.2.3 - Develop effective reporting and communication tools relevant to the way our community access information

Strategy 4.3:

‘Commitment to continuous improvement in service delivery.’

Corporate Action 4.3.2 - Be transparent with our financial management by reporting regularly readable and meaningful financial data to the community

Accordingly, the recommended outcome for this report aligns with the Corporate Business Plan.

STRATEGIC RISK IMPLICATIONSLow Risk

This item has been evaluated against the Shire of Plantagenet Risk Assessment and Acceptance Criteria. The perceived level of risk is considered to be “Low” risk and can be managed by routine procedures and with currently available resources.

REGIONAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no regional implications for this report.

OFFICER COMMENT

The attached Statement of Financial Activity for the period 1 July 2025 to 31 March 2026 represents nine (9) months, or 75% of the year. The following items are worthy of noting:

- Closing surplus position of \$2.23m;
- Operating results:
 - 60% of budgeted operating revenue has been received; and
 - 74% of budgeted operating expenditure spent;

- Capital expenditure achieved 21.6% of budgeted projects, including:
 - Land & Buildings 9%
 - Furniture & Equipment 34%
 - Plant & Equipment 53%
 - Infrastructure – Roads, Drainage, & Footpaths 59%
 - Infrastructure – Parks & Ovals 3%
 - Infrastructure – Other 6%
- Cash holdings of \$9m of which \$7.6m is held in cash backed reserve accounts;
- Rates debtors outstanding equate to 7.7% of total rates raised for 2025/2026 (this includes deferred pensioner rates); and
- Page 10 of the statements detail major variations from year to date (amended) budgets.

VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Simple Majority

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the monthly financial statements for the period ending 31 March 2026 as presented.

9.3.2 LIST OF ACCOUNTS – MARCH 2026

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| File Ref: | N67912 |
| Attachment: | <u>List of Accounts – March 2026</u> |
| Responsible Officer: | Anthony Middleton Executive Manager Corporate & Community |
| Author: | Kylie Caley Manager of Finance |
| Proposed Meeting Date: | 28 April 2026 |

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present the list of payments that were made during the month of March 2026.

EXTERNAL CONSULTATION

No external consultation has occurred in relation to this report.

STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT

This information is provided to Council monthly in accordance with provisions of the *Local Government Act 1995* and *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996*.

Regulation 12(1)(a) of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* provides that payment may only be made from the municipal fund or trust fund if the Local Government has delegated the function to the Chief Executive Officer.

Regulation 13 of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* provides that if the function of authorising payments is delegated to the Chief Executive Officer, then a list of payments is to be presented to the Council at the next ordinary meeting and recorded in the minutes.

Regulation 13A of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* provides that a list of payments must be prepared and presented to Council each month for all credit, debit, or purchasing cards utilised by authorised employees during the month.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Council Policy – Purchasing Policy

Council Policy – Corporate Credit Card Policy

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Expenditure is in accordance with the 2025/2026 Annual Budget.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications for this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications for this report.

ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no asset management implications as no assets are being created or acquired.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

The Shire of Plantagenet Corporate Business Plan 2025 - 2029 provides:

At Key Pillar 4 Performance & Leadership the following:

Strategy 4.2:

‘A Shire that is open and transparent with its community.’

Corporate Action 4.2.3 - Develop effective reporting and communication tools relevant to the way our community access information

Strategy 4.3:

‘Commitment to continuous improvement in service delivery.’

Corporate Action 4.3.2 - Be transparent with our financial management by reporting regularly readable and meaningful financial data to the community

Accordingly, the recommended outcome for this report aligns with the Corporate Business Plan.

RISK MITIGATION IMPLICATIONSLow Risk

This item has been evaluated against the Shire of Plantagenet Risk Assessment and Acceptance Criteria. The perceived level of risk is considered to be “Low” risk and can be managed by routine procedures and with currently available resources.

STRATEGIC RISK IMPLICATIONS

There are no strategic risk implications for this report.

REGIONAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no regional implications for this report.

OFFICER COMMENT

Accountability in local government encompasses various dimensions, as councils strive to fulfill a range of social, political, and financial objectives for the community's benefit.

These accountability principles are rooted in strong financial integrity, adherence to conflict of interest standards, and the expectation that local governments are fully responsible for community resources.

Council has delegated authority to the Chief Executive Officer to make payments from the Shire's Municipal and Trust funds as required.

All payments are independently evaluated by the Manager of Finance to verify that expenditures are for the Shire of Plantagenet and comply with Council policies, procedures, the *Local Government Act 1995*, and relevant regulations. The review also ensures there is no misuse of corporate credit or fuel purchase cards.

VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Simple Majority

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives the list of accounts paid during the month of March 2026 as per the attached Schedule of Payments, and as summarised below:

Municipal Account (inclusive of credit card and fuel card purchases

| | | |
|---|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Cheque Payments | 47306 | \$1,866.00 |
| EFT Payments | EFT9787 – EFT9956 | \$1,831,081.67 |
| Direct Debit Payments | | \$157,608.86 |
| EFT Payroll Payments | | \$506,177.50 |
| Total Municipal Account Payments | | \$2,496,734.03 |
| Licensing Trust Account | | |
| Direct Debit Payments | | \$ 150,948.50 |
| Total Licensing Trust Account Payments | | \$ 150,948.50 |
| TOTAL OF ALL ACCOUNTS | | \$2,647,682.53 |

9.3.3 RESERVE ACCOUNTS – 2025/2026 ANNUAL REVIEW

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Attachment: | <u>Annual Review of Reserve Accounts 2025/2026</u> |
| Responsible Officer: | Julian Murphy Chief Executive Officer |
| Author: | Anthony Middleton Executive Manager – Corporate & Community |
| Proposed Meeting Date: | 28 April 2026 |

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to undertake a review of the appropriateness and balance of each reserve account and consider a Council Policy setting parameters around reserve account operations.

BACKGROUND

Section 6.11 of the *Local Government Act 1995* states that ‘where a local government wishes to set aside money for use for a purpose in a future financial year, it is to establish and maintain a reserve account for each such purpose’.

Cash reserves are established and maintained to accumulate funds for the following purposes:

1. To smooth funding allocations over future years (e.g. Plant reserve);
2. To offset liabilities in respect of previously earned employee entitlements to the extent they require an outflow of funds not allocated in the annual budget (e.g. Employee Entitlements reserve);
3. To meet statutory obligations (e.g. Public Open Space – WAPC 99183 reserve);
4. To fund the renewal of existing physical/built assets (e.g. Hockey Ground Carpet Replacement reserve);
5. To fund future strategic initiatives and the provision of new services and facilities to future residents (e.g. Mount Barker Swimming Pool Revitalisation reserve);
6. To buffer against unpredictable events (e.g. Natural Disaster reserve);
7. To hold unspent grants and contributions (e.g. Spring Road Roadworks reserve); and/or
8. Other purposes as determined by the Council from time to time.

The 2024/2025 review of reserve accounts was adopted by the Council at its meeting held 26 November 2024.

EXTERNAL CONSULTATION

Nil

STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT

Section 6.11 of the *Local Government Act 1995* legislates reserve accounts.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Policy implications do not apply for this report. It is recommended that a new policy be created addressing specific reserve account treatments and minimum balances. For example, operating profits from the Mount Barker Regional Saleyards be transferred to the Mount Barker Regional Saleyards Capital Improvement reserve.

A recommended draft policy is attached.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

While the report does not in itself have a financial implication on the 'bottom line' of this year's finances, reserve accounts are one of the primary funding sources for major projects and a very important financial tool in managing the finances of the Shire day-to-day.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications for this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications for this report.

ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Reserve accounts can be used as a saving/funding mechanism for key asset upgrades and renewal, such as the several building renewal reserve accounts that have been established in the past. This item is central to good asset management and the ability to fund identified major upgrades, renewal and replacement of assets as identified in the asset management plan.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

The Shire of Plantagenet Corporate Business Plan 2025 – 2029 provides:

At *Key Pillar 4 - Performance & Leadership* the following:

Strategy 4.3 – Commitment to continuous improvement in service delivery

Corporate Action 4.3.1 - Implement review processes in service delivery on a regular basis and as needed

Corporate Action 4.3.2 - Be transparent with our financial management by reporting regularly readable and meaningful financial data to the community

Accordingly, the recommended outcome for this report aligns with the Corporate Business Plan.

RISK MITIGATION IMPLICATIONS

Low Risk

This item has been evaluated against the Shire of Plantagenet Risk Assessment and Acceptance Criteria. The perceived level of risk is considered to be “Low” risk and can be managed by routine procedures and with currently available resources.

STRATEGIC RISK IMPLICATIONS

Maintaining a suitable forward planning process that is intrinsically linked to long term financial planning minimises many risks, including those associated with the funding of major projects or the provision of essential equipment and infrastructure.

REGIONAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no regional implications for this report.

OFFICER COMMENT

The attached review of reserve accounts seeks to ask the following questions:

1. Are existing reserve account definitions/purposes appropriate?
2. Do existing reserves cover all major future expenditure?
3. Are existing reserve account balances sufficient?
4. Is the operational parameters of reserve accounts clearly defined and agreed upon?

The existing reserve accounts held by the Shire have been well managed in the past according to a variety of ad-hoc criteria and processes. It is recommended that these criteria and processes be defined in writing and form part of a Council Policy to ensure they receive (at minimum) an annual review.

It is recommended that a new policy be created addressing specific reserve account treatments and minimum balances. For example, operating profits from the Mount Barker Regional Saleyards be transferred to the Mount Barker Regional Saleyards Capital Improvement reserve.

A recommended draft policy is attached.

Changes to reserve accounts are best implemented through the budget process and decisions on allocating more funds to reserve accounts cannot be made solely with an affordability lens being applied. As such, it is suggested that the recommendations contained within the attached reserve account review are implemented via the 2026/2027 annual budget process.

VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Simple Majority

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Receives the 'Annual Review of Reserve Accounts 2025/2026', as proposed;**
- 2. Refers the recommendations contained within the review to the Draft 2026/2027 Budget for consideration; and**
- 3. Adopts the draft policy titled 'Financial Management – Reserve Accounts', as proposed.**

**9.3.4 COMMUNITY GRANT PROGRAM 2025/2026 – CATEGORIES 3 & 4,
ROUND 2 APPLICATIONS**

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Synergy Ref: | N67903 |
| Attachment: | <u>1. Guidelines</u> |
| Responsible Officer: | Nicole Selesnew – Manager Community and Recreation Services |
| Author: | Isabelle Draffehn – Coordinator Community Events and Initiatives |
| Proposed Meeting Date: | 28 April 2026 |

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to consider the Category 3 & 4 grant applications received in round 2 of the 2025/2026 Community Grant Program.

BACKGROUND

The Community Grant Program (CGP) aims to support projects that build community capacity, promote social participation and inclusion, and enhance community harmony. The CGP process was reviewed and updated in May 2025 to simplify application requirements for community volunteers, extend the application period for smaller and more straightforward grant requests, and better distinguish between different types of funding (e.g. industry support) to enable clearer comparison between applications. This review has been well received by both staff and community groups seeking funding. A copy of the CGP Guidelines is attached (Attachment 1).

Four (4) CGP categories are available:

- CEO Donation (up to \$1,000)
- Quick Response Grant (less than \$3,000)
- Community Grant (more than \$3,000)
- Industry Support (Triennium Community Grants)

There are two (2) funding rounds annually for Category 3 grants: Round 1 (August to September) and Round 2 (February to March).

Category 3 grants are open to incorporated not-for-profit organisations and charities, as well as unincorporated not-for-profit organisations applying through the auspice of an incorporated body. Applications must address the selection criteria outlined in the guidelines and include all required supporting documentation, such as budgets, receipts, quotes, and letters of support.

The following items are not eligible for funding under Category 3 grants:

- Alcohol
-

- Items that directly benefit an individual
- Contributions toward the applicant's operating costs (e.g. rent, wages, utility costs), excluding Shire fees and charges such as hall hire and waste fees
- Political activities

Category 4 grants are generally offered once annually (February to March). However, to support the transition to the revised process, a second round was advertised for 2025/2026 in conjunction with the Category 3 grant process.

Category 4 grants are open to incorporated not-for-profit organisations and charities, as well as unincorporated not-for-profit organisations applying through the auspice of an incorporated body. The assessment process includes a presentation to Council, which occurred prior to this meeting, as only one Category 4 application was received in this round.

A key distinction of Category 4 grants, compared to Categories 1–3, is that funding may be used for operating costs (e.g. rent, wages, and utility expenses) and funds may be approved for a three (3) year period, providing greater certainty for community organisations in planning their operations.

The following items are not eligible for funding under Category 4 grants:

- Alcohol
- Items that directly benefit an individual
- Political activities

Further details regarding ineligible items and program objectives are provided in the attached guidelines.

This agenda item relates to the 2025/2026 Category 3 and 4, Round 2 applications only.

EXTERNAL CONSULTATION

Round 2 of the CGP was promoted through local media. Consultation between Shire staff and applicants occurred as part of the application process.

STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT

There is no statutory environment relevant for this report.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The revised Community Grant Program Guidelines (Attachment 1) were adopted as Council Policy on 24 February 2026.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The adopted 2025/2026 Annual Budget allocates a total of \$155,000 to the Community Grant Program. To date, 24 applications have been supported in the 2025/2026 financial year, with total funding of \$148,463.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Applications submitted under Categories 3 and 4 in this funding round will be assessed for inclusion in the 2026/2027 Community Grant Program budget.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications for this report.

ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no asset management implications as no assets are being created or acquired.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

The Shire of Plantagenet Corporate Business Plan 2025 – 2029 provides:

At *Key Pillar 1 - Community* the following:

Strategy 1.9 - Encourage and support the retention and attraction of volunteers

Corporate Action 1.9.2 - Review the annual grants program to ensure its relevant to clubs and association needs

At *Key Pillar 4 - Performance & Leadership* the following:

Strategy 4.4 - A progressive Shire with diverse thinking

Corporate Action 4.4.2 - Community Grant Program - Establish a grant program to support local businesses and community groups in delivering place-based projects, public art, and events

Accordingly, the recommended outcome for this report aligns with the Corporate Business Plan.

RISK MITIGATION IMPLICATIONSLow Risk

This item has been evaluated against the Shire of Plantagenet Risk Assessment and Acceptance Criteria. The perceived level of risk is considered to be “Low” risk and can be managed by routine procedures and with currently available resources.

STRATEGIC RISK IMPLICATIONS

There are no strategic risk implications for this report.

REGIONAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no regional implications for this report.

OFFICER COMMENT

The following provides a summary of Category 3 and 4 applications received for round 2, along with the relevant officer recommendations and comments:

| Applicant | Project Summary | \$'s Requested | \$'s Recommended | Officer Comment |
|----------------------------------|---|---------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| Mount Barker Senior Cricket Club | Mount Barker Firebirds – Game on Girls program 2026/2027 (8-week program in term 3 at the Mount Barker Recreation Centre) | \$5,000 | \$0 | Requires further work and refinement, incomplete application – suggest that support be given to equipment and Rec Centre usage under Category 2 of CGP. |
| Second Act Arts Inc. | Chronicle: Plantagenet Stories (Community arts initiative) | \$7,500 | \$0 | For consideration through other Shire budget areas – minimal objectives of the CGP met. |
| Plantagenet Village Homes | Supply and install window security screens for units at Redman Court | \$4,534 | \$4,534 | Strong application that meets the objectives of the CGP. |
| Mt Barker Wildlife Hospital – | Purchase of storage container to store wildlife care equipment and supplies | \$8,228 | \$4,114 | Application seeking 100% of the cash costs of the project. Worthy applicant, recommend support equalling 50% of the request. |
| Kendenup Tennis Club | Clubhouse access and inclusion project | \$8,000 | \$8,000 | Strong application that meets the objectives of the CGP. Application supports a strategy identified in the Club's Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan previously funded through the Shire's Every Club program). |

| Applicant | Project Summary | \$'s Requested | \$'s Recommended | Officer Comment |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| Friends of the Porongurup Range | Porongurup National Park Centenary Exhibition | \$10,000 | \$10,000 | Strong application that meets the objectives of the CGP. |
| Empowering Plantagenet Seniors (EPS) | Operational Support: GO - PHER Meals for the community | Yr 1 - \$49,500 Yr 2 - \$37,125 Yr 3 - \$24,750 | Yr 1 - \$49,500 Yr 2 - \$37,125 Yr 3 - \$24,750 | Funding History: 2024/25 - \$40,000 The proposal seeks funding to employ a cook which will enable EPS to expand service delivery, providing meals for people on an Aged Care Plan and supporting community members in need. This is a new program requiring initial start-up funding, with the expectation that it will become self-sustaining within four years as well as generate financial support for EPS. The initiative is expected to benefit a significant proportion of the Shire's population. |

The adopted 2025/2026 Annual Budget allocates a total of \$155,000 to the Community Grant Program. To date, 24 applications have been supported in the 2025/2026 financial year, with total funding of \$148,463.

In the current funding round, Category 3 and 4 applications to the Community Grant Program total \$76,148 in requested funding for the 2026/2027 budget.

VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Simple Majority

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council approves the Community Grant Program Round 2, Category 3 and 4 applications, as follows:

- 1. Plantagenet Village Homes - \$4,534**
- 2. Mt Barker Wildlife Hospital - \$4,114**
- 3. Kendenup Tennis Club - \$8,000**
- 4. Friends of the Porongurup Range - \$10,000**
- 5. Empowering Plantagenet Seniors (EPS):**
 - 2026/27 - \$49,500**
 - 2027/28 - \$37,125**
 - 2028/29 - \$24,750**

9.4 EXECUTIVE SERVICES REPORTS

Nil

10 MOTIONS OF WHICH PREVIOUS NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

Nil

11 NEW BUSINESS OF AN URGENT NATURE INTRODUCED BY DECISION OF THE MEETING**12 CONFIDENTIAL****12.1.1 TENDER CO3-2526 WILSON PARK STAGE ONE**

File Ref: N67872
Responsible Officer: Anthony Middleton
Executive Manager of Corporate and
Community Services
Author: Samantha McLean
Project Coordinator
Proposed Meeting Date: 28 April 2026

REASON FOR CONFIDENTIALITY

In accordance with Section 5.23 (2) of the Local Government Act 1995 the meeting is closed to members of the public with the following aspect(s) of the Act being applicable to this matter:

Section 5.23 (4)

- (c) information contained in a tender received by the local government for a contract to the extent that the information —
 - (i) is a tendered price; or
 - (ii) a tendered methodology for calculating a price;
- (d) information contained in a tender received by the local government for a contract to the extent that —
 - (i) the information discloses any technology, or any manufacturing, industrial or trade process, that the tenderer proposes to use in performing the contract; and
 - (ii) the information has not previously been made public; and
 - (iii) the making public of the information would be likely to have an adverse effect on the tenderer's business interests;

12.1.2 APPOINTMENT OF CEO RECRUITMENT PANEL

Synergy Ref: N67915
Responsible Officer: Julian Murphy
Chief Executive Officer
Author: Julian Murphy
Chief Executive Officer
Proposed Meeting Date: 28 April 2026

REASON FOR CONFIDENTIALITY

In accordance with Section 5.23 (2)(b) of the Local Government Act 1995 the meeting is closed to members of the public with the following aspect(s) of the Act being applicable to this matter:

- (b) a matter relating to the recruitment or employment of the CEO or a senior employee, including the following —
 - (i) the termination of employment;
 - (ii) a review of performance under section 5.38;

12.1.3 CODE OF CONDUCT BEHAVIOUR COMPLAINT

Synergy Ref: N67918
Responsible Officer: Julian Murphy
Chief Executive Officer
Author: Julian Murphy
Chief Executive Officer
Proposed Meeting Date: 28 April 2026

REASON FOR CONFIDENTIALITY

In accordance with Section 5.23 (4)(f) of the Local Government Act 1995 the meeting is closed to members of the public with the following aspect(s) of the Act being applicable to this matter:

- (4) (f) information the making public of which would be likely to impair the effectiveness of any lawful method or procedure for preventing, detecting, investigating or dealing with any contravention or possible contravention of the law;

13 CLOSURE OF MEETING

There being no further business the Presiding Member closed the meeting at X.XXpm.