

## **Part II Statement**

**Last Updated: July 2024**

## Freedom of Information Part II Statement

*Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic)*

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## **PURPOSE OF THE PART II STATEMENT**

The purpose of a Part II Statement under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic)* (FOI Act) is to ensure that individuals and organisations can effectively exercise their right to obtain access to government information or documents (see section 7 of the FOI Act).

Macedon Ranges Shire Council (Council) is committed to ensuring that, where appropriate, members of the public have access to information held by Council and that both decision-making and operational processes of Council are transparent.

The Part II Statement provides members of the public with information about Council and informs the type of information and the type of documents that are held by Council. It also details the process of obtaining access to information and documents, including documents that are publicly available and documents that may be accessed through a request made under the FOI Act.

The Part II Statement gives effect to the public transparency principles contained in section 58 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and it operates in conjunction with Council's Public Transparency Policy.

## **1. ORGANISATION AND FUNCTION OF COUNCIL**

### ***Access to documents and information about how we exercise our powers and perform our functions***

Part II of the FOI Act requires government agencies, to publish a number of statements designed to assist members of the public in accessing the information it holds. These statements provide a non-exhaustive list of the types of documents held by Council, the functions it performs and how members of the public may access the information it holds. Council aims to make documents and information where not exempt, easily accessible to the public. After reviewing these statements and conducting a search on our website, if you cannot locate the information you are seeking, we encourage you to contact Council on 5422 0333 or email [mrsc@mrsc.vic.gov.au](mailto:mrsc@mrsc.vic.gov.au) before making a Freedom of Information (FOI) request. In some instances, we will be able to provide you with the information you are seeking without going through a formal process.

### ***About the Macedon Ranges Shire Council***

The Macedon Ranges Shire is one of 79 municipal authorities in Victoria operating as a public statutory body under the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Macedon Ranges Shire (Shire) is located in central Victoria, about a one-hour drive northwest of Melbourne, covering an area of approximately 1,747 square kilometres. The Shire has a growing population of more than 52,920 and is a semi-rural municipality known for its beautiful natural landscapes. The Shire is on the countries of the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wurundjeri Peoples.

## **Macedon Ranges**



### ***Our Council***

The Macedon Ranges municipality is divided into three wards consisting of East Ward, South Ward, and West Ward. Our elected Council comprises of a Mayor, a Deputy Mayor and seven Councillors. The Councillors work together to set Council's strategic direction and to make important decisions regarding the whole municipality.

Further information regarding the Councillors that represent each Ward can be found on the Councillors & Wards page on Council's website.

East Ward includes the townships of Bayton, Darraweit Guim, Kerrie, Lancefield, Newham, Riddells Creek and Romsey.

South Ward includes the townships of Bullengarook, Gisborne, Macedon, Mount Macedon, and New Gisborne.

West Ward includes the townships of Carlsruhe, Kyneton, Malmsbury, Tylden and Woodend.

### ***The Administration***

The Chief Executive Officer is appointed by the Council and is responsible for the employment of all other members of Council staff. As per section 46 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, the Chief Executive Officer is responsible for:

- supporting the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and the Councillors in the performance of their roles; and
- ensuring the effective and efficient management of the day-to-day operations of the Council.

### ***Organisational Structure***

Our organisational structure is based on four directorates that collectively manage and coordinate the full range of activities and services to the Macedon Ranges Shire community.

The four directorates are:

- Assets and Operations
- Community
- Corporate
- Planning and Environment

For further information about the structure of the organisation, please refer to the organisational structure available on Council's website.

### ***Our Functions***

The functions of a Council as prescribed by the *Local Government Act 2020* are:

- Advocating and promoting proposals which are in the best interests of the local community.
- Planning for and providing services and facilities for the local community.
- Providing and maintaining community infrastructure in the municipal district.
- Undertaking strategic and land use planning for the municipal district.
- Raising revenue to enable the Council to perform its functions.
- Making and enforcing local laws.
- Exercising, performing, and discharging the duties, functions and power of Councils under the *Local Government Act 2020* and other Acts; and
- Any other function relating to the peace, order, and good government of the Shire.

Council performs the following major functions and services:

- Animal management
- Arts and cultural events
- Capital works and maintenance of parks and gardens, roads, pedestrian ways, and public spaces of the Shire
- Community health services
- Customer, resident, and visitor information services
- Environment and water management
- Financial planning, budgets, valuations, and rates
- Food safety and regulation of food premises
- Marketing of the shire and coordination of events
- Maintenance of council-owned facilities, property, and other assets
- Management of parks, gardens and sporting facilities and services
- Planning and building regulations
- Recycling and waste management
- Regulation of parking and traffic
- Regulation of parking, filming, trading, and other activities in the streets
- Public safety
- Services for children, youth, aged people, and people with disabilities
- Tourism

Further information about each of these areas can be found on the MRSC website.

### ***Contacting Council***

Council is here to help. If you require assistance, please call us on 5422 0333 or send an email to [mrsc@mrsc.vic.gov.au](mailto:mrsc@mrsc.vic.gov.au).

Use the links on our website to report an issue, submit an enquiry, feedback or complaint, make online payments, or access commonly requested services. We aim to respond within three working days. Other ways to contact MRSC:

#### ***Call us:***

Phone: 03 5422 0333

TTY Service: 133 677

(ask for 03 5422 0333)

#### ***Visit us:***

Gisborne Administration Centre

40 Robertson Street, Gisborne

8.30am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday (public holidays excluded)

Kyneton Administration Centre

129 Mollison Street, Kyneton

8.30am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday (public holidays excluded)

Romsey Hub

96-100 Main Street, Romsey

9.30am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday (public holidays excluded)

Woodend Community Centre

Corner Forest and High Streets Woodend

12.00pm to 5.00pm, Tuesday and Thursday (public holidays excluded)

#### ***Write to us:***

Chief Executive Officer

PO Box 151

Kyneton VIC 3444

**Email us:**

mrsc@mrsc.vic.gov.au

## **Legislation and Laws administered by Council**

The list below provides, as far as practicable, the Acts that are relevant to Council. This includes Acts that Council administers as well as Acts that may otherwise apply to Council currently or in the future.

*Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*

*Building Act 1993*

*Building Regulations 2018*

*Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*

*Catchment and Land Protection Regulations 2022*

*Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005*

*Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*

*Children Services Act 1996*

*Climate Change Act 2017*

*Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987*

*Country Fire Authority Act 1958*

*Country Fire Authority Regulations 2014*

*Cultural and Recreational Lands Act 1963*

*Dangerous Goods Act 1985*

*Development Victoria Act 2003*

*Disability Act 2006*

*Domestic Animals Act 1994*



*Domestic Building Contracts Act 1995*

*Education and Care Services National Law 2010*

*Education and Training Reform Act 2006*

*Electoral Act 2002*

*Electricity Safety Act 1998*

*Emergency Management Act 1986*

*Emergency Management Act 2013*

*Environment Protection Act 2017*

*Equal Opportunity Act 2010*

*Estate Agents Act 1980*

*Family Violence Protection Act 2008*

*Fences Act 1968*

*Filming Approval Act 2014*

*Fines Reform Act 2014*

*Fire Services Property Levy Act 2012*

*Fire Rescue Victoria Act 1958*

*Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*

*Food Act 1984*

*Freedom of Information Act 1982*

*Gender Equality Act 2020*

*Geographic Place Names Act 1998*

*Graffiti Prevention Act 2007*

*Health Complaints Act 2016*

*Health Records Act 2001*

*Heritage Act 2017*

*Housing Act 1983*

*Impounding of Livestock Act 1994*

*Infringements Act 2006*

*Land Act 1958*

*Land Tax Act 2005*

*Libraries Act 1988*

*Local Government Act 1989*

*Local Government Act 2020*

*Major Events Act 2009*

*Meat Industry Act 1993*

*Museums Act 1983*

*National Parks Act 1975*

*Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*

*Pipelines Act 2005*

*Planning and Environment Act 1987*

*Planning and Environment (Planning Schemes) Act 1996*

*Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986*

*Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*

*Project Development and Construction Management Act 1994*

*Property Law Act 1958*

*Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*

*Public Interest Disclosure Act 2012*

*Public Records Act 1973*

*Rail Safety National Law Application Act 1987*

*Residential Tenancies Act 1997*

*Retail Leases Act 2003*

*Road Management Act 2004*

*Road Safety Act 1986*

*Subdivision Act 1988*

*Surveying Act 2004*

*Sustainability Victoria Act 2005*

*Tobacco Act 1987*

*Transfer of Land Act 1958*

*Valuation of Land Act 1960*

*Veterans Act 2005*

*Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 1998*

*Victorian Local Government Grants Commission Act 1976*

*Victoria State Emergency Service Act 2005*

*Victorian Environmental Assessment Council Act 2001*

*Victorian Planning Authority Act 2017*

*Water Act 1989*

*Water Industry Act 1994*

*Wildlife Act 1975*

Copies of Victorian legislation are available on the Victorian Legislation and Parliamentary Documents website at [www.legislation.vic.gov.au](http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au).

Local Laws relevant to the MRSC and available to view on Council's website:

- Community Local Law 2023
- Governance Local Law 2021
- Local Law No.12: Kyneton Airfield

## **Services provided by Council**

Council provides more than 100 services to the community including:

- Environment services such as greenhouse gas mitigation, waste management, natural resource management and environmental conservation;
- Health services such as food regulation;
- Emergency management services such as disaster response and recovery;
- Transport and infrastructure services such as roads, footpaths, traffic management, recreation and leisure facilities;
- Planning and building services such as land use regulation;
- Social and community services such as early childhood services and youth development;
- Economic development, tourism promotion programs and services including business and industry support and major events; and
- Arts and cultural services including Kyneton Town Hall, Kyneton Theatre and Bluestone Theatre, along with numerous community arts and cultural programs.

Macedon Ranges Shire Council perform these functions by providing multiple services to our community. They include but are not limited to:

- Food safety regulations
- Youth services
- Health and support services
- Support to community and sporting groups
- Support to businesses

- Maternal and Child Health
- Economic development
- Local law enforcement
- Building regulation enforcement
- Planning permits
- Permit application and renewals
- Rates and registrations
- Grants and funding
- Safety and Emergency management
- Waste and recycling services
- Festivals and events
- Maintaining parks and gardens
- Local halls and venues
- Repairing roads, footpaths, and streetlights

## **Decision Making Powers**

### ***Decisions of Council***

There are decisions that must be made by the Council at a formal Council Meeting. Examples of such decisions include the adoption of the Council Budget, adoption of the Council Plan, the adoption of Council policies and strategies and decisions involving contracts that exceed the financial delegation of the CEO.

Council makes decisions by passing resolutions at Scheduled or Unscheduled Council Meetings.

Scheduled Council and Planning Delegated Committee Meetings for each year are adopted at a Council Meeting in the prior year and are available on Council's website – About Council/Our Council/Council Meetings. Scheduled Council Meetings are generally held on the fourth Wednesday of the month, February to December. Planning Delegated Committee Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of the month when required. Please consult our website for the most up-to-date Meeting schedule.

Scheduled Council meetings are ordinarily held at the Gisborne Administration Centre, located at 40 Robertson Street Gisborne (opposite the Police Station). Planning Delegated Committee

Meetings are only held online. You can watch a livestream, or a recording in the days after each meeting.

Under Council's *Governance Rules 2020*, an *Unscheduled Council Meeting* may be called to deal with a specific item of business that cannot wait until the next *Scheduled Council Meeting*. *Unscheduled Council Committee Meetings* are advertised on Council's website.

Members of the public are welcome to attend both *Scheduled* and *Unscheduled Council Meetings* unless the meeting has been closed to the public in accordance with section 66 of the *Local Government Act 2020* or due to a pandemic or other state or national emergency.

Council Meetings are regulated by Council's *Governance Rules 2020*.

Agenda and Minutes of all public Council Meetings are available on Council's website for the current term of Council. Older Agendas and Minutes available by contacting our Governance team on 5422 0333 or [governance@mrsc.vic.gov.au](mailto:governance@mrsc.vic.gov.au)

## **2. CONSULTATION WITH THE PUBLIC**

The Macedon Ranges Shire Council is committed to ensuring that the members of our community are involved and can contribute to the decision-making processes of Council. This can be through informal consultative processes such as mail outs, surveys and social media. It may also be through formal consultative processes such as public submissions, workshops or public questions.

Council is committed to the *Community Engagement* principles as contained in section 56 of the *Local Government Act 2020* which are centred around ensuring members of the community have access to the information they need to participate in Council decision making, are provided with support to participate and are informed of how their participation will influence Council decision making.

Council has developed a *Community Engagement Policy* in accordance with section 55 of the *Local Government Act 2020*. This Policy outlines the Macedon Ranges Shire Council's commitment and approach to community engagement practice.

It details the principles that guide our work towards delivering sustainable outcomes for our shire: through shared problem-solving, open dialogue and meaningful participation. It also

seeks to foster a deeper culture of public participation and provides a common language that strengthens community engagement for all.

Ways in which members of the public can currently participate in Council decision making include:

### **a) Submit a question at a Macedon Ranges Shire Council meeting**

Any member of the public may submit up to two written questions to the Chief Executive Officer at each scheduled Council meeting (other than the meeting to elect the Mayor).

To submit your question:

- download and complete a question form, email it, or bring it to a Council customer service centre, or
- Complete and submit our online question form by 5pm on the day prior to the meeting.

The Mayor or Chief Executive Officer decides whether a question will be read, in line with Council's Governance Rules, and then a brief verbal or written answer is given.

If you are present at the time of the question, you may be asked to clarify your question. No further discussion is permitted.

Answers from officers to questions will be circulated in the minutes of the meeting within five working days of each meeting or can be viewed in the recording of the meeting, which is usually available on Council's website within 48 hours after the meeting.

For more information regarding the Council Meeting question time refer to Council meeting question time on our website, call 5422 0333 or email [governance@mrsc.vic.au](mailto:governance@mrsc.vic.au).

### **b) Have your say via our online engagement hub “Your Say”**

Visit the ‘Your Say’ page on Council’s website to view current consultations, provide feedback and sign up to receive tailored alerts about future consultations as they are listed. Council undertakes both formal and informal consultation processes throughout the year. These are advertised on Council’s website, social media and in local publications.

### **3. TYPES OF DOCUMENTS HELD BY COUNCIL**

Given the extensive number of functions performed and services provided by Council, there is a large range of documents that are possessed or controlled by Council. This includes both hard copy documents (held at Council offices or offsite) as well as electronic documents. The categories of documents held by Council include but are not limited to:

- Agendas and minutes/notes of meetings;
- Animal registration applications and registrations issued;
- Annual and financial reports;
- Building and planning permits and associated documents including plans;
- Building enforcement documents;
- Correspondence (general and Councillor);
- Council records relating to elections, elected representatives, resolutions, agendas and minutes of meetings;
- Council publications, including newsletters;
- Disclosures and declarations of conflict of interests, gifts, and public interest disclosures;
- Documents submitted by third parties;
- Internal administration documents relating to staff management and the operation of Council;
- Organisational and staffing records, financial and resource management records, audit records and internal operating procedures;
- Legal documents including Local Laws, contracts, leases, agreements, licences, instruments of delegation, instruments of appointment and authorisations, and legal advice;
- Local Laws permit applications and permits issued;
- Mailing lists;
- Maternal and child health records, including immunisation records;
- Media releases and general advertising;
- Memorandums of Understanding and Service Agreements;
- Officer reports and recommendations;
- Policies, guidelines, strategies, and plans, including their development and implementation;
- Public and stakeholder consultation processes and outcomes;



- Records of the administration and enforcement of legislation and Local Laws;
- Reports prepared by external consultants;
- Requests for information under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* and files and papers relevant to the consideration of those requests;
- Risk management assessments;
- Standard operating procedures;
- Surveys, statistics, and data;
- Tenders and tender evaluations;
- Training material; and
- Written and verbal complaints received and records of any subsequent investigations.
- Files within these categories are held and maintained in accordance with best practice records management principles and relevant legislation. This includes regular archiving and disposal of records undertaken in accordance with approved schedules.

#### **4. INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTS COUNCIL HAS PREPARED FOR PUBLICATION OR INSPECTION**

Section 57 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires Council to adopt and maintain a Public Transparency Policy.

The purpose of the Public Transparency Policy is to provide guidance to the community about how Council is delivering and promoting the public transparency principles set out in the *Local Government Act 2020*, by being open and transparent in its decision-making processes and access to information and to outline Council's commitment to be more engaging and accountable to the community it serves.

A list of the categories of Council information which will generally, subject to the Public Transparency Policy, be made available either on the Council website, at the Council offices or on request is set out below.

***Documents such as:***

- Plans, Strategies and Reports adopted by Council
- Council Policies
- Local Laws

- Council Budget
- Project and Service Plans
- Grant application, tenders, and tender evaluation material
- Service agreements, contracts, memorandum of agreement or understanding, leases and licenses
- Council permits and notices of building and occupancy
- Relevant technical reports and/or research that inform decision-making.

***Process information such as:***

- Practice notes and operational procedures
- Notes of meetings
- Application processes for approvals, permits, grants, access to Council services
- Cat and dog registration application and registrations
- Decision-making processes
- Guidelines and manuals
- Community engagement processes and outcomes, and
- Complaints Handling Processes.

***The following Council Information will be available on Council's website:***

- Council meeting agendas
- Reporting to Council
- Minutes of Council meetings
- Reporting for Advisory Committees to Council through reporting to Council
- Audit and Risk Committee Performance Reporting, through reporting to Council
- Terms of reference or charters for Advisory Committees
- Newsletters
- Media releases and public notices
- Registers of gifts, benefits and hospitality offered Councillors or Council staff
- Registers of travel undertaken by Councillors or Council staff
- Submissions made by Council
- Register of donations and grants made by Council
- Registers of leases entered into by Council, as lessor and lessee
- Registers of Delegations

- Registers of Authorised officers
- Registers of Contracts
- Register of Election campaign donations
- Summary of Personal Interests
- Any other Registers or Records required by legislation or determined to be in the public interest.

## **5. PUBLICITY MATERIAL**

### ***Council's website***

The Macedon Ranges Shire Council maintains an up-to-date website to ensure that members of our community have easy access to information about Council and the municipality.

Information that can be found on the website includes:

- Council and committee meetings
- Shire Maps
- Media releases and road closures
- Resident Information: waste and recycling, information for new residents, local laws and permits, pets, rates, sustainable living.
- Business: economic support, start a business information, grants, and funding, permits, licenses and laws, sustainable businesses, waste and recycling for businesses.
- Community: Child care, health and wellbeing services, hubs, organising events, safety and emergency management, sports and recreation and creating healthier communities.
- Parking and Transport: cycling, parking, public transport options, roads, streets and pedestrians, transport planning and projects.
- Building and development: planning and building services, property information, heritage studies, engineering requirements, sustainable building, and urban planning.
- Arts and culture: arts and cultural events, performing arts program, arts venues and facilities, opportunities for artists, galleries and exhibitions, theatre dance and live performances.

### ***Key Council Publications***

The key Council publications, policies and documents are also published to Council's website, including but not limited to:

- The Council Plan, which outlines the work Council plans to deliver over the next four years.
- The Annual Plan and Budget documents, which outlines what we will do and how we will fund our activities over the financial year.
- The Annual Report, which outlines how the Macedon Ranges Shire Council performed during the financial year.
- Policies and strategies.
- MRSC Council and Committee Meeting Agenda and Minutes.

### **Newsletters**

Our team produce regular newsletters:

- ShireLife - delivered to your physical mailbox
- eNewsletters - many different topics regularly delivered straight to your inbox.
  - Aquatics and Fitness
  - Arts and Culture
  - Doing Business in the Macedon Ranges
  - Environment
  - Healthy Landscapes
  - Macedon Ranges Kids
  - Over 55s Connect
  - ShireLife Newsletter
  - Visit Macedon Ranges
  - Waste

## **6. POLICIES, PLANS, STRATEGIES AND PROTOCOLS**

The Macedon Ranges Shire Council has several policies, plans, strategies and protocols in place to guide the governance, management and integrity of its actions. The documents, listed below, are available from the Council website.

### **Financial Plan 2021-2025**

The Financial Plan spans ten years from 2021/22 to 2030/31.

It supports the Council Plan by providing a 10-year financially sustainable projection regarding how the actions of the Council Plan may be funded to achieve the Community Vision. It shows

the community where Council's funding comes from and how we will spend it to achieve the best outcomes for our shire.

### **Affordable Housing Policy**

The Affordable Housing Policy will guide Council decisions relating to affordable housing in the shire. The policy sets out how Council will facilitate the provision of affordable housing through its role as advocate, decision-maker, facilitator, and investor.

### **Asset Plan 2021-2031**

Asset management ensures that Council's assets can provide services in a sustainable manner for present and future generations.

### **Borrowing Policy**

This policy provides the appropriate parameters for Council to undertake borrowings without compromising the application for sound financial management principles.

### **Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy/Code of Conduct**

The Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy applies to a broad range of situations where interaction with children and young people can occur.

The Child Safety and Wellbeing Code of Conduct sets out Council's commitment to ensure it discharges the obligations and expectations in the Child Safe Standards.

### **Claims against Council Procedure**

If you have sustained an injury, loss, or damage because you believe there has been negligence by Council, you can submit a request for compensation claim.

### **Climate Emergency Plan**

On 13 December 2023, Council adopted its first Climate Emergency to guide shire-wide action on climate change. The plan was developed as a collaborative effort involving people from across the community and Council, through a series of workshops. A steering group involving representatives from across Council departments and key community sectors guided the development of the plan and supported the workshops.

### **Complaint and Unreasonable Behaviour Policy**

Council's Complaint and Unreasonable Behaviour Policy describes how we enable, respond to, and learn from complaints, feedback, and compliments from our customers. The draft policy sets out to improve the complaint process and has adopted a four-tiered approach in line with the Victorian Ombudsman's recommendation and best practice.

### **Community Engagement Policy**

This policy outlines Council's commitment to engage with the Macedon Ranges community when there is a decision to be made by Council. It outlines the purpose, principles and responsibilities of Council as required under the *Local Government Act 2020*.

### **Council Plan**

The Council Plan is the primary vision and goal-setting document for Council.

It is our strategic direction for the future of the Macedon Ranges Shire. It outlines our key priorities for the next four years, covering the term of the current elected Council, and supports the achievement of the Community Vision through planned objectives and strategies.

### **Councillor Code of Conduct**

This policy outlines the expected and required behaviour of Councillors in the exercise of power, duties, and functions.

### **Councillor Gift, Benefits and Hospitality Policy**

This policy sets out the position of the Macedon Ranges Shire Council on the acceptance of gifts, benefits, and hospitality for Councillors.

### **Delegation Framework Policy and Procedures**

Establishes a framework in which Council officers can exercise delegated powers and functions in accordance with various legislation.

### **Economic Development Strategy 2021-2031**

This strategy provides a vision for economic development, job creation, education and training and COVID-19 recovery in the Macedon Ranges for the next ten years.

### **Financial Hardship Policy**

Council's Financial Hardship Policy applies to those who are suffering financial hardship or would suffer financial hardship if they paid the full amount of rates and charges or other debts.

### **Financial Reserves Policy**

This policy ensures sustainable and responsible management of Council's cash balances and financial reserves through a consistent and transparent approach to the appropriate identification and creation, administration, and usage of statutory and discretionary restricted financial reserve accounts.

### **Governance Rules**

Under the *Local Government Act 2020* Section 60, Council is required to adopt Governance Rules for the conduct of Council meetings and meetings of any delegated committee that Council may establish.

The Governance Rules also outline the process for the election of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor as well as the disclosure of conflicts of interest by Councillors and members of Council staff.

### **Investment Policy**

Outlines Council's approach to financial investments, including risk reduction controls, safeguards, operating requirements, and compliance with regulatory requirements.

### **Lease and Licence Policy**

This Lease and Licence policy has been developed to provide a framework for leasing and licencing of Council-owned and managed land and buildings across the shire.

### **Macedon Ranges Heritage Strategy**

Council's Heritage Strategy 2014-2018 establishes Council's approach to the management of heritage within the shire. The strategy provides Council with an action plan of heritage-related projects to be undertaken from 2014 onwards.

A heritage strategy is a key tool in assisting Councils to meet their heritage obligations under various pieces of legislation, identify work already done by our Council, prioritise work to be done in the future, manage heritage assets appropriately for the community and celebrate the rich history and heritage of our area.

In 2023, Council invited public submissions to help inform a review of the Heritage Strategy.

### **Memorial Policy**

This policy ensures requests for permission to place memorials on public land in the Shire are assessed in a consistent and accountable way.

### **Open Space Strategy**

Council is developing a new Open Space Strategy to provide strategic direction for the planning, management, and delivery of public open space.

### **Privacy Policy**

This policy provides statement and guidelines around the use and storage of personal information according to the Information Privacy Principles (IPPs) contained in the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (the PDP Act).

### **Procurement Policy**

This policy confirms the principals, processes, and procedures for purchasing goods and services or undertaking works.

### **Public Interest Disclosures**

The *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012* (the PID Act) encourages and facilitates disclosures of improper conduct by public officers, public bodies and other persons including Council,



Council officers and Councillors and detrimental action taken against a person for making a disclosure under the PID Act.

Along with the PID Act, we are guided by our Public Interest Disclosures Policy and Procedure. The Public Interest Disclosures Policy explains the process of making a public interest disclosure of improper conduct by public officers and public bodies.

### **Public Transparency Policy**

To promote openness and transparency in Council decision-making processes and to provide guidance on access to Council information.

### **Reconciliation Action Plan 2021–23**

Our vision for reconciliation is one of equality and unity between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and all Macedon Ranges communities, which recognises past injustices, our shared history and shared future, and strengthens Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' right to self-determination.

### **Risk Management Framework**

Council's Risk Management Framework provides our staff with a consistent and systematic application of Risk Management that is critical in maximising outcomes for our communities, benefiting from opportunities, managing uncertainty, and minimising the impact of adverse events.

### **Township Street and Park Tree Management Policy**

This policy provides the framework for the management of street and park trees including botanic gardens within Council's township boundaries. It establishes when Council will plant, prune, or remove a tree and the measures required to protect and enhance the tree population.

### **Walking and Cycling Strategy**

This strategy aims to increase walking and cycling opportunities in the Shire and promote healthy active lifestyles from 2014-2024.

## **Waste and Resource Recovery Management Strategy 2021-2026**

The Waste and Resource Recovery Management Strategy 2021-26 provides sustainable solutions for the collection, disposal and resource recovery from waste generated within our community. It contains measurable targets and actions to be undertaken by the Council over the next five years.

## **Website Privacy Statement**

We are committed to protecting the privacy of people using this website. We understand that visitors and users of our website are concerned about their privacy and security of any information that is provided.

## **7. COUNCIL'S COMMITMENTS**

Macedon Ranges Shire Council is committed to complying with both its legal obligations and the commitments that it makes to the members of its community.

Key commitments of Council include:

### **Gender Equality Action Plan 2022-2025**

The implementation of this plan will assist with making the Macedon Ranges Shire Council a workplace of choice that is a leader in gender and intersectional equality. Alongside the Gender Equality Act 2020, it is a means of addressing longstanding gender inequalities within the Victorian community.

### **Customer Service Charter**

The Customer Service Charter is an expression of our commitment to providing a high standard of service and ensuring consistency and sustainability in service delivery.

The Macedon Ranges Shire Council is committed to the Charter being at the front of mind of Council in all aspects of Council's day to day operations.

### **Child Safety**

Council has zero tolerance for child abuse. Every child accessing Council services has the right to feel and be safe. We embrace diversity and inclusion. Children of all age, gender, race,

religion, disability, sexual orientation, family background and social background have equal rights to protection from abuse.

### **Reconciliation Action Plan**

Our vision for reconciliation is one of equality and unity between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and all Macedon Ranges communities, which recognises past injustices, our shared history and shared future, and strengthens Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' right to self-determination.

## **8. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ARRANGEMENTS**

*The Freedom of Information Act 1982* (the FOI Act) gives you a general right of access to information held by Council. The right of access is subject to exceptions and exemptions necessary to protect essential public and private interests.

The general principle of the FOI Act is that all documents in Council's possession should be available to the public limited only by certain exemptions.

The FOI Act allows Council to refuse access to some documents including:

- 'Exempt documents' such as internal working documents, law enforcement documents, documents relating to legal proceedings, or documents affecting the personal privacy of other people
- Documents which are already publicly available or available by paying a fee under another Act
- Documents which were created before 1 January 1989.

You may be refused access to an entire document, or you may be given access to a document with some information redacted.

### ***How do I make a request under Freedom of Information?***

Before submitting a Freedom of Information (FOI) request, you are encouraged to contact the Governance Team on 5422 0333 or email [governance@mrsc.vic.gov.au](mailto:governance@mrsc.vic.gov.au) to discuss your request, as the information may be publicly available without having to go through FOI.

Council aims to provide access to information by way of informal release wherever possible, by proactively providing information (access by our website) or by providing access to the information requested administratively without the need to process the request under the FOI Act. This promotes transparency and provides efficient and affordable access to information.

If a request is required to be processed under the FOI Act you will be required to complete the Freedom of Information Request application form found on Council's website, and email to [foi@mrsc.vic.gov.au](mailto:foi@mrsc.vic.gov.au). Council's FOI Officer will review your application and if needed, work with you to clarify the terms of your request. Once the terms have been mutually agreed to, Council will provide you with payment details.

Fees and charges associated with FOI are set by the Department of Treasury and Finance annually, the current schedule of fees can be located on Council's website.

### **FOI Officers**

By instrument of appointment Council's Principal Officer under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* appointed the officers named below to be Freedom of Information Officers for the purposes of the Act and authorises the officers to make decisions in respect of requests made to the Council under the Act.

Adele Drago-Stevens  
Director Corporate

Cherry Stojanovic  
Acting Coordinator Governance

### **Contacts**

If you have any questions about the process, please call 5422 0333 and speak with a member of the governance team or email [governance@mrsc.vic.gov.au](mailto:governance@mrsc.vic.gov.au). You may also address your request to:

Governance  
Macedon Ranges Shire Council  
PO Box 151  
KYNETON VIC 3444

## 9. ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Advisory committees help plan and develop services across specific areas of Council. Members are volunteers and committees may be a mix of residents/industry/sector specialists, Councillors and Council officers.

- Audit and Risk Committee
- Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee