# The Banyule Story 2025-2026

Annual Report



Banyule
City Council



**Acknowledgement of the Traditional Custodians**

Banyule City Council is proud to acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as Traditional Custodians of the land and we pay respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, past, present and emerging, who have resided in the area and have been an integral part of the region's history.

**Diversity statement**

Our community is made up of diverse cultures, beliefs, abilities, bodies, sexualities, ages and genders. We are committed to access, equity, participation and rights for everyone: principles which empower, foster harmony and increase the wellbeing of an inclusive community.

# Welcome to the Banyule Story

## Sharing our story

Banyule City Council is committed to transparent reporting. The Banyule Story 2025-2026 (the Banyule Story) is Council's Annual Report and one of the ways Council shares information about its performance and operations with the community.

This report meets the requirements of *the Local Government Act 2020* and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*. It shows how Council is delivering on the Banyule Plan (Council Plan) and working towards the long-term community vision.

The Banyule Story is presented in three separate documents:

- **Part 1: Report of Operations** – outlines Council's activities, achievements and governance
- **Part 2: Performance Statement** – reports on Council's audited service and financial performance against indicators
- **Part 3: Financial Report** – provides audited financial statements and notes

This document forms Part 1 of the Banyule Story and serves as the Report of Operations for 2025-2026.

## Banyule's Community Vision 2041

The Banyule Community Vision 2041 (the Community Vision) sets out what matters most to the people of Banyule. It reflects the values, aspirations and priorities of those who live, work, study, visit or run a business in the municipality.

The vision was shaped through extensive community engagement. In 2021, more than 1,300 people shared their ideas, helping Council understand what is most important to them. A group of community members co-wrote the vision statement and identified six priority themes that reflect the community's goals. These themes were reviewed and updated in 2025 following further engagement.

The Community Vision guides Council's planning, policies and investment decisions.

### Community Vision statement

***'We in Banyule are a thriving, sustainable, inclusive, healthy and connected community. We are engaged, we belong, and we value and protect our environment.'***

### Community Vision priority themes




Figure 1 | The six priority themes of the Banyule Community Vision 2041

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## Part 2: Performance Statement 2025-2026

This is published as a separate document and is available online.

## Part 3: Financial Report 2025-2026

This is published as a separate document and is available online.

# Introducing Banyule Council

## Message from the Mayor and Councillors




Figure 2 | Mayor Cr Alison Champion and Councillors

It is my pleasure to present The Banyule Story 2025-2026 and to reflect on a year of significant achievement, investment and community impact.

Guided by the Key Initiatives identified by our Councillors and community through the Banyule Plan 2025-2029, we continued to deliver practical outcomes that support a thriving, sustainable, inclusive and connected Banyule.

**Financial sustainability**

Careful financial management helped ensure we could deliver major projects and community programs while remaining financially responsible. Despite ongoing cost–of–living pressures, Council continued to provide quality services, invest in infrastructure and support residents experiencing hardship.

**Environmental action**

We adopted a new Biodiversity Strategy and Banyule's first Community Climate Resilience Plan. Thousands of plants and trees were added to our urban forest and parks. We progressed towards our goal of being a net zero emissions organisation and empowered our community to act. Together we are caring for the natural environment that makes Banyule so special.

**Local business support**

The Inclusive Economy Strategy, recognised through a national award for inclusive economic development, support for local traders and investment in social enterprises all contributed to a stronger and more resilient local economy. Employment initiatives including First Nations

traineeships and social enterprise programs help ensure more people share in Banyule's prosperity.

**Advocating for community needs**

Advocacy and community participation remain at the heart of our work. We continued to represent Banyule's interests with all levels of government, local organisations and business, helping secure investment and support for our community. Through advisory committees, consultations, community groups and local events, residents helped shape plans, projects and services across Banyule.

**Improved community assets and projects**

More than 2,100 people visited the new Rosanna Library on its first day of operation, showing the level of excitement for this new community hub. Other major projects included the redeveloped pavilion at Anthony Beale Reserve, the new pavilion at Macleod Park and completion of the Olympic Park Master Plan. We delivered upgrades to sporting facilities, parks, playgrounds and community buildings, while continuing important work on roads, footpaths, drainage and other infrastructure.



Councillor Alison Champion
**Mayor,**
**Banyule Council**

**Health and wellbeing**

Programs such as YouthFest, Active Banyule initiatives, activities for older adults, community festivals, accessibility improvements and culturally responsive services all helped create a healthier, safer and more connected community.

**Housing and homelessness**

The new Banyule Assertive Community Outreach program provided support for people experiencing homelessness and sleeping rough, helping connect them with housing, health and other services. We continued to advocate for greater government investment in housing and homelessness services, as well as better planning controls that support a growing community.

**Celebrating community spirit**

Finally, I want to thank the volunteers who make such a valuable contribution to our community. Whether through sporting clubs, support services or community groups, their dedication strengthens the quality of life we enjoy in Banyule. Together, we are building a community that is welcoming, resilient and ready for the future.

# Message from the CEO



Figure 3 | Allison Beckwith, CEO

The Banyule Story lays out the work undertaken by Council over the past year to deliver for our community on the priorities set out in the Banyule Plan 2025-2029. Throughout the year, our focus remained on providing high-quality services, delivering essential infrastructure, maintaining strong financial stewardship and ensuring our organisation continues to respond to the needs of a growing and diverse community.

**Delivering on organisational priorities**

Our focus has been on implementing the Banyule Plan and ensuring our services and operations contribute to a thriving, sustainable, inclusive and connected community. We made strong progress on climate resilience, customer service, community engagement, digital improvement and organisational performance, while maintaining our commitment to transparency, accountability and continuous improvement. We have achieved this through partnerships with community groups, businesses, government agencies and service providers.

**Managing community resources responsibly**

We continue to operate in an environment of rising costs, increasing demand for services and higher community expectations. Careful financial management enabled Council to remain in a strong position while continuing to invest in community priorities.

This included maintaining essential infrastructure, delivering major projects and providing more than 100 services across Banyule. Managing community resources responsibly helps ensure we can meet current needs while planning for the future.

**Investing in infrastructure and services**

Significant milestones included the opening of Rosanna Library, completion of the Olympic Park Master Plan, upgrades to sporting pavilions, improvements to parks and playgrounds, and continued investment in roads, footpaths and community facilities.

Alongside these projects, Council delivered a wide range of services that support children, young people, older adults, families, businesses, community organisations and vulnerable residents. From youth programs and community festivals to environmental initiatives, recreation opportunities and support services, our teams worked every day to improve quality of life for everyone in our community.

**Our people make the difference**

The outcomes we achieve for our community are only possible because of the dedication and expertise of our staff. Across the organisation, employees have continued to demonstrate professionalism, adaptability and a strong commitment to serving the community.

Whether maintaining public spaces, delivering frontline services, supporting residents or planning for the future, their work has a positive impact on the lives of people across Banyule every day.

We are committed to supporting our people through ongoing training, professional development and opportunities to build the skills needed to meet changing community needs. We also continue to foster an inclusive workplace where staff feel respected, valued and able to contribute.

**Thank you**

I would like to sincerely thank our staff for their contribution throughout the year. Their commitment to serving the community is reflected in the achievements highlighted throughout this report.

I also thank our Councillors for their leadership, and acknowledge the many volunteers, community organisations and partners whose work helps strengthen our community and enrich life in Banyule.

**Looking ahead**

As we look towards the future, we remain committed to continuous improvement, responsible financial management and delivering the services, infrastructure and outcomes that matter most to our community.

Together, we will continue working towards Banyule's long-term vision and creating positive outcomes for current and future generations.



Allison Beckwith
**Chief Executive Officer,**
**Banyule Council**




Figure 4 | Carers in Healthcare Expo

# Financial Overview

In 2025-2026, Banyule City Council continued to invest in the services, facilities and infrastructure that support a thriving, connected and resilient community.

Council recorded an annual surplus of **$17.5 million**, reflecting careful financial management and prudent use of community resources. While financial results are important, Council's focus remains on ensuring that available funding is used to deliver lasting benefits for residents through high-quality services, infrastructure and community programs.

Council's strong financial position enabled continued investment in community priorities while responding to rising costs and increasing demand for services. During the year, Council generated **$41.0 million in cash from operating activities**, providing the financial capacity to support essential services, maintain community assets and invest in future projects.

Throughout the year, Council delivered more than 100 services and invested **$58.6 million** in community infrastructure, helping maintain and improve the places people rely on every day. This included the opening of the new Rosanna Library, upgrades to sporting pavilions at Olympic Park, Macleod Park and Anthony Beale Reserve, improvements to parks and playgrounds, and continued investment in roads, footpaths and drainage across the municipality. Investment in community infrastructure remained a key priority. Of the **$58.6 million** invested during the year, more than **$36.5 million** was directed toward renewing existing assets, ensuring roads, buildings, parks, sporting facilities and public infrastructure continue to serve current and future generations.

Council also continued to strengthen its long-term financial sustainability by reducing debt, with borrowings decreasing to **$16.6 million** at 30 June 2026. Strong cash and investment reserves of **$97.8 million** ensure Council remains well placed to respond to future challenges, deliver planned infrastructure projects and maintain services that matter most to the community.

Banyule's community assets are now valued at more than **$2.6 billion**, representing a significant public investment in roads, drainage, parks, open space, buildings and community facilities. These assets support the quality of life enjoyed by residents and underpin the delivery of services across the municipality.

As Council looks ahead, it remains committed to balancing affordability, service delivery and investment in community infrastructure. Through responsible financial management and long-term planning, Council will continue to deliver the facilities, services and outcomes that support a healthy, inclusive, sustainable and connected Banyule.

**Financial Highlights 2025-2026**

- **$58.6 million invested in community infrastructure**
- **$41.0 million generated from operations**
- **$17.5 million annual surplus**
- **$97.8 million in cash and investments**
- **$16.6 million in borrowings**
- **$2.6 billion in community assets managed**
- **More than 100 services delivered to the community.**

# Elected leadership: Our Councillors

Banyule Council is made up of **nine wards**, each representing a unique local character and a similar population size. **One Councillor is elected per ward**, serving a four-year term from October 2024 to October 2028. Collectively, these nine Councillors advocate for the interests of all Banyule residents and ratepayers.




Figure 5 | Map of Banyule Council showing ward boundaries and the suburbs within each of the nine wards

## Council's responsibilities include:

- Providing strategic leadership and good governance for the community
- Representing residents, businesses, workers, and community groups
- Advocating to Victorian and Australian governments on local priorities
- Endorsing the Banyule Plan, Annual Action Plan, and Budget
- Approving policies and overseeing service delivery, safety, and environmental stewardship

Banyule's Councillors are listed below:

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**Mayor Councillor Alison Champion**

Sherbourne Ward

**Year elected**

2016

**Terms as Deputy Mayor**

2018–2019, 2021-2022

**Terms as Mayor**

2019-2020, 2025-current

**Committees and reference groups**

- CEO Employment Matters Committee
- Yarra Plenty Regional Library Board
- Yarra Regional Library Board Audit Committee
- Northern Council Alliance (NCA)

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**Deputy Mayor Councillor Rick Garotti**

Grimshaw Ward

**Year elected**

2012

**Terms as Deputy Mayor**

2019-2020, 2023-2024, 2025-2026

**Terms as Mayor**

2020-2021

**Committees and reference groups**

- CEO Employment Matters Committee
- Yarra Plenty Regional Library Board
- Metropolitan Transport Forum



**Councillor Peter Castaldo**

Griffin Ward

**Year elected**

2016

**Terms as Deputy Mayor**

2024-2025

**Terms as Mayor**

2022-2023

**Committees and reference groups**

- First Nations Advisory Committee (Co-Chair)
- CEO Employment Matters Committee
- Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action (NAGA)



**Councillor Alicia Curry**

Ibbott Ward

**Year elected**

2024

**Committees and reference groups**

- CEO Employment Matters Committee
- Arts and Culture Advisory Committee



**Councillor Mark Di Pasquale**

Bakewell Ward

**Year elected**

2012

**Terms as Deputy Mayor**

2016-2017

**Terms as Mayor**

2017-2018

**Committees and reference groups**

- CEO Employment Matters Committee
- Environment and Climate Action Advisory Committee



**Councillor Alida McKern**

Chelsworth Ward

**Year elected**

2020

**Terms as Deputy Mayor**

2022-2023

**Committees and reference groups**

- CEO Employment Matters Committee
- Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action
- Sustainable Living Advisory Committee



**Councillor Elizabeth Nealy**

Beale Ward

**Year elected**

2020

**Terms as Mayor**

2021-2022, 2024-2025

**Committees and reference groups**

- CEO Employment Matters Committee
- Municipal Association Victoria (MAV) Committee, State Council
- Northern Council Alliance



**Councillor Mary O'Kane**

Olympia Ward

**Year elected**

2024

**Committees and reference groups**

- Audit and Risk Committee
- CEO Employment Matters Committee
- Connected Communities Advisory Committee



**Councillor Matt Wood**

Hawdon Ward

**Year elected**

2024

**Committees and reference groups**

- CEO Employment Matters Committee
- Metropolitan Transport Forum
- Audit and Risk Committee

# Who we are

## Traditional Custodians

Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters across Banyule. More than 50 indigenous archaeological sites have been identified in the area, and Council is committed to their protection.

## Our location

Banyule is located 7 to 21 kilometres north-east of central Melbourne. It covers around 63 square kilometres across 21 suburbs. The Birrarung (Yarra) River forms the southern boundary, and Darebin Creek marks the western edge.

## Our history and heritage

Banyule's scenic landscapes inspired the Heidelberg School of Australian Impressionist painters, including Arthur Streeton, Walter Withers, Tom Roberts, Clara Southern and Frederick McCubbin. Renowned architects and urban designers such as Walter Burley Griffin and Ellis Stones also shaped the local environment.

The Olympic Village in Heidelberg West housed 4,200 athletes from 67 countries during the 1956 Melbourne Olympic Games. After the Games, the accommodation was converted into public housing, forming part of the local community.

## Natural environment and recreation

Banyule is known for its green spaces, especially along the Birrarung (Yarra) and Plenty River valleys. There are 466 hectares of Council-owned open space, 50 sports grounds and 44 kilometres of shared trails.

## Housing and growth

Banyule is primarily residential, with 70% of households owning or purchasing their home and 25% renting. While separate houses are most common, there is growing development of townhouses, units and semi-detached homes. The population is expected to grow over the next decade, especially in the 80 years and over age group.

## Economy and employment

Key industries in Banyule include health care, education, retail and construction. Major commercial centres are located in Greensborough, Heidelberg and Ivanhoe, with industrial areas in Heidelberg West, Greensborough, Briar Hill and Bundoora. Banyule is home to major institutions such as Melbourne Polytechnic and Austin Hospital and is bordered by La Trobe University.

# Council offices

## Greensborough

Level 3, 1 Flintoff Street, Greensborough

## Ivanhoe

275 Upper Heidelberg Road, Ivanhoe
*(Located at the Ivanhoe Library and Cultural Hub)*

# Contact details

**Postal address**: PO Box 94, Greensborough VIC 3088

**Telephone**: 9490 4222

**National Relay Service**: If you have difficulty hearing or speaking, you can contact Banyule Council through the National Relay Service.

Call 133 677 (TTY) or 1300 555 727 (voice) and ask for 9490 4222.

**Email**: enquiries@banyule.vic.gov.au

**Website**: banyule.vic.gov.au

# Our precincts

Banyule is home to a diverse and vibrant community, with each suburb offering its own character, needs and priorities. To help organise data in a meaningful way, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) divided Banyule into seven distinct precincts. Council uses these ABS-defined precincts to better understand local communities and tailor services to reflect their unique qualities.

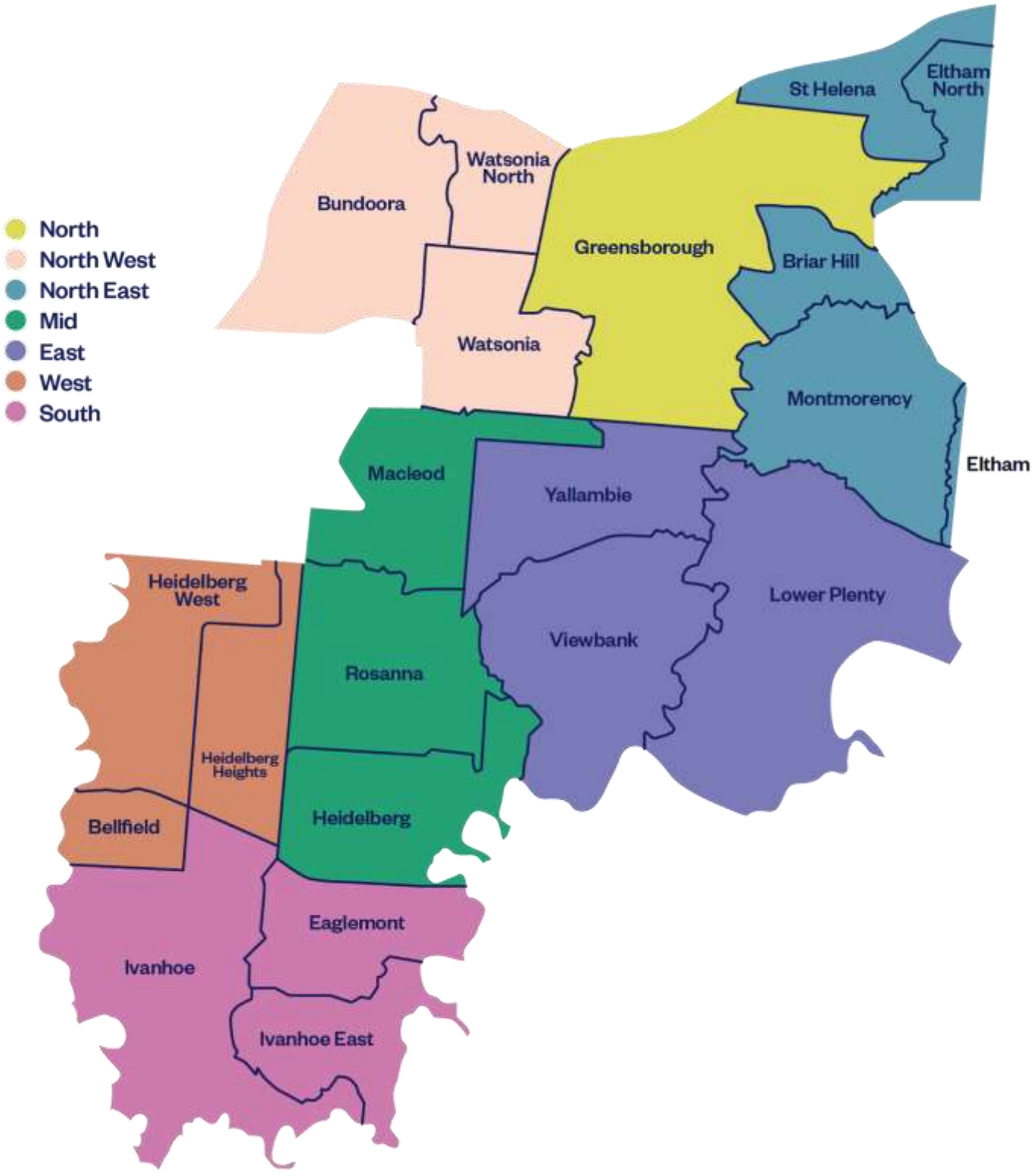



Figure 6 | Map of Banyule's seven distinct precincts and their suburbs

# Banyule precincts overview

Each precinct has its own identity, shaped by its natural environment, facilities and population. This structure helps Council respond to the specific needs of different areas across the municipality.



## East Precinct

**Suburbs: Lower Plenty, Viewbank, Yallambie**

This precinct is known for its extensive green spaces, including Banyule Flats Reserve, parkland lookouts, hiking trails and picnic areas. It has the most open space in Banyule and a semi-rural feel due to its lower population density. Key sporting facilities include Yallambie Park, Glenauburn Reserve, Viewbank Reserve, Banyule Flats Reserve and Heidelberg Golf Club.
**Population: 15,596**



## Mid Precinct

**Suburbs: Heidelberg, Macleod, Rosanna**

This precinct features unique parklands along the Birrarung (Yarra) River corridor and Rosanna Parklands. Heidelberg is home to a major health precinct, including Austin, Heidelberg Repatriation, Mercy and Warringal hospitals and allied health services. It is also a key activity centre with retail, commercial, transport and hospitality services, providing significant employment opportunities.

**Population: 24,394**



## North Precinct

**Suburb: Greensborough**

Located in the Plenty River Valley, this precinct offers scenic views and access to the river trail. Greensborough is a major activity centre with retail and commercial spaces surrounding Greensborough Plaza. It also includes residential areas and key community facilities such as the main Council office.
**Population: 16,068**



## North East Precinct

**Suburbs: Briar Hill, Eltham North, Montmorency, St Helena**

This precinct features leafy streets and native flora and fauna along the Plenty River Trail, including a 3.6 km circuit from Montmorency to Yallambie. Were Street village and Anthony Beale Reserve are local highlights. Community infrastructure is centred around Petrie Park, which includes a large community hall, pavilion and scout hall, all within walking distance of the train station.
**Population: 18,185**



## North West Precinct

**Suburbs: Bundoora, Watsonia, Watsonia North**

Known for its cultural diversity and well-used community facilities, this precinct includes NJ Telfer Reserve in Bundoora, which hosts buildings for scouts, preschool, maternal and child health services, tennis and football.
Watsonia Station is close to the library, neighbourhood houses and the community hall at Aminya Reserve.
**Population: 19,932**



## South Precinct

**Suburbs: Eaglemont, Ivanhoe, Ivanhoe East**

This precinct features scenic trails including the Darebin Creek Trail, Main Yarra Trail and Wilson Reserve Trail, which connect to surrounding areas. Key community facilities include the Ivanhoe Library and Cultural Hub and Ivanhoe Aquatic. Eaglemont is known for its heritage estates, while East Ivanhoe offers boutique shopping and fine dining. Ivanhoe is a major activity centre with a higher socio-economic profile and a well-established sports precinct that supports 14 clubs across Ivanhoe Park, Chelsworth Park and Ivanhoe Recreation Reserve.
**Population: 22,464**



## West Precinct

**Suburbs: Bellfield, Heidelberg Heights, Heidelberg West**

Celebrated for its cultural diversity, this precinct includes a strong First Nations presence supported by Barrbunin Beek Gathering Place, a dedicated space for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Bellfield Community Hub provides preschool and maternal and child health services, social support for older adults and spaces for community activities. Heidelberg West Olympic Village, a legacy of the 1956 Olympic Games, is also located here. The precinct is part of the La Trobe National Employment and Innovation Cluster, which supports business growth and job creation.
**Population: 16,179**

# Our Banyule Community

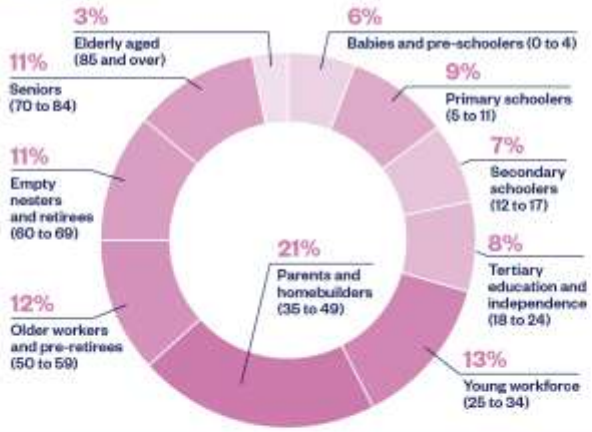
## Population



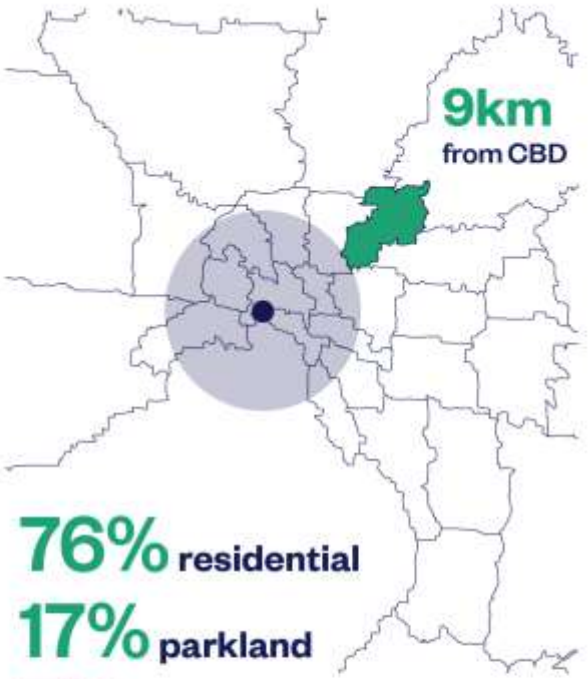
Banyule is a community of **132,770** residents (2025)

and is forecast to grow to **161,397** by 2046

### Age groups




## Land use




**76%** residential

**17%** parkland

**7%** other

Approx. 890 hectares of public open space

## Households

There are over **49,000** households

**2.51** people — average household size

### Household types

**33%** couples with children

**25%** couples without children

**24%** lone person households

**10%** one parent families

**70%** households purchasing or fully owning their home

**22%** renting - private

**4%** renting - social housing

**1,364** residents who are a specialist homeless service client, 62% **female**, 38% **male** (2024-25)

## Diversity in Banyule

**22%** use a non-English language at home

**24%** were born overseas

**69.5%** think multiculturalism makes life in Banyule better

**6%** of **female** and **5%** of **male** residents need assistance due to disability

**871** residents identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

**12%** of residents aged 18+ identify as LGBTIQA+

## Economy in Banyule

**11,540** businesses

**56,937** jobs

**$8.4 billion** Gross Regional Product (GRP)

### Main industries

- **Healthcare and social assistance**
- **Construction**
- **Education and training**
- **Retail trade**

## Health and wellbeing in Banyule

**$2,016** per week is the median household income (2021)

**17%** of people aged 15+ years with income $2,000 or more per week (**female** 11%, **male** 23%) (2021)

**11%** of **female** and **7%** of **male** residents have a mental health condition (2021)

**88%** of **female** and **89%** of **male** residents participate in at least one sport and recreation activity (2025)

**35%** of households reported 'cost' was a barrier to eating fresh fruit and vegetables (2025)

**28%** of households experienced barriers to using or accessing at least one community service (2025)

**29%** of adults consumed sugar-sweetened beverages daily or several times per week (2023)

**54%** of households were very satisfied with access to good quality places for play and recreation (2025)

**63%** of adults undertook 2.5 hours or more of physical activity in a typical week (2025)

**14%** of adults smoke tobacco or vape (2023)

**46.9%** of adults self-report their health as excellent or very good 7.1% better than Victoria (2023)

**10%** experienced discrimination in the past 12 months (2025)

**64%** hardly ever or never experienced loneliness (2025)

**65%** described their social wellbeing as very good or excellent (2025)

**$5m** was lost on average each month to electronic gaming machines, or $577 per adult the year (2025-26)

**78%** of households enjoy living in their local area (2022)

## Services statistics and area highlights

**20,800**
**visits** to Barrbunin Beek Aboriginal Gathering Place

**676**
**artists** supported by Council

Banyule's community relief partners, BANSIC, DVCS and DVFS supported
**17,606**
**people** including food and other essential needs

**~75,000**
**street trees** and 25,000 park trees actively inspected and maintained and protected across Council streets, parks, reserves and bushlands

**4.4 million**
**bin lifts** per year providing a waste service to over 51,000 properties

Council manages
**322 buildings**
**48 picnic shelters**

**14,189**
**visits** to Shop 48 at Bell Street Mall

**~40,000**
**visitors** attended festivals and events

**250 MCG**
equivalents each **mowed each month** in summer and 125 MCGs mowed each month in winter

**48km²**
of **open space** serviced, an area almost the size of Sydney Harbour

**87.7%**
of **planning applications** were decided within the required timeframe

Last year, the average number of **aquatic centre visits per person** has nearly doubled, increasing from 4.6 to just over
**9 visits**

**3,938**
**immunisation clients** were seen and **8,898 vaccines given**

## Infrastructure we maintain

**1,014km**
of **kerbs**

Resheeting of
**37**
**local streets**
(67,000m² of asphant)

**822km**
of **drainage pipes**

Replacement of
**7,300**
**concrete footpath bays**

**35**
**wetlands and stormwater harvesting systems** and **30 gross pollutant traps**

To read an accessible long description of the Our Banyule community infographic, refer to Appendix A.

# Demographic trends

## Population

Banyule's estimated population in 2025 is 132,770. By 2046, this is expected to grow to over 161,000 residents, with Heidelberg forecast to have the highest percentage increase. Banyule has an older age profile than Greater Melbourne, with a median age of 40 compared to 37.

## Health and wellbeing

About one in three residents (33%) live with one or more long-term health conditions, slightly higher than the Greater Melbourne average (30%). The most common condition is mental health, affecting around 9.2% of residents (11,641 people), followed by arthritis (8.7%) and asthma (8.4%).

## Cultural diversity

Banyule is home to people from many different cultures, languages, abilities, sexualities and gender identities. Around one in four residents (24%) were born overseas and more than one in five (22%) speak a language other than English at home. The most common languages spoken (other than English) are Mandarin, Italian, Greek, Cantonese and Arabic.

Between 2016 and 2021, the largest increases in overseas-born residents were from India (+425), China (+309) and Iran (+189). Christianity remains the most common religion (45%), while the percentage of people with no religion or secular beliefs has grown to 43%, up from 35% in 2016.

## Households

Families make up a large part of the community, with couples with children being the most common household type (33%). Between 2016 and 2021, the biggest increases were in lone person households (+1,326) and couples without children (+1,188). Most households either fully own or are buying their home (70%).

## Education

More residents are completing higher levels of education. In 2021, 66% of people aged 15 and over had finished Year 12 or equivalent, up from 61% in 2016. Similarly, 38% had completed a bachelor's degree or higher, up from 32%. These figures are higher than the Greater Melbourne averages of 64% (Year 12) and 33% (Bachelor or higher).

## Employment

Health care and social assistance is the largest industry for Banyule residents, employing 10,480 people (16%). Banyule has a higher proportion of residents working as managers or professionals (48%) compared to Greater Melbourne (41%). The unemployment rate in Banyule remains lower than in Greater Melbourne, Victoria and Australia.

# 2025-2026: What Council achieved

## Delivering for our community

### Priority theme 1
### Our Inclusive, Healthy and Connected Community

A safe, healthy, vibrant and connected community where people of all ages and life stages love to live, work and stay; diversity and inclusion are valued and encouraged.

### Active Banyule Plan 2025-2030

Following extensive community engagement involving almost 1,000 residents, Council adopted the Active Banyule Plan 2025-2030 in July 2025.

The Plan sets Council's direction for sport, recreation and physical activity over the next five years. It aims to increase participation across all ages and abilities, remove barriers to being active, and support healthier, more connected communities. The Plan recognises the important role that sports clubs, parks, trails, leisure facilities, open spaces and inclusive programs play in supporting community wellbeing and encouraging people to stay active throughout their lives.

Council also launched a new Active Banyule website, making it easier for residents to discover local sports clubs, leisure centres, parks, trails, events and recreation programs. Designed with accessibility and ease of use in mind, the website allows people to search for opportunities based on their interests and stage of life, including options for older adults and the LGBTIQA+ community.
An interactive search tool helps residents find activities and facilities close to home, making it easier to get involved and stay active in Banyule.



Figure 7 | Watsonia Neighbourhood House

**18,014**

**young people took part in Council youth programs, events and support services in 2025-2026.**

## Priority theme 2
## Our Sustainable Environment

A progressive and innovative leader in protecting, enhancing and increasing the health and diversity of our natural environment, where we all commit to playing an active role in achieving environmental sustainability, waste and carbon emissions reduction.

### Biodiverse Banyule – Towards 250,000 Indigenous Plants by 2035

The Biodiversity Strategy's Biodiverse Banyule – Target 250K program establishes a Banyule-wide goal of planting 250,000 local indigenous plants by 2035, based on ecological analysis of the vegetation cover required to improve ecosystem health, resilience and habitat connectivity across Banyule. Council's ongoing bushland and revegetation programs are expected to deliver about 65% of this target through business-as-usual activities. The remaining 35% is a stretch target for Council and a call to action for Friends groups, residents, community organisations and industry partners to support the target and collaborate.

Progress toward this objective is already being supported through Bushland Management, Friends groups, Gardens for Wildlife and the Indigenous Plants Voucher Program, which have collectively contributed 12,566 indigenous plants since October 2025. Beyond planting numbers, the long-term success of the program depends on the ongoing maintenance and survival of planted species, increased support for stewardship on private land, and continued community participation in creating connected, resilient and biodiverse landscapes throughout Banyule.

### We updated the Corporate Emissions Reduction Plan

In December 2025 Council endorsed a revised Corporate Emissions Reduction Plan (CERP) following community engagement. The CERP 2025-2029 outlines 32 actions across eight priority areas to reduce emissions from Council's operations. It reaffirms Council's commitment to achieving real zero emissions by 2028 and introduces a new 2035 target to reduce emissions from Council's supply chain and services (known as Scope 3 emissions).

Since adopting the original CERP 2020-2023, Council has delivered several emissions reduction programs, including sourcing 100% renewable electricity through the Victorian Energy Collaboration (VECO) since 2021, which reduced Council's annual greenhouse gas emissions by almost 60%. Council has also begun transitioning its passenger vehicle fleet to zero emissions vehicles, with full transition expected by 2028.

Council has improved energy efficiency across its facilities by installing LED lighting, upgrading heating and cooling systems, adding new insulation, and making aquatic centres more efficient through pool blankets, more efficient pumps, automatic doors and upgraded fans. More than 90% of Council buildings and community facilities have been electrified by replacing gas appliances and systems with electric alternatives.

Council has installed solar panels on more than 85 Council buildings, reducing its carbon footprint, lowering costs and moving away from traditional energy sources. Climate action is now embedded across the organisation, with emissions reduction considered in decision-making across all departments and supported by ongoing monitoring, reporting and continuous improvement.

**12,566**

**indigenous plants were planted in Banyule's bushland reserves, supporting biodiversity since October 2025.**

## Priority theme 3
## Our Well-Built City

A well planned, sustainable and liveable place that caters for all our current and emerging communities, where our local character and environment is protected and enhanced.

### Relocation and upgrade of the Greensborough War Memorial

Completed in time for Anzac Day 2026, the realignment and upgrade of the Greensborough War Memorial represent a strong community outcome that honours a century of local history while improving parkland functionality. Originally dedicated after World War I to commemorate 15 local servicemen who lost their lives, the central cenotaph has served as a touchstone of remembrance for the community through moves from Main Street in 1919 to War Memorial Park in the 1950s. provided in close partnership with the Greensborough RSL and supported by the Victorian Government's Better Parks and Playgrounds Program, this latest milestone successfully relocates the cenotaph to a purpose-built sanctuary within Greensborough War Memorial Park. Featuring a 0.8 meter low memorial wall crafted from repurposed bluestone from the original memorial, a feature-paved circular plaza, a new Lone Pine tree, and an avenue of eight deciduous trees framing the 'Justin the Tracker Dog' Homefront sculpture, the project creates a deeply respectful and accessible space for ceremonial gatherings while returning former memorial land to open community parkland.

### We delivered eight playground projects across Banyule

Children across Banyule have more opportunities than ever to climb, swing, ride, imagine and connect, with nine playgrounds renewed and a brand-new playground provided this year.

Fresh play experiences, upgraded equipment and landscape improvements were completed at **Vin Heffernan Playground** (Heidelberg Heights), **Maleela Reserve** (Rosanna), **St Clems and Glen Katherine Drive Reserves** (St Helena), **Sackville Reserve** (Montmorency) and **Plenty River Drive Reserve** (Greensborough). A brand-new playground was established at **College Views Reserve** in Bundoora.

At **James Reserve**, a major playground upgrade inspired by Council's Going on a Bear Hunt invites children on an adventure of their own. Through climbing, balancing, crawling and exploring, children discover that they can't go over it, they can't go under it — they'll have to go through it — creating opportunities for imaginative play and outdoor discovery.

Each playground was shaped by the ideas, experiences and local knowledge of nearby residents. Through community consultation, families helped design play spaces that reflect what children enjoy most and what neighbourhoods value in their local parks, creating places where children can play, learn, build confidence and make lasting memories.

**80%**

**of planning applications were decided within required timeframes in 2025-2026.**

## Priority theme 4
## Our Valued Community Assets and Facilities

As custodians of our community, assets, facilities and services, we work to ensure that they are affordable, sustainable, evenly distributed, safe and accessible for all ages and abilities and designed to provide meaningful experiences and connections.

### Rosanna Library opening

On Friday 13 February Council opened the new Rosanna Library. A new partnership with Woolworths in 2020 was pivotal in delivering this magnificent three-storey building, which proudly anchors Rosanna, connecting seamlessly to Rosanna Parklands, the station and Rosanna Village

The vision was to create a place of identity and expression for the Rosanna community. A melting pot of learning, culture, and expression. A collective place for people to come together and share learning and experiences, with a strong connection to nature.

Key features include:

- An expanded children's area
- Co-working and study spaces
- Community meeting rooms, reading zones and quiet areas
- A podcast room and recording studio
- The co-location of Maternal and Child Health services and the Banyule Toy Library, creating a truly integrated community facilities.

**94%**

**of capital works projects were completed on time in 2025-2026, exceeding Council's target.**

### Investing in the Future of Barrbunin Beek Aboriginal Gathering Place

The Barrbunin Beek Aboriginal Gathering Place has undergone an important transformation through funding from the Victorian Government's Aboriginal Community Infrastructure Program. The upgrades have improved accessibility by creating Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant amenities and improving the site's usability for all community members. New facilities include a commercial kitchen to support cultural programs, community meals and workshops, as well as a lively Aboriginal-themed basketball area that provides a welcoming space for recreation, connection and youth engagement. These improvements strengthen Barrbunin Beek as a safe, inclusive and culturally important place where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can gather, learn, celebrate culture and access community-led programs for many years to come.



Figure 8 | The Rosanna Library

## Priority theme 5
## Our Thriving Local Economy

**A thriving, resilient, socially responsible local and integrated economy that encourages, supports and advocates for a diverse range of businesses and entrepreneurship, providing local investment and employment opportunities.**

### Banyule BestBiz Awards 2025

The 2025 BestBiz Awards campaign was a great success, demonstrating the strength and vibrancy of Banyule's business community. This year, Council received more than 8,000 votes for hundreds of local businesses, an incredible response that highlighted both the community's engagement and the value people place on local businesses.

The campaign concluded with a fantastic awards night attended by 170 guests in October. The event provided an opportunity to recognise and celebrate the strong businesses that contribute so much to Council's local economy. On the night, Council proudly announced the winners across 10 categories.

The 2025 BestBiz Awards reaffirmed Banyule's commitment to supporting Council's local businesses. By shining a spotlight on their achievements, Council continue to celebrate the people, passion and hard work that help drive economic growth and make Banyule a thriving place to live, work and do business.




Figure 9 | Banyule BestBiz Awards

### Women in Business Brunch

Banyule's annual Women In Business Bunch was held on Friday 1 May, welcoming about 300 local business owners and their teams for a morning of inspiration, networking and connection.

Guests were inspired by keynote speaker Carrie Bickmore OAM, who shared her personal journey and insights on resilience, leadership, and purpose, leaving the attendees with valuable takeaways to apply in both their personal and professional lives.

The annual event highlighted the strength and diversity of Banyule's business community, with attendees making meaningful connections and celebrating the achievements of women in business across the Banyule. There was a very generous contribution of over 20 local businesses, through sponsorship, donations, and other event support, to help make the event a great success.




Figure 10 | Women in Business event with guest Carrie Bickmore

**7.8 out of 10**

**Community satisfaction score with Council's support for the local economy remained strong in 2025-2026.**

# Priority theme 6
# Our Trusted and Responsive Leadership

A responsive, innovative and engaged Council that has the trust of our community through demonstrated best practice governance, is financially sustainable, and advocates on community priorities and aspiration.

## Health and Wellbeing Plan highlights

Council delivered targeted actions to improve safety, inclusion, connection, active living, environmental wellbeing and lifelong healthy habits across Banyule.

**Building Respectful Communities:** Banyule's 16 Days of Activism campaign strengthened local understanding of gender-based violence prevention. Council shared a plain-language toolkit with organisations, offering practical examples, free training, resources and partnership opportunities. A video featuring Cr Nealy, as Mayor, promoted Respect Victoria's Walk Against Family Violence, with strong Councillor and staff participation in 2025.

**Social Connection with Purpose:** The Connected Communities Advisory Committee working group explored how residents want to connect. With input from the LGBTIQA+, Disability, Age Friendly and Multicultural Champions groups, the group found people want inclusive, accessible, culturally safe, affordable and welcoming activities. Key needs include informal "come and try" options, small low-sensory gatherings, and gentle pathways for people still affected by COVID or facing barriers such as ill health, cost, access or lack of information. A full report is expected by June 2026.

**Every Body Active**: Council supported active living through a free Scouts Victoria school holiday event in September 2025 for 50 primary school children, featuring damper making, shelter building, rock climbing and a sausage sizzle. Council is also developing a new 10-Year Tennis Strategy, informed by 17 tennis clubs and more than 100 resident and casual player responses, with adoption planned for July 2026.

**Healthy Planet, Healthy People:** The Spring Outdoors festival ran from September to November across Banyule, Manningham and Nillumbik, offering three months of cultural walks, reserve tours, citizen science and volunteer working bees. The program supported biodiversity, habitat restoration, practical learning, outdoor activity and community connection.

**Lifelong Healthy Habits:** During Gambling Harm Awareness Week 2025, Council partnered with Gambler's Help Northern (Holstep Health) to raise awareness and promote support. Activities included bus shelter advertising, social media, Banyule Banner, eNews, a Mayor's message, digital displays at Greensborough and Ivanhoe Library and Cultural Hub, and an information session for community-facing staff and organisations on local gambling harm, support services, referral pathways and lived experience.



Figure 11 | Sunset Pride

**74%**

**Community participation in advisory committees reached its highest level in the past four years.**

# Celebrating community through events

## July



- *First Nations Art* From The Banyule Art Collection *(pictured)*
- Disability Pride Month - an evening of conversation, creativity and connection

## August




- *Early Impressions: Painters of the Heidelberg School* from the National Collection – exhibition launch *(pictured)*

## September



- YouthFest 2025 *(pictured)* – 5,500 attendees, celebrating young people with music, activities and community engagement

## October



- *Freedom of Entry Parade* celebrating the Defence Force School of Signals (DFSS) and its connection to our community *(pictured)*

## November



- Family-friendly Malahang Festival *(pictured)*

## December



- Family-friendly Carols by Candlelight event hosted by Wilbur Wilde *(pictured)*
- International Day of People with Disability

## January



- *New Hopin'* - exhibition by young artists from the New Hope street and graffiti art program. (*pictured*)
- Free family-friendly outdoor movies

## February



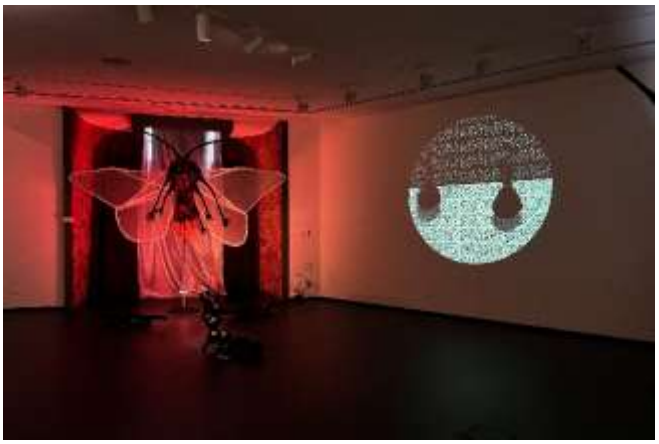
- Twilight Sounds – free music headlined by the Ferguson Rogers Process *(pictured)*
- Free family-friendly outdoor movies
- Sunset Pride Party – celebrating LGBTIQA+

## March




- Eco Festival – a community festival of environmental stewardship *(pictured)*
- Beale Family Day –event in St Helena

## April



- *CHRYSALIS* Exhibition, by Lachlan Plain, co-presented by Melbourne International Animation Festival (MIAF) *(pictured)*

## May



- National Sorry Day Healing Ceremony *(pictured)*
- Chillin' in Banyule – live local music
- International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT)
- National Volunteer Week

## June



- '*The Plunge*' by Ash Allen – Art In Public Spaces in WaterMarc Foyer *(pictured)*
- National Reconciliation Week family day
- LGBTIQA+ Pride month

# Listening to the community

## Community engagement in 2025-2026

Council continued to strengthen its commitment to meaningful engagement as a core part of its work.

- **Community participation:** Residents shared their views on **31 projects**, contributing **4,328 responses** through Shaping Banyule which attracted **54,891 visitors**.
- **Projects shaped by community:** Engagement ranged from playground upgrades to major plans for Rosanna Parklands, Diamond Village and Olympic Leisure Centre.
- **Staff capability:** In 2025-2026, **55 staff completed tailored engagement training**, including 29 who trained in managing challenging conversations.
- **Sector leadership:** Staff shared Banyule's engagement practice at three sector forums, including Municipal Association of Victoria and Local Government Professionals conferences.

## Planning for Banyule's future together

### Shaping the future of Rosanna Parklands

Council invited the community to help shape the future of Rosanna Parklands, one of Banyule's most valued recreational and environmental destinations.

More than **740 residents, park users and community groups** shared their views through pop-ups, surveys and in-person conversations. This feedback highlighted the importance of protecting the natural environment while improving accessibility, pathways and opportunities for people of all ages to enjoy the Parklands.

This feedback was used to shape the draft vision and guiding principles released in May 2026 and will inform the final Rosanna Parklands Management Plan.

### Shaping local neighbourhood centres – Diamond Village

More than **550 people** shared how they use Diamond Village and how it could be improved through a survey, community pop-ups and walking tours. Key priorities included a public toilet, greater shop diversity, a more attractive centre and upgrades to Delta Reserve.

Council used this feedback to develop the draft Diamond Village 2041 Strategy and Public Realm Concept Design. A further **220 people** provided feedback when the drafts were shared in March and April 2026.

Together, the two engagement rounds helped create a long-term vision that reflects community priorities and aspirations. The final Strategy and Concept Design were adopted by Council in July 2026.



Figure 12 | Diamond Village engagement

# Improving communication with the community

Council continued to strengthen how it connects with residents, focusing on improving reach, responsiveness and impact.

- **Communications Strategy Adopted**
  The Communications Strategy 2025-2029 was adopted by Council, and shaped by input from more than 500 community members. It includes 42 actions to improve how Council communicates, including a focus on improving communications with our multicultural community and younger residents.
- **Print communications**
  Eight editions of the Banyule Banner and four ward newsletters per Councillor were delivered to households and businesses across Banyule. More people than ever report getting their information about Council from the Banyule Banner than ever before.
- **Social media growth**
  Council gained 4,292 new followers across Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. New approaches to social media content creation (including more video content) also led to a 63% increase in engagement on Facebook (reactions, comments, shares, interactions etc). Video content is being watched more than ever too, with an increase of 116% on overall watch-time of Council's content.
- **Email engagement**
  The Banyule eNews subscriber list grew to 7,518 people. Email open rates averaged out to 51.2% and click-through rates at 7.2%.
- **Website and online services**
  Council's website received a record 1.4 million visits in 2025-2026, more than double pre-COVID levels. Online service use also grew, with 80,432 forms submitted, 17% more than 2024-2025.
- **Targeted digital campaigns**
  Growth in digital engagement was driven by targeted campaigns and improved online touchpoints:
    - Rates notice emails prompted over 16,000 visits
    - Pet registration notices generated over 11,000 visits
    - Banyule eNews and Age in Focus eNewsletters performed strongly more with than 11,000 visits to websites and webpages generated by the newsletters.

These results show that digital channels are playing an increasingly important role in helping the community stay informed, engaged and connected with Council services and initiatives.



Figure 13 | Diamond Valley Community Support Volunteers Brunch

# Advocating for Banyule

Council alone cannot fund all the programs, services and infrastructure our community needs. That is why we advocate to all levels of government for the right mix of policy settings, regulatory mechanisms and funding.

## Advocacy priorities for 2025-2026

At the Council meeting of **22 September 2025**, Council endorsed eight advocacy priorities for 2025-2026. One of these priorities, to secure a government commitment to a shared user path as part of the Ruthven Street level crossing removal has already been achieved. The remaining seven have been tightened via research and stakeholder engagement throughout the year to focus on advocating for:

- a 24-hour truck ban on local roads (such as Rosanna Road, Lower Plenty Road and Greensborough Road) when North East Link opens in 2028;
- ongoing funding for assertive outreach for people experiencing homelessness;
- a new community services hub in Heidelberg West;
- upgrade of Ivanhoe Aquatic Centre including a full electrification and a switch to renewable energy;
- reforms to deliver new housing in balance with good design, retention of tree canopy and local voices being heard in decision making;
- accessibility and precinct design improvements for Watsonia station; and
- a safety solution for the Civic Drive roundabout.



Figure 14 | Advocacy – Watsonia Station 2026

## Engagement with elected representatives

Throughout the year, Councillors and senior staff engaged with state and federal Members of Parliament (MPs) to ensure Banyule's voice was heard on the issues that matter to our community.

In September 2025, Banyule joined a delegation to Canberra with the *Northern Councils Alliance* and met with various federal Ministers and Members of Parliament to advocate for investment in the northern region.

In June 2026, a delegation of Councillors attended the annual *Australian Local Government Association* (ALGA) conference in Canberra. During the conference, Banyule's delegation met with federal Ministers and their advisors to advocate for investment in local priorities.

Advocacy with members of the crossbench also led to several Questions being asked in the Victorian Parliament on Council's behalf. On 19 March 2026, the Greens Member for North Eastern Metropolitan, asked two questions in the Legislative Council highlighting the need for accessibility improvements at Ivanhoe train station and opportunities to include affordable housing on the Watsonia station car park site. On 13 May, he asked another question about the need for accessibility improvements at Watsonia station.

## Advocacy campaigns

### Connect Melbourne's North

In partnership with the other six Member Councils of the *Northern Councils Alliance*, Banyule participated in the *Connect Melbourne's North* transport advocacy campaign launched in October 2025. A series of videos featuring the seven Mayors was produced to highlight the transport challenges local communities are facing in the northern region. The story was picked by local and mainstream media outlets including an article in The Local Paper and a feature story on the Channel 9 news.

## RACV's *My Melbourne Road* campaign

In 2025, the *My Melbourne Road* survey invited RACV members to vote on the worst intersection in metropolitan Melbourne. More than 12,200 people voted in the campaign and the highest number of votes went to the Civic Drive roundabout, which straddles the municipalities of Banyule and Nillumbik. Off the back of this announcement, Council worked in partnership with the RACV and Nillumbik to run a communications campaign highlighting safety and traffic concerns at the roundabout and calling for investment in a solution.

## Let's be Clear on Glass

Banyule joined an alliance of **38** other Councils to advocate for a rethink of the legislated introduction of a glass-only recycling bin. The L*et's be Clear on Glass* campaign ran in April and May, running a statewide survey to test community support for the proposed fourth bin. Nearly 24,000 people participated in the survey with **824** respondents from Banyule. Banyule results closely reflected the statewide trend, with **84%** opposing the introduction of a fourth bin and **92%** instead supporting the expansion g the Container Deposit Scheme (CDS) to accept wine and spirit bottles.

## Planning Amendment *(Better Decisions Made Faster)* Bill

Banyule joined the Municipal Association of Victoria's campaign to advocate for improvements to the Planning Amendment (Better Decisions Made Faster) Bill. More than a third of the sector's concerns were addressed and led to significant amendments to the Bill before it became legislation in February 2026.

## *Banyule's ready* pre-election campaign

*Banyule's ready* is Council's advocacy campaign leading up to the State election scheduled for 28 November 2026. The campaign was launched on 22 May 2026 on Council's advocacy webpage and social media channels. The campaign spotlights each of the seven remaining advocacy priorities, conveyed through a mix of Councillor and community voices. The *Banyule's ready* webpage also features an election commitment tracker where all pledges that align with Council's advocacy priorities or commit to invest in a Banyule address will be published.

# Funded outcomes

## Ruthven Street Macleod, shared user path

In late November 2025, Council welcomed the news that the Level Crossing Removal project at Ruthven Street Macleod will include the shared user path sought as one of Council's top advocacy priorities. The new shared user path will run along Ellesmere Parade, filling a long-standing missing link in the local walking and cycling network and giving pedestrians and cyclists a safer, more direct connection between Ruthven Street and Davies Street.

## Pick my Park open space funding

The Advocacy program supported the securing of **$1.095 million** for eight open space improvement projects under Round 1 of the Victorian Government's Pick my Park program.

## Upgrading sporting facilities

Received a $2m funding contribution from the Federal Government for upgrades to Ivanhoe Park.



Figure 15 | Opening of the renovated Anthony Beale Reserve

## Supporting community-led advocacy

Advocacy worked closely with Council's Connected Communities Advisory Committee on more accessible rail stations on the Hurstbridge line, focussing on Watsonia and Ivanhoe train stations.

- Advocacy meetings with key personnel at the Department of Transport and Planning and Metro Trains, and with the Disability Services Commissioner
- Advocacy letters to State Ministers
- Facilitated tailored consultation sessions for community members living with disability on the Watsonia station car park design and supporting them to lodge a submission
- Advocacy to elected Members of the cross bench requesting they ask Questions in Parliament on our behalf
- Supporting three members of the community living with disabilities to lodge complaints with the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC)
- Supporting the production of advocacy videos to highlight inaccessible aspects of the network through the perspectives of people with lived experience
- Facilitating a Banyule Disability Champion to participate in the transport focus group for the State Disability Plan.




Figure 16 | Advocacy promotion

## Working with Advisory Committees

Council works with a range of committees to strengthen good governance, collaboration, partnerships and community participation. These committees offer advice to Council on relevant matters, for the purpose of supporting Council to achieve the Banyule Community Vision 2041.

In July 2025, Council inducted five new advisory committees to strengthen community participation: First Nations, Arts and Culture, Connected Communities, Environment and Climate Action, and Sustainable Living. From July 2025 to June 2026, these committees, made up of members with lived experience and professional expertise, met regularly to discuss community priorities in line with their Terms of Reference.

## Internal committees and their contributions

### First Nations Advisory Committee

This committee provided advice on inclusion, access and equity issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. It also supported Council's strategic reconciliation commitments. Made up of up to 9 members with a connection to Banyule's First Nations communities, the committee's contributions focused on:

- **Strategy development** – instrumental in shaping the Marrageil Strategy, adopted in 2024. Now they are guiding the Year 3 implementation of the Strategy.
- **Cultural advice** – supported improvements across multiple projects and initiatives to enhance they connection and responsibilities within the reconciliation space.
- **Reconciliation** – championed the adoption of the Uluru Statement from the Heart and guided Council's approach to the Referendum and events such as Sorry Day, National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week.

## Arts and Culture Advisory Committee

This committee advised Council on strategic planning for arts, culture and heritage. Key achievements included:

- **Strategy development** – helped shape the new Public Art Policy and contributed to the review of the Inclusive Banyule Plan, as well as the refresh of the Pinpoint Artist's Network.
- **Art collections** – provided expertise in curation, gallery and museum management, and the acquisition of new artworks into the Banyule art Collection.

## Audit and Risk Committee

This committee supports Banyule Council in meeting its governance responsibilities. It oversees compliance with laws and regulations, ensures accountability, promotes ethical standards, and monitors the systems and controls in place to manage risk effectively. The Audit and Risk Committee operate to an adopted Audit and Risk Committee Charter and Workplan.

## Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Employment Matters Committee

This committee provides advice and makes recommendations to Council on matters relating to the CEO, including employment, performance, reappointment, recruitment and contractual arrangements. The Committee includes all nine Councillors and is chaired by an independent member who guides and supports its work. The Committee is guided by a Council adopted CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy and Terms of Referenced.

As part of Council's Mandatory Professional Training and Development, the Councillors received training in effective performance management of the CEO, key obligations of the Committee and the CEO in line with the *Local Government Act 2020* and key information regarding the discharging of the CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy.

## Connected Communities Advisory Committee

This committee advised Council on respect, inclusion, understanding and unity across Banyule's diverse communities, helping guide inclusion, health and wellbeing priorities. With up to 20 diverse community members, the committee focused on:

- **Communication and engagement:** Examined the needs of LGBTIQA+, disability, age-friendly and multicultural communities, and contributed to updates to Council's Community Engagement Toolkit.
- **Accessible transport advocacy:** Led advocacy for upgrades to the Watsonia Station ramp and Ivanhoe Station pedestrian bridge, including an advocacy video launched on International Day of People with Disability in December 2026.
- **Inclusive Banyule strategy refresh:** Helped review the Inclusive Banyule strategy and develop draft recommendations for Council.
- **Inclusive places and spaces:** Identified ways to make neighbourhood places more culturally safe, gender inclusive and accessible.
- **Social connection:** Explored how diverse communities prefer to connect and proposed ways to embed inclusion in future social connection opportunities.

## Environment and Climate Action Advisory Committee

This committee advised Council on environmental sustainability, climate action and community-led ecological initiatives. It supported the development and delivery of long-term strategies to protect Banyule's natural environment and reduce emissions. Key themes included:

- **Strategic planning** – Provided advice on major environmental strategies including the Biodiversity Strategy, Corporate Emissions Reduction Plan and Banyule's first Climate Change Adaptation Framework.
- **Monitoring and reporting** – Oversaw the development of two State of the Environment reports and helped refine indicators for future environmental reporting.
- **Community action and grants** – Offered expertise to the assessment panel for Council's annual Environment Grants Program, which funded 51 community and school-based environmental projects during the committee's term.

### Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)

The MAV State Council is the MAV governing body. It is made up of representatives from each member council. Members must appoint a representative to attend State Council meetings, exercise their council's vote and provide regular reports to their council on the activities. The MAV State Council meet twice a year, usually in May and October. Each year, Council appoint Councillor delegate and substitute delegate to the MAV to enable Council to have a vote at each State Council meeting and become a formal member council.

In 2025-2026 Council submitted the following motions to the MAV State Council meetings:

- October 2025 – Tree Canopy to Align with Plan for Victoria MAV State Council 10 October 2025
- October 2025 – Social and Affordable Housing Design Standards
- October 2025 – Permanent Truck Ban in Northeast
- May 2026 – Electric Line Clearance and Urban Canopy Retention
- May 2026 – Support and delivery of promised outcomes for Victorian Big Build Projects

### Sustainable Living Advisory Committee

This committee advised Council on various initiatives ranging from transport planning, dog waste campaigns, structure planning and the climate change adaptation plan. The committee formed a Working Group to review the draft Banyule Design Guide and provide a recommendation to Council.

## External committees

Council participates in external committees and partnerships that support collaboration, advocacy and shared decision-making across the region.

### Darebin Creek Management Committee

Supports the preservation, restoration and environmentally sensitive development of the Darebin Creek Linear Park.

### Metropolitan Transport Forum (MTF)

An advocacy group made up of metropolitan councils, transport organisations, government representatives and environmental groups. The forum works together to improve transport outcomes across Melbourne.

### Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) – State Council Representatives

Council appoints representatives to attend MAV State Council meetings, vote on behalf of Banyule and report back on key activities. The State Council is the MAV's governing body, made up of representatives from member Victorian councils.

### Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action (NAGA)

A regional partnership that develops and coordinates projects to reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions across member councils.

### Northern Councils Alliance

A collective of seven councils: Banyule, Darebin, Hume, Mitchell, Merri-Bek, Nillumbik and Whittlesea. These councils work together to improve economic, social, health and wellbeing outcomes for residents and businesses across the region. A Memorandum of Understanding guides decision-making and voting processes.

### Yarra Plenty Regional Library (YPRL) Board

The Board includes two representatives from each of the Banyule, Nillumbik and Whittlesea councils. Together, they set the strategic direction and policies for the regional library service. The Director of Community Wellbeing represents Council as its delegate on the YPRL Board.

### Yarra Plenty Regional Library (YPRL) Audit Committee

A sub-committee of the YPRL Board that provides advice on financial and risk management matters.

# Improving health and wellbeing in Banyule

Banyule Council supports community health and wellbeing through services, programs, infrastructure and partnerships. This includes maternal and child health, youth services, programs for older adults, arts and culture, employment pathways, social enterprise support, community engagement, environmental health, urban planning, parks and recreation, emergency management and public health protection.

The Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP) is integrated with the Banyule Plan, developed under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*, and reviewed each year. It guides Council's work to improve health outcomes, reduce inequity and support people across all life stages, from early childhood to older adulthood.

Council uses a health equity approach that considers culture, human rights, social and environmental factors, community voice and the different barriers people may face. Key goals include investing in First Nations health, supporting biodiversity and climate stability, embedding equity in health governance, strengthening partnerships and enabling community-led local action.

The MPHWP is built around five priority areas:




Figure 17 | Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP) priorities and icons

## What Council did for health and wellbeing

In 2025-2026, Council delivered 113 actions across the five Health and Wellbeing priority areas. Through the Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029, Council worked to reduce barriers, strengthen inclusion and improve access to services, supports and opportunities for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities.

Key work included strengthening partnerships with Aboriginal organisations, improving cultural safety in Council facilities, supporting community-led inclusion activities and continuing the Connected Communities Advisory Committee so community voices help shape Council decisions.

Council also improved access to services through a new Support Service and Information Navigation Program, planning for the West Heidelberg Integrated Services Hub, inclusive employment pathways, social enterprise support, Auslan Story Time and digital accessibility technology for people with disability.

Council supported social connection and active living through youth spaces, programs for carers and older adults, inclusive recreation, women's swim nights, multicultural family events, Rainbow Space programs for LGBTIQA+ young people, creative arts programs and activities designed with older residents.

Council also recognised the link between healthy people and a healthy environment by increasing tree canopy, planting thousands of indigenous plants, expanding environmental education and nature-based wellbeing programs, improving open spaces and walking connections, and supporting more sustainable living.

Council will continue to focus on health inequities, build stronger delivery partnerships and advocate to other levels of government for the support residents need to live well in Banyule.



## Building Respectful Communities – Banyule Nillumbik Family Violence Network focus on pets

The Banyule Nillumbik Family Violence Network brings together government, community and specialist services every two months to improve outcomes for people experiencing family violence.

Co-convened by Banyule and Nillumbik Councils, the Network creates space to share expertise and strengthen local partnerships. At the March 2026 meeting, Pets of the Homeless Australia shared insights into its Safe Shelter Program, showing how pet support can remove a major barrier for people seeking safety from family violence.



## Every Body Active – First Nations Interschool Cultural Session

Developed in response to First Nations young people's feedback at the Banyule Youth Summit, this session gave students from different schools a culturally safe opportunity to connect through culture, games and creative activities.

Organised by Banyule Youth Services with support from Barrbunin Beek and delivered by First Nations Incursions, the day included yarning, sport, art, structured activities and informal time. Youth Services will build on this by strengthening links between schools and Barrbunin Beek Aboriginal Gathering Place as a safe and welcoming cultural space.



## Lifelong Healthy Habits

Preventing gambling harm helps people, families and communities stay healthy, connected and financially secure. During Gambling Harm Awareness Week 2025, Council partnered with Gambler's Help – Northern to raise awareness about gambling harm, reduce stigma and promote support services.

Council also worked with Gambler's Help – Northern to explore ways to build awareness among customer-facing Council staff so they can better connect residents with local support.

The Banyule Assertive Community Outreach (BACO) partnership is helping people in Banyule who are experiencing homelessness, sleeping rough or facing significant housing insecurity. Delivered through a partnership between Banyule City Council and Merri Outreach Support Service (MOSS), BACO brings together local knowledge, outreach expertise and coordinated support. The program works alongside people to build trust, understand their individual circumstances and connect them with housing and other support services.

The BACO partnership helped secure housing for four people, showing the value of consistent outreach and strong local partnerships. The work has reinforced that homelessness is often linked to broader systemic issues, including housing stress, family violence, health concerns and financial hardship, and that each person's experience is different. Following the positive outcomes of the pilot, Banyule City Council has committed further investment to continue BACO for another year, supporting a coordinated local response that improves housing stability, dignity and wellbeing for vulnerable residents.



## Healthy Planet, Healthy People – Nature Strip Planting Guidelines

Banyule's Nature Strip Planting Guidelines help create greener, more biodiverse streets that benefit people, wildlife and the environment. They encourage suitable planting, including indigenous and pollinator-friendly species, to provide habitat and food for birds, insects and other wildlife.

The guidelines also help protect waterways by increasing vegetation cover, reducing runoff, improving water infiltration and filtering pollutants before they enter stormwater systems. Greener streets also support urban cooling, walking, social connection, mental health, reduced stress and physical activity.

The guidelines balance community participation, environmental care, public safety and accessibility by supporting well-designed planting that keeps sightlines clear and pedestrian movement safe.



## Social Connection with Purpose

The *It Matters To Us* podcast was developed in response to recommendations from the Banyule Youth Summit. It gives young people a platform to lead conversations about issues that matter to them, including racism, belonging and community inclusion.

Working with Banyule Youth Services, young producers designed content, recorded episodes and shared lived experiences. The project built confidence, communication, storytelling and media skills, and launched publicly at Rosanna Library. The podcast will continue as a youth-led storytelling platform.

**Listen to the podcast here.**

## Creating an Inclusive Banyule

In the final year of Inclusive Banyule 2022-2026, Council continued embedding inclusion across services, programs and decision-making, guided by people with lived experience through advisory and champion groups.

Key achievements included the Accessible and Inclusive Customer Service Project, which introduced staff training, adaptive communication tools and visible signs of inclusion to improve access to Council services.

Council also delivered programs such as Rainbow Space, Jets Express, the African Women's Action Group and Inclusive Dungeons & Dragons, supporting social connection and participation for priority communities.

Through events, partnerships and accessibility initiatives, including Midsumma activities, an LGBTIQA+ Seniors Day Out and consultation on accessible public spaces, Council helped create a more connected and inclusive Banyule.

## Celebrating Banyule's diverse communities

In 2025-2026, Council adopted a new approach to celebrating diversity through community storytelling and awareness campaigns that promoted inclusion, belonging and social cohesion.

The *Belonging in Banyule* campaign recognised a range of cultural and faith-based celebrations, including Lunar New Year, Ramadan, Holi, Passover, Easter, Eid, Vesak and World Interfaith Harmony Week, helping foster understanding and connection across communities.

Council also supported key inclusion-focused events and campaigns, including Midsumma Festival, Harmony Week, International Day of People with Disability, Trans Day of Visibility, International Women's Day, IDAHOBIT, World Refugee Day and World Elder Abuse Awareness Day.

Together, these initiatives celebrated Banyule's diversity, raised awareness of different lived experiences, and encouraged a community where everyone feels respected, valued and able to belong.

# How Council spends and delivers services

## Council's financial position this year

Council continues to maintain a strong financial position. Below is a summary of our performance for the 2025-2026 financial year. For more detail, please refer to the Performance Statement and Financial Report sections of this document.

## How Council performed financially

Council recorded a surplus of $17.47 million in 2025-2026, compared with a surplus of $19.09 million in the previous year and a budgeted surplus of $18.08 million. The result was influenced by reduced capital grant funding, including early receipt of Financial Assistance Grant payments from the Victorian Grants Commission, together with higher than anticipated interest revenue.

While overall operating expenditure was lower than budget, primarily due to savings in materials and services, Council achieved an underlying surplus of $4.29 million, significantly better than the budgeted underlying deficit of $0.28 million.

The budgeted underlying deficit formed part of a long-term financial strategy to reinvest Council's own-source revenue into essential services and priority capital investments, while reducing reliance on temporary external funding. This approach supports the long-term sustainability of Council's extensive asset base, valued at approximately $2.6 billion, including roads, buildings, drainage infrastructure, parks and community facilities.

Council is projecting to maintain surpluses from operating activities over the next few years, helping to ensure financial sustainability and continued investment in community infrastructure.

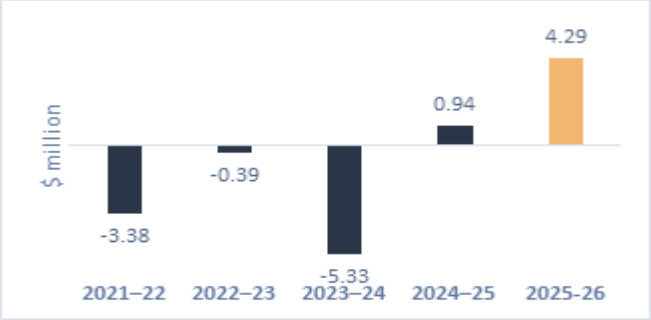



Figure 18 | Adjusted underlying surplus/deficit

## How Council manages cash and debt

Council's cash and term deposits total $98 million, with over 80% allocated for specific purposes. Our working capital ratio shows that Council is well positioned to meet its financial commitments over the next four years.

Thanks to strong cash reserves, Council has continued to reduce debt and deliver major capital works. Although some property sales planned for 2025-2026 did not go ahead, others were brought forward due to favourable market conditions. This shift did not negatively impact Council's financial position.

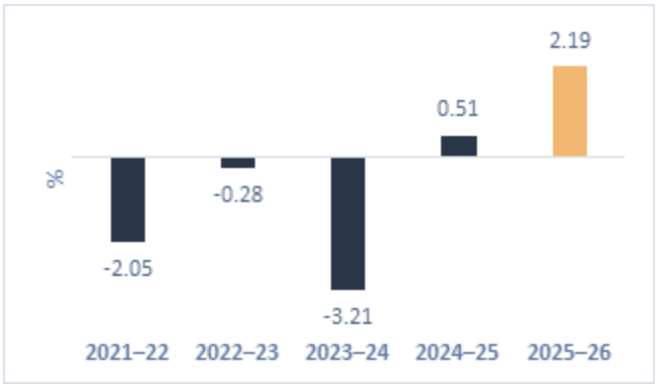



Figure 19 | Adjusted underlying result ratio

## Investing in community assets

Council is committed to maintaining community infrastructure. Our asset renewal ratio remains above 100%, meaning we are investing enough to keep assets in good condition.

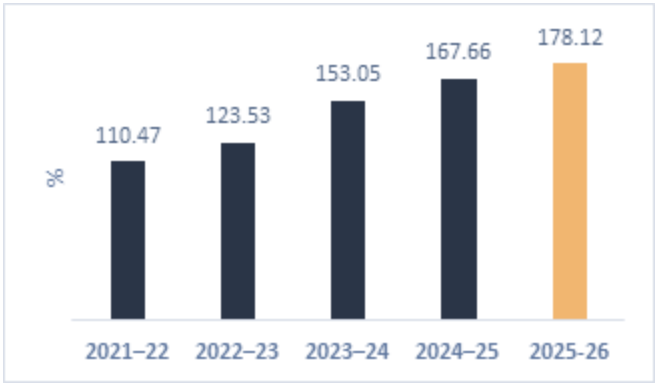



Figure 20 | Asset renewal ratio

By the end of 2025-2026, Council's loans and borrowings ratio fell below 13%, reflecting ongoing efforts to reduce debt through our Debt Management Strategic Plan.

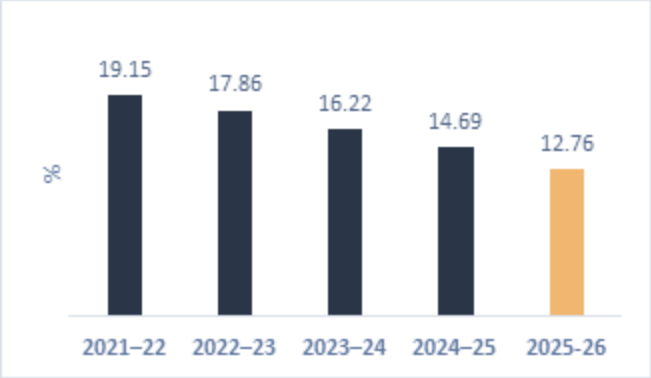



Figure 21 | Loans and borrowings ratio

## Where Council's money comes from

Council generates income from a range of sources, including rates, user fees, fines, grants and contributions. Rates remain the main source of funding, totalling $130.45 million in 2025-2026. The rates concentration ratio, which compares rate revenue to overall income, remains at a healthy level.

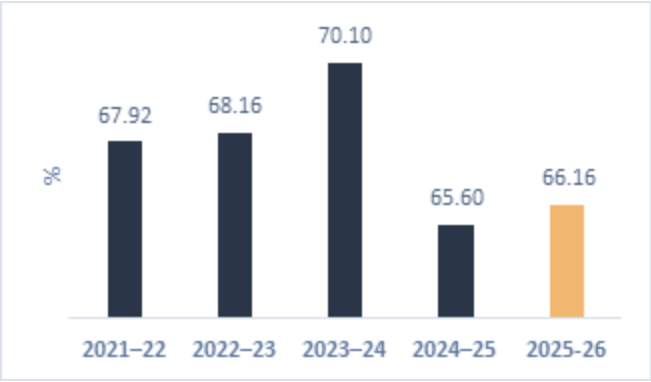



Figure 22 | Rates concentration ratio

Council's Revenue and Rating Plan guides how we manage income and spending. It focuses on finding new ways to generate revenue and manage costs, so we can continue delivering high-quality services and community infrastructure. Council is also committed to reducing the rates burden on residents wherever possible.

Rates were capped at 3.00% for the year, in line with the Victorian Government's rate cap. Through our Financial Assistance Hardship Policy, more than 653 applications were approved, resulting in $150,054 in waived rates for residents experiencing financial difficulty.

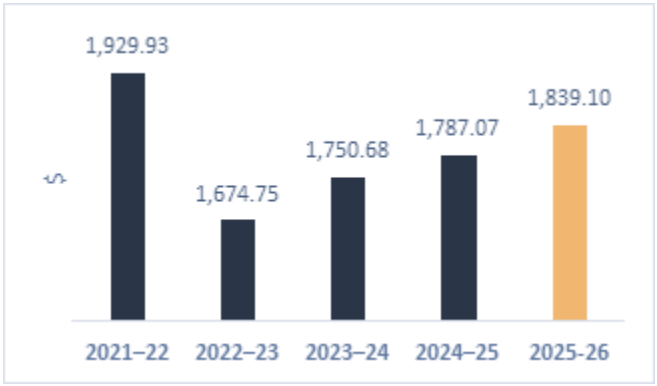



Figure 23 | Revenue level average rate per property assessment

## What Council does

Council delivers more than 150 services to the community. These include youth and family support, health and wellbeing programs, local laws, waste and recycling, open space planning, and economic development and planning. Council is also responsible for managing the annual budget.

Our vision, goals and service improvements are outlined in the Banyule Plan and Budget 2025-2029, which are reviewed in this report. We track our performance using a range of indicators and meet responsibilities under both Victorian and Australian laws.

## How the economy affects Banyule

During 2025-2026, economic conditions remained challenging, with inflation and cost pressures continuing to impact local government operations. While inflation began to moderate compared with previous years, costs associated with labour, materials, utilities and contracted services remained elevated, placing ongoing pressure on Council's operating budget and long-term financial sustainability.

Despite ongoing cost pressures, Victoria's economy remained relatively resilient during 2025-2026. Employment levels remained strong, supporting continued demand across many sectors.

While inflation moderated from recent highs, the cost of living remained elevated and household budgets continued to face pressure from higher housing, utilities and everyday living costs. These conditions contributed to more cautious consumer spending and continued financial challenges for many households.

# What Council built and upgraded

Council continues to invest significantly in Banyule's infrastructure to ensure it meets the needs of a growing and diverse community. In 2025-2026, infrastructure projects valued at $21.7 million were started or completed. These works help maintain and improve the quality of roads, footpaths, drainage, buildings, parks and open spaces.

During 2025-2026 the major capital works included the following:

## Roads, streets and bridges



$12.7 million

Council maintains **543 km of roads**, including **538 km of sealed local roads** and **5 km of unsealed roads**, supported by bridges, carparks and public pathways and footpaths, valued at approximately $515.4 million.

Key projects in 2025-2026 included:

- Replacement of 7,300 concrete footpath bays
- Resheet and upgrade of Monty South Oval carpark.
- Resheeting of 37 local streets (67,000 m² of asphalt)
- Reconstruction of Looker Road Access Lane and Yarra Hill Close
- Construction of footpath along Old Eltham Road
- Construction of the Bolton Street shared use path.

## Drainage



$693,000

Council maintains a broad and complex drainage network, valued at approximately $270.1 million, that plays a vital role in managing stormwater and protecting the environment. This includes **822 kilometres of piped drainage**, **1,014 kilometres of kerbs and channels**, along with **21 flood retention basins**, **35 wetlands and stormwater harvesting systems** and **30 gross pollutant traps** (GPT) or simpler trash rack that help prevent litter and debris from entering local waterways.

Key projects in 2025-2026 included:

- Desilting of Binnak Park Wetland
- Minor drainage upgrades at eleven locations across the municipality.

## Parks and natural environment



Parks and gardens:
$6.1 million

Playgrounds:
$2.2 million

Banyule's parks and natural environment network spans **more than 800 hectares**, including **311 hectares of bushland**, and encompasses a diverse range of community, recreational and environmental assets. This includes **more than 70,000 street trees and over 20,000 open space trees**, along with **irrigated and floodlit sports grounds, picnic areas, barbeques, shelters, gardens and playgrounds**. Facilities support a variety of sports, including cricket, tennis, netball, soccer, athletics, baseball, softball and Australian football. Council manages these assets to deliver high-quality public spaces while **protecting and enhancing biodiversity, expanding the urban forest and increasing tree canopy cover to support a cooler, greener and more resilient city**.

Key 2025-2026 projects included:

- Upgrade of Partington Flats ground and lighting
- Playground renewals at Sackville Reserve, Glen Katherine Drive Reserve and Maleela Reserve Rosanna.

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## Buildings



$25.2 million

Council manages **229 buildings** and **42 picnic shelters**, valued at approximately $417.6 million. These include offices, works depots, libraries, childcare centres, maternal child and health centres, community hubs, leisure and aquatic centres, investment properties and public toilets.

Key 2025-2026 projects included:

- Completion of the Rosanna Library
- Completion of the Olympic Park Pavilion
- Completion of the Macleod Football Pavilion rebuild
- Extension and upgrade to the Yallambie Pavilion
- Renovations at Apollo Parkways Preschool
- Replacement of Yallambie Park public toilet
- Upgrade of Montmorency North and Seddon Reserve changerooms

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# Challenges Banyule faced

## Challenges

### MCH and Immunisation

The key challenge for our MCH and Immunisation Team in 2025-2026 was not service demand alone, but the increasing complexity of family presentations. Mental health concerns, family violence, developmental issues, cost-of-living pressures and difficulty accessing external services all contributed to a significantly higher need for intensive support, service coordination and follow-up than traditionally required within a universal MCH model.

### Homelessness / BACO

The Banyule Assertive Community Outreach program logged 110 reports of community members sleeping rough during the available 2025-2026 reporting period.

### Joyce Avenue Children's Centre closure

Banyule City Council has completed the transition out of long day care service delivery following the closure of Joyce Avenue Children's Centre at the end of March 2026. The decision was informed by declining utilisation, an ageing facility that was no longer fit for purpose, and the need to align services with the Victorian Government's Best Start, Best Life reforms. Throughout the closure process, Council worked closely with affected families, children and staff to support smooth transitions to alternative services, while redeploying staff across the broader Early Childhood Services network.

### Parks and Natural Environment

Increasing housing density and higher levels of on-street parking across Banyule's southern suburbs are constraining access and movement for larger operational vehicles, including trucks, plant and trailers, creating challenges for efficient service delivery and balancing risk management with tree retention and canopy growth.

### Technology, health and safety challenges

Council's Environmental Health team is upgrading its food and health business management system to improve efficiency, streamline regulatory processes and enhance services for local businesses.

### Planning reforms and Council's role

Continued planning reforms introduced by the Victorian Government have reduced Council's control over key areas such as environmental sustainability and neighbourhood character, with new planning controls introduced for mid-rise apartments developments and new car parking rates based on public transport accessibility.

Planning approval pathways which have shifted decision-making authority away from Council continue to be used by developers, challenging Banyule's ability to represent community interests in development matters.

On 1 July 2026, Safe Food Victoria became Victoria's new statewide food safety regulator, bringing together the functions of Dairy Food Safety Victoria, PrimeSafe and key food safety regulatory functions undertaken by local government. Councils will continue to play a critical role in protecting public health by registering, inspecting and regulating local food businesses.

### Delivered Meals

After more than 20 years of supporting older residents through the delivery of nutritious meals, Banyule transitioned out of the provided Meals service on 1 December 2025. Following a review of the long-term sustainability of the service, Council determined that transitioning the program to specialist aged care provider Mecwacare was the best way to support the delivery of high-quality services for clients into the future. Council worked closely with partners to ensure a smooth and seamless handover, with no disruption to meal deliveries or client support throughout the transition.

In its final year, the service provided about 45,000 meals to more than 500 residents, supporting their health, independence and wellbeing. Beyond meal provision, the service offered valuable social connection and wellbeing checks, and Council acknowledges the dedication of staff and partners whose care and commitment helped make the service a trusted source of support for the community.

# What's next for Banyule

## Strengthening community wellbeing and inclusion

Council will strengthen community wellbeing and inclusion by continuing to implement the Marrageil Strategy 2024-2034, supporting Aboriginal self-determination and deepening partnerships with local Aboriginal organisations and communities. This includes expanding programs at Barrbunin Beek, one of only eight Aboriginal Gathering Places in Victoria, to support cultural connection, community leadership and a stronger sense of belonging.

Council will also continue working with Traditional Owners, the First Peoples' Assembly and the Victorian Government as part of the journey toward Treaty in Victoria. Health equity evidence, integrated planning and community engagement will guide the Health and Wellbeing priorities 2025-2029, while the updated Inclusive Banyule Strategy will help Council identify and remove barriers to participation through more inclusive planning.

## Supporting arts, culture and local jobs

Council will continue supporting arts, culture and local jobs by continuing to host a nationally significant exhibition at Ivanhoe Library and Cultural Hub to attract visitors and support local trade, while also mapping arts and culture spaces across Banyule to better understand future community needs.

Council will also implement year one of the new Local Economy Strategy, which brings together the Economic Development, Inclusive Local Jobs and Social Enterprise plans into a single vision linking business growth with community wellbeing. This work will include delivering business events, networking and education sessions, supporting Traders Associations and Special Rate and Charge Schemes, and continuing the Social Enterprise Partnership Program to help residents access meaningful employment.

## Preparing for Early Childhood Services reforms (Best Start Best Life)

Council is preparing for the Victorian Government's Best Start, Best Life reforms by completing workforce forecasting and service planning to support increased kindergarten hours from 2026. This includes preparing for Pre-Prep, supporting families through Free Kinder to improve affordability and access, and updating kindergarten registration policies and procedures so enrolment systems are ready for future reform requirements.

Council also progressed Banyule's Kindergarten Infrastructure Improvement Plan to identify future capacity and facility needs, while strengthening workforce readiness through staffing and recruitment planning. By working with government, peak bodies and neighbouring councils, Council is supporting the successful implementation of the reforms and helping ensure sustainable, high-quality early years programs for Banyule families.

## Nursery upgrades

Progress nursery upgrades to improve capacity, stock planning and support future planting programs.

# Our people and teams

## Council's executive leadership and organisational structure

Banyule Council is led by a Chief Executive Officer and four directors who work together as the Executive Management Team. This team is responsible for leading the organisation, supporting staff and making sure Council services are delivered in a way that responds to community needs and priorities. Council's structure helps bring together the people, services and expertise needed to deliver the Banyule Plan, support good governance and provide more than 100 services to the community. Our work is guided by Banyule's values of Respect, Responsibility, Initiative, Inclusion and Integrity.



**Allison Beckwith**
**Chief Executive Officer**

Appointed CEO in December 2019
33 years local government experience

Bachelor of Applied Science (Consumer Science) – RMIT

Post Graduate of Business Management – Victoria University

Master of Business Administration – La Trobe University

Company Directors Course Graduate Australian Institute of Company Directors

Graduate Executive Leadership Program Local Government Professionals (LGPro)

Table 1 | Executive Office directorate – Department managers and their business units

| | |
|---|---|
| **Allison Beckwith**<br>**CEO and Director Executive Office**<br>• Office of the CEO and Councillors | **Krysten Forte**<br>**Manager Governance and Integrity**<br>• Governance and Integrity<br>• Councillor Requests and Support<br>• Cemetery Operations<br>• Privacy and Freedom of Information<br>• Council Business (Council meeting and briefing matters)<br>• Councillor Conduct<br>• Public Interest Disclosure<br>• Victorian Ombudsman Liaison |



**Natasha Swan**
**Director**
**City Development**

Appointed Director in January 2022

28 years local government experience

Bachelor of Arts/ Bachelor of Planning Design – University of Melbourne

Member and Fellow of the Victorian Planning & Environmental Law Association

Graduate Executive Leadership Program Local Government Professionals (LGPro)



**Marc Giglio**
**Director**
**Corporate Services**

Appointed Director in January 2016

31 years local government experience

Bachelor of Business (Accounting) – Swinburne University of Technology

Fellow CPA Australia

Graduate Executive Leadership Program Local Government Professionals (LGPro)

Certificate in Public Participation – IAP2



**Joseph Tabacco**
**Director**
**Community Wellbeing**

Appointed Director in May 2024

28 years local government experience

Bachelor of Business (Marketing) – Victoria University

Diploma of Local Government (Governance and Administration) – Swinburne University

Graduate Australian Institute of Company Directors

Graduate Executive Leadership Program Local Government Professionals (LGPro)



**Darren Bennett**
**Director**
**Assets and**
**City Services**

Appointed Director in July 2021

27 years local government experience

Bachelor of Arts (Recreation) – Phillip Institute of Technology

Diploma of Project Management – Australian Institute of Management

Graduate Australian Institute of Company Directors

Graduate Executive Leadership Program Local Government Professionals (LGPro)

The table below outlines Council's organisational structure across the four other directorates.

Table 2 | Council department managers and their business units, grouped by directorates

| City Development | Corporate Services | Community Wellbeing | Assets and City Services |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Niall Sheehy**<br>**Manager City Planning, Safety and Amenity**<br>• Building Services<br>• Development Planning<br>• Environmental Health<br>• Municipal Laws and Public Assets<br>• Emergency Management | **Tim Wakeham**<br>**Manager Customer and Transformation**<br>• Enterprise Project Management<br>• Transformation<br>• Customer and Information Services<br>• Information Technology<br>• Data, Integration and Automation<br>• Customer and Digital Experience | **Georgie Meyer**<br>**Manager Inclusive and Creative Communities**<br>• First Nations<br>• Arts and Culture<br>• Community Impact<br>• Community Partnerships<br>• Local Economy | **Greg Gale**<br>**Manager Delivery and Assets**<br>• Building Maintenance<br>• Capital Works<br>• City Assets<br>• Project Management |
| **Jonathan Risby**<br>**Manager Transport and Engineering**<br>• Transport and Development Engineering<br>• Transport Planning and Advocacy | **Gloria Conte**<br>**Chief Financial Officer Strategic Finance and Performance**<br>• Integrated Planning<br>• Financial Accounting<br>• Financial Performance and Planning<br>• Revenue Services<br>• Strategic Procurement | **Shawn Neilsen**<br>**Manager Advocacy, Communications and Engagement**<br>• Advocacy<br>• Communications<br>• Community Engagement and Insights | **Michael Tanner**<br>**Manager Parks and Natural Environment**<br>• Bushland Management<br>• Environmental Operations<br>• Parks Presentation<br>• Sports fields and Parks Assets<br>• Urban Forestry |
| **Nadine Wooldridge**<br>**Manager City Futures**<br>• Environment<br>• Open Space Planning and Design<br>• Strategic Planning and Urban Design | **Julia Limbrey**<br>**Manager People and Culture**<br>• Employee and Industrial Relations<br>• Inclusive Employment Pathways<br>• Learning and Development<br>• Organisational Development<br>• Payroll<br>• Risk and Assurance<br>• Safety and Wellbeing<br>• Talent Management | **Nicole Maslin**<br>**Manager Healthy and Active Communities**<br>• Banyule Leisure<br>• Civic Precincts, Hubs and Community Facilities<br>• Sports and Leisure Contracts Management<br>• Sports, Recreation and Community Infrastructure | **Kathy Hynes**<br>**Manager Operations**<br>• Fleet Management<br>• Operations Infrastructure<br>• Operations Projects and Site Management<br>• Waste Management |

| City Development | Corporate Services | Community Wellbeing | Assets and City Services |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Julian Harvey**<br>**Manager Strategic Properties and Projects**<br>• Spatial and Property Systems<br>• Strategic Properties and Property Services | | **Roberta Colosimo**<br>**Manager Family and Community Services**<br>• Aged Services<br>• Early Childhood Services<br>• Maternal and Child Health and Immunisation Services<br>• Youth and Community Connections | |

# Council's workforce at a glance

As of 30 June 2026, Banyule Council employed 972 individuals, equating to full-time equivalent (FTE) positions. FTE is a standard way of measuring staffing levels based on hours worked. For example, one full-time employee working 76 hours per fortnight equals 1.0 FTE. This helps provide a clearer picture of the workforce, especially when it includes part-time and casual roles. Workforce data is presented in accompanying tables and graphs.

Table 3 | Council FTE staff by executive and directorate, including employment type, gender and total headcount

| Employment type (Gender) | Executive Office | Assets and City Services | City Development | Community Wellbeing | Corporate Services | Total FTE | Total headcount |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Permanent full-time (Female)** | 6.0 | 26.0 | 45.8 | 73.6 | 57.7 | 209.1 | 210.0 |
| **Permanent full-time (Male)** | 1.0 | 156.4 | 57.0 | 22.6 | 40.0 | 277.0 | 278.0 |
| **Permanent full-time (Self-described)** | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 |
| **Permanent part-time (Female)** | 1.4 | 5.8 | 23.1 | 95.7 | 17.1 | 143.1 | 252.0 |
| **Permanent part-time (Male)** | 0.0 | 1.6 | 8.8 | 25.2 | 2.3 | 37.9 | 94.0 |
| **Permanent part-time (Self-described)** | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.2 | 2.0 | 0.0 | 2.2 | 4.0 |
| **Casual (Female)** | 0.0 | 0.0 | 3.8 | 10.5 | 1.9 | 16.2 | 85.0 |
| **Casual (Male)** | 0.0 | 0.0 | 2.4 | 2.0 | 2.2 | 6.6 | 39.0 |
| **Casual (Self-described)** | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.1 | 1.1 | 0.2 | 1.4 | 7.0 |
| **Total FTE/ Headcount** | **8.4** | **189.8** | **141.2** | **233.7** | **123.4** | **696.5** | **972.0** |

Table 4 | Council FTE staff by employment classification and gender

| Employment classification | Female | Male | Self-described | Total FTE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Band 1** | 11.9 | 7.0 | 0.3 | **19.2** |
| **Band 2** | 0.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | **0.5** |
| **Band 3** | 41.9 | 20.8 | 1.4 | **64.1** |
| **Band 4** | 55.8 | 23.3 | 1.0 | **80.1** |
| **Band 5** | 58.4 | 35.9 | 0.0 | **94.3** |
| **Band 6** | 81.2 | 53.8 | 1.6 | **136.6** |
| **Band 7** | 32.3 | 40.5 | 2.0 | **74.8** |
| **Band 8** | 23.9 | 27.0 | 0.0 | **50.9** |
| **Band not applicable** | 62.5 | 113.2 | 0.3 | **176.0** |
| **Total FTE** | **368.4** | **321.5** | **6.6** | **696.5** |

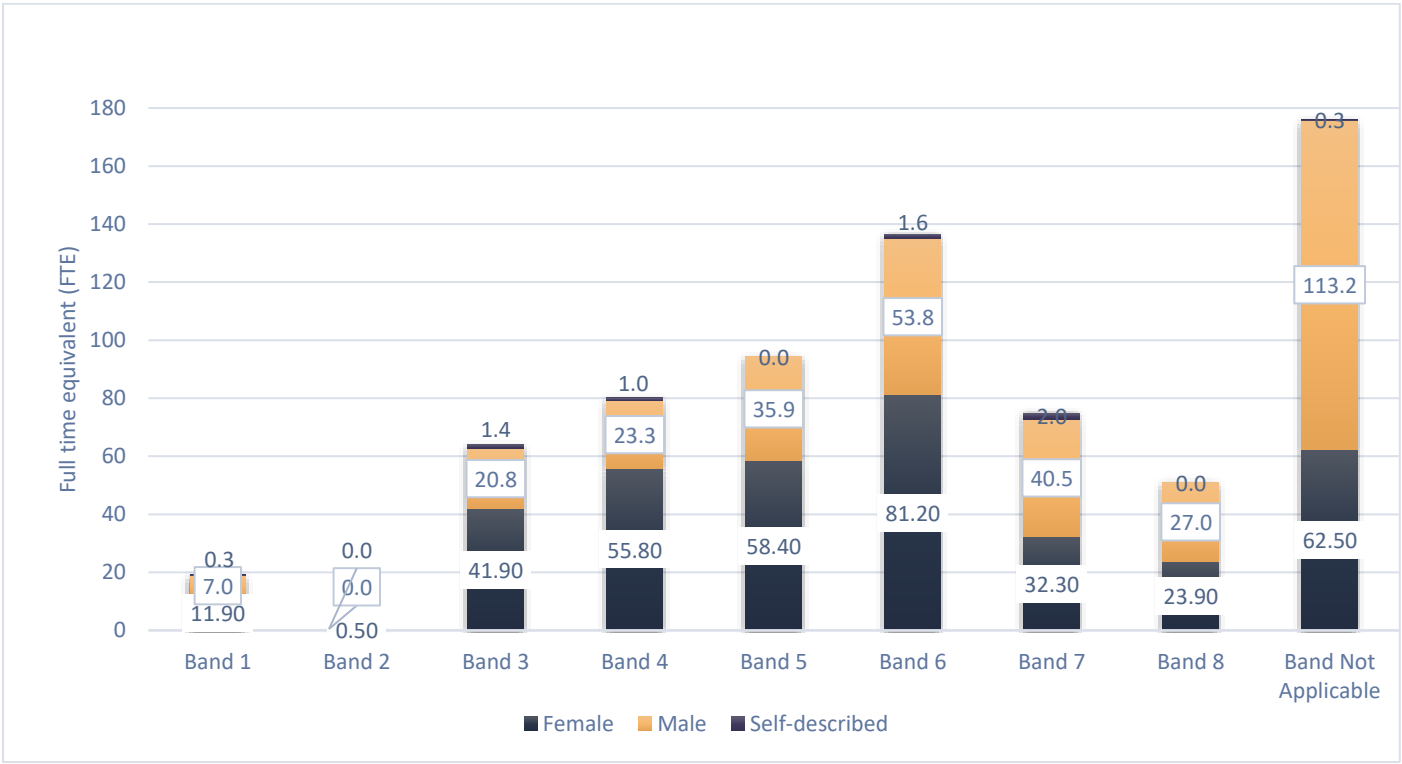


Figure 24 | Council (FTE) staff by employment classification and gender

# How Council works together

## Fostering an inclusive workplace

Council employs more than 1,000 people across a wide range of services. In 2025-2026, we continued to strengthen belonging, equity and inclusion so employees feel respected, supported and able to contribute.

The Inclusive Employment Program provided meaningful opportunities for people who may face barriers to work. In its eighth year, the program received 105 applications and offered 12 placements across Council. Participants received tailored onboarding, coaching, mentoring, workplace adjustments and JobAccess support.

Council also supported future talent through the Workplace Pathway Program, delivering 37 tertiary student placements and 13 work experience placements. These opportunities help people gain practical experience, learn about local government and explore career pathways.

Together, these programs help build a workforce that reflects the diversity of the Banyule community and strengthens inclusive practices across Council.

Key achievements in 2025-2026

- 12 Inclusive Employment Program placements
- 105 applications received
- Tailored onboarding, mentoring and workplace adjustments
- JobAccess support to improve accessibility
- 37 tertiary student placements
- 13 work experience placements
- Planning for future graduate opportunities.

## Championing diversity and inclusion

Council continued to create opportunities for staff to learn, connect and participate in inclusion initiatives.

Activities included International Women's Day, IDAHOBIT, Pride Month, Walk Against Family Violence and the NAIDOC March. These events promoted gender equality, LGBTIQA+ inclusion, reconciliation, allyship and wellbeing.

Key achievements included:

- Completing and submitting the 2025 Gender Equality Audit
- Progressing the Gender Equality Action Plan 2026-2030
- Supporting employee focus groups and consultation
- Continuing the Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Group
- Maintaining inclusive policies and reporting pathways
- Achieving reaccreditation as a Breastfeeding Friendly and Best Practice Workplace.

These initiatives help create a workplace where people feel safe, valued and able to do their best work.

## Growing and supporting Council's people

### Attracting and retaining talent

Council's workforce is central to delivering services for the community. In 2025-2026, Council advertised 204 positions and received more than 6,029 applications.

Recruitment processes were improved through clearer application forms, tailored advertising and greater support for hiring managers. Council also increased in-house management of senior recruitment, reducing reliance on external agencies and delivering savings.

Agency recruitment spending was 45.12% under budget, approximately $1.8 million below the approved cap.

## Professional development and leadership

Council continued to invest in employee development through internal programs, external learning opportunities and regional partnerships.

Key programs included:

- Banyule Coaching and Mentoring Program
- Northern Council Alliance Coaching and Mentoring Program
- LGPro leadership programs
- Women's Network events
- Aspire Leaders Program.

Training focused on leadership, workplace safety, inclusion, cultural safety, communication and respectful workplace behaviours. Staff accessed learning through a mix of face-to-face, online and eLearning options.

Additional support included study assistance, team development activities and career development conversations.

## Supporting career conversations

Employee Development Reviews (EDRs) help staff reflect on achievements, identify development opportunities and align goals with Council priorities.

These annual conversations support career planning, learning and continuous improvement, helping staff grow and succeed in a changing environment.

## Keeping our people safe

Council takes a proactive approach to health, safety and wellbeing, supporting employees to thrive personally and professionally.

In 2025-2026, Council recorded 1,069 safety-related events, reflecting strong reporting and risk awareness. A significant achievement was the implementation of the Safety and Wellbeing Framework, providing an integrated approach to managing physical and psychological health, safety and wellbeing risks.

## Preventing violence against women

Banyule Council continues to take a strong, compassionate and practical approach to preventing violence against women. This work recognises the important role workplaces can play in promoting gender equality, respectful relationships and safe, inclusive cultures.

In 2025-2026, Council continued to embed the Family and Domestic Violence Support Policy, which was endorsed in the previous year. The policy provides confidential, trauma-informed and victim-survivor-centred support for staff experiencing family violence, including access to flexible work arrangements, workplace safety planning, leave and wellbeing services.

Council also progressed Year 1 implementation of its Sexual Harassment Prevention Action Plan. Building on the plan’s launch in 2024-2025, mandatory sexual harassment prevention training was fully rolled out across the organisation. This helped strengthen employee understanding of respectful workplace behaviours, the drivers and impacts of sexual harassment, and the shared responsibility everyone has in creating a safe and respectful workplace.

Whispli, Council’s confidential and anonymous reporting platform, continued to provide staff with an additional safe pathway to raise concerns. This supports Council’s zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment, discrimination and gender-based violence.

Staff also participated in awareness and education initiatives, including International Women’s Day and 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence. These activities helped keep gender equality and prevention of violence against women visible across the organisation.

Together, these actions are helping Banyule build a workplace where safety, respect and inclusion are part of everyday practice, and where Council continues to play its part in contributing to a safer and more equal community.

## Supporting staff wellbeing

Council's wellbeing approach recognises physical, mental, emotional, social and financial health.

Highlights included:

- An Inclusive Wellbeing Calendar featuring Reconciliation Week, Men's Health Week and RU OK? Day
- 153 hours of Employee Assistance Program counselling
- Free flu vaccinations
- Fitness Passport access
- Fruit box deliveries
- Active commuting facilities
- Social Club events that strengthen workplace connections.

These initiatives support a healthy, connected and resilient workforce.

## Child safety is paramount at Council

Council continued to strengthen child safe systems across the organisation in 2025-2026.

Work focused on:

- Embedding the Victorian Child Safe Standards
- Improving reporting and response processes
- Providing targeted training and practical resources
- Supporting teams that work with children and young people
- Maintaining recruitment, onboarding and compliance requirements, including Working with Children Checks.

These actions support Council's commitment to protecting the safety, wellbeing and rights of children and young people.

## Enterprise Agreement No. 9

Council is a purpose-led, values-based organisation that responds to the diverse needs of the community in a resourceful and sustainable way. Our values of integrity, initiative, respect, inclusion and responsibility guide how we work together and deliver services.

A key achievement in 2025-2026 was the successful negotiation and endorsement of **Enterprise Agreement No. 9**. Through a single-employer bargaining approach, Council developed an agreement tailored to the needs of its workforce. The process included regular bargaining meetings, consultation and strong employee engagement.

The Agreement received strong employee support, with **76% voting in favour** and **81% of eligible staff participating**. This reflects high levels of engagement, trust and confidence in the outcome.

Aligned with Council’s purpose and values, the Agreement provides a strong foundation for supporting our people, culture and workplace into the future.

# Recognising staff excellence

## First Nations, Local Economy and Arts and Culture teams

The teams received multiple awards for work supporting First Nations self-determination, inclusive employment, economic development and community events including:

- LGPro First Nations Manager Exchange Program to New Zealand. *Winner,* First Nations Lead
- LGPro Awards for Excellence – Diversity and Inclusion. *Finalist* for the Marrageil Strategy: Victoria's first Self-Determination Strategy
- National Economic Development Awards for Excellence – Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Award. *Winner* for the 1000 Jobs Project: A Tested Model for Inclusive Employment and Economic Growth
- MAVlab Innovation Awards – Sandbox Award for Experimentation Practice. *Finalist* for the 1000 Jobs Project: A Tested Model for Inclusive Employment and Economic Growth
- Australian Event Awards - Best Community Event. *Shortlisted* for the Banyule Lantern Festival.

These awards recognise Council’s leadership in reconciliation, creating meaningful employment pathways for people facing barriers to work and creating events to enhance community participation and wellbeing.

## Tree City of the world

Banyule City Council is proud to be recognised as a Tree City of the World, an international designation awarded by the Arbor Day Foundation and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). This recognition acknowledges Council's commitment to protecting, managing and celebrating its urban forest through strong governance, sustainable tree management, dedicated investment and community engagement. Becoming a Tree City of the World reinforces Banyule's leadership in urban forestry and its commitment to growing a healthier, greener and more resilient municipality for future generations.

# Planning for the future

## Council's approach to planning and reporting

Banyule Council uses an integrated approach to planning, budgeting and reporting to ensure services are delivered effectively and meet community needs. This approach also supports compliance with the Act.

As part of the Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework, Council prepares the following key documents:

- Community Vision – a long-term vision for the next 10 or more years
- Banyule Plan (Council Plan) – strategic priorities for the next four years
- Health and Wellbeing Plan – outlines safeguarding, enhancing, and promoting public health and wellbeing within Banyule
- Financial Plan – financial goals and forecasts for at least 10 years
- Asset Plan – management of community assets over 10 years
- Revenue and Rating Plan – how rates and revenue will be managed over four years
- Annual Budget – spending and service priorities for the next four years
- Quarterly Budget Reports – tracking progress throughout the year
- The Banyule Story (Annual Report) – performance summary each financial year
- Financial Policies – guiding responsible financial management
- Workforce Plan – staffing needs for the next four years.

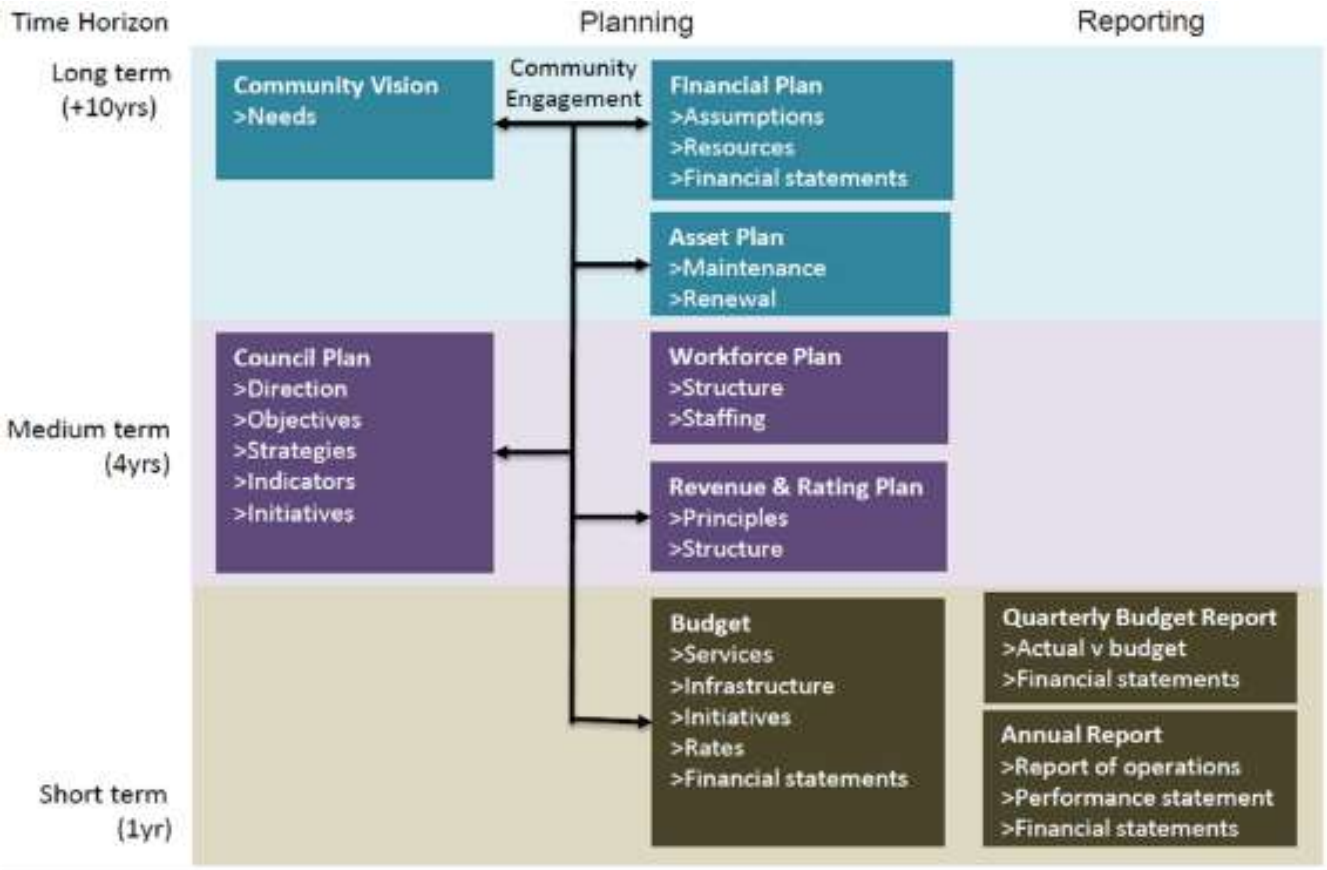


Figure 25 | Victoria's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework *(Source: Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions)*

# How Council tracks progress

Council's performance in 2025-2026 was measured against the Banyule Plan 2025–2029 using:

- **Actions** from the Banyule Delivery Plan 2025–2029 and Budget 2026–2030
- **Strategic indicators** for Council and community outcomes
- The **Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF)**, a mandatory framework used by all Victorian councils to ensure consistent and transparent reporting, which includes indicators across:
    - Service delivery
    - Financial performance
    - Sustainable capacity.

Council also reports on the services funded in the Budget and who in the community benefits from those services.

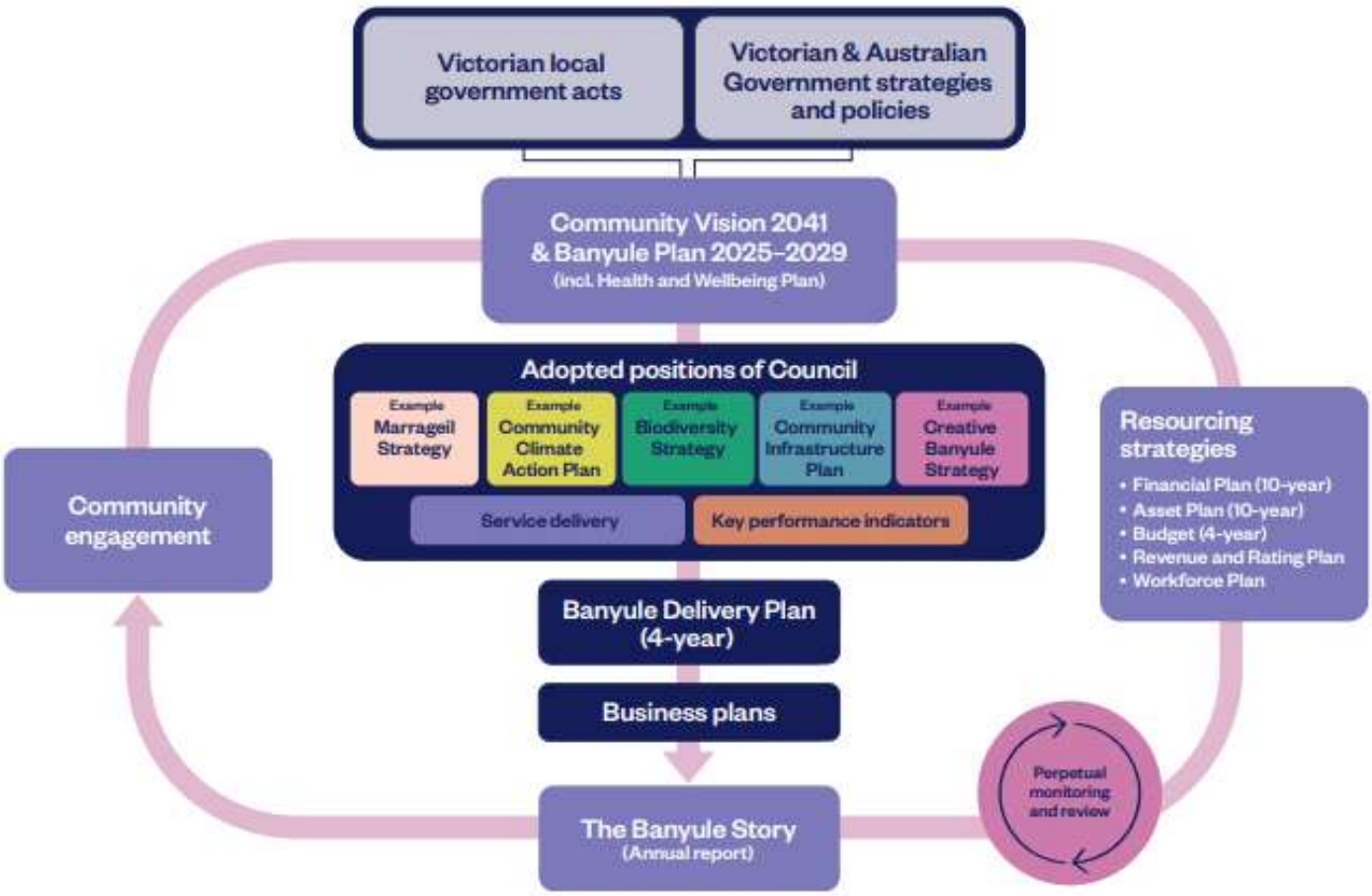


Figure 26 | Banyule's integrated planning model

This integrated approach ensures decisions are informed, resources are used wisely, and services continue to meet community expectations. It also helps Council deliver on the Community Vision and the Banyule Plan 2025–2029, by aligning long-term goals with annual actions, budgets and performance measures.

# How Banyule measures success

The following pages summarise 2025-2026 results for the Delivery Plan, Health and Wellbeing Plan and each Priority Theme, including Delivery Plan actions, strategic indicators (KPIs) and LGPRF measures.

## Delivery Plan Year 1 results

The Delivery Plan sets out the actions Council committed to delivering during the first year of the Banyule Plan.

At 30 June 2026, 46 of the 56 Year 1 actions had been completed, with no actions postponed. The summary below shows the final status of these actions.

### Action results overview

The chart below shows the status of Delivery Plan actions as at 30 June 2026.

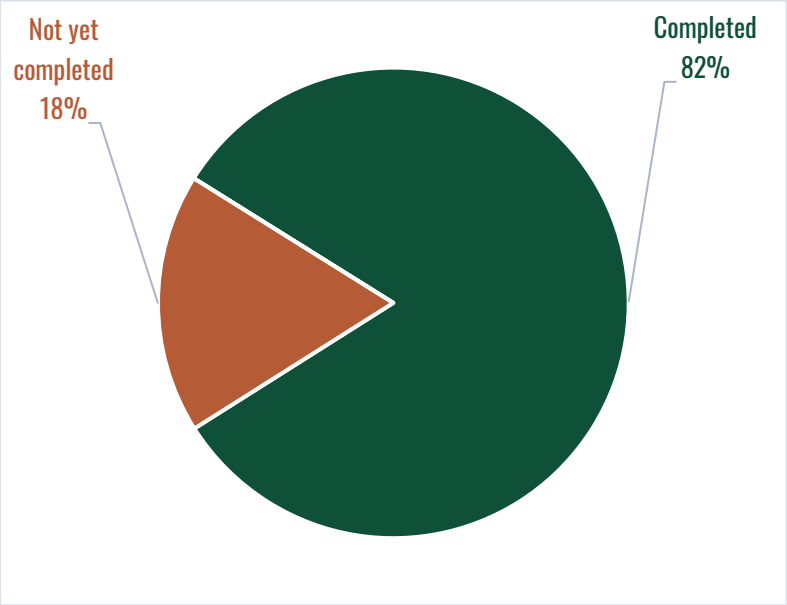


Figure 27 | Status of Delivery Plan Year 1 actions as at 30 June 2026

### Year 1 action results

#### 46 actions completed

These actions were completed, or reached at least 90% completion, by year end. For reporting purposes, actions that reached 90% or more completion are counted as completed.

#### 10 actions not yet completed

These actions had not yet reached 90% completion by 30 June 2026 and will continue into the next reporting period.

#### 0 actions postponed

No actions were postponed or rescheduled during the year.

## Progress on outstanding Council Plan 2021–2025 actions

When the Banyule Plan 2025–2029 was adopted, Council committed to monitoring and reporting on actions from the Council Plan 2021–2025 that were not carried across into the new Banyule Delivery Plan.

Of the 14 actions that remained outstanding at the end of the Year 4 Annual Action Plan, 10 had been completed by 30 June 2026 and one was still in progress. Three actions were postponed during 2025–26 but are scheduled to recommence:

- Heidelberg Theatre Storage Upgrade: construction is scheduled to recommence in 2026–27, with works expected to be completed by 30 June 2027.
- Integrated venue booking system and event management solution: postponed pending completion of Project Atlas. Delivery is scheduled to commence from 2026–27, with a completion date to be confirmed.
- Asset Management System implementation (Phase 1): postponed in 2025–26, with implementation planned to begin in 2027–28 and completion targeted by 30 June 2028.

Council will continue to monitor and report on these actions until they are completed.

# Strategic indicators – Summary of results

To track progress towards the goals in the Banyule Plan, Council monitored 42 strategic indicators, also known as Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

These indicators were grouped into two categories:

- **Council indicators**
  These measure outcomes that Council is directly responsible for delivering and help show how effectively services, projects and priorities are being delivered.
- **Community indicators**
  These measure broader outcomes that Council can influence, but does not directly control. They help track long-term changes in areas such as wellbeing, inclusion and environmental sustainability.

These indicators continue to be used in the Banyule Plan to monitor progress and provide transparent reporting to the community.

## Status used in reporting tables

✓ = Achieved target ⇆ = Close to target ✗ = Did not achieve target

*Close to target means the result was within the acceptable range of the target, taking into account whether a higher or lower result is preferred.*

## KPI results overview

The chart below shows how Banyule's KPIs performed in the first year of the Banyule Plan.

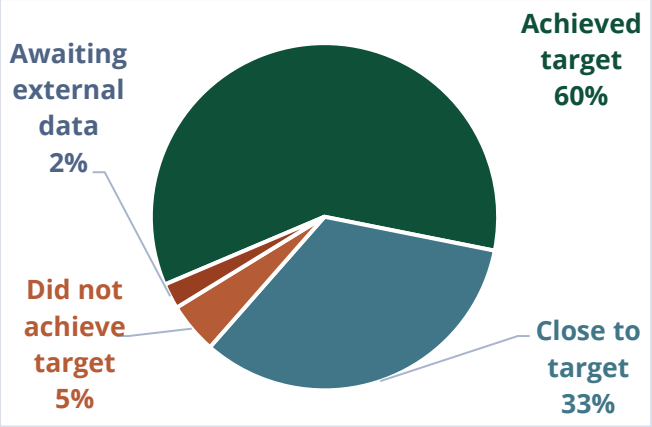


Figure 28 | Status of Banyule Plan KPIs at end of Year 1

## Year 1 KPI results

### 25 KPIs achieved target

These indicators met or exceeded their Year 1 target.

### 14 KPIs close to target

These indicators were within the acceptable range of their Year 1 target.

### 2 KPIs did not achieve target

These indicators were below their Year 1 target and will continue to be monitored and reported on in future years.

# Delivering on the Delivery Plan and Health and Wellbeing Plan

The Banyule Plan is Council's main strategy for the next four years. It sets out priorities identified by the community through broad engagement. The Delivery Plan turns these priorities into practical actions and services, funded through Council's annual budget.

The Banyule Plan also includes the Health and Wellbeing Plan, which outlines Council's goals to support the health and wellbeing of everyone in the community. Many actions in the Delivery Plan directly support these goals. Other important activities outside the Delivery Plan also contribute. Together, they form a whole-of-Council approach to building a healthy, inclusive and resilient Banyule.

The infographic below gives an overview of the Health and Wellbeing Plan. It shows the plan's vision and aim, the life stages it supports, the three foundations for living well and the five health and wellbeing priorities that Council is focusing on.




Figure 29 | A summary of Banyule's Health and Wellbeing Plan
*A full accessible description of this infographic is provided in Appendix A.*

*Read the full Banyule Plan and Delivery Plan at banyule.vic.gov.au.*

# Delivery Plan results by Health and Wellbeing Plan priority

Many Delivery Plan actions contribute to the goals of the Banyule Health and Wellbeing Plan. The summary below shows how the 26 related actions were delivered across each health and wellbeing priority at 30 June 2026.

**Health and wellbeing priority icons identify the relevant health and wellbeing priority.**



### Building Respectful Communities

8 actions in the Delivery Plan

8 actions completed



### Lifelong Healthy Habits

4 actions in the Delivery Plan

3 actions completed

1 action not yet completed



### Every Body Active

3 actions in the Delivery Plan

2 actions completed

1 action not yet completed

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### Healthy Planet, Healthy People

5 actions in the Delivery Plan

4 actions completed

1 action not yet completed



### Social Connection with Purpose

6 actions in the Delivery Plan

6 actions completed

A safe, healthy, vibrant and connected community where people of all ages and life stages love to live, work and stay; diversity and inclusion are valued and encouraged.

# What Council delivered

## Welcoming and inclusive sports pavilions

Council completed upgrades to five sporting pavilions across Banyule to support the growing participation of women, girls and gender-diverse people in community sport. provided through a joint investment by Council and the Victorian Government, the upgrades provide modern, welcoming and inclusive facilities that improves participation and retention of female players, umpires and officials. Local sporting clubs can now grow their female teams.

The pavilions primarily support local sporting clubs involved in Australian rules football, soccer, cricket and other sports during their allocated seasons. Outside of sporting club use, the facilities are available on weekdays for community groups, delivering a range of programs and activities that benefit the community.

### Montmorency North Pavilion

Completed in May 2026, the Montmorency North Pavilion now has female-friendly and accessible change rooms for players and umpires, increased storage and sustainability improvements. The pavilion is used by the Montmorency Football Netball Club, Montmorency Junior Football Club and Montmorency Cricket Club.



Figure 30 | The opening of Montmorency North Pavilion

### Olympic Park Pavilion and Master Plan Completion

February 2026 marked the completion of the Olympic Park Master Plan, one of Banyule's most important sport and recreation projects. Supported by $10.5 million from Council and $8 million from the Victorian Government, the project transformed Olympic Park Reserve with upgraded playing fields, lighting, synthetic pitches, shared paths, community spaces and a new accessible multi-purpose sports pavilion. The facility supports local sporting groups such as Heidelberg United FC and Olympic Colts Cricket Club to grow their female participation. Community Groups have started to use the facility during the day for learning and social connection programs.




Figure 31 | Olympic Park Pavilion

### Anthony Beale Pavilion

Completed in November 2025, the Anthony Beale Pavilion now has female-friendly change rooms for players and umpires, a new kitchen and canteen, more storage and improved landscaping. The pavilion is used by Greensborough Junior Football Club, Diamond Valley Cricket Association and other local sporting groups.

### Macleod Pavilion

Completed in March 2026, the Macleod Pavilion has female- friendly, accessible changerooms for players, umpires and officials, new office, new social room and kitchen. The pavilion is mainly used by the Macleod Junior Football Club, Macleod Cricket Club and other sporting groups.




Figure 32 | Macleod Pavilion

### Yallambie Park Pavilion

Completed in June 2026, the Yallambie Park Pavilion redevelopment provided new male and female accessible change rooms and showers, accessible parking, new bike facilities, landscaping improvements and a new public toilet near the playground. The pavilion is home to the Banyule Bulls and Banyule City Soccer Club.

## Supporting First Nations Families Through Water Safety

This year saw the launch of Little Boorais, a targeted swimming and water safety program for First Nations families at Ivanhoe Leisure Centre.

Designed specifically for First Nations parents and children, the weekly program provides a culturally safe and welcoming environment for families to build confidence in and around the water. Sessions are offered for children under three years of age as well as a dedicated group for children aged three to five years.

The program has already provided important benefits. Parents have reported increased confidence in supporting their children's water safety journey, with one participant sharing that they felt confident enough to take their child to the pool independently for the first time outside of lessons. Stories such as this demonstrate the powerful impact of providing inclusive and targeted opportunities that reduce barriers to participation.

## Banyule's largest National Reconciliation Week

Banyule City Council celebrated its largest National Reconciliation Week (NRW) to date, bringing together the community to recognise and strengthen relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the wider community. Held from 27 May to 3 June 2026, the week featured a range of events, including National Sorry Day Healing Ceremony at Malahang Reserve, a staff Flag Raising Ceremony, and community Family Day in partnership with Barrbunin Beek Aboriginal Gathering Place. More than 1,200 people participated across the week, making it the most successful NRW program Council has provided. The program was led by Council's First Nations Unit in partnership with Traditional Owners, First Nations organisations, community members and local partners. The strong attendance reflects the growing commitment to reconciliation and creates opportunities to learn, connect and celebrate Aboriginal cultures, histories and achievements.



Figure 33 | Reconciliation Week

## Service Navigation

Service Navigation responded to 437 enquiries from community members between July 2025 and June 2026.

The most common support needs related to community services, social connectedness, financial hardship, housing and homelessness, health and wellbeing, and navigating complex service systems.

Service Navigation also expanded outreach across neighbourhood houses, libraries, community centres, community events, shopping centres and partnership activities to improve visibility and access.

## Youth Services and Jets

Banyule Youth Services recorded more than 20,000 youth engagements across workshops, outreach, events, individual support, cultural inclusion programs and Jets activities during 2025-2026 including:

- 1,200 young people engaged through Jets facility and services from July 2025 to June 2026. This includes young people attending programs, drop-in, work experience, tours, community bookings and facility use.

Across broader Youth Services activity in 2025-2026, the team recorded strong engagement across multiple streams, including:

- 2,692 young people through school workshops
- 1,910 attendances across 46 school holiday events
- 6,108 outreach contacts, including school walkthroughs and hotspot outreach
- 603 instances of individual support
- 918 parent/carer engagements through workshops and info sessions
- 5,500 estimated YouthFest attendance
- 442 First Nations engagements
- 793 CALD/AWAG engagements.

Total engagements = 20,456.

## Jets Block Party

On 12 December, **Banyule Youth Services (BYS)** hosted an end of year celebration for young people enrolled with programming at Jets.

This family friendly event encouraged young people to bring along their friends and family to show them the community they are so strongly connected to. Running from 3-7pm the event included live youth performances, Gaming tournament, art activities, food and a way for young people to connect across programs. The event offered several paid and volunteer opportunities to young people through roles such as; performing, photography, workshop facilitation or behind the scenes event planning and saw 80-100 patrons through the doors.

As young people eagerly engaged in indoor and outdoor activities, parents offered their feedback and praise to staff highlighting the positive impact the Jets community has had on their young people.

Scouts Victoria School Holiday Program

In partnership with Scouts Victoria, Council provided a free school holiday program in September 2025 that encouraged children and families to get outdoors, learn new skills and connect with nature.

The day featured a range of hands-on activities including damper making, shelter building, climbing and other outdoor adventures, along with a free sausage sizzle for participants. The program successfully combined recreation, learning and fun while showcasing the opportunities available through local Scout Groups.

By introducing children and families to outdoor activities and local community organisations, the program helped encourage greater participation in active recreation while strengthening awareness of local opportunities available within Banyule.



Figure 34 | Participants in the Banyule Abilities Unleashed program at Nets Stadium.

## Banyule Abilities Unleashed

The come and try sports program for people with a disability on 21 November 2025 at Nets Stadium at Macleod attracted forty three students from Concord and Diamond Valley Special Development School. Students had the opportunity to try different sports activities including athletics, bocce, basketball dance and e-bikes. Council continues to run a regular inclusive sports program at different venues across Banyule.

## Somali Youth Employment Forum

On the 14 of February, Banyule Youth Services provided an employment forum for young Somali Australians that created meaningful connections with working professionals from a range of industries. The forum featured a panel of professionals who shared their personal career journeys, practical insights and advice, and reflections on navigating education and employment pathways. Through open discussion and networking opportunities, attendees could ask questions, build confidence, expand their professional networks, and gain a clearer understanding of existing and emerging career opportunities available to them.

## Immunisation support

Our Banyule Immunisation service provides accessible and reliable vaccination services for infants, children, adolescents, eligible adults and the broader community. Our service provides:

- Free National Immunisation Program vaccines, childhood vaccinations, catch-up schedules, influenza vaccines and funded RSV immunisation programs.
- Accessible community clinics, school-based vaccination programs, vaccine education and support to build confidence in immunisation.
- Outreach, tailored support, reliable health information and safe vaccine delivery for residents experiencing vulnerability
- 3,938 clients were seen
- 8,898 vaccines given
- 20 school visits for 3,678 vaccines
- 2,850 flu vaccines

Nillumbik Immunisation service delivered by Banyule Service year 2025-2026

- 1,643 clients were seen
- 3,667 vaccines given
- 7 school visits for 903 vaccines
- 581 flu vaccines.

## Major festivals and events

The **Malahang Festival** was a free, family-friendly event celebrating culture, community and diversity. The program featured performances, stalls and inclusive activities for all ages and abilities. Highlights included free children's rides and a community stage showcasing local artists and First Nations performers Murundaya Yepenga, Japanese drumming, belly dancers and Bollywood performers. Attendees also enjoyed a parent zone and chill space and a range of free workshops, including floristry, circus skills, clay making, terrariums, henna art, gardening, a learn-to-skate clinic, plus a variety of cultural and community groups such as Persian arts & crafts, community gardens, Banyule Scouts, and the Textile Art Community.

**Eco Festival** returned in 2026 to Petrie Park, for a festival of ideas and hands-on activities. 2,500 people attended. The event focused on environmental stewardship and sustainability, showcasing community and Council-led action while inspiring participants at all stages of their sustainability journey. The program was structured around five key themes: climate action; EVs and sustainable transport; biodiversity, urban forest and water; food sustainability; and the circular economy and waste reduction. It introduced a range of waste reduction and sustainable programs such as reusable dishes in the food courts, and the stage was entirely powered entirely by Electric Vehicles from Council's fleet.

**Carols by Candlelight 2025**, held at Greensborough War Memorial Park, continued to attract one of the largest audiences in the annual events program. This family-friendly event featured live performances by First Nations artists Isaiah Firebrace and Ruva, free Santa photos, children's activities and food vendors, and remains a strong community tradition. Local identity, Wilbur Wilde hosted the event.

**Chillin' in Banyule** provided a large-scale local music program, presenting over 30 live performances across 17 venues throughout Banyule and showcasing local artists and bands close to home. The program was launched at Empire Music Studios in Heidelberg West, where 20 local participating musicians were awarded vouchers to the value of $550 of recording studio time, at Empire Music Studios.

**The St Kilda Film Festival** in Banyule returned for another sellout season. provided at HOYTS Cinemas in Greensborough through a partnership with the City of Port Phillip, the program featured a curated selection of Australia's leading short films from the festival's 40th anniversary collection. -

**Outdoor Movies** provided free, family-friendly screenings across the Banyule, with two double feature events provided in 2026 to encourage community connection in shared outdoor spaces.

**Twilight Sounds** was a standout event held at Heidelberg Park Oval, attracting a large crowd (6,500 people) to a free outdoor concert celebrating live music. The 2026 highlight performance by *The Ferguson Rogers Process* drew strong interest, reinforcing the event's reputation as a major drawcard to Banyule. The event also catered for younger patrons with a free kids' zone featuring craft workshops, hair braiding and face painting.

**Midsumma Festival Event** – Sunset Pride 2026 at Greensborough Walk came alive on a balmy February evening in 2026 as more than 1,000 LGBTIQA+ community members, friends, families and allies filled the space with colour, music and celebration for Banyule's annual Midsumma Festival event.

Hosted by Visit Greensborough, the event brought together over 40 lively stalls, from LGBTIQA+ makers and market traders to local services, creating a lively hub of connection at the heart of the Walk.

## Storylines Exhibition

This exhibition celebrated the many ways First Nations women of Barrbunin Beek Aboriginal Gathering Place express their stories and experiences.

It recognised the women of the Storylines Women's Group, who came together to connect through art, story and culture, alongside women from multiple generations connected to the Barrbunin Beek community.

Through dance, art, weaving, sculpture and poetry, the exhibition highlighted diverse forms of storytelling used to share culture and strengthen connections to Country and songlines.

The opening event attracted over 100 people to celebrate and enjoy these impressive artworks.




Figure 35 | Active Banyule Plan front cover

## Women in Sport Night

In July 2025, Council provided its annual Women in Sport Night, bringing together more than 80 representatives from local sporting clubs to celebrate and support women's participation and leadership in sport.

The evening featured Olympic Taekwondo gold medallist Lauren Burns, who shared her inspiring journey of resilience, determination and success. Participants were energised by Lauren's practical and engaging presentation, with many joining her on their feet to learn some taekwondo moves firsthand.

The event provided an opportunity for local sporting communities to connect, share experiences and continue building inclusive sporting environments where women and girls can thrive.

## Banyule 2025-2026 Grants Ceremony

On Tuesday 19 November, Banyule City Council hosted its Annual Grants Ceremony at the Greensborough Council offices, celebrating the strong contributions of local organisations. Funding was awarded across the three grant streams of Community, Arts & Culture, and Environment, reflecting Council's commitment to inclusion, creativity, and sustainability. In 2025, Council supported 27 community projects totalling $170,000, 6 arts and culture projects totalling $59,700), and 15 environment projects totalling $90,000, ranging from urban farming and disability inclusion programs to biodiversity programs, creative workshops, and renewable energy projects. The ceremony highlighted the passion and innovation driving these community-led efforts, reinforcing Banyule's vision of an inclusive, lively, and environmentally responsible Banyule.

## Pickleball: Building Connections Through a Fast-Growing Sport

One of the year's standout successes has been the introduction of pickleball programs across Banyule. What began as a trial program at NETS Stadium in Macleod during February and March quickly exceeded expectations, attracting strong participation and very positive feedback from the community. Due to continued demand, the program has now become a permanent weekly offering provided by Banyule Leisure staff. The program has proven particularly popular among older adults aged 55 and over, providing not only opportunities for physical activity but also meaningful social connection.



Figure 36 | Pickleball session participant at Nets Stadium

## Bringing Generations Together Across Banyule

In 2025-2026, Banyule's Older Adults Social Support Group (SSG) partnered with Audrey Brooks Memorial Preschool, St Bernadette's Primary School and Ivanhoe Grammar to deliver 18 intergenerational sessions over the course of the year. These programs brought together a total of 85 young people and 76 older adults aged 65+ years, including participants living with dementia, to share experiences and learn from one another through purposeful social engagement.

These sessions were held at Bellfield Community Hub and local schools. The sessions featured several social and creative group activities including shared art making, group games, sing-alongs, book readings and a storytelling project where Ivanhoe schools students learned about the older adult's lives and transformed their memories into personalised photo books.

Council's intergenerational programs have been integral to bridging the generational and social gaps between young and older people, creating opportunities for community connection, skill-building and fostering understanding across generations of Banyule, raising greater awareness of ageism.





Figure 37 | Students presenting older adults with their life story photo books at Ivanhoe Grammar

## YouthFest 2025 celebrates youth and diversity

On 21 September, Banyule Youth Services (BYS) hosted the annual YouthFest at Macleod Park, attracting 5,500 residents for a lively celebration of youth culture, creativity and community connection. The event featured free amusement rides, food trucks, interactive workshops, live music, free clothes grab stall and the Youth Marketspace. More than 140 young people contributed through performances, volunteering and paid roles, helping shape the event and build their skills and confidence. Youth Services

Festival stalls promoted learning on topics such as cultural diversity, First Nations perspectives, LGBTQIA+ inclusion, environmental sustainability, youth consultation, mental health and navigating public transport safely. The historically adored lower sensory zone was further expanded to incorporate a third space 'The Echo lounge' which provided an area where young people could talk, eat and connect in a quieter environment, without compromising the sensory input in the nest.

This new addition was in response to 2024 feedback and ensuring the festival is adapting to the changing needs of local young people. The echo lounge also trialled the first ever silent disco which was positively received by young people. These refined features are key factors in ensuring the event is inclusive for young people with disabilities and neurodiversity.

YouthFest 2025 continues to be a valuable platform for young people to connect with others, showcase their skills and interests and take part in shaping their community. It reflected Council's commitment to inclusion, youth leadership and accessible events.

## Community Champions advocate for accessibility

In December, to mark International Day of People with Disability, seven of Council's local Disability Champions road-tested three of Banyule's train stations – Montmorency, Watsonia and Ivanhoe- to find accessible features that support all people to enjoy the benefits of safe and accessible train travel. They were looking for features like Tactile Ground Surface Indicators (TGSI's), ramps, hearing loops and signage.

Council's Champions liked the state-of-the-art accessibility features at the new Montmorency station. Their assessment of the Watsonia and Ivanhoe stations were mixed. At Watsonia, they noted accessibility features were present, but old and in poor condition. They found the steep, long switchback ramp caused safety and accessibility issues, especially for people with disability and those with health conditions and discovered the TGSI's were worn and damaged. At Ivanhoe, they celebrated the new TGSI's but identified the old, slippery wooden pedestrian bridge with steps prohibited use by many, including people in wheelchairs.

Community-led advocacy campaigns are important as Council need to work together to advocate to the Victorian Government for station upgrades, so all stations are as accessible as Montmorency. Watch the Disability Champions video here Youtube Disability Champions.



Figure 38 | Ivanhoe train station

## R U OK? Day

The Age Friendly team provided an R U OK? Day event featuring guest speaker Simon Sinnott from Beyond Blue, who shared his personal journey and experiences with mental health. His honest and insightful presentation resonated with the participants and highlighted the importance of open conversations around mental wellbeing.

A total of 86 participants attended the event, and feedback was very positive. Many attendees expressed appreciation for both the speaker and the opportunity to engage in meaningful dialogue about mental health.



Figure 39 | The R U Ok? Day event

## LGBTI+ Fun Day Out

The LGBTI+ Fun Day out was held in October at Preston City Hall. This event was the first cross council partnership between the City of Darebin, City of Whittlesea, Nillumbik Shire and Banyule City Council, celebrating the LGBTI+ older adults in the community.

The event attracted about 136 participants across Victoria, along with dignitaries, councilors, mayors, managers and staff from all four councils. The day featured entertainment, trivia, roving performers, magic acts, caricature drawings, and a range of information stalls where participants could learn about services and support available to them. It was a very successful and well-received event that brought the community together in celebration and connection.

## Art and community – New Hope program, murals in Banyule

Banyule Youth Services' New Hope street art program continues to provide creative opportunities, meaningful community connections and positive outcomes for young people.

Over the past 12 months, participants contributed to projects with Open House, Olympic Neighbourhood House and other Council teams. Highlights included canvas painting workshops with four community groups, resulting in artworks for display at Bellfield Community Hub, a public mural at Watsonia Town Square created by two graduating participants, artwork for YouthFest, and an end-of-year exhibition at ILCH.

Beyond the artwork, New Hope provides an important source of social, emotional and creative support. Participants build confidence, develop skills and form positive connections in a safe and supportive environment.

The program's impact is reflected in feedback from participants and families. One long-term participant described New Hope as a vital source of stability and support during his three years in the program. A parent of a newer participant also reported noticeable improvements in her son's mood, confidence and engagement after joining.

## Seniors Festival Morning Tea

On 24 October, 350 older adults gathered at The Great Hall, The Centre Ivanhoe, for the Banyule Seniors Festival Morning Tea, a joyful event filled with music, connection, and celebration. Hosted by MC and Positive Ageing Warrior Carol O'Halloran, the morning featured a heartfelt Mayor's speech highlighting Banyule's commitment to age-friendly programs and recognising Age Friendly Champions. Guests enjoyed a delicious morning tea with lucky plate prizes, followed by an energetic performance from Honey Bee and the Stingers, which had everyone singing and dancing to 60s and 70s classics. The event embodied the theme "Connect, Create, Celebrate," bringing people together and honouring the vital role older adults play in shaping the community.

## National Carers Week

Council hosted a National Carers Week forum at Bellfield, attended by 28 carers and 7 other community members. Many stayed for both sessions and enjoyed a catered lunch in between. Holstep Health and Justice Connect provided an interactive Preparing for Your Future workshop. A Holstep Health dietitian presented on healthy eating and gut health, sharing simple dietary and lifestyle tips.

## Cooking with Nonna - Sharing Culture Across Generations

The Cooking with Nonna program highlighted the power of food to connect people across generations and cultures. Delivered through a partnership between Banyule's Youth and Community Connections teams and the Bundoora Italian Pensionati Seniors Club, the program brought older and younger community members together to share skills, stories and experiences.

Participants learned traditional Italian recipes, including homemade gnocchi and focaccia, while building connections through conversation. Members of the Seniors Club shared stories of migration, resilience and community, offering valuable insights into their lived experiences.

The program celebrated the knowledge, cultural heritage and contributions of older residents while fostering mutual respect and stronger social connections. Through simple shared experiences, Cooking with Nonna helped preserve cultural traditions and strengthen community connections across Banyule.



Figure 40 | Cooking with Nonna




Figure 41 | Art therapy for unpaid carers

## Free Art Therapy group sessions for Banyule's unpaid carers

Council's Carer Support Program funded thirteen Art Therapy sessions for 32 of Council's local carers throughout 2025-2026. Council created a nurturing, welcoming space for carers to relax and take some time out for themselves.

*'The art therapy session with Tanis was magical. The way she held the space of acceptance and companionship for us all to be however Council are, and acknowledging all that Council were holding, was such a balm.'*

## Banyule 2025 Volunteer Celebration

Banyule City Council celebrated its 20th Annual Volunteer Celebration in May at the Great Hall in Ivanhoe, welcoming 383 guests and representatives from 80 volunteer groups during National Volunteer Week. Embracing the theme "Connecting Communities," the event honoured the vital contributions of volunteers across diverse sectors, presenting 12 awards in recognition of strong service. Guests enjoyed a three-course meal and entertainment by MC Wilbur Wilde and his band, while Mayor Cr Elizabeth Nealy and Councillors expressed heartfelt gratitude, reinforcing Council's commitment to supporting and celebrating volunteerism throughout Banyule.

## Community Food Relief Program

From April to December 2025, BANSIC and Himilo provided a joint project under the Community Food Relief Program, supported by Banyule City Council, to assist vulnerable Australian-Somali families. This project aimed to establish a reliable supply chain of culturally appropriate food while strengthening food and nutritional literacy. BANSIC and Himilo provided culturally helpful food relief and education, distributing 151 food parcels to 50 Somali families (268 individuals) while also training nine volunteers in Somali cultural safety. BANSIC strengthened its FoodHub by stocking culturally relevant items, and Himilo provided cooking and nutrition education to 50 children in homework club and 24 children in playgroup, promoting healthy eating and Somali food traditions. Together, these actions ensured families received the support they needed and contributed to stronger community wellbeing.



Figure 42 | The founding volunteers of Diamond Valley Food Share

## Home and community care for younger people (HACCPYP)

HACCPYP supports people under 65 with disabilities and complex support needs through service coordination, assessments and referrals, helping them access the right supports, maintain independence and stay connected to their community. In 2025-2026 Banyule's HACCPYP program provided 1939 hours of domestic assistance and personal care, 654 hours of assessments and138 hours of property maintenance.

## Early Impressions - Painters of the Heidelberg School from the National Collection

The exhibition of eight original Heidelberg School paintings at Art Gallery 275 has made a strong contribution to local visitation and cultural activity in Banyule. Exhibition attendance was 3.4 times higher than the previous year.

The paintings, on long-term loan from the National Gallery of Australia as part of the Australian Government's Sharing the National Collection program, have generated interest well beyond the local area. As original works by leading artists of the Heidelberg School, the exhibition represents a rare and high-profile cultural offering in a local gallery setting.

The display has particular resonance in Banyule, which is recognised as the birthplace of Australian Impressionism. The Heidelberg School artists painted extensively in and around Banyule during the 1880s and 1890s, establishing outdoor camps at Eaglemont and capturing the landscapes that define the area today. The works selected for this loan were painted locally, strengthening the exhibition's authenticity and sense of place.

## Diamond Valley Community Support (DVCS) New Advocacy Service

In 2025, DVCS launched a new advocacy service that provides more time and personalised support. What began as utilities help now addresses a wide range of complex client issues through a case-management approach. Many older community members come to DVCS feeling overwhelmed as they try to manage complex systems while dealing with health issues, financial pressures, and limited digital access. Whether facing housing delays, mounting utility bills, confusing government forms, or difficulty communicating with agencies, they often do not know where to start. DVCS can step in and simplify what feels unmanageable by advocating on their behalf, completing applications, liaising with service providers, preventing service disconnections, and helping them access grants and aged-care supports. Through this hands-on guidance, DVCS helps them regain stability and confidence during times they could not navigate alone.

## Social Support Individual

This year, Banyule's Social Support Individual Team provided 7,033 hours of individual social support to older adults across the community.

While helping with everyday tasks such as shopping, support workers also assist clients to stay active and connected through meaningful outings. Whether it's visiting the Heide Museum of Modern Art, enjoying a walk in a local park, browsing the library, or catching up over a coffee, these experiences help clients maintain their independence and remain engaged in community life. Reducing social isolation is one of the most valuable outcomes of the service. Regular social connection can improve confidence, wellbeing and overall health, while helping older adults continue doing the things they enjoy.

The impact is reflected in the feedback received from families. One client's wife recently shared:

*"Jenny is so good for him and gets him to do things like going for walks – which he never does usually. I love Jenny's energy and commitment, and she has made such a difference in his life already."*

## Property Maintenance

Banyule's Property Maintenance Service helps older residents maintain safe and accessible homes, supporting independence, wellbeing and ageing in place. Services include gardening, spring cleaning, minor home repairs and safety modifications.

In 2025-2026, the team provided more than 3,000 service hours and supported over 1,100 local residents. The service continues to receive positive feedback from clients and health professionals. One resident described our gardener maintenance team member as an "Absolute gem" for his exceptional support, while the Occupational Therapist shared praise from a client who "highly recommended" the work completed by the Property Maintenance team.

A particularly memorable example came from a client, who thanked the team for completing important home safety improvements just before Christmas. Their work included building a custom back doorstep, installing a bathroom handrail and fitting a magnetic door closure, helping make the client's home safer and easier to navigate.

## Freedom of Entry Parade

Banyule was proud to host the Freedom of Entry Parade and Ceremony in October, celebrating the Defence Force School of Signals (DFSS) and its long-standing connection to Council's community.

Freedom of Entry is one of the highest civic honours a city can bestow. Granted for the first time in nearly a decade, it reaffirmed the strong ties between Banyule and the Australian Defence Force (ADF).

Based at Simpson Barracks in Yallambie, DFSS is the ADF's specialist training centre for military communications and cyber operations, with the barracks forming a key part of Banyule's military history since World War II.

The day featured a parade from Montmorency Station to Petrie Park, where more than 200 members of the Army, Navy and Air Force marched before a formal ceremony and community morning tea. A highlight was the traditional challenge by Victoria Police, followed by Mayor Cr Elizabeth Nealy formally acknowledging DFSS's right to exercise Freedom of Entry into Banyule.

The strong community turnout reflected both the significance of the occasion and the enduring bonds between Banyule and those who serve Council's nation.

## Ageing Well Housing Forum

The Ageing Well Housing Forum was successfully provided in March, attracting a total of 76 participants. The event featured several expert speakers who addressed key topics such as Ageing in Place, Housing Needs, Local Housing Policies, and Financial Housing options. In addition to the guest speakers, there were also 11 partners providing a wide range of resources and information aimed at helping attendees live independently in their homes. Feedback from participants highlighted that the event provided valuable solutions and insights.

# What Council achieved under the Our Inclusive, Healthy and Connected Community priority

## Delivery Plan

In the first year of the Delivery Plan, Banyule Council delivered **11 key actions** that supported the Our Inclusive, Healthy and Connected Community priority theme. These actions helped strengthen inclusion, support community wellbeing and create opportunities for people to connect and participate in community life.

The results are summarised alongside. The full report is available on Banyule's website. The Council departments and business units that contributed to this work are shown later in this section.

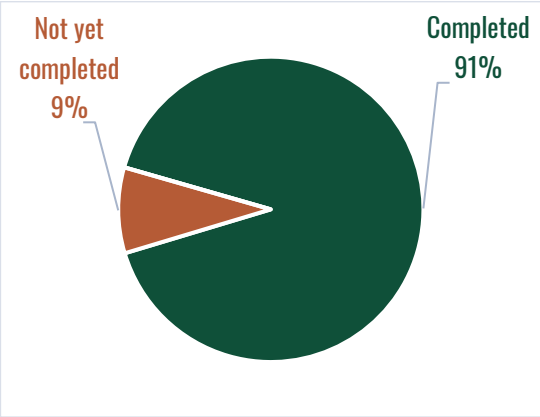


Figure 43 | Status of Our Inclusive, Healthy and Connected Community actions as at 30 June 2026

### 10 actions completed

These actions were completed or reached at least 90% progress by year end. For reporting purposes, actions at 90% or more are counted as completed.

### 1 action not yet completed

This action had not reached 90% progress by year end and is reported as not yet completed.

### 0 actions postponed

No actions were rescheduled during the year.

## Strategic indicators: Council performance

The table below shows Council's results against the measures and targets for this priority theme.

Table 5 | Council strategic indicators – Our Inclusive, Healthy and Connected Community

| Council KPI outcome | Annual measure | Target by 2029 | 2022-2023 result | 2023-2024 result | 2024-2025 result | 2025-2026 result/ status | Commentary |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Strong relationships and collaborations with local First Nations groups** | Number of formal partnerships established | Develop **two partnerships** each year | 2 | 2 | 2 | **2** ✓ | Council continued to strengthen relationships with local First Nations organisations in 2025-2026. In addition to maintaining existing partnerships, Council established two new partnership opportunities with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations to support collaboration and shared outcomes. |

| Council KPI outcome | Annual measure | Target by 2029 | 2022-2023 result | 2023-2024 result | 2024-2025 result | 2025-2026 result/ status | Commentary |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Banyule is recognised as an accessible and inclusive community**  | Community Satisfaction Survey (CSS) mean index score for agreement with the social connection measure, 'I feel part of the local community' | Maintain or exceed the baseline mean index score of **8 out of 10** | 8.6 out of 10 | 8.2 out of 10 | 8 out of 10 | **8 out of 10** ✓ | The survey showed a strong sense of community connection among Banyule residents. 70% of respondents strongly agreed that they feel part of their local community, while only 2% disagreed. |
| **Community is satisfied with Council-run and supported arts and cultural spaces and programs**  | Average CSS mean index score for satisfaction with 'Provision of arts and cultural venues, spaces and facilities' and 'Provision of arts and cultural events, programs and activities' | Maintain or exceed the average baseline mean index score of **8.1 out of 10** | Not available *(different survey questions asked)* | Not available *(different survey questions asked)* | 8.1 out of 10 | **8.1 out of 10** ✓ | Community satisfaction with Council-run and supported arts and cultural spaces and programs remained at an excellent level in 2025-2026. 67% of respondents were very satisfied, while only 4% were dissatisfied. This reflects the strong value the community places on Banyule's arts and cultural offerings. |

| Council KPI outcome | Annual measure | Target by 2029 | 2022-2023 result | 2023-2024 result | 2024-2025 result | 2025-2026 result/ status | Commentary |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Enhanced social cohesion and mutual understanding through intergenerational and intercultural programs**  | Average number of program categories run through Neighbourhood House partnerships that facilitate these connections | Deliver **programs across an average of four categories** each year | Not measured | Not measured | Not measured | **5 program categories** ✓ | Neighbourhood House partnerships delivered 136 sessions bringing together people of different ages, cultures and backgrounds. Activities spanned arts and culture, health and wellbeing, learning and community connection, strengthening relationships and a sense of belonging across Banyule. This exceeded the target of four program categories, with five delivered across the year. |
| **Community is satisfied with services for children from birth to five years of age**  | CSS mean index score for satisfaction with 'Services for children from birth to five years of age' | Maintain or exceed the baseline mean index score of **8.4 out of 10** | Not available *(different survey questions asked)* | Not available *(different survey questions asked)* | 8.4 out of 10 | **8.3 out of 10** ⇆ | Community satisfaction with services for children from birth to five years of age remained at an excellent level in 2025-2026. 78% of respondents were very satisfied, while only 3% were dissatisfied. This indicates these services continue to be highly valued by families in Banyule. |

| Council KPI outcome | Annual measure | Target by 2029 | 2022-2023 result | 2023-2024 result | 2024-2025 result | 2025-2026 result/ status | Commentary |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **High immunisation rates for young children.** | Percentage of children aged 12-15 months who received all scheduled vaccines under the National Immunisation Program (NIP) | **Equal to or higher than the Victorian average** percentage of children who received all scheduled vaccines | 94.8% | 94.1% | 93.3% | **92.14%** ✓ | Banyule immunisation rates remain high but have declined slightly over the past four years, consistent with Victorian, national and global trends in routine childhood immunisation following the COVID-19 pandemic.<br>Banyule remains above both the Victorian (91.5%) and national (90.2%) immunisation rates for children aged 12–15 months.<br>Figures include immunisations delivered across Banyule by Council and local General Practitioner providers. |
| **High immunisation rates for young children.** | Percentage of children aged 24-27 months who received all scheduled vaccines under the National Immunisation Program (NIP) | **Equal to or higher than the Victorian average** percentage of children who received all scheduled vaccines | 92.4% | 92% | 90.7% | **90.6%** ✓ | Banyule immunisation rates remain high but have declined slightly over the past four years, consistent with Victorian, national and global trends in routine childhood immunisation following the COVID-19 pandemic.<br>Banyule remains above both the Victorian (89.8%) and national (88.6%) immunisation rates for children aged 24–27 months.<br>Figures include immunisations delivered across Banyule by Council and local General Practitioner providers. |

| Council KPI outcome | Annual measure | Target by 2029 | 2022-2023 result | 2023-2024 result | 2024-2025 result | 2025-2026 result/ status | Commentary |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **High immunisation rates for young children.** | Percentage of children aged 60-63 months who received all scheduled vaccines under the National Immunisation Program (NIP) | **Equal to or higher than the Victorian average** percentage of children who received all scheduled vaccines | 94.5% | 95.2% | 95.9% | **93.9%** ⇆ | Banyule immunisation rates remain high but have declined slightly over the past four years, consistent with Victorian, national and global trends in routine childhood immunisation following the COVID-19 pandemic.<br><br>An unexpectedly low Q1 result of 91.3% affected the annual result for Banyule; bringing our annual rate slightly below the Victorian annual rate of 94.3% however, Banyule consistently exceeded the Victorian rates in Q2–Q4. Banyule remained above the national immunisation rate for children aged 60–63 months (92.9%).<br><br>Figures include immunisations delivered across Banyule by Council and local General Practitioner providers. |
| **High participation of young people in youth programs and services** | Accumulated attendees from Jets Studios, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) support, YouthFest, school workshops, youth worker support and Banyule Youth Summit | Maintain or exceed the baseline of **10,000 young people** attendees | 11,296 attendees | 15,924 attendees | 20,736 attendees | **18,014 attendees** ✓ | Strong participation was recorded across youth programs and services, including around 5,500 attendees at YouthFest, more than 4,600 young people engaged through outreach activities and almost 3,000 participants in school workshops. This demonstrates strong engagement with Council's youth programs and events. |

## Strategic indicators: Community outcomes

The table below shows community outcomes against the measures and targets for this priority theme.

Table 6 | Community strategic indicators – Our Inclusive, Healthy and Connected Community

| Community KPI outcome | Annual measure | Target by 2029 | 2022-2023 result | 2023-2024 result | 2024-2025 result | 2025-2026 result/ status | Commentary |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Decreased gambling losses in Banyule**  | Average electronic gambling machine losses in Banyule, measured in dollars per adult | A **reduction in average losses** per adult each year | $569 | $573 | $567 | **$577** ⇆ | Total electronic gambling losses in Banyule were $60.5 million in 2025-2026, an increase of 2.4% on the previous year. Average losses per adult increased from $567 to $577, up 1.8%. Gambling-related harm remains an important community issue, highlighting the need for ongoing prevention, education and support for those affected. |
| **Community members feel safe in public areas** | CSS mean index score for 'How safe do you feel in public areas at night' | Maintain or exceed the baseline mean index score of **7.5 out of 10** | Not available *(different survey questions asked)* | Not available *(different survey questions asked)* | 7.5 out of 10 | **6.9 out of 10** ⇆ | Perceptions of safety in public areas at night declined in 2025-2026. While many residents reported feeling safe, female respondents reported lower feelings of safety than male respondents, highlighting that experiences of safety can vary across the community. |

| Community KPI outcome | Annual measure | Target by 2029 | 2022-2023 result | 2023-2024 result | 2024-2025 result | 2025-2026 result/ status | Commentary |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Decreased rate of family violence in Banyule**  | Number of family violence incidents per 100,000 population, as reported by Victoria Police | A decrease below the baseline of **1,412 incidents** per 100,000 population | 1,194 incidents per 100,000 population (2021–22 data) | 1,163 incidents per 100,000 population (2022–23 data) | 1,412 incidents per 100,000 population (2023–24 data) | **1,539 incidents per 100,000 population (2024–25 data)** ⇆ | Family violence incidents increased in 2024-2025, reflecting a broader trend across Victoria. While the result was slightly above Banyule's target, it is encouraging that more victim-survivors are coming forward to seek supports. Council continues to work with the family violence sector to support prevention and early intervention programs. |

## Measuring LGPRF service performance indicators

The LGPRF is a Victorian Government reporting framework that measures how well councils deliver key services.

The table below shows Banyule's results for the Our Inclusive, Healthy and Connected Community priority, including four years of results and commentary to help explain performance over time.

Table 7 | LGPRF indicators – Our Inclusive, Healthy and Connected Community

| **Service/*classification*/** *indicator*/measure | **2023 result** | **2024 result** | **2025 result** | **2026 result/ 4-year trend** | **Target/ status** | **Public comments** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Maternal and Child Health (MCH)**<br>***Service standard***<br>*Infant enrolments in the MCH service*<br>[Number of infants enrolled in the MCH service (from birth notifications received) / Number of birth notifications received] x100 | 99.8% | 100.7% | 100.9% | **100.6%** ⇆ | 99% ✓ | Banyule Council's Maternal and Child Health (MCH) service continued to achieve strong enrolment results in 2025-2026, maintaining a five-year trend of enrolling more than 100% of eligible infants. Enrolments increased slightly from the previous year, reflecting stable service demand and a modest increase in Banyule's birth rate.<br>Results above 100% can occur where families move into Banyule after a birth notification is issued, or where address information provided to the birthing hospital is later updated. |
| **MCH**<br>***Service cost***<br>*Cost of the MCH service*<br>[Cost of the MCH service / Hours worked by MCH nurses] | $82.23 | $84.23 | $84.88 | **$89.74** ⇆ | $85 ⇆ | The cost of providing Maternal and Child Health (MCH) services increased during 2025-2026, reflecting higher costs for employee wages, client resources and material aid. Additional investment was also required to attract and retain qualified MCH nurses.<br>Despite these cost pressures, the service continued to operate within expected cost levels, providing value for money while maintaining high-quality support for local families. |

| Service/*classification*/ *indicator*/measure | 2023 result | 2024 result | 2025 result | 2026 result/ 4-year trend | Target/ status | Public comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **MCH**<br>***Participation***<br>*Participation in the MCH service*<br>[Number of children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of children enrolled in the MCH service] x100 | 77% | 79.1% | 77.9% | **76.1%**<br>⇆ | 75%<br>✓ | Banyule Council's Maternal and Child Health (MCH) service continues to support a high proportion of enrolled children, with participation remaining above the 75% target and broadly consistent over recent years. While participation was slightly lower than the previous year, Banyule has maintained strong performance in supporting local families through the MCH service.<br>*Not all enrolled children are scheduled for a Maternal and Child Health appointment within a 12-month period, as no Key Ages and Stages visits occur between 2 and 3 ½ years of age. As a result, participation figures may not fully reflect ongoing engagement with the service.* |
| **MCH**<br>***Participation***<br>*Participation in the MCH service by Aboriginal children*<br>[Number of Aboriginal children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of Aboriginal children enrolled in the MCH service] x100 | 77.4% | 82.6% | 85.7% | **80.3%**<br>↑ | 75%<br>✓ | Participation by Aboriginal children in Banyule's Maternal and Child Health (MCH) service remained strong in 2025-2026, exceeding Council's target and maintaining the high level of participation achieved in recent years. While participation was slightly lower than the previous year, the service continues to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families to access the services and programs available to them.<br>*Not all enrolled Aboriginal children are due for an appointment within a 12-month period, as no Key Ages and Stages visits are scheduled between 2 and 3 ½ years of age. As a result, participation figures may not fully reflect ongoing engagement with the service.* |

| Service/*classification*/ *indicator*/measure | 2023 result | 2024 result | 2025 result | 2026 result/ 4-year trend | Target/ status | Public comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **MCH**<br>***Satisfaction***<br>*Participation in four-week Key Age and Stage visit*<br>[Number of four-week key age and stage visits / Number of birth notifications received] x100 | 96.9% | 93% | 96.7% | **95.8%**<br>⇆ | 94%<br>✓ | Participation in Banyule Council's Maternal and Child Health (MCH) 4-week Key Age and Stage visits continued to exceed Council's target in 2025-2026 and has remained consistently high over recent years.<br>The result reflects strong early engagement with families and helps establish a foundation for ongoing support and connection through the MCH service. |
| **Food Safety**<br>***Timeliness***<br>*Time taken to action food complaints*<br>[Number of days between receipt and first response action for all food complaints / Number of food complaints] | 1.4 days | 1.3 days | 1.3 days | **1.3 days**<br>↘ | 1.4 days<br>✓ | Banyule Council responded to food complaints in an average of 1.3 days during 2025-2026, continuing a strong four-year trend of responding to complaints in around 1 to 1 ½ days.<br>Timely investigations help identify and address potential food safety concerns quickly. Council also works closely with the North Eastern Public Health Unit to investigate food-related illnesses and protect community health. |
| **Food Safety**<br>***Service standard***<br>*Food safety assessments*<br>[Number of registered class 1 food premises and class 2 food premises that receive an annual food safety assessment in accordance with the *Food Act 1984* / Number of registered class 1 food premises and class 2 food premises that require an annual food safety assessment in accordance with the *Food Act 1984*] x100 | 95.1% | 97.2% | 96.7% | **99%**<br>↗ | 98%<br>✓ | Banyule Council completed food safety assessments for 99% of registered food businesses requiring assessment in 2025-2026, exceeding the 98% target. Assessment rates have remained consistently high over the past four years and improved further this year, helping maintain food safety standards across the municipality.<br>Council continues to work with Safe Food Victoria and local food businesses to support compliance with Victoria's food safety requirements. |

| Service/*classification*/ *indicator*/measure | 2023 result | 2024 result | 2025 result | 2026 result/ 4-year trend | Target/ status | Public comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Food Safety**<br>***Service cost***<br>*Cost of food safety service*<br>[Direct cost of the food safety service / Number of food premises registered or notified in accordance with the *Food Act 1984*] | $526.77 | $579.15 | $614.32 | **$729.79**<br>↑ | $630<br>✗ | The cost of delivering food safety services at Banyule Council increased in 2025-2026, continuing the upward trend observed in recent years. The increase was broadly consistent with rising service delivery costs experienced across local government and reflects changes in the number of registered food premises from year to year. Despite the increase, the result remains within the expected range established by Local Government Victoria. |
| **Food Safety**<br>***Health and safety***<br>*Critical and major non-compliance outcome notifications*<br>[Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance notifications about a food premises followed up / Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance notifications about a food premises] x100 | 100% | 100% | 100% | **98.2%**<br>⇆ | 100%<br>✓<br>*Considered achieved under Local Government Victoria target guidelines* | Banyule Council followed up 98% of critical and major food safety non-compliance outcomes in 2025-2026. This follows three consecutive years in which all critical and major non-compliance outcomes were followed up, helping ensure serious food safety issues are addressed promptly and supporting public health across the municipality. |
| **Food Safety**<br>***Health and safety***<br>*Food safety samples*<br>[Number of food samples obtained / Required number of food samples] x100 | New indicator (2024–25) | 120.3% | 113% | **112.6%**<br>↓ | 100%<br>✓ | Banyule Council collected the required number of food samples in 2025-2026, meeting the expectations in the Victorian Government Gazette.<br>Samples were taken from a range of food businesses, including higher-risk settings such as aged care homes and restaurants and cafes. |

# What it costs to deliver Council services

Each year, Council allocates funding to deliver services, programs and infrastructure that support the community.

The sections below show the cost of delivering services that contributed to the Our Inclusive, Healthy and Connected Community priority in 2025-2026. They compare budgeted and actual spending and outline the services delivered by each Council department and its business units. Services are grouped by the community members or service areas they support.

*Difference from budget shows the gap between budgeted and actual spending. A positive value means spending was below budget, while a negative value means spending was above budget.*

## Inclusive and Creative Communities

Table 8 | Inclusive and Creative Communities – Service costs for 2025-2026

| Description | Amount ($'000) |
|---|---|
| Budget | **4,556** |
| Actual spending | **4,473** |
| Difference from budget | **83** |

Provision of the following to the First Nations community and municipal community as a whole:

### First Nations

- Lead Council's partnership with Traditional Owners across Banyule, grounded in respect, recognition and self-determination.
- Deliver the Marrageil Strategy and Action Plan, advancing Aboriginal self-determination across Council.
- Partner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to deliver culturally meaningful programs, events and initiatives.
- Support reconciliation through stronger relationships with Traditional Owners, Elders and First Nations communities.
- Deliver the First Nations Traineeship Program, creating employment and career pathways for First Nations people.

Provision of the following to the municipal population as a whole:

### Arts and Culture

- Supporting and celebrating Banyule's culture, creativity and local heritage.
- Support local artists, creatives and creative businesses to thrive.
- Deliver inclusive arts, cultural programs, festivals and events.
- Care for and grow Banyule's art collection, exhibitions and public art program.
- Activate Banyule's spaces and places through arts, culture and creative placemaking.

### Community Partnerships

- Manage community spaces including Shop 48 The Harmony Centre, ensuring they remain welcoming and responsive to community needs.
- Build strong partnerships with local organisations and community groups to maximise community benefit and participation.
- Manage Council funding and partnerships with more than 20 community organisations that deliver essential community services and support across Banyule.
- Work collaboratively with neighbourhood houses through a shared Partnership Agreement and Action Plan to strengthen local community outcomes.

Provision of the following to support Council's direct service delivery areas:

### Community Impact

- Lead initiatives that promote inclusion, equity, participation and wellbeing across the Banyule community.
- Deliver the Inclusive Banyule Strategy, MPHW Plan, and Gambling Harm Prevention Policy.
- Build and strengthen strategic partnerships to achieve the Community Vision and Banyule Plan objectives.
- Support the Connected Communities Advisory Committee and community-led Champions groups to inform Council decision-making and advocacy.

## Family and Community Services

Table 9 | Family and Community Services – Service costs for 2025-2026

| Description | Amount ($'000) |
|---|---|
| Budget | **8,214** |
| Actual spending | **7,295** |
| Difference from budget | **919** |

Provision of the following to families and children:

### Early Childhood Services

Provision of the following to families and children: (0 – 5 years old) *Giving Banyule Children the best start through quality early learning, strong partnerships and family-centred support.*

- Operating Council-managed kindergartens and long day care centres that provide safe, inclusive and nurturing environments for children.
- Coordinating kindergarten registrations and placements through Banyule's Central Enrolment Scheme, helping families access quality early learning close to home.
- Connecting families with information, programs and activities that support children's learning, development and wellbeing.
- Working in partnership with health, education and community organisations to deliver coordinated and connected services for children and families.
- Managing and improving early childhood facilities to ensure welcoming, accessible and high-quality environments for current and future generations.



Figure 44 | Youth Summit

### Youth and Community Connections

- Supporting individuals, LGBTQIA+ and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) residents
- Facilitating the development and delivery of integrated and coordinated services for young people and their families
- Providing youth communications
- Facilitating community connectedness and responding to identified needs through the delivery of programs for the community
- Providing regional assessment service, service access and navigation
- Providing age-friendly programs, events, activities, social planning and support
- Community development and strengthening
- Providing community grants, age-friendly grants and monthly equipment grants.

Provision of the following to carers, older people and younger people with significant health issues:

### Aged Services

- Organising social support groups
- Providing social support services for individuals including assistance with accessing the community shops, carer support, delivered meals, property maintenance and modifications, assessment and outreach
- Providing the Home and Community Care Program (HACC PYP) through assessment, community support, meals and property maintenance for younger people under 65 who do not qualify, are awaiting National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).



Figure 45 | Rosanna Fire Station Christmas

Provision of the following to families, children and to the municipal community as a whole:

### Maternal and Child Health (MCH)

Our Banyule MCH service provides a comprehensive free service to families with babies and young children from birth to school age. Our service provides:

- Health, growth, and development checks delivered through the Key Ages and Stages framework. Service includes home and centre based visits, infant feeding support, sleep and settling guidance, health promotion, parent and caregiver support and First Time Parent Groups.
- Early identification of developmental, health or wellbeing concerns for children through routine screening and expert assessment. Families receive essential health education, monitoring and referral to specialist or allied health services.
- The MCH enhanced home visiting service support families experiencing vulnerability, disadvantage or additional complexity including parental mental health concerns, family violence, and complex care coordination.

In 2025-2026, Banyule MCH continued to deliver strong outcomes for children and families, including enrolling 1,415 birth notifications, 560 hours of group programs delivered, 768 MIST - Eye tests for preschoolers, 984 referrals completed for supporting child health and wellbeing, almost 600 hours of sleep outreach support and 636 breastfeeding support appointments with a specialist lactation consultant. These figures highlight the breadth of MCH service delivery and the ongoing role the service plays in early identification, prevention, family support and improved health outcomes across the Banyule community.

## Healthy and Active Communities

Table 10 | Healthy and Active Communities – Service costs for 2025-2026

| Description | Amount ($'000) |
|---|---|
| Budget | **8,582** |
| Actual spending | **8,323** |
| Difference from budget | **259** |

Provision of the following to the municipal population as a whole:

### Banyule Leisure

- Running Council's leisure and aquatic centres, including Ivanhoe Aquatic Centre, Olympic Leisure Banyule and NETS Stadium
- Encouraging more people to take part in swimming, fitness and health programs
- Supporting community participation in both organised sports and informal physical activity.

### Sports, Recreation and Community Infrastructure

- Planning and improving local sport, recreation and community facilities
- Creating more opportunities for people to take part in sport and physical activity
- Allocating sports grounds and pavilions each season so clubs and teams can operate
- Managing leases and licences for local sporting clubs.

### Civic Precincts and Community Facilities

- Looking after and bringing life to Council's key civic spaces, including Ivanhoe Library and Cultural Hub, Greensborough Civic Precinct, The Centre Ivanhoe and the future Rosanna Library Precinct
- Managing partnerships and contracts to ensure these facilities operate well for the community
- Managing community halls and rotundas and making them available for hire.

### Sports and Leisure Contracts

- Managing partnerships and contracts across Council's major leisure and recreation facilities including Ivanhoe Golf Course, Chelsworth Park, WaterMarc, Macleod Recreation Centre and Watsonia Pool.
- Planning for the improvement and advancement of Council's major leisure and recreation facilities and the services they provide to keep the community active and connected.



Figure 46 | The new Olympic Leisure Centre gym.

A progressive and innovative leader in protecting, enhancing and increasing the health and diversity of our natural environment, where we all commit to playing an active role in achieving environmental sustainability, waste and carbon emissions reduction.

## What Council delivered



Figure 47 | Banyule Council collaboration with Coranderrk

### Biodiverse Banyule – Towards 250,000 Indigenous Plants by 2035

The Biodiversity Strategy's Biodiverse Banyule – Target 250K program establishes a Banyule-wide goal of planting 250,000 local indigenous plants by 2035, based on ecological analysis of the vegetation cover required to improve ecosystem health, resilience and habitat connectivity across Banyule. Council's ongoing bushland and revegetation programs are expected to deliver about 65% of this target through business-as-usual activities. The remaining 35% is a stretch target for Council and a call to action for Friends groups, residents, community organisations and industry partners to support the target and collaborate.

Progress toward this objective is already being supported through Bushland Management, Friends groups, Gardens for Wildlife and the Indigenous Plants Voucher Program, which have collectively contributed 12,566 indigenous plants since October 2025. Beyond planting numbers, the long-term success of the program depends on the ongoing maintenance and survival of planted species, increased support for stewardship on private land, and continued community participation in creating connected, resilient and biodiverse landscapes throughout Banyule.



Figure 48 | Banyule Council collaboration with Coranderrk



Figure 49 | Binnak Park

## We created a climate-resiliency upskilling workshop series- Banyule Loves...

In March 2025, Council launched the Banyule Loves...Workshop Series. This no-cost workshop series explores the lost art of sustainable, climate-resilient living. It celebrates the things about Banyule which Council's community loves- from gardening to connecting to Country to saving money on Council's energy bills. These workshops aim to upskill community members while connecting them to like-minded neighbours increasing social connection. Attendees are entered in a drawing for a prize for participating in each workshop, with the drawing held at the annual wrap-up celebration and highlight event in November. Each attendee will receive a certification of completion for the workshops they attend.

To date, Council have hosted 19 workshops for the community since March 2025 and have reached over 590 community members. The workshops have been popular, with attendees rating them 9 out of 10 stars, on average.

Community feedback has been very positive and confirms the increased community connection we sought to foster, "Seriously the best workshop I have attended...I exchanged contact details with a participant new to Melbourne who wants to join some friend's groups. Never done this before." Follow our Humanitix site for updates when we post a new workshop.

## A new chapter for Biodiversity in Banyule

In September 2025, Council proudly endorsed the Biodiversity Strategy 2025-2035, setting a shared vision for how Council will protect, enhance and celebrate Banyule's unique natural environment over the next decade.

The strategy recognises the deep and enduring connection that First Nations Peoples have with Country and commits to working in partnership with Traditional Owners to achieve stronger biodiversity outcomes for Council's community and environment.

The strategy is built around the following five key themes, which provide a roadmap for creating a more resilient and thriving natural environment for future generations:

- Knowledge and Biodiversity
- Healthy Biodiversity
- Protecting Biodiversity
- Wellbeing and Biodiversity
- Partnerships for Biodiversity

A priority action arising from the strategy is the development of Banyule's first Biodiversity Monitoring Program. This exciting program will be launched in 2026 and help track the health of Council's local ecosystems, measure progress towards Council's biodiversity goals, and inform how Council adapt and improve Council's management of biodiversity over time.

To help bring biodiversity to life, the strategy also introduces six flagship species that represent the incredible wildlife found across Banyule: the Eltham Copper Butterfly, Powerful Owl, Krefft's Glider, Swift Parrot, Platypus and Growling Grass Frog. These species provide a powerful focus for conservation efforts and invite the community to connect with, celebrate and help protect the wildlife that makes Banyule special. Together, Council can play an active role in caring for Council's local environment and ensuring nature continues to thrive across Council's city.



Figure 50 | A Powerful owl

## Supporting Local Environmental Projects

Fifteen community projects received funding through Banyule City Council's 2025-2026 Environment Grants Program, supporting local individuals and groups to deliver projects that benefit Council's environment and community.

The program awarded almost $90,000 across the projects, supporting programs aligned with the Banyule Plan's 'Council's Sustainable Environment' focus areas, including Caring for Country, strengthening biodiversity, renewable energy, environmental education and urban farming.

Project highlights include:

- The Veggie Empire's project to provide accessible equipment for chemical-free land management while creating opportunities for people with disabilities to care for local biodiversity
- Viewbank Primary School's project to establish an Urban Forest and Wellbeing Trail featuring Indigenous plantings and interactive mindfulness stations
- The Plenty River Rewilding Project, which continued monitoring water quality and aquatic biodiversity to help protect local waterways and native wildlife, including the platypus.



Figure 51 | Banyule waterways

## We drafted the Community Climate Resilience Plan

The Community Climate Resilience Plan brings together Council's efforts to reduce carbon emissions (climate mitigation) and prepare for and respond to the impacts of climate change (climate adaptation). It sets out actions Council will take to lower emissions and respond to risks such as extreme storms, heatwaves, flooding and bushfires. This document includes an updated version of the 2020 Community Climate Action Plan.

using best-practice advice from Victorian Climate Resilient Councils' review of existing local government climate risk assessments, Council developed a methodology to create the plan, aiming to increase likelihood of implementation success. Throughout 2025-2026, Council conducted community engagement and used a range of council officers from different areas to help design with the community Council's plan and Council conducted a gender impact assessment to examine impacts to diverse groups within the community.

Please see Council's Shaping Banyule page library to review all Council's key climate documents.

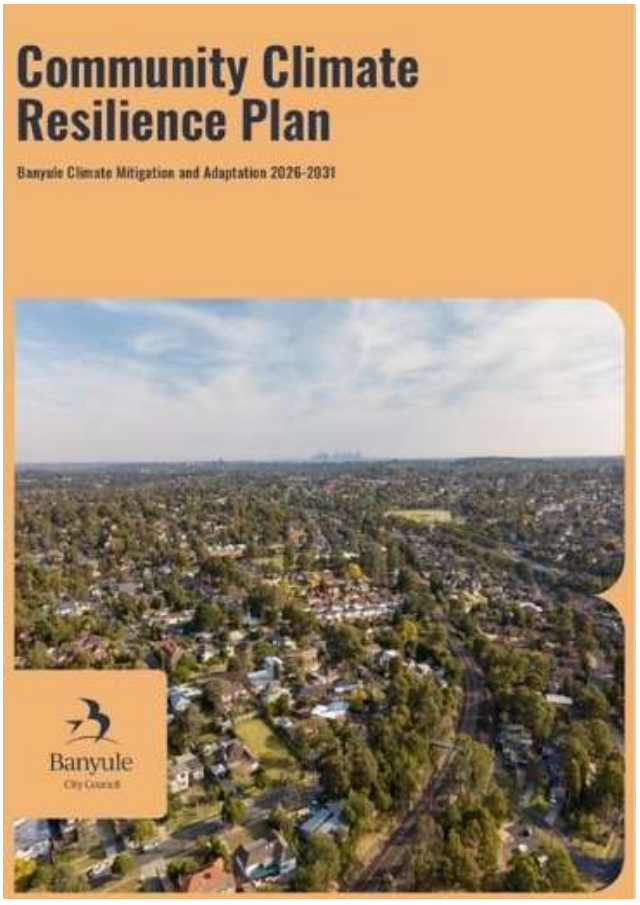


Figure 52 | Cover of the draft Community Climate Resilience Plan

## Celebrating World Environment Day

To celebrate World Environment Day in June, Council partnered with Environmental Films Australia to host a special evening of film, conversation and community connection.

The event featured two inspiring short films, Outpicker and Forest Country, showcasing the many ways people are taking action to protect the environment and create positive change. From community litter picking that fosters belonging and inclusion to the inspiring efforts to protect Victoria's native forests, both films highlighted the power of local action and environmental advocacy.

Following the screenings, attendees heard from filmmakers and guest speakers Lesley Le Luo, Jing and Lewi Haskins, who shared insights into the stories behind the films and reflected on the role communities can play in caring for the environment. The evening concluded with light refreshments, giving attendees the opportunity to connect, exchange ideas and continue the conversation.

The event received positive feedback from attendees, with one participant sharing, *"I have talked to many of my friends about both films and suggest they watch them."* Another commented, *"Excellent choice and please keep us educated."*

The evening inspired attendees to reflect on the many ways individuals and communities can make a difference, while celebrating the power of storytelling to spark conversation, connection and environmental action.




Figure 53 | World Environment Day Film Screening, Ivanhoe Library and Cultural Hub

# What Council achieved under the Our Sustainable Environment priority

## Delivery Plan

In the first year of the Delivery Plan, Banyule Council delivered **seven key actions** that supported the Our Sustainable Environment priority theme. These actions helped protect and enhance the natural environment, reduce emissions and support a more sustainable Banyule.

The results are summarised alongside. The full report is available on Banyule's website. The Council departments and business units that contributed to this work are shown later in this section.

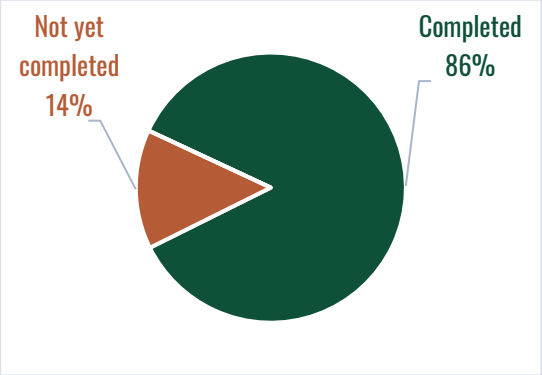


Figure 54 | Status of Our Sustainable Environment actions as at 30 June 2026

### 6 actions completed

These actions were completed or reached at least 90% progress by year end. For reporting purposes, actions at 90% or more are counted as completed.

### 1 action not yet completed

This action had not reached 90% progress by year end and is reported as not yet completed.

### 0 actions postponed

No actions were rescheduled during the year.

## Strategic indicators: Council performance

The table below shows Council's results against the measures and targets for this priority theme.

Table 11 | Council strategic indicators – Our Sustainable Environment

| Council KPI outcome | Annual measure | Target by 2029 | 2022-2023 result | 2023-2024 result | 2024-2025 result | 2025-2026 result/ status | Commentary |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **The natural environment and tree-filled parklands, which are so important to the community, have been successfully preserved** | Number of trees planted in public areas | Maintain or exceed the baseline of **2,500 trees** planted | 1,868 trees | 800 trees | 2,736 trees | **4,153 trees** ✓ | More than 4,100 trees were planted across Banyule in 2025-2026, significantly exceeding the target. This was supported by major planting programs, including works funded through the North East Link project. Most plantings were indigenous or native species, helping to strengthen biodiversity, increase canopy cover and enhance Banyule's natural environment. |

| Council KPI outcome | Annual measure | Target by 2029 | 2022-2023 result | 2023-2024 result | 2024-2025 result | 2025-2026 result/ status | Commentary |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Banyule's biodiversity increased through the planting of indigenous species**  | Number of indigenous species planted in bushland reserves | Maintain or exceed the baseline of **10,000 bushland plantings** | 10,293 bushland plantings | 11,220 bushland plantings | 12,772 bushland plantings | **12,566 bushland plantings** ✓ | Bushland planting of indigenous species exceeded the target in 2025-2026, supported by increased participation in Council's environmental incentive programs. These plantings help improve biodiversity and create habitat for native plants and animals across Banyule. |
| **Council has reduced emissions from its operations and is working towards becoming carbon neutral in the future** | Council's scope 1 and 2 Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions<br>*Scope 1 emissions are greenhouse gases directly emitted through Council operations — like fuel used in Council vehicles or gas used in buildings*<br>*Scope 2 emissions are indirect emissions from the electricity Council buys and uses — like powering offices, libraries and streetlights* | **Annual reduction** in Council's **scope 1 and 2 GHG emissions** | 4,323 tonnes $CO_2e$ | 3,991 tonnes $CO_2e$ | 3,891 tonnes $CO_2e$ | **4,711 tonnes $CO_2e$** ✗ | Council's reported greenhouse gas emissions increased in 2025-2026, reflecting both higher gas-related emissions and updates to industry emissions reporting methods. This included changes to how solar exports and refrigerants are accounted for. Council continues to implement initiatives that support its transition towards real zero emissions. |

| Council KPI outcome | Annual measure | Target by 2029 | 2022-2023 result | 2023-2024 result | 2024-2025 result | 2025-2026 result/ status | Commentary |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Council has reduced emissions by switching to electric vehicles** | Percentage of Council's vehicles that are electric | **Annual increase** from the baseline percentage of **15% of Council vehicles** that are electric | Not available *(baseline established in 2024–2025)* | Not available *(baseline established in 2024–2025)* | 15% | **18.9%** ✓ | More of Council's vehicles and equipment are now electric, helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. By June 2026, 18.9% of Council's vehicles and equipment were electric, up from 15%, including ride-on mowers used to maintain parks and open spaces. |
| **Waste services are delivered to a high standard** | Average CSS mean index score for satisfaction with waste management services, including bookable hard rubbish service, litter collection in public areas, management of illegally dumped rubbish, the Waste Recovery Centre and the collection of household rubbish, recycling, food and green waste | Maintain or exceed the baseline average mean index score of **8 out of 10** | Not available *(different survey questions asked)* | Not available *(different survey questions asked)* | 8 out of 10 | **8.1 out of 10** ✓ | Community satisfaction with waste management services remained at an excellent level in 2025-2026. 68% of respondents were very satisfied, while only 4% were dissatisfied. This reflects strong community satisfaction across a range of services, including household rubbish, recycling, food and green waste collection, the Waste Recovery Centre and the bookable hard rubbish service. |

| Council KPI outcome | Annual measure | Target by 2029 | 2022-2023 result | 2023-2024 result | 2024-2025 result | 2025-2026 result/ status | Commentary |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Banyule's waste to landfill is being minimised through the diversion of FOGO and recyclables, aligning with the principles of a circular economy** | Percentage of kerbside waste collected that is diverted from landfill and instead composted or recycled | Maintain or exceed the baseline of **58% of waste** diverted from landfill | 62.6% | 64.2% | 64.9% | **62%** ✓ | Banyule's kerbside waste diversion rate remained strong in 2025-2026, with 62% of waste diverted from landfill. The result remains above Council's target, supported by the ongoing success of weekly FOGO collections. Diversion rates can vary from year to year depending on seasonal conditions and the amount of garden waste generated. |
| **Community has responsibly managed their waste through organic waste recycling** | Average food organics and garden organics (FOGO) collected per household each year (kg) | Maintain or exceed the baseline of **350.6kg average FOGO** collected per household each year | 315kg | 351kg | 367kg | **347kg** ⇆ | Community members continued to make strong use of the FOGO service in 2025-2026, helping divert food and garden waste from landfill. Collection volumes remained close to the target and can vary from year to year depending on seasonal conditions and the amount of garden waste generated. |

## Strategic indicators: Community outcomes

The table below shows community outcomes against the measures and targets for this priority theme.

Table 12 | Community strategic indicators – Our Sustainable Environment

| Community KPI outcome | Annual measure | Target by 2029 | 2022-2023 result | 2023-2024 result | 2024-2025 result | 2025-2026 result/ status | Commentary |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Banyule is a carbon neutral municipality by 2040** | Municipal greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions | **Annual reduction** in municipal **GHG emissions**, achieving zero emissions by 2040 | 1,048,000 tonnes $CO_2e$ (2020-2021 result) | 840,000 tonnes $CO_2e$ (2021-2022 result) | 801,000 tonnes $CO_2e$ (2022-2023 result) | **805,800 tonnes $CO_2e$ (2023–24 result)** ⇆ | Municipal greenhouse gas emissions remained relatively stable in 2023-2024. Changes to emissions reporting methods influenced the result, while Council continued to support emissions reduction through household energy efficiency programs and community education initiatives. Work towards Banyule's goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2040 continues. *This data is reported with a time lag, with 2024-2025 results expected later in 2026.* |
| **Open spaces are used to connect people**  | Average CSS mean index score for satisfaction with 'Provision and maintenance of parks and gardens' and 'The design of public spaces' | Maintain or exceed the baseline average mean index score of **7.8 out of 10** | Not available *(different survey questions asked)* | Not available *(different survey questions asked)* | 7.8 out of 10 | **7.8 out of 10** ✓ | Community satisfaction with parks, gardens and public spaces remained at a high level in 2025-2026. Ongoing investment in park upgrades, open spaces and public realm improvements is helping to create welcoming places for the community to connect, relax and be active. |

| Community KPI outcome | Annual measure | Target by 2029 | 2022-2023 result | 2023-2024 result | 2024-2025 result | 2025-2026 result/ status | Commentary |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Households are producing less waste** | Average rubbish and recyclables collected each year per household (kg) | Maintain or less than the baseline of **550kg average rubbish and recyclables** collected each year per household | 529.3kg | 550kg | 540kg | **554kg** ⇆ | Households continued to manage their waste responsibly in 2025-2026. Waste generation remained close to the baseline and significantly lower than before the introduction of Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) collection. Results can vary from year to year due to changes in recycling volumes, seasonal conditions and household waste patterns. |

## Measuring LGPRF service performance indicators

The table below shows service performance results for this priority theme, including four years of results and commentary.

Table 13 | LGPRF indicators – Our Sustainable Environment

| **Service/*classification*/** *indicator*/measure | **2023 result** | **2024 result** | **2025 result** | **2026 result/ 4-year trend** | **Target/ status** | **Public comments** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Waste Management**<br>***Service standard***<br>*Kerbside collection bins missed*<br>[Number of kerbside garbage and recycling collection bins missed / Number of scheduled kerbside garbage and recycling collection bin lifts] x10,000 | 18 bins | 17.8 bins | 28.8 bins | **27.1 bins**  | 18 bins  | The number of missed kerbside garbage and recycling bin collections decreased in 2025-2026, improving from 29 to 27 missed bins per 10,000 collections.<br>Performance was affected by North-East Link construction activities, particularly increased worker parking in residential streets, which made it more difficult to access some bins for collection. Whilst outside the scope of this indicator, a significant staff illness event also disrupted waste collection services, resulting in approximately 9,000 FOGO bins not being collected as scheduled over a two-day period.<br>*Please note that the 2022-2023 result has been corrected to 18 missed bins due to a historical reporting error. The Know Your Council website displays the originally published result and will not reflect this correction.* |

| Service/*classification*/ *indicator*/measure | 2023 result | 2024 result | 2025 result | 2026 result/ 4-year trend | Target/ status | Public comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Waste Management**<br>***Service cost***<br>*Cost of kerbside garbage bin collection service*<br>[Direct cost of the kerbside garbage bin collection service / Number of kerbside garbage collection bins] | $91.16 | $100.87 | $128.13 | **$132.84**<br>↑ | $135<br>✓ | Significant increases to the Victorian Government's Municipal Landfill Levy continued to place substantial upward pressure on the cost of Banyule's kerbside garbage bin collection service during 2025-2026.<br>During the year, Council reviewed how waste collection costs were allocated between the rubbish and Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) services. This resulted in costs being reallocated from the rubbish service to the FOGO service, partially offsetting the impact of higher landfill levy and waste disposal costs on the reported result.<br>Council's high-performance FOGO service continues to divert food and garden waste from landfill, helping to reduce disposal costs and manage future cost increases while supporting more sustainable waste management practices.<br>*Please note that the 2022-2023 result has been corrected to $91.16 due to a historical reporting error. The Know Your Council website displays the originally published result and will not reflect this correction.* |
| **Waste Management**<br>***Service cost***<br>*Cost of kerbside recyclables collection service*<br>[Direct cost of the kerbside recyclables bin collection service / Number of kerbside recyclables collection bins] | $52.30 | $54.35 | $69.89 | **$69.15**<br>↑ | $77<br>✓ | The cost of providing Banyule's kerbside recyclables bin collection service remained relatively stable in 2025-2026.<br>A small reduction in the total volume of recyclables collected contributed to a slight decrease in cost compared with the previous year. |

| Service/*classification*/ *indicator*/measure | 2023 result | 2024 result | 2025 result | 2026 result/ 4-year trend | Target/ status | Public comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Waste Management**<br>***Waste diversion***<br>*Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill*<br>[Weight of recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins / Weight of garbage, recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins] x100 | 62.6% | 64.3% | 64.9% | **62.1%**<br>⇆ | 58%<br>✓ | Banyule's kerbside waste diversion rate remained strong in 2025-2026, with 62.1% of waste collected through kerbside services diverted from landfill. While the result was slightly lower than the previous year, it remains above Council's target and significantly higher than levels reported prior to the introduction of Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) collection in 2022.<br>The introduction of weekly FOGO collections has significantly increased the amount of waste diverted from landfill by moving food waste from the rubbish stream to FOGO. Diversion rates can vary from year to year due to factors such as seasonal conditions. For example, drier weather generally reduces the amount of garden organics collected, which can lower overall diversion rates. |
| **Animal Management**<br>***Timeliness***<br>*Time taken to action animal management requests*<br>[Number of days between receipt and first response action for all animal management requests / Number of animal management requests] | 4.1 days | 10.1 days | 4.8 days | **4.8 days**<br>⇆ | 3 days<br>✗ | Banyule Council continued to prioritise urgent animal management matters, such as dog attacks and animals at large, responding to these requests within 30 minutes.<br>Across all animal management requests, the average response time remained at 4.8 days in 2025-2026. While this exceeded Council's three-day target and means the target was not achieved, response times have improved significantly over the past two years. This improvement reflects a more experienced team and ongoing enhancements to service delivery. |

| Service/*classification*/ *indicator*/measure | 2023 result | 2024 result | 2025 result | 2026 result/ 4-year trend | Target/ status | Public comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Animal Management**<br>***Service standard***<br>*Animals reclaimed*<br>[Number of animals reclaimed / Number of animals collected] x100 | 33% | 20.5% | 17.3% | **19.3%** | 30% | Banyule Council improved its animal reclaim rate during 2025-2026, increasing from 17% to 19% and successfully reuniting 111 animals with their owners. While the long-term trend remains below earlier results, the result represents an improvement on the previous year.<br>Council continues to focus on reuniting lost pets with their owners before they enter the impound process, and these reunions are not included in this measure. More than a third of animals collected during 2025-2026 had been voluntarily surrendered by their owners and therefore could not be reclaimed. The measure also includes cats collected through trapping programs that are not registered or microchipped, making it difficult to identify an owner.<br>Work will continue to further improve an increase in the successful reclaim rate.<br>*Please note that the 2024-2025 result has been corrected to 17.3% due to a historical reporting error. The Know Your Council website displays the originally published result and will not reflect this correction.* |
| **Animal Management**<br>***Service standard***<br>*Animals rehomed*<br>[Number of unclaimed collected animals rehomed / Number of unclaimed collected animals] x100 | 49.3% | 81.5% | 98.1% | **84.5%** | 70% | Banyule Council successfully rehomed 392 unclaimed animals during 2025-2026, achieving a rehoming rate of 84% and exceeding the 70% target. The rehoming rate has increased significantly over recent years, reflecting a strong and ongoing improvement in outcomes for animals that cannot be reunited with their owners.<br>Council works closely with partner agencies to help unclaimed animals find safe and suitable new homes. |

| Service/*classification*/ *indicator*/measure | 2023 result | 2024 result | 2025 result | 2026 result/ 4-year trend | Target/ status | Public comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Animal Management**<br>***Service cost***<br>*Cost of animal management service per population*<br>[Direct cost of the animal management service / Population] | $3.59 | $2.71 | $3.28 | **$2.77**<br>⇆ | $3.50<br>✓ | The cost of providing Banyule's animal management service decreased in 2025-2026 and remained below Council's target. Service costs have remained low and relatively stable for more than six years, while ongoing improvements to service delivery have helped Council provide animal management services efficiently for the community. |
| **Animal Management**<br>***Health and safety***<br>*Animal management prosecutions*<br>[Number of successful animal management prosecutions / Number of animal management prosecutions] x100 | 100% | 100% | 100% | **100%**<br>⇆ | 95%<br>✓ | Banyule Council continued its strong record of successful animal management prosecutions during 2025-2026, with 6 out of 6 prosecutions finalised during the year successfully resolved in Council's favour.<br>The 100% prosecution success rate is consistent with Banyule's strong results in recent years and supports responsible pet ownership while helping protect the safety and wellbeing of the community. |

# What it costs to deliver Council services

The sections below show the cost of delivering services that contributed to the Our Sustainable Environment priority in 2025-2026 and outline the services delivered by each Council department and its business units.

## City Futures

Table 14 | City Futures – Service costs for 2025-2026

| Description | Amount ($'000) |
|---|---|
| Budget | **1,202** |
| Actual spending | **1,155** |
| Difference from budget | **47** |

Provision of the following to the municipal community as a whole:

### Environment

- Setting Council's direction on environmental sustainability, including climate action and biodiversity
- Delivering plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support the community to respond to climate change
- Improving the environmental performance of Council buildings and public spaces, such as saving energy and reducing emissions
- Helping Council consider environmental sustainability in everything it does.

## Operations

Table 18 | Operations – Service costs for 2025-2026

| Description | Amount ($'000) |
|---|---|
| Budget | **22,278** |
| Actual spending | **22,310** |
| Difference from budget | **-32** |

Provision of the following to municipal households and to the municipal population as a whole:

### Waste Management

- Planning and managing waste and recycling services for the municipality
- Collecting household kerbside waste, including rubbish, recycling and food and garden waste (FOGO)
- Providing booked hard waste and bundled branch collection services
- Repairing and maintaining over 150,000 bins across the municipality
- Operating Council's Waste Recovery Centre (transfer station)
- Educating the community about reducing waste and recycling correctly.

Provision of the following to support Council's direct service delivery areas:

### Fleet Management

- Maintaining and repairing Council vehicles and equipment
- Responding to vehicle breakdowns to keep services running
- Managing vehicle parts and supplies to support day-to-day operations.

### Operations Infrastructure

- Looking after local roads, footpaths, kerbs and unsealed roads
- Maintaining stormwater drains to help prevent flooding and manage rainwater
- Keeping road line markings clear and safe for all road users.

### Operations Projects

- Making sure Council's Operations Centre meets safety and regulatory requirements
- Managing leases with organisations that operate from Council sites
- Delivering improvement projects and introducing new technology to support efficient services.

## Parks and Natural Environment

Table 15 | Parks and Natural Environment – Service costs for 2025-2026

| Description | Amount ($'000) |
|---|---|
| Budget | **15,858** |
| Actual spending | **15,791** |
| Difference from budget | **67** |

The provision of the following to the municipal community as a whole:

### Bushland Management

- Looking after local bushland and environmental reserves
- Restoring and protecting natural habitats for plants and animals
- Recording and monitoring local flora and fauna
- Managing noxious weeds and pest animals to protect the environment.

### Environmental Operations

- Looking after how water is managed across Banyule
- Improving stormwater quality and supporting water-sensitive urban design
- Using water more sustainably through harvesting, reuse and environmental improvements
- Helping protect local waterways and the natural environment.

### Parks Presentation

- Looking after garden beds and landscaped areas in parks and reserves
- Mowing and maintaining both active and passive parks and open spaces
- Keeping parks and reserves clean, safe and well presented for community use.

### Sportsfields and Parks Assets

- Maintaining park facilities such as playgrounds, sports grounds, paths, fences, seating and barbecues
- Looking after irrigation systems to keep parks and sportsfields in good condition
- Renewing and upgrading park assets as part of Council's improvement programs
- Delivering capital works projects to improve open spaces across Banyule.

### Urban Forestry

- Looking after trees in our streets and parks
- Managing tree pests and diseases to keep trees healthy
- Planning new tree planting and replacing trees when needed
- Keeping the community informed through Urban Forest Forums
- Providing clear guidelines for planting trees on nature strips.



Figure 55 | Rosanna Parklands

# Transport and Engineering

Table 16 | Transport and Engineering – Service costs for 2025-2026

| Description | Amount ($'000) |
|---|---|
| Budget | **313** |
| Actual spending | **-656** |
| Difference from budget | **969** |

Provision of the following to support Council's direct service delivery areas:

### Transport and Development Engineering

- Improve road safety, traffic efficiency and accessibility through transport planning and engineering solutions.
- Deliver transport infrastructure projects from planning through to implementation.
- Provide specialist transport engineering advice to support development, infrastructure and strategic planning.
- Partner with the community and stakeholders to promote sustainable transport, effective parking management and active travel.
- Assess development, subdivision and infrastructure proposals to ensure compliance with planning and engineering requirements.
- Manage drainage, flooding and stormwater outcomes through specialist engineering advice and approvals.
- Provide technical expertise on complex development and drainage matters to support informed decision-making.
- Deliver parking enforcement services that support compliance, road safety and network efficiency.
- Manage parking permits and systems while providing responsive customer service and advice
- Coordinate safe school crossing operations through supervision, training, safety assessments and compliance management.
- Support schools and the community through road safety education, stakeholder engagement and customer service.

### Transport Planning and Projects

- Planning transport improvements with the Victorian Government to support better public transport, walking and cycling across Banyule
- Working in line with Banyule's Integrated Transport Plan to improve how people move around the municipality
- Overseeing traffic, drainage, engineering and landscaping for major transport projects in Banyule, including North East Link, the M80 Ring Road, level crossing removals and the Greensborough bus interchange car park
- Providing specialist transport planning advice across Council
- Representing the community in major Victorian Government transport projects to achieve better urban design, safer roads and improved local infrastructure.
- Developing urban design concept plans to improve walking and cycling facilities in Banyule.
- Updating transport policy and strategy to incorporate changes in transport patterns including increased working from home and an increase in carshare use.

# Priority theme 3:
# Our Well-Built City

A well planned, sustainable and liveable place that caters for all our current and emerging communities, where our local character and environment is protected and enhanced

## What Council delivered

### Watsonia Town Square opens

Over the past two years, we've created safe, welcoming public spaces in the heart of Watsonia. The Town Square is a new community asset designed for people of all ages to enjoy now and into the future.

This large and complex project included:

- A nature play area, climbing wall, skateable zone, shared user paths and landscaped surrounds on the Morwell Avenue side of the Town Square
- Accessible public toilets, an innovative play space and additional seating near the library
- A new shared user path providing safer walking and cycling connections through the Town Square to Watsonia Station
- An arbour to provide shade along the shared user path
- Safe raised pedestrian crossings at High Street and Watsonia Road, and new pedestrian traffic lights at Watsonia Road
- A new central car park on Morwell Avenue, including improved lighting and pedestrian crossings
- A large underground water retention system beneath the Morwell Avenue car park to improve local drainage
- Accessible parking spaces that meet current standards

We thank residents and local traders for their patience and valuable input throughout the construction of Watsonia Town Square.



Figure 56 | Watsonia Town Square




Figure 57 | Ivanhoe Park

## Turning fallen trees into play-time treasures

Banyule's **Timber Repurposing Program** continues to give local trees a second life by transforming reclaimed timber into unique features for parks and open spaces.

During 2025-2026, local and regional artists created more than **20 public artworks** from repurposed timber, including sculptures, carved totems and interactive play elements. These features were installed at locations including Olympic Reserve, Plenty River Drive Reserve, St Clems Reserve, Settlers Reserve, Viewbank Reserve and Cyril Cummins Reserve.

The program also supplied natural log steppers and seating for playground renewal projects. By repurposing timber that would otherwise become waste, the program reduces landfill, supports local creativity and delivers distinctive park experiences that celebrate nature and Banyule's commitment to a circular economy.

## A New Chapter for Pets in Our Community

After 35 years, Council's community has refreshed its approach to managing dogs and cats in public spaces. The new Public Order for the Control of Dogs and Cats, which came into effect in February 2025, was shaped through months of consultation with residents, animal welfare groups and local park users.

The updated order reflects how much Council's community and Council's pets have changed over the decades. It introduces a cat curfew and clearer guidelines for responsible pet ownership, off-lead areas and measures to protect wildlife.

This is not just about rules; it's about balance ensuring people and pets can share public spaces safely and enjoyably. The outcome supports both animal wellbeing and community harmony, helping everyone feel more confident about where and how their furry companions can roam.



Figure 58 | Promoting responsible animal management




Figure 59 | The Bell St Mall

## Revitalising the Bell Street Mall

The Bell Street Mall Revitalisation Project is a partnership between the Victorian Government and Banyule City Council to revitalise the Mall into a lively multicultural destination. Guided by the Masterplan completed in December 2025, the project includes improvements to shopfronts, signage restoration, lighting in public spaces, along with new murals, street furniture and improvements to the arcades.

Funded by $250,000 from the Victorian Government and $70,000 from Council, works will occur from late 2026 to early 2027, with completion by March 2027.

The project will create a safer, more welcoming environment, support local businesses, and enhance community pride by celebrating the area's diverse cultural identity.

## Re-Imagining Greensborough

We are creating a new plan for Greensborough activity centre. But first, wanted to hear from the community and traders what new and exciting ideas they have for the activity centre. Through community consultation during May and June 2026 the community answered the question "how do you imagine Greensborough activity centre in 20-30 years?"

Community consultation featured a range of in-person and online activities including walking tours, information sessions, workshops, pop-up stalls, and a NextGen design day for young people. Council talked with people about what is changed in the last 20 years thanks to the current Greensborough plan. There were also some big ideas tested, like how Council can make the streets more inviting for pedestrians and cyclists, and where housing growth should be located.

With a lot of planning policy change at Victorian Government level, these projects are ever more important to give a voice back to the community, ensuring an up-to-date shared Council and community vision for the future of Greensborough activity centre.



Figure 60 | Bell Street Heidelberg illustration

# What Council achieved under the Our Well-Built City priority

## Delivery Plan

In the first year of the Delivery Plan, Banyule Council delivered **11 key actions** that supported the Our Well-Built City priority theme. These actions helped create a well-planned, sustainable and liveable city by improving infrastructure, planning for growth and enhancing places where people live, work and gather.

The results are summarised alongside. The full report is available on Banyule's website. The Council departments and business units that contributed to this work are shown later in this section.

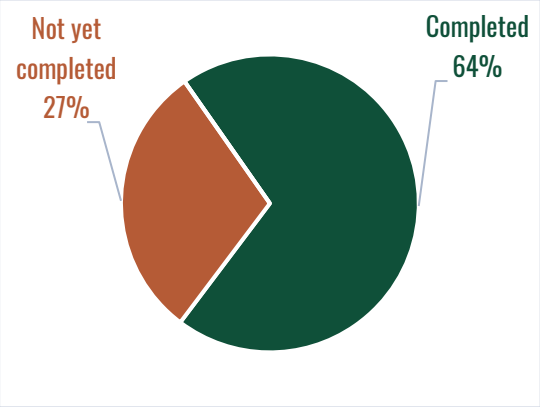


Figure 61 | Status of Our Well-Built City actions as at 30 June 2026

### 8 actions completed

These actions were completed or reached at least 90% progress by year end. For reporting purposes, actions at 90% or more are counted as completed.

### 3 actions not yet completed

These actions had not reached 90% progress by year end and is reported as not yet completed.

### 0 actions postponed

No actions were rescheduled during the year.

## Strategic indicators: Council performance

The table below shows Council's results against the measures and targets for this priority theme.

Table 17 | Council strategic indicators – Our Well-Built City

| Council KPI outcome | Annual measure | Target by 2029 | 2022-2023 result | 2023-2024 result | 2024-2025 result | 2025-2026 result/ status | Commentary |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Council provides accessible infrastructure that supports active living for people with disability**  | Difference in average CSS mean index scores between the general population and households with a person with a disability, showing satisfaction with Council's infrastructure that supports active living | Maintain or reduce the **satisfaction gap to 0.3 or less** between households with and without a person with a disability | Not available *(different survey questions asked)* | Not available *(different survey questions asked)* | 0.3 point gap | **0.1 point gap** ✓ | Households with a member with disability reported equal satisfaction on three of the seven measures and higher satisfaction on two, indicating Council's infrastructure is broadly supporting active living across the community. However, satisfaction was lower for footpaths (4 points) and bike and shared paths (3 points), flagging these as priority areas for improvement to ensure equitable access. |
| **Significant majority of planning applications are decided within required timeframes** | Percentage of planning applications decided within 60 days | Annual increase from the baseline percentage of **75% of planning applications**, reaching 80% or higher by 2029 | 80.2% | 78.6% | 87.7% | **80.1%** ✓ | Most planning applications were decided within the required timeframe in 2025-2026, continuing strong performance in this area. Timely planning decisions help support investment, development and community confidence in the planning process. |

## Strategic indicators: Community outcomes

The table below shows community outcomes against the measures and targets for this priority theme.

Table 18 | Community strategic indicators – Our Well-Built City

| Community KPI outcome | Annual measure | Target by 2029 | 2022–23 result | 2023–24 result | 2024–25 result | 2025–26 result/ status | Commentary |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **More planned developments in Banyule are sustainably designed** | Average sustainability score for the design of commercial, industrial and large-scale residential developments | Maintain or exceed the baseline **average sustainability score of 55%** | Not available *(previous results were based on a different sustainability measure)* | Not available *(previous results were based on a different sustainability measure)* | 55% | **61%** ✓ | Sustainability outcomes for eligible developments improved in 2025-2026, with the average sustainability score exceeding the target. While recent planning reforms reduced the number of developments assessed using the sustainability tool, developments that were assessed achieved stronger sustainability outcomes overall. |
| **Community considers Banyule as a great place to live** | Overall Liveability index score | Maintain or exceed the baseline **Liveability index score** | 65.5 index score | Not available *(not scheduled to be measured)* | Not available *(not scheduled to be measured)* | **70.4 index score** ⇆ | Banyule recorded a strong liveability score in 2025-2026. As this result is based on a new survey methodology, it cannot be directly compared with previous years. Future surveys will help build a clearer picture of how residents view Banyule as a place to live over time. |

## Measuring LGPRF service performance indicators

The table below shows service performance results for this priority theme, including four years of results and commentary.

Table 19 | LGPRF indicators – Our Well-Built City

| **Service/*classification*/** *indicator*/measure | **2023 result** | **2024 result** | **2025 result** | **2026 result/ 4-year trend** | **Target/ status** | **Public comments** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Statutory Planning**<br>***Timeliness***<br>*Time taken to decide planning applications*<br>[The median number of days between receipt of a planning application and a decision on the application] | 28 days | 25 days | 17 days | **25 days** ⇆ | 23 days ⇆ | The median number of days taken by Banyule Council to decide a planning application increased to 25 days in 2025-2026, up from 17 days in the previous year. This reflects a higher number of planning applications received during the year, resulting in increased assessment workloads.<br>While the result was above Council's target of 23 days, it remained within the accepted performance range and was significantly lower than the Victorian average. Despite the increase this year, planning application timeframes remain lower than in 2022-2023 and 2023-2024. |
| **Statutory Planning**<br>***Service standard***<br>*Planning applications decided within required time frames*<br>[(Number of regular planning application decisions made within 60 days) + (Number of VicSmart planning application decisions made within 10 days) / Number of planning application decisions made] x100 | 83.6% | 78.1% | 87.6% | **81.9%** ⇆ | 80% ✓ | Banyule Council decided 82% of planning applications within the required timeframes during 2025-2026, a decrease of 6 percentage points from the previous year. While the result was lower than 2024-2025, it remained above Council's target of 80% and significantly higher than earlier years.<br>This reflects Banyule Council's ongoing commitment to delivering timely and effective planning decisions. |

| Service/*classification*/ *indicator*/measure | 2023 result | 2024 result | 2025 result | 2026 result/ 4-year trend | Target/ status | Public comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Statutory Planning**<br>***Service cost***<br>*Cost of statutory planning service*<br>[Direct cost of the statutory planning service / Number of planning applications received] | $2,127.38 | $2,617.81 | $2,624.70 | **$2,580.14** | $2,640 | Banyule Council's cost of delivering statutory planning services decreased slightly in 2025-2026, the first reduction since 2020-2021. The result reflects an increase in planning applications received during the year, which offset a modest increase in overall expenditure.<br>The average cost per application decreased to $2,580, remaining below Council's target and demonstrating continued efficiency in the delivery of statutory planning services. |
| **Statutory Planning**<br>***Decision making***<br>*Council planning decisions upheld at VCAT*<br>[Number of VCAT decisions that did not set aside Council's decision in relation to a planning application / Number of VCAT decisions in relation to planning applications] x100 | 44% | 67.4% | 73.3% | **75.9%** | 60% | Of the 29 Banyule Council planning decisions considered by VCAT in 2025-2026, 22 were upheld, resulting in an overall success rate of 76%. This exceeded Council's target and continues the strong improvement achieved over recent years.<br>The result is more than 20 percentage points higher than in 2021-2022, demonstrating a positive long-term trend. |

# What it costs to deliver Council services

The sections below show the cost of delivering services that contributed to the Our Well-Built City priority in 2025–26 and outline the services delivered by each Council department and its business units.

## City Futures

Table 20 | City Futures – Service costs for 2025-2026

| Description | Amount ($'000) |
|---|---|
| Budget | **1,707** |
| Actual spending | **1,669** |
| Difference from budget | **37** |

Provision of the following to support Council's direct service delivery areas:

### Open Space Planning and Design

- Planning and designing parks, reserves, playgrounds and shared trails
- Making sure open spaces continue to meet the needs of current and future communities
- Improving how people use and enjoy outdoor spaces across Banyule.

### Strategic Planning and Urban Design

- Planning how Banyule grows and develops now and into the future
- Preparing plans and guidelines for land use, buildings and activity centres
- Shaping the design of renewal areas to create well-planned, liveable places
- Managing changes to the planning scheme to guide development across Banyule.

## City Planning, Safety and Amenity

Table 21 | City Planning, Safety and Amenity – Service costs for 2024-2025

| Description | Amount ($'000) |
|---|---|
| Budget | **-1,447** |
| Actual spending | **-1,107** |
| Difference from budget | **-340** |

Provision of the following to landowners, builders and developers:

### Building Services (BPi)

- Assessing building permit applications and carrying out required inspections
- Issuing occupancy permits and final certificates to ensure buildings are safe to use
- Providing building and property information to owners, designers and other professionals.

Provision of the following to the road users, pet owners, parents and the municipal community as a whole:

### Municipal Laws and Public Assets

- Helping keep neighbourhoods safe, orderly and welcoming
- Carrying out patrols to support community safety and local laws
- Managing issues such as local amenity and animal management.
- Helping the community prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies
- Supporting community safety, resilience and wellbeing before, during and after incidents
- Planning and coordinating Council's response to emergencies that may affect Banyule
- Working to keep the community informed, prepared and supported in emergencies.

Provision of the following to landowners, architects, building designers, builders and developers:

### Development Planning

- Assessing planning applications in line with planning laws and Council policies
- Providing advice and information to help the community understand development and land use proposals
- Supporting residents, businesses and developers through the planning process.

Provision of the following to the municipal community as a whole:

### Environmental Health

- Helping keep Banyule a healthy and safe place to live
- Protecting people and the environment from waste, pollution and health risks
- Preventing and reducing the spread of illness to support a healthy community
- Supporting local food, health and accommodation businesses to meet regulatory standards



Figure 62 | Watsonia Town Square

# Priority theme 4:
# Our Valued Community Assets and Facilities

As custodians of our community, assets, facilities and services, we work to ensure that they are affordable, sustainable, evenly distributed, safe and accessible for all ages and abilities and designed to provide meaningful experiences and connections.

## What Council delivered

### Early Years Facility Upgrades

Banyule continued to invest in high-quality early years infrastructure across the municipality, including the $3.6 million **East Ivanhoe Preschool** redevelopment, funded through the Victorian Government's Building Blocks Grant program. The project transformed the former single-room kindergarten into a modern, purpose-built double-room preschool with capacity for 55 children, featuring environmentally sustainable design and inclusive spaces to support high-quality early childhood education and care. While construction is complete, the new centre is scheduled to open in early 2026, providing a state-of-the-art learning environment for three- and four-year-old programs. Additional improvements were completed across several preschool facilities, including bathroom and office upgrades at **Greenhills Preschool** to enhance functionality, accessibility and amenity for children, families and staff; upgrades to the children's bathroom, storage areas and front entrance at **Briar Hill Preschool** to create a more functional and welcoming environment; a foyer upgrade at **Apollo Parkways Preschool** to improve the arrival experience for families and the preschool community; and a bathroom upgrade at **Panorama Heights Preschool** to improve facilities for children and educators.



Figure 63 | St Hellier street Children's Centre

### Municipal Laws Public Assets & Emergency Management

The Municipal Laws, Public Assets and Emergency Management team helps protect community safety, maintain public amenity and build a resilient Banyule. During the year, Council's Emergency Management function joined the team following an organisational review, strengthening the integration of emergency management, local laws and public assets within the City Planning, Safety and Amenity Department.

The team delivers a wide range of regulatory, animal management and emergency management services, including enforcement of local laws, management of abandoned vehicles, illegal dumping, fire prevention and responsible pet ownership. It also coordinates emergency preparedness, response, relief and recovery activities with emergency services and community partners.

## Animal Management Highlights

- Council delivered its first Community Dog Education Workshops under the Domestic Animal Management (DAM) Plan, covering topics including barking dogs, separation anxiety, socialisation and responsible pet ownership. Led by a nationally qualified dog trainer, the workshops received strong community support and demonstrated demand for ongoing education programs.
- Animal rehoming remained a key focus, with staff partnering with pound providers and rescue organisations to find homes for surrendered animals. A notable success involved a German Shepherd being matched with a resident who had recently lost his assistance dog, creating a positive outcome for both owner and animal.
- In 2026, Council established the first Banyule Dogs Working Group, bringing together community members, Councillors and Council officers to provide input into dog-related policies and programs.
- Council adopted the **Domestic Animal Management Plan 2025-2029**, setting priorities for responsible pet ownership, animal welfare, community safety and compliance with the Domestic Animals Act over the next four years.

## Asset Protection and Construction Management

The Asset Protection and Construction Management team continued to achieve strong compliance outcomes by working collaboratively with builders, developers and the community to promote understanding of permit requirements and asset protection obligations. Through a proactive approach focused on education, guidance and early engagement, the team supported high levels of permit adherence by helping protect Council infrastructure and minimise impacts on neighbouring residents and the community.

During the year, the team also completed a review of its operational fleet, resulting in the transition to electric vehicles. This program supports Councils commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and contributes to its broader objective of achieving net zero emissions, while continuing to deliver efficient frontline services.

## Building Emergency Management Capability and Partnerships

Throughout 2025-2026, Council invested in emergency management training and professional development to strengthen staff capability, build partnerships and improve preparedness. Council hosted a Municipal Emergency Management Officer (MEMO) and Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM) training course attended by practitioners from across metropolitan Melbourne. The program used scenario-based learning and case studies to strengthen emergency response and recovery skills while building regional networks.

Emergency Management staff and support personnel also completed Personal Support Training, developing skills in supporting people affected by emergencies, including active listening, psychological wellbeing and recovery-focused approaches.

Banyule also participated in the North-West Metro Regional Emergency Management Exercise alongside emergency services, neighbouring councils and partner agencies. The exercise tested emergency management arrangements, decision-making processes and inter-agency communication, helping identify improvements for future planning, training and response activities.

These initiatives have strengthened Council's emergency management capability, partnerships and preparedness, ensuring staff are better equipped to support the community before, during and after emergencies.

# What Council achieved under the Our Valued Community Assets and Facilities priority

## Delivery Plan

In the first year of the Delivery Plan, Banyule Council delivered **seven key actions** that supported the Our Valued Community Assets and Facilities priority theme. These actions helped maintain and improve community facilities, public spaces and infrastructure, ensuring they remain safe, accessible and responsive to community needs.

The results are summarised alongside. The full report is available on Banyule's website. The Council departments and business units that contributed to this work are shown later in this section.

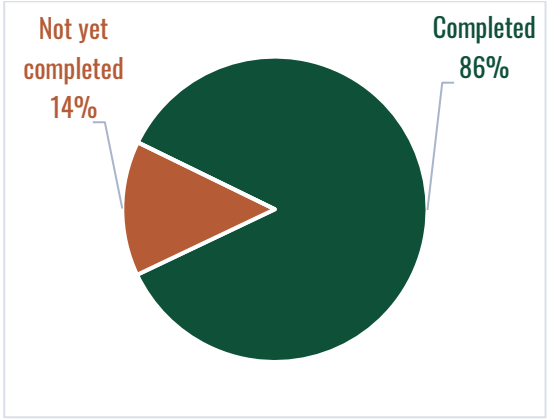


Figure 64 | Status of Our Valued Community Assets and Facilities actions as at 30 June 2026



Figure 65 | Bundoora Bowls Club

## 6 actions completed

These actions were completed or reached at least 90% progress by year end. For reporting purposes, actions at 90% or more are counted as completed.

## 1 action not yet completed

This action had not reached 90% progress by year end and is reported as not yet completed.

## 0 actions postponed

No actions were rescheduled during the year.

## Strategic indicators: Council performance

The table below shows Council's results against the measures and targets for this priority theme.

Table 22 | Council strategic indicators – Our Valued Community Assets and Facilities

| Council KPI outcome | Annual measure | Target by 2029 | 2022-2023 result | 2023-2024 result | 2024-2025 result | 2025-2026 result/ status | Commentary |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Enhanced community inclusivity by enabling all community members to utilise Council buildings** | Number of Council buildings where accessibility improvements have been made | Complete accessibility improvements on **at least one building** each year | 8 buildings | 9 buildings | 7 buildings | **15 buildings** ✓ | Accessibility improvements were completed at 15 Council buildings in 2025-2026. Key projects included a new accessible ramp, automatic door and accessible parking at the Lower Plenty Senior Citizens Centre, accessible bathrooms and a lift at the Rethink Centre, Council's community waste and sustainability education centre, and accessibility upgrades at the James Reserve public toilets.<br>These improvements help create more inclusive and accessible facilities for people with disability and the wider community. |
| **Banyule's sustainable transport network has been expanded and enhanced to better connect people and places** | Length of new on-road bicycle lanes and off-road shared paths and trails in metres throughout the municipality | Add **a new lane, path or trail** each year | 328m | 344m | 690m | **1,240m** ✓ | More than 1.2 kilometres of new shared paths and connecting links were delivered in 2025-2026, an increase on previous years. Key works along Old Eltham Road have improved connections between neighbourhoods and support safer walking, cycling and active transport across Banyule. |

| Council KPI outcome | Annual measure | Target by 2029 | 2022-2023 result | 2023-2024 result | 2024-2025 result | 2025-2026 result/ status | Commentary |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Infrastructure for the community is increased and maintained** | Percentage of annual Capital Works program completed on time | **90% of annual Capital Works program** completed on time | 80% | 91% | 90% | **94%** ✓ | Council exceeded its target for on-time delivery of capital works in 2025-2026, with 94% of projects completed as scheduled. This supports continued investment in the infrastructure and facilities that help keep Banyule a great place to live, work and visit. |

## Strategic indicators: Community outcomes

The table below shows community outcomes against the measures and targets for this priority theme.

Table 23 | Community strategic indicators – Our Valued Community Assets and Facilities

| Community KPI outcome | Annual measure | Target by 2029 | 2022-2023 result | 2023-2024 result | 2024-2025 result | 2025-2026 result/ status | Commentary |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Community members feel safe in and around local activity centres** | CSS mean index score for 'how safe do you feel in public areas in and around your local activity centre' | Maintain or exceed the baseline mean index score of **8 out of 10** | Not available *(different survey questions asked)* | Not available *(different survey questions asked)* | 8 out of 10 | **7.8 out of 10** ⇆ | Most residents reported feeling safe in and around their local activity centre in 2025-2026. 65% of respondents felt very safe, while only 3% felt unsafe. While the result was slightly below the target, it remained within the target range and indicates that activity centres continue to be viewed as generally safe places within the community. |

| Community KPI outcome | Annual measure | Target by 2029 | 2022-2023 result | 2023-2024 result | 2024-2025 result | 2025-2026 result/ status | Commentary |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Community is satisfied with the connected network of bike lanes and shared paths** | CSS mean index score for satisfaction with 'Bike and shared paths (both on-road and off-road and including shared paths)' | Maintain or exceed the baseline mean index score of **8 out of 10** | Not available *(different survey questions asked)* | Not available *(different survey questions asked)* | 8 out of 10 | **7.6 out of 10** ⇆ | Community satisfaction with bike and shared paths remained at a good level in 2025-2026. 63% of respondents were very satisfied, while only 5% were dissatisfied. Continued investment in bike lanes, shared paths and connections is helping people travel more easily between homes, parks, activity centres and other destinations across Banyule. |
| **Community is satisfied with the condition of Banyule's footpaths** | CSS mean index score for satisfaction with 'Footpath maintenance and repairs' | Maintain or exceed the baseline mean index score of **7.1 out of 10** | Not available *(different survey questions asked)* | Not available *(different survey questions asked)* | 7.1 out of 10 | **7.2 out of 10** ✓ | Community satisfaction with footpath maintenance and repairs was at a good level in 2025-2026. 57% of respondents were very satisfied, while only 8% were dissatisfied. Council continues to invest in footpath renewal and maintenance to improve safety, accessibility and connectivity across Banyule. |

## Measuring LGPRF service performance indicators

The table below shows service performance results for this priority theme, including four years of results and commentary.

Table 24 | LGPRF indicators – Our Valued Community Assets and Facilities

| **Service/*classification*/** *indicator*/measure | **2023 result** | **2024 result** | **2025 result** | **2026 result/ 4-year trend** | **Target/ status** | **Public comments** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Aquatic facilities**<br>***Service standard***<br>*Health inspections of aquatic facilities*<br>[Number of authorised officer inspections of Council aquatic facilities / Number of Council aquatic facilities] | 12 inspections | 10.7 inspections | 14 inspections | **11.7 inspections** ⇆ | 8 inspections ✓ | Banyule Council regularly inspects public pools to ensure they are clean, safe and meet health standards. Inspection rates have remained high in recent years as part of Council's proactive approach to water testing and monitoring.<br>The aquatic areas at Olympic Leisure Centre closed during 2025-2026, resulting in fewer inspections than the previous year. Despite this, inspection levels remained above Council's target and continued to support high water quality and safe enjoyment of aquatic facilities across Banyule. |
| **Aquatic facilities**<br>***Utilisation***<br>*Utilisation of aquatic facilities*<br>[Number of visits to aquatic facilities / Population] | 8.3 visits | 8.7 visits | 9.1 visits | **9.1 visits** ↑ | 8 visits ✓ | Aquatic facility use remained strong during 2025-2026, with residents making an average of 9 visits per person. Utilisation has increased significantly over recent years and remained above Banyule's target.<br>Attendance at WaterMarc increased by 3.5% and Ivanhoe Aquatic casual attendances increased by 8% compared with 2024-2025. During the year, Olympic Leisure's aquatic facilities were decommissioned and the centre subsequently closed for redevelopment works. |

| Service/*classification*/ *indicator*/measure | 2023 result | 2024 result | 2025 result | 2026 result/ 4-year trend | Target/ status | Public comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Aquatic facilities**<br>***Service cost***<br>*Cost of aquatic facilities*<br>[Direct cost of aquatic facilities less income received / Number of visits to aquatic facilities] | $1.00 | $0.13 | $0.46 | **$0.04**<br>↘ | $0.50<br>✓ | The net cost of providing aquatic facilities decreased further in 2025-2026, continuing the favourable trend observed in recent years. WaterMarc delivered a very strong result in the second year of its current contract, meeting the guaranteed net lump sum payment to Council and achieving an additional profit outcome.<br>Strong patronage levels and financial performance across Banyule's aquatic facilities have contributed to the ongoing reduction in net cost per visit. |
| **Libraries**<br>***Resource currency***<br>*Recently purchased library collection*<br>[Number of library collection items purchased in the last five years / Number of library collection items] x100 | 92.6% | 81.3% | 86% | **83.5%**<br>⇆ | 75%<br>✓ | More than 83% of library collection items available through Yarra Plenty Regional Library were purchased within the last five years, exceeding Banyule's 75% target. While slightly lower than the previous year, the result remains above target and reflects a strong focus on maintaining a current and relevant collection over recent years.<br>Yarra Plenty Regional Library balances collection renewal with sustainable collection management practices to ensure library resources continue to meet community needs. |

| Service/*classification*/ *indicator*/measure | 2023 result | 2024 result | 2025 result | 2026 result/ 4-year trend | Target/ status | Public comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Libraries**<br>***Service cost***<br>*Cost of library service per population*<br>[Direct cost of the library service / Population] | $39.15 | $39.57 | $41.70 | **$45.49**<br>⇆ | $42<br>⇆ | The cost of providing library services increased during 2025-2026 due to rising operating costs and the continued expansion of library services. Costs are shared between member councils under the Yarra Plenty Regional Library Agreement.<br>Cost increases over recent years have been consistent with inflation and continued investment in library services, supporting access to library collections, programs, digital resources and community learning opportunities across the municipality. |
| **Libraries**<br>***Utilisation***<br>*Library loans per population*<br>[Number of collection item loans / Population] | New indicator (2024-2025) | 6.21 loans | 7.55 loans | **7.69 loans**<br>↗ | 6.5 loans<br>✓ | Library loans remained strong in 2025-2026, with residents borrowing almost seven items per person on average. The result exceeded Banyule's target and continues a strong level of community use of library collections and services over recent years. |
| **Libraries**<br>***Participation***<br>*Library membership*<br>[Number of registered library members / Population] x100 | New indicator (2024-2025) | 30.6% | 34.7% | **43.6%**<br>↗ | 30%<br>✓ | Library membership continued to grow strongly in 2025-2026, with more than 43% of Banyule residents registered as active library members. Membership has increased significantly over recent years, reflecting strong community engagement with Yarra Plenty Regional Library's collections, programs and services.<br>Growth during 2025-2026 was supported by the opening of the new Rosanna Library and a successful junior membership campaign, helping more residents connect with library services. |

| Service/*classification*/ *indicator*/measure | 2023 result | 2024 result | 2025 result | 2026 result/ 4-year trend | Target/ status | Public comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Libraries**<br>***Participation***<br>*Library visits per head of population*<br>[Number of library visits / Population] | New indicator (2024-2025) | 4.1 visits | 4 visits | **4.4 visits**<br>↑ | 4 visits<br>✓ | Library visits increased during 2025-2026, with residents making an average of 4.4 visits per person. The result exceeded Banyule's target and continues the positive growth in library visitation seen in recent years.<br>Strong community engagement with Yarra Plenty Regional Library's spaces, programs, collections and services has contributed to the increase in visits. |
| **Roads**<br>***Satisfaction of use***<br>*Sealed local road requests*<br>[Number of sealed local road requests / Kilometres of sealed local roads] x100 | 121.7 requests | 73.8 requests | 87 requests | **96.9 requests**<br>⇆ | 100 requests<br>✓ | Requests to repair sealed local roads increased to 522 in 2025-2026, an 11% increase on the previous year and one of the highest results recorded in recent years.<br>Increased reporting was concentrated in areas affected by the North East Link Project and along key road corridors, where ongoing construction activity and heavy vehicle movements can contribute to road wear. Growing use of Council's online reporting channels may also be contributing to more requests being received. |
| **Roads**<br>***Condition***<br>*Sealed local roads maintained to condition standards*<br>[Number of kilometres of sealed local roads below the renewal intervention level set by Council / Kilometres of sealed local roads] x100 | 97.5% | 97.5% | 97.9% | **98.2%**<br>↑ | 97%<br>✓ | More than 98% of Banyule's sealed local roads were maintained in veery good or good condition during 2025-2026, exceeding the 97% target. Road condition has remained consistently high in Banyule for many years and improved further this year, reflecting Council's ongoing investment in maintaining and renewing the local road network.<br>Regular inspections and proactive maintenance help keep local roads safe, reliable and well maintained for the community. |

| Service/*classification*/ *indicator*/measure | 2023 result | 2024 result | 2025 result | 2026 result/ 4-year trend | Target/ status | Public comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Roads**<br>***Service cost***<br>*Cost of sealed local road reconstruction*<br>[Direct cost of sealed local road reconstruction / Square metres of sealed local roads reconstructed] | $0 | $206.15 | $0 | **$0**<br>⇆ | $0<br>✓ | No sealed local road reconstruction projects were undertaken in Banyule during 2025-2026. |
| **Roads**<br>***Service cost***<br>*Cost of sealed local road resealing*<br>[Direct cost of sealed local road resealing / Square metres of sealed local roads resealed] | $43.86 | $34.51 | $40.60 | **$40.11**<br>⇆ | $37<br>⇆ | The cost of resealing local roads in Banyule remained stable in 2025-2026, at a similar level to the previous year. Over the longer term, resealing costs have increased broadly in line with inflation.<br>Higher construction and material costs across the industry, including oil-based products commonly used in road maintenance, have contributed to these increases. Despite these cost pressures, Council has been able to improve service delivery and identify cost efficiencies, enabling continued investment in maintaining and renewing local roads to help keep the network safe, reliable and well maintained for the community. |

| Service/*classification*/ *indicator*/measure | 2023 result | 2024 result | 2025 result | 2026 result/ 4-year trend | Target/ status | Public comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Roads**<br>***Satisfaction***<br>*Satisfaction with sealed local roads*<br>[Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how Council has performed on the condition of sealed local roads] | 64 out of 100 | 61 out of 100 | 70 out of 100 | **70 out of 100** ⇆ | 70 out of 100 ✓ | Satisfaction with the maintenance and repair of sealed local roads in Banyule remained at a good level in 2026, with a score of 70 out of 100, meeting Council's target. 45% of respondents were very satisfied and 9% reported dissatisfaction.<br>Banyule Council continues to maintain local roads through regular inspections and timely repairs, helping to keep roads safe, smooth and long-lasting.<br>*A new survey provider and methodology were introduced in 2025, meaning results from 2025 onwards are not directly comparable with earlier years.* |

# What it costs to deliver Council services

The sections below show the cost of delivering services that contributed to the Our Valued Community Assets and Facilities priority in 2025-2026 and outline the services delivered by each Council department and its business units.

## Delivery and Assets

Table 25 | Delivery and Assets – Service costs for 2025-2026

| Description | Amount ($'000) |
|---|---|
| Budget | **8,737** |
| Actual spending | **9,199** |
| Difference from budget | **-462** |

Provision of the following to the municipal population as a whole:

### Capital Works

- Planning, managing and reporting on major construction and upgrade projects
- Delivering building and civil works, including roads, footpaths, shared paths and trails
- Managing contractors to ensure projects are delivered safely, on time and to standard.

### Building Maintenance

- Providing reactive, preventative, and planned maintenance across all Council buildings and their assets
- Managing essential safety measures.

### City Assets

- Strategic Asset Management, programming for renewals and maintenance of infrastructure assets including road, footpath, bridge, kerb and channel, carpark, drainage, building and public toilets, Developing Capital Works Program, Road Management Plan, 10 Year Asset Plan, Special Charge Scheme Policy, implementing CAMMS for capital projects.

### Major Projects

- Providing leadership and managing a variety of major projects for the organisation to achieve positive outcomes for the community, meeting beneficial financial outcomes and delivering new and revitalised community assets.

## Strategic Properties and Projects

Table 26 | Strategic Properties and Projects – Service costs for 2025-2026

| Description | Amount ($'000) |
|---|---|
| Budget | **-663** |
| Actual spending | **-317** |
| Difference from budget | **-347** |

Provision of the following to support Council's direct service delivery areas:

### Spatial and Property Systems

- Coordinating spatial and property systems
- Maintaining and providing spatial approaches to managing Council's operations.

### Strategic Properties and Property Services

- Looking after Council's long-term interests and growth through sustainable property and land acquisitions, divestments and investments
- Managing all aspects of ongoing land management including works consent, lease and license arrangements, discontinuances and ongoing re-valuations.

Priority theme 5:

# Our Thriving Local Economy

A thriving, resilient, socially responsible local and integrated economy that encourages, supports and advocates for a diverse range of businesses and entrepreneurship, providing local investment and employment opportunities.

## What Council delivered

### Award-Winning Leadership in Inclusive Economic Development

Banyule City Council was honoured to receive the Economic Development Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Award at the 2025 Economic Development Australia (EDA) National Awards for Excellence.

These awards celebrate professionals and organisations across the country who demonstrate innovation, creativity and leadership in strengthening their communities.

Banyule was recognised for its groundbreaking Inclusive Local Jobs and Social Enterprise Strategies, the first of their kind led by local government in Victoria. These strategies set an ambitious target to create 1,000 jobs for people facing barriers to work, a goal achieved a year ahead of schedule. By embedding equity into Council operations and co-designing programs with community and business, Banyule has set a new benchmark for inclusive economic development and continues to shape a fairer and connected local economy.



Figure 66 | Inclusive Economic Development Award

### New Inclusive Economy Strategy endorsed – a shared plan for opportunity, participation and local prosperity

In May 2026, Council endorsed **Banyule's Inclusive Economy Strategy 2026-2031**, setting a clear direction for a fairer and more connected local economy.

The Strategy brings together Council's work in economic development, social enterprise and local employment. It recognises that a strong economy is not only about business growth, but also creating opportunities for people to learn, work, start a business and participate in community life.

Developed through two years of community engagement, the Strategy was informed by **247 contributions** from residents, businesses, social enterprises, trader groups and advisory committees. Community support was strong, with **73% of respondents** saying the draft reflected local needs to a moderate or great extent.

The Strategy provides a shared roadmap for Council, local businesses and community partners over the next five years. Its focus is on strengthening local connections, building economic resilience and improving access to opportunities for people who may face barriers.

The next step is delivering the Strategy's commitments in partnership with the community and ensuring local voices continue to guide its implementation.

## Banyule is a Business Friendly Council

Through the Victorian Government's Business-Friendly Councils program, the Local Economy team proudly partnered with planning, health, building, and other regulatory departments to improve how council supports new and existing local businesses.

This shared work brought relevant teams together to review Council's processes for business applications, identify bottlenecks and communication gaps, and create a more coordinated approach.

A key achievement has been the Business Concierge responding to 177 business applications, supporting business owners and helping deliver a faster, clearer, and more consistent experience for them with Council.

Council are proud of the progress made and the strong cross-council commitment to improving customer focused practice. Work continues to build in new tools, resources, and training that support quicker internal decision-making and better outcomes for Council's local businesses.

This work also supports the recently endorsed Inclusive Economy Strategy 2026-2031 and provides a strong foundation for future actions that strengthen local business support and contribute to a thriving, more inclusive and resilient local economy.

## Social Enterprise Growth Fund

The Social Enterprise Growth Fund supports social enterprises, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-owned businesses, and not-for-profit organisations to grow their impact in Banyule.

In 2025–26, Council funded four organisations: The Good Brick AUS, Sycamore Tree Café, SheForce Recruitment and Amplifier Collective. Projects included NDIS registration support, commercial kitchen improvements, industry networking and skills development.

These initiatives strengthen Banyule's inclusive economy by creating employment opportunities, supporting business growth and increasing organisations' capacity to deliver positive community outcomes.

## Banyule traders continue to strengthen local precincts

Traders' associations across Banyule continued to build stronger, more connected business communities, delivering a range of projects, events and programs that supported local businesses and created more lively places for residents and visitors.

Over the past year, Council worked alongside traders' associations to support the growth and renewal of local precincts. This included the successful re-establishment of the Rosanna Village Traders Association, following strong community and business support for a revitalised focus on the precinct. Council also supported the renewal of the Lower Plenty and Bell Street Mall Special Rate Schemes, helping ensure local businesses can continue to invest collectively in projects and activities that benefit their precincts into the future.

Trader associations also provided a diverse calendar of community events and activities that celebrated the unique character of each precinct. New first events added to Banyule's local calendar included Bell Street Mall's Eid Festival and Greensborough's Feel Great Greensy day, bringing communities together through cultural celebration, connection and social wellbeing. Watsonia also celebrated the opening of its Town Square through a special community event, while Ivanhoe provided a reinvigorated calendar of new activities that encouraged visitation and engagement within the precinct.

Through these programs, Banyule's traders' associations played an important role in creating welcoming, inclusive and thriving local precincts. Council's Local Economy team remains committed to working in partnership with traders to support local businesses and help deliver programs that reflect the needs and aspirations of their communities.

## Supporting start-up Social Enterprises

Council partnered with social enterprise StartSomeGood to deliver Pitch for Good, a program that helped five local social enterprises build skills, connect with the community and raise funds through workshops, mentoring and crowdfunding.

The program achieved strong results, with four of the five enterprises meeting their fundraising targets and raising more than $54,000 for local projects. Funded initiatives included affordable refurbished whitegoods, disability arts programs, Aboriginal-led Caring for Country workshops, textile reuse projects and a youth-designed mental health game.

## Creating Pathways Through the First Nations Traineeship Program

Council continued its partnership with AFL SportsReady's Warumilang Program to support First Nations employment opportunities.

The 12-month traineeship provides Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants with paid work, nationally recognised qualifications and practical experience across Council. Trainees also receive mentoring, professional development and opportunities to build career-ready skills.

The program has supported graduates to move into ongoing employment and further study. By investing in First Nations talent and culturally safe workplaces, Council is creating pathways to employment and strengthening outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Banyule.




Figure 67 | Banyule Business awards at Ivanhoe

### Developing the local Creative Sector

Council continued to support and strengthen Banyule's creative sector through professional development, funding and promotional opportunities. In partnership with Nillumbik Shire Council, Council presented the second Creative Industries event, *From Practice to Portfolio*, an ongoing series that explores how creative practice can be developed into sustainable and viable careers. The event was attended by 72 artists.

Council also awarded $60,000 in grants to six recipients (five individual artists and one group), with each receiving $10,000 to deliver new and original creative projects in Banyule. Further support was provided for the annual Banyule Open Studios weekend in October through funding, venue assistance, marketing and promotion. The event showcased 49 artists across 25 studios and attracted approximately 2,400 visitors.




Figure 68 | The Good Brick store, Greensborough

# What Council achieved under the Our Thriving Local Economy priority

## Delivery Plan

In the first year of the Delivery Plan, Banyule Council delivered **six key actions** that supported the Our Thriving Local Economy priority theme. These actions helped support local businesses, encourage investment and strengthen employment opportunities across Banyule.

The results are summarised alongside. The full report is available on Banyule's website. The Council departments and business units that contributed to this work are shown later in this section.

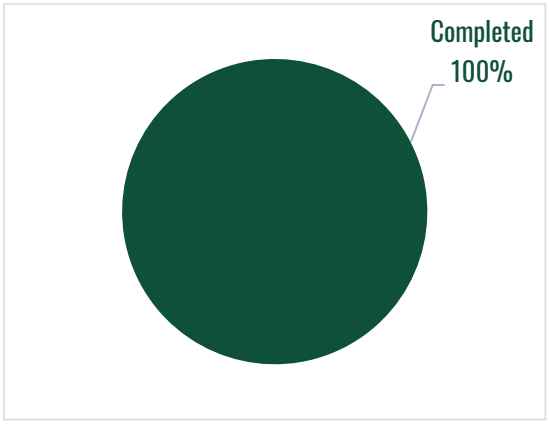


Figure 69 | Status of Our Thriving Local Economy actions as at 30 June 2026

### 6 actions completed

These actions were completed or reached at least 90% progress by year end. For reporting purposes, actions at 90% or more are counted as completed.

### 0 actions not yet completed

No actions were reported as not yet completed.

### 0 actions postponed

No actions were rescheduled during the year.




Figure 70 | Banyule Grants Program

## Strategic indicators: Council performance

The table below shows Council's results against the measures and targets for this priority theme.

Table 27 | Council strategic indicators – Our Thriving Local Economy

| Council KPI outcome | Annual measure | Target by 2029 | 2022-2023 result | 2023-2024 result | 2024-2025 result | 2025-2026 result/ status | Commentary |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **More jobs for people with barriers through various inclusive programs** | Number of inclusive job opportunities created within Banyule through the Inclusive Employment Program, Social Enterprise Partnership Program, First Nations Traineeship Program, volunteering and other connected programs | Maintain or exceed the baseline of **200 job opportunitie**s each year | 333 job opportunities | 297 job opportunities | 349 job opportunities | **247 job opportunities** ✓ | More than 240 employment, traineeship and placement opportunities were created in Banyule during 2025-2026 through Council programs and community partnerships. These opportunities helped support people facing barriers to employment, including through inclusive employment initiatives, social enterprise partnerships and First Nations pathways. |
| **Community is satisfied with how Council promotes local economy** | CSS mean index score for satisfaction with 'Council's activities promoting local economic development' | Maintain or exceed the baseline mean index score of **7.7 out of 10** | Not available *(different survey questions asked)* | Not available *(different survey questions asked)* | 7.7 out of 10 | **7.8 out of 10** ✓ | Community satisfaction with Council's activities promoting local economic development remained strong in 2025-2026. 65% of respondents were very satisfied, while only 3% were dissatisfied. This indicates that the community values Council's efforts to support a vibrant and resilient local economy. |

## Strategic indicators: Community outcomes

The table below shows community outcomes against the measures and targets for this priority theme.

Table 28 | Community strategic indicators – Our Thriving Local Economy

| Community KPI outcome | Annual measure | Target by 2029 | 2022-2023 result | 2023-2024 result | 2024-2025 result | 2025-2026 result/ status | Commentary |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Banyule's economy is healthy and growing** | Annual growth in Gross Regional Product (GRP), shown in billions of dollars, for the municipality | **An increase** each year | $7.1 billion (June 2022) | $7.6 billion (June 2023) | $8.1 billion (June 2024) | **$8.4 billion (June 2025)** ✓ | Banyule's economy continued to grow in 2024-2025, with Gross Regional Product increasing by 1.7% to $8.4 billion. This growth reflects the ongoing contribution of local businesses, workers and industry to the municipality's economy. |

## Measuring LGPRF service performance indicators

There are no service performance indicators or measures required under the LGPRF for this priority theme.

# What it costs to deliver Council services

The sections below show the cost of delivering services that contributed to the Our Thriving Local Economy priority in 2025-2026 and outline the services delivered by each Council department and its business units.

## Inclusive and Creative Communities

Table 29 | Inclusive and Creative Communities – Service costs for 2025-2026

| Description | Amount ($'000) |
|---|---|
| Budget | **1,936** |
| Actual spending | **1,997** |
| Difference from budget | **-61** |

Provision of the following to the municipal population as a whole:

### Local Economy

- Deliver the Inclusive Economy Strategy, supporting economic participation, inclusive employment and sustainable local economic growth.
- Support social enterprises, inclusive businesses and local traders to grow, innovate and succeed.
- Create pathways to employment by helping businesses build inclusive workplaces and job opportunities.
- Strengthen the vitality of Banyule's activity centres and shopping precincts through business support and place-based initiatives.
- Provide training, mentoring and networking opportunities that build capability, collaboration and business resilience.




Figure 71 | Chillin launch. Artist Lunic. Photographer Ben Scapin.

# Priority theme 6:
# Our Trusted and Responsive Leadership



A responsive, innovative and engaged Council that has the trust of our community through demonstrated best practice governance, is financially sustainable, and advocates on community priorities and aspirations.

## What Council delivered

### Strengthening Our Community Through the New Local Law

In April 2025, Council's new Community Local Law 2025 came into effect. Developed through community consultation that began in early 2024, it reflects input from residents, local businesses and Councillors. The clearer, more modern law supports responsible pet ownership, public space management and a safer, fairer and more welcoming Banyule.

By simplifying language and updating outdated provisions, the law makes it easier for people to understand their rights and responsibilities. It helps balance individual freedoms with community wellbeing and supports cleaner, safer and more connected neighbourhoods.

### Revenue Services

During 2025-2026, Revenue Services supported residents experiencing financial hardship, managing more than 600 hardship assessments representing about $1.56 million in arrears and supporting over $1.19 million in payments through hardship arrangements. Strategic work included updates to the Revenue and Rating Plan, Rates Hardship Assistance Policy and Debt Collection Policy.

The Rates and Accounts Teams delivered strong service, innovation and customer support while managing increasing demand. The Rates team processed approximately 4,100 property sales and issued around 5,420 Land Information Certificates. It also administered annual and supplementary valuations, rate calculations and notices while preparing for new rating categories and the 2026-2027 rating year.

### Merri Outreach Support Service MOSS

**The successes and challenges in the delivery of Banyule Housing Support Program.**

The Banyule Housing Support Program has supported housing pathways through strong networking and advocacy with key partners in the private and community housing sectors. These partnerships helped the program to secure a three-bedroom property from a private landlord for five months, providing temporary accommodation for people sleeping rough while longer-term housing and support options were explored. This resource was also shared with MOSS Assertive Outreach programs operating across Merri-Bek, Darebin and Banyule LGAs.

Another key success was the 12 housing exits achieved in the last financial year into long-term housing:

- 6 Community housing
- 5 Office of Housing
- 1 private rental

In addition to these long-term housing outcomes, Council are actively exploring other housing options in the interim to contain the crisis while Council pursue longer-term options. There is a great need for crisis accommodation here in the Northern corridor where Council can house those who are homeless or sleeping rough until Council can establish rapport and work out what the next move is, guided by the client.



Figure 72 | Urban Food Stakeholder Group visiting Bundoora Secondary College

## Urban Food Strategy two years in

Council adopted the Urban Food Strategy and Action Plan in September 2023. The first two years focused on building strong foundations for implementation, including governance, partnerships and community-focused actions to support more sustainable food systems.

- Formation of the Urban Food Working Group (now Stakeholder Group)
- Establishment of the Banyule Community Gardens Network
- Re-establishment of the Banyule Nillumbik Emergency Relief Network (BNERN)
- Significant funding for food systems and food relief providers

Development of a partnership with Local Food Connect and Bundoora Secondary College to establish a market garden, learning and education centre, supporting education, skills development and local food production.

## Diamond Valley Food Share

Council provided more than 7,200 vulnerable community members with reliable access to fresh, healthy, and nutritious food. This scale of support was made possible by scaling Council's food rescue and donation operations from two days a week to five. Partnering with local businesses aligned with Council's vision for environmental sustainability, Council simultaneously reduced commercial waste and secured high-quality provisions. Beyond essential food and personal care relief, Council's volunteers actively fostered social connection. By prioritizing empathy, active listening and dignity, Council's team provided a vital support network for isolated clients, directly improving their overall wellbeing and sense of community belonging.

## Neighbourhood Houses

### Neighbourhood Houses

Banyule's Neighbourhood Houses play an important role in creating inclusive, healthy and connected communities. Across Greenhills, Wellington St, Watsonia, Livingstone, Rosanna Fire Station, Contact Bundoora and Olympic Neighbourhood Houses, people of different ages, cultures, abilities and life experiences are finding welcoming places to connect, learn, volunteer and belong.

At **Greenhills Neighbourhood House** the Tai Chi group has grown from a class into a strong social network. The class is adapted for people with different needs, including participants with disability, Parkinson's and other health conditions.

At **Wellington St Neighbourhood House**, The newly created Monty Art Gang, is supported by Council through venue access, administration, advice and materials. The group brought together young adults to seniors, and held an exhibition in June 2026.

**Watsonia Neighbourhood House** has supported over 300 community members through weekly lunches, creative groups and movement activities, helping people move from isolation to belonging. Livingstone Community Centre has grown volunteer-led craft, Stitch & Yarn and hallway artwork projects that reduce isolation, encourage volunteering and value local skills. Council's operational funding helps provide the coordination, facilities and welcoming spaces these programs need.

**Rosanna Fire Station Community House** used Seniors Week to welcome residents of all ages through free activities, creative workshops, social connection programs and lunch. Council support through funding, promotion and engagement helped attract first-time visitors, increase participation, involve new volunteers and strengthen community networks.



Figure 73 | Olympic Neighbourhood House

**Contact Bundoora Community Centre** supports mental health and wellbeing through welcoming volunteers, a chat table, soup days, skill-building and social connection. At Olympic Neighbourhood House, Maria, a migrant single parent with limited English, joined an English language program after referral through Council networks. She built confidence, friendships and English skills, began volunteering and now helps other newly arrived residents connect with local services. This reflects broader outcomes: increased participation by culturally diverse residents, reduced isolation, stronger links to services, more volunteering and learning, and improved social cohesion through inclusive and culturally safe programs.

## Long-Term Housing Outcomes

The Banyule program successfully supported three households in transitioning from Transitional Housing Management properties to long-term housing through Community Housing and the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing. This also helped three additional families to move into the vacated transitional properties.

Two of the households had been residing in transitional housing for more than nine years, highlighting the significance of these successful long-term housing outcomes.

Additional Housing Exits and Referral Practice A further eight housing exits were achieved for households that had entered the program from crisis accommodation or homelessness. These households transitioned into long-term Community Housing within 12 months of being a client of Council's service.

The program has maintained a proactive approach to networking and advocacy by identifying suitable vacancies, strengthening referral pathways and ensuring referrals are appropriately matched to available housing. This has supported more sustainable tenancy outcomes for participating households.

## Northern Council Alliance (NCA) cross Council Councillor Training and Development

In May 2026, mayors, deputy mayors, Councillors, governance staff and communications specialists from the Northern Council Alliance came together for Councillor professional development on effective communication, social media and public-facing conduct. The Alliance includes Banyule, Darebin, Merri-bek, Whittlesea, Hume, Nillumbik Shire and Mitchell Shire councils. The session helped Councillors meet mandatory annual training requirements, learn from each other and apply advice from specialists. Scenario-based learning focused on community advocacy, integrity, transparency and good governance.

# What Council achieved under the Our Trusted and Responsive Leadership priority

## Delivery Plan

In the first year of the Delivery Plan, Banyule Council delivered **14 key actions** that supported the Our Trusted and Responsive Leadership priority theme. These actions helped strengthen community engagement, improve organisational capability and support transparent, responsive and effective decision-making.

The results are summarised alongside. The full report is available on Banyule's website. The Council departments and business units that contributed to this work are shown later in this section.

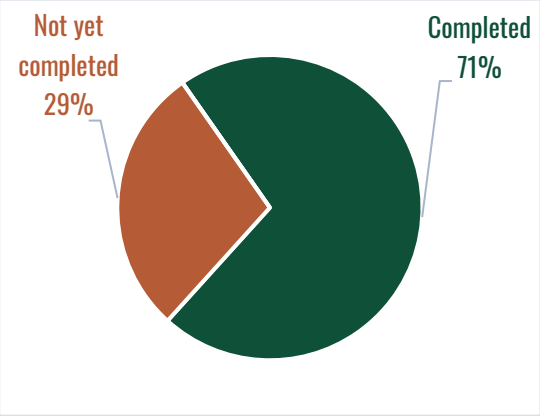


Figure 74 | Status of Our Trusted and Responsive Leadership actions as at 30 June 2026

## 10 actions completed

These actions were completed or reached at least 90% progress by year end. For reporting purposes, actions at 90% or more are counted as completed.

## 4 actions not yet completed

These actions had not reached 90% progress by year end and is reported as not yet completed.

## 0 actions postponed

No actions were rescheduled during the year.

## Strategic indicators: Council performance

The table below shows Council's results against the measures and targets for this priority theme.

Table 30 | Council strategic indicators – Our Trusted and Responsive Leadership

| Council KPI outcome | Annual measure | Target by 2029 | 2022-2023 result | 2023-2024 result | 2024-2025 result | 2025-2026 result/ status | Commentary |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Banyule advisory committees support community participation in decision-making** | Average attendance rate of committee members at meetings | Maintain or exceed an **average attendance rate of 60%** | 66.1% | 68.5% | 69.9% | **74%** ✓ | Attendance at Banyule's advisory committee meetings increased to 74% in 2025-2026, the highest result recorded for this KPI. Following the introduction of a new committee structure in 2025, strong attendance demonstrates the community's ongoing commitment to contributing to Council decision-making on matters that affect Banyule. |
| **Council is financially sustainable in the long term** | Risk rating of the seven Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO) sustainability ratios | All **7 ratios are rated as 'low risk'** | 5 out of 7 ratios | 6 out of 7 ratios | 6 out of 7 ratios | **6 out of 7 ratios** ⇆ | Council remained financially sustainable in 2025-2026, with six of the seven Victorian Auditor-General's Office financial sustainability indicators assessed as low risk. This supports Council's ability to continue delivering services, maintaining assets and investing in community infrastructure over the long term. |

| Council KPI outcome | Annual measure | Target by 2029 | 2022-2023 result | 2023-2024 result | 2024-2025 result | 2025-2026 result/ status | Commentary |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Council resources are being used efficiently to deliver services** | Total expenses per property assessment | **Meet or stay under the target** in the Budget | $2,919 | $3,002 | $3,152 | **$3,147** ✓ | Council exceeded its target for efficient use of resources in 2025-2026. Total expenses per property assessment were lower than budgeted, helping ensure services, facilities and infrastructure continue to be delivered while supporting long-term financial sustainability. |
| **Council is well-positioned to provide services for the community** | Total expenses per head of population | **Meet or stay under the target** in the Budget | $1,287 | $1,320 | $1,389 | **$1,400** ✓ | Council achieved its budget target for efficient use of resources in 2025-2026. This reflects Council's ongoing focus on delivering quality services while managing community resources responsibly and supporting long-term financial sustainability. |
| **Community is satisfied with their customer service experiences with Council** | CSS mean index score for overall satisfaction with customer service experience | Maintain or exceed the baseline mean index score of **7.9 out of 10** | 7.5 out of 10 | 7.4 out of 10 | 7.9 out of 10 | **7.7 out of 10** ⇆ | Community satisfaction with customer service remained strong in 2025-2026 and was within Council's target range. 68% of respondents were very satisfied with their customer service experience, while only 11% were dissatisfied. This reflects Council's commitment to providing responsive and helpful service to the community.<br>*Results from 2025 onwards are not directly comparable with earlier years due to a change in survey methodology.* |

| Council KPI outcome | Annual measure | Target by 2029 | 2022-2023 result | 2023-2024 result | 2024-2025 result | 2025-2026 result/ status | Commentary |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Community is satisfied that Council decisions are made in their best interests** | CSS mean index score for satisfaction with 'Council making decisions in the interests of the community' | Maintain or exceed the baseline mean index score of **7.1 out of 10** | 5.7 out of 10 | 5.7 out of 10 | 7.1 out of 10 | **7 out of 10** ⇆ | Satisfaction with Council's decision-making remained at a good level in 2026, with 43% of respondents very satisfied and 9% dissatisfied. Banyule continues to provide opportunities for residents to have input into major projects, plans and decisions that affect the community.<br>*Results from 2025 onwards are not directly comparable with earlier years due to a change in survey methodology.* |
| **Community is satisfied with how Council keeps them informed** | CSS mean index score for satisfaction with 'Council's performance informing the community' | Maintain or exceed the baseline mean index score of **8 out of 10** | 6.4 out of 10 | 6.3 out of 10 | 7.1 out of 10 | **7.1 out of 10** ✕ | Community satisfaction with how Council keeps residents informed remained at a good level in 2025-2026. Council continues to use a range of print and digital channels to share information with the community, with the 2026 Household Survey showing strong use and satisfaction with these communication methods. |

## Strategic indicators: Community outcomes

The table below shows community outcomes against the measures and targets for this priority theme.

Table 31 | Community strategic indicators – Our Trusted and Responsive Leadership

| Community KPI outcome | Annual measure | Target by 2029 | 2022-2023 result | 2023-2024 result | 2024-2025 result | 2025-2026 result/ status | Commentary |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Community is satisfied with how Council advocates on their behalf** | CSS mean index score for satisfaction with 'Council's representation, lobbying and advocacy on behalf of the community' | Maintain or exceed the baseline mean index score of **7.2 out of 10** | 5.8 out of 10 | 5.5 out of 10 | 7.2 out of 10 | **7 out of 10** ⇆ | Community satisfaction with Council's advocacy on behalf of the community remained at a good level in 2025-2026. Council continues to represent community interests and advocate on issues that matter to Banyule residents, while publicly reporting on the outcomes and impact of its advocacy activities. |
| **Community is satisfied with Council's overall performance** | CSS mean index score for satisfaction with 'the performance of Banyule City Council across all areas of responsibility' | Maintain or exceed the baseline mean index score of **7 out of 10** | 6.7 out of 10 | 6.4 out of 10 | 7 out of 10 | **7.1 out of 10** ✓ | Community satisfaction with Council's overall performance reached its highest recorded level in 2025-2026 at 7.1 out of 10. 43% of respondents were very satisfied, up from 41% the previous year, while only 6% were dissatisfied. Residents across Banyule reported similar levels of satisfaction, reflecting continued confidence in Council's overall performance. |

## Measuring LGPRF service performance indicators

The table below shows service performance results for this priority theme, including four years of results and commentary.

Table 32 | LGPRF indicators – Our Trusted and Responsive Leadership

| **Service/*classification*/** *indicator*/measure | **2023 result** | **2024 result** | **2025 result** | **2026 result/ 4-year trend** | **Target/ status** | **Public comments** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Governance**<br>***Transparency***<br>*Council decisions made at meetings closed to the public*<br>[Number of Council resolutions made at meetings of Council, or at meetings of a delegated committee consisting only of Councillors, closed to the public / Number of Council resolutions made at meetings of Council or at meetings of a delegated committee consisting only of Councillors] x100 | 6.7% | 5.6% | 4.7% | **2.7%** ↓ | 5.5% ✓ | Only 5 of 188 Council reports were considered in closed meetings during 2025-2026, continuing a low proportion of confidential decisions over recent years. Closed meetings were limited to matters required to be confidential, including Chief Executive Officer employment matters, a strategic property matter and a service reform report.<br>The proportion of decisions made in closed meetings remained well below Council's target, meaning the vast majority of Council decisions were made in meetings open to the public. |

| Service/*classification*/ *indicator*/measure | 2023 result | 2024 result | 2025 result | 2026 result/ 4-year trend | Target/ status | Public comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Governance**<br>***Consultation and engagement***<br>*Satisfaction with community consultation and engagement*<br>[Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how Council has performed on community consultation and engagement] | 59 out of 100 | 57 out of 100 | 72 out of 100 | **73 out of 100** ⇆ | 60 out of 100 ✓ | Community satisfaction with consultation and engagement in Banyule remained strong in 2026, increasing slightly from the previous year to a score of 73 out of 100. More than half of respondents (54%) were very satisfied with Council's consultation and engagement activities, while only 7% reported dissatisfaction.<br>Council continues to provide a range of opportunities for community members to share their views and help shape local projects and initiatives through Shaping Banyule and other engagement activities.<br>*A new survey provider and methodology were introduced in 2025, meaning results from 2025 onwards are not directly comparable with earlier years.* |
| **Governance**<br>***Attendance***<br>*Councillor attendance at Council meetings*<br>[The sum of the number of Councillors who attended each Council meeting / (Number of Council meetings) × (Number of Councillors elected at the last Council general election)] x100 | 92.6% | 90.8% | 98.5% | **95.8%** ⇆ | 90% ✓ | Councillor attendance at Council meetings remained high during 2025-2026, with councillors attending 96% of meetings. Attendance has remained consistently strong over recent years and exceeded Council's target, reflecting councillors' ongoing commitment to participating in decision making and representing the community.<br>One approved leave of absence was granted during the year, which is not counted as an absence under the attendance requirements. |

| Service/*classification*/ *indicator*/measure | 2023 result | 2024 result | 2025 result | 2026 result/ 4-year trend | Target/ status | Public comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Governance**<br>***Service cost***<br>*Cost of elected representation*<br>[Direct cost of the governance service / Number of Councillors elected at the last Council general election] | $67,291.56 | $76,696.33 | $69,608.67 | **$83,730.35**<br>↑ | $75,000<br>⇆ | The cost of elected representation increased during 2025-2026, continuing a gradual increase over recent years. A contributing factor was the completion of Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) training by three councillors, helping to strengthen governance capability and informed decision making. |
| **Governance**<br>***Satisfaction***<br>*Satisfaction with council decisions*<br>[Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how Council has performed in making decisions in the interest of the community] | 57 out of 100 | 57 out of 100 | 71 out of 100 | **70 out of 100**<br>⇆ | 72 out of 100<br>⇆ | Satisfaction with Banyule Council's decision making remained at a good level in 2026, with a score of 70 out of 100, a slight decrease from the previous year. 43% of respondents were very satisfied with Council's decision making, while 9% reported dissatisfaction.<br>Banyule continues to follow its Community Engagement Policy, providing opportunities for residents to have input into major projects, plans and decisions that affect the community. Residents also rated opportunities to engage with Council decisions and Council's advocacy and representation at 7 out of 10.<br>*A new survey provider and methodology were introduced in 2025, meaning results from 2025 onwards are not directly comparable with earlier years.* |

# What it costs to deliver Council services

The sections below show the cost of delivering services that contributed to the Our Trusted and Responsive Leadership priority in 2025-2026 and outline the services delivered by each Council department and its business units.

## Advocacy, Communications and Engagement

Table 33 | Advocacy, Communications and Engagement – Service costs for 2025-2026

| Description | Amount ($'000) |
|---|---|
| Budget | **3,090** |
| Actual spending | **2,988** |
| Difference from budget | **102** |

Provision of the following to support Council's direct service delivery areas:

### Advocacy

- Speaking up on issues that matter to the Banyule community
- Leading advocacy campaigns and progressing Council's advocacy priorities.

### Communications

- Sharing clear and timely information about Council services, programs and activities
- Keeping the community informed about issues that affect people who live, work or visit Banyule
- Protecting and strengthening Council's reputation through effective communication.

### Community Engagement and Insights

- Helping the community have a say in Council projects and services
- Planning and running community engagement activities so local voices are heard
- Training Council staff to engage confidently and effectively with the community
- Using feedback and data from the community to support better decision-making.

## Customer and Transformation

Table 34 | Customer and Transformation – Service costs for 2025-2026

| Description | Amount ($'000) |
|---|---|
| Budget | **12,639** |
| Actual spending | **11,727** |
| Difference from budget | **912** |

Provision of the following to support Council's direct service delivery areas:

### Customer and Digital Experience

- Helping Council better understand what matters to customers and improve their experience when interacting with Council
- Leading the delivery of Banyule's Customer Experience strategy, including staff training, listening to customer feedback, and embedding the Banyule Service Promise
- Managing Council's websites, online forms, mobile apps and digital channels to make it easier for the community to access services and information
- Improving how services are designed and delivered by focusing on customer journeys, accessibility and usability
- Using customer feedback, data and insights to continuously improve digital services and customer interaction.

### Customer and Information Services

- Acting as the main point of contact between Council and the community, helping people by phone, online and in person
- Resolving enquiries quickly where possible, and directing more complex matters to the right Council teams
- Managing customer enquiries, correspondence and records so every interaction is captured and can be followed up efficiently
- Looking after Council's information and records to meet legal requirements and ensure information is easy to find, secure and well managed throughout its lifecycle.

### Data, Integration and Automation

- Managing Council's data so it is accurate, secure and used consistently
- Connecting Council systems so information can be shared easily and services work together
- Automating routine tasks to reduce manual work and improve service speed
- Using smart tools and insights to support better decision-making and everyday work.

### Technology

- Keeping Council's technology running reliably and securely every day
- Managing Council's systems and applications so services work well and remain fit for purpose
- Strengthening cyber security and improving the resilience of Council's technology
- Supporting staff through the service desk and day-to-day IT assistance
- Designing, building and rolling out new or improved applications, while major change projects are led through Transformation.

### Transformation

- Helping Council change and improve the way it works
- Leading major technology upgrades and improving how people access Council services
- Supporting teams to learn, share ideas and deliver continuous improvement projects that lead to better outcomes for staff, customers and the community.

## Governance and Integrity

Table 35 | Governance and Integrity – Service costs for 2025-2026

| Description | Amount ($'000) |
|---|---|
| Budget | **632** |
| Actual spending | **477** |
| Difference from budget | **155** |

Provision of the following to the municipal community as a whole:

### Cemetery Administration and Support

- Managing Council-run cemeteries, including Warringal, Hawdon and Greensborough
- Supporting respectful, well-maintained and accessible cemetery services.

Provision of the following to support Council's direct service delivery areas:

### Governance and Integrity

- Supporting Councillors, Council staff and senior leaders with advice and guidance
- Making sure Council meetings and elections are run properly and fairly
- Ensuring Council make decisions in a transparent, lawful and accountable way.

## Office of the CEO and Councillors

Table 36 | Office of the CEO and Councillors – Service costs for 2025-2026

| Description | Amount ($'000) |
|---|---|
| Budget | **1,861** |
| Actual spending | **1,874** |
| Difference from budget | **-13** |

Provision of the following to support the executive office, comprising of the CEO and four directors and their support staff, and to the municipal community as a whole:

### Office of the CEO and Councillors

- Providing strategic advice to support Council decision-making
- Putting Council policies into action
- Overseeing the day-to-day running of the organisation
- Supporting the overall structure and leadership of Council.

## People and Culture

Table 37 | People and Culture – Service costs for 2025-2026

| Description | Amount ($'000) |
|---|---|
| Budget | **9,255** |
| Actual spending | **8,421** |
| Difference from budget | **833** |

Provision of the following to support Council's direct service delivery areas:

### Human Resources Business Partners

- Supporting a positive, fair and inclusive workplace at Council
- Providing advice and support to leaders and employees on workplace matters
- Supporting respectful and timely resolution of workplace issues
- Helping Council meet its employment obligations and workplace requirements
- Working with teams to support change and improve how Council works
- Helping build a strong workplace culture and employee engagement.

### Inclusive Employment Pathways

- Creating fair and inclusive employment opportunities for people in the community
- Supporting local people who may face barriers to finding work
- Helping people build skills, confidence and experience through training, mentoring and coaching
- Providing pathways into work through student placements, work experience, traineeships, apprenticeships, cadetships and graduate programs
- Helping Council build a workforce that reflects and understands the diverse Banyule community.

### Organisational Development

- Supporting Council staff to learn, grow and do their best work
- Delivering training, leadership development and wellbeing programs
- Leading diversity and inclusion initiatives that help create a workplace where everyone feels respected, valued and able to contribute
- Supporting talent management, inclusive recruitment and workforce planning so Council can attract, develop and retain skilled people to serve the community
- Supporting fair and effective performance and development conversations
- Building the skills and capabilities needed to meet current and future community needs.

### Payroll

- Making sure staff are paid accurately and on time
- Providing clear and reliable payroll information to support employees and leaders
- Helping Council meet workplace laws, employment conditions and reporting requirements
- Supporting workforce planning through accurate payroll and workforce data
- Improving the employee experience through responsive, reliable and transparent payroll services.

### Safety and Wellbeing

- Keeping Council staff, volunteers, visitors and contractors safe and well
- Promoting healthy, safe and supportive workplaces
- Supporting people to return to work safely after injury
- Helping teams identify and manage workplace health and safety risks
- Putting physical and mental wellbeing at the centre of how Council operates.

### Risk and Assurance

- Helping Council identify and manage risks so services can be delivered safely, reliably and effectively
- Supporting business continuity so Council can respond to and recover from disruptions
- Coordinating internal audits and supporting the Audit and Risk Committee to support good governance and oversight
- Managing Council's insurance program, including claims, to reduce financial impact and support the community when incidents occur
- Promoting and embedding child safety to meet legal obligations and safeguard children and young people across Council services
- Building a culture of risk awareness, compliance and continuous improvement across Council

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## Strategic Finance and Performance

Table 38 | Strategic Finance and Performance – Service costs for 2025-2026

| Description | Amount ($'000) |
|---|---|
| Budget | **5,758** |
| Actual spending | **5,289** |
| Difference from budget | **469** |

Provision of the following to support Council's direct service delivery areas:

### Financial Accounting

- Providing specialist financial advice
- Managing Council's key financial systems and controls to ensure accurate and timely payment to suppliers.

### Financial Performance and Planning

- Preparing Council budgets and reporting on financial performance
- Prepare and maintain the Long Term Financial Plan to assess Council's long term financial sustainability.
- Supporting transparency and responsible use of ratepayers' funds.

### Revenue Services

- Providing quality services to our customers by accurately managing levying and collecting rates, property services and other Council fees and charges, including Council databases and communication of the rate payment options available, to residents in a timely manner compliant with all required legislation and policies
- Managing accounts receivables
- Administering rates hardship applications.

### Strategic Procurement

- Managing Council purchasing and public tenders in a fair and transparent way
- Making sure Council gets good value when buying goods and services
- Supporting ethical, sustainable and responsible purchasing decisions
- Providing advice and systems to help staff purchase consistently and correctly.

### Integrated Planning and Performance

- Providing organisational integration of corporate planning and transparent reporting
- Developing Council Plans (i.e. the Banyule Plan) and annual action plans in collaboration with the community
- Supporting the organisation with business planning and integrated reporting.

# Governance and management

## Banyule's governance approach

Banyule Council is committed to fair, transparent and ethical governance. Councillors, staff and contractors are entrusted to act with honesty, integrity and care when managing public resources and delivering services.

Robust governance, sound financial stewardship and efficient service delivery underpin all Council operations. Transparency and accountability remain central to how Council functions.

## Decision-making at Council

Formal decisions are made at Council meetings, while many operational decisions are delegated to staff in line with adopted policies and strategic directions.

Council decisions aim to:

- Reflect the diverse needs of the community
- Provide leadership and monitor progress
- Manage resources responsibly
- Advocate for the interests of the community
- Strengthen community connection and participation

Community members can contribute through consultations, forums, submissions, ward meetings and other engagement opportunities.

## Council meetings

Ordinary Council meetings are generally held **every three weeks** on **Monday evenings** at the **Ivanhoe Library and Cultural Hub**. The meeting schedule is set annually and published on Council's website. Meetings begin at **7pm** and are **open to the public** unless confidential matters are being discussed or safety concerns require closure.

Meetings are livestreamed on Council's Facebook page and recordings are available on Council's website and YouTube channel for two years. Community members are welcome to attend in person or watch online.

Council meetings follow the Governance Rules, which outline meeting procedures, the election of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, and how the community can participate.

The mayor chairs meetings when present. If unavailable, the Deputy Mayor takes the chair. Voting is conducted by a show of hands.

## Community participation in Council meetings

Community members can:

- **Speak at a meeting** on an agenda item by submitting a request by 12pm on the day of the meeting. Each speaker is allocated two minutes.
- **Submit a question** for Public Question Time by **12pm the Friday before** a scheduled Monday meeting. Questions are read and answered during the meeting if the submitter is present. All questions and responses are recorded in the meeting minutes and shared with the submitter.

Table 39 | Councillor attendance at Council meetings (2025-2026)

| Ward | Councillor | Council meetings | Special meetings | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bakewell | **Cr Mark Di Pasquale** | 12 | 2 | **14** |
| Beale | **Cr Elizabeth Nealy** | 14 | 2 | **16** |
| Chelsworth | **Cr Alida McKern** | 13 | 2 | **15** |
| Griffin | **Cr Peter Castaldo** | 14 | 2 | **16** |
| Grimshaw | **Cr Rick Garotti** | 13 | 2 | **15** |
| Hawdon | **Cr Matt Wood** | 14 | 2 | **16** |
| Ibbott | **Cr Alicia Curry** | 12 | 2 | **14** |
| Olympia | **Cr Mary O'Kane** | 14 | 2 | **16** |
| Sherbourne | **Cr Alison Champion** | 14 | 2 | **16** |

## Councillor briefings and informal meetings

Councillors regularly attend briefing sessions to explore issues in greater detail. These sessions are not decision-making forums but help inform the decisions made at formal Council meetings.

In 2025-2026, Council recorded a total of 18 council meetings:

- 16 Ordinary Council meetings
- 2 Special Council meetings
- 136 informal meetings of Councillors

## Committee appointments and advisory roles

Each November, Council holds its Statutory Meeting to elect the Mayor and Deputy Mayor and appoint Councillors to internal and external committees.

At its Special Meeting in November 2025, Council appointed Councillor delegates to internal and external committees.

Council has:

- **Five advisory committees** with appointed Councillor representatives
- **Six external committees** with Councillor involvement

These appointments will remain in place until the next Mayoral election in November 2026, after which they will return to an annual cycle.

Council did not establish any delegated committees in 2025-2026

## Model Councillor Code of Conduct

All Victorian Councillors must comply with the Model Councillor Code of Conduct (the Model Code), effective from 26 October 2024. It outlines standards across:

1. Performing the role of a Councillor
2. Behaviours
3. Good governance
4. Integrity

Councillors publicly affirmed their commitment at the 9 December 2024 Council Meeting.

## Managing conflict of interest

The Act outlines the conduct expected of Councillors and members of delegated committees. Councillors must act honestly and exercise reasonable care and diligence in carrying out their duties. They must not misuse their position or information gained through their role to:

- Gain, or attempt to gain, an advantage for themselves or others
- Cause, or attempt to cause, detriment to Council

Where a conflict of interest exists, Councillors are required to disclose the nature of the interest, whether general or material, before any discussion or decision takes place. Councillors must leave the chamber during deliberation and voting on the matter.

Conflicts may be:

- **General**: Where private interests could be perceived to influence public duties
- **Material**: Where a Councillors private interests would result in a direct or indirect financial or other gain or loss for themselves or an affected person

Under section 128 of the Act, an 'affected person' includes:

- The relevant person
- A family member
- A body corporate where the person or their partner is a director or member
- An employer (unless a public body)
- A business partner
- A client or associate (e.g. consultant, contractor, agent)
- A beneficiary of a trust where the person is trustee
- A person who has given the relevant person a disclosable gift

To maintain impartiality, the CEO, Councillors and nominated staff are required to submit a return of prescribed interests every six months.

During the 2025–26 period, eight conflicts of interest were declared by Councillors at Council meetings.

Table 40 | Register of conflicts of interest (2025-2026)

| Type of conflict | No. |
|---|---|
| General interest (s127) | 3 |
| Material conflict of interest (s128) | |
| – Direct benefit or loss | 5 |
| – Indirect benefit or loss | 0 |
| – Relating to a family member | 0 |
| – Spouse/domestic partner is a director or member of a governing body | 0 |
| – An employer of the relevant person | 0 |
| – A business partner of the relevant person | 0 |
| – A person for whom the relevant person is a consultant, contractor or agent | 0 |
| – A beneficiary under a trust or object of a discretionary trust | 0 |
| – A person who has given a disclosable gift | 0 |
| **Total** | **8** |

## Councillor allowances

Under section 39 of the Act, allowances for the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors are determined by the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal (the Tribunal). This is done in accordance with the *Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal and Improving Parliamentary Standards Act 2019* (the VIRTIPS Act).

The Tribunal sets a base allowance for each Councillor, which varies depending on the role and the Council's assigned allowance category. Banyule City Council was classified as a Category 3 council in 2025-2026.

Allowances are reviewed annually and adjusted by the Tribunal under section 23B of the VIRTIPS Act.

Table 41 | Councillor allowances (2025-2026)

| Role | Allowance |
|---|---|
| **Mayor** | $146,319 |
| **Deputy Mayor** | $73,159 |
| **Councillor** | $41,992 |

## Councillor expenses

Section 40 of the Act requires councils to reimburse Councillors for expenses incurred while performing their duties. Councils must also adopt and maintain an Expenses Policy that outlines how reimbursements are managed and what resources, facilities and support are provided to assist Councillors in their roles. Details of expenses and reimbursements for each Councillor and committee member are published annually. The following table outlines expenses incurred during 2025-2026. These expenses are submitted to the Audit and Risk Committee annually.

Table 42 | Councillor expenses (2025-2026)

| Councillor | Travel (Interstate/ Overseas) $ | Conference/ Training $ | Events $ | IT and Comms $ | Memberships/ Subscriptions $ | Data/ Mobile $ | Other $ | Car mileage $ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Cr Alison Champion** | 408.99 | 5,349.58 | 165.75 | 0 | 0 | 348.00 | 104.10 | 0 |
| **Cr Rick Garotti** | 408.99 | 2,359.57 | 0 | 0 | 750.00 | 780.00 | 89.10 | 1,552.02 |
| **Cr Peter Castaldo** | 0 | 0 | 65.00 | 0 | 750.00 | 348.00 | 89.10 | 70.40 |
| **Cr Alicia Curry** | 0 | 11,578.95 | 153.00 | 0 | 0 | 348.00 | 104.40 | 736.04 |
| **Cr Mark Di Pasquale** | 408.99 | 2,359.58 | 0 | 144.10 | 0 | 780.00 | 147.69 | 470.00 |
| **Cr Alida McKern** | 0 | 2,630.45 | 286.75 | 0 | 0 | 780.00 | 89.10 | 1,155.30 |
| **Cr Elizabeth Nealy** | 0 | 0 | 88.00 | 0 | 0 | 780.00 | 104.40 | 0 |
| **Cr Mary O'Kane** | 0 | 11,512.95 | 143.75 | 0 | 0 | 348.00 | 114.00 | 0 |
| **Cr Matt Wood** | 0 | 10,270.00 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 348.00 | 0 | 0 |

*Note: Only categories where expenses were incurred are shown. For a full list of expense categories, refer to the Councillor Expense Register on Council's website.*

Councillors are encouraged to attend conferences and training sessions relevant to their role in local government. These opportunities support ongoing learning and informed decision-making. Some sessions are mandatory under the Act, and specialised training may be required for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor to support their leadership roles.

# Management and oversight

Banyule Council maintains a strong governance and management framework to ensure decisions are well-informed, risks are proactively managed, and services are delivered efficiently and transparently. This framework is underpinned by legislative requirements, best-practice policies, and continuous performance monitoring.

## Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee (the Committee) plays a key role in overseeing Council's financial management, internal controls, risk governance and ethical standards. It comprises three independent members, Marilyn Kearney (Chair), Jonathan Kyvelidis and Lisa Young, and two Councillors. Independent members are appointed for a three-year term, with a maximum of two terms. The Chair is elected annually from among the independent members.

The Committee met four times in 2025-2026 (July, September, December and March). Attendees included the Internal Auditor, Executive Management Team, managers and external auditors. To support independence, pre-meeting sessions were held without management present. Minutes from each meeting were tabled at the next practicable Ordinary Council Meeting.

## Internal audit

Council's internal audit function provides independent assurance that systems and processes are operating effectively. The program is delivered through a combination of in-house expertise and an external provider, guided by a Strategic Internal Audit Plan that is reviewed and approved annually by Council's Executive Management Team and the Audit and Risk Committee.

In 2025-2026, internal audits focused on:

- Fleet Management
- Volunteer Management
- Tendering
- Cyber Security
- Environmental Health (Food, Beauty, Accommodation)
- Follow Up Review 2025

Audit recommendations are risk-rated and tracked quarterly. Updates are reviewed by the Executive Management Team and the Audit and Risk Committee.

## External audit

Council's 2025-2026 external audit is being conducted by HLB Mann Judd as an agent of the Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO). External auditors presented findings at the March and September Audit and Risk Committee meetings, including the Financial Report and Performance Statement. Council's management responses to the audit findings are included in the final management letter.

## Risk management

Council's Risk Management Framework, adopted in December 2025 and aligned with ISO 31000, provides a consistent approach to identifying, assessing and managing risk across all operations. The framework supports strategic and operational planning, service delivery and decision-making.

Strategic risk reports were presented to the Committee in July 2025 and December 2025. These reports outlined key risks, their likelihood and consequences, and the mitigation strategies in place.

# Strategic documents adopted in 2025-2026

In 2025-2026, Banyule Council adopted a range of strategies to guide decision-making, support service delivery and align with the strategic direction set out in the Banyule Plan and Community Vision.

These documents reflect Council's commitment to planning, transparency and continuous improvement:

- Active Banyule Plan 2025-2030 adopted 14 July 2025
- Communications Strategy adopted 1 September
- Biodiversity Strategy 2025-2035 adopted 1 September
- Financial Sustainability Strategy 2025-2029 adopted 22 September
- Domestic Animal Management Plan 2025-2029 adopted 13 October
- Corporate Emissions Reduction Plan 2025-2029 adopted 1 December

- Transform Banyule 2030 Strategy adopted 4 May
- Revenue and Rating Plan 2026-2030 adopted 25 May
- Inclusive Economy Strategy 2026-2031 adopted 25 May
- Annual Budget 2026-2030 adopted 22 June

These documents are available on the Policies, plans and strategies page of Council's website.

# Governance and management checklist

Council annually assesses its performance against a prescribed checklist under the Act. This checklist helps ensure Council is meeting its responsibilities and maintaining strong governance practices.

The table below shows the results of Banyule Council's assessment for 2025-2026.

Table 43 | Governance and management checklist

| **Governance and management item**/ *Description of item* | **Assessment** | **Completed** |
|---|---|---|
| **1. Community Engagement Policy**<br>*Policy under section 55 of the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act) outlining Council's commitment to engaging with the community on matters of public interest* | Adopted in accordance with section 55 of the Act<br>Date of adoption: 1 July 2021<br>A review of the Community Engagement Policy is currently underway, with community engagement activities in progress. An updated policy is expected to be presented to Council for adoption in early 2027. | ✓ |
| **2. Community Engagement guidelines/toolkit**<br>*Guidelines to assist staff to determine when and how to engage with the community* | Current guidelines and toolkit in operation<br>Date of commencement: 1 July 2021<br>A review of the Community Engagement Guidelines and toolkit is currently underway, with community engagement activities in progress. Updated guidelines and toolkit materials are expected to be presented to Council for adoption in early 2027. | ✓ |
| **3. Financial Plan**<br>*Plan under section 91 of the Act outlining the financial and non-financial resources required for at least the next 10 financial years* | Adopted in accordance with section 91 of the Act<br>Date of adoption: 23 June 2025 | ✓ |
| **4. Asset Plan**<br>*Plan that sets out the asset maintenance and renewal needs for key infrastructure asset classes for at least the next 10 years* | Adopted in accordance with section 92 of the Act<br>Date of adoption: 23 June 2025 | ✓ |
| **5. Revenue and Rating Plan**<br>*Plan setting out the rating structure of Council to levy rates and charges* | Adopted in accordance with section 93 of the Act<br>Date of adoption: 25 May 2026 | ✓ |

| **Governance and management item**/ *Description of item* | **Assessment** | **Completed** |
|---|---|---|
| **6. Annual Budget**<br>*Plan setting out the services to be provided and initiatives to be undertaken over the next 12 months and the funding and other resources required* | Budget adopted in accordance with section 94 of the Act<br>Date of adoption: 22 June 2026 | ✓ |
| **7. Risk Management Policy**<br>*Policy outlining Council's commitment and approach to minimising the risks to Council's operations* | Current policy in operation<br>Date of commencement: 22 September 2023<br>Date of last review: 5 December 2025 | ✓ |
| **8. Fraud and Corruption Framework and Policy**<br>*Policy outlining Council's commitment and approach to minimising the risk of fraud* | Current policy in operation<br>Date of commencement: 14 April 2025 | ✓ |
| **9. Municipal Emergency Management Planning**<br>*Participation in meetings of the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC)* | MEMPC meetings attended by one or more representatives of Council (other than the chairperson of the MEMPC) during the financial year.<br>Dates of MEMPC meetings coordinated and attended: 14 August 2025, 13 November 2025, 12 February 2026 and 14 May 2026 | ✓ |
| **10. Procurement Policy**<br>*Policy outlining the principles, processes and procedures that will apply to all purchases of goods and services by the Council* | Adopted in accordance with section 108 of the Act<br>Date of commencement: 22 September 2025 | ✓ |
| **11. Business Continuity Plan**<br>*Plan setting out the actions that will be taken to ensure that key services continue to operate in the event of a disaster* | Current plan in operation<br>Date of commencement: 1 December 2021<br>Date of last review: 20 November 2024 | ✓ |
| **12. Disaster Recovery Plan**<br>*Plan setting out the actions that will be undertaken to recover and restore business capability in the event of a disaster* | Current plan in operation<br>Date of commencement: 1 June 2022<br>Date of last review: 6 June 2025 | ✓ |

| **Governance and management item/** *Description of item* | **Assessment** | **Completed** |
|---|---|---|
| **13. Complaint Management Policy**<br>*Policy under section 107 of the Act outlining Council's commitment and approach to managing complaints* | Policy developed in accordance with section 107 of the Act<br>Date of commencement: 30 April 2021<br>Date of last review: 26 February 2024<br>A review of the Complaint Policy is currently underway, with an updated policy expected to be presented to Council for adoption following completion of the review process. | ✓ |
| **14. Workforce Plan**<br>*Plan outlining Council's commitment and approach to planning the current and future workforce requirements of the organisation* | Plan developed in accordance with section 46 of the Act<br>Date of commencement: 1 December 2021<br>Date of last review: 23 July 2025 | ✓ |
| **15 Rates Financial Hardship Assistance Policy**<br>*Policy outlining Council's commitment and approach to assisting ratepayers experiencing financial hardship or difficulty paying their rates* | Current policy in operation<br>Date of commencement: 25 May 2026 | ✓ |
| **16. Risk Management Framework**<br>*Framework outlining Council's approach to managing risks to the Council's operations* | Current framework in operation<br>Date of commencement: 11 December 2021<br>Date of last review: 5 December 2025 | ✓ |
| **17. Audit and Risk Committee**<br>*Advisory committee of Council under section 53 and section 54 of the Act* | Established in accordance with section 53 of the Act<br>Date of establishment: 1997<br>Date of legislated establishment: 1 September 2020<br>The Audit and Risk Committee met on five occasions throughout the past 12 months: 11 July 2025, 19 September 2025, 5 December 2025, 27 March 2026 and 26 June 2026 | ✓ |
| **18. Internal Audit**<br>*Independent accounting professionals engaged by the Council to provide analyses and recommendations aimed at improving Council's governance, risk and management controls* | Internal auditor engaged<br>Date of engagement:<br>1 October 2022 to 30 September 2027 | ✓ |

| **Governance and management item**/ *Description of item* | **Assessment** | **Completed** |
|---|---|---|
| **19. Performance Reporting framework**<br>*A set of indicators measuring financial and non-financial performance, including the performance indicators referred to in section 98 of the Act* | Current framework in operation<br>Date of commencement: 1 July 2022 | ✓ |
| **20. Banyule Plan Report**<br>*Report reviewing the performance of the Council against the Banyule Plan, including the results in relation to the strategic indicators, for the first six months of the financial year* | Current report<br>Date of reports:<br>10 September 2025<br>25 February 2026 | ✓ |
| **21. Quarterly Budget Reports**<br>*Quarterly reports to Council under section 97 of the Act, comparing actual and budgeted results and an explanation of any material variations* | Quarterly reports presented to Council in accordance with section 97(1) of the Act<br>Date of reports:<br>22 September 2025 – Quarter 4<br>10 November 2025 – Quarter 1<br>9 February 2026 – Quarter 2<br>4 May 2026 – Quarter 3 | ✓ |
| **22. Risk Reporting**<br>*Six-monthly reports of strategic risks to Council's operations, their likelihood and consequences of occurring and risk minimisation strategies* | Risk reports prepared and presented<br>Date of reports:<br>11 July 2025<br>5 December 2025 | ✓ |
| **23. Performance Reporting**<br>*Six-monthly reports of indicators measuring the results against financial and non-financial performance, including the performance indicators referred to in section 98 of the Act* | Performance reports prepared<br>Date of reports:<br>13 August 2025: based on 2024-2025 end of year reporting<br>4 March 2026: six-month non-financial report<br>As in prior years, Council monitors financial and non-financial indicator performance six monthly, as part of more extensive and informative reporting throughout the year. Council's annual report (the Banyule Story) includes reporting against all performance indicators and targets referred to in section 98 of the Act. | ✗<br>Financials reported quarterly<br>Non-financials reported six-monthly |

| **Governance and management item/** *Description of item* | **Assessment** | **Completed** |
|---|---|---|
| **24. Annual Report**<br>*Annual report under sections 98 and 99 of the Act to the community containing a report of operations and audited financial and performance statements* | Annual report presented at a meeting of Council in accordance with section 100 of the Act<br>Date of presentation: 13 October 2025 | ✓ |
| **25. Councillor Model Code of Conduct**<br>*Code setting out the standards of conduct to be followed by Councillors and other matters* | Model Code of conduct adopted in accordance with section 139 of the Act<br>Date in effect: 26 October 2024<br>In line with the *Local Government Act 2020* all councils in Victoria are required to abide by the Model Councillor Code of Conduct, which came into effect on 26 October 2024. At the 2024 Swearing-In Ceremony for the 2024–28 Council term, Councillors took an oath or affirmation in support of the Model Code. They also publicly affirmed their commitment to the Code at the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 9 December 2024. | ✓ |
| **26. Delegations**<br>*Documents setting out the powers, duties and functions of Council and the Chief Executive Officer that have been delegated to members of staff* | Delegations reviewed in accordance with section 11(7) of the Act and a register kept in accordance with sections 11(8) and 47(7) of the Act<br>Date of review: 13 April 2026 | ✓ |
| **27. Meeting Procedures**<br>*Governance Rules governing the conduct of meetings of Council and delegated committees* | Governance Rules adopted in accordance with section 60 of the Act and Council's Community Engagement Policy<br>Date rules adopted: 30 October 2023 | ✓ |

I certify that this information presents fairly the status of Council's governance and management arrangements.

Cr Alison Champion

Mayor, Banyule Council

Dated: 28 September 2026

Allison Beckwith

Chief Executive Officer, Banyule Council

Dated: 28 September 2026

# Policies and statutory information

## Protecting rights and promoting transparency

### Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities

Council upholds the rights and freedoms of all Victorians under the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*. In 2025-2026, **no complaints were received** by Council or the Victorian Ombudsman regarding its implementation.

To support compliance, Council:

- Trains staff to identify and respond to human rights concerns
- Assesses decisions and policies against the Charter
- Participates in sector-wide surveys led by the Victorian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.

## Public transparency and access to information

Council's **Public Transparency Policy** outlines how information is made available to the public, in line with regulation 12 of the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2015*. Information may be redacted or summarised to protect privacy, security or commercial sensitivity.

Documents listed under the 'Part II Statement' of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* are available on Council's website.

## Freedom of information (FOI)

Under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*, the public can:

- Access Council documents
- Request corrections to personal records if they are inaccurate or misleading
- Appeal decisions that deny access or refuse amendments

Requests must be submitted in writing with the required fee. Additional charges may apply for services such as photocopying or document retrieval. Council must respond within 30 days, with a possible 15-day extension if consultation is needed. If access is refused or deferred, applicants receive written reasons and information about appeal options.

Council reviewed and updated it's Part II Statement in June 2026 which:

- Supports the community aware of the existence of documents held by the Banyule City Council
- Provides the community with the information needed to identify specific documents of interest
- Provides details of how to apply for access to said documents.

## FOI activity in 2025-2026:

Council finalised **45 FOI requests**. More details and forms are available on Council's website.

## Public Interest Disclosures

Council complies with the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012* (PID Act) , which encourages reporting of improper conduct by Councillors or staff. These disclosures, previously known as protected disclosures or 'whistleblower' complaints, help ensure accountability and integrity in public service.

The Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission (IBAC) oversees the PID process across the Victorian public sector, including local government. IBAC investigates serious misconduct and supports public sector organisations to strengthen their systems and prevent corruption.

A disclosure must be based on reasonable grounds and relate to conduct serious enough to constitute a criminal offence or grounds for dismissal.

In 2025-2026:

- **0 eligible disclosures** were received
- **0 referrals** were made by IBAC or the Victorian Ombudsman

Council does not tolerate improper conduct or reprisals against those who report it. Further information and a copy of Banyule's Public Interest Disclosure Procedures are available on Council's website or by calling 9490 4222.

Council updated and adopted its Public Interest Disclosure Procedures in December 2025.

# Animal management and local laws

## Alcohol-Free and Smoke-Free Zones in Public Spaces

Under the Community Local Law 2025, Council has designated specific public areas as alcohol-free zones, where it is an offence to consume alcohol or carry an open container of alcohol. These designated areas include shopping precincts, community facilities and surrounding public spaces across Banyule. Restrictions do not apply to licensed venues, premises operating under a current Footpath Trading Permit, or locations approved by Licensing Victoria. Clear signage is installed to identify restricted areas.

During the life of the Plan, Council will undertake a review of the existing alcohol-free zones to assess their effectiveness in supporting community safety, reducing anti-social behaviour and maintaining positive public amenity outcomes. The review will consider whether the current locations remain appropriate and whether any amendments are required to better meet community needs.

As part of the same initiative, Council will also investigate the introduction of smoke-free zones in selected public places. This review will explore opportunities to reduce exposure to second-hand smoke, improve public amenity and support healthier community environments through the potential declaration of smoke-free areas under the Community Local Law.

Community consultation will be a key component of both reviews, providing residents, businesses, traders, community organisations and other stakeholders with the opportunity to contribute their views on the existing alcohol-free zones and the proposed introduction of smoke-free zones. Feedback received through the consultation process will help inform Council's future decisions and any recommended changes to the Community Local Law.

Together, these initiatives will support Council's ongoing commitment to creating safe, healthy and welcoming public spaces, while ensuring local laws remain responsive to community expectations and emerging public health priorities.

## Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP)

Under section 68A of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, Council is required to prepare a Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) every four years. The previous DAMP was due for renewal and following community consultation undertaken during 2024-2025, the updated Domestic Animal Management Plan 2025-2029 was reviewed and endorsed by Council in October 2025.

The consultation process provided residents, stakeholders and animal welfare organisations with an opportunity to contribute feedback, helping to inform the development of the new plan.

The 2025-2029 DAMP continues to support responsible pet ownership through initiatives such as:

- Online animal registration services
- A free cat desexing program for Banyule residents
- A new requirement for the mandatory desexing of newly registered cats to help reduce stray animals and unwanted litters

Council remains committed to reuniting lost pets with their owners, rehoming animals where appropriate, and delivering high-quality animal management services. Education, community engagement and proactive animal welfare initiatives continue to be key components of this approach over the life of the 2025-2029 plan.

## Dogs and Cats in Public Places Order

As part of the DAMP, Council adopted a new **Dogs and Cats in Public Places Order** in June 2024, which came into effect on 1 February 2025. Key changes include:

- A cat curfew from 7pm to 7am

- A clearer definition of 'effective control' for dogs in public places, placing more responsibility on dog owners

To support these changes, Council increased proactive patrols in parks and public spaces to engage with the community and promote responsible pet ownership.

More details are available on the **DAMP** consultation page on Shaping Banyule.

### Community Local Law 2025

The Community Local Law 2025 was adopted on 3 March 2025 and will remain in effect until 15 April 2035. This law helps Council manage local issues through permits, enforcement and community standards tailored to Banyule's needs.

Local Laws are unique to each municipality and must:

- Align with relevant legislation, including the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- Avoid duplication or conflict with planning schemes
- Stay within Council's legal powers
- Be written clearly and unambiguously

In addition to the Community Local Law, Council maintains **Governance Local Law No. 2 (2022)**, which regulates the use of the common seal and the issuing of infringement notices for breaches of Council's Local Laws.

## Environmental Health

### Ministerial directions

Under section 7E the *Food Act 1984,* no ministerial directions were received between 2025-2026.

Under section 39(2) of the *Food Act 1984*, Council, as the regulation authority for local food businesses, must carry out an inspection of the premises during the period of registration before the registration of the food premises is renewed. In 2025-2026, the Environmental Health team completed 99% of statutory food inspections for registered food businesses, exceeding the state performance target of 98%.

Under section 60 of the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*, Council has a duty to remedy as far as reasonably possible all nuisances existing within its municipal district. In 2025-2026, the Environmental Health strengthened its investigation and enforcement processes to improve the timely identification and resolution of nuisance issues within the community.

## Inclusion and community wellbeing

### Disability Action Plan

In line with section 38 of the Disability Act 2006, Banyule Council reports annually on the implementation of its Disability Action Plan. This work is embedded in the Inclusive Banyule Plan 2022-2026, which reflects Council's commitment to access, equity and inclusion for people with disability and their families.

The plan aligns with the Victorian Government's Inclusive Victoria 2022-2026 and focuses on four key areas:

1. Challenging attitudes that limit opportunities
2. Increasing visibility and awareness
3. Removing systemic barriers
4. Understanding lived experiences

To ensure actions remained relevant and responsive, Council worked closely with the Connected Communities Advisory Committee and the Disability Champions. Insights were used to plan and progress a range of disability inclusion actions.

### Key achievements 2025-2026

#### Communications, Engagement and Lived Experience

- Insights from the Disability Champions were used to refresh the Community Engagement Toolkit, creating guidance notes on how to better engage with the disability community.
- People with disability contributed insights to inform the accessible design of Malahang Reserve.
- Council undertook a website content audited against Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) and a range of improvements were completed.
- A digital accessibility tool called Cérge was extended to levels 3 and 4 of the WaterMarc building, making it easier for people with disability to plan their visit to the facility.
- Council supported people with disability to participate in the Connected Communities

Advisory Committee and Disability Champions groups.

- Council delivered the Job Access Program, and worked with residents to identify employment barriers for people with dyslexia

### Inclusive Community Buildings and Spaces

- Universal design standards and standards for braille were included in the draft Wayfinding Management Plan.
- Hearing loop upgrades were made at Bellfield Community Hub, Ivanhoe Library and Cultural Hub and Greensborough Customer Service Centre.
- Accessibility improvements were made to Olympic Park Pavillion, Macleod Park Pavillion and James Street Reserve change facility.
- Shelley Park and Anthony Beale Reserve audits were undertaken to identify physical accessibility improvements required in the pavilions social areas, meeting rooms, kitchen and toilets.

### Inclusive Programs, Events and Services

- Council became a member of the Hidden Sunflower program and rolled out a training program for some frontline staff. Lanyards were made available to community members through customer service sites.
- Council pilot a low sensory hour at Ivanhoe Aquatic and Olympic Leisure Centre.
- In recognition of International Day of People with Disability, a partnership with Disability Champions and Ability TV to advocate for accessible train stations in Banyule.
- Monthly Auslan Story Time sessions were delivered in partnership with Yarra Plenty Regional Library.
- The annual sports club forum focused on best practice inclusion in sport, sports clubs were supported to deliver the Abilities Unleashed Program and Come and Try Days were delivered.
- Youth Services delivered the Inclusive Dungeons & Dragons Program, supporting neurodiverse young people to come together in a safe space.
- Banyule's major festivals provided Auslan interpreters, accessible pathways, social stories and designated accessible parking to support people with disability to participate.
- Implemented the First Nations Employment Program which saw four Aboriginal participants successfully complete the 12-month program.

More details are available on Council's website.

# Council procurement and contract management

Council maintains a robust procurement framework to ensure that procurement activities are reviewed for strategic alignment, efficiency, and continued relevance. Each review considers:

- Whether the service remains necessary
- Optimal delivery method
- Market conditions and supplier availability
- Appropriate procurement approach

In 2025-2026, Council issued more than ~167 procurement opportunities, including

- Requests for Quotes ($100,000 and $500,000)
- Public tenders (over >$500,000)

These covered a diverse range of service areas:

- Events and marketing
- Community services
- Consultancy and professional services
- Capital works and infrastructure
- Operational services
- Technology

Additionally, 16 contracts were awarded under approved exemptions in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy.

Table 44 | Contracts awarded with an estimated total contract value exceeding $500,000

| Contract number | Contract name | Successful supplier/s | Status |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1474-2025 | Seddon Reserve Pavilion Extension | Circon Constructions | Expired |
| 1477-2025 | Replacement of the external combustible wall claddings for One Flintoff | Stosius | Expired |
| 1498-2026 | Olympic Leisure Centre Gym Construction | Building Impressions | Expired |
| 1509-2026 | Operations Centre Vehicle Wash and Major Site Drainage Upgrades | Kennedy's Group | Active |
| 1516-2026 | Shelley Park Pavilion Redevelopment | Notion Partners | Active |
| 1495-2025 | Provision of Corporate and Workwear Clothing, PPE and Equipment (Panel contract) | Amare<br>Safety RSEA SafetyQuip | Active |
| 1475-2025 | Hire of Plant with Operators - Waste, Street Sweeping | Spano Family Trust<br>Bemich<br>Enviro Sweep<br>Haynes Family Trust<br>Sweep Wright<br>M. Tucker & Sons<br>Plumbtrax | Active |
| 1484-2026 | Panel for Traffic & Transport Consultancy Services | Salt3<br>Beveridge Williams<br>Traffix group<br>One Mile Grid<br>Trafficworks | Active |

| Contract number | Contract name | Successful supplier/s | Status |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1488-2026 | Construction of Chainwire Fencing including Cricket Nets | Fencetech<br>Melbourne Chainwire Fencing | Active |
| 1493-2026 | Panel of Arborist Consultancy Services | Lucas & Co<br>Mcleod Trees<br>AusGreen Services<br>Kenyon Family Trust<br>Tree Response<br>Bay Group Victoria<br>Arbortryst<br>Xylem Treecare<br>Urban Amenity Tree Management | Active |
| NPN1.23 | Supply & Delivery of (2) Side-Loading Waste Trucks | AHG1 Pty Ltd - Prestige | Active |
| 1499-2026 | Repair & Maintenance Services for Waste Recovery Centre | OGTEC Australia | Active |
| 1511-2026 | Panel for Drainage Maintenance Works | J.R Willett<br>Plumbtrax<br>M Tucker & Sons<br>V. Crete Concrete Contractors<br>Etheredge Mintern<br>Bluestone Unit Trust<br>Bosco Traffic | Active |
| NPN4.19 | Supply & Delivery of (6) Out-Front Ride-on Mowers | Yarra Valley Ag | Expired |
| MAV NPN2.15-2 | Supply & Delivery of (1) Backhoe Loader | JCD Construction | Active |
| 1537-2026 | Supply & Application of Mulch and Sand | Ecodynamics<br>Repurpose It<br>Blow It Mulch | Active |

Table 45 | Approved Exemptions from Public Tendering

| Contract number | Contract name | Successful supplier/s | Status |
|---|---|---|---|
| **PO** | Purchase of Wash Bay Equipment for the Operations Centre EPA Project | Speedywash | Live |
| **1530-2026Q** | AV Project Community Rooms (exemption as submitted price was < $500,000) | Citadel Technology | Live |
| **1522-2026** | **Project Atlas Business Transformation Delivery Partner (exemption from public tendering, x 7 selected tenderers) | Tender Open | Live |
| **PO** | Project Atlas – Transformation Delivery Partner – exemption to appoint Enterprise Architect for a 4 year term) | Ontwerp Consulting Pth Ltd | Live |
| **PO** | Project Atlas - Transformation Delivery Partner - Microsoft Unified Support Agreement | Microsoft | Live |
| **PO** | Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation | WWCHAC | Live |
| **PO** | Land Management & Catchment Coordination Services | DCMC | Live |
| **PO** | BCC Cultural Values Assessment | RAP | Live |
| **PO** | Legal fees associated with compulsory acquisition of 15-17 Flintoff Street, Greensborough | Maddocks | Completed |
| **PO** | Multicultural Shopfront Improvement & Roller Shutter Art Design Program | Pop Creative Collection | Live |
| **PO** | Urgent works/repairs to Olympic Leisure Centre roof | NPS | Completed |
| **PO** | Urgent skate park repairs - Stocksoft Australia Pty Ltd | Skatecon | Completed |
| **PO** | Review of Alistair Knox Heritage Properties | GJM | Completed |
| **PO** | Duress Pty Ltd - lanyards required for staff that work alone, remotely or after hours. | Duress | Completed |

## Infrastructure and development contributions

Under sections 46GM and 46QD of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, councils that collect or manage development contributions must report annually to the Minister for Planning. This includes details of levies received and infrastructure delivered through Development Contributions Plans (DCPs).

In 2025-2026, Banyule Council did not enter into any agreements for land, works, services or facilities accepted in-kind under a DCP.

Table 46 | Development Contributions Plan (DCP) levies received in 2025-2026

| DCP name (Year approved) | Levies received |
|---|---|
| DCP 2016/2017 (2019) | **$1,256,245** |

Table 47 | Infrastructure delivered using DCP levies in 2025-2026

| Project | Project ID | DCP name | DCP funds used | Council contribution | Other contributions | Total project cost | % delivered |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Ivanhoe Aquatic – Stage 2 Construction** | B51 | DCP 2016/2017 (2019) | $1,024 | $626 | - | $606,311 | 14% |
| **Kolora Road/Lillimur Avenue to Orthla Avenue, Heidelberg West - road rehabilitation** | R221 | DCP 2016/2017 (2019) | $1,941 | $154,467 | - | $180,597 | 100% |
| **Alexandra Street/Howard Street to Gibcoe Street, Greensborough - road rehabilitation** | R225 | DCP 2016/2017 (2019) | $181 | $24,078 | - | $48,448 | 100% |
| **Olympic Park Pavilion** | B52 | DCP 2016/2017 (2019) | $63,605 | $2,574,065 | $635,690 | $6,154,264 | 100% |
| **Total** | | | **$66,751** | **$2,753,236** | **$635,690** | **$6,989,620** | |

In 2025-2026, Council incurred annual expenditure of $3.5 million in projects funded under the DCP 2016/2017 (2019). By 30 June 2026, total cumulative expenditure on these projects reached $7.0 million.

Between 2016-2017 and 2024-2025, Council incurred expenditure of $76.0 million in other DCP projects. In 2025-2026, it received $1,189,494 in DCP levy income to support these initiatives.

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# Glossary

| Term | Description |
|---|---|
| **Act, the** | The *Local Government Act 2020*. |
| **Advisory committees** | The main function of an advisory committee is to provide advice to Council on key matters important to the community, for the purpose of supporting the decision-making of Council. Each year Council appoints Councillor representatives to a number of advisory committees. Their role in relation to these committees is representation, advocacy and consultation. |
| **ALGA** | Australian Local Government Association: the national voice of local government, representing 537 councils across the country. |
| **Annual Report** | A yearly summary of Council's work and performance over the past financial year. It includes a report of operations, along with externally audited performance and financial statements. |
| **Appropriateness** | Means indicators or measures that provide users with sufficient information to assess the extent to which an entity has achieved a pre-determined target, goal or outcome. |
| **Auditor-General** | An independent officer of the Parliament, appointed under legislation, to examine and report to Parliament and the community, on the efficient and effective management of public sector resources, and provide assurance on the financial integrity of Victoria's system of government. |
| **Banyule Story, the** | Banyule City Council's Annual Report that shows how Council is delivering on the Banyule Plan and working towards the Community Vision. |
| **Budget** | A plan setting out the services and initiatives to be funded for the financial year and how they will contribute to achieving the strategic objectives specified in the Banyule Plan. |
| **CALD** | Culturally and linguistically diverse. |
| **Capital works** | Work undertaken on Council-owned assets including new works, expansions, upgrades and renewal or disposal. |
| **CEO** | Chief Executive Officer. |

| Term | Description |
|---|---|
| **Continuous improvement** | The process of ensuring that review and improvement practices are built into operational activities. |
| **Corporate governance** | Taking responsibility for the economic and ethical performance of the municipality, the underlying principles of which are openness, inclusion, integrity and accountability. Governance differs from the everyday management of affairs, in that it identifies the strategic directions for the organisation and implements the controls and checks, which enable the governing body to measure management's performance. |
| **Council asset** | An asset is a physical component of a facility that has value, enables a service to be provided and has an economic life greater than 12 months. |
| **Council Plan** | A plan setting out the medium-term strategic objectives, strategies, strategic indicators and resources reflecting vision and aspirations of the community for the next four years. |
| **DCP** | Development Contributions Plan. |
| **Financial performance indicators** | A prescribed set of indicators and measures that assess the effectiveness of financial management in a council covering operating position, liquidity, obligations, stability and efficiency. |
| **Financial Report** | The Financial Report and notes prepared in accordance with the Local Government Model Financial Report, Australian Accounting Standards and other applicable standards as they apply to the general purpose financial reports and a statement of capital works and included in the Annual Report. |
| **Financial year** | The period of 12 months beginning on 1 July and ending on 30 June the following year. |
| **Financial year representation** | Representation of financial years is presented in one of two formats as appropriate; either as 2023–24 or where a whole year is used it represents end of the relevant financial year, that is, 2024 represents 2023–24. |
| **FOGO** | Food Organics and Garden Organics waste collection. |
| **FOI** | Freedom of Information. |
| **Governance and management checklist** | A prescribed checklist of policies, plans and documents that councils must report the status of in the Report of Operations, covering engagement, |

| Term | Description |
|---|---|
| | planning, monitoring, reporting and decision-making. |
| **HACC PYP** | Home and Community Care Program for Young People. |
| **Indicator** | What will be measured to assess performance. |
| **Infrastructure** | The physical 'skeleton' required to enable the community to be connected and operational. This includes roads, drains, footpaths and public open spaces as well as public facilities and buildings. |
| **Initiatives** | Actions that are one-off in nature and/or lead to improvements in service. |
| **Integrated planning and reporting framework** | A framework that applies to local government in Victoria to ensure transparency and accountability to the local community. |
| **Internal audit** | An independent appraisal to examine and evaluate Council's financial, management and internal control systems. |
| **Major initiative** | Significant initiatives that will directly contribute to the achievement of the Banyule Plan during the current year and have a major focus in the budget. |
| **MAV** | Municipal Association of Victoria: the peak representative and lobbying body for Victoria's 79 councils. |
| **Measure** | How an indicator will be measured and takes the form of a computation, typically including a numerator and denominator. |
| **Minister** | The Minister for Local Government. |
| **NEIC** | National Employment and Innovation Cluster. |
| **NRW** | National Reconciliation Week. |
| **Performance Statement** | A statement including the results of the prescribed service outcome indicators, financial performance indicators and sustainable capacity indicators for the financial year and included in the Annual Report. |
| **Regulations** | The Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014 and/or Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020. |
| **Report of Operations** | A report containing a description of the operations of Council during the financial year and included in the Annual Report. |

| Term | Description |
| --- | --- |
| **Revenue and Rating Plan** | A plan setting out the rating structure of Council to levy rates and charges. |
| **Service outcome indicators** | The prescribed service performance indicators to be included in the Performance Statement which measure whether the stated service objective has been achieved. |
| **Service performance indicators** | A prescribed set of indicators measuring the effectiveness and efficiency of Council services covering appropriateness, quality, cost and service outcomes. |
| **Services** | Assistance, support, advice and other actions undertaken by a council for the benefit of the local community. |
| **Strategic objectives** | The outcomes a council is seeking to achieve over the next four years and included in the Banyule Plan. |
| **Strategies** | High-level actions directed at achieving the strategic objectives in the Banyule Plan. |
| **Sustainable capacity indicators** | A prescribed set of indicators measuring whether councils have the capacity to meet the agreed service and infrastructure needs of the local community and absorb foreseeable changes and unexpected shocks into the future covering financial performance, capacity and governance, and management. |

# Appendix A – Long description of the Our Banyule community infographic

This section provides accessible descriptions of complex visuals featured in the Our Banyule community infographic, located in the Introducing Banyule Council section.

## Our Banyule community

9km from the Central Business District.

Land use: 76% residential, 17% parkland, 7% other. Approximately 890 hectares of public open space.

## Population

Banyule is a community of 132,770 residents (2025). Which will grow to 161,397 by 2046.

Banyule's population is made up of the following age groups:

- 6% Babies and pre-schoolers (0 to 4)
- 9% Primary schoolers (5 to 11)
- 7% Secondary schoolers (12 to 17)
- 8% Tertiary education and independence (18 to 24)
- 13% Young workforce (25 to 34)
- 21% Parents and homebuilders (35 to 49)
- 12% Older workers and pre-retirees (50 to 59)
- 11% Empty nesters and retirees (60 to 69)
- 11% Seniors (70 to 84)
- 3% Elderly aged (85 and over).

## Households

There are over 49,000 households

Household types:

- 33% couples with children
- 25% couples without children
- 24% lone person households
- 10% one parent families.

Average household size of 2.51 people.

1,364 residents who are a specialist homeless service client, 62% female, 38% male (2024-2025).

70% households purchasing or fully owning their home, 22% renting private, 4% renting social housing.

## Diversity

24% of residents were born overseas.

22% use a non-English language at home.

69.5% of residents think multiculturalism makes life in Banyule better

6% of female and 5% of male residents need assistance due to disability

871 residents identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

12% of residents aged 18+ years identify as LGBTIQA+.

## Economy in Banyule

11,540 businesses.

56,937 jobs.

$8.4 billion Gross Regional Product (GRP).

## Main industries of employment

Healthcare and social assistance.

Construction.

Education and training.

Retail trade.

## Health and wellbeing

- $2,016 per week is the median household income (2021).
- 17% of people aged 15+ years with income $2,000 or more per week (female 11%, male 23%) (2021).
- 11% of female and 7% male residents have a mental health condition (2021).
- 88% of female and 89% of male residents participate in at least one sport and recreation activity (2025).

- 35% of households reported ‘cost’ was a barrier to eating fresh fruit and vegetables (2025)
- 28% of households experienced barriers to using or accessing at least one community service (2025)
- 29% of adults consumed sugar-sweetened beverages daily or several times per week (2023).
- 54% of households were very satisfied with access to good quality places for play and recreation (2025)
- 63% of adults undertook 2.5 hours or more of physical activity in a typical week (2025)
- 14% of adults smoke tobacco or vape (2023).
- 46.9% of adults self-report their health as excellent or very good 7.1% better than Victoria (2023).
- 10% experienced discrimination in the past 12 months (2025)
- 64% hardly ever or never experienced loneliness (2025)
- 65% described their social wellbeing as very good or excellent (2025)
- $5m was lost on average each month to electronic gaming machines, or $577 per adult for the year (2025-2026)
- 78% of households enjoy living in their local area (2022).

## Services statistics and area highlights

- 20,800 visits to Barrbunin Beek
- 676 artists supported by Council
- 14,189 visits to Shop 48
- Approx. 40,000 visitors attended festivals and events
- Banyule’s community relief partners, BANSIC, DVCS and DVFS supported 17,606 people including food and other essential needs
- 125 MCG equivalents mowed each month in winter and 250 MCGs mowed each month in summer
- Approximately 75,000 street trees and 25,000 park trees actively inspected and maintained and protected across Council streets, parks, reserves and bushlands
- 48 kilometres squared of open space serviced, an area almost the size of Sydney Harbour
- 4.4 million bin lifts per year providing a waste service to over 51,000 properties
- 87.7% of planning applications were decided within the required timeframe
- Council manages 322 buildings and 48 picnic shelters
- The average number of aquatic centre visits per person has nearly doubled, increasing from 4.6 to just over 9 visits last year.
- 3,938 immunisation clients were seen and 8,898 vaccines given

## Infrastructure we maintain

- 1,014 kilometres of kerbs
- 822 kilometres of drainage pipes
- 35 wetlands and stormwater harvesting systems and 30 gross pollutant traps
- Resheeting of 37 local streets (67,000 m² of asphalt)
- Replacement of 7,300 concrete footpath bays

Return to the Our Banyule community infographic.