

SEPTEMBER 2025 COUNCIL UPDATE

Snapshot of key decisions and discussions from Council's September 15, 2025 Ordinary Meeting.

COMMUNITY & INFRASTRUCTURE

- Flood Mapping (Ross): Council resolved that any new flood mapping must include community consultation where required by the Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993. Local District Committees will be notified and made aware of the release of local flood studies.
- River Signage (Macquarie River Bridge, Woolmers Lane, Longford): Council acknowledged the request for signage with traditional Aboriginal names. Advice from the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre was noted that the traditional names for Brumbys Creek and the Woolmers Bridge are not known and that the Macquarie River is referred to as Tinamirakuna. No funding is currently available, but this can be considered for the 2026/27 budget.
- Pedestrian Safety (Wellington & Marlborough Streets, Longford): Council noted concerns but clarified the road is not council-owned; requests should be directed to the Department of State Growth and that Council will also advise DSG of the committee's concerns.

PARKS & AMENITIES

- Pioneer Park (Evandale): Council noted requests for information regarding the master plan and amenities (toilet block, public shower). Matters are operational in nature and the committee will receive information when the projects are progressed.

COMMUNITY WELLBEING & ENGAGEMENT

- Lift the Tone Campaign: Council endorsed the Local Government of Tasmania campaign to promote respectful dialogue, mental health support, and policy reinforcement for civility in council meetings, social media and emails.

MAJOR PROJECTS

- TRANSLink Intermodal Facility: Council approved amended cost estimates for Stage One (Phases One to Four) and approved the cost estimate for implementation of Phase Five of Stage One of the project, with decisions to be released publicly once agreements are finalised.

CLIMATE & FLEET

- Transition to Electric Vehicles: A motion to prepare a report for transitioning the council's small fleet to electric vehicles (supporting the Climate Resilience Strategy 2025–2028) was lost as Council focus will remain on operational efficiencies, route optimisation, and ongoing review of service delivery to reduce fuel use and emissions across the entire fleet. Council will continue to monitor the market for suitable EVs and charging solutions and consider pilot projects or trials as costs become more viable and technology improves.

FINANCIAL & POLICY MATTERS

- Monthly Financial Report: Council received and noted the financial report for August 2025 and authorized budget alterations for 2025/26.
- Longford Netball Club: Council committed up to \$5,000 to support gym hire for the club's 2026 training season.
- Policy Reviews: Policies on legal assistance for employees and councillor allowances/expenses were deferred for future workshops.

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

- Evandale Rezoning (Draft Amendment 14/2024): Council refused to prepare the draft amendment for rezoning land in Evandale, citing that it does not represent sound strategic planning and co-ordinated action by State and local government, contrary to Schedule 1, Part 2 (a) of the Act. Specifically, the Department of State Growth has advised it is appropriate that proposals of this type, scale and location are considered as part of the current comprehensive review of the Northern Tasmania Regional Land Use Strategy, and any rezoning ideally be undertaken in context of the outcomes of the review, strategic planning, infrastructure, environmental, and heritage concerns. Community members voiced strong opposition, referencing heritage, traffic, and environmental impacts.
- Perth Subdivision (Draft Amendment 19/2025): Council agreed to amend the planning scheme for 5 Eskleigh Road, Perth, allowing a 2-lot subdivision with site-specific qualifications and conditions for infrastructure and easements.

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LIFT THE TONE: COUNCIL BACKS CAMPAIGN TO CURB ABUSE IN LOCAL DEMOCRACY



Better debate for stronger communities.

Northern Midlands Council has formally endorsed the Local Government Association of Tasmania's Lift the Tone campaign, committing to a suite of actions aimed at reducing abuse and intimidation directed at elected representatives and council staff. The decision was carried at the Ordinary Meeting on 15 September 2025.

Under the resolution, Council will actively promote the campaign through its communication channels, support community education on respectful debate, strengthen wellbeing support for staff and elected members, and reinforce guidelines for public participation at meetings and on Council-managed social media.

The Lift the Tone campaign, led by the Local Government Association of Tasmania (LGAT), calls on all Tasmanians to stand against abusive behaviour and commit to respectful communication—online and in person. LGAT notes that nearly 80% of surveyed elected representatives in Tasmania reported experiencing abuse in the past two years; social media and public spaces were identified as the most common settings. Mayor Mary Knowles OAM said the decision sends a clear message about the kind of community Northern Midlands wants to be.

"Robust debate is healthy and necessary in a democracy, but abuse and intimidation are not. By endorsing the Lift the Tone campaign, we are saying loud and clear that respect matters. We want everyone—councillors, staff and community members—to feel safe to participate in local government without fear or hostility."

WHAT COUNCIL HAS COMMITTED TO DO

- Public endorsement: Promote the campaign's objectives via media releases, the Council website and community forums.
- Awareness & education: Support initiatives that highlight constructive dialogue and the harms of abusive behaviour.
- Mental health support: Continue prioritising wellbeing for staff and elected members, including access to professional supports.
- Policy reinforcement: Review and reinforce guidelines for public participation at meetings and on Council-managed social media to ensure civility.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Council's endorsement aligns with a sector-wide push to safeguard local democracy by improving the tone of public engagement. LGAT's campaign emphasises that while robust debate is vital, abuse and intimidation have no place in civic life and can deter good people from standing for office. Residents are encouraged to learn more and pledge their support via LGAT's campaign page.

Find out more: Visit LGAT's Lift the Tone hub to view the pledge and campaign resources.

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OPENING HOURS

Monday - Friday
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