Behavioural Standards Panel

Final Report

Council Member:	Cr Bruce Preece
Council:	The Barossa Council
Referral by:	Mayor Bim Lange
Panel Reference:	25BSP-0007
Date Received:	25 July 2025
Issues:	Misbehaviour

January 2026

Government of South Australia

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Final Report

1. This final report has been prepared on an inquiry undertaken by the Behavioural Standards Panel (the Panel) following a referral made by Mayor Michael 'Bim' Lange, principal member of The Barossa Council (the Council). The complaint alleged that Councillor Bruce Preece (Cr Preece) had committed misbehaviour as defined by s 262E of the *Local Government Act 1999* in that he had failed to undertake actions that were made by resolution of the Council in accordance with s 262C of the Act following its inquiries into complaints about Cr Preece's behaviour made under Chapter 13, Part AI, Division 1 of the Act.

2. Cr Preece was elected to the Council at the 2022 Council elections and has had previous experience as a Councillor at the City of Prospect.

Legislative Framework

3. Section 262Q of the *Local Government Act 1999* (the Act) provides that a complaint alleging misbehaviour, repeated misbehaviour or serious misbehaviour may be referred to the Panel by a resolution of the council; the principal member of the council; at least 3 members of the council; or a responsible person in accordance with section 75G(5) of the Act.

4. Relevantly to this inquiry, s 262E provides that misbehaviour means—

   (a) a failure by a member of a council to comply with a requirement of the council under section 262C(1); or

   (b) a failure by a member of a council to comply with a provision of, or a requirement under, the council's behavioural management policy; or

   (c) a failure by a member of a council to comply with an agreement reached following mediation, conciliation, arbitration or other dispute or conflict resolution conducted in relation to a complaint under Division 1.

The Complaint

5. On 25 July 2025, Mayor Lange referred a complaint to the Panel that included, in summary—

   - Between February 2024 and April 2024, the Council received 6 complaints about Cr Preece's behaviour alleging that he had breached the Behavioural Standards for Council Members (the Behavioural Standards).

- The Council received the complaints and dealt with them under its Behavioural Management Policy. This resulted in five independent investigations (investigation one combined council complaints one and two) being undertaken, each separate investigation found that Cr Preece had breached the Behavioural Standards as alleged.

- The Council considered the five independent investigations into the complaints about Cr Preece's behaviour at the ordinary council meeting on 20 May 2025.

6. On behalf of the Panel, in accordance with s 262R(1) of the Act the presiding member, determined that the Panel would deal with the complaint as one complaint of misbehaviour (the Complaint).

Inquiry

7. The Panel—

- Designated the Complaint 25BSP-0007.

- Assessed the Complaint lodged against Cr Preece.

- Considered the Complaint in the context of the Act, the Panel's Practice Directions, and guidance material.

- Provided a letter to Cr Preece that detailed the five allegations.

- Provided Cr Preece with the opportunity to respond to the allegations through written submissions and considered his responses.

- Met to discuss determinations relating to the Complaint.

- Assessed further information provided by the Council, as sought by the Panel.

- Considered further correspondence provided by Cr Preece.

- Prepared letters and a report of provisional findings and orders provided to both Cr Preece and Mayor Lange.

- Provided Cr Preece and Mayor Lange with the opportunity to respond to the provisional findings and orders.

- Considered the submissions received from the Council.

- Considered further correspondence received from both Cr Preece and Mr Trevor Wedding (representing Cr Preece).

- Prepared a Final Report.

Standard of Proof

8. The standard of proof applied by the Panel in this inquiry and investigation process is on the balance of probabilities.

Complaint

9. At its meeting held on 20 May 2025, the Council received and considered 5 of reports relating to Cr Preece's breaches of the Behavioural Standards for Council Members that had been prepared in accordance with the Council's Behavioural Management Policy.

10. Following its consideration of these reports, the Council decided to take action under s 262C of the Act, that included the following resolutions—

    1. First and Second Complaint—Cr Preece issue a public apology to Crs Greatwich and Schilling and acknowledging the offence to fellow Councillors and the Indigenous and wider community at a public meeting of the Council, to be delivered within the next two (2) meetings of Council, and the terms of the apology are to be recorded in the Minutes which shall be acknowledgement of the substances of the complaint being substantiated. [CARRIED 2022-26/695]

    2. Third Complaint—Cr Preece issue a public apology which shall acknowledge he engaged with staff contrary to the Chief Executive Officers instructions and bullied and harassed staff, at a public meeting of the Council to the employees in question (without otherwise naming them), to be delivered within the next two (2) meetings of Council, and the terms of the apology are to be recorded in the Minutes. [CARRIED 2022-26/697]

    3. Fourth Complaint—Cr Preece issue a public apology at a public meeting of the Council which shall include an apology to Cr Greatwich for a lack of professional conduct and undertaking bullying and harassment, to be delivered within the next two (2) meetings of Council, and the terms of the apology are to be recorded in the Minutes. [CARRIED 2022-26/699]

    4. Fifth Complaint—Cr Preece issue a public apology which shall include acknowledgement of misconduct at a Council and community event and to

the members of the clubs and community present at the Tanunda Recreation Park redevelopment opening at a public meeting of the Council, to be delivered within the next two (2) meetings of Council, and the terms of the apology are to be recorded in the Minutes. [CARRIED 2022-26/701]

5. Sixth Complaint—Cr Preece issue a public apology to the Members of the Gawler River Floodplain Management Authority and Council which shall include acknowledgement of his discriminative behaviour and comments at a public meeting of the Council and write to the Chairperson of the Gawler River Floodplain Management Authority providing a written apology, to be delivered within the next two (2) meetings of Council, and the terms of the apology are to be recorded in the Minutes. [CARRIED 2022-26/703]

11. The Complaint alleged that Cr Preece had not complied with the Council's resolutions, as Cr Preece failed to provide the apologies as required by the resolutions.

Procedural Fairness

Letter of allegations

12. On 13 August 2025, the Panel wrote to Cr Preece, detailing the allegations that formed the Panel's inquiry, and inviting his submissions within a period of two weeks (by COB 27 August 2025).

13. Cr Preece responded to the Panel's inquiry with four emails received at:

- 7:23 pm, Tuesday, 26 August 2025
- 7:48 pm, Tuesday, 26 August 2025
- 4:12 pm, Wednesday, 27 August 2025
- 4:30 pm, Wednesday, 27 August 2025.

Additional correspondence from Cr Preece

14. During the Panel's consideration of the inquiry, Cr Preece sent a further email to the Panel which was received at 3:37 pm on 18 November 2025.

15. The Panel noted that this email referenced correspondence that Cr Preece claimed to have referred to the Panel, notably an email sent on 7 October 2025.

16. The Panel had no record of receiving the email on 7 October 2025.

17. On 19 November at 11:59 am, the Panel contacted Cr Preece via email and requested copies of the correspondence Cr Preece referred to in the 18 November email.

18. Cr Preece was requested to respond within 48 hours. However Cr Preece did not respond to the Panel's request within that timeframe.

19. Cr Preece contacted the Panel on 24 November 2025 and further arrangements were subsequently made with the Panel's Executive Officer to enable him to send information to the Panel.

20. On Saturday 29 November the Executive Officer received 5 emails from Cr Preece—

    - three entitled 'your message could not be delivered' received at 8:32, 8:32 and 8:33 am.
    - 1 entitled 'emails' received at 8:39 am
    - 1 entitled 'FW: Response to Council resolution' received at 8:41 am.

21. The Panel considered these emails out of sessions between 1 and 4 December 2025 and determined to accept them for consideration, however it was resolved that the content of the emails did not alter the member's earlier provisional findings.

Consultation on Provisional Report

22. On Wednesday 26 November 2025, Cr Preece advised the Panel's Executive Officer that he was taking sick leave from dealing with Council business throughout December 2025.

23. The Panel noted Cr Preece's leave, however, formed the view that Cr Preece and/or his legal representatives would be able to make submissions on a provisional report during this period.

24. Accordingly, on 5 December 2025, the Panel issued a Provisional Report on inquiry 25BSP0007 via email to both Cr Preece and Mayor Lange.

25. The Panel provided both recipients the opportunity to provide comments in response to the report by close of business,19 December 2025.

26. The Panel received submissions from the Council on 8 December 2025 and 10 December 2025.

27. On 13 December 2025, the Panel received correspondence from Mr Trevor Wedding of Kensington Legal Services. This correspondence constituted correspondence that had been provided to a third party relating to matters before the Council relating to Cr Preece, advising the third party that Cr Preece was suffering from ill health, would be unable to return to his normal duties and therefore requesting that Cr Preece be provided with additional time (until "in the new year") to respond on these matters.

28. As this correspondence did not specifically request an extension of time for submissions on the Panel's Provisional Report, the Panel sought clarification from Mr Wedding. Mr Wedding confirmed that Cr Preece was seeking an extension for submissions relating to the Provisional Report on 25BSP-0007.

29. On 18 December 2025 Cr Preece contacted the Panel directly via email requesting an extension for his submissions until the "end of January 2026" as he was travelling overseas for the month of December. Cr Preece also stated that his medical leave was further reason for granting him an extension.

30. On 23 December the Panel noted the correspondence from Mr Wedding and Cr Preece and considered the requests for extension.

31. The Panel considered—

    - The previous opportunities for submissions that had been provided to Cr Preece during the inquiry.

    - The previous extension provided by the Panel, the provision of information from Cr Preece outside of consultation periods and the effect that these actions had on the progress of the inquiry (refer correspondence timeline below).

    - That as the complaint was an allegation of misbehaviour, whether a further extension of time would enable Cr Preece to provide any further information that would explain his non-compliance with the Council's resolutions additionally to his previous submissions and correspondence in the inquiry.

32. Following this consideration, the Panel declined to offer Cr Preece an extension on the time provided to him to make a submission on the Provisional Report as the Panel considered that procedural fairness had been provided to Cr Preece throughout the inquiry process.

33. The Panel was also cognisant of its responsibility under s 262U of the Act, relating to inquiries, that it must proceed with as little formality and technicality and with as much expedition as the requirements of this or any other Act and a proper consideration of the matter permit.

34. Cr Preece and Mr Wedding were informed of the Panel's decision on 24 December 2025.

Correspondence Timeline

Complaint Referral from Mayor Lange	25 July 2025	
To Cr Preece from Panel	4 August 2025	Email to confirm contact details of the Panel as Cr Preece telephoned and wanted to provide information for the panel's consideration.
To Cr Preece from Panel	13 August 2025	Letter of allegations and request for information required by COB 27 August 2025.
To Mayor Lange from Panel	13 August 2025	Determination to deal with the matter
To Panel from Cr Preece	26 August 2025	Submission to Panel's request
To Panel from Cr Preece	26 August 2025	Submission to Panel's request
To Panel from Cr Preece	27 August 2025	Submission to Panel's request
To Panel from Cr Preece	27 August 2025	Submission to Panel's request

To Panel from The Barossa Council	28 August 2025	Further information regarding the inquiry
To Panel from Mayor Lange	9 September 2025	Additional referral from Council regarding Cr Preece's behaviour 25BSP-0009
To Council CEO from Panel	25 September 2025	Request for information regarding Council's investigations into Cr Preece's behaviour.
To Panel from Council CEO	25 September 2025	Response to Panel's request
To Panel from Council CEO	22 October 2025	Request for inquiry update
To Council CEO from Panel	22 October 2025	Response to query
To Panel from Cr Preece	18 November 2025	Email from Cr Preece re Panel referral (see section 'additional correspondence from Cr Preece')
From Panel to Cr Preece	19 November 2025	Seeking clarification of the above email
To Panel from Cr Preece	29 November 2025	Response to request for clarification
To Panel from Cr Preece	29 November 2025	Response to request for clarification
To Panel from Cr Preece	29 November 2025	Response to request for clarification
To Panel from Cr Preece	29 November 2025	Response to request for clarification

From Panel to Cr Preece	1 December 2025	Confirmation of receipt of 29 November emails.
To Cr Preece	5 December 2025	Notification of Provisional Report providing opportunity for submissions by COB 19 December 2025
To Mayor Lange	5 December 2025	Notification of Provisional Report providing opportunity for submissions by COB 19 December 2025
To Panel from Council CEO	8 December 2025	Request to clarify Panel proceedings
To Panel from Mayor Lange	10 December 2025	Response to Provisional Report
To Panel from T Wedding (Kensington Legal Services)	13 December 2025	Third party correspondence
To T Wedding from the Panel	15 December 2025	Requesting clarification of the above
To Panel from T Wedding	16 December 2025	Further information re 25BSP-0007 and request for extension
To T Wedding from the Panel	16 December 2025	Requesting further clarification of the email dated 13 December 2025
To Panel from T Wedding	16 December 2025	Response to request for clarification and request for extension.
To Panel from Cr Preece	18 December 2025	Notification of medical leave and extension request
To Cr Preece and T Wedding from Panel	24 December 2025	Decline request for extension for submissions on Provisional Report

The member's compliance with Council resolutions

35. The relevant Council resolutions were made on 20 May 2025. All resolutions gave Cr Preece a timeframe of "within the next two meetings of Council" to comply with the resolutions.

36. The Panel noted that ordinary Council meetings were held on 17 June 2025 and 15 July 2025.

37. The below table sets out Cr Preece's compliance with the Council's resolutions. This is based on information provided to the Panel by Cr Preece in his emails of 26 and 27 August 2025—

Alleged Outstanding Action	Evidence of Compliance	Details
First and Second Complaint—Cr Preece issue a public apology to Crs Greatwich and Schilling and acknowledging the offence to fellow Councillors and the Indigenous and wider community at a public meeting of the Council, to be delivered within the next two (2) meetings of Council, and the terms of the apology are to be recorded in the Minutes which shall be acknowledgement of the substances of the complaint being substantiated. [CARRIED 2022-26/695]	None provided	Cr Preece was asked to comply within 2 council meetings

Third Complaint—Cr Preece issue a public apology which shall acknowledge he engaged with staff contrary to the Chief Executive Officers instructions and bullied and harassed staff, at a public meeting of the Council to the employees in question (without otherwise naming them), to be delivered within the next two (2) meetings of Council, and the terms of the apology are to be recorded in the Minutes. [CARRIED 2022-26/697]	None provided	Cr Preece was asked to comply within 2 council meetings
Fourth Complaint—Cr Preece issue a public apology at a public meeting of the Council which shall include an apology to Cr Greatwich for a lack of professional conduct and undertaking bullying and harassment, to be delivered within the next two (2) meetings of Council, and the terms of the apology are to be recorded in the Minutes. [CARRIED 2022-26/699]	None provided	Cr Preece was asked to comply within 2 council meetings
Fifth Complaint—Cr Preece issue a public apology which shall include acknowledgement of misconduct at a Council and community event and to the members of the clubs and community present at the Tanunda Recreation Park redevelopment opening at a public meeting of the Council, to be delivered within the next two (2) meetings of Council, and the terms of the apology are to be recorded in the Minutes. [CARRIED 2022-26/701]	None provided	Cr Preece was asked to comply within 2 council meetings

Sixth Complaint—Cr Preece issue a public apology to the Members of the Gawler River Floodplain Management Authority and Council which shall include acknowledgement of his discriminative behaviour and comments at a public meeting of the Council and write to the Chairperson of the Gawler River Floodplain Management Authority providing a written apology, to be delivered within the next two (2) meetings of Council, and the terms of the apology are to be recorded in the Minutes. [CARRIED 2022-26/703]	Cr Preece provided the agenda for the (at the time) upcoming GRFMA meeting showing he had sent the Executive Officer an apology that had been included on the agenda. See text of Cr Preece's apology to GRFMA below	Cr Preece's apology was presented to the GRFMA board on 28/08/25 GRFMA meetings were held on 19/06/25 and 28/08/25 The requirement was for the apology to be lodged within 2 Council meetings, not 2 GRFMA meetings. GRFMA meetings are held every two months, whereas council meetings are held monthly. Within this timeframe, Cr Preece's apology was required by the Council to be provided by 15 July 2025

Cr Preece's apology to the GRFMA board

Dear Board Members,

I am writing to express my sincerest apologies to the board in regards to the context of the conversation on the disparity of punishment between two issues namely that Port Adelaide Player was given 6 match suspension for a slur and a player can sling tackle a player and get only one or two match suspension causing serious injury and highlighted the number of times he had been personally branded with the slur while playing sport, while making a sticks and stones type argument. I submit that the pursuit of the argument was not appropriate to the context and I apologise for any offense caused. I have no intention to cause embarrassment or offense to the board as I hold the GRFMA in high regards and appreciates the hard work the board members are undertaking. These remarks occurred approximately 16 months ago. Going forward, I wish the GRFMA board every success in its future endeavours.

Kind regards, Councillor Bruce Preece

Provisional Findings

38. At its meeting of 16 September 2025, the Panel made provisional findings about the Complaint.

39. In making its provisional findings, the Panel carefully considered the information provided in the Complaint from Mayor Lange which included details of the processes undertaken by the Council in accordance with its Behavioural Management Policy and minutes of ordinary Council meetings held on 20 May 2025, 17 June 2025 and 15 July 2025.

40. The Panel also carefully considered the submissions made by Cr Preece on 26 and 27 August 2025, the minutes of the GRFMA meetings held on 19 June 2025 and 28 August 2025 and additional correspondence from Cr Preece received on 18 November and 29 November 2025.

41. The Panel's provisional findings in relation to each Council complaint are contained below.

42. The Complaint alleges that that Cr Preece has not complied with requirements resolved by the Council at this meeting, as at its subsequent meetings held on 17 June 2025 and 15 July 2025, Cr Preece failed to provide the apologies for each of the six resolutions made by Council on 20 May 2025, being—

Allegation 1

43. That Cr Preece has not complied with the following requirement resolved by the Council—

    First and second complaint—the Council resolved that Cr Preece issue a public apology to Crs Greatwich and Schilling and acknowledge the offence to fellow Councillors and the Indigenous and wider community at a public meeting of the Council, to be delivered within the next two (2) meetings of Council, and the terms of the apology are to be recorded in the Minutes which shall be acknowledgement of the substances of the complaint being substantiated. [CARRIED 2022-26/695]

Panel Finding 1

44. Cr Preece offered no evidence of compliance with this action nor stated any reason as to why he did not comply with the action.

45. The Panel found that Cr Preece failed to comply with the actions determined by the Council resolution 2022-26/695 and had therefore committed misbehaviour as defined by section 262E of the Act.

Allegation 2

46. That Cr Preece has not complied with the following requirement resolved by the Council—

    Third Complaint—The Council resolved that Cr Preece issue a public apology which shall acknowledge he engaged with staff contrary to the Chief Executive Officer's instructions and bullied and harassed staff, at a public meeting of the Council to the employees in question (without otherwise naming them), to be delivered within the next two (2) meetings of Council, and the terms of the apology are to be recorded in the Minutes. [CARRIED 2022-26/697]

Panel Finding 2

47. Cr Preece offered no evidence of compliance with the Council action nor stated any reason as to why he did not comply with the action.

48. The Panel found that Cr Preece failed to comply with the actions determined by the Council resolution 2022-26/695 and had therefore committed misbehaviour as defined by section 262E of the Act.

Allegation 3

49. That Cr Preece has not complied with the following requirement resolved by the Council—

    Fourth Complaint—The Council resolved that Cr Preece issue a public apology at a public meeting of the Council which shall include an apology to Cr Greatwich for a lack of professional conduct and undertaking bullying and harassment, to be delivered within the next two (2) meetings of Council, and the terms of the apology are to be recorded in the Minutes. [CARRIED 2022-26/699]

Panel Finding 3

50. Cr Preece offered no evidence of compliance with the Council action nor stated any reason as to why he did not comply with the action.

51. The Panel found that Cr Preece failed to comply with the actions determined by the Council resolution 2022-26/695 and had therefore committed misbehaviour as defined by section 262E of the Act.

Allegation 4

52. That Cr Preece has not complied with the following requirement resolved by the Council—

    Fifth Complaint—The Council resolved that Cr Preece issue a public apology which shall include acknowledgement of misconduct at a Council and community event and to the members of the clubs and community present at the Tanunda Recreation Park redevelopment opening at a public meeting of the Council, to be delivered within the next two (2) meetings of Council, and the terms of the apology are to be recorded in the Minutes. [CARRIED 2022-26/701]

Panel Finding 4

53. Cr Preece offered no evidence of compliance with the action nor stated any reason as to why he did not comply with the action.

54. The Panel found that Cr Preece failed to comply with the actions determined by the Council resolution 2022-26/695 and had therefore committed misbehaviour as defined by section 262E of the Act.

Allegation 5

55. That Cr Preece has not complied with the following requirement resolved by the Council—

    Sixth Complaint—The Council resolved that Cr Preece issue a public apology to the Members of the Gawler River Floodplain Management Authority and Council which shall include acknowledgement of his discriminative behaviour and comments at a public meeting of the Council and write to the Chairperson of the Gawler River Floodplain Management Authority providing a written apology, to be delivered within the next two (2) meetings of Council, and the terms of the apology are to be recorded in the Minutes. [CARRIED 2022-26/703]

Panel Finding 5

56. Cr Preece offered some information as evidence of compliance with this action. However, the Panel noted that—

    - While the Council required this apology to include acknowledgement of his discriminative behaviour and comments at a public meeting of the Council, Cr Preece's apology did not include this acknowledgement.

    - The apology was not made in the timeframe specified in the action determined by the Council.

57. The Panel found that Cr Preece failed to comply with council resolution 2022-26/695 and was in breach of section 262C of the *Local Government Act 1999*, and that Cr Preece has therefore committed misbehaviour as defined by section 262E of the Act.

58. In relation to all allegations, the Panel was satisfied that Cr Preece had been given sufficient opportunity to comply with the actions determined by the Council under s 262C(1) of the Act but had not done so.

Provisional orders determined by the Panel

59. The Panel may, after inquiring into a complaint referred to it, make one or more orders in as provided for by section 262W(1) of the Act.

60. Prior to determining its provisional orders, the Panel considered the following factors in relation to Cr Preece's breaches—

- the nature and seriousness of the misbehaviour;
- the circumstances in which the misbehaviour occurred;
- the period over which the misbehaviour occurred;
- the impact of the misbehaviour on any person(s) affected by the misbehaviour;
- the actual and potential consequences of the misbehaviour;
- whether the misbehaviour appeared to have been inadvertent, ill-informed or the result of naivety, carelessness or misunderstanding;
- whether the misbehaviour was acknowledged and if a commitment not to repeat the misbehaviour was made; and
- statements made by Cr Preece in his correspondence with the Panel.

61. At its meeting of 16 September 2025, the Panel determined that that it would make the following provisional orders—

- Reprimand Cr Preece, by public statement in accordance with s 262W(1)(a).
- Direct the Council to pass a censure motion in respect of Cr Preece, in accordance with s 262W(1)(b).
- Require Cr Preece to issue public apologies in a manner which accords with the resolutions made by the Council, in accordance with s 262W(1)(c).
- Require Cr Preece to issue a public apology for his non-compliance with the Council's resolutions, in a manner which clearly acknowledges the impact of his non-compliance, in accordance with s 262W(1)(c).
- Require Cr Preece to reimburse $810 to the Council which represents a portion of the costs incurred s 262W(1)(e).

62. In determining the provisional orders, the Panel considered that the nature and seriousness of Cr Preece's misbehaviour was of a higher level, as the Council had received and taken action on numerous complaints about Cr Preece's behaviour over a relatively short period of time.

63. The Panel noted that on all occasions, the complaints received about Cr Preece's behaviour related to public facing events or council business where Cr Preece was representing the Council in his capacity as an elected member.

64. Given this, it was particularly important that Cr Preece make the public apologies as the Council had determined should occur, under s 262C(1) of the Act. His failure to make these apologies further compounded the effect of his poor behaviour.

65. The Panel acknowledges that Cr Preece had partially complied with the Council's resolutions to some extent by undertaking the training that had formed part of these resolutions. The Panel also notes that Cr Preece stated that he "was happy to undertake it", thereby signifying that Cr Preece was of the view that his behaviour needed to be addressed in some way. It is unclear to the Panel why Cr Preece then refused to make public apologies to address his poor behaviour.

66. This was not a one-off breach. Cr Preece has been found to have committed misbehaviour on several occasions and has neither acknowledged this misbehaviour nor made a commitment to abide by the behavioural requirements that apply to council members.

67. The Panel noted that dealing with Cr Preece's misbehaviour has caused the Council to incur significant costs.

Mayor Lange's submission on the Provisional Report

68. Mayor Lange provided a submission to the Panel on 10 December 2025. This submission noted the impact on Council resources in dealing with the complaints about Cr Preece's behaviour that led to the Complaint and requested that the Panel make the following orders—

- that Cr Preece be suspended from Office for three (3) months without an allowance;
- $810 reimbursement for each of the five (5) concluded investigation reports.
- that compliance with the orders shall be undertaken within two (2) ordinary Council meetings; and
- a direction to Council to file disciplinary proceedings in the SACAT… if the orders are not complied with.

69. Mayor Lange's submission also referenced other matters relating to Cr Preece's behaviour that were being considered by the Barossa Council and the resultant impact on Council resources.

Panel consideration of Mayor Lange's submission

70. The Panel noted Mayor Lange's request for amended orders, however, the Panel considered the provisional orders as reasonable and proportionate to the Panel's findings.

71. In relation to the request from Mayor Lange that the Panel direct the Council to file disciplinary proceedings to SACAT, the Panel notes that section 262W(4) of the Act provides that if a member of a council fails to comply with an order of the Panel requiring the member to take action under subsection (1), the council is to ensure that a complaint is lodged against the member with SACAT.

72. The Panel also noted that the other matters raised by Mayor Lange were not relevant to this complaint.

Cr Preece's response to the Provisional Report

73. As noted earlier Cr Preece did not provide submissions relating to the Provisional Report as requested by the Panel (See Procedural Fairness, above).

Final Findings and Orders

74. At its meeting of 23 December 2025, the Panel considered all elements of the inquiry and determined to make its provisional findings and orders made on 16 September 2025 final without alteration.

75. The Panel's findings are therefore that Cr Preece committed misbehaviour on five occasions as detailed above (see Provisional Findings).

76. The Panel orders that—

    1. It reprimands Cr Preece, by means of a public statement, in accordance with s 262W(1)(a) of the Act.

    2. The Council is directed to pass a censure motion in respect of Cr Preece, in accordance with s 262W(1)(b) of the Act.

3. Cr Preece is required to issue public apologies in a manner which accords with the actions taken by the Council, in accordance with s 262W(1)(c) of the Act.

4. Cr Preece is required to issue a public apology in a manner determined by the Panel in accordance with s 262W(1)(c) of the Act.

5. Cr Preece is required to reimburse the Council the specified amount of $810, as a proportion of reimbursement of the costs to the Council in relation to dealing with these complaints, in accordance with section 262W(1)(e) of the Act.

77. The Panel reprimand is available at bsp.sa.gov.au/publications.

78. The apology required of Cr Preece is included in Attachment 1.

Timeframe for orders

79. Cr Preece and the Council are required to have completed the above orders within two ordinary meetings of the Council following the date of publication of this report.

80. The Panel requires written confirmation from the Council that these orders have been completed.

Final Comments from the Panel

81. The Panel considers that elected members must comply with processes undertaken by their Council to address complaints of breaches of the behavioural standards. This includes compliance with resolutions made by councils to address breaches where they have been found to have occurred. A failure to do so is not in the interests of the council or its community and is therefore properly considered as misbehaviour, as defined by 262E of the Act.

Attachment 1 — Apology

Pursuant to section 262W(1) of the *Local Government Act 1999*, the Panel requires that—

- Cr Preece reads aloud the apology in full with no additional commentary, personal statement or other amendment at a public meeting of The Barossa Council within 2 ordinary meetings of the Council following publication of the Panel's Final Report.
- The apology be recorded in full in the public minutes of the relevant meeting of the Council.

Apology to be read aloud by Cr Preece

In 2024 and 2025, The Barossa Council received numerous complaints about my behaviour at various events and meetings I attended as a representative of the Council.

The Council inquired into these complaints and found that on six occasions I had breached the behavioural standards that apply to all council members.

My breaches included behaviour that was discriminatory and lacked professionalism. I failed to act in a manner consistent with my role, and failed to establish and maintain relationships of respect, trust, collaboration and cooperation with all Council members.

On 20 May 2025, the Council resolved that I make five public apologies in relation to my behaviour within two ordinary meetings of the council. I did not comply with these Council resolutions which resulted in the referral of a complaint of misbehaviour to the Behavioural Standards Panel.

The Behavioural Standards Panel has found that I committed misbehaviour as defined by the *Local Government Act 1999* through my failure to comply with the Council's resolutions.

The Behavioural Standards Panel has ordered that I comply with the Council's resolutions by making the necessary public apologies and also make this apology for my misbehaviour.

The Behavioural Standards Panel has also ordered that I reimburse the Council $810 as a portion of the Council's costs of dealing with this matter.

The Behavioural Standards Panel has also reprimanded me by means of a public statement, published on its website.

I understand my role as a council member is to represent my community and behave in a way that meets public expectations. I acknowledge that my behaviour did not meet these expectations and I apologise unreservedly.

I also acknowledge that both dealing with the complaints made about my behaviour and the necessity to refer a complaint to the Behavioural Standards Panel due to my failure to comply with the Council's resolutions has come at significant cost to the Council and the community.

Additionally, I acknowledge that my failure to apologise for my poor behaviour compounded the effects of this behaviour, particularly on the individuals that were subject to it, and exposed the Council to reputational risk.

I therefore apologise unreservedly for my behaviour and my failure to comply with the Council's resolutions.