



MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

HELD ON

MONDAY, 21 MARCH 2011

RELEASED TO THE PUBLIC ON THURSDAY 24 MARCH 2011

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**MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE
DAREBIN CITY COUNCIL HELD AT DAREBIN CIVIC CENTRE,
350 HIGH ST, PRESTON ON MONDAY 21 MARCH 2011**

THE MEETING OPENED AT 7.05P.M.

1. PRESENT

Councillors

Cr. Diana Asmar (Mayor)
Cr. Stanley Chiang
Cr. Vince Fontana
Cr. Gaetano Greco
Cr. Nick Katsis
Cr. Tim Laurence (7.06pm)
Cr. Trent McCarthy
Cr. Ben Morgan
Cr. Steven Tsitas

Council Officers

Rasiah Dev – Chief Executive
Michael Ballock – Director City Works and Development
Daniel Freer – Director City Design and Environment
Vijaya Vaidyanath – Director Corporate and Business Services
Chris LoPiccolo – Manager City Works
Rhys Thomas – Governance and Corporate Planning Manager
Ron Downes – Council Business Coordinator

2. APOLOGIES

Nil.

3. DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Nil.

4. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

MOVED: Cr. V. Fontana
SECONDED: Cr. S. Chiang

THAT the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 7 March 2011 be confirmed as a correct record of business transacted.

CARRIED

5. REPORTS BY MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS

MINUTE NO. 75

5.1 REPORT OF CR STEVEN TSITAS

Cr Tsitas reported on his attendance at the following functions/activities:

- Council Briefing Session.
- Planning Committee meeting.
- Constituent matters, including community forum regarding the proposed Heritage Overlay for Alphington (Amendment C108).

(Cr. Laurence entered the meeting 7.06pm)

5.2 REPORT OF CR. TIM LAURENCE

Cr Laurence reported on his attendance at the following functions/activities:

- Planning Committee meeting.
- Council Briefing Session.
- Civic Welcome for International Students.
- East Reservoir Neighbourhood Renewal Steering Committee meeting.
- Speaker at the Federation of Indian Women's Association event in connection with International Women's Day.

5.3 REPORT OF CR. VINCE FONTANA

Cr. Fontana reported on his attendance at the following functions/activities:

- City of Darebin Art and History Collections Advisory Committee meeting.
- Council Briefing Session.
- Planning Committee meeting as Chair.
- Reception hosted by Co.As.It and opened by the Italian Consulate General.
- Meeting with traders from Gilbert Road/Miller Street Preston Junction.
- Preston Market and Preston Business Advisory Committee 'fun day'.
- Hosted the Santa Maria College Debutante Ball.
- Civic Welcome for International Students.

5.4 REPORT OF CR. NICK KATSIS

Cr. Katsis reported on his attendance at the following functions/activities:

- Council Briefing Session.
- Planning Committee meeting.
- Resident issues.

5.5 REPORT OF CR. STANLEY CHIANG

Cr Chiang reported on his attendance at the following functions/activities:

- Council Briefing Session.
- Victorian Multicultural Commission Gala Dinner.
- Celebration of Buddha's birth at the Bright Moon Temple.
- 2011 Melbourne Chinese Opera Festival performance by the 'Tianjin Youth Beijing Opera Troupe' at Melbourne Town Hall.

5.6 REPORT OF CR. TRENT MCCARTHY

Cr. McCarthy reported on his attendance at the following functions/activities:

- Brunswick Terminal Station Reference Group meeting
- International Women's Day event.
- Council Briefing Session.
- Darebin/Banyule Business breakfast.
- Media launch regarding Australian aid to South Sudan.
- Sports for Change Festival as Master of Ceremonies
- Various planning, traffic, and amenity issues raised by residents and traders.

5.7 REPORT OF CR. GAETANO GRECO

Cr. Greco reported on his attendance at the following functions/activities:

- Active and Healthy Ageing Strategy Launch.
- Municipal Association of Victoria Board meeting/induction.
- Migrant Heritage Pilot Project meeting.
- All Nations Football Tournament meeting.
- Civic Welcome for International Students.
- Finance Committee Phone Conference Briefing.
- CEO Performance Review Committee meeting.
- Planning Committee meeting.
- Council Briefing Session.
- Visit to Leamington Street Reservoir Public Recreation Area.
- Resident issues.

5.8 REPORT OF CR. BEN MORGAN

Cr. Morgan reported on his attendance at the following functions/activities:

- Council Briefing Session.
- Resident matters, particularly planning issues.

5.9 REPORT OF THE MAYOR, CR. ASMAR

The Mayor, Cr. Asmar, reported on her attendance at the following functions/activities:

- Bike and Scooter Ride 2 school 'hands-up' challenge - Fairfield Primary School.
- Civic Welcome for International Students.
- CEO Performance Review Committee meeting.
- Citizenship Ceremony.
- Council Briefing Session.
- Darebin/Banyule Business Breakfast.
- International Women's Day Reception.
- Darebin International Women's Day for Staff.
- Active and Healthy Ageing Strategy Launch.
- Women's Health in the North film for International Women's Day.
- Raleigh Street Thornbury Kindergarten meeting.
- Telstra Northcote Exchange Official Launch.
- International Women's Day Committee community event.
- City of Darebin Art and History Collections Advisory Committee meeting.
- Launch of E-Business capacity program.
- Resident issues.

6. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

MINUTE NO. 76

The Mayor, Cr. Asmar, invited questions from members of the public gallery:

The following questions were submitted:

- Rob Burgess of Alphington asked a three-part question regarding the proposed Heritage Overlay for Alphington (Amendment C108). The question was responded to by the Mayor Cr. Asmar and the Director City Works and Development, Michael Ballock.
- Mary Soumbasis of Preston asked a question about the impact of the proposed Bell City Development. The question was responded to by the Mayor Cr Asmar.

After Public Question Time had concluded, no further questions were submitted in writing.

7. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

7.1 AUDIT COMMITTEE

MINUTE NO. 77

The Audit Committee is an Advisory Committee appointed, pursuant to section 139 of the Local Government Act 1989, to assist Council in fulfilling its responsibilities relating to internal control mechanisms and external reporting requirements.

Meetings of the Audit Committee were held on 22 November 2010 and 1 March 2011. A summary report of each meeting is attached as **Appendices A and B** to this report. The minutes of the meetings, incorporating the reports considered by the Committee, have been circulated to Councillors.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

MOVED: Cr. G. Greco
SECONDED: Cr. T. McCarthy

THAT the Reports of the Audit Committee meetings held on 22 November 2010 and 1 March 2011 be received and the Committee Recommendations be adopted.

CARRIED

8. RECORDS OF ASSEMBLIES OF COUNCILLORS**8.1 ASSEMBLIES OF COUNCILLORS HELD****MINUTE NO. 78**

An Assembly of Councillors is defined in section 76AA of the *Local Government Act 1989* to include Advisory Committees of Council if at least one Councillor is present or, a planned or scheduled meeting attended by at least half of the Councillors and one Council Officer that considers matters intended or likely to be the subject of a council decision.

Written records of Assemblies of Councillors must be kept and include the names of all Councillors and members of Council staff attending, the matters considered, any conflict of interest disclosures made by a Councillor attending, and whether a Councillor who has disclosed a conflict of interest leaves the assembly.

Pursuant to section 80A (2) of the Act, these records must be, as soon as practicable, reported at an ordinary meeting of the Council and incorporated in the minutes of that meeting.

An Assembly of Councillors record was kept for:

- City of Darebin Art and History Collections Advisory Committee meeting – 9 March 2011
- Council Briefing Session – 15 March 2011

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

MOVED: Cr. V. Fontana
SECONDED: Cr. S. Chiang

THAT the records of Assemblies of Councillors held on 9 and 15 March 2011 be noted and incorporated in the minutes of this meeting.

CARRIED



ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS PUBLIC RECORD

ASSEMBLY DETAILS:	Title:	City of Darebin Art and History Collections Advisory Committee meeting
	Date:	Wednesday 9 March 2011
	Location:	Conference Room, Darebin Civic Centre
PRESENT:	Councillors:	(Mayor) Diana Asmar, Cr Vince Fontana
	Council Staff:	Daniel Freer, Jacqueline Healy
	Other:	Representative from Preston Historical Society, Artist
APOLOGIES:		Nil

The Assembly commenced at 5pm

MATTERS CONSIDERED		DISCLOSURES AND COMMENTS
1.	Collection Management Report on cataloguing the collection, catalogue on line for general public and installation art collection.	No disclosures were made
2.	Report on Gift to the collection of an Artwork.	No disclosures were made
3.	Report on proposed Acquisitions for the City of Darebin art and history collection	No disclosures were made

The Assembly concluded at 6.15pm

RECORD COMPLETED BY:	Officer Name:	Jacqueline Healy
	Officer Title:	Director, Bundoora Homestead Art Centre



ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS PUBLIC RECORD

ASSEMBLY DETAILS:	Title:	Council Briefing Session
	Date:	Tuesday, 15 March 2011
	Location:	Conference Room, Darebin Civic Centre
PRESENT:	Councillors:	Cr Diana Asmar (Mayor), Cr Vince Fontana, Cr Gaetano Greco, Cr Ben Morgan, Cr Trent McCarthy, Cr Stanley Chiang, Cr Steven Tsitas, Cr Nick Katsis, Cr Tim Laurence (7.20pm)
	Council Staff:	Rasiah Dev, Michael Ballock, Daniel Freer, Vijaya Vaidyanath Chris Lo Piccolo
	Other:	Representatives of VicRoads (for the first 15 minutes)
APOLOGIES:		Nil

The Assembly commenced at 7.05pm

MATTERS CONSIDERED		DISCLOSURES AND COMMENTS
1	Chandler Highway Bridge – Presentation by VicRoads	No disclosures were made
2	Implementation of the Clean Air Strategy, Investigation on the potential of smoke reduction devices available and rebate opportunities for replacement of wood heaters	No disclosures were made
3	Amendment to Development Plan 205-215 Bell Street, Preston	No disclosures were made
4	Landfill Tipping Contract (Confidential paper)	No disclosures were made
5	Bundoora Dam	No disclosures were made
6	Darebin Meals Kitchen	No disclosures were made

ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS – PUBLIC RECORD (CONT)

MATTERS CONSIDERED		DISCLOSURES AND COMMENTS
7	Clinic with Community	No disclosures were made
8	Councillor Weekend Workshop	No disclosures were made
9	Signature Projects	No disclosures were made

Cr Nick Katsis left at 8.40pm

Cr Stanley Chiang, Cr Vince Fontana and Cr Morgan left at 9.05pm

The Assembly concluded at 9.45pm

RECORD COMPLETED BY:	Officer Name:	Vijaya Vaidyanath
	Officer Title:	Director Corporate and Business Services

9. CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS

9.1 FINANCIAL REPORT – 8 MONTHS ENDED 28 FEBRUARY 2011

MINUTE NO. 79

AUTHOR: Financial Accountant – Michael O’Riordan

REVIEWED BY: Director Corporate and Business Services – Vijaya Vaidyanath

SUMMARY:

A comprehensive mid-year financial review has been undertaken for the eight months ended 28 February 2011 to assess the financial performance of Council year-to-date. The outcome of the review indicates that Council has achieved a year-to-date operating surplus of \$34.7 million, which is \$7.5 million ahead of budget and capital works expenditure of \$15.2 million, which is \$7.1 million behind the budget. All material variations have been explained in the report.

CONSULTATION:

Managers and Coordinators.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

MOVED: Cr. G. Greco
SECONDED: Cr. V. Fontana

THAT the contents of the “Financial Report for the eight months ended 28 February 2011” included as **Appendix A** to this report be received and the year-to-date actual and budget operating and capital results be noted.

CARRIED

REPORT

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Under the *Local Government Act 1989*, at least every three months the Chief Executive Officer is required to present to the Council a statement comparing the budgeted with the actual revenues and expenses for the financial year to date. In complying with the Act, the attached report (**Appendix A**) compares the actual and budgeted operating revenues and expenses and the actual and budgeted capital revenues and expenses for the eight months ended 28 February 2011. It also compares the actual and budgeted movements in the Balance Sheet and Cash Flow Statement for that period.

ISSUES AND DISCUSSION

Operating Performance

The Operating Performance for the eight months ended 28 February 2011 is an operating surplus before capital revenue and other items of \$32.9 million, which is \$7.1 million ahead of budget. The main items contributing to this favorable variance are contributions, operating and capital grants, material and services and depreciation partly offset by unfavorable variances in user fees and parking fines. After capital and other items, the operating surplus is \$34.7 million, which is \$7.5 million ahead of budget.

Capital Performance

The Capital Performance for the eight months ended 28 February 2011 shows that a total of \$15.2 million has been expended on the capital works program, which is \$7.1 million behind the budget. The variance is due mainly to timing differences on the road, drainage and open space works projects and purchase of plant and equipment.

Financial Position

The Financial Position as at 28 February 2011 shows a cash balance of \$45.1 million which is \$17.1 million ahead of budget. The variance is due mainly to the higher opening cash position compared with budget and timing differences in receipts from customers, payments to suppliers and employees, purchase of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment, interest and government receipts. The net current asset position is \$54.6 million which is \$15.8 million more than budget. The variance is due mainly to the higher cash position, lower trade and other receivables and lower trade and other payables compared with budget. The net asset position is \$955.5 million, which is \$9.8 million ahead of budget.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Environmental Sustainability

Nil.

Social Inclusion and Diversity

Nil.

Other

Nil.

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Nil

CONCLUSION

The Financial Report for the eight months ended 28 February 2011 shows that Council's year-to-date operating result is a surplus of \$34.7 million and \$15.2 million has been expended on capital works.

FUTURE ACTIONS

A further financial report will be presented to Council for the nine months ending 31 March 2011.

DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Section 80C of the Local Government Act 1989 requires members of Council staff and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council to disclose any direct or indirect interest in a matter to which the advice relates.

The Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Nil.

9.2 TRAFFIC ISSUES – AREA BETWEEN MERRI PARADE AND CHARLES STREET NORTHCOTE AND EPPING TRAIN LINE**MINUTE NO. 80****AUTHOR: Transport Engineer – Daniel Neave****REVIEWED BY: Director City Works and Development – Michael Ballock****SUMMARY:**

At its meeting on 7 June 2010, Council resolved:

“That officers prepare a pro-active plan for traffic calming measures for the area between Merri Parade and Charles Street Northcote and the Epping Train Line.”

A report was submitted at Council’s meeting on 4 October 2010 with the following recommendation:

- *“50 km/h speed signs be installed on Charles Street.*
- *The proposed threshold treatments for the intersections of South Park Street, Union Street and Bridge Street Northcote are referred to the 2011/2012 Capital Works Program for consideration by Council”*

Council resolved at its meeting on 4 October 2010:

“That the item be deferred to allow for consultation with local residents.”

In October 2010 a public opinion survey was sent to the residents in the subject area with three questions:

- Would you support Council installing threshold treatments?
- Do you believe the current parking management is appropriate?
- Would you like to attend a meeting chaired by your Councillors?

On 9 December 2010 a community meeting was held at Northcote Town Hall with 17 residents, Councillors Diana Asmar and Trent McCarthy, and Council officers in attendance.

Further investigations have been undertaken and it is proposed to continue with introducing threshold treatments as well as one lane slow points and improved connections to the train station. These traffic management treatments will be put forward to the 2011/2012 Capital Program for consideration.

CONSULTATION:

Residents

RECOMMENDATION**THAT:**

- (1) 50 km/hr speed signs be installed in Charles Street Northcote.
- (2) The 'Not So Fast' speed education program be undertaken in Charles Street Northcote.
- (3) Traffic management treatments be referred to the future 2011/2012 Capital Program for consideration by Council (bicycle lanes in Charles Street, threshold treatments, one lane slow points, railway station access improvements).
- (4) The residents within the study area be informed of the outcome of the public opinion survey.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

MOVED: Cr. T. McCarthy
SECONDED: Cr. S. Tsitas

THAT:

- (1) 50 km/hr speed signs be installed in Charles Street Northcote.
- (2) The 'Not So Fast' speed education program be undertaken in Charles Street Northcote.
- (3) Traffic management treatments be referred to the future 2011/2012 Capital Program for consideration by Council (bicycle lanes in Charles Street, threshold treatments, one lane slow points, railway station access improvements).
- (4) The residents within the study area be informed of the outcome of the public opinion survey.
- (5) Further consultation be undertaken regarding the proposal to remove the existing partial road closure in Union Street at Merri Parade.

CARRIED

REPORT

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND



Figure 1. Aerial photo showing study area.

---> Train Replacement Bus Route

Road Hierarchy

Merri Parade in Northcote is a declared main road, therefore VicRoads is responsible for the management of the carriageway. Merri Parade carries significant volumes of traffic as it links St Georges Road to Hoddle Street via High Street.

Charles Street acts as a local collector road as it carries traffic from the arterial road of St Georges Road to the local street network in this part of Northcote, including High Street.

Bridge Street, Union Street, Park Street and South Park Street are local roads with low speeds and volumes.

The following table shows the recently collected traffic data in the study area.

Street	Year of survey	Volume (vehicles per day)	85 th percentile Speed ¹ (km/h)	Speed limit (km/h)
Merri Parade	2010	17,999	55.8	60
Charles Street	2010	3,743	54.7	50
Bridge Street	2010	186	45.8	50
Union Street	2010	155	31.7	50
South Park Street (at Charles Street)	2010	644	44.7	50
South Park Street (at Merri Parade)	2010	464	40.9	50

Note:

¹ 85th percentile speed is used to determine the speed of majority of motorists as it is known that a minority of the motoring public deliberately disobey speed limits

Parking controls

Union Street, Park Street and South Park Street currently do not have any time restricted parking in place.

Bridge Street on both sides of the road has two hour (2P) parking from 8am to 5pm, Monday to Friday and one-hour (1P) parking from 5.00pm to 11.30pm, Thursday to Sunday.

Charles Street has permit only parking from 5.00pm to 11.30pm, Friday to Sunday on the north side in front of properties 13 to 49 and on the south side in front of properties 12 to 26 and 46 to 56.

Merri Parade has a solid centre line marking which does not allow for parking at any time because there would be less than three metres between a parked car and the solid centre line.

Adjacent to 28 Union Street in South Park Street there is a parking space for people with a disability.

There does not seem to be a parking demand issue in the study area at this time.

Parking enforcement

Parking enforcement is undertaken on a daily basis in this area with only 12 infringement notices issued in 2010.

Public Transport

The area of study lies adjacent to the Merri Railway Station. When the trains are not in operation, the train replacement bus service travels east along Charles Street, turns right into South Park Street, then right into Bridge Street, and right into Merri Parade to rejoin St Georges Road.

In addition, Bus Route 506 travels along Merri Parade, which is also within the area of study.

It is important to note that many traffic calming measures are often not favoured by bus operators due to the added difficulty for bus manoeuvrability and passenger discomfort.

ISSUES AND DISCUSSION

Traffic Volume

Local roads like Bridge Street, Union Street and South Park Street are expected to carry up to 2,000 vehicles per day. Union Street is carrying approximately 155 vehicles per day and South Park Street is carrying approximately 644 vehicles per day. It is highly unlikely that volumes of traffic along these local roads would become excessive in the near future.

Charles Street, being a local collector, is expected to carry up to 6,000 vehicles per day as it forms a link between St Georges Road and High Street. At the moment it is carrying approximately 3,743 vehicles per day, which is within expectation.

The recent project by VicRoads to remove a roundabout and install a signalised intersection at the intersection of St Georges Road, Merri Parade and Charles Street generated community concern with traffic seeking alternative routes to avoid the new signalised intersection. During the construction period these concerns peaked, and since the treatment was finalised, there have been several concerns raised to Council.

Traffic counts were taken before and after the works at the new signalised intersection in the surrounding local street network. Traffic volumes on Park Street and South Park Street remained unchanged while traffic volumes on Charles Street reduced by 12%.

Traffic Speed

The speed of traffic along Bridge Street and Union Street is low due to the short length of carriageway. South Park Street has natural traffic calming devices at the bend in the road at Union Street and the road narrowing at the south end.

The two requests raised with Council since the completion of the project at St Georges Road and Merri Parade identified 'rat-running' traffic and careless driving by failing to give way and driving aggressively.

The traffic count recently taken in Charles Street shows a 85th percentile speed of 54.7 km/h. As this is higher than the default speed limit of 50 km/h, Council will undertake the *Not So Fast* speed education program to educate motorists who use this road, that the default speed limit of 50 km/h applies at all times. This has proven successful elsewhere in reducing speeds in the first instance. In addition, 50 km/hr speed signs will be installed as some drivers may not appreciate that this is a local road given that it is wider than standard local roads.

Parking

Charles Street and Bridge Street have permit zones and time restrictions (respectively) in place which give residents in these areas the eligibility to apply for a parking permit to park for an unlimited time. If any over-spill parking from a new development was to eventuate, it is likely that Union Street, Park Street and South Park Street would have a high parking demand as these streets do not have any residential parking schemes in place.

Existing Traffic Controls and Treatments

The existing traffic control signs and lines in the traffic control area were inspected and found to be in good condition.

There is an existing traffic management treatment (partial road closure) at the west end of Union Street at Merri Parade restricting vehicle access onto Merri Parade.

Public Opinion Survey

A public opinion survey (29% response rate) was undertaken in October 2010 with the following results:

- Would you support Council installing threshold treatments? 89% support
- Do you believe the current parking management is appropriate? 47% agree
- Would you like to attend a meeting chaired by your Councillors? 53% would

The feedback from the public opinion survey was in favour of Council's proposal to introduce threshold treatments and residents also indicated that they would like more done.

Parking management was seen as appropriate for current conditions, but residents raised concerns about future parking conditions after the completion of the development.

Community meeting discussion points

At the community meeting on 9 December 2010 the following issues were raised:

Local Traffic Only roads

The installation of Local Traffic Only signs is inexpensive and unlikely to be monitored for compliance.

Reduce speed limits to 40km/h

VicRoads has advised that a speed limit reduction to 40km/h will not be approved unless it is adjacent to a school or in a strip shopping centre.

Reduce width of Charles Street

The reduction in carriageway width will assist with controlling vehicle speeds whilst giving motorists the indication that they are in a local area, and not a preferred traffic route. The introduction of a median will inhibit access to the angle parking on the south side. We are unable to introduce angle parking on the north side as the street has insufficient width. Charles Street does have sufficient width for bike lanes which would reduce carriageway width whilst retaining existing traffic and parking provisions.

Pedestrian Operated Signals on Merri Parade

Council has previously investigated this option without success. Officers are currently working on the feasibility of an informal pedestrian crossing on Merri Parade near Union Street.

Pedestrian fencing along rail line

VicTrack and the rail operator (Metro) are responsible for the infrastructure on rail land. This issue will be forwarded to them.

Safety at the intersection of Charles Street and South Park Street

With the proposed threshold treatments, there will also be intersection remodelling to tighten turning circles to reduce the speed of vehicles and improve the general road safety at these locations.

Development traffic forced onto Merri Parade

The process required to close a road is lengthy and can cause concerns for emergency vehicles and Council's collections vehicles. As an alternative, Officers recommend one lane slow points set back into Bridge Street and Union Street which provide access for locals and may discourage non-local traffic.

Intersection of Union Street and South Park Street to be safer for train users

The intersection does require significant improvement works to improve traffic management and pedestrian amenity. This item will need some concept planning and referral to the Capital Works program (approximately \$40,000).

Roundabout at Bridge Street and South Park Street

This is not supported by officers due to the narrow carriageway available and roundabouts provide priority to vehicles and not pedestrians going to/coming from the train.

Pedestrian access within the subject area

The majority of kerb ramps in the area are not compliant with current standards. As there is little room between the carriageway and property boundaries, providing for the correct gradient of ramps is challenging. To overcome these challenges it is necessary to realign the kerb (reduce road space). Any future works undertaken within the study area will ensure that pedestrian access meets current standards. This item will be referred to the Capital Works Program.

Bicycle access to the train station

Any works undertaken near the train station will be designed to cater for all road users, especially pedestrians and cyclists.

Resident only parking restrictions

Resident only parking restrictions do not make the most of the community asset that is on-street parking. Residents of the new development will not be eligible for parking permits, therefore time restricted parking will cater for existing residents as they are eligible for a permit to park for an unlimited time, and their visitors can also park for short visits. The majority of residents (47%) responded in the survey that the current parking management arrangement is adequate. As such, parking restrictions are not likely to be supported by the majority of residents.

Threshold treatments may cause some people to wrongly assume priority

Council has sought professional legal advice on threshold treatments and has been advised that there is little risk from this occurring.

Proposed traffic management treatmentsThreshold treatments

To ensure motorists realise that South Park Street, Union Street and Bridge Street are local residential roads, installation of threshold treatments at intersections can be implemented to help differentiate them from arterial roads such as Merri Parade. Additional benefits include reducing speeds at intersections and providing an improved facility for pedestrians. The intersection of Union Street with Merri Parade is in a flood zone, therefore no raised treatment will be installed at this location. This item will be referred to the Capital Works program.

One lane slow points

Between the new development and existing residential properties, it is proposed to install a one lane slow point on Bridge Street and Union Street. This will provide a visual barrier between existing residents and future residents whilst still retaining all vehicle movements. This item will be referred to the Capital Works program.

Removal of existing treatment in Union Street at Merri Parade

The existing partial road closure in Union Street at Merri Parade is proposed to be removed to minimise traffic from future development being forced onto South Park Street.

Intersection remodel of Bridge Street and South Park Street

Access to Merri Train Station is far from ideal and to cater for pedestrians and cyclists, significant changes need to occur. The site is constrained by private property, so it is proposed to raise the entire intersection which provides accessible links to public transport and promotes a lower speed environment for vehicles. This item will be referred to the Capital Works program.

Bicycle lanes on Charles Street

To narrow the available carriageway and to give motorists the impression of a local environment, it is proposed to install bicycle lanes in Charles Street. This item will be referred to the Capital Works program.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS**Environmental Sustainability**

There are no environmental sustainability issues.

Social Inclusion and Diversity

The higher than acceptable speeds on Charles Street can deter pedestrians and cyclists from using it and become a barrier to the local community. The high volume of traffic on Merri Parade is a significant barrier for these residents to access local amenities.

Other

This report has considered the *Darebin Transport Strategy 2007-2027*.

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Up to this point the project has cost under \$1,000 for traffic surveys out of the existing operational budget.

The following will be referred to the future 2011/2012 Capital Program for consideration:

- Threshold treatments - \$20,000 each
- One-lane slow points - \$10,000 each
- Intersection of Bridge Street and South Park Street - \$40,000
- Bike lanes on Charles Street - \$2,000.

The above costs are an approximate.

CONCLUSION

A number of actions detailed in the Recommendation are warranted to address traffic issues in the subject area of Charles Street Northcote.

FUTURE ACTIONS

- (1) Install 50 km/hr speed signs on Charles Street Northcote.
- (2) 'Not So Fast' speed education program be undertaken in Charles Street Northcote.
- (3) Submit an application to the future 2011/2012 Capital Program for traffic management treatments in the subject area.
- (4) Inform residents within the study area of the outcome of the public opinion survey.

DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Section 80C of the *Local Government Act 1989 (Vic)* requires members of Council staff and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council to disclose any direct or indirect interest in a matter to which the advice relates.

The Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Council Minutes – 7 June 2010 and 4 October 2010.

**9.3 WALKER STREET NORTHCOTE – PARKING AND TRAFFIC
MINUTE NO. 81**

AUTHOR: Transport Engineer – Daniel Neave

REVIEWED BY: Director City Works and Development – Michael Ballock

SUMMARY:

Requests have been made to Council indicating parking and traffic accessibility issues in Walker Street Northcote, east of Ross Street.

A community meeting was held regarding the matter on 8 December 2010 with twelve residents, Councillor Diana Asmar and Councillor Trent McCarthy, and Council Officers in attendance.

A public opinion survey was carried out in early 2011 requesting residents to comment on indented parking, widening vehicle crossings, and residential parking permit scheme, with ten responses received (19% response rate).

As vehicle access is the main issue and not parking capacity, it is proposed that Darebin Council offer a reasonable priced service to bring into line the vehicle crossings to current standards, ensuring that residents of Walker Street have accessible vehicle crossings.

CONSULTATION:

Residents of Walker Street Northcote.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

MOVED: Cr. T. McCarthy

SECONDED: Cr. S. Tsitas

THAT:

- (1) Council write to residents of Walker Street offering to upgrade vehicle crossings in Walker Street Northcote, east of Ross Street, at cost to the resident.
- (2) The installation of a turning head at the east end of Walker Street Northcote and the potential indented parking bays be referred to the future Capital Program.

CARRIED

REPORT**INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

Walker Street Northcote east of Ross Street, only provides access to residents living adjacent to this part of Merri Creek as the roads do not provide for through access.



Figure 1. Subject location

Walker Street, east of Ross Street, has a carriageway width of six metres which allows for parking on one side of the road and a traffic lane. Parking demand in the street is inconsistent as issues arise during local events (house parties) where people who are not familiar with the area park in a manner which restricts access to private property.

As the roads in this part of Northcote were formalised in the early 1940s, vehicle crossings from the carriageway into private property were designed for vehicles smaller than the current standards. In instances where on-street parking is close to the vehicle crossings, there is insufficient room for residents to gain access to their off-street parking facilities.

The following photo shows an example of this.



Figure 2. Legally parked vehicles creating access issues.

VicRoads CrashStats database has no recorded casualty crashes in the subject area.

ISSUES AND DISCUSSION

A community meeting was held on 8 December 2010 with consensus reached on three issues:

- Do not widen road
- Investigate indented parking
- Investigate parking restrictions.

Widen Walker Street

The widening of Walker Street was not supported by residents at the community meeting. This option is not favoured by Council as Darebin's Transport Strategy.

The cost of widening Walker Street is approximately \$100,000 and is not a feasible option.

Indented parking bays

To improve access to vehicle crossings, residents at the community meeting requested investigation into indented parking bays. Indented parking may assist as on-street parked vehicles will be further from the vehicle crossing, which would provide for improve turning circles. The supply of on-street parking spaces will be reduced with the introduction of indented parking. Residents are in support for this option with 100% of residents responding positively to the public opinion survey.

The cost of indenting parking in Walker Street is approximately \$52,000 and is not seen as a high priority compared to other parking matters in Darebin.

Widening of vehicle crossings

During the community meeting on 8 December 2010, the most common theme mentioned was access to private property. The private vehicle crossings are not in line with current standards as the majority are 2.4 metres in width and are not splayed. Darebin Council's current standard is 3.0 metres in width at the footpath, splaying out 1.0 metre on each side to the carriageway showing an opening of 5.0 metres in width. Therefore the difference between existing conditions and current standards is that vehicle crossings are half as wide at the carriageway. This narrow width at the carriageway does not provide for vehicle turning circles, especially when contending with on-street parking.

To address the vehicle access issues in Walker Street it is proposed that Council upgrade the vehicle crossings at cost to the resident. Of the eleven vehicle crossings in the subject area, only three are in line with current standards. The public opinion survey indicated 60% support for this.

The cost of contributing to widen the vehicle crossings in Walker Street is approximately \$3,000 each.

Parking restrictions

To reduce the impact that parking has on accessibility of Walker Street, Darebin Council is able to introduce a time restriction which would reduce the numbers of parked vehicles, or introduce No Stopping parking controls to completely remove parked vehicles. Residents were asked to vote on introducing parking restrictions with 30% agreeing. As there is a lack of community support, it is not recommended to introduce parking controls.

Turning head

Vehicles entering Walker Street east of Short Street are currently unable to make a turn to return back out of the street without using private vehicle crossings. This is not unusual in many streets in Darebin. If Darebin Council undertakes any Capital Works in Walker Street, it is necessary to install a turning head before the entrance to The Parade (private property) to ensure our collection vehicles are able to efficiently operate. These works are expected to cost in the order of \$21,000.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Environmental Sustainability

The reduction of nature strip will have minor impacts to environmental sustainability.

Social Inclusion and Diversity

A safe and useable road network gives residents the opportunity to interact positively to the area.

Other

This report has considered the *Darebin Transport Strategy 2007-2027*.

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The cost of a turning head is approximately \$21,000 and will be referred to future Capital Programs.

CONCLUSION

Vehicle access issues in Walker Street Northcote warrant action being taken as proposed in the Recommendation.

FUTURE ACTIONS

- (1) Council write to residents of Walker Street offering to upgrade vehicle crossings in Walker Street Northcote, east of Ross Street, at cost to the resident.
- (2) Refer the installation of a turning head at the east end of Walker Street Northcote and the potential indented parking bays to the future Capital Program.

DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Section 80C of the *Local Government Act 1989 (Vic)* requires members of Council staff and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council to disclose any direct or indirect interest in a matter to which the advice relates.

The Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Nil.

9.4 PEDESTRIAN FATALITIES AND INJURIES IN DAREBIN**MINUTE NO. 82****AUTHOR:** Senior Transport Planner – Daniel Neave**REVIEWED BY:** Director City Works and Development – Michael Ballock**SUMMARY:**

At its meeting on 7 February 2011, Council resolved as follows under “General Business”:

“Council receive a report on the number of pedestrian injuries and fatalities over the past 10 years in the City of Darebin”

From 1 January 2000 to 31 December 2009 (the last ten years of data available) there were 587 reported crashes involving pedestrians within Darebin.

CONSULTATION:

Nil.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council note this report regarding the number of pedestrian injuries and fatalities over the past 10 years in the City of Darebin.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION**MOVED:** Cr. T. McCarthy**SECONDED:** Cr. G. Greco**THAT** Council:

- (1) Note the report and express dismay at the unacceptable level of pedestrian injuries and fatalities in Darebin over the past decade.
- (2) Officers prepare a further report for Council on:
 - a) The possibility of increasing the number of Darebin’s streets with a 40 km/hr speed restriction, particularly around land uses attracting vulnerable pedestrians such as child care centres, kindergartens and aged care facilities.
 - b) The current Police resources provided to target ‘hoon driving’ and speeding activity in the Darebin area.

CARRIED

REPORT

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

At its meeting on 7 February 2011, Council resolved as follows under "General Business":

"Council receive a report on the number of pedestrian injuries and fatalities over the past 10 years in the City of Darebin"

From 1 January 2000 to 31 December 2009 (the last ten years of data available) there were 587 reported crashes involving pedestrians within Darebin.

The following figure shows that the majority of crashes occur on the arterial road network managed by VicRoads and also some Council roads such as High Street.

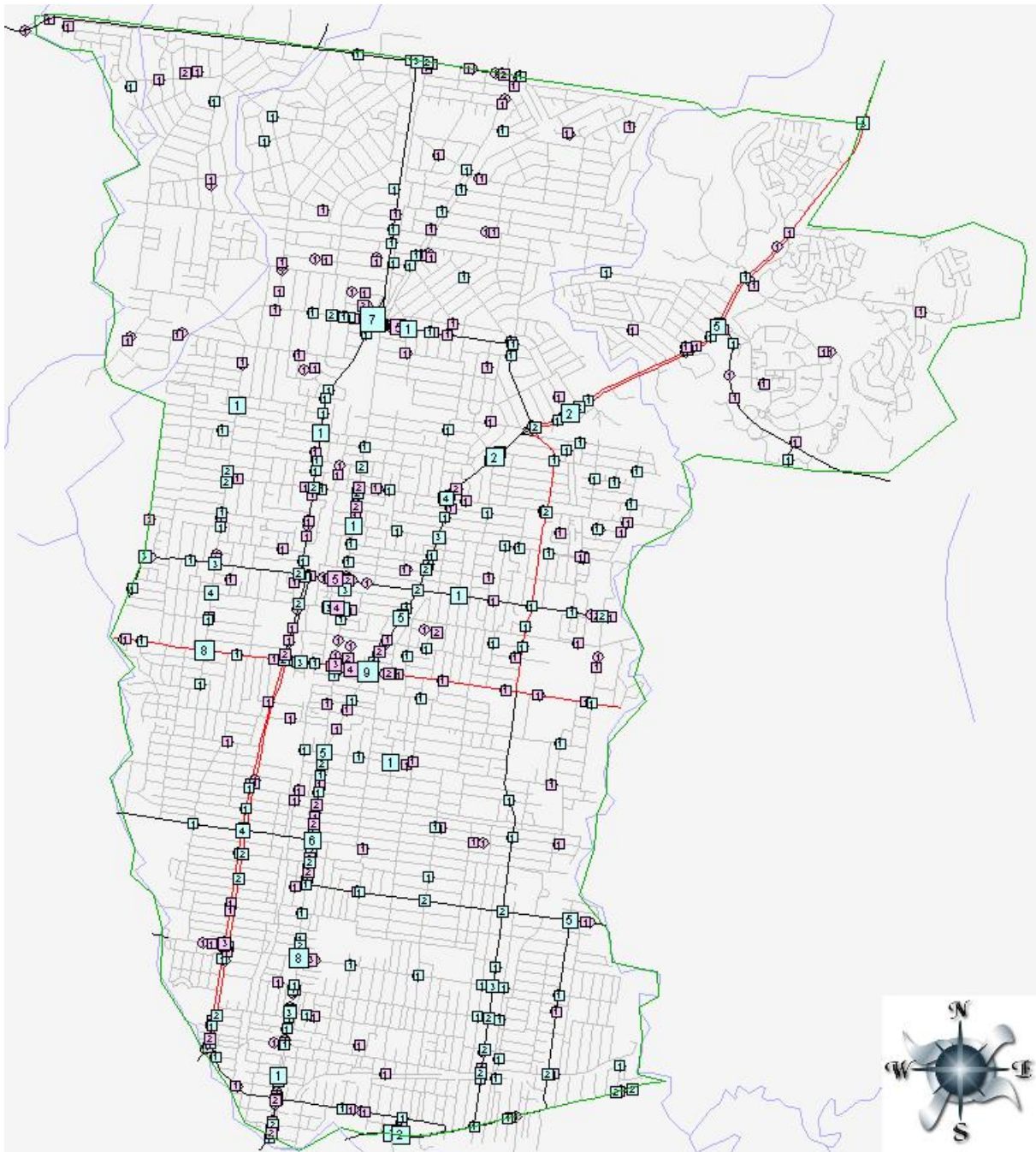


Figure 1. Map of reported pedestrian fatalities and injuries in Darebin (VicRoads CrashStats) (Numbers represent number of incidents)

ISSUES AND DISCUSSION

Fatalities

Over this ten year period, there have been 22 pedestrian fatal crashes, with 16 on VicRoads managed roads and 6 on Darebin managed roads. There was no instance of two or more crashes at the one location.

Serious and Minor Injuries

There were 565 injury crashes over the 10 year period, with 249 serious injury and 316 minor injury crashes. This demonstrates that if a pedestrian is involved in a crash, that the likelihood is that the severity is high due to their vulnerability.

Comparison with Moreland

Over the same ten year period, there were 643 crashes in the City of Moreland where a pedestrian was killed or injured.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS**Environmental Sustainability**

There are no environmental sustainability issues.

Social Inclusion and Diversity

There are no social inclusion and diversity issues.

Other

This report has considered the *Darebin Transport Strategy 2007-2027*.

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

CONCLUSION

It is recommended that this report on the number of pedestrian injuries and fatalities over the 10 years in the City of Darebin be noted.

FUTURE ACTIONS

Implement the actions from the Safe Travel Strategy.

DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Section 80C of the *Local Government Act 1989 (Vic)* requires members of Council staff and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council to disclose any direct or indirect interest in a matter to which the advice relates.

The Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Council Minutes – 7 February 2011

9.5 IMPLEMENTATION OF CLEAN AIR STRATEGY, AND INVESTIGATION ON THE POTENTIAL OF SMOKE REDUCTION DEVICES AVAILABLE AND REBATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR REPLACEMENT OF WOOD HEATERS

MINUTE NO. 83

AUTHOR: Manager Economic Development and Employment, Eddy Boscarol

REVIEWED BY: Director Corporate & Business Services, Vijaya Vaidyanath

SUMMARY:

This report is a review of the implementation of the clean air strategy which includes advocacy, education and enforcement actions, and an investigation on the potential of smoke reduction devices available and rebate opportunities for replacement of wood heaters.

CONSULTATION:

Compliance and Amenity Unit
Transport Management and Planning Unit
Environmental Strategy Unit
Environment Protection Authority
Yarra City Council
Moreland City Council
Armidale Dumaresq Council, NSW
University of New England, Armidale
SmartBurn Pty Ltd Australia

RECOMMENDATION

THAT:

- (1) Council note this report regarding the implementation of Darebin's clean air strategy and investigation of smoke reduction devices available and rebate opportunities for replacement of wood heaters.
- (2) Council officers develop a Community Education Campaign to complement its enforcement actions, including media release, media article, flyer, and educational visits for revisited complaints.

MOTION

MOVED: Cr. T. McCarthy
SECONDED: Cr. -

THAT:

- (1) Council note this report regarding the implementation of Darebin's clean air strategy and investigation of smoke reduction devices available and rebate opportunities for replacement of wood heaters.
- (2) Council officers develop a Community Education Campaign to complement its enforcement actions, including media release, media article, flyer, and educational visits for revisited complaints.

THE MOTION LAPSED FOR WANT OF A SECONDER

FURTHER MOTION

MOVED: Cr. S. Tsitas
SECONDED: Cr. S. Chiang

THAT the report be received and noted.

THE FURTHER MOTION WAS PUT AND CARRIED AND BECAME THE COUNCIL RESOLUTION AS FOLLOWS:

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

MOVED: Cr. S. Tsitas
SECONDED: Cr. S. Chiang

THAT the report be received and noted.
:

CARRIED

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This report is in response to previous Council resolutions listed below:

- Council receive a report in 12 months time on implementation of the clean air strategy and any issues arising.
- Council receive a report on the investigation of the potential of smoke reduction devices available and also rebate opportunities for replacement of wood heaters.

ISSUES AND DISCUSSION

THE CLEAN AIR STRATEGY

Air pollution pervades every major city of the world, Metropolitan Melbourne is fortunate compared with many other cities of comparable size – our geography, climate, relative absence of heavy industry and dispersed population mean that air quality is good most of the time. Air quality in Victoria is primarily governed by State Environment Protection Policies (SEPPs) under the Environment Protection Act 1970 enforced by the Environment Protection Authority (EPA).

The current State Environment Protection Policy (Ambient Air Quality) sets objectives for the protection of human health, for six common pollutants: carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide, lead, ozone and particles. Particulates and ozone are the two common pollutants of most concern in the Melbourne metropolitan area. The other four common pollutants are consistently below SEPP guidelines in Melbourne. The most significant air quality pressure, in Melbourne in terms of gross tonnage of pollutant per annum, is the burning of fossil fuel by motor vehicles leading to the release of carbon monoxide and other greenhouse gases that trap heat in the Earth's atmosphere.

Particulates or airborne particles are emitted from motor vehicles (especially diesel and poorly maintained engines), wood combustion, industry and also arise naturally from wind-blown dust, pollen and bushfires. Particles can affect human health aggravating or contributing to throat, eye and respiratory problems.

Ozone is the main ingredient of summer smog. Ozone occurs naturally in the Earth's upper atmosphere (about 16 to 48 kilometres above the Earth's surface) where it shields us from the sun's harmful ultraviolet rays. In the Earth's lower atmosphere, near ground level, ozone is formed when pollutants emitted by cars, power plants, industrial boilers, refineries, and other sources react chemically in the presence of sunlight. Even at low levels ozone can cause a number of respiratory effects. Ozone can irritate respiratory systems and aggravate asthma and other chronic lung diseases.

The main contributor to ozone is motor vehicles, particularly during short trips when the engine is cold. Ozone pollution is of particular concern during the summer months due to weather conditions. Bushfires also contribute to elevated levels of ozone concentration in the air.

Air quality in Melbourne has improved over time. This is due to a range of initiatives including cleaner motor vehicles, tighter controls on industrial emissions, cleaner wood heaters, greater enforcement and education by local government and the banning of back yard incineration.

Tobacco smoking is a highly localised air pollution issue which affects people in immediate or contained areas and for this reason is not commonly included in air pollution issues.

At a local level industrial outputs including Environment Protection Authority (EPA), licensed premises are controlled by the Environment Protection Act 1970.

Darebin's Climate Change Action plans seek to reduce emission of greenhouse gases within Darebin and provide supporting actions to improve air quality. Similarly, Darebin's Transport Strategy seeks to promote sustainable transport modes and therefore reduce air pollution related to vehicle usage.

Darebin's Clean Air Strategy has been developed in keeping with the Victorian State of the Environment Report 2009 – 2013. Note: The reports for 2011/2012 and 2012/2013 will be reported in 2013. The following key findings were made in the Victorian State of the Environment Report 2009:

- Victoria has good air quality when compared to international standards.
- Air quality has been relatively stable over the last decade despite increased pressures from a growing population and economy.
- Levels of fine particles and ozone do not always meet the objectives set out in Victoria's ambient air quality policy.
- Bushfires and dust storms resulting from a prolonged drought have recently affected air quality across Victoria.
- Air quality was poor in 2003 and 2006 due to the impact of severe bushfires.
- Increased frequency and severity of bushfires and drought associated with climate change will compound existing air quality pressures. The higher temperatures may also lead to a greater potential for ozone formation.
- Current air pollution levels are associated with adverse health impacts.

The report made several recommendations to the Victorian Government around reducing transport and greenhouse emissions; environmental labelling systems stating potential pollutants (for cars and heaters); bushfire and fire management; alternative fuels; smog and pollution alerts as well as phasing out the sale and use of wood heaters in areas where alternatives are readily available.

1. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CLEAN AIR STRATEGY

Enforcement

Council investigates complaints relating to smoke emissions from solid fuel heating (wood heaters and open fireplaces). Council is currently acting in accordance with state legislative requirements and within recommendations of the EPA in relation to solid fuel heating. Council investigates discharges to the air pertinent to Council's Local Law and the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (PHWA 2008). Council investigates complaints relating to open air burning. Darebin's General Local Law 2005 provides that "Except for cooking food outdoors, a person must not burn or allow to be burned any matter in an incinerator or in the open air."

In many instances the material traditionally burnt in incinerators or backyard fires can be composted or recycled. Introduction of this local law has supported the composting and recycling initiatives, which in turn have reduced the impact of airborne pollutants on the environment.

Darebin Council General Local Law 2005

Complaints regarding open air burning are investigated by the Compliance and Amenity Unit. The resident is advised of the Local Law and further action is taken if they do not comply. If a complaint is substantiated and residents do not comply with initial direction, the resident is issued a fine. Only one fine was issued in 2009.

Complaints received by the Compliance and Amenity Unit are tabled below. Also, listed below is the number of reported incidents of outdoor cooking. Council's Local Law currently

permits cooking outdoors on open fires to recognise cultural and social community practices that exist in the municipality (for example, cooking tomato sauce).

Amenity Unit		2009	2010	In 2009 and 2010
Open Air Burning – Complaints	No. of properties with single incident burning off complaints	49	79	N/A
	No. of multiple complaints of burning off from same property.	5	7	5
	Total	54	86	5
Outdoor Cooking - Self reported	No. of properties with single reports of outdoor cooking (sauce)	36	48	N/A
	No. of multiple reports of outdoor cooking (sauce) from same property.	1	7	26
	Total	37	55	26

Complaints received by the City of Darebin indicate the following:

- The number of complaints received in relation to burning off has increased.
- A small percentage of properties have multiple complaints.
- The number of people notifying Council of their intentions to light a fire for the purpose of outdoor cooking has increased. The increase in these numbers may be due to education and a growing awareness of Council's Local Law.

Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008

The nuisance provisions of the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (PHWA 2008) are enforced by Council's Health Officers. These provisions can be enforced if a property owner or occupier is causing a nuisance, considered as being, or liable to be, dangerous to health or offensive (which is defined as noxious or injurious to personal comfort).

The most common air quality complaints received by Council relate to the wood heaters. If a resident complains about a wood heater it is investigated. Complaints received by Council in 2009 and 2010 are tabled below.

Health Protection Unit Wood heater complaints	2009	2010
Properties with single incident complaints	12	16
Properties with multiple complaints	1	2
Total complaints	13	18

Complaint category	2009	2010
Wood heater in house	7	13
Wood heater in shed/out house	4	2
Wood fire stove	1	0

Unknown source	1	2
Total complaints	13	17

Complaints received by Council indicate the following:

- The number of wood heater complaints has increased slightly.
- Most complaints reported are about wood heating units within the main house. This increase could be due to people renovating their homes and either activating old fire places or installing wood fired heaters.
- The number of complaints that relate to heating units situated in sheds or outhouses have decreased.
- There are a small number of multiple complaints.
- In most situations complaints related to the type of wood being used. Complainants were concerned that treated or wet wood had been used. There have been no situations where this has been found to be substantiated.
- Most complaints were resolved through education by advising the resident how to use the heater and select wood correctly. No prosecutions relating to this issue have occurred to date.
- Some complaints are part of ongoing neighbourhood disputes.
- In the case where a Health Officer has identified the matter as being a neighbourhood dispute the complaint is referred to Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria.

In summary, although the number of complaints has increased slightly, the overall number of complaints is low. Due to the low number of complaints, particularly those being re-investigated, it is felt that community education is an effective strategy to further reduce these types of complaints.

Education

Educational efforts should remain as a key part of our strategy to deal with wood smoke complaints. This strategy enables households to retain the benefits of wood burning, while minimising negative impacts to the broader community. Education efforts require a clear, coordinated and sustained effort to be effective.

Various organisations have published information in the area of reducing smoke from solid fuel heaters. Council Officers have commonly referred to publications made available by the EPA, Firewood Association of Australia (FAA) and Australian Home Heating Association (AHHA). The information provides residents with the following:

- Selection, purchase, installation and maintenance of wood heaters,
- Promotion of efficient use and tips to reduce smoke from wood heaters,
- The selection, use and storage of wood for burning, and
- Best practices in wood heater operation and firewood management.

Supporting Strategies

Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan

The Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP) is designed to identify existing and emerging public health priority areas and provide a range of preventative and responsive strategies to enable people to achieve their maximum wellbeing. This plan does not directly

and specifically target air quality initiatives. The MPHWP 2010 Action Plan (updated January 2011) states that it will rely on current services provided through Darebin's Transport Strategy, Darebin's Climate Change Action Plans and the Peak Oil Adaptation Plan to reduce emissions.

Transport Management Strategy

Darebin's Transport Strategy (DTS) seeks to reduce the need for car based transport through a range of approaches including land use integration, road safety and education and marketing. The DTS seeks to promote sustainable transport modes of walking, cycling and public transport, reducing environmental impacts (including air pollution) and improving public health, accessibility, social inclusion and supporting economic growth.

A key aim is to reduce the impact of private car use. There is an identified need to improve the effectiveness and coverage of public transport services within Darebin as well as improve walking and cycling facilities.

DTS is in its third year of implementation and key projects achieved in 2010 include:

- Completion of the Koonda Lat Bridge over Merri Creek.
- Railway level crossing improvement such as flashing signals assembly, mark stop bar and a central barrier were arranged at level crossings in Darebin including Charles St, Arthurton Rd, Hutton St and Oakover Rd.
- Bus Stop Upgrade - 15 new bus shelters were installed within Darebin.
- Speed and Safety - A 40km/h speed limit was implemented along the shopping strip of High Street in Northcote and Thornbury.
- 112 Tram Route – Extension advocacy campaign and community consultation.
- Continuing the 'Not So Fast' speed reduction project.

DTS is also implementing a range of innovative travel behaviour change programs for the community including:

- Safe Travel Strategy – A new road safety strategy that protects the safety of walking and cycling, encouraging greater use of these modes and reduced car use.
- School Travel Planning - Working with schools to develop a travel plan with the school community to reduce car use and traffic issues.
- Going Places – Darebin's Travel Reward Scheme - is an award winning web-based program which rewards people for making two less drive alone trips each week.

Changes achieved through key projects listed above, coupled with the range of innovative travel behaviour change programs, has led to strong shift in the attitude to cycling within the community. Over the last five years, Darebin has seen a total increase in cycling of 170% whilst the relative risk of cycle crashes has reduced by 50%. Significant achievements have been made overall in implementing the Darebin Transport Strategy.

Darebin's Climate Change Action Plans

Darebin's Climate Change Action Plans (Community and organisation) seek to reduce emission of greenhouse gases within Darebin and in doing so play a role in improving the air quality within the Municipality.

Implementation of both plans is underway and on track with annual progress reports considered and endorsed by Council in November 2010. Key achievements under the strategies include:

- Greenhouse reduction savings in Council's top energy using buildings including a 32% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions at the Darebin Civic Precinct.
- Achievement of Council's 2010 greenhouse reduction target ahead of time in the 2008/2009 financial year.
- Savings of \$430,000 in energy bills in the 2009/2010 financial year based on current usage and pricing compared to usage prior to the implementation of the energy efficiency program.
- A successful Solar Hot Water roll-out with more than 275 Darebin households installing new energy efficient hot water systems.
- Support for those most vulnerable to climate change impacts and rising energy costs via a number of programs including the Victorian Government's Energy and Water Taskforce program that provided free energy and water retrofits for more than 750 Darebin concession card holders.
- The Talking My Language program successfully completed with the launch of the Greek energy efficiency brochure attended by more than 80 people.
- Darebin's Climate Change Action Plan has been recognised by a number of awards including the United Nations Australia 'Meeting the Greenhouse Challenge Award' and the Australian Government's Local Government Award for 'Community Climate Change Action'.

2. INVESTIGATION ON THE POTENTIAL OF SMOKE REDUCTION DEVICES AVAILABLE AND REBATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR REPLACEMENT OF WOOD HEATERS

Domestic Wood Heaters

In winter, domestic wood heaters and open fireplaces are used to heat houses and buildings. Correct use of wood heaters is important for reduction of smoke emissions. Wood heaters can be an efficient form of heating and create a cosy effect that is difficult to achieve from any other source. Smoke created by wood heaters could be a problem on very cold, still nights. The colder temperatures mean that more people leave their wood heaters burning overnight. On a still night this may cause a problem to adjoining properties as the smoke lingers in the area.

Wood heaters that meet the Australian Standard and are properly used can be cost effective and have lower greenhouse emissions. Modern, clean burning wood heaters, when used according to instructions, can be cost effective and emit lower greenhouse gas when compared to other methods of home heating using fossil fuels, such as gas or electricity. For some households wood heaters may be the only form of heating. Thus, an efficient wood heater offers people a chance to heat their home economically, and at running costs far below any other energy source.

The Australian Home Heating Association (A.H.H.A.) believes that wood heaters serve a valuable social function in Australia in addition to the benefits of direct employment. The industry also provides employment opportunities in areas of high unemployment.

Armidale Dumaresq Council, New South Wales.

There is only one Council in New South Wales (NSW) that has introduced a rebate program to residents in its continuing effort to address the issue of wood smoke reduction associated with winter wood smoke. Armidale Dumaresq Council (ADC), NSW, is rather unique due to its topography. Armidale's level of wood smoke pollution is greater than other communities, due to its valley topography, high pressure meteorological conditions (low wind and cloud cover) and severe cold temperatures in the winter months. This creates temperature inversion layers which sometimes trap high levels of wood smoke in the atmosphere. The smoke is trapped so that it lingers close to the ground overnight.

This area is significantly affected by wood smoke in winter because most residents heat their homes by burning wood using slow-combustion heaters. The Armidale community has approximately 4,000 wood heaters in use accounting for one third of all households. High particle levels are consistently recorded on many winter days in Armidale. This is the reason why ADC needs to implement a wood smoke rebate program.

ADC has closely monitored the wood smoke problem in recent years and implemented several educational interventions to increase awareness of the problem and promote responsible wood-burning practices. The Council initiated a "Woodsmoke Reduction Program" which involved providing households with cash rebates for making changes to their form of heating to reduce wood smoke emissions. Rebates available to residents from Armidale Council include cash back for SmartBurn (technological devices) purchased at point of sale, cash rebates for wood heater replacement with approved alternatives including solar heating and subsidies for heat saving curtains and blinds.

See Appendix A

These rebates have been offered to residents for 3 years now since July 2008. Council has allocated \$30,000 each financial year (\$90,000 to date) towards these rebates.

SmartBurn Technological Device

There is currently one device that is on the market that according to its manufacturer is able to reduce smoke emissions from wood fires. This product is called SmartBurn. It has been in the market place since 2005 and available through major hardware stores. ADC has been promoting this device as a technological strategy to reduce wood smoke pollution.

SmartBurn is a steel tubular unit containing a solid mixture. The unit is placed in the fireplace before it is lit. As the device becomes hot the solid mixture melts and releases vapour which causes the fire to be hotter and allows soot and sap deposits to be burned "within" the fire. Manufacturers of this product claim the extra heat increases efficiency of the fire thus reducing the amount of smoke being entered into the atmosphere. Each Smartburn is designed to last for up to 3 months, about the length of a typical Australian winter. Some households may require a second unit depending on the size of the house and heating unit.

See Appendix B

Limitations

At this time the product has yet to be systemically evaluated in the home settings. This represents an important gap given that the device may operate quite differently under sub-optimal operating conditions (for example wet wood, older wood heaters and poor heater operation practices).

The increase in the temperature of the fire may pose risks to residents with old open fire places as they may not cope with such increase in heat. This situation may also increase the risk of fire in older homes.

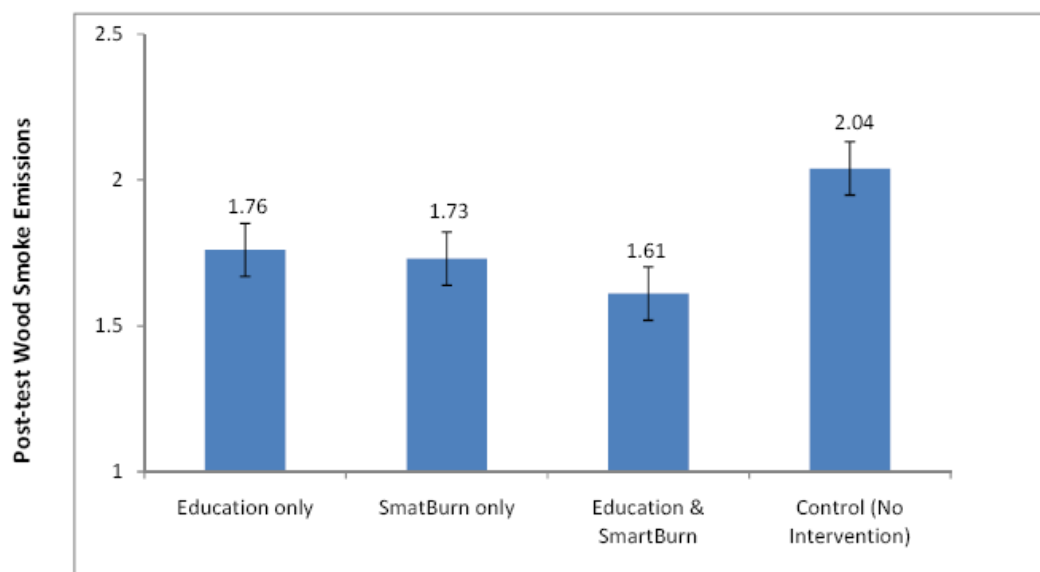
New convection heaters can cope with this increase in temperature as they are designed with air cavities around the outside of the firebox and an outer casing to keep the external panels cooler.

Research

To evaluate the effectiveness of using SmartBurn, ADC works closely with the University of New England. A field experiment was conducted by the university to compare the effectiveness of education and technological innovation to reduce emissions from wood heaters. In this study there were four (4) intervention groups:

1. Education only – households received a wood smoke reduction education pack
2. SmartBurn only – households received a SmartBurn device designed to improve combustion and help wood fires burn more efficiently
3. Education and SmartBurn
4. No intervention (control group).

Wood smoke emissions were assessed on a 5-point visual analog scale (1 = no visible emission and 5 = very pronounced cloud of smoke). Results of the experiment are shown below.



Results from this trial indicate:

- Households in the SmartBurn group emitted less visible wood smoke compared to those in the control group.
- Households in the education group also emitted less wood smoke than those in the control group.
- Households in both SmartBurn and Education groups were not statistically significant suggesting there was no added advantage of combining the two interventions.

In summary, even though education and Smartburn shows a reduction in household wood smoke emissions, the overall size of the effect was small. These results appear to be consistent with the view held by Lemming, Dwyer, Porter and Cobern (1993) which found

that environmental education interventions tend to be more effective than technological interventions. This is further supported by a recent cost-benefit analysis by Todd (2006) who concluded that community education has the potential for being a cost effective strategy for reducing wood smoke.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Environmental Sustainability

Air quality in Victoria is primarily monitored by the Environment Protection Authority (EPA). Air quality in Melbourne has improved over time significantly due to industry complying with EPA standards and the introduction of emission controls on cars.

Council is currently acting in accordance with State legislative requirements and in line with recommendations of the EPA in relation to solid fuel heating.

Social Inclusion and Diversity

Council's Local Law currently provides for cooking outdoors on open fires to recognise cultural and social community practices. Tomato sauce cooking is an example of this type of activity.

For some households wood heaters may be the only form of heating. Thus, the efficient use of a wood heater offers people a chance to heat their home economically and at running costs far below any other energy source. This provides an important social benefit through low cost heating and improved thermal comfort.

Modern, clean burning wood heaters, when used according to instructions, can be a cost effective alternative and emit less greenhouse gasses when compared to other methods of home heating using fossil fuels, such as gas or electricity.

Other

Nil.

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The recommended actions are met within existing operational budget programs. Additional enforcement or communication programs would require additional funding and resourcing.

CONCLUSION

1. REVIEW OF THE CLEAN AIR STRATEGY

This is a review of Darebin's Clean Air Strategy adopted by Council in 2009. It highlights achievements in 2010 through various Council activities and programs which contribute towards improving air quality. In 2010 a number of successful new initiatives were also implemented.

Council's legislative units continue to receive complaints about smoke from wood burning. Although the number of complaints has increased slightly, the overall numbers are low.

2. INVESTIGATION ON THE POTENTIAL OF SMOKE REDUCTION DEVICES AVAILABLE AND REBATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR REPLACEMENT OF WOOD HEATERS

There is only one Council in New South Wales that has introduced a rebate program for its residents to address the issue of wood smoke pollution. This Council has a high level of wood smoke pollution due to its topography, severe cold temperatures in winter and a high usage of wood burning for heating by its residents.

Research into the effectiveness of using SmartBurn by the University of New England concluded the overall size of its effect in reducing smoke from wood burning was small.

A good initiative that Council could consider is to create a local law which requires people with wood heaters to be registered with Council. This will give us an indication of the number of heaters in use in the municipality. A registration fee of \$50 could be charged for each registration and for those that take up Council's wood heater information session the \$50 fee would be waived.

FUTURE ACTIONS

- Health Protection and Compliance and Amenity Units will continue educational and enforcement practice in accordance with legislative requirements and in line with the Environment Protection Authority.
- Health Protection will develop a Community Education Campaign to complement its enforcement actions.

This will include:

- Media release
- Media article
- Flyer, and
- Educational visits for revisited complaints.

DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Section 80C of the Local Government Act 1989 requires members of Council staff and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council to disclose any direct or indirect interest in a matter to which the advice relates.

The Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Council Minutes, 19 July 2010, Item 8.2: *Woodheaters*
Council Minutes, 20 July 2009, Item 8.4: *Clean Air Strategy*
Darebin Clean Air Strategy
Darebin Climate Change Action Plan
Darebin Community Climate Change Action Plan
Darebin Transport Strategy

Environment Protection Act 1970

Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008

Darebin Local Law 2005

Victorian State of the Environment Report 2009

Environment Protection Authority:

<http://www.epa.vic.gov.au/air/woodheaters/default.asp>

Sustainable Energy Authority:

<http://www.clean.energy.wa.gov.au/index.asp>

Environment Protection Act 1970

Darebin General Local Law 2005

Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008

Australian Home Heating Association

http://www.homeheat.com.au/green_issues.htm

Lemming, F.C., Dwyer, W.O., Porter, B.E., & Cobern, M.K. (1993). Outcome research in environmental education: A critical review. *Journal of Environmental Education*, 24(4), 8-21.

Todd, J.J., (2006) *Cost-benefits analysis of wood smoke reduction in Perth. Report prepared for the department of Environment and Conservation, Western Australia:* <http://portal.environment.wa.gov.au>

(Cr. Fontana left the meeting - 8.37pm)

10. URGENT BUSINESS

Nil.

11. GENERAL BUSINESS**11.1 LEAMINGTON STREET RESERVOIR – PUBLIC RECREATION AREA****MINUTE NO. 84****COUNCIL RESOLUTION**

MOVED: Cr. G. Greco
SECONDED: Cr. T. Laurence

THAT Council consider an upgrade of the Leamington Street Reservoir public recreation area as part of the Council's 2011/2012 budget deliberations with a focus on:

- (1) Reviewing the closure of the public toilets.
- (2) Considering viable options for the future use of Council premises closed due to asbestos.
- (3) Undertaking a general upgrade of the dilapidated public sporting facilities.

CARRIED**11.2 RESERVOIR JUNCTION****MINUTE NO. 85****COUNCIL RESOLUTION**

MOVED: Cr. G. Greco
SECONDED: Cr. T. McCarthy

THAT Council:

- (1) Prepare a comprehensive activation strategy which sets out a plan of action for Council to effectively advocate for grade separation at Reservoir Junction.
- (2) Consider as part of the activation strategy funding for a preliminary feasibility and land use study to be commissioned by the State Government.
- (3) Officers report back to Council within 2 months.

CARRIED

11.3 BICYCLE ROAD SAFETY**MINUTE NO. 86****COUNCIL RESOLUTION**

MOVED: Cr. N. Katsis
SECONDED: Cr. T. Laurence

THAT Council write to the State Government requesting the feasibility of implementing and enforcing a number plate system or recognition system for bicycles that commute on VicRoads' roads and furthermore, whether an indicator system is available for adoption on bicycles commuting on VicRoads' roads and the implementation of a 'Ride Smart' policy that ensures bicycle riders are educated in proper riding etiquette, clothing attire and footwear.

CARRIED**11.4 TRAFFIC ISSUES – STURDEE STREET RESERVOIR****MINUTE NO. 87****COUNCIL RESOLUTION**

MOVED: Cr. T. Laurence
SECONDED: Cr. N. Katsis

THAT Officers prepare a pro-active plan for traffic calming measures in and around Sturdee Street Reservoir to address 'hoon driving' incidents in the area.

CARRIED**11.5 TRAFFIC ISSUES – ARUNDEL AVENUE RESERVOIR****MINUTE NO. 88****COUNCIL RESOLUTION**

MOVED: Cr. T. Laurence
SECONDED: Cr. G. Greco

THAT Officers prepare a pro-active plan for traffic calming measures in Arundel Avenue Reservoir to address excessive "rat runs" due to peak over flow from cars avoiding the Keon Parade and Cheddar Road intersection.

CARRIED

12. CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS CONSIDERED CONFIDENTIAL**CLOSE OF MEETING**

MOVED: Cr. S. Chiang
SECONDED: Cr. N. Katsis

THAT in accordance with section 89(2) of the Local Government Act 1989, Council resolves to close the meeting to members of the public to consider the following item which relates to a contractual matter:

12.1 Regional Landfill Services Contract (CT201117).

CARRIED

The meeting was closed to members of the public at 9.20pm.

The Council considered and resolved on Report Item 12.1 (Regional Landfill Services Contract (CT20117)) which had been circulated to Councillors on Thursday 17 March 2011 with the Council Agenda Paper.

(Cr. Tsitas left the meeting – 9.43pm)

RE-OPENING OF MEETING

MOVED: Cr. N. Katsis
SECONDED: Cr. S. Chiang

THAT the meeting be re-opened to the members of the public.

CARRIED

The meeting was re-opened to members of the public at 9.44pm.

CONFIDENTIAL**12.1 REGIONAL LANDFILL SERVICES CONTRACT (CT201117)****MINUTE NO. 89****AUTHOR: Manager City Works – Chris Lo Piccolo****REVIEWED BY: Director City Works and Development – Michael Ballock****SUMMARY:**

Council's current involvement in a regional landfill services contract is ending on 31 March 2011 facilitated by the Metropolitan Waste Management Group (MWMG). On 21 September 2010, a letter expressing interest to be a part of a new regional landfill services tender was sent to the MWMG. The City of Darebin is one of 21 councils participating in the tender.

MWMG have completed the tender process and an evaluation panel including members from the participating councils has made its recommendations to the MWMG board.

The tender resolution will remain confidential until all 21 Councils have considered the matter.

CONSULTATION:

Officers have been part of the working group and the evaluation panel formed by MWMG for this tender process. Officers from the 21 participating councils have met regularly in the lead up to the tender and during the tender process.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

MOVED: Cr. T. Laurence**SECONDED: Cr. S. Chiang**

THAT the Council Resolution and the report remain confidential until the Metropolitan Waste Management Group (MWMG) advise that the Panel of Preferred Contractors has been finalised.

CARRIED

13. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 9.46pm.