



MINUTES OF THE HEARING OF SUBMISSIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

THURSDAY, 11 JUNE 2015

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HEARING OF SUBMISSIONS
COMMITTEE OF THE DAREBIN CITY COUNCIL
HELD AT DAREBIN CIVIC CENTRE,
350 HIGH ST, PRESTON ON THURSDAY 11 JUNE 2015**

THE MEETING OPENED AT 7.02 PM

1. PRESENT

Councillors

Cr Gaetano Greco (Mayor) (Chairperson)
Cr Vince Fontana
Cr Tim Laurence
Cr Bo Li
Cr Trent McCarthy
Cr Steven Tsitas
Cr Angela Villella
Cr Oliver Walsh
Cr Julie Williams (Deputy Mayor)

Council Officers

Katrina Knox – Acting Chief Executive
Tiffany White – Acting Director Corporate Services
Jacinta Stevens – Manager Corporate Governance and Performance
Joann Hennessy – Management Accountant
Katia Croce – Coordinator Council Business

2. APOLOGIES

Nil

3. DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Nil

4. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS HEARING OF SUBMISSIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

COMMITTEE DECISION

MOVED: Cr. G. Greco
SECONDED: Cr. J. Williams

THAT the Minutes of the Hearing of Submissions Committee meeting held on 11 May 2015 be confirmed as a correct record of business transacted.

CARRIED

5. CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS

5.1 PROPOSED BUDGET 2015/2016

AUTHOR: Management Accountant

REVIEWED BY: Acting Director Corporate Services

SUMMARY:

At its meeting on 7 May 2015, Council resolved to give public notice of its intention to adopt the proposed Budget 2015/2016 at a meeting of Council to be held on 22 June 2015. Further notice has been given to adopt the proposed Budget 2015/2016 at a meeting of Council to be held on 22 June 2015.

Those persons wishing to make a submission in relation to the proposed Budget 2015/2016 were invited to do so by Tuesday 9 June 2015 with any person requesting to be heard in support of their written submission to be heard by Council's Hearing of Submissions Committee at 7.00pm on 11 June 2015.

Statutory procedures under the Local Government Act 1989 have been completed and forty-two submissions have been received for the proposed 2015/2016 budget.

Seven of the submitters have requested to be heard in support of their submission. The submitters have been invited to attend this meeting of the Hearing of Submissions Committee.

CONSULTATION:

Community Information Sessions were held on 19 and 21 May 2015.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council officers prepare a report for the Council Meeting on 22 June 2015 addressing the written submissions received and verbal presentations heard in respect of the proposed Budget 2015/2016.

REPORT

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

At its meeting on 7 May 2015, Council resolved to give public notice of its intention to adopt the proposed Budget 2015/2016 at a meeting of Council to be held on 22 June 2015. Further notice has been given to adopt the proposed Budget 2015/2016 at a meeting of Council to be held on 22 June 2015. A public notice was placed in The Age on 11 May 2015 with copies in the Northcote Leader and Preston Leader on 13 May 2015.

Those persons wishing to make a submission in relation to the proposed Budget 2015/2016 were invited to do so by Tuesday 9 June 2015 with any person requesting to be heard in support of their written submission to be heard by Council's Hearing of Submissions Committee at 7.00pm on 11 June 2015.

ISSUES AND DISCUSSION

2015/2016 Proposed Budget

The 2015/2016 proposed budget is currently reporting an underlying surplus of \$553,000. Any amendment to the proposed budget based on the submissions would need to ensure that an underlying surplus is retained.

At the time of preparing this report (Wednesday 10 June 2015), forty-two written submissions have been received in relation to the proposed Budget 2015/2016. The following seven submitters have requested to be heard in support of their written submissions:

- Julia Chiera (Darebin Women's Sports Club) – Submission # 21
- Nina Crawley (Darebin Greens) – Submission # 23
- Narelle Phelan (Resident) – Submission # 31
- Tanya Wolkenberg (Resident) – Submission # 34
- James Thyer (Resident) – Submission # 35
- Maria Georgiou (Darebin Community Legal Centre) – Submission # 38
- Rebecca Burdon (Merri Action Group) – Submission # 28

Copies of all submissions have been circulated separately to Councillors for their information.

Submissions received

	Submitter	Issue	Budget Implication	Management Comment
1	Jeanne Cooper	Lighting at AH Capp and WH Robinson Reserves	\$329,750 council contribution (\$420,000 total for both reserves)	Given winter sport is often played after work in the evenings, lights allow training sessions and matches to be extended to outside of daylight hours. Sports field lighting provides the flexibility to extend the use and scheduling of sporting venues; and during the winter months provision of sports field lighting allows approximately 30 additional hours of use per week.
2	Alberta Gunner			
3	Julia Chiera			
4	Alex Reynolds			
5	Maria Caruso			
6	Jasmine Hirst			
7	Martin Boyle			
8	Louise Potter			
9	Emily Campbell			
10	Darcy Vescio			
11	Danielle Moore			
12	Sophie Boyden			
13	Lauren Datson			
14	Rebecca Mayo			
15	Jade Stevens			
16	David Nolan			
17	Sarah Dowling			
18	Harriet Radermacher			
19	Leesa Mereos			
20	AFL Victoria			
21	Darebin Women's Sports Club			
22	Women's Health in the North			
23	Darebin Greens	- Lighting at AH Capp and WH Robinson Reserves	See above	See above
		-Expansion of the Solar \$aver	\$nil	Additional costs such as increased administration and borrowing costs could be recovered through the cost of the units to residents.
24	Meredith Isakson	Off lead dog park – All Nations Park	\$60,000 to \$100,000	More investigation is required. Council is implementing an off lead dog park this financial year. This facility will be the first of its kind in Darebin and will serve as a test case for future works. All Nations Park will be the subject of some upgrade works in 2015/16 and these works need to be completed before considering additional features in the park.
25	Margarita Munoz	Stop light at Miller St/ Heidelberg Rd	\$150,000 to \$200,000	Pedestrian operated signals are a major traffic control item and would require VicRoads approval and must be installed in accordance with VicRoads standards and warrants. An existing crossing exists less than

	Submitter	Issue	Budget Implication	Management Comment
				100m away and an additional crossing has been proposed as part of the upcoming AMCOR site development.
26	Kate Picker	Off lead dog park – Bundoora Park	\$40,000	An off lead dog park will be constructed. Before the end of June community consultation will determine where. Bundoora Park is one of three locations for consideration.
27	Tony Martello	Proposed Local Law against trailers on roads for longer than 24 hours	\$nil	At the council meeting on 1 June 2015 the provision was removed from the proposed Local Law.
28	Merri Action Group	Support of cycling initiatives included in the proposed budget	N/A	N/A
		Traffic calming initiatives and 40km/h speed limit	\$25,000 for speed zone signs and splitter island	Project requires further review, initial assessment suggests that 85 th percentile speeds are already around 40km/h or below. This precinct could be eligible for speed changes with the construction of a splitter island at Barry St and installation of speed zone signage. Council is currently developing a Traffic Management Strategy to prioritise neighbourhood precincts for local area traffic management projects.
29	Jordan Andrews	East Preston Senior Citizens Centre upgrade	Year 1 \$775,000 Year 2 \$1,175,000	The building is dated and in need of a major refurbishment. Funds were not available in the proposed 2015/16 capital works budget. A budget application will be made for 2016/17 seeking funding.
30	Larissa Nicholls	Support of cycling initiatives and energy efficient street lights	N/A	N/A
31	Narelle Phelan	Clean up the north	\$1,000,000 (for whole of Darebin)	Last year \$250,000 was allocated to undertake a city wide clean up that removed approximately 25% of graffiti. \$185,000 is included in the 2015/16 proposed budget. Council is restricted by the Graffiti Management Act in relation to the removal of graffiti from private property.
32	Louisa Mercuri	Speed hump – Elm St	\$15,000	Recent traffic data indicates that traffic volumes and speeds are within the acceptable range for a 'local road'. The speed traffic was recorded approximately at 40.1km/h with an average speed of 33.4km/h. The suggested treatments are not suitable
		Splitter island – Elm St	\$15,000	
		Kerb outstand or	\$25,000	

	Submitter	Issue	Budget Implication	Management Comment
		extension		for accessing of heavy vehicles such as rubbish trucks, emergency vehicles, etc. and it is noted that there is a factory in operation in Elm Street. Council is currently developing a Traffic Management Strategy that will provide a framework and assessment criteria to carry out extensive studies of the traffic conditions in particular areas and Elm Street will be considered when that area is studied.
33	Mike Flattley	Safer crossing at Merri Parade to Green Memorial Reserve and Kunda Lat Bike Bridge	\$150,000 to \$200,000 Pedestrian/ bike rider operated signals	\$230,000 has been included in the proposed budget for the signalised crossing of Merri Parade but the project going ahead is dependent on grant funding.
34	Tanya Wokenberg			
35	James Thyer			
36	Janna Hilbrink			
37	Christos Symeonides	Prevention of large trucks entering Merri Parade	\$50,000 Pedestrian/ bike rider refuge	Signage could be installed to warn trucks not to enter Merri Parade/ Westgarth Street
		Bicycle and pedestrian overpass over Merri Parade	\$5,000 to \$10,000 (static signage) \$50,000+ (dynamic signs) \$1,000,000+	Unlikely to be supported by VicTrack and Metro. The structure would most likely need to be freestanding with the challenging aspect to create the grades required for a Disability Discrimination Act compliant structure on the north side of Merri Parade.
38	Darebin Community Legal Centre (DCLC)	Family violence - community safety initiative	\$37,020	\$138,000 has been included in the 2015/16 proposed budget for preventing violence against women (PVAW) projects. This initiative strongly aligns with Council's priorities in the PVAW Action Plan, Health and Wellbeing Plan and Council Plan. Family violence in CALD communities is a significant issue, DCLC is a key member of the Darebin family violence service system and is well placed to advance work in this space

	Submitter	Issue	Budget Implication	Management Comment
				through their proposal.
39	Carla Moss	Dog Park – Cheddar Road median strip	\$60,000 to \$100,000	Cheddar Road median strip is owned and managed by Melbourne Water. Council does not have authority to conduct works in this space. Council is implementing a fenced in dog park in the north of Darebin in July 2015.
40	Darebin Environmental Reference Group (DERG)	Support of projects that provide excellent environmental outcomes	N/A	N/A
41	Cameron Taylor	Reservoir Streetscape Master Plan	\$3,500,000 to \$4,500,000	\$1,250,000 has been included in the proposed budget for projects within the Reservoir Streetscape Master Plan area.
42	Chris Erlandsen	Environmental and sustainability policies	N/A	Council through Amendment C138 prepared a municipal wide strategy that addresses the issues raised in this submission. There was extensive consultation and Council's strategy has been reviewed by an independent planning panel and given support on how these various issues are addressed. The independent ruling on Council's municipal strategy confirms that the balance between facilitating development and delivering acceptable environmental outcomes will be achieved and that Council's position is fair and reasonable.

Consideration of Submissions

In accordance with sections 129 and 223 of the *Local Government Act 1989*, the Council is required to take into consideration all submissions received in relation to the proposed Budget and after it has made a decision, notify all persons who have made a submission of the decision and the reasons for the decision.

Council has established the Hearing of Submissions Committee to hear and report to Council on submissions received by Council under section 223 of the Act.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The 2015/2016 Proposed Budget has been prepared to give financial effect in the coming year to the objectives set out in the Council Plan 2013-2017 and Strategic Resource Plan.

Environmental Sustainability

The 2015/2016 Proposed Budget continues Council's funding of environmental operations in a range of areas including waste collection and recycling services, street cleaning, litter collection, park and sporting field maintenance and improvements in the context of drought, water-saving and energy efficiency measures.

Funding has also been included to enhance Council's active work with the community to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Human Rights, Equity and Inclusion

The Council Plan 2013-2017 contains a number of policy directions specifically designed to reflect Council's commitment to social inclusion and diversity, and the Proposed Budget has been prepared in this context. Social inclusion, fairness and equity have been key principles in Council determining how to raise income and allocate expenditure to fund the many services it delivers and infrastructure it maintains and upgrades.

Council has proposed to increase the rate rebate provided to over 12,000 eligible Darebin pensioners to \$150 and free animal registration of one cat or dog for eligible pensioners.

Economic Development

The 2015/2016 Proposed Budget includes approximately \$2.1 million for Economic Development. Economic development activities proposed for 2015/2016 include the Green Business Expo, continuing the rollout of WiFi in retail strips, activation of vacant shops, working with local trader and business associations to help them improve business performance, and with neighbouring municipalities to develop and implement regional economic growth.

Other

The Proposed Budget is prepared in the context of key principles in the Council's Strategic Resource Plan that underpin long term financial planning. These principles are:

- Maintenance of the scope and standard of ongoing services provided to the Darebin community and a flexibility to address changing community needs with innovative services and facilities.
- A focus on renewing community assets such as roads, footpaths, open space and buildings to ensure they are maintained at an appropriate standard to meet required service levels.
- Generation of sufficient ongoing income to fund Council services and capital works commitments over the longer term.
- Holding of sufficient cash and other assets in order to meet Council's payment obligations to suppliers and employees.

In addition the Proposed Budget's preparation reflects the principles of Council's Charter of Good Governance:

- Transparency.
- Accountability.
- Equity and Inclusion.
- Effectiveness and Efficiency.
- Community Engagement.
- Ethical Decision Making.

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

No changes have been made to the proposed budget arising from these submissions. The submissions are requesting additional \$6,184,750 for capital works projects and \$852,020 for operating projects.

CONCLUSION

The 2015/2016 proposed budget is currently reporting an underlying surplus of \$553,000. Any amendment to the proposed budget based on the submissions would need to ensure that an underlying surplus is retained.

FUTURE ACTIONS

Following the Hearing of Submissions Committee meeting, a report in relation to all submissions received will be submitted for consideration at the meeting of the Council scheduled for **22 June 2015 – for the 2015/2016 adoption of the proposed budget**.

The report will include a management response to the issues raised in the submissions.

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 Director authorising 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 May 2015

Public Advertisement in The Age on 11 May 2015

PRESENTATIONS

At the invitation of the Chairperson, Cr. Tsitas, the following persons spoke in support of their written submissions.

(1) Julia Chiera (Darebin Women's Sports Club) – Submission #21

Ms Chiera spoke to her written submission dated 7 June 2015 requesting funding to support the lighting upgrade works to AH Capp and WH Robinson Reserves, West Preston.

Points made during her presentation included:

- *If Council don't include the project in 2015/2016, the State Government may forfeit the grant and may not be available in the future*
- *Growing women participation rates*
- *Two grounds are poorly lit and requires investment from Council*
- *Incident last year where a girl drinking from a poorly lit water fountain was grabbed by a strange man*
- *Council has identified that equity and inclusion are two of its key goals and have strategies to have more females in Darebin participating in sport*

(2) Nina Crawley (Darebin Greens) – Submission #23

Ms Crawley spoke on behalf of Flemming Lebech's written submission dated 9 June 2015 requesting funding to support the funding for lights at AH Capp and WH Robinson Reserves and expand the 2015/2016 Solar Savers program.

Points made during her presentation included:

- *The lighting at the grounds is unsafe*
- *Poor lighting limits the numbers for participation*
- *At the Council meeting on 29 April Council tabled the participation numbers and committed to considering the poor state of facilities available*
- *Darebin Women's Sport Club has a strong culture of excellence*
- *Expand Solar Saver program to make solar accessible and affordable to all Darebin residents, particularly for low income households – will assist in providing lower cost of heating*
- *Needed to tackle climate change*

(3) Narelle Phelan (Resident) – Submission #31

Ms Phelan spoke to a powerpoint presentation in relation to her written submission dated 3 June 2015 requesting funding to support the funding for Clean up the North.

Points made during her presentation included:

- *Graffiti attracts additional crime*

- *Vandalism of public spaces*
- *Devalues equity in the area and therefore effects commercial viability*
- *Diminishes amenity of our area*
- *Not a good feeling*
- *Council should put pressure on the police and business owners to clean up*
- *Need to have a zero tolerance approach*

(4) Tanya Wolkenberg (Resident) – Submission #34

Ms Wolkenberg spoke to a powerpoint presentation in relation to her written submission dated 4 June 2015 requesting funding to support safe crossing at Merri Parade.

Points made during her presentation included:

- *Dangerous to get to the bike/pedestrian bridge*
- *Worst spot for cyclists*
- *To access public transport you need to cross Merri Parade*
- *Fatality a matter of time*
- *Most cyclists won't use train bridge because it is too difficult to use the stairs*
- *Take life into your own hands*
- *Primary school nearby, children and families cross here all the time*

(5) James Thyer (Resident) – Submission #35

Mr Thyer spoke to his written submission dated 28 February 2015 requesting funding to support the protection of pedestrian and bicycle commuters at Merri Parade/Westgarth Street, Northcote.

Points made during his presentation included:

- *Council need to push for grant funding \$230k*
- *Spoke on behalf of local families*
- *Many students from the many schools in the local area use this crossing point*
- *Noted a motorist death on the corner*
- *Used as a cycle crossing*
- *Requests*
 - Lower speed limit along Merri Parade/Westgarth Street stretch from 60km/h to 40km/h*
 - Provision of a zebra crossing including adequate car-proof barricading to protect cyclists and pedestrians*
 - Provision of pedestrian/cyclist operated traffic lights*

(6) Maria Georgiou (Darebin Community Legal Centre) – Submission #38

Ms Georgiou spoke to her written submission dated 4 June 2015 requesting funding to support the funding for Strengthening CALD communities Prevention of Family Violence Project.

Points made during her presentation included:

- *Community legal centre since 1988*
- *Since 1992 began working with family violence*
- *Published 3,000 copies of a new brochure, supported by the Mayor – since November they have nearly run out*
- *There is a great need from people with a CALD background, they don't understand English and they don't understand our legal system*
- *Wanting to provide a program which allows them to engage with each other*
- *Currently DCLC provide 45 minute appointments, they are either very rushed or used to attend court*

(7) Rebecca Burdon (Merri Action Group) – Submission #28

Ms Burdon spoke on behalf of Meg Montague's written submission dated 29 May 2015 requesting funding to support the traffic calming initiatives and a 40kmp/h speed limit in the Merri residential pocket east of the South Morang railway line.

Points made during her presentation included:

- *3 key points*
 1. *Patterns of use has changed. Increasingly used as a shortcut. Fast and slow traffic – two traffic stream difficult to manage*
 2. *Demographics – a lot of children (not always accompanied by an adult) use this crossing. The elderly and large groups of people with special needs use this crossing placing people with impaired mobility and reaction times at risk.*
 3. *Should be funded together with other initiatives in the area. Improvements to Merri Parade has been increasingly problematic as traffic is diverted with people looking for shortcuts.*

At the conclusion of their presentations, the Chairperson, Cr. Tsitas, thanked the presenters for addressing the Committee in support of their written submissions.

COMMITTEE DECISION

MOVED: Cr. V. Fontana
SECONDED: Cr. T. McCarthy

THAT Council:

- (1) Officers prepare a report for the Council Meeting on 22 June 2015 addressing the written submissions received and verbal presentations heard in respect of the proposed Budget 2015/2016.
- (2) Thank presenters for addressing the Committee in support of their written and/or verbal submissions.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

6. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 7.43 pm.