

Memorandum of Understanding

This document represents an agreement between

Merri Creek Management Committee

and

Darebin City Council

1 July 2017 – 30 June 2020

Scope

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlines the key principles and agreements between Darebin City Council and Merri Creek Management Committee for management of various creek side remnant/ revegetation sites, Strategic and Statutory Planning input and community engagement for the Merri Creek Catchment and Waterwatch including water quality monitoring and related events, education and activities for the Merri Creek and the Darebin Creek Catchments. Darebin City Council commits to this partnership in order for MCMC to deliver activities and events on behalf of and for Darebin City Council, in line with Council's *Watershed – Towards a Water Sensitive Darebin Strategy and Implementation Plan 2015-2025* and *Darebin's Natural Heritage Strategy 2015 – 2025*.

Objectives

The partner agencies will ensure deliverables outlined in this document are met. Darebin City Council and Merri Creek Management Committee are jointly committed to managing, protecting, promoting and ensuring the long term viability of the Merri Creek and its Environs. This Agreement seeks to provide a formalised framework to achieve these aims.

Terms of agreement

This agreement will apply for a term of three years from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2020 contingent on both parties signing this agreement.

If Merri Creek Management Committee fails to meet the deliverables as detailed in this document or related documents, this agreement may be terminated by Council with thirty days written notice. In the event of this occurring, any unspent funds from this Agreement, must be returned to Council. This applies to both this Agreement and Schedule 1 – Waterwatch Agreement.

Before any payment or work commences under this MOU, Merri Creek Management Committee must provide Council with copies of:

- Certificates of currency for all insurances for Professional Indemnity and Public Liability.
- All Safe Work Method Statements/ Work Instructions (which shall be updated by Merri Creek Management Committee annually).

Council must be provided with current versions of the above documents for the term of this MOU. Merri Creek Management Committee must continue to provide Council with new copies of the above documents as they expire and are renewed or updated.

If Merri Creek Management Committee is wound up or cancelled, any unspent funds from this Agreement must be returned to Council, prior to any surplus assets being distributed to another, organisation, association or other body.

Resource contribution

The organisations involved will work actively to support the partnership and share resources and/or facilities to ensure the long term viability of the Merri Creek as a natural and educational area providing space for recreation, habitat for native flora and fauna, community engagement and protection of the Merri Creek. Roles and responsibilities for each organisation are outlined below; and in Schedule 1 – Waterwatch Agreement. Schedule 1 will be updated annually throughout the term of this MOU.

Merri Creek Management Committee will

- Manage and maintain specified Conservation Bushland and Conservation Parkland sites within the Merri Creek Catchment.
- Conduct Waterwatch water quality monitoring and related events, activities and education within the Merri Creek and Darebin Creek Catchments as per Schedule 1 – Waterwatch Agreement.
- Participate in the strategic and statutory Planning process.
- Provide accurate, regular reports on KPIs as part of the Merri Creek Management Committee meeting cycle.
- Prepare submissions to seek external grants to extend the objectives listed above.
- Provide clear and detailed reports showing how Council's contribution and grant funds are spent.

Darebin City Council will:

- Provide a representative to advocate for Merri Creek Management Committee and Merri Creek Catchment.
- Hold two seats on Merri Creek Management Committee Board of Directors and attend all meetings
- In Financial Year 2017/2018, provide \$175,864 in operational funding to support the day-to-day operations of the Merri Creek Management Committee. This funding will increase each year in line with Council's rate capping percentage until the expiration of this MOU.
- In financial year provide \$14937 to undertake the Waterwatch activities as detailed in Schedule 1 – Waterwatch Agreement, which is to be allocated across both the Merri Creek catchment and the Darebin Creek catchment, as directed and approved by Council. This funding will increase each year in line with Council's rate capping percentage until the expiration of this MOU.
- Ensure that Waterwatch funding is spent across both the Merri Creek and Darebin Creek catchments. In line with previous agreements and arrangements for Waterwatch activities across both creeks, some of the above funding may be required to be transferred to other organisations/bodies. This may occur by request from either party and with final approval for funding allocation from Darebin City Council.
- Ensure that MCMC is consulted on all Statutory and Strategic Planning matters within the Merri Creek Environmental Significance Overlay.
- Provide opportunities for Merri Creek Management Committee to quote on conservation and revegetation works along the Merri Creek Corridor.

- Provide a staff member, the Bushland Coordinator or their delegate, as the responsible authority to oversee and manage maintenance and enhancement works in creek land conservation areas.
- Provide a staff member, the Water and Waste Officer or their delegate for Waterwatch activity approval and liaison.
- Actively seek ongoing grant funding to further support Merri Creek Management Committee and the Merri Creek Catchment.

Schedule of Funding

Once the MOU is signed by both parties, and at the commencement of the financial year for the remainder of the agreement, Merri Creek Management Committee will invoice Darebin City Council for half of the operational and half of the Waterwatch funding specified below on 1 July. The remainder is to be invoiced on 1 January, which will be paid, subject to satisfactory completion of the works detailed in this document and Schedule 1 – Waterwatch Agreement.

- In the financial year 2017/2018 \$175,864 will be provided in operational funding to support the day to day operations of the Merri Creek Management Committee and their provision of the activities detailed in this document.

This funding will increase each year in line with Council's rate capping percentage until the expiration of this MOU.

- In the financial year 2017/2018 \$14,937 funding will be provided for Waterwatch activities as detailed in Schedule 1 – Waterwatch Agreement, to be allocated across both the Merri Creek catchment and the Darebin Creek catchment, as directed and approved by Council.

To ensure Waterwatch funding is spent across both the Merri Creek and Darebin Creek catchments, in line with previous agreements and arrangements for Waterwatch activities across both creeks, some of the above funding may be required to be transferred to other organisations/bodies. This may occur by request from either party and with final approval for funding allocation from Darebin City Council.

This funding will increase each year in line with Council's rate capping percentage until the expiration of this MOU.

Deliverables

Key performance indicators for the Merri Creek Management Committee fall into three main categories: Operational Works, Strategic Management and Waterwatch. These areas need to be reported on as part of the MOU.

Operational Works

Physical and Community Engagement Works

- Carry out conservation and restoration programs works along the Merri Creek and its tributaries including but not limited to weed control, litter removal, revegetation, planting and monitoring.
- Develop and maintain skills and expertise in ecological restoration of waterway corridors, and share these with member organisations, community groups and other stakeholders within the Merri Catchment.
- Provide community education and support in the areas of conservation, revegetation and preservation of the Merri Creek Catchment.

Strategic Management

Communication and Advocacy Planning

- Seek and advocate for the consolidation and expansion of public open space along the Merri Creek corridor.
- Provide written comment on vegetation impacts and visual character of associated statutory planning referrals within the Merri Creek Catchment.
- Provide feedback on the development of master plans and strategic documents as they relate to the Merri Creek Catchment.
- Consult, coordinate, inform, advise and provide a forum for member organisations and other stakeholders to discuss and learn about conservation, protection and preservation of the Merri Creek Catchment.
- Inform, educate and involve the community in projects involving the Merri Creek Catchment.

Waterwatch

Water Quality Monitoring, Events and Related Activities

See Schedule 1 – Waterwatch Agreement for details on related Waterwatch water quality monitoring, events and related activities, especially Point 1, Table 8.

Reporting

Reporting against this MOU is a required part of this Agreement. Reporting is an important component of this MOU as it allows Council to understand how funding is being spent and how MCMC is meeting the requirements of this Agreement.

Reporting for Operational Works and Strategic Management Works

Reporting for Operational Works and Strategic Management Works will take place at regular meetings of the Merri Creek Management Committee and as detailed below.

Daily & Weekly Reporting

- When physical works are to take place on Council land, a representative from Merri Creek Management Committee will phone or email Darebin's Bushland Coordinator or their delegate providing details about the nature of tasks to be undertaken. This should include the number of staff, anticipated number of hours and where multiple sites are stated, a breakdown of these per site.
- When physical works involve chemical weeding, the location and extent of spraying shall be reported as above (email on the morning of) and each fortnight in the form of a spray records including what chemical was used, how much of each chemical was used, the chemical mix rate, method of application, weather conditions, target species, and what (if any) follow-up is required.
- At the end of each fortnight where physical works have occurred, Merri Creek Management Committee will provide Darebin's Bushland Coordinator or their delegate with a detailed list of the locations where work occurred, dates when works have occurred, tasks undertaken and staff hours worked at each site. This report shall be provided to Darebin's Bushland Coordinator or their delegate by the Monday of the week following.
- All site meetings between Darebin's Bushland Coordinator or their delegate and Merri Creek Management Committee shall be minuted by the Merri Creek Management Committee. These minutes shall be forwarded on to all meeting attendees within 48 hours of the meeting.

Quarterly Reporting

- At the close of each quarter, the Merri Creek Management Committee will provide a quarterly report on Operational Works and Strategic Management Works which will include:
- a list of all applications for grants and external funding undertaken in the quarter. This list will include information on the source of the funding, criteria of the grant, amount requested and whether the application was successful and any feedback received if unsuccessful.
- activities from any successful grants must be reported on at regular meetings of the Merri Creek Management Committee and/or in the quarterly report at the close of each quarter.
- a detailed list of any Planning referrals for which the Merri Creek Management Committee were asked to provide comment. The details should include the location of the referral and the nature of the comment provided.
- a copy of all Site Meeting Minutes of meetings with Darebin's Bushland Coordinator or their delegate shall be included in the quarterly report.
- a quarterly works summary detailing site, task and task hours, total staff hours per site.
- a summary of all Strategic Management Works undertaken on Communication and Advocacy Activities as described above.
- Update any renewals of Safe Work Method Statements/Work Instructions
- Confirmation of the provision to Council of new Certificates of Currency for Public Liability and Professional Indemnity in the quarter they expire.

Reporting for Waterwatch

Reporting for Waterwatch water quality monitoring, activities and related events will take place as detailed in Schedule 1 – Waterwatch Agreement, especially as detailed in Point 8, Table 1.

Commitment

Darebin City Council and Merri Creek Management Committee agree to work collaboratively to jointly manage, protect, promote and ensure the long term viability of the Merri Creek. This Memorandum of Understanding will be in effect and operate according to the principles outlined in this agreement and its Schedule for three years, effective from 1 July 2017 until 30 June 2020.

Merri Creek Management Committee

Darebin City Council

Name: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____

DRAFT