



the place
to live

MINUTES OF THE HEARING OF SUBMISSIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

Held on Thursday 26 May 2022

Released to the public on 30 May 2022

**LIVE STREAMING OF THE HEARING OF SUBMISSIONS COMMITTEE
MEETING WAS MADE AVAILABLE ON COUNCIL'S INTERNET SITE**

Table of Contents

Item Number		Page Number
1.	PRESENT	1
	ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS.....	1
2.	APOLOGIES.....	2
3.	DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST	2
4.	CONFIRMATION OF THE PREVIOUS HEARING OF SUBMISSIONS COMMITTEE MEETING.....	2
5.	CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS	3
5.1	DRAFT BUDGET 2022–23 (INCLUDING THE FOUR YEAR BUDGET), DRAFT REVENUE & RATING PLAN, DRAFT RATES FINANCIAL HARDSHIP POLICY AND NOTICE OF INTENT TO DECLARE A SPECIAL CHARGE FOR RESERVOIR VILLAGE BUSINESS PRECINCT, A PUBLIC WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE RATE, KERBSIDE WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE CHARGE AND ASSOCIATED CONCESSIONS.....	3
6.	CLOSE OF MEETING.....	7

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HEARING OF SUBMISSIONS COMMITTEE OF THE DAREBIN CITY COUNCIL HELD AT COUNCIL CHAMBER, 350 HIGH STREET PRESTON ON THURSDAY 26 MAY 2022

THE MEETING OPENED AT 6.03 PM

The Mayor advised that the meeting was being streamed live and that audio and video would be made available on Council's website.

1. PRESENT

Councillors

Cr. Lina Messina (Mayor) (Chairperson)

Cr. Trent McCarthy (Deputy Mayor)

Cr. Emily Dimitriadis

Cr. Gaetano Greco

Cr. Tom Hannan

Cr. Susanne Newton

Cr. Susan Rennie

Cr. Julie Williams

Council Officers

Rachel Ollivier - Acting Chief Executive Officer

Jodie Watson - General Manager Governance and Engagement

Sam Hewett - General Manager Operations and Capital

Shadi Hanna - Acting General Manager Community

Vanessa Petrie – Acting General Manager City Sustainability & Strategy

Srini Vasan – Chief Financial Officer

Rachna Gupta Singh - Senior Council Business Officer

Milan Nagda – IT Support Officer

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

The Chairperson, Mayor Messina, opened the meeting with the following statement:

Darebin City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung people as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land and waters we now call Darebin and pays respect to their Elders, past, present and emerging.

Council pays respect to all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Darebin.

Council recognises, and pays tribute to, the diverse culture, resilience and heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

We acknowledge the leadership of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and the right to self-determination in the spirit of mutual understanding and respect.

The Mayor made the following Statement:

Today is National Sorry Day. This year it is 25 years since the Bringing Them Home report and 14 years since the National Apology to the Stolen Generations in the Federal Parliament.

On National Sorry Day we acknowledge the injustice experienced by the Stolen Generations who were forcibly removed from their families and communities.

We recognise the ongoing trauma and pain and pay our respect to people of the Stolen Generations who made it home, those still searching and those who never made it back to their families, communities and Country.

The Aboriginal flag is flying at half-mast above Preston City Hall today to commemorate and honour Australia's Stolen Generations. We're also lighting the Stolen Generations Marker and Darebin Arts Centre in purple, the colour of the Australian native hibiscus flower, representing the strength and resilience of the Stolen Generations.

2. APOLOGIES

AN APOLOGY WAS RECEIVED FROM COUNCILLOR TIM LAURENCE.

3. DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Nil

4. CONFIRMATION OF THE PREVIOUS HEARING OF SUBMISSIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

Officer Recommendation

That the Minutes of the Hearing of Submissions Committee Meeting held on 8 November 2021 be confirmed as a correct record of business transacted.

Committee Decision

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

That the Minutes of the Hearing of Submissions Committee Meeting held on 8 November 2021 be confirmed as a correct record of business transacted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS

5.1 **DRAFT BUDGET 2022–23 (INCLUDING THE FOUR YEAR BUDGET), DRAFT REVENUE & RATING PLAN, DRAFT RATES FINANCIAL HARDSHIP POLICY AND NOTICE OF INTENT TO DECLARE A SPECIAL CHARGE FOR RESERVOIR VILLAGE BUSINESS PRECINCT, A PUBLIC WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE RATE, KERBSIDE WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE CHARGE AND ASSOCIATED CONCESSIONS**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At its meeting on 28 March 2022, Council resolved to give notice of its intention to adopt the draft budget 2022-23 and draft 4-year budget, including the following related matters:

- Draft Revenue & Rating Plan 2021-25
- Draft Rates Financial Hardship Policy
- Declaration of the public waste service charge
- Declaration of the service charge for kerbside collection services
- Granting of a rate rebate to pensioners, granting of two concessions aligned to equity principles to support the separation of waste cost recovery from general rates
- Granting of a safety net concession for ratepayers experiencing hardship as a result of the service rate and service charge
- The introduction of the Special Rate for Reservoir Village Business Precinct at a meeting of Council to be held on 27 June 2022.

Prior to adopting the Budget in its final form, Council placed the Draft Budget on public display inviting submissions by Sunday, 1 May 2022 with any person requesting to be heard in support of their written submission to be heard by Council's Hearing of Submissions Committee at 6.00pm on 26 May 2022.

The community submissions in total are requesting an estimated \$22 million (\$21.9 million for capital works projects and \$95,000 for operating projects).

Fifty-four (54) submissions were received by the closing date, including twenty-four (24) submitters requesting to be heard in support of their written submission. A break-down on the number of submissions by major theme is as follows:

- Declaration of waste rate & charge: 17
- Draft Financial Hardship policy: 1
- Recreation & Reserves: 18
- Equity & Wellbeing: 3
- Traffic Management: 1
- Environmental Issues: 4

- Public Places: 5
- General Matters: 2
- Additional Funding, Grants and Addressing Disadvantage: 3

A summary of Management Responses by major themes of submissions is as follows:

Recreation and Reserves / Public Places

Council owns, manages and maintains over \$1.5b in assets across the municipality and each of these assets plays an important role in delivering important services to the local community. It is important that Council invests in each of the asset types to ensure they are renewed, upgraded and enhanced before they fail.

Council relies on the following to help to make decisions on the renewal of existing assets and the construction of new assets:

- The 4-year Council Plan
- The 10-year capital works plan
- The 10-year financial plan
- The 10-year asset plan
- Strategic plans such as the Outdoor Sports Infrastructure Framework and masterplans
- Service demands from new and existing users
- Asset condition
- Asset inspections and audits
- Asset management plans
- Risk and safety assessments on individual assets
- Prioritising areas of disadvantage
- Grants from external funding sources
- Distribution of limited resources across the municipality
- Judgements on previous investment decisions to ensure equity where possible
- Project costs, return on investment, Council's financial ratios and risk appetite

Declaration of waste rate & charge

Council is facing increasing costs for waste related services due to the State Government landfill levy, Recycling Victoria reforms and rising costs in the waste sector. This represents a \$26m deficit over the next 10 years that impacts Council's financial sustainability, which is one of Council's strategic risks.

Equity measures have been introduced to accompany this change and support those most impacted.

Darebin is one of 8 out of the 79 Victorian Councils that do not currently have a separate waste charge. This change is necessary to mitigate financial risk and ensure that Council can fully implement the Recycling Victoria Reforms in coming years, noting that universal FOGO is being introduced from 1 July 2022.

Council has endeavoured to be transparent with the community by making the decision to introduce the service rate and service charge in November 2021, in advance of the draft Budget and process to declare the service rate and service charge that commenced in March 2022. This has provided more time for the community to understand the change and to prepare for the impact when implemented from 1 July 2022.

Draft Financial Hardship policy

Council understands that the financial circumstances of our community vary greatly and through the collection of rates that a need exists to provide options for ratepayers experiencing financial hardship.

The hardship mechanisms and support options give consideration to:

- The Toward Equality Framework
- The Revenue and Rating Plan
- The 10-year Financial Plan

In addition to this policy, Council has extended the Covid Financial Hardship Policy until 30 September 2022, which provides additional relief measures for those experiencing hardship due to COVID.

Environmental Issues

This year a strong interest in food and green waste, and recycling, emerged, showing our community's strong interest in the circular economy. Many matters raised will be supported through the upcoming green and food waste campaign, and consultation on service delivery in 2023.

Traffic Issues

Road safety and electric vehicles continue to be a focus. Council's Your Street Your Say program will continue to drive safety and improved transport, and the Electric Vehicle policy project will support more electric charging operators to install infrastructure across Darebin.

Additional Funding, Grants and Addressing Disadvantage

Council has a substantial community grants program. The 2022/23 program is valued at \$944,000, to support organisations, projects and initiatives that make Darebin a better, healthier, sustainable and more inclusive place. The current year community grant streams include:

- Quick response and Small Grants Program – up to \$1,000 and up to \$3,000 (\$108k allocated to 56 recipients in 21/22)
- FUSE Grants Program – up to \$20,000 (\$34,040 allocated to 4 recipients in 21/22)
- Medium Grants Program – up to \$15,000 (\$198k allocated to 22 recipients in 21/22)
- Venue Hire Support Grants Program – up to \$8,000 (\$79k allocated to 47 recipients in 21/22)
- Youth Projects Grants Program – up to \$5,000 (\$50k allocated to 2 recipients in 21/22)

- Three year Partnership Grants (\$316k allocated to 14 recipients in 21/22)
- Social Enterprise Grants Program
- Darebin Sports Club Grants – up to \$5,000 (\$62k allocated to 35 recipients in 21/22)

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 27 June 2022.

Submissions

The following people addressed the Committee in support of their submission:

- *Andrew Holden*
- *Mark Cooper*
- *Carolyn Lunt*
- *Emilia Storm*
- *Walter Costantin*
- *Angie Davidson*
- *Tom & John (surnames not provided)*
- *Ruth Jelley*
- *David Cvetkovski*
- *Michael Slaughter*
- *Christina DiPierdomenico*
- *Serena O'Meley*

Following submitters did not attend the Committee Meeting:

- *Ale Taouk*
- *Jarran Niel*
- *Peter Gonis*
- *Allison Harvey*
- *Joel Thomson*
- *Karen Bayly*
- *Michael Howden*
- *Rob Brown*
- *Richard Cosway*
- *Jamie Clennett*
- *Diana Pais*

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

- (1) Receives and notes the written and verbal submissions.
- (2) Thank all submitters and presenters for addressing the Committee in support of their written responses.
- (3) Refers all submissions for further consideration to the Council meeting to be held on 27 June 2022 as part of Council's deliberations in the adoption of the Budget 2022-23 (incorporating the four year budget).
- (4) Notes that submissions that are not incorporated into the 2022/23 Budget will be referred for consideration in the development of the draft 2023/24 Budget.

Committee Decision

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

That Council:

- (1) Receives and notes the written and verbal submissions.
- (2) Thank all submitters and presenters for addressing the Committee in support of their written responses.
- (3) Refers all submissions for further consideration to the Council meeting to be held on 27 June 2022 as part of Council's deliberations in the adoption of the Budget 2022-23 (incorporating the four year budget).
- (4) Notes that submissions that are not incorporated into the 2022/23 Budget will be referred for consideration in the development of the draft 2023/24 Budget.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

6. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 6.52 pm.